

WIDENING HORIZONS

Parks North Tyneside



North Tyneside Council

Marden Quarry Park Management Plan 2011 - 2016



widening
horizons

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1.0 Where Are We Now?

1.1 Site Name

Marden Quarry Park.



1.2 Site Description/ Introduction

Located near the centre of Whitley Bay, Marden Quarry represents virtually the only exposure of magnesium limestone north of the River Tyne. Marden Quarry covers an area of approximately 5.94 hectares. The site was formed due to previous limestone quarrying activity dating back to the late 1600's. The site was converted to an informal park and opened in 1977 and was awarded Local Nature Reserve Status in the summer of 2005. It is well used by local people from the surrounding neighbourhood, and has been developed over a significant period.

The reserve provides a range of habitats including a large wildfowl lake, small pockets of limestone grassland, senescent elder scrub and a small area of mature woodland.

The lake is known locally for its wildfowl and wintering populations can reach impressive numbers. Breeding birds on the site include mute swan, mallard, moorhen, coot and tufted duck. Many migrating bird species use the quarry as a 'fall' site. The elder scrub provides an important food source for birds, in particular several species of thrush. The site is recorded as having the largest blackbird population in the county, as well as supporting the declining song thrush.

In 2003 Friends of Marden Quarry received £90k from English Nature to improve the site as it is important for flora and wildlife. The current team would like to continue to improve current standards recognising the park for the asset it is to the area.

The main objectives for management presently are:

- To preserve and enhance the conservation and wildlife value of the site.
- To manage and enhance the habitat for wildfowl.
- To facilitate public access for the enjoyment of nature, non-detrimental to wildlife interests.
- To develop and maintain the site for educational use.

Increase the public's understanding and appreciation of the site.

Due to its location within an urban setting there is a significant risk of disturbance. Changes to the surrounding area could affect vegetation and food sources for wildfowl. The area is also susceptible to littering, flooding, acts of vandalism and antisocial behaviour.

1.3 Site Location

The Park is located on Marden Road South just off the A193 The Broadway. The quarry is surrounded on three sides by established quality housing in a generally prosperous area. To the East the border is met by what is several sporting amenities including football pitches, cricket ground, tennis courts and an ice rink. The entrance road is shared by a private residence with stables and Northumbria Water who have a pumping station located within the park.

Marden Quarry Park,
Whitley Bay,
North Tyneside NE25 8PN

Grid Reference NZ 35619 71413
 X 435619 Y 571413
 Latitude 55.035963 Longitude -1.4442354

1.3.1 Site Map



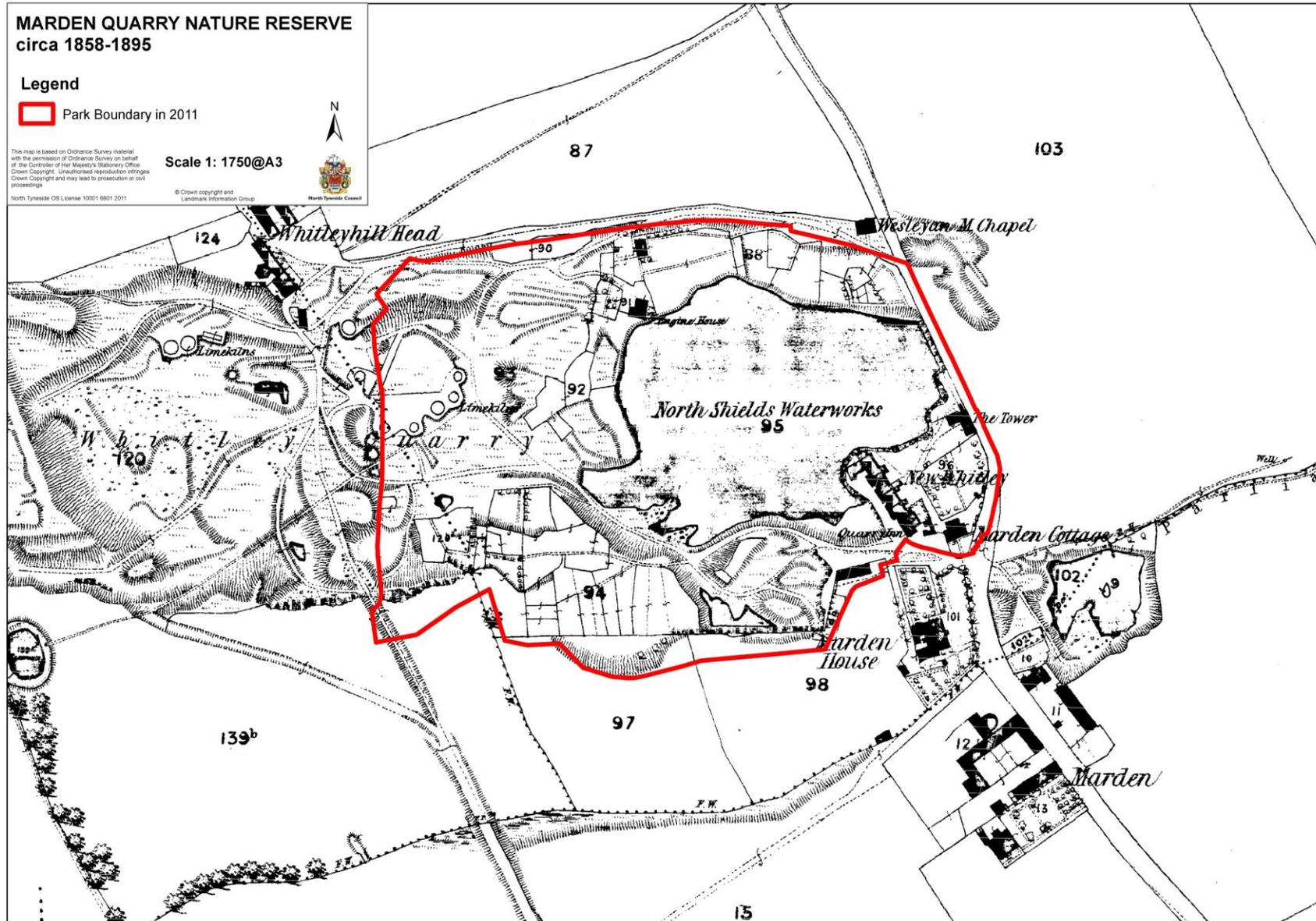
1.3.2 Aerial Map 2008



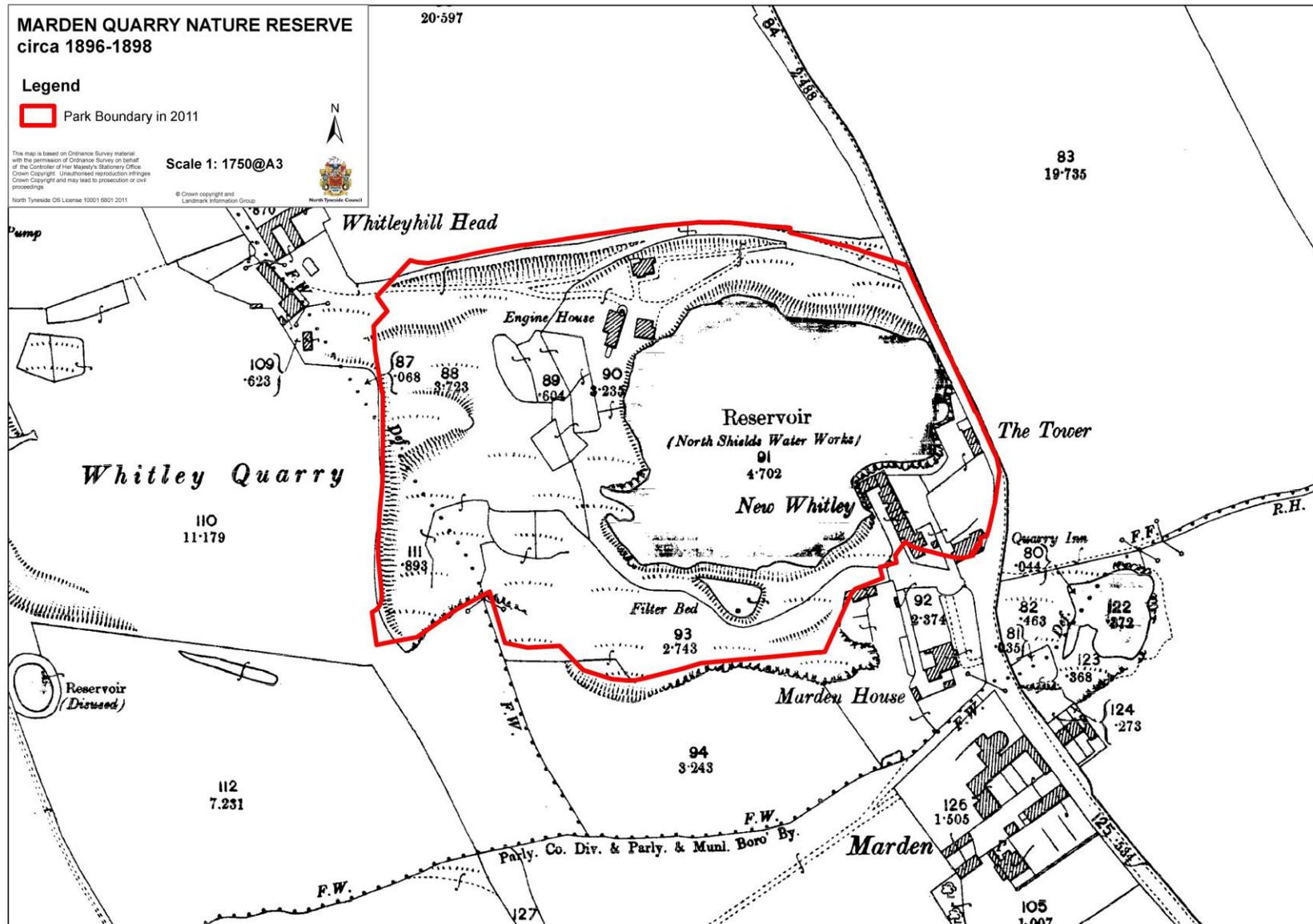
1.3.2 Aerial Map 1974



1.3.3 Historical Map 1858 - 1895



1.3.3 Historical Map 1896 - 1898



1.3.3 Borough Location Map

KEY

1. Benton Quarry Park, Longbenton
2. Churchill Playing Fields, Whitley Bay
3. Howdon Park
4. Killingworth Lake
5. Lockey Park, Wideopen
6. Marden Quarry Park, Whitley Bay
7. Norham Playsite, North Shields
8. Northumberland Park, Tynemouth
9. Rising Sun Country Park, Benton
10. Silverlink Park, Cobalt
11. Springfield Park, Forest Hall
12. The Parks Sports Centre, North Shields
13. Tynemouth Longsands
14. Tynemouth Park
15. Wallsend Parks (Richardson Dees Park and Civic Hall Grounds)
16. Weetslade Country Park
17. Whitley Park, Whitley Bay

find us



1.3.5 Metro / Bus numbers / Location



The main access to the park is via The Broadway (A193), and is within walking distance of Whitley Bay and Cullercoats Metro stations. There are two pedestrian entrances to the park along Studley Gardens.

Marden Quarry is well served by local buses with the X9 stopping outside the entrance to the park on Marden Road South. Also the following buses run along Hillheads Road near the rear boundary of the park: N58, 309, 308, 59, 57A, 57, 53A, 53, 17A, 17

1.3.5.2 Car Parking

There is a gravel car park at the main entrance to the quarry, which has no formal bays but will hold approximately 25 vehicles at no charge for parking.

1.3.5.3 Bike Parking



There are currently no formal bike parking facilities on site, though this is an area we will be looking to improve upon in the future.

1.4 Area Committee and Ward

Marden Quarry Park falls within the ward of Whitley Bay though its boundary lies next to both Cullercoats ward and Monkseaton South Ward. Whitley Bay Ward lies in the North East Area. It lies south of Marine Avenue and north of Burnside Road/North View. It includes central Whitley Bay and the area forum it is attached to Whitley Bay also.

1.5 Elected members

There are 60 Local Councillors for 20 Wards.

There are three Councillors representing each ward with one seat (one third of the Council) elected each year.

The three councillors representing the Whitley Bay Ward are:

Councillor Alison Austin (Conservative)

Councillor Michael McIntyre (Conservative)

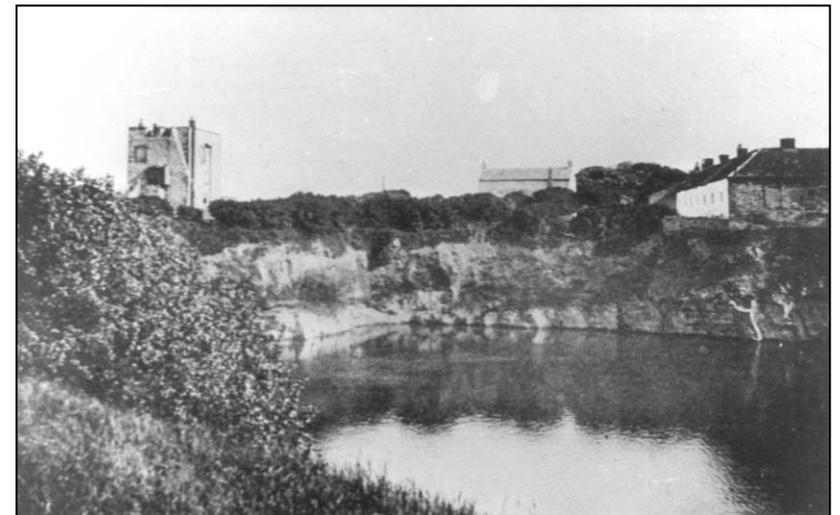
Councillor Pamela Brooks (Labour)

1.6 Historical Context

Marden Quarry represents virtually the only exposure of magnesium limestone north of the River Tyne. Henry Hudson, a local landowner, leased Maudlin Pitts in 1684, to quarry magnesian limestone. Over the next two hundred years the quarry extended westwards almost as far as Hill Heads Farm. In the early years of the last century a waggonway was built from the pit, across the present golf course, to terminate in a staith at the Low Light in North Shields.



The North Shields Water Company, established in 1786, used part of the quarry as a reservoir. This quarry is mentioned in Tomlinson's 1880 book and is a historically well valued site for recreation. Princess Margaret opened the site in 1977 as Marden Park. The site was awarded Local Nature Reserve Status in the summer of 2005.



1.7 Legal Context

1.7.1 Ownership and Conveyances

The entire site is owned by North Tyneside Council.

1.7.2 Designations

NATIONAL PARKS AND ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1949
DECLARATION OF NATURE RESERVE
COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTH TYNESIDE
MARDEN QUARRY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN in pursuance of Section 19 of the above-mentioned Act that by the Local Nature Reserve Declaration made on the 21st day of June 2005, 5.94 hectares or thereabouts of land situated in the Borough of North Tyneside at Marden Quarry and shown edged red on the plan attached to the said Declaration will be managed as a Nature Reserve.

1.7.3 Leases and Licences

Big Waters Angling Club are licensed to fish on this site and regulate themselves with the provision of water bailiffs..

1.7.4 Other Agreements

The entire park is an alcohol exclusion zone. In November 2002 negotiations commenced between the police and the local authority legal department about having the Quarry designated under the Crime and Disorder Act as a none drinking area. This was eventually achieved in October 2003 and signs put in place establishing the fact.

1.7.4.1 Byelaws

There are no extraordinary bylaws currently governing the site of Marden Quarry. Users are bound by the same bylaws governing any public space in the borough.

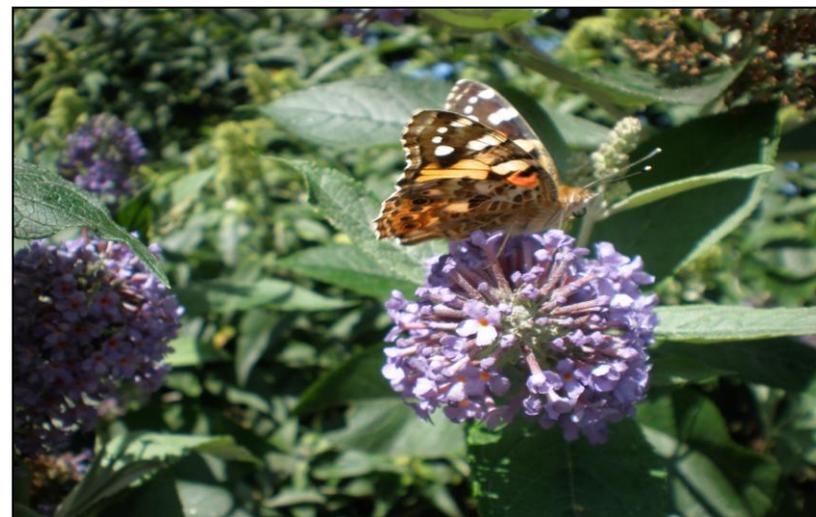
1.7.4.2 Rights of Way

There are no rights of way within Marden Quarry Park.

1.8 Site Surveys and Assessments

1.8.1 Ecological Survey

The reserve provides a range of habitats including a large wildfowl lake, small pockets of limestone grassland, senescent elder scrub and a small area of mature woodland. The lake is known locally for its wildfowl and wintering populations can reach impressive numbers. Breeding birds on the site include mute swan, mallard, moorhen, coot and tufted duck. Many migrating bird species use the quarry as a 'fall' site.



This site holds an interesting senescent elder scrub, a small amount of limestone grassland flora and a valuable waterfowl pond. It is extensively used for informal recreation purposes with a good community interest. It is proposed as a Local Nature Reserve and is currently recognised as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.

The reserve holds significant ornithological interest; breeding bird species include mute swan, mallard, moorhen and coot, willow warbler, dunnock, blackcap and wren. Moreover, the site is particularly well known for its thrush population. Song and mistle thrush are both residents, whilst the recorded blackbird population is the largest in the county.

The site will be getting surveyed as part of the Local Wildlife Site review, so ecological data is due to be updated however historically data has been collected and the findings of these surveys, some dating back to 1977, is given in the tables below. It is worth noting that some of the plant species may have disappeared as a result of scrub encroachment and lack of management but this will be clarified with the completion of the new surveys.

<u>Species List 1977 - 1983</u>	<u>Fish 1977-83</u>	<u>Birds 1977 -91</u>	<u>Butterflies (H.A. Ellis, 1992-96)</u>	<u>SPECIES (M P Carruthers 1996)</u>
Alexanders	Bream,	Teal	Meadow Brown	Arctic Warbler
American Bellbine	Eel	Wigeon	Large Skipper	Barnacle Goose
Annual Meadow grass	goldfish	Mallard	Large White	Black Tern
Annual Wall Rocket	carp	Gadwall	Small White	Black-headed Gull
Ash	Bronze bream	Pochard	Common Blue	Black-throated Diver
Bay Willow	Three spined stickleback	Tufted Duck	Small Tortoiseshell	Blackbird

Bittersweet,	Perch	Goldeneye		Blackcap
Black Horehound	Minnow	Goldfinch		Blue Tit
Black Knapweed, Hardhead	Roach	Mute Swan		Bluethroat
Black Medick	Rudd	Kestrel		Brambling
Black Mustard	Tench	Moorhen		Brent Goose
Bladder Champion		Lesser Black backed Gull		Bullfinch
Bluebell, Wild Hyacinth		Great Black headed Gull		Canada Goose
Bramble, Blackberry		Grey Wagtail		Carrion Crow
Branched Bur reed		Little Grebe		Chaffinch
Broad leaved Dock		Redshank		Chiffchaff
Broad leaved Pondweed		Redwing		Coal Tit
Broad leaved Willow herb				Collared Dove
Burdock				Common Gull
Burnet Saxifrage				Common Rosefinch
Cocksfoot				Common Sandpiper
Common Birdsfoot Trefoil				Common Tern
Common Catsear				Common Whitethroat
Common Chickweed				Coot
Common Comfrey				Cormorant
Common Couch				Crossbill
Common Forget me not				Cuckoo
Common Fumitory				Duncock
Common Mallow				Feral Pigeon
Common Mouse ear				Fieldfare
Common Mullein				Firecrest
Common Orache				Gadwall
Common Ragwort				Garden Warbler
Common Sorrel				Goldcrest
Common Spotted Orchid				Goldfinch
Common Storksbill				Goosander
Common Water plantain				Goshawk
Common Winter cress				Goshawk
Corn Chamomile				Grasshopper Warbler



Cow Parsley, Keck
Cowbane
Cowslip
Crab apple
Crack Willow
Creeping Bent, Fiorin
Creeping Buttercup
Creeping Thistle
Cuckoo Flower, Wild Arum
Curled Dock
Cut leaved Cranesbill
Daisy
Dandelion
dog roses
Dog Violet
Dogwood
Elder
English Elm
Eyebright
Fat Hen
Feverfew
Field Bindweed
Field Scabious
Fool`s Parsley
Foxglove
Garlic Mustard
Germander Speedwell
Goatsbeard
Goosegrass, Cleavers
Gorse, Furze
Great Bindweed [agg.]
Great Reedmace
Great Willow herb
Greater Spearwort



Great Black-backed Gull
Great Crested Grebe
Great Spotted Woodpecker
Great Tit
Green Sandpiper
Greenfinch
Grey Heron
Grey Partridge
Grey Wagtail
Greylag Goose
Hen Harrier
Herring Gull
Hobby
House Martin
House Sparrow
Icterine Warbler
Jackdaw
Kestrel
Kingfisher
Lesser Black-backed Gull
Lesser Whitethroat
Linnet
Little Auk
Little Grebe
Long-eared Owl
Long-tailed Skua
Long-tailed Tit
Magpie
Mallard
Meadow Pipit
Merlin
Mistle Thrush
Moorhen
Mute Swan

Greater Stitchwort
Groundsel
Harebell
Hawthorn
Heath Bedstraw
Hedge Mustard
Hedge parsley
Hemlock
Herb Bennet, Wood Avens
Herb Robert
Hoary Ragwort
Hogweed, Cow Parsnip
Holly
Honeysuckle
Italian Rye grass
Ivy
Ivy leaved Toadflax
Japanese Knotweed
Jointed Rush
Kidney Vetch
Knot grass [agg.]
Lady's Bedstraw
Lesser Celandine
Marsh Woundwort
Meadow Buttercup
Meadow Fescue
Meadow Vetchling
Meadowsweet
Michaelmas Daisy
Mugwort
Musk Thistle
Northern Marsh Orchid
Ox eye Daisy
Pineapple Weed

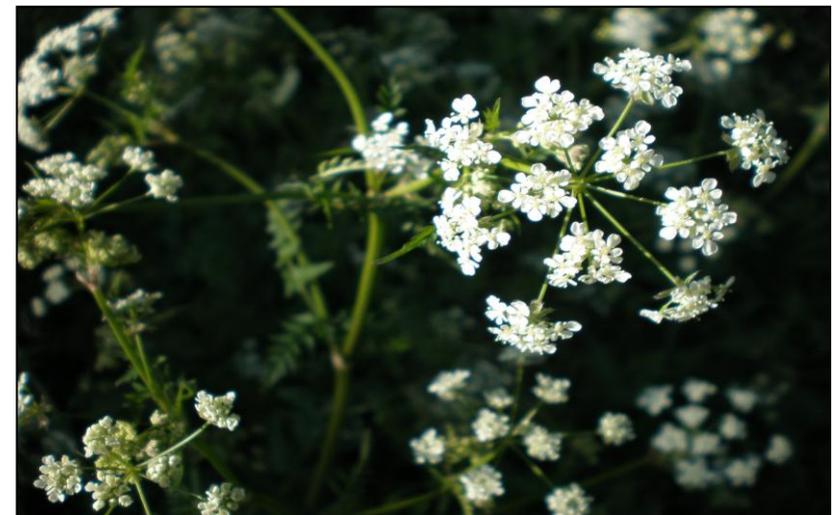


Northern Wheatear
Oystercatcher
Peregrine Falcon
Pheasant
Pied Flycatcher
Pied Wagtail
Pochard
Red-breasted Flycatcher
Redpoll
Redshank
Redstart
Redwing
Reed Bunting
Reed Warbler
Ring Ouzel
Ring-necked Duck
Robin
Rook
Ruddy Duck
Sand Martin
Sedge Warbler
Short-eared Owl
Shoveler
Siskin
S Skylark
Snipe
Song Thrush
Sparrowhawk
Spotted Flycatcher
Starling
Stock Dove
Swallow
Swift
Tawny Owl

poppy sp.
Prickly Sow thistle
Quaking Grass
Raspberry
Red Clover
Red Dead nettle
Rest harrow
Ribwort Plantain
Rosebay Willow herb
Salad Burnet
Scots Pine
Self heal
Sheep's Fescue [agg.]
Shepherd's Purse
Silver Birch
Silverweed
Small Bur reed
Small Scabious
Smooth Hawksbeard
Spear Thistle
Spiked Water milfoil
Square St. John's Wort
Stinging Nettle
Sweet Woodruff
Sycamore
Timothy
Traveller's Joy
Tufted Vetch
Turnip
Wall Barley
Wallflower
Weld
Weld
White Clover



Teal
Tree Pipit
Tree Sparrow
Treecreeper
Tufted Duck
Water Rail
Waxwing
Whinchat
White-fronted Goose
Whooper Swan
Willow Tit
Willow Warbler
Wood Pigeon
Wood Sandpiper
Wood Warbler
Woodcock
Wren
Yellow Wagtail
Yellow-browed Warbler
Yellowhammer



White Dead nettle
Wild Cabbage
Wild Daffodil
Wild Mignonette
Wild Parsnip
Wood Sage
Yarrow
Yellow Flag
Yellow Rattle
Yorkshire Fog



Marden Quarry Park is also an important geological site, which is why it has been designated as a Local Wildlife Site (formerly SNCI).

1.8.2 Tree Surveys

A tree survey has been undertaken on all authority owned trees. Data collected has been transferred onto a computerised system, which links to a digital mapping facility. Each tree is numbered and plotted on a map for ease of reference, with a corresponding number fixed to each tree. The database allows programming of work on a cyclical basis for pruning and highlights and prioritises tree works.



1.8.3 Accessibility Surveys

There is a need to conduct a full formal accessibility survey, however an informal assessment has been completed and appropriate action taken for example the resurfacing of certain paths to improve access and also resolve drainage issues.

1.8.4 Archaeological Surveys

To date there has been no archaeological survey carried out. Due to the site being a former quarry, it is expected that anything of archaeological significance has been lost and therefore it is unlikely an archaeological survey would be considered.

1.9 Community Context



1.9.1 The Surrounding Community

Age Profile Whitley Bay Ward

Ward -	No	Ward - %	NT - %
Age Under 5	5 568	5.2%	5.6%
Age 5-14	1,113	10.1%	10.9%
Age 15-24	1,092	11.1%	12.2%
Age 25-44	2,867	26.7%	27.5%
Age 45-59	1,934	20.9%	20.7%
Age 60-74	1,107	15.6%	14.5%
Age 75(+)	764	10.4%	8.7%

Ages – ONS, 2007 Mid Year Estimates

Ethnicity Whitley Bay Ward

Ward -	No	Ward - %	NT - %
BME Pop'tion	413	4.4%	1.9%
BME – Mixed	79	19.1%	25.7%
BME - Asian	218	52.8%	39.0%
BME - Black	33	8.0%	9.5%
BME - Chinese	33	8.0%	18.8%
BME - Other	50	2.1%	7.0%

Ethnic – ONS, 2001 Census

Note - % of individual ethnic groups represents proportion of ward BME total

Index of Deprivation Rankings Whitley Bay Ward

Rank	
Overall Deprivation	2496
Income Deprivation	22385
Employment Deprivation	1789
Health Deprivation	1808
Education Skills & Training	5015
Access to Amenities	6428
Crime Deprivation	1818
The Living Environment	2787
Inequality	59

ID2007 – DCLG, Index of Deprivation 2007

Rankings – Local Futures, best fit of 8,836 pre-2004 wards.

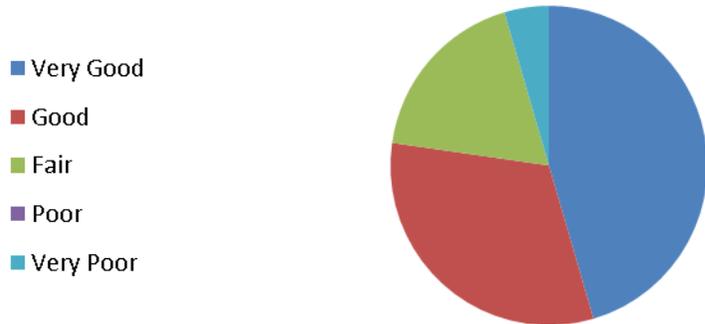
Note – 1 = Most Deprived; 8,836 = Least Deprived

Inequality – National ranking of difference between most and least deprived part of the ward. (1 = Most Inequality, 8,836 = Least Inequality)

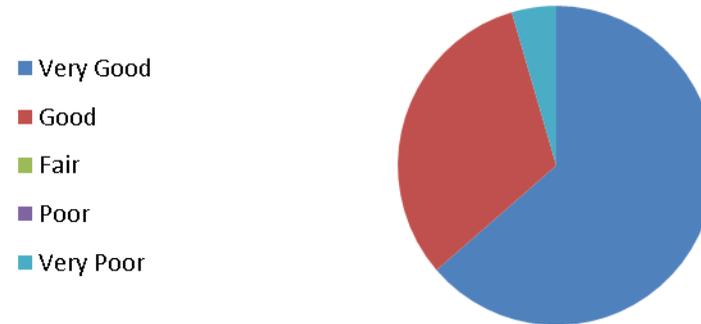
1.9.2 Current Users

Visitor surveys are conducted by the Park Warden, and the data collected for 2011 is as follows:

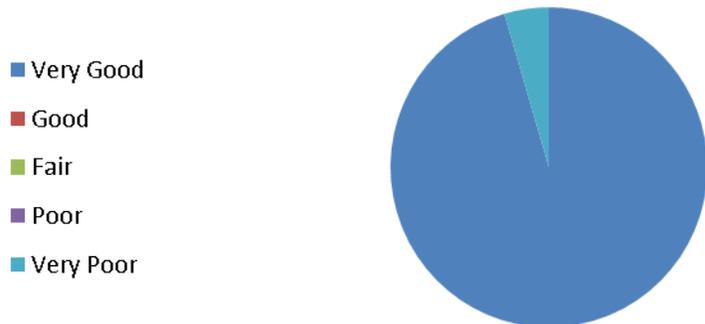
Marden Quarry Park
How would you rate the quality of the facilities?



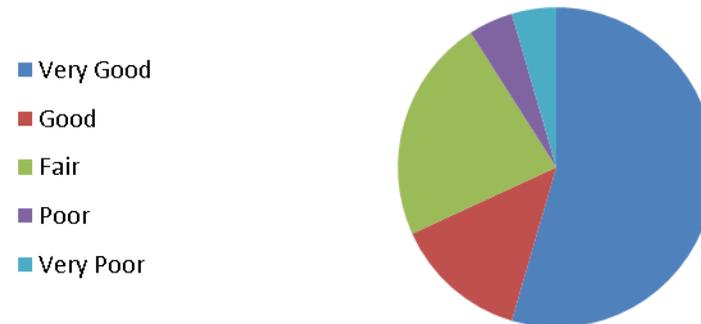
Marden Quarry Park
How would you rate the overall satisfaction?



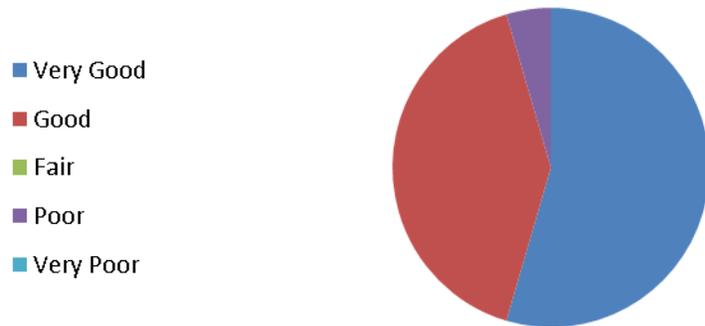
Marden Quarry Park
How would you rate the helpfulness of the park staff?



Marden Quarry Park
How would you rate the general cleanliness of the park?



Marden Quarry Park How would you rate the quality of the park?



More details are required such as user numbers and this is an area that will be progressed in the future. Extra comments that were submitted along with the surveys can be found included in the appendices.

The site is used by a wide range of people, and there are clearly defined 'groups' within the users. These groups include:



Dog Walkers

This group forms a large proportion of visitors at certain times of the day especially early in the morning and early evening after work.

Sporting Users

The Lake is a popular fishing venue regulated by the Big Waters Angling Club. They have a licence with the local authority for this purpose however day passes are available for non-club members and a code of conduct must be adhered to by all those fishing on the lake.

Families

This major user group encompasses the whole range of families from parents with young children through to parents and grandparents visiting the park to feed the birds, for picnics or simply for relaxation.

The list above is by no means the extent of users on site. Others visits include educational visits organised by the local schools and nurseries in conjunction with the Park Warden, and special events led by the Park Staff.

1.9.3 Community Consultation

In 2006-07 Play Parks Study Group included Marden Quarry in a survey, the results were as follows:

Marden Quarry (102 respondents visited in the past 12 months)

- All respondents were aware of the footpaths, bridleways and cycleway;
- 50% of respondents were not regular users;
- Respondents mainly visited early in the afternoon;
- 53% of respondents visited on foot; 48% by car; 9% by bicycle
- Access to the park scored highest (3.4 out of 5.0) but signage (2.8) and warden provision (2.4) scored poorly;
- Suggested improvements by respondents – more warden presence; increase cleanliness; clear dog mess; improve footpaths; more made of the wildlife aspect; additional facilities such as an adventure playground, visitors centre and public toilets.

Information taken from All Scrutiny Reports/2006-07/Play Parks Study Group – Second Report/13v

Since the recent restructure the visitor surveys are being completed by park users, facilitated by Park Wardens. Evaluation from 2011 is given in the section above.

The Parks Management team working alongside the Data Performance and Management Team held a half day consultation exercise using members from North Tyneside's Residents Panel. The objective was to determine local resident's views and perceptions of North Tyneside's parks. Residents were from all ages and backgrounds and also park users and non users giving the management team a better understanding of what we need to do to encourage people into our parks. It was a very successful and informative day which we will look to repeat in the future.

1.9.4 Community Involvement

Since starting in 2008 the Park Warden has built up excellent relations with those that use this site and has also encouraged higher visitor numbers through the events and activities that are provided both for the public and educational groups.

The site is well used by the local community both as individuals who visit the site as well as groups and local schools. More emphasis has been placed on engaging with the local park users and neighbouring communities through the development of the council's parks department.

Marden Quarry Park Management Plan 2011 – 2016





Currently the Park Warden engages with a number of park user groups including a very proactive Friends of Marden Quarry Group which has been established for a number of years now and was integral to the successful funding bid that was awarded by English Nature in 2003. The Park Warden has very good relations with members of this group and it is a desire of the parks team to work with them to expand it making sure it has a good mix of participants from all areas of the community. The entrance and car park of Marden Quarry Park serve as access for the neighbouring Scout hut. The park warden has been working closely establishing good relations with the scouts and frequently give talks and encourages them to come along and use the park for activities.

1.9.5 Community Safety

The site is well used throughout the year however historically it has suffered from anti-social behaviour in the form of youth disorder and a couple of occasions of animal cruelty. The results of these incidents led to a very close working relationship with the local police.

In 2004 the then sergeant David Foy, from Northumbria Police Tynemouth Area Command produced a document titled The Marden Quarry Project showing the problems the area had experienced and the solutions put in place to resolve the issues. The resulting analysis of events and incidents surrounding the quarry led both police and the local community to decide that a line was to be drawn and that the usage of the Quarry was to be transformed from that of a drinking den for a disorderly minority to a well used and valued community resource for use by all sections of the community without fear.

Evidence of the success of the project could be measured by the level of reported incidents to police during the time of the worst disorder.

2001 – 35 incidents

2002 – 36 incidents

2003 – 14 incidents

In more recent times Marden Quarry has continued to be monitored by the police, fire service, Friends of the Park group and the local authority with the introduction of Park Wardens based on site.

Feedback from some of the local residents and park users indicate there are sometimes still concerns. These mainly relate to teenagers on site drinking, some taking drugs and a general fear of anti-social behaviour, mainly occurring on a seasonal pattern, during the warmer – summer-months from May to September and usually between 7-9pm. The Park Warden continues to work closely with the neighbourhood policing team to improve the safety of all park users and any issues raised are presented at the Local Tasking and Coordinating Group meetings held by the police.

Other concerns mainly relate to issues over dogs fouling and dogs off leads and the quality of the footpaths. In response extra patrol are organised on a monthly basis by the parks team and they will issue fixed penalty notices for failure to clear up after a dog and litter dropping when required to do so. North Tyneside Council is currently working on establishing dog control orders which will be adopted and enforced by the end of 2012.



1.10 Recent Improvements

Date	Improvements
2002	Funding via English Nature for £170,000 won by the Friends of Marden Quarry
Dec.2002	Appointment of project manager on 18month contract
Feb 2003	Major clean up operation organised by the Friends of Marden Quarry
Apr 2003	Quarry watch is established
Apr 2003	Installation of barrier at the head of the access road
Oct 2003	Ban on consumption of alcohol within the park boundaries
2004	Marden Quarry was runner-up in the IPRA President's Association Trophy category after the park was transformed
2004	North Tyneside Council Park Warden is allocated to the site
2007	New bins are installed
2008	Current Park Warden Carole Maddison employed
2008	Ongoing improvements to the elder woodland paths putting chipped bark down working alongside probation services
2009	Establishing a community wildflower meadow next to Studley Gardens entrance – on going maintenance programme
2009	Additional seating installed
2009	Hand rail installed and stepped area of circular lake path improved
2010	Ongoing work with local policing teams to tackle issues of anti social behaviour
2010	Woodland planting enhanced
2010	Park events publicised on the council website and the first joined up park events leaflets produced
2011	Path resurfacing and drainage issues address on main path round lake
2012	New path top dressed with dust
2012	New front put on park notice board to replace the damaged Perspex



2.0 Where Do We Want To Get To?

2.1 Analysis and Evaluation



2.1.1 Site Vision

To further develop the already unique nature of this park as a space for both wildlife and the local community, to safely enjoy a well maintained venue for cultural, educational and local activities and events.

2.1.2 Site Aims

- Preserve and enhance the site as a haven for wildfowl.
- Preserve and enhance wildflower meadow areas within the wooded area to the west of the site, including those sections of magnesium limestone grassland.
- Carry out management of the woodland and elder scrub, allowing for natural regeneration and development of ground flora.
- Maintain public access and the park's amenity value.
- Maintain a clean and pleasant environment, and increase the public's appreciation and understanding of the site.



2.2 A Welcoming Place

2.2 1 Welcoming



The main entrance into Marden Quarry Park is from the Broadway (A193) and is surrounded by an attractive stone wall which shields from view the green cabins of both the scout hut and park warden base. A lovely feature of this particular park is the iron work barrier gates, the first of which can be seen at the end of the entrance lane. It states the name of the site Marden Quarry and has other attractive features such as a Heron.

Turning into the car park, the view from here is spectacular looking out across the lake. The car park itself is of a good size and the surface, though not ideal at present, is one of the ongoing projects for 2011 / early 2012 along with the footpath repairs and resurfacing.

The car park has trees running along one side and there is an area of grass which leads





to a stone wall, over this is a fabulous view across the lake which is clearly visible due to the elevated height of the car park. This is a popular spot for sitting, relaxing and enjoying the sights below and makes it a good location for seating. There are plenty of bins in this area as it is frequently used as a favourite destination for people to drive into and eat their fish and chips while watching the wildlife across the water.

The Park Warden works between two sites in the Whitley Bay area and adds a uniformed presence which makes visitors not only feel safe and secure but provides a point of contact for any enquiry about the park.

2.2.2 Good and Safe Access

The main entrance and vehicular access into the park is from the Broadway (A193). There are also two pedestrian access points one on the corner of Lovaine Avenue and Studley Gardens, the other opposite number 2 Studley Gardens. A community wildflower meadow welcomes visitors to the Lovaine Avenue / Studley Gardens entrance while a wooden kissing gate marks the entrance to the other pedestrian access point.



2.2.3 Signage

There is a small white directional road sign for Marden Park, from the Broadway (A193) when approaching the park, although it is an aspiration to have a larger more prominent sign put in place in the future.

Once into the main entrance of the park there is a large North Tyneside Council sign in corporate colours stating the name of the site and also displaying the councils website address. Behind this there is a large park notice board which is used by the Park Warden to advertise events, wildlife and conservation information.



A separate “Warden on Duty” sign is displayed when a warden is present it is located in the car park and contains contact details for the Park Warden and Parks Development Officer, along with the local neighbourhood policing team and fire service, which can be used by any member of the public to either access further information or report any issues.



Located in the car park there is sign which gives a brief history of Marden Quarry along with a map of the area plus information about some of the wildlife you may encounter on the lake. There is an information section detailing the park regulations including information about fishing on the lake. This sign was installed by the friends of Marden Quarry as part of the restoration of the area in 2002 and is still in a reasonable state of repair although the cover is to be replaced. A similar sign is located at the Studley Gardens entrance to Marden Quarry Park, again the plastic cover will be replaced but the information, quality and style of the sign is good.



A rustic wooden sign has recently been added to clearly identify the wildflower area next to Studley Gardens. This project is managed and maintained by the Park Warden who actively encourages involvement from the local school and community groups to promote environmental and conservation subjects.

Being a small site there is less of a need for directional signage although there is an opportunity to install wildlife information boards and produce a site specific information panel / web based leaflet. The Park Warden working alongside Big Waters Angling Club is looking at ways to provide information to anglers and it may mean that extra signs are installed round the lakeside in the future if this is deemed the most appropriate solution, however to durability of such signage needs to be addressed so they will blend in with the surroundings and withstand any potential vandalism.

2.2.4 Equal Access for all



There has been no formal accessibility survey carried out to date, however the new parks service is developing a rolling programme for the production of accessibility audits for each park. Accessibility in the park has been informally reviewed and new paths constructed as a consequence.

The main circulatory path round the lake is constructed of whinstone dust to fit in with the natural environment of the quarry. Path improvements are ongoing, they are top dressed as required and new construction is installed if desire lines are to be formalised. The paths through the elder woodland are formed with chipped bark and the programme for keeping these in a useable condition is part of Northumbria Probation Services role within the park with the additional assistance from volunteers and the park warden as necessary.

A number of bins both for dog waste and general rubbish have been placed in a manner that they can be used by anyone using a wheelchair comfortably. There are benches and other seating arrangements placed round the park providing plenty of spots for quiet rest and relaxation for anyone of any fitness level. 

2.3 Healthy Safe and Secure

2.3.1 Safe Equipment and Facilities

The Park Warden undertakes a monthly check list that is completed and signed off. This includes visual checks to the trees, paths signs and park furniture. All faults / repairs are reported into the appropriate team and progress monitored.

In addition to the site specific risk assessments there are comprehensive risk assessment carried out for any specific event that take place on the site, this is the responsibility of the lead person on the event. As part of the safety checks all the life buoys are inspected and spare are always available from the warden's cabin. The local authority is planning a publicity campaign promoting the legal implications of using rope from any water safety equipment for any purpose other than emergency rescue. The parks team will be involved in this using Marden Quarry Park as the main target to get the message across to the public.

2.3.2 Personal Security

The Park Warden team provide extra reassurance to the public through their uniformed presence and the fact their contact details are available to all. They also work a shift pattern that enables some form of coverage seven days a week. There are very good links between the park staff and the local neighbourhood policing teams and the fire service. Monthly police Local Tasking and Coordinating Group meetings are attended by park staff and crime / anti-social issues are reported accordingly.

2.3.3 Dog Fouling



Dogs are allowed off the lead throughout Marden Quarry Park providing they are kept under control. As the site is an important area for wildfowl it is important that dog owners are extra vigilant and responsible while exercising their dogs. The Park Wardens educate dog owners who do not act responsibly.

The site is very well used by local dog walkers they are an important and valued user group, however, there are incidents where dog owners have failed to pick up their dogs' mess.

To combat this all Park Wardens are authorised and trained by North Tyneside Council to issue fixed penalty notices. Another measure in place to combat dog mess is the promotional activity of distributing free dog waste bags to any dog walkers by the Park Wardens. All the bins on the park sites are for dual use.

2.3.4 Appropriate Provision of Facilities

Marden Quarry Park is classed as a Local Nature Reserve but this doesn't mean it is only significant as an area of biodiversity, it is an important amenity for the local community. While it is a sanctuary for wild life it provides accessible greenspace for recreation and educational activities. To enhance the use of Marden Quarry Park as a place for people to have access to nature on their doorstep and to provide the opportunities for study, it is important to continue working with the local scout group to make use of the scout hut for park events and educational activities.





2.3.5 Quality of Facilities

The overall quality of the maintenance and management of the site is a good standard due to the presence of the Park Warden. Regular patrols identify any areas that need attention and also the fact a uniformed member of staff is in attendance can lead to reduction in damage to equipment and facilities.

2.4 Clean and Well Maintained

2.4.1 Litter and Waste Management

There is an adequate provision of litter bins which are frequently emptied and a litterpick conducted by the Park Warden to maintain the park in a litter free condition. There is an arrangement with the environmental team to remove the refuse bags which are collected next to the warden hut however a future project is to create an enclosed area for the bags to be left to not only make it more aesthetically pleasing but also to reduce the instances where dogs and other animals shred them before they are removed from the site. Current policy is to uplift any fly tip that may be left within twenty four hours of being reported after making an investigation for evidence of its source so that legal action can be pursued. The very large fly tips are removed by Clean Neighbourhood's team as they have the appropriate vehicles and machinery.

2.4.2 Grounds Maintenance and Horticulture



Due to the nature of Marden Quarry Park much of the grounds maintenance and horticulture tasks are taken care of either by the Park Warden or the Waggonway Warden team. The grounds maintenance team from environmental services assist with the grass cutting in the park and also the tree squad are responsible for any issues of health and safety relating to the trees on site. They provide another service by leaving a constant supply of chipped bark which is used to replenish the paths through the elder woodland.

There is a very good working relationship with the Northumbria Probation Service who bring offenders, under the community payback scheme, to work in the park. They mainly concentrate their efforts on litter picking the site or maintaining the woodland paths through the addition of chipped bark.

2.4.3 Building and Infrastructure Maintenance

All the building and facilities in the council are maintained by the Valuation and Asset Management Team. The services that are normally requested in Marden Quarry Park relate to items such as the boundary fences and walls.

Under the current structure this section controls all budgets relating to the parks infrastructure - footpaths, railings, buildings etc. In the absence of any repairs and maintenance plan or formal inspection programme other than the monthly health and safety checks conducted by the Park Warden, all requests for work are passed to this officer, from the warden, grounds maintenance staff, or park users direct.

There is currently no dedicated budget for repairs and maintenance to the infrastructure within Marden Quarry Park rather a Borough wide budget where priorities are made based on health and safety considerations. For this reason a lot of the basic repair work needed on the wardens cabin has been carried out by the parks team themselves however a larger amount of investment is needed to keep the building and toilet facility in a good state of repair.

2.4.4 Equipment Maintenance

The maintenance of park equipment is undertaken centrally by the horticultural workshop based at the Killingworth depot. Basic maintenance is carried out by the Park Warden and Waggonway Warden team.

As Marden Quarry Park contains a large body of water it is part of the Park Wardens duties to inspect the life buoys, and take any appropriate action if the equipment is missing or not up to standard.

2.4 Sustainability

North Tyneside Council is committed to the ideals of sustainability through its strategies, primarily the Bio-Diversity action plan. The aim of the Council is to maintain the Park in a sustainable way, to encourage wildlife and bio-diversity. In Marden Quarry Park the Park Warden is specifically responsible for sustainable actions through his composting of the autumn leaves and other horticultural waste through to the management of the wild flower areas.

2.5.1 Environmental sustainability- energy and natural resource conservation and pollution

There is a general environmental policy which has recently been adopted by parks. Actions to comply with the policy have been agreed and scheduled e.g. recycling. Green waste created on site is recycled within the woodland plantations rather than being removed.



2.5.2 Pesticides

North Tyneside Council's policy on Pesticide and Herbicide use is to demonstrate good practice to all users of the service to reduce pesticides/herbicides application to a minimum and is restricted where possible to the control of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed. North Tyneside Council makes every effort to maintain its open space network without the use of pesticides/herbicides.

2.5.3 Peat Use

North Tyneside Council's policy is to demonstrate good practice to all users of the service, to phase out the use of peat and make use of sustainable growing media that is not harmful to the environment.

As there is no formal bedding or formal shrub planting programmes for Marden Quarry Park the only planting likely to take place is the planting of native shrubs and trees which will be bare root and therefore will not use peat.

2.5.4 Waste Management and Minimisation

We are committed to making North Tyneside a cleaner, safer and more attractive place to live and work. This includes reducing waste and pollution, responsible planning and sustainable development

All green waste is recycled on site any tree chippings are spread directly back onto areas in the park as a weed control measure and when the grass is cut the clippings are again left on site. As an extra measure Marden Quarry Park is being looked at as a possible suitable site to locate a recycling point in the car park for public use.

2.5.5 Arboriculture and Woodland Management

Objectives in the management of trees in parks is as follows:

- To maintain existing trees in a safe, healthy condition diversifying age class structure and species spread.
- To increase the native tree stock where appropriate.
- Retain standing dead wood where this does not conflict with public safety considerations.
- To maximise the potential for tree planting and tree management in parks and open spaces within the boroughs wildlife corridors.
- To ensure that parks and open spaces are used to maintain our large tree population where possible.

- Liaise with all interested outside bodies and partners such as “Friends of” groups on enhancing our parks and open spaces.

The tree populations of our parks and open spaces are as diverse as the character of the parks themselves. For this reason, the management of our parks trees is considered on a site by site basis. A specialist team from the environmental services section of the council undertakes the arboricultural maintenance within the park. Currently the maintenance is determined by the Arboricultural Officer who inspects the site to determine maintenance and on referrals from the Park Warden. It is supported through the emergency work carried out where staff or members of the public report concerns directly to the tree squad.

In Marden Quarry Park the Park Warden carries out tree planting activities with many of the local schools which replenishes the trees that may have come to the end of their life cycle or needed to be removed due to damage. All trees that are selected and planted are approved by the Tree Squad and are native species.

2.5.5.1 Tree Safety

The authority needs to ensure that acceptable standards of safety are maintained for the users of parks and open spaces and still observe wildlife conservation principles. Use of locally produced native species provide an immediate biodiversity gain and will be encouraged, whilst taking into account their suitability to environmental conditions in the urban environment. Trees that are within Marden Quarry Park are regularly inspected and monitored by the Park Warden who looks for signs of visual decline. If there is any cause for concern the tree squad will be called out and the tree will be reassessed and action is taken as required.

The internal tree squad are the primary contact for any tree works required on site, the Waggonway Wardens are also arboriculturally trained and perform a massive range of maintenance too and in certain cases basic work can be carried out by the Park Warden team.

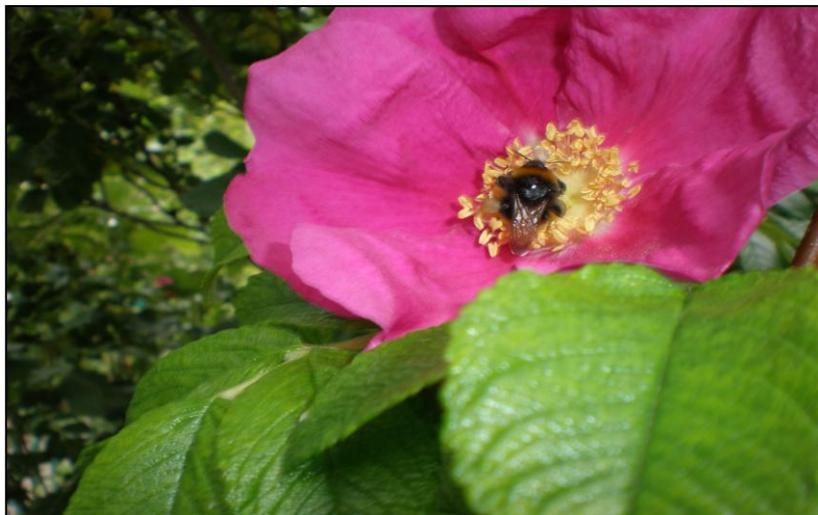
Public safety is of the utmost importance when decisions are made about trees in the borough.

Arboricultural Standards:- The authority will ensure that all tree work for which it is responsible is carried out in accordance with BS3998: 1989, British Standard Recommendations for Tree Work or any subsequent revision.



2.6 Conservation and Heritage

Marden Quarry was designated a Local Nature Reserve in 2005 by the Local Authority in consultation with English Nature whose duty it is to promote conservation of England's wildlife and natural resources. Local Nature Reserve is a statutory declaration and allows a site to be protected for the benefit of its biodiversity and future generations. By North Tyneside Council declaring the site a LNR it demonstrates its commitment to preserving the features the features of special interest found there.



2.6.1 Conservation of Natural Features, Fauna, and Flora

The Park Warden is key to the development of the natural flora and fauna on this site. Working alongside the biodiversity officer, the Friends of Marden Quarry and getting local schools and community groups involved there has been ongoing projects to introduce and manage wildflower areas throughout the park. There is also a woodland planting programme to improve the ground-flora which again the Park Warden is heavily involved with. Marden Quarry Park links into the biodiversity targets relating to priority species and habitats contained in North Tyneside Council's Biodiversity Action Plan.

The creation of wildlife habitats and bird feeding areas is something that the local schools and community groups again like to get involved with. Sometimes this means just retaining any standing deadwood, where it is safe to do so, other times it is through warden led activities of making bird feeders and food for over the winter months.

Another popular activity which takes place in Marden Quarry Park is the annual bee surveys and bee educational walks that are led by the wardens. The results are sent on to Stirling University where the Bees Conservation Trust is based as part of their larger bee surveys.

2.6.2 Conservation of Landscape Features

Marden Quarry is one of a number of sites in North Tyneside designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI). Its main features of interest relate specifically to the type of vegetation habitat located on site, i.e. magnesian limestone grassland, as this is the only known site within North Tyneside to hold this type of habitat.

A grant was awarded to North Tyneside Council to employ a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) for three years, between 2002 – 2005, for capital project work on Local Nature Reserves. As part of this project a Management Plan was created for Marden Quarry and specific aims and objectives were laid out for the conservation of the wildlife and landscape features.

The project actively involved local communities in the development and management of the reserve, as well as maximising educational, interpretation and access requirements on all sites. This is something that the current parks team are continuing to do at Marden Quarry Park lead by the Park Warden.

2.6.3 Conservation of Buildings and Structures

Marden Quarry Park has no buildings or structures of any significance other than the stone retaining wall at the entrance to the park. It is maintained as the only built structure of conservation significance as it is from the Victorian period.

2.7 Community Involvement

2.7.1 Community Involvement and Outreach

There is a dedicated group of park users who undertake such activities as litter picking, reporting anti-social behaviour and generally assisting as and when they can with the upkeep of the area working closely with the Park Warden. The Friends of Marden Quarry.



Members of the community and the many different representatives of park users are given the opportunity to become involved in the management, promotion and upkeep of the park and to work together to provide an accessible facility for all to enjoy. This is a key area the team are wanting to build on and further develop in this park as there is such a strong sense of ownership among the park users already.



Using the Audience Development Plan an attractive and diverse programme of activities has been produced for Marden Quarry Park. These are now being evaluated by those that attended, and those that do not attend events are also



encouraged to say what would attract them into the park. This information is used and reviewed by the whole parks team and then decisions are made annually as to what is felt the most appropriate future events and activities would be.



An important part of the Parks Team's role is to arrange formal consultation events to obtain feedback on each park so we have indicators to direct our development plans. This should therefore meet the needs of the surrounding community but it is important to update our information and ideas and also use a broad range of individuals and groups for these exercises. A half day session discussing the Parks Strategy was undertaken in November 2010 using members from the Residents Panel and also work has been done with North Tyneside's Youth Forum in October 2010.



Further consultation activities will be carried out on a regular basis and will be the responsibility of the whole team led by the Parks Development Officer.

2.7.2 Appropriate provision for the community



Marden Quarry Park is classified as a Local Nature Reserve and plays host to a number of events and activities throughout the year which are appropriate to its size and on site



January / February	Making Bird Feeder Activities
March	Wildflower Meadow Sowing
April	Easter / Spring Nature Activities
May	Wildlife / Nature Walks
May – August	Bee Conservation Walks & Surveys
July	Summer Holiday Nature Events
August	Mini-Beast Hunt Children’s Activities
September	Moth and Bat Walks
October	National Poetry Day Displays
December	Christmas Crafts and Bird Feeder Education

2.8 Marketing and Promotion

2.8.1 Marketing and Promotion

Marden Quarry Park is promoted through the generic park events brochures, 3 of which are published each year. Events and activities are also publicised in several other ways to try and maximise the number of people who know about the parks in the region. We use residents magazines, which is delivered four times a year to every household in the borough.

To catch those that regularly use the park posters are displayed in the park notice board and in local community facilities.

The Parks Team is always striving to make best use of the council’s website and not only promote the park events but the parks themselves, this is subject to corporate guidelines but work is in progress to make all the parks available on this facility.

Other ways the parks are marketed and promoted are through using local media, producing press releases and working closely with the Councils communications team. Flyers are distributed promoting special activities and events and when working with local businesses we ask them to promote us through their advertising etc.



Market research is ongoing, in line with the Rising Sun Country Park, a post code profile is being conducted which will provide important data on where park users travel from.

A promotional strategy is currently employed within the borough. It is relatively low cost and includes all the borough parks, incorporating events and activities provided by all service areas.

The Widening Horizons, Parks North Tyneside branding has been adopted by the parks service and is now included on all uniforms and general publications.

Due to the parks development team being in its infancy, residents have been consulted on a parks strategy as mentioned previously. This identified their current perceptions of parks with a view to addressing areas they regarded as priorities for change.

There is a requirement to carry out an equality impact assessment to enable the park to anticipate and meet the different needs of all users thereby improving our overall quality of service. It will enable the park to predict and assess what likely implications our work will have on the different communities within the borough.

2.8.2 Provision of Appropriate Information

The corporate sign that states the parks name also has the Councils web address on and is located at the front of Marden Quarry Park making easy access to anyone needing further information at a glance. Once in the park the community notice board for Marden Quarry Park contains a map of the site and appropriate information about forthcoming activities. Park events leaflets are available from a dispenser located within the parks play site area.

The address of the park is listed online and contact details are listed on the park notice board. Through a generic council customer service number the parks service can be contacted for information.

In addition to this information when the Park Warden is on duty a sign is displayed stating the fact a member of staff is around and also lists a variety of contact details for services the park users may require. The following contact information is displayed Park Wardens contact number, local police and fire service contact details, the Park Development Officers email address and the councils Envirolink number which is used to report all manner of issues that require action from various council departments.

In 2012 Marden Quarry park has been added to Google Maps to increase the range of people we can reach with information about this site.

2.8.3 Provision of Appropriate Education Interpretation/information

Park Wardens are actively engaged with local schools and the wider community. They host a number of educational activities and provide site information and literature. The Park Warden team working alongside the Environmental Education Team based at the Rising Sun Country Park are working on developing a corporate education pack to be used throughout all North Tyneside Parks.

As Marden Quarry Park offers a natural setting in an urban environment it is an aspiration to install wildlife information boards round the park to give visitors a taste of what may be present right in the middle of their neighbourhood. This could just take the form of a site specific information panel which would be supported by a downloadable web based leaflet for Marden Quarry Park.

2.9 Management

2.9.1 Implementation of Management Plan

It is essential that the management of the park is joined up across all directorates and stakeholders. The recently formed excellent parks group brings together all council stakeholders. This has led to a major improvement in the overall service and has streamlined planning, operations and developments.

The management service delivery plan will prove to be a very effective tool to develop and maintain the park. The process of action planning with an annual review will drive the parks development to ensure value for money.



3.0 How Will We Get There?

3.1 Action Plan

3.1.1 Introduction

The action plan below has been based around the green flag criteria to ensure ease of reading an application. Actions will include existing projects planned for the site along with action to try and alleviate the issues raised from feedback.

The Action plan is due to cover the 5 year period from 2011 to 2016. It will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure future actions are added as required.

Key:

PDO – Parks Development Officer

3.1.2 Marden Quarry Park Action Plan 2011-2016

Green Flag Theme	Action and Location	Performance Measure	Estimated Cost	Who involved	Action Date	Progress
1. A Welcoming Place	Improve Site Interpretation	Improve the park notice board Install wildlife information boards and produce a site specific information panel / web based leaflet.	Externally Funded £1,000 £4,000	Parks Team Friends of Marden Quarry Community group / School.	Sept 2012	
	Improve car parking facilities	Car park pot holes filled with road plainings and the surfaces top dressed with dust.	Urban Parks Budget	Parks Team	January 2012	
	Review and improve site accessibility and circulation.	Conduct accessibility audit Improvements made to existing footpath network Additional footpaths as required Improve drainage adjacent to footpaths	£1,000	PDO Park Warden	Spring 2012 May 2011	
	Ensure the park is inclusive to all members of the community.	Carry out equality impact assessment.	Urban Parks Budget	Parks Team	Oct 2012	

3.1.2 Marden Quarry Park Action Plan 2011-2016

Green Flag Theme	Action and Location	Performance Measure	Estimated Cost	Who involved	Action Date	Progress
	Create a storage bay for full rubbish bags waiting collection from cleansing team	A smart screened area is created in the car park near wardens cabin	£100	Parks Team	Autumn 2012	
2 Healthy, Safe and Secure	Park furniture and infrastructure maintained in safe condition	Monthly recorded inspections action repairs as necessary	Existing Budget	Parks Team Relevant department	Ongoing	
	Improve visibility within woodland path network and keep growth around the edges maintained to a good standard.	Woodland area of park divided into zones and the trees are thinned accordingly.	Existing Budget	Parks Team Grounds Maintenance Waggonway Team	Ongoing	
3. Well Maintained and Clean	Retain and improve upon standards of grounds maintenance and cleansing	Review environmental services input to the site regularly with relevant area officers	Existing Budget	PDO Area Officers	Ongoing	
	Address any dog fouling issues effectively	Continue partnership working with Council Dog Wardens, Neighbourhood Wardens and issue fixed penalty notices if required.		Park Warden Dog Warden	Ongoing	
	Review of Park Bins	The Bins are of a good standard and in a sensible location for both public use and staff emptying.	£250	Park Warden, PDO	Review Complete Dec 2011	
4. Sustainability	Recycle as much waste as possible on site as per Council Environmental Policy	All green waste produced by the site is re-used on site. Investigate installation of recycle point in car park		Park Warden Grounds Maintenance Tree Squad Waste Management	Ongoing June 2011	
	Continue working with the tree squad and Probation to use chipped disease trees as woodland path surface	Paths are maintained to a good standard throughout the elder woodland area of the park	None	Tree Squad Northumbria Probation Service / Park Warden	Ongoing	

3.1.2 Marden Quarry Park Action Plan 2011-2016

Green Flag Theme	Action and Location	Performance Measure	Estimated Cost	Who involved	Action Date	Progress
5. Conservation and Heritage	Review and improve bio-diversity offer within the site.	Update the detailed ecological survey for Marden Quarry.	£100	Bio-Diversity Officer Park Warden Schools / Community Groups / Friends of Marden Quarry	Oct 2011	
		Creation of new habitat areas for insects / small mammals / ground nesting birds	£100		Sept 2011	
		Wildflower meadow maintained and expanded.	£100		Sept 2011	
	Area Forum Bee Conservation Project Rolled Out	Wildflowers planted and conservation area established and enhanced year on year. Educational activities organised with interested parties.	Area Forum Fund £900 (split between 2 Whitley Bay Parks)	Park Warden / Bio Diversity Officer / Friends of Marden Quarry / Schools	Summer 2011 Ongoing	
	Link with the Targets Set Out in the Biodiversity Action Plan	Data collected through events such as bat, bee and butterfly walks is used to populate BAP	Existing Budget	Biodiversity Officer, Parks Team, Friends of Marden Quarry	Review Spring 2012	
6. Community Involvement	Widen community use, participation and interaction with site	Design and deliver a range of quality events for the local and wider community.	Events Budget	Park Warden PDO Friends of Marden Quarry	Review Nov 2011	
		The Friends Group is developed & meetings scheduled. Closer working relationship with the neighbouring scout group established.		Park Warden PDO	Sept 2011	
		Gather information on park users	Existing Budget	Parks Team	Ongoing April 2011	
		Visitor counts take place Consultation using parks questionnaire and GreenSTAT				

3.1.2 Marden Quarry Park Action Plan 2011-2016

Green Flag Theme	Action and Location	Performance Measure	Estimated Cost	Who involved	Action Date	Progress
7. Marketing	Improve online information for the park.	Specific page improved on Council website for the Marden Quarry.		PDO Dave Lattimer	August 2011	
	Undertake annual visitor / non visitor surveys and review findings.	10 visitor surveys are completed each month. Detailed surveys are also carried out annually with both visitors and non users.	Existing Budget	Park Warden PDO	Annual Review Oct starting 2011	
	Improve conservation and environmental education projects within the site linked to external groups such as the Bee Conservation Trust	2 Environmental Events delivered in conjunction with external organisation	Events Budget	Park Warden PDO Community / School Group External?	Dec 2012	
8. Management	Deliver the park management plan objectives for Marden Quarry Park	Achieve and retain a Green Flag Award for the park. Annual review of management plan 5 Year in depth review of management plan		Parks Team	July 2012 Ongoing	
	Ensure an efficient and cohesive approach to site management and development	Continue co-ordinating role between all stakeholders		Parks Team	Ongoing	

3.2 Financial Plan

<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2011/12</u>	<u>2010/11</u>
<u>General Maintenance</u>	<u>£500</u>	<u>£500</u>
<u>Additional non Programmed Maintenance</u>	<u>£500</u>	<u>£500</u>
<u>Development</u>	<u>£500</u>	<u>£4,500</u>
<u>Building Maintenance and Other</u>	<u>£0</u>	<u>£0</u>
<u>Staffing</u>	<u>£12,000</u>	<u>£12,000</u>
<u>Total£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>

4.0 How will we know when we have arrived?

4.1 Measures of Success

4.1.1 A Welcoming Place

Green Flag Award achieved in 2012 and the quality standards that are obtained in this process are constantly reviewed to check they remain at that level or above.

4.1.2 Healthy Safe and Secure

An overall visitor impression rating set using GreenSTAT / in house visitor comments forms / annual visitor survey and be used as a baseline to be improved upon annually. Continue close working with the Neighbourhood Police team and continue to strive for the reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents in the park.

4.1.3 Clean and Well Maintained

Feed back obtained regularly from visitor surveys show no problems with this aspect of the park and also reduction in members enquiries and calls going through the council switchboard regarding issues with the parks maintenance and cleanliness.

4.1.4 Sustainability

All green waste is recycled on site, bottles and cans are recycled and there is increased awareness and participation for park users.

4.1.5 Conservation and Heritage

Detailed ecological survey completed as part of the Local Wildlife Site review, habitats are conserved and developed, biodiversity increases. Projects linking into wider conservation organisations, such as the Bee Conservation Trust, are encouraged and developed.

4.1.6 Community Involvement

Minimum 10 North Tyneside Parks Survey responses achieved for Marden Quarry Park monthly and reviewed annually. Development of the positive and sustainable community group attached to the site, with a plan of projects, activities and events they can achieve with the support of the Parks Team.

4.1.7 Marketing and Promotion

Increase visitor numbers each year, increase number of events and activities that are led by other bodies, such as relevant environmental groups, on this site to encourage new users and advertised to a different audience, improved parks specific section on website which is more easily accessible.

4.1.8 Management

Successfully deliver the management plan year on year.

Appendices

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Supporting Information

Number		
1	Wild Space Project management Plan	Wallsend Park Lodge Office
2	Asbestos Survey for Marden Warden Cabin	Wallsend Park Lodge Office

Appendix 1

Contacts

Name	Organisation	Contact Number or Email
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	Whitley bay Area Forum, North Tyneside Council	Whitleybayareaforum@northtyneside.gov.uk
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Sergeant Dave Foy (684)	Neighbourhood Sergeant, Whitley Bay	
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Appendix 2

Directorate: Community Services		Service area: Cultural and Customer Services		Section: Outdoor Parks		Work Activity / Task / Site / Equipment: General Park Risk Assessment Working With Groups	
Date of assessment: 24 February 2011		Date of previous:		Review date: 24 February 2012		Number of pages: 3	Persons involved in assessment:
Hazard Identification	People at risk	Significant risks to health and safety	Existing control measures	Future improvements and actions	Timescale / lead officer	Result*	
General safety in parks	Employees, public	Slips, trips and falls	Identify and remove hazards prior to commencing site visit. Advise the use of caution in slippery and steep areas during briefing, prior to commencing visit. Use of safety boots. Keep site, tools and materials tidy.			A	
	Employees	Personal injury	Access to first aid kit at all times. First aid kits must be clearly marked, stocked appropriately and checked regularly. First aid training for wardens. Mobile phone on site to ring 999 in emergency.			A	
	Employees, public	Dog faeces	<i>Be aware of risk of contact; warden to inspect area intended for the group visit prior to leading any activities. Wash hands if contact suspected. Use safety gloves and litter picks for collecting rubbish.</i>			A	
						A	

Hazard Identification	People at risk	Significant risks to health and safety	Existing control measures	Future improvements and actions	Timescale / lead officer	Result*
	Employees, public	Cuts from sharp objects e.g. needles, broken glass, thorns, barbed wire etc.	<p><i>Check area and be aware of dangers (particularly with respect to needles), prior to commencing work. Point out danger of infection. Any needles or sharps found to be reported to Envirolink (0845 2000 103) immediately, NOT to be tackled by employees unless they have received appropriate training and have correct PPE and equipment with them. Any wounds to be encouraged to bleed, washed thoroughly and bandaged, before casualty is taken to A&E. All incidents to be reported to line manager immediately.</i></p>			A
	Employees, public	Tetanus, Leptospirosis and other infections from plants/ animal handling / water	<p><i>Reduce risk of contact by using PPE supplied (employees only supplied). Always provide gloves to groups when tackling any kind of work within a park plus a health and safety speech about appropriate actions. Cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters before and during the task. Wash and dress wounds properly. Employees should consult their GP about tetanus vaccination. Identify hazardous plants, e.g. hogweed, and look for signs of rats. Plan work to avoid contact with hazardous plants and contaminated areas. Wear long sleeves and trousers when working close to hazards. Always wash hands before eating, drinking or smoking. Wash hands and all equipment thoroughly before leaving a contaminated site. Report any subsequent illness to a doctor immediately.</i></p>			A

Hazard Identification	People at risk	Significant risks to health and safety	Existing control measures	Future improvements and actions	Timescale / lead officer	Result*
Marden Quarry Park Management Plan 2011 – 2016	Employees, public	Drowning	<i>Raise awareness of dangers during pre visit talk and point out lifebuoys if available. Avoid letting groups go too close to lake/ponds/ streams and under on circumstances is anyone to enter any inland waterways.</i>			A
	Employees, public	Inclement weather	<i>Ensure appropriate clothing is worn for the weather conditions. Provide sun block and water (employees only supplied), and take other appropriate steps to avoid heat stroke / exhaustion. Stop work promptly if people are clearly ill attired for conditions, in discomfort, or the work is increasing in risk. PPE to be worn at all times.</i>			A
	Employees, public	Welfare/personal hygiene	<i>Washing facilities and toilets provided at some parks and those that do not have public access facilities groups to be made aware of this fact prior to site visit. Hand wipes to be available to groups if working in a park.</i>			A
	Public	Lost individual	<i>Stay together in a group with group leaders park staff if appropriate. Park is open to all members of the public during the time the visit takes place so even with prior site checks preformed by the warden areas can change making it more important for no one to leave the group without permission.</i>			A
	Public / Group visitors	Unknown Special Need of Group	<i>All outside groups to conduct their own risk assessment in addition to this general one prior to visit.</i>			A

Appendix 3

Marden Quarry

Visitor Comments Evaluation Oct 2010 – 2011

“The Park warden was very friendly and helpful when I asked about the toilet facilities for my 4 year old. The park was spotless but could be developed further to improve it.”

“Its great to see that nature can reclaim land and make its mark. As a nature reserve this place seems to be improving year on year, been coming for 12 years and it just gets better.”

“Lovely day, fab park, thanks.”

“an undiscovered (by us!) treasure, thanks.”

“Activities were lovely for the children. When we took our picnic down to the lake it was difficult to find somewhere suitable to sit and play as there was an awful lot of dog foul on grass.”

“Beautiful spot”

“Had chat with park keeper about history and wildlife of area. First time I’ve visited. Lots of good info. Will bring camera next visit.”

“I think the warden does a wonderful job”

“The warden works hard to keep the area clean and tidy, sometimes against the odds when bottles etc are discarded thrown around.”

“A highly valued resource both for fishing and for walking. NTC should be proud of the warden and other staff involved.”

“I visit the quarry at least once a week to feed ducks, swans etc. This is a wonderful place to bring children, it is a peaceful place.”

“Dog poo all over the place, litter all over the place. Warden was shouting at some lady. Kids drinking. Paths muddy.”

“Beautiful park, wonderful walks in the wooded area.”

“Very pleasant and helpful park warden.”

“Clamp down on jobs!”

“The park is the jewel in the crown of an otherwise densely populated area.”

“needs toilet and café!”

APPENDIX 4

Park Management Background and Policy

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The Council’s parks strategy “Healthy Parks, Healthy People, Healthy Communities: A Parks Strategy for North Tyneside 2011-2021” identifies a desire to have management plans for all of our key sites by 2021. In addition, the Council sees the Green Flag Award scheme as a way of developing its open and green spaces to a quality standard that is recognised by both professionals and the public alike.

This plan is part of that commitment and brings together the information needed for the management, maintenance, and development of Marden Quarry Park. The plan is both a working document that contains actions and timetables that will need to be implemented and reviewed and a reference document that provides links to other documents, policies, and strategies and explores their implications for the site.

The plan has been developed by Council Officers from the Parks Team with valuable input from the staff at Cleaner Neighbourhoods, from friends groups and from key individuals.

The plan needs to be a working and reference document and has to be used by a number of key audiences; it has therefore been produced in a readable and straightforward style. Supporting evidence is available and is referenced at the end of the plan.

The main people that the document is aimed at are:

- Council Staff
- Council elected members
- Partner organisations and stakeholders

Friends groups
Funding partners

The plan is laid out under 5 key headings:

1.0 Where are we now? – here the plan describes the current situation of the site – what it is, who manages it, its history to date, what is known about the site, what policy and procedures govern the way it is and can be managed, where it is located, what is known about current users and the surrounding community.

2.0 Where do we want to get to? – here the plan takes a step back to assess the significance of the site, what issues are to be addressed, what improvements are needed both to the site itself and the way it is managed. This section also develops aims and objectives that can then be translated into actions in the next section.

3.0 How will we get there? – here the plan sets out what actions need to be taken to deliver change, where appropriate (i.e. this might not be appropriate to all plans / sites) it also sets out proposals for new management and maintenance arrangements as well as considering the financial and resource implications of the actions.

4.0 How will we know when we have arrived? – The final section sets out how the success of the actions will be measured and when the plan itself will need to be monitored and updated.

A.0 Background and policy – this is a general overview, explaining the political context in which the Council operates, the main policies and procedures that affect a sites management and the structures and staffing arrangements that exist. More details can be found in the appendices section.

A.0 Background and policy

A.1 National Context

The overall national policy context is now set out in the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 which promotes the sustainability of local communities through a road agenda for partnership working at the local level, including the development of sustainable community strategies (SCSs) and the negotiation of local area agreements (LAA). In addition, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new spatial planning system, comprising regional spatial strategies (RSS) and local development frameworks (LDFs). Since 2004, there has been a process of replacing planning policy guidance notes (PPGs) with planning policy statements (PPSs). These highlight the importance of open space in the spatial planning process.

The most relevant national planning policies are contained in PPG17: *Planning for open space, sport and recreation* (2002). The government commenced a review of PPG17 in 2009 as part of its process of streamlining national planning policy. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a statutory duty on all public authorities to conserve biodiversity. An open space strategy that incorporates biodiversity as a key theme will enable the local authority to demonstrate that it is complying with the act.

A.1.1 CABE Space

A clear indication of the level of importance given to open and green spaces nationally was the establishment of CABE Space (the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) in 2003, which was created following the recommendations of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce. CABE Space aims to bring excellence to the design and management of public spaces in towns and cities and to ensure that such spaces make a greater contribution to quality of life and the deliverability of sustainable communities. CABE Space has carried out a number of research projects and written several guidance books and manuals on developing and improving open and green space.

- Through their work they have identified that there are a number of current problems including:
- 30% of the public say they don't use parks, usually because they feel unsafe
- This figure is much higher for elderly people and those from minority ethnic groups
- The parks in deprived areas are likely to be in worse condition than those in more affluent areas
- Equipped children's play areas are often perceived as being neglected, underused and lacking in maintenance
- The deteriorating quality of our streets means that a third of the population never walks alone in their area after dark.

A.1.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: planning for open space, sport and recreation

In July 2002, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published a revised Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) on Planning for Open Space, Sport, and Recreation. The Guidance emphasises that open spaces underpins people's quality of life and are particularly important in delivering broader Government objectives such as assisting urban renaissance, promoting social inclusion and contributing to health and well being.

PPG17 states that it is essential that local authorities undertake robust assessments of the need for open spaces. It sets out a requirement that local authorities should carry out assessments of existing open space and needs of residents, those working within and visitors to the area. Such assessments provide the baseline information necessary to establish an effective open and green space strategy. PPG17 also advises on general considerations relating to the provision of new open space, which include such issues as the promotion of access, creation of good design, and consideration of safety, promote social inclusion, and consider recreational needs of visitors and children.

In addition the companion guide to PPG17, 'Assessing needs and opportunities', has been used as a basis for developing North Tyneside Councils Open and Green Space Strategy.

PPG17 is due for replacement in 2011 and PPS 'Natural and Healthy Environment' replaced PPG13 and PPS9 in early 2010. Both of these papers will be used to inform and guide the development of the plan in the future.

A.2 Regional Context

Natural England, Play England, One North East, Northumbria Wildlife Trust, BTCV, Nacro, Northumbria Probation Service, Sure Start, Northumbria Health Care Trust, Tyne and Wear PCT and Forestry Commission. All of these bodies have the potential to be involved in projects on open and green spaces in the Borough of North Tyneside.

A.3 Local Context

North Tyneside, located on the North East coast, is one of the five boroughs that make up the Tyne & Wear region. The borough is made up of coastal and riverside towns (e.g. Whitley Bay, North Shields and Wallsend) and semi-rural villages and agricultural areas to the north and west. In addition, it is adjacent to Newcastle upon Tyne, one of the UK's Core Cities Group – which consists of those cities identified by the government as being the 'powerhouses' of the economy.

The borough of North Tyneside was created in 1974 but its identity originates much further back, and was shaped first by the Roman settlements along Hadrian's Wall and later by the industrial revolution and the borough's role as a world leader in ship-building and coal-mining.

North Tyneside acts as a major transport gateway due to the International Ferry Terminal at North Shields and strong public transport connectivity to Newcastle International Airport and Newcastle Central Station on the East Coast Main Line via the Metro light rail system.

North Tyneside's estimated population of 197,300¹ is forecast to grow in the period up to 2030 due to our position as a housing growth point and also due to an ageing population with extended life expectancy.

North Tyneside is a borough of contrasts with some of the most affluent areas in Tyne and Wear (e.g. Tynemouth, St Mary's) sitting alongside some of the poorest areas. The Index of Deprivation shows that the borough is made up of 129 Super Output Areas*, of which nearly a third (42) fall within the 25% most deprived areas nationally.

North Tyneside's profile as a high quality visitor area is gathering momentum. The borough hosts a range of world-class cultural events (e.g. Mouth of the Tyne Festival, which attracts internationally renowned performers). The Roman site at Wallsend, Segedunum, is now the most explored Fort along Hadrian's Wall and the borough's award-winning Waggonway network provides an accessible, community leisure, travel and learning resource.

As a borough we are transforming our economy from one that is overly-reliant on heavy industry and public sector jobs to a more diverse economy based around emerging sectors (e.g. low carbon) and culture and tourism. As part of this transformation the council is working with a range of partners on a major regeneration scheme, River Tyne North Bank (an area larger than London Docklands). This scheme will develop the former shipyards and industrial sites along the riverbank to provide new industries, business opportunities, homes and a "Learning Village" that will provide opportunities for residents in both higher education and skills-based learning.

In terms of crime, North Tyneside is one of the safest places in the country when compared to areas of a similar size and demographic make-up, with year-on-year reductions in crime levels since 2002.

Economic data shows the number of Job Seeker Allowance claimants in North Tyneside rose to 5.2% in February 2010, as a result of the recent recession

¹ Source = The Office of National Statistics 2009

*A Super Output Area (SOA) is a geographical area designed for the collection and publication of small area statistics. It is used on the Neighbourhood Statistics site, and has a wider application throughout national statistics. SOAs give an improved basis for comparison throughout the country because the units are more similar in size of population than, for example, electoral wards.

North Tyneside suffers from severe health inequalities compared to national averages, with 50% of differences in life expectancy statistics due to the effects of smoking. In addition, alcohol-related diseases/deaths are higher than the average for both the North East region and England as a whole. A quarter of all our residents class themselves as having a limiting, long-term illness or disability.

Educational attainment in North Tyneside is improving with 52.3% of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs. This is still below the national average of 55.7% and when data is drilled down to ward level there are sharp contrasts between the more affluent communities and those in areas of deprivation.

- According to the 2010 Residents' Survey the percentage of residents who feel happy living in North Tyneside has dropped by 2% to 92%.
- The overall employment rate based on information available in September 2009 is above average.
- North Tyneside is an above average performing authority for young people achieving 5+ GCSEs including maths and English. However, 17% of our working age population have no qualifications.
- Life expectancy in the borough is lower than the national average. For women in North Tyneside it is 80.9 years (81.5 years nationally) and for men it is 76.7 year (77.3 years nationally).
- 21,000 people live in areas in the borough considered to be among the most deprived 10% in England and 62,000 live in areas considered to be among the most deprived 20% in England. Our average score rank in the Index of Deprivation is 102nd.
- Average earnings in North Tyneside are £22,027 compared to the national average of £26,020.
- Has one of the highest rates of alcohol related hospital admissions. This is due to the above national average level of binge drinking in the area.
- North Tyneside has a high rate of proven re-offending by young offenders.
- Nationally North Tyneside has one of the highest rates of 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training.
- In comparison to other local authority areas in England North Tyneside has a low number of serious acquisitive crimes per 1,000 population.
- North Tyneside has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in the country.

A.3.1 North Tyneside - a green borough

Parks Strategy

"Healthy Parks, Healthy People, Healthy Communities: A Parks Strategy for North Tyneside 2011-2021" sets out the long-term vision for green spaces within the borough. The aim of this strategy is to 'provide green spaces that are attractive, safe, accessible and well managed'.

As part of this process the Planning Department have undertaken an audit of every single green space in the borough to find out the quality and value of these spaces. Staff have checked all of our beaches, cemeteries, allotments, outdoor sports facilities, children's' play areas, public footpaths and cycle ways. Natural spaces such as woodlands and smaller areas of land have also been included.

The 2010 Mori Residents' Survey showed that 83% of users of Parks and Open Spaces/Countryside were satisfied with services, which is an 11% rise since the survey taken in 2007. We are currently seeking data relating to non users through the Residents Panel in an effort to engage more with them and address any issues they have with North Tyneside's parks and open spaces.

North Tyneside has an above average rate of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and one of the lowest rates of litter, graffiti and fly posting on the street and local area.

Despite their importance and value by the local community there has been a marked decline and under-investment in North Tyneside's parks and green spaces over the past 2 decades – a decline that has been reflected nationally.

The parks of North Tyneside have a rich and varied history, reflecting the social and economic changes, which have influenced the Borough over the past 100 years. Most of the significant park areas have been created, in the great Victorian tradition, through land donation by high profile local benefactors. More recently their creation has been the result of New Town developments of the 1960's and reclamation of industrial land.

A.4 North Tyneside Council

North Tyneside Council is composed of:

- An Elected Mayor
- 60 elected Councillors (also known as members)

North Tyneside Council is one of a small number of councils across the country with a directly elected mayor.

Ref. 'Your Representatives' section of the Council website www.northtyneside.gov.uk

The 60 elected councillors are elected for a term of four years. Three councillors represent each of the 20 wards in North Tyneside.

Ref. 'Your Representatives' and the 'Election and voting' sections of the website www.northtyneside.gov.uk

Decision Making in North Tyneside

The Elected Mayor

The Mayor is directly elected by the residents of North Tyneside to lead the Council for a four-year term.

The Cabinet/Executive

The Cabinet is also known as the executive and has responsibility for taking key decisions and implementing the Council's policies and budget. The Cabinet is made up of the Elected Mayor, and up to 9 cabinet members. The cabinet members are appointed by the Mayor from the 60 elected members of the Council. Each cabinet member has responsibility for specific policy areas. The Cabinet meets in public, usually once per month, but at least 9 times in a year.

Key decisions to be taken by the Cabinet over the next four months are set out in the forward plan. A copy of the forward plan is available under the 'Council and Democracy' section of the website and all decisions made by the Cabinet are published in the Cabinet minutes.

The Council

The Elected Mayor and all councillors meet together as the Council to decide the council's overall policy framework and to set the budget and council tax each year.

The Council annually appoints a number of regulatory and overview and scrutiny committees.

Council meetings provide a central forum for debate and provide an opportunity for councillors and, at designated meetings throughout the year, members of the public, to ask questions about the Council or matters affecting the Borough.

One of the 60 councillors is appointed each year to serve as the Chair of North Tyneside Council. The Chair has responsibility for chairing meetings of the Council and for undertaking civic and ceremonial duties on behalf of the Council.

Overview and scrutiny

Those members of the Council who are not cabinet members (non-executive councillors) are able to serve on the Council's overview and scrutiny committees.

Overview and scrutiny is about improving services for the people of North Tyneside by influencing decision-makers. It achieves this by:

- Acting as a critical friend to the Elected Mayor and Cabinet and other decision makers
- Investigating issues of interest and concern to communities in North Tyneside
- Involving communities in its work
- Making recommendations to decision makers on how services can be improved.

Regulatory committees

The Council is able to appoint regulatory and other committees to deal with regulatory matters such as planning, licensing and appeals. These committees are often making final decisions on matters and these decisions do not need approval / endorsement by either the Council or the Cabinet.

Council officers

The Mayor and councillors are supported by council officers, who are not elected. They are led by a chief executive and five strategic directors.

A.4.1 Area Forums

The Council has set up four Area forums in North Tyneside to increase the involvement of local people and communities in the way in which the Council does its work.

These four Area forums are known as:

- The North Shields Area forum
- The North West Area forum
- The Wallsend Area forum
- The Whitley Bay Area forum

Marden Quarry Park sits within the Whitley Bay Area

These Area forums provide an opportunity for people who live and/or work in the area to discuss issues of common concern. They provide an opportunity for local people to understand and influence the way in which services are provided in their area.

The Area forums involve local people, working with their ward councillors shaping improvements to where they live.

The Ward Councillors at each Area forum, working with local residents, make recommendations on how some of the environmental as well as roads and pavement budget is spent in a particular area.

A.4.2 North Tyneside's Corporate Plan

The Council Plan presents the council's priorities and outlines the main work programmes we intend to deliver over the next four years to achieve our ambitions.

The Council Plan is the key document that expresses the contribution to the borough's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and 2030 vision. It sets out the priorities for the Council. The plan was developed during a time of growing economic challenge and within the time frame of the review of the current SCS.

In view of this the 2010-13 Council Plan is aligned to the previous SCS themes but takes into consideration the growing economic pressures on local communities. The plan sets out a number of projects that will help take the borough forward, supporting businesses and residents through tough economic times.

The Plan covers six corporate priority themes:

- Our families and children
- Backing business
- Shaping North Tyneside
- Getting more for less
- A safer, greener, cleaner North Tyneside
- The regeneration of North Tyneside

Many of the initiatives within the Plan will help to bring more investment and jobs into the borough shaping future industries and North Tyneside's reputation as a driver for the region's economy.

Other priorities within the plan will improve educational opportunities for children, young people and older residents alike, through the development of 21st Century educational system. We also aim to widen horizons in sport, culture and leisure for everyone and make sure we have housing that meets all of our residents' needs.

In summary, this plan will help to make North Tyneside a great place to live, work and visit. A place where people can influence their community to help shape its future, achieve their potential and be supported to widen their horizons.

The Excellent Parks project is a key council objective involving the regeneration of 6 parks, £5.6 million capital investment has been allocated. It is a council priority to improve the boroughs parks.

A.4.3 Local Plan

The current plan is the North Tyneside 'Unitary Development Plan', which was adopted in 2002. However, since the release of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a new policy framework, the 'Local Development Framework' (LDF), has become the focus of attention for the planning policy section. This new framework will eventually replace the Unitary Development Plan, and will offer a more pro-active approach to planning.

A.4.4 Directorate of Community Services, Cultural and Customer Services

Cultural and Customer Services forms part of the Directorate of Community Services. Cultural and Customer Services is responsible for the direct commissioning and delivery of the following:-

Sport and Leisure – Sports Development, Physical activity / Health Team, Sports Pitches, Recreation Grounds, Whitley Bay Mini Golf, Tynemouth Pool, Waves, The Lakeside Centre, Sport and Leisure@ Burnside, Marden Bridge Sports Centre

Parks – Rising Sun Country Park, Allotments, Parks Development, Borough Parks (Wallsend Park, Northumberland Park, Tynemouth Park, Killingworth Lakes Park, Churchill/Souter Park), Springfield Park, Benton Quarry, Marden Quarry.

Arts Tourism and Heritage – Arts Development, [Art@Saville](#) Exchange, Cultural Development, Tourism, Events and Festivals, Museums (Segedunum, Stephenson Railway Museum, Dial Cottage), St Mary's Island and Lighthouse, Heritage Development and Intergenerational Project and Resource Centre.

Customer Services – under review. Libraries and customer services is merging with cultural services (2010-11), the structure is yet to be confirmed.

Our vision is to deliver first class Cultural and Customer Services for the residents of and visitors to North Tyneside that are:-

- Responsive to local needs.
- Fast and flexible in they're approach.
- Efficient with available resources.
- Excellent value for money.
- Communicated effectively with and based upon local community needs and issues.
- Highly valued by the community of North Tyneside.

Our purpose is to provide all our residents and visitors opportunities to experience, enjoy and benefit from a diverse and high quality cultural offer. To achieve this we will strive to:

- Increase and widen participation in cultural activities;
- Close the gap between resident and user satisfaction;
- Raise resident and user satisfaction in relation to Parks, Theatres, Museums and Galleries;
- Move our performance against the National Indicator set to top quartile;
- More effectively shape services around user needs; and

- Make the case for investment in culture/cultural intervention stronger.

A key area of focus for 2011-2013 is our Widening Horizons for All project (WH4A). This is a mayoral priority with the clear purpose of providing a broader, richer set of opportunities for residents, in particular young people, to engage in cultural activities. Through WH4A our vision is to ensure residents are challenged to make the most of their lives, provided with opportunities to try new things, learn new skills and play their full part in their community.

Excellent Parks

The environmental, economic, health and well being benefits of parks are well documented. In North Tyneside our parks have played a key role in the lives of many over numerous generations. Reinvestment in these parks is needed to revitalise them and provide for modern day needs. The project is focusing on Wallsend Parks, Northumberland Park, Churchill Playing Fields/Souter Park and Killingworth Lakeside Park.

The main objectives of the Excellent Parks project are:

- To regenerate/restore the four parks
- To engage with our communities in shaping the regeneration proposals for the parks
- To secure external grant funding to add value to the Council's own investment and
- To increase residents satisfaction with parks and open spaces

The overall outcome of the project will result in the provision of excellent parks that reflect the needs of our local communities that are sustainably managed. To date the council has been successful in securing stage 1 approval from Heritage Lottery Fund towards the regeneration of Wallsend Parks and is waiting for the decision on the stage 2 submission made in October 2009. A further stage 1 bid was made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for Northumberland Park in February 2010. In addition to the Excellent Parks project some other parks have been identified for improvements including Tynemouth Park and Marden Quarry Park.

Funding – Revenue – Base Budgets. Capital - £3m in 2010/11. Total of £5.6m over the ten years of the Strategic Investment Plan.

Project start date: December 2008

Target end date: March 2013

A.4.5 North Tyneside Park Strategy

“Healthy Parks, Healthy People, Healthy Communities: A Parks Strategy for North Tyneside 2011-2021”.

The strategy will be the key driver for improving parks in North Tyneside over the next 10 years as well as provide a focus to everyone who has a role in providing, delivering and managing parks.

It was developed and informed by a 12-month consultation period, which included seeking the public's views at engagement events and among a variety of organisations and groups.

Cllr Glynis Barrie, cabinet member for Leisure, Culture, Tourism and Safer Communities, said: "North Tyneside's parks and green spaces play an important role in the lives and well-being of residents and visitors.

"They're places where you can escape from everyday life to relax, exercise or play.

"This strategy is important as it sets out our aspirations and visions for improving and developing parks in North Tyneside over the next 10 years."

The strategy features eight aims ranging from raising maintenance standards to supporting greater community involvement.

A.4.6 The Parks Team

Responsibility for the management and maintenance of Parks is spread across several council sections. All maintenance is carried out in-house, except for any specialist activities such as lake clearance and building works.

Cultural and Customer Services have recently taken on the management responsibilities for nine parks, the responsibilities include:

- Strategy & development
- Warden management
- Customer liaison
- Sports development / provision
- Additional Facilities Request
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Events Taking Place
- Play site issues

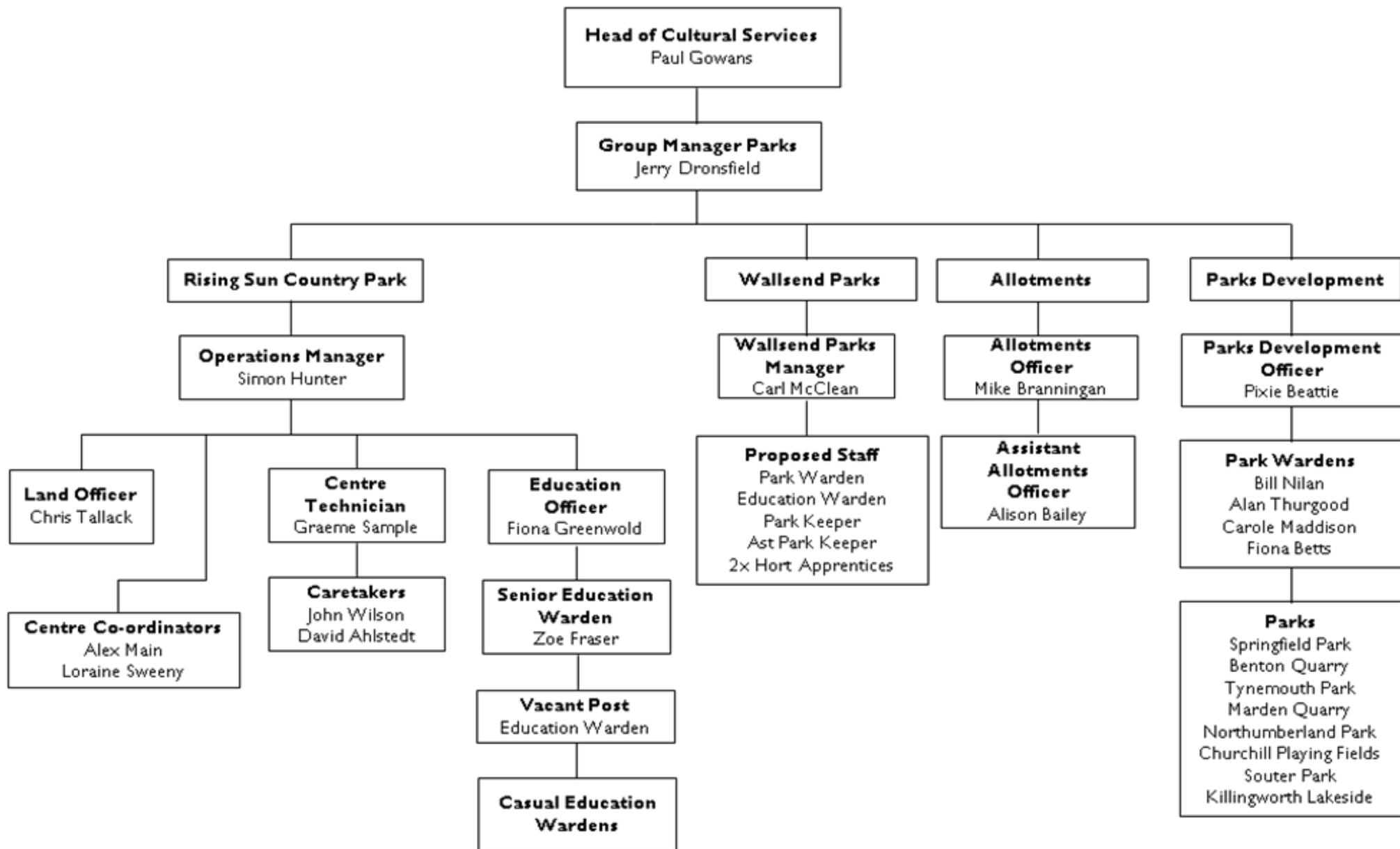
Cultural and Customer Services have full management and maintenance responsibilities at the Rising Sun Country Park and will be taking on the responsibilities for the Wallsend parks when the HLF capital project is complete.

A specialist arboricultural team are brought in as and when required, carries out arboricultural operations. On occasions, subject to workload, external contractors may be brought in to assist with this work.

Asset Management

Under the current structure this section controls all budgets relating to the parks infrastructure - footpaths, railings, buildings etc, responsibilities include:

- Hard landscaping (maintenance)
- All structures and buildings (maintenance)
- All boundary fences and walls (maintenance)
- Flooding / Drainage
- Seating (maintenance)
- Lighting (maintenance)



A.4.7 Park Wardens

Our eight wardened parks are covered by four full time Park Warden's. It is proposed to provide the Park Wardens with two vehicles this will enable greater mobility leading to more effective working and responsiveness within parks across the borough.

The Park Wardens now cover parks within specific areas to reduce travel between parks and to fit with the Local Tasking and Coordinating group boundaries. Each individual warden attends their area supported by the Parks Development Officer to ensure park issues are kept high on the agenda.

North West: Killingworth Lakeside / Benton Quarry, Springfield Park

Whitley bay: Marden Quarry / Churchill / Souter park

Wallsend: Wallsend Parks (Richardson Dees / Arboretum / Hall Grounds)

North Shields: Northumberland Park / Tynemouth Park

Park Wardens have been provided with access to IT to improve communications within the team and ensure a joined up approach is taken rather than wardens working in isolation. Park Wardens are able to utilise Wallsend Lodge and RSCP Countryside centre as the main base to access IT and it is anticipated also for vehicle, materials and tool store locations.

Key roles

The key roles performed by Park Wardens are to:

- Be a uniformed presence acting as a deterrent to vandalism, graffiti and anti-social behaviour.
- Act as an ambassador for the Authority, giving advice and information to residents regarding the park, crime prevention local and environmental issues, whilst promoting the image of North Tyneside.
- Liaise with colleagues in Clean neighbourhoods and other services to ensure a safe and clean environment.
- Maintain a constant awareness of potential problems, reporting incidents to Park Manager / Community Beat manager / other agencies where appropriate.
- Act as a point of contact between residents and the Local Authority, paying particular attention to anti-social behaviour, neighbour disputes and environmental issues and referring them to the appropriate agency.
- Attend community meetings where appropriate.
- Monitor and enforce appropriate bylaws (Dog Fouling, Littering, Fly Tipping).
- Plan general maintenance schedules and produce and maintain action plans and operational manuals for daily activities.
- Carry out minor repairs, general park / building maintenance, gardening and cleansing activities, including litter and graffiti removal.

- Lock and unlock parks / premises as required
- Liaise with schools and colleges to promote community safety and environmental education.
- Carry out and record inspections, risk assessments and surveys and log incidents and accidents and act as a qualified First Aider.
- Plan and coordinate a range of community park events and activities.

A.4.8 North Tyneside in Bloom

North Tyneside in Bloom links local communities, businesses and individuals through sustainable partnerships, working together to produce horticultural excellence and enhance the local landscape, the environment and the character of North Tyneside.

A.5 Budgets

Community Services manage the budgets and financial responsibility for open and green spaces; the budget is held by the Clean Neighbourhoods department for the management and maintenance of open spaces the budget is in the region of £750k

Each site within the maintenance contract has a detailed maintenance specification that lists all the work that is scheduled to be carried out by a contractor during one financial year. All work listed is that of a type that can be quantified and a cost is associated with it. This is known as the asset register. In addition, there are a number of activities that happen on site that are picked up by a Non-Programmed Work Budget. This budget relates to work done at times during the year that cannot be quantified, such as repairs to damage caused by vandalism. To help fund this unforeseen extra work a sum of money is held in reserve.

The Rising Sun Country Park is currently the only park in the borough with its own dedicated budget. Wallsend Parks will also have a dedicated budget when capital works are completed. All other parks managed by Cultural and Customer Services utilise the Urban Parks budget.

A.6 Training and Continuing Professional Development

North Tyneside Council is committed to supporting employees with learning and development opportunities. The corporate Learning and Development team, part of Human Resources, produce a portfolio of training workshops and development activities to support, individuals, teams, and managers. This portfolio is based on a training need analysis that has been conducted to determine the likely development needs emerging from each service area and is designed to meet the needs of the Council's employees. The Council believe that development is for everyone, and that that everyone has the chance to learn something new.

A.7 Marketing and Promotion

The Parks Team manage the marketing and promotion of parks in partnership with the Communications Team. The Corporate Communications team provide ongoing support and direction within the Department for marketing opportunities.

Key priorities were identified to form the basis for a marketing strategy for the team. The priorities are

- The continued development of the Web pages and ensuring that these are kept up-to-date
- The development of a range of balanced marketing material for selected sites
- The need for improved signage for sites
- The use of targeted marketing at hard to reach groups
- The production of improved educational information for schools and the general public

Marketing is a standing agenda item on the Parks and Allotment team meeting that is held twice a month and the information shared at these meetings allows us to track progress and success in our efforts to market and promote the parks of North Tyneside.

A.7.1 Web pages

The North Tyneside Council website has a section for Parks and Play Facilities and also Local Nature Reserves, with dedicated sites for Wallsend Parks and Rising Sun Country Park and Marden Quarry. The website contains information on planned regeneration projects, locations of parks, centre facilities, upcoming events and links to grounds maintenance websites. Individual events are also advertised on the websites on their own pdf link.

Regional Tourism

The tourism development officer for North Tyneside Council regularly updates regional tourism websites with park events in the borough, increasing the scope of advertisement to the wider area. Specific parks are included within regional promotions such as 'Great Days Out'.

A.7.2 Generic and Site based Leaflets

Currently only two of the larger parks have information leaflets. Rising Sun Country Park also has leaflets focusing on the Organic Farm, history of the site and wildlife. The 'Waggonway' leaflets refer to various parks across the borough there is also references to parks in the 'Healthy Walks Pack'.

In June 2010 a more coordinated approach was taken to promoting park activities and events. A joint park events leaflet was launched, which covers events and activities taking places in parks and open spaces. Partners included: Sports development team, Play and urban games, events

team, arts development and park community groups. The leaflets are distributed around key sites such as schools, libraries, leisure centres, tourist information centres. Park wardens also keep a supply for day to day distribution on sites.

Park events are promoted in the quarterly council magazine 'Widening Horizons' which is delivered to every dwelling in the borough.

Schools / Centres / Group circulation

As well as seasonal events leaflets being circulated, individual event posters are sometimes emailed around schools, centres and community groups in the locality of certain parks, in order to attract a wider attendance at events.

A.7.3 Signage

Currently every park has a notice board at their main entrance displaying information about the park and upcoming events, which are updated by the wardens. Some parks also have dedicated events notice boards placed at gates. In centres such as Rising Sun there is an area in the foyer advertising upcoming events and information on the park.

At present the structure of signage in parks is not standardised although marketing items such as posters and leaflets all follow council guidelines.

Some parks due to their location are hidden from the road side and therefore may be missing out on attracting users.

Three parks in North Tyneside have tourism directional signs from the road networks surrounding it. There is potential to increase this type of signage to all parks of reasonable size and significance.

A.7.4 Targeted Marketing

The council media department are involved in publicising information on park development on a regular basis for example funding, regeneration projects, voluntary group activity and any work with our partners for example Police patrols. In addition to this press releases are often put out for individual events as they are approaching in local newspapers.

Crime and Disorder:

Close working with the local policing teams through the Excellent Parks Project has driven towards a close relationship between police officers and park staff. The document 'Designing out crime in North Tyneside Parks' covers a range of recommendations of which parks can benefit from improved perimeter views into parks among other manageable alterations.

Park drop in sessions have been held in North Tyneside and it is proposed to expand this to different locations to provide the chance for resident to discuss their concerns with the safety, use and monitoring of their local park.

Park staff attend Local Tasking and Co-ordinating groups every month for their park area. This is a group consisting of the local policing team, council officers (safer estates, youth team, regeneration, play and urban games) school representatives, external youth engagement organisations, Tyne and Wear fire department, YMCA and other

Park and Waggonway Wardens regularly hold joint patrols with members of the local neighbourhood policing team, targeting hot-spots outside of regular hours. These have proven to be successful in reducing Reports of disturbances when carried out in problem areas within parks. In addition to this, the police, following liaison with park staff, target problem areas with increased resources.

Specific police operations have been carried out in response to a high number of incidents related to school holiday times and underage drinking in parks. These have taken the form of joint park staff & police patrols, mounted patrols, metro station police checking for youths with alcohol and monitoring of off licenses in the area of specific parks.

Park watch repeat offenders scheme was set up in August 2010 and is a system of monitoring repeat offenders and using a 'strike out' system to enforce anti-social behaviour injunctions, effectively excluding the offender access to the park by the police or through reporting by park staff.

A.7.5 Environmental Education

The Council's Environmental Education Team based in 'Cultural Services' in conjunction with the Park Warden Team, Parks Development Officer and local schools deliver an Environmental Education Programme. This programme is fully linked in to the National Curriculum and, although it contains generic material; the programme is tailored to suit each site and visiting group. Initially the education programme has been aimed at Key Stage 1 and 2, with a later expansion into Key Stage 3 and then, as opportunities arise, Higher Education. The majority of the Environmental Educational activities delivered are focused around the Early Years and Primary Groups. The service also offers the opportunity for teachers to attend training courses for Children's Learning in the Outdoor Environment.

The Rising Sun Country Park is particularly well equipped for education visits as it has facilities, such as Education Rooms and teaching aids for specific curriculum based activities. The team based at Rising Sun shares good practice and supports the programme that is being rolled out across the Borough's park network.

The House of Objects is an innovative community resource that offers opportunities for children, young people and adults to access, work with, and be inspired by quality, reclaimed materials. It provides a wide range of recycled, remnant or discarded materials and objects that are capable of being revived through the imagination and creativity of their users.

A.8 User information

In 2007 the current population in North Tyneside stood at 195,961, which is a rise of 2.1% since the 2001 census. The 2001 census showed the population is made up of 48% males and 52% females. The largest group of people are aged between 30-44 years old, which is in line with national trends. In addition the census data from 2001 shows that:

- 96.9% of North Tyneside's population classed themselves as White British. 1.9% classed themselves as being from non-White ethnic groups.
- 78% of individuals are Christian, 0.5% are Muslim, 0.2% each are Sikh and Hindu and 14% have no religion.
- 22% of individuals have a long term limiting illness or disability
- 5-7% are lesbian, gay or bisexual (estimated)
- There are 84,861 households in the borough and of these:
 - 33% are single person households
 - 27% are pensioners
 - 28% have children under the age of 16.
- 69% residents own their own home. 23% rent from the local authority or a social housing organisation.
- 65% of residents aged between 16-74 years old are classed as being economically active (either in part/full time employment, self-employed, unemployed but seeking employment or a full time student). 0.4% of residents between 16-74 have never been in employment and 1.4% have been unemployed long term (pre-1999).
- 7% of households are lone parent households with dependent children (between the ages of 0-15 years old or 16-18 in full time education).

The percentage of 16-74 year olds in employment as Managers and Senior Officials is 12%, which is below the national average.

A.8.1 Green STAT

In April 2011, the Council will be signed up to the Green Stat on-line questionnaire and feedback service. This will be used to inform future development plans and to identify gaps in the parks provision currently provided by North Tyneside Council. Green STAT will also be used to constantly evaluate the service as part of our continuous improvements. Copies of the questionnaires will also be completed at each park and be available at key site locations across the borough.

At present the Park Wardens facilitate the completion of 10 Visitor Surveys per site per month on average. This survey will continue to run alongside the Green STAT survey once it is adopted.

Visitor Counters

To date two sets of visitor counters have been installed to monitor usage of parks. Rising Sun Country Park collates data from user numbers of the main car park and of the countryside centre. Wallsend Parks collates user numbers from the main entrance to Richardson Dees.

Proposals are to install visitor counters at all parks within North Tyneside. Next in line will be Northumberland Park as part of its Heritage Lottery Grant application, Marden Quarry will be looked at in the future when funding becomes available for such a project.

A.9 Sustainability

A.9.1 Biodiversity

The North Tyneside Biodiversity Action Plan

The UK Biodiversity Steering Group recommended the production of Local Action Plans with the aim of including national priorities that had been identified in the national plan as well as to identify and include plans for locally important species and habitats. One of the first functions in the preparation of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan was to establish a biodiversity partnership in order to advance biodiversity conservation in North Tyneside. The plan provides a focus for everyone involved in implementing action to achieve the objectives and targets set out in the plan. The partnership includes a wide range of organizations including local authorities, statutory and non-statutory organizations, business, voluntary bodies and farming and landowner organizations. Working in partnership, all of these organizations can help conserve biodiversity in North Tyneside and the north east region. It is envisaged that the partnership will expand as the plan progresses and the contribution from additional partners will be invaluable to the success of the delivery of the plan. The North Tyneside Plan includes detailed action plans for species and habitats of national importance e.g. water vole, song thrush and streams and watercourses. It also includes plans for habitats and species which are locally important, particularly in urban areas e.g. managed urban green space and barn owls.

A.9.2 Environmental Policy

It is the aim of North Tyneside Council to protect and enhance the local environment through its provision of services and the regulation of the activities of others. In working towards a more sustainable future, the Council is committed to minimising adverse environmental impacts to improve the quality of life for the people of North Tyneside.

North Tyneside Council has identified through the draft parks strategy that Parks have a major role to play in sustainable development and has agreed a strategic objective to 'manage open and green spaces in a sustainable manner'.

In our parks and allotment we recognise that all our activities have environmental impacts. The service has a role to play in protecting and enhancing the environment and *can* make a difference. We will consider the effects of all our activities on the local and global environment. We will develop action plans to promote the policy and will train our own staff, volunteers, users and other voluntary organisations to move towards a more environmentally sustainable way of life.

Waste

The earth's resources are finite and are damaged by the pollution we produce. We use more than we need and give little thought to waste disposal. We need to use less, reuse items if possible and recycle the rest. To do this we will

- Use ICT effectively to prevent unnecessary printing and duplication – increase our use of email and avoid printing out messages, adjust page settings to make documents fit on fewer pages, proof-reading and page previewing before printing to avoid mistakes.
- reduce the amount of paper mailed out by encouraging our users to receive publications by email or through the Council's website
- reduce the amount of paper generated by circulating information or memos rather than producing copies for everyone
- reuse suitable envelopes for all internal courier communications
- use both sides of paper – photocopy double-sided and use scrap paper for notes, faxes and some photocopies
- Recycle green waste to reuse on the land.
- make use of composted plant material for crop production
- avoid products with unnecessary packaging to reduce waste
- provide reusable cutlery and crockery for staff and visitors to use, rather than disposable alternatives
- re-use second hand timber and other items where feasible
- where possible, operate a no burn policy for organic waste
- recycle cans, glass and toner cartridges
- lobby council and explore alternatives to recycle paper and plastic bottles
- publicise dangers of dog waste and work towards a zero tolerance policy on litter

Energy and water consumption

Carbon dioxide and other emissions are released every time gas, oil or coal are burnt to produce energy, this uses resources and contributes to climate change. We will

- collect rainwater for animal drinking and irrigation, use tap water responsibly
- fit water displacement devices into cisterns to reduce water consumption
- support and investigate renewable energy
- use water responsibly and keep waste to a minimum
- turn off lights and heating when not needed, and power-down computers and other electronic equipment, where possible fit automatic power down devices
- use low energy light bulbs wherever possible

Creating a better environment

We recognise that steps can be taken to improve the environment for everyone. We will:

- develop and promote agricultural and horticultural practices to protect and enhance our green spaces
- Demonstrate good practice to all users of the service to phase out the use of peat and reduce pesticides/herbicides application to a minimum and to continue organic farming practices under soil association status at the Rising Sun Farm which is part of the Rising Sun Country Park.
- demonstrate high horticultural, arboricultural and conservation management standards
- publicise the services environmental efforts and encourage other organisations to do the same
- encourage the use of plants and maintain our work area as a pleasant and effective working space
- raise awareness of sustainability among staff and encourage environmental responsibility
- work towards using environmentally friendly cleaning and maintenance products

Purchasing

All economic transactions have social and environmental effects. By choosing purchases thoughtfully, we can make a positive difference. Cost alone cannot be the only consideration when buying items. We will

- buy environmentally friendlier products, wherever possible, that are recycled, recyclable, reusable, made from renewal materials, made from non-hazardous materials, energy efficient and have minimum packaging
- take into account the environmental and social impact of all purchases, including buying fair trade, organic or locally produced produce where possible
- promote investing our funds ethically
- pursue an ethical purchasing policy e.g. Fair-trade products, recyclable, biodegradable packaging
- Buy goods containing recycled / sustainable material, wherever possible, such as paper, park furniture etc.

Transport

The use of vehicles has social and environmental costs, they contribute heavily to pollution, health problems and climate change. To reduce dependence on cars, we will

- Minimise the need to travel, share vehicles and use the least polluting form of transport appropriate to each journey. This may include working from home using a bicycle and communicating by telephone and email, where appropriate
- encourage staff and visitors to reduce car use
- provide details of how to get to the parks by different modes of transport

- Select vehicles that are suitable for purpose and are environmentally sustainable.

A.10 Current Maintenance Arrangements

Clean Neighbourhoods is responsible for the majority of the parks day-to-day maintenance in terms of the horticultural aspects. They operate as one of four teams covering the geographical areas of North Tyneside, the responsibilities include:

- All soft landscaping issues
- All floral display issues
- Tree management issues
- Graffiti removal
- Dog/litter bin provision
- Litter
- Cleaning Toilets
- Ponds / Streams
- Bushes
- Dog Dirt / Dog Wardens

Key Players:

Grounds Maintenance Area Officers have day-to-day responsibility for the charge hands and grounds maintenance staff that maintains the majority of horticultural aspects of all parks.

Waggonway Wardens have a wider borough remit however they also work with the Park Wardens to assist in the development and improvement of our parks. The team has access to a towed chipper, have chainsaw certificates and also a broad range of skills such as fencing, brickwork and woodland management. They are managed through an area officer. This team tends not to be scheduled in for works and acts in a responsive manner when required for particular tasks.

Street Cleansing Area Officers link in with grounds maintenance under the Clean Neighbourhoods Department. This team responds to issues around bins, graffiti and gate locking. If a park's paths can accommodate its size a street sweep machine may also be requested on occasions.

Grass cutting standards for North Tyneside Council' is the document which outlines maintenance schedules for different grades of grassed areas and also sets standards for strimming and chemical control.

Volunteers:

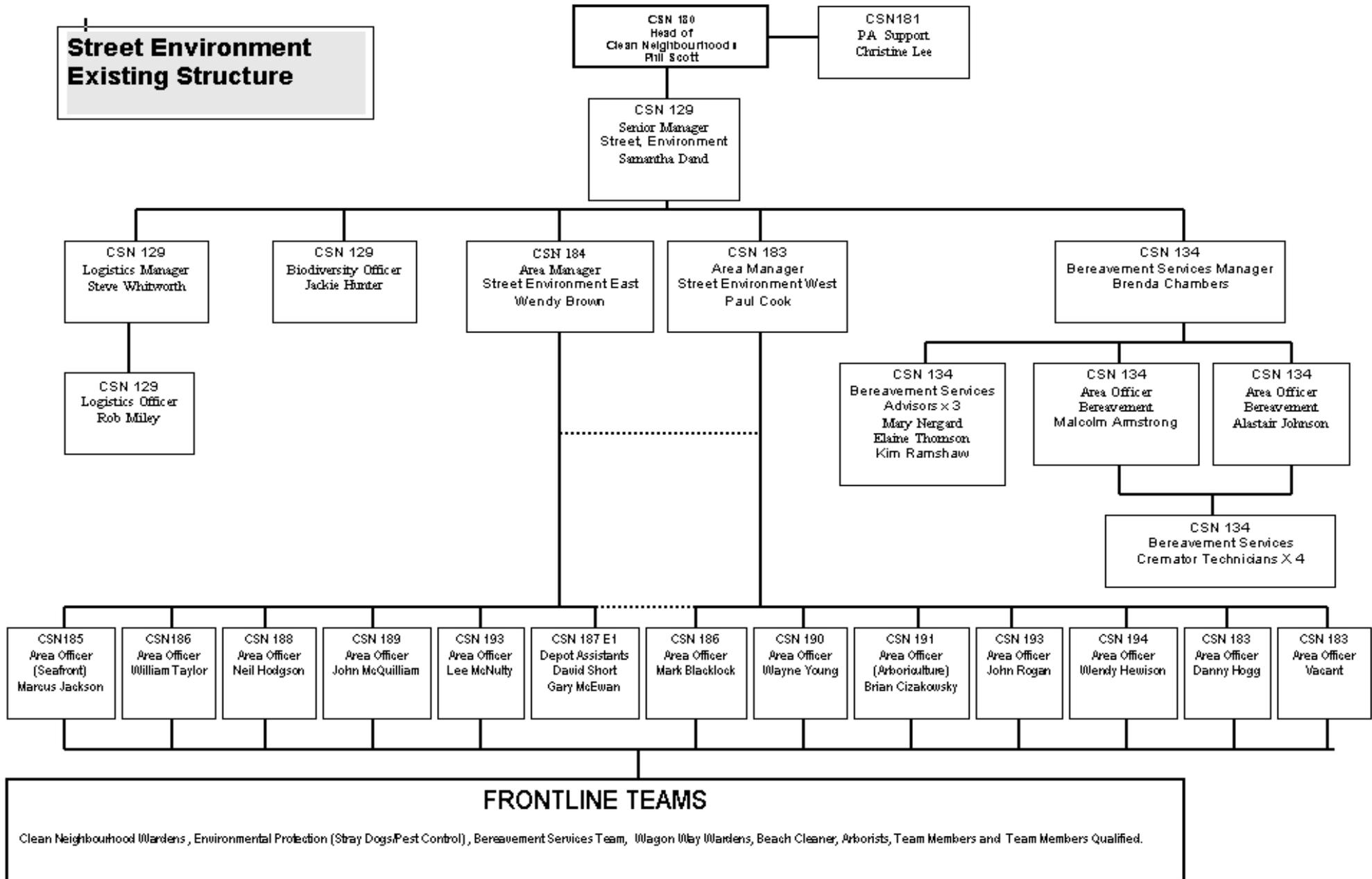
Across two park sites, volunteer groups also carry out a certain level of woodland maintenance, watercourse management, tree and shrub pruning, border clearance and litter picking.

A.10.2 Health and Safety

North Tyneside Council, in common with other local Authorities, has clear corporate, departmental, and individual responsibilities for health and safety. There is a Corporate Safety manual as well as Departmental Safety manuals, which outline these responsibilities both for its employees and to the wider public.

These documents are available on the Council Intranet, at main maintenance depots and on staffed sites.

Street Environment Existing Structure



A.10.3 Safe Systems of Work

Risk Assessments are an integrated part of carrying out any maintenance activity on site. Environmental Services are responsible for producing these and making sure that copies of the generic task based Risk Assessments are available on the Council Intranet, at main maintenance depots and on staffed sites. Competent, trained staff update these annually, with any amendments disseminated to staff accordingly. In addition, a site-specific risk assessment will be found on each staffed site or as part of a site risk assessment book that is held by the maintenance team.

All site staff including temporary, seasonal or agency staff are not allowed to carry out operations on site unless they have had the relevant, informal/formal training necessary to carry out site based maintenance operations. Human Resources hold training records centrally, with copies held at Area Depots within Cleaner Neighbourhoods.

A.10.4 Use of chemicals on site

Agreement with site managers must be obtained before using any chemicals on open and green spaces. Environmental Services are responsible for ensuring that a full COSHH assessment is carried out before any new chemical is used on site, as well as for holding all records of usage and specific data sheets. Copies of data sheets are available at maintenance depots or on site as appropriate.

Pesticide/Herbicide use

North Tyneside Councils policy on Pesticide and Herbicide use is to demonstrate good practice to all users of the service to reduce pesticides/herbicides application to a minimum and is restricted where possible to the control of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed. North Tyneside Council makes every effort to maintain its open space network without the use of pesticides/herbicides.

A.10.6 Accident reporting

The method of reporting of accidents on sites is as follows:

- All accidents and near misses that involve staff or the public should be reported as soon as possible after the accident via electronic accident report forms that feed into an electronic reporting system.
- If they are applicable under RIDDOR, line management must be contacted within 1 hour of the incident occurring.
- There will be quarterly monitoring of accidents and incidents with relevant staff to look at trends or improving ways of working and there is a standing agenda item on monthly team meetings for the early identification of issues that occur.

A.10.7 Arboriculture

Trees in Parks and Open Spaces,

Trees are fundamental to the structure of both parks and open spaces. They add height and scale to the essentially flat landscape of the borough. Trees in these locations are of major arboricultural importance because of the high number of large maturing trees, which may include “exotic” or non-native species. Our older Victorian parks were originally designed with planting schemes to provide both botanical interest and visual attractiveness. Mature trees can support eco-systems and populations of mammals, birds, invertebrates and plants that may be under threat. Dead wood and cavities support species found in no other habitat. Whilst recognizing this the authority needs to ensure that acceptable standards of safety are maintained for the users of parks and open spaces and till observe wildlife conservation principles. Use of locally native species provide an immediate biodiversity gain and will be encouraged, whilst taking into account their suitability to environmental conditions in the urban environment. The tree populations of our parks and open spaces are as diverse as the character of the parks themselves. For this reason, the management of our parks trees is considered on a site-by-site basis. From the wooded splendour of the dene that forms Northumberland Park to the formal coastal planting of Tynemouth Park each site poses different problems. Many of these parks are virtual monocultures with more diversity of species required whilst others such as the Hall grounds and Richardson Dees Park contain mature rare and interesting specimens.

The potential for a tree to structurally fail is determined by a variety of factors including species, age, size history of damage and adverse environmental conditions. The risk of being killed by a tree in a public space is about one in 20 million. It is the responsibility of North Tyneside Council to manage this and to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that people are not exposed to this risk.

Our Objectives In The Management Of Trees in Parks And Open Spaces Is As Follows:

- To maintain existing trees in a safe, healthy condition diversifying age class structure and species spread.
- To increase the native tree stock where appropriate.
- Retain standing dead wood where this does not conflict with public safety considerations.
- To maximize the potential for tree planting and tree management in parks and open spaces within the boroughs wildlife corridors.
- To ensure that parks and open spaces are used to maintain our large tree population where possible.
- Liaise with all interested outside bodies and partners such as “Friends of” groups on enhancing our parks and open spaces.

A.10.8 Inspection and Reporting

It is planned as part of our improvement process that all of our Ward Areas of which there are four hold regular (quarterly) review meetings with the Area Officers to look at various development and maintenance opportunities on site including work programming, capital improvements, customer feedback from surveys etc. dates for these meetings need to be in place by March 2011.

A.10.9 Waste Management and Minimisation

The Council currently has no policy on the management of its green waste. However, Environmental Services does have a target to separate and recycle 75% of its green waste into usable green waste products.

All other non-contaminated green waste is processed at a transfer station within the borough and then transported in bulk and used as a soil improver within 11 miles of the borough. In order to reduce green waste production the Council's Tree Team leave brash and logs unprocessed on site whenever possible. The Draft parks strategy has an action that states that all Borough and allotment sites will have onsite composting facilities. However as the Council is a very urban authority, the regulatory framework limits this and it is currently only feasible at a few sites.

A.10.10 Litter

Environmental services use the Environmental protection Act 1990 – Code of Practice on Litter and refuse. It is their responsibility as the maintenance contractor to ensure that on no occasion will the quality fall below the Environmental Protection Act Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse and if it does that it is addressed in accordance with the Act.

Park wardens also play a role in maintaining a litter free environment in the parks by doing regular litter picks, making sure the bins are emptied on a regular basis and also by issuing fixed penalty notices to anyone found dropping litter. It is also part of their duties to actively promote keeping the park tidy while making use of recycling wherever possible with both park users and educational groups that they lead. This has led to community clean up campaigns being ran through out North Tyneside's parks on an annual basis.

A.10.11 Dogs in parks

The council has an overall policy for the management of dogs and their mess The Council of the Borough of North Tyneside Dogs (Fouling of Land) Order No 1, 1997. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 and the above order by authorised officers for North Tyneside Council.

Dog wardens are responsible for the removal of stray dogs, prevention and enforcement of dog fouling and dealing with dangerous dogs. Dog wardens are part of Environmental services.

The parks team in conjunction with environmental services ensure that the issue of dog fouling is addressed within parks signage and through leaflets and literature produced. Promotional activities take place where dog walkers are issued with free 'poo bags' which have a copy of the "Good Dog Code" also produced by park staff attached, this raises awareness of how responsible dog owners are expected to behave in and around North Tyneside's parks. All park wardens are authorised to issue fixed penalty notices to anyone found letting their dog foul without removing the mess.

A.10.12 Graffiti and vandalism

If graffiti is found on site, depending on its severity and its extent, the on-site and area-based staff will remove it with their Graffiti removal kits. If it is a larger area, however the Graffiti Removal Team will be called in and it will be removed with industrial cleaners.

The response time varies depending on the offensiveness of the graffiti and the prominence of the site. Explicit or racist graffiti should be removed within 24 hours of reporting.

A.10.13 Peat use

North Tyneside Council's policy is to demonstrate good practice to all users of the service, to phase out the use of peat and to continue organic farming practices under soil association status at the Rising Sun Farm which is part of the Rising Sun Country Park.

A.10.14 Pest control

Pest control is part of the Street Environment team based in Environmental Services. They are responsible for dealing with statutory pest control which covers Rodents (rats and mice in domestic premises but not in commercial premises and Rats in the gardens of domestic premises but not Mice), Fleas, Bed Bugs, Cockroaches and they also treat for Bees and Wasps (non statutory)in both domestic and commercial premises as these are charged jobs. They can also give advice in some other instances and do insect identification but don't deal with any type of bird or other mammal other than those above. In terms of other animals our Animal Welfare inspector Paul Tyrie would deal with any advice or issues

A.10.15 Children's Play Facilities

North Tyneside's Play Policy sets out the strategic approach to developing play facilities within the borough. The plan enables the Council and its partners to deliver the joint vision set out in the Children & Young Peoples Plan that: 'Children & young people have a right to live and play in a safe and healthy environment which provides a whole range of opportunities for personal and social development, recreational and cultural activity, creative self expression and independent team'

Playsite Development & Maintenance is part of the Play & Urban Games Section, bringing the responsibility for the delivery play services across the borough under one team.

North Tyneside currently has 53 equipped play areas across the Borough. These include fixed play areas, Multi Use Games areas and Skate facilities. An audit of provision was carried out as part of the Play Policy and Strategy in 2005 –'06. This identified existing play space and gaps in provision and allowed us to successfully bid for Play Pathfinder status (one of the first local authorities in the country to do so). The Play and Urban Games Section provide a cohesive service for all aspects of fixed equipment provision. Consultation with children and residents, design of play spaces, maintenance and repair are all dealt with by one team. The Maintenance team are able to respond quickly and efficiently to problems on site. This allows us to give a proactive service and holistic approach to new and existing provision.

In line with EU recommendations for children's play equipment all existing play sites undergo a hierarchy of inspections. The playsite maintenance team carries out a weekly-recorded inspection, of each site and each piece of equipment. This identifies any necessary repairs or vandalism issues and these are tackled immediately. This allows us a very quick turn around to deal with H&S issues on site reducing the potential for injuries and insurance claims. This also reduces vandalism on site because the site looks well maintained and cared for spiral of decline does not develop

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (or an equivalent body) conducts an Annual Independent Inspection of all sites. A Post Installation Inspection of any new site is also carried out. These reports are held by Play & Urban Games section in case of insurance claims against the Council. The Playsite Maintenance Team are all qualified to level one of the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPPII).

In addition to inspections the maintenance team also carry out routine maintenance duties these include: litter removal, emptying play site bins, graffiti removal, replenishing loose fill surfacing areas (i.e. sand) and painting existing equipment. The team is also responsible for the installation of equipment and ancillary items such as, seats and litterbins. Keeping all maintenance aspects under one roof enables speedy responses and efficiencies when procuring spares and new equipment. This holistic approach has worked well and has significantly improved service delivery and customer satisfaction.

A.11 Buildings and Structures

The upkeep and repair of buildings and structures is the responsibility of the Corporate Property Team. This team has a central budget that is allocated for works to buildings and structures on open and green spaces. The team has limited budgets and is forced to prioritise its spend, this has resulted in many park buildings becoming dilapidated, abandoned and in some cases demolished.

The Council has a Conservation Officer who has a responsibility for providing advice and must be consulted on any works planned to listed building or structures.

A.12 Risk Management

Risk to the Council's business can take various forms, e.g. financial risk, risk to projects, risk to the services we deliver, risk to the public or specific stakeholders, risks from missed opportunities or from policy failures, and risks to our reputation. Risks can affect performance, stakeholders, customers, and members of the public. The Risk Management Framework sets out the way in which the Council identifies, monitors, manages its strategic, operational, and project / partnership risks. Doing this properly is central to planning to succeed and avoiding failure; enabling the Council to meet key objectives and targets; to create confidence in a watchful public; to take opportunities; and to meeting the demands of good corporate governance (see also 1.10.3 earlier).