

Eaton Park Management Plan 2023-2028

Action Plan updated January 2024



Contents

1 Introduction	3	5.4 Building and infrastructure maintenance	23	9.2 Objectives	41
1.1 Vision and aims	3	6.Environmental management	24	9.3 Resources.....	41
1.2 Location and overview	4	6.1 Environmental impact and climate change mitigation	24	9.3 Information and interpretation.....	42
1.3 Site plan	5	6.2 Waste minimisation	24	10. Management.....	44
1.4 Green flag	6	6.3 Chemical use.....	25	10.1 Implementation of the management plan	44
2 A welcoming place	7	7 Heritage and conservation	26	10.2 Council priorities	44
2.1 The visitor experience.....	7	7.1 Brief History.....	26	10.3 Finance	45
2.2 Good and safe access	9	7.2 Management and conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora and landscapes	28	10.4 management structures.....	45
2.3 Signage	10	7.3 Conservation of buildings and structures	34	10.5 Monitoring the management plan	46
2.4 Equal access for all.....	10	8. Community involvement.....	36	10.6 Action plan	47
3. Diverse and high quality facilities, activities and services	12	8.1 Background	36	11.Appendices	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4 Safe and secure.....	19	8.2 About the local community	36	Appendix 1: Green flag judges' comments 2022-23.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1 Safe equipment and facilities.....	19	8.3 Meeting the needs of the local community	36	Appendix 2: Communication plan 2023-28	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.2 Personal security	20	8.4 Friends of Eaton Park (FOEP)	38	Appendix 3: Species list 2022-28	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.3 Dogs – behaviour and mess	20	8.5 Other groups in Eaton Park.....	39	Appendix 4: Wildflower survey 2021-22	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5 Well maintained and clean.....	21	8.6 Norwich City Council	39	Appendix 5: Grade II listed building designations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.1 Litter and waste management	21	9 Marketing and communication	41		
5.2 Horticultural maintenance	21	9.1 Background	41		
5.3 Arboricultural and woodland maintenance	22				

1 Introduction

The Eaton Park Management Plan (the Plan) provides a framework for the management, maintenance and development of Eaton park from 2023 to 2028. It builds on the previous plan for the period 2014-2022 and includes an Action Plan, Communications Plan and other appendices.

The Plan has been co-written by Norwich City Council's (NCC) Parks and Open Spaces team and Friends of Eaton Park (FOEP). The FOEP committee held a brainstorming session to feed in to it and various partners and NCC teams have also contributed.

The Plan is a working document informing the work of those involved in managing, developing and maintaining Eaton Park: NCC's Parks and Open Spaces and other teams, Norwich City Services Limited (NCSL), Friends of Eaton Park, park groups and concession holders.

This is a public document and can be accessed on Norwich City Council's and FOEP's websites. It will be reviewed

annually at the end of the calendar year when Action and Communications Plans will also be updated prior to Green Flag status submission.

The Plan should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and documentation as outlined later.

1.1 Vision and aims

'For people, for nature, for sustainability'.

- a place for pleasure, leisure and recreation
- a haven for people and wildlife
- an engine for individual and community wellbeing
- a beacon for sustainability

Our aims are;

- to increase the number of visitors and users
- to spread visits and use more evenly across the year
- to raise awareness of the park, its facilities, groups, events and activities
- to provide good and safe access for all

- to provide a friendly and welcoming environment for all
- to provide a wide range of activities that are either free or good value for users
- to provide children with a range of opportunities to play, learn and develop
- to provide a wide range of opportunities for informal and competitive sporting and other physical activities
- to provide a range of cultural and learning opportunities
- to maintain Eaton Park to a high standard
- to improve environmental sustainability
- to improve biodiversity
- to provide a clear and concise Management Plan that is openly accessible to stake holders and to review and update this annually
- to ensure the park is responsive to changing public needs and aspirations
- to ensure the park is sufficiently resourced to meet the aims outlined in this plan
- to empower users, user groups and others to contribute to care and development of the park

- to continue to achieve Green Flag status.

1.2 Location and overview

Eaton Park covers over 33 hectares. It is the largest of Norwich's remarkable collection of twenty first century parks and is open year-round, 24/7.

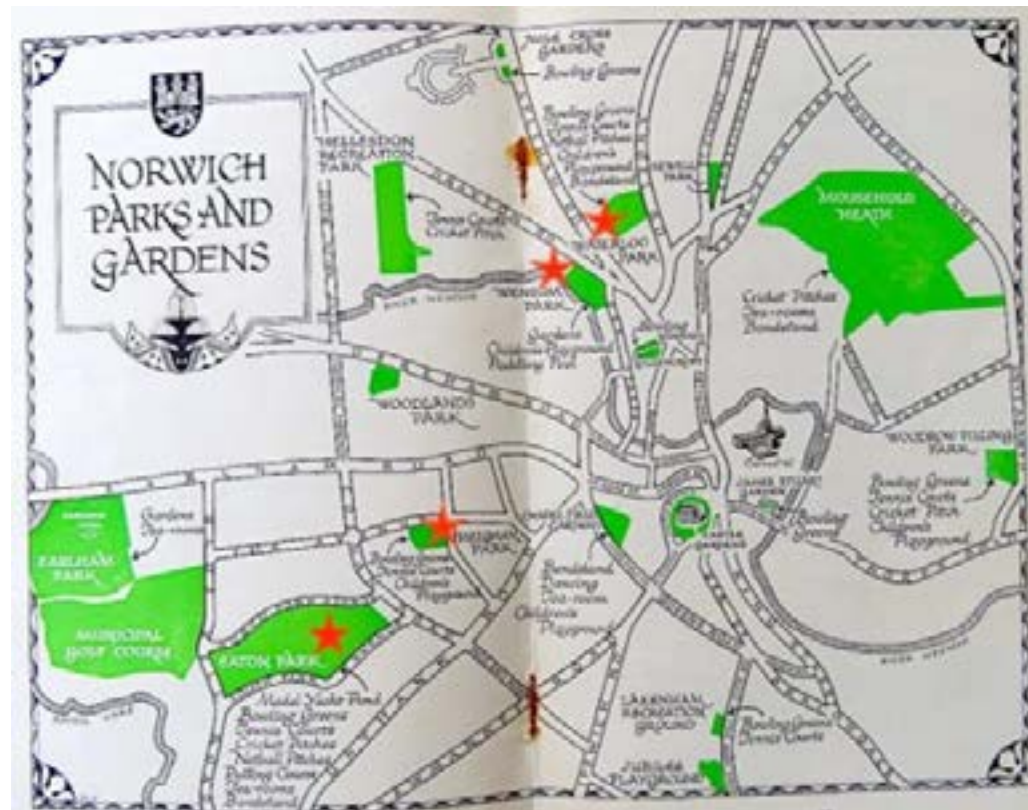
The park is to the south west of the city centre. Around it lie the densely populated, socially mixed wards of Earlham, Eaton, Mancroft and Nelson. It's close to Tuckswood and Cringleford (South Norfolk District Council) and next to the University of East Anglia.

In contrast, to the west the park overlooks the Yare Valley making it part of a vital green corridor. Pathways from the park join up with walks through marshes, carr woodland, reedbeds and to UEA Broad.

Historically Eaton Park is a good example of an early C20th civic park. Several of its buildings are listed, as are its entrances and tree-lined avenues. English Heritage has granted Eaton Park a Grade II* listing.

Built as a sports park for a growing city, Eaton Park has also become a focus for many people's hobbies and enthusiasms.

The park is cherished by many as being at the heart of their lives and their communities.



Spread from "Norwich Parks: Summer Handbook" ca 1947. Starred: Eaton, Heigham, Wensum and Waterloo Parks

1.3 Site plan



1.4 Green flag

Green Flag Awards recognise and reward well-managed parks and green spaces, setting a benchmark for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the UK and round the world.

Purpose and aims

- to ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live.
- to ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve.
- to establish standards of good management.
- to promote and share good practice amongst the green space sector.
- to recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers.

Eaton Park was first granted Green Flag status in 2014. Since then visits and reports from Green Flag judges have provided valuable feedback and ideas for

ongoing management and future development.

This Plan has been developed with Green Flag interest areas in mind:

- a welcoming place
- healthy, safe and secure
- well maintained and clean
- environmental management
- biodiversity, landscape and heritage
- community involvement
- marketing and communication
- management.



2 A welcoming place

2.1 The visitor experience

Arriving at Eaton Park

A beech hedge surrounds the park, separating it from the world outside and creating the possibility for it to be a different kind of place: for people, not cars, nature not concrete, for all people, not just those who can afford it.

There are two road entrances and six pedestrian entrances. These are well-spaced around the park and connect with neighbouring roads and pathways.

A dramatic entrance

The two main entrances have grand iron gates but nearly all entrances provide a sense of arrival (the rose garden, a dramatic stand of Cyprus pines, ancient oaks, the Mughal-styled boat pavilion).

Stepping inside

Inside, wide tree-lined avenues provide good level access, shade and shelter from rain. Seventy five benches offer places to rest, read a book, chat or enjoy the view.

Key characteristics are the use of symmetry, the beauty of the built environment, the huge variety of facilities

and activities and the drama and ambition, but also the thoughtfulness of the planning and layout.

At the heart of the park, a visible landmark from nearly everywhere, is the bandstand and its surrounding rotunda quadrants. The latter house changing rooms, café and toilets. There are banks of seating around the bandstand. Wherever you are, this centre-point is never more than five minutes' walk.

The rotunda is at the centre of a grand arrangement of tree-lined avenues and ponds. Leaving or approaching it offers wonderful views, some of them, such as across the two ponds and false bridge to the boat pavilion, are iconic.

Different facilities (play area, cycle speedway, crazy golf) are 'framed' by hedges, trees or fencing. Some have their own benches or picnic tables, others (croquet, pitch and putt, crazy golf, parkrun etc) their own club house or base.

Different places and park communities are celebrated through details such as mown pathways in the meadow, carte blanche for graffiti artists at the skatepark and the railway benches made from reclaimed sleepers.

Different moods

The park is designed to offer different types of experience and mood for different people and different days.

Large areas are dedicated to sports. These are places of dynamism and community, from Junior park runners to ambling pitch and putters, to the year-round tennis players and the seasonal footballers, cricketers, touch rugby and ultimate frisbee players of the park's large sports pitches.

Eaton Park also offers places and walks for quiet contemplation and getting away from it all. These include the two large ponds, the meadow and the rose garden.

Throughout the park there are opportunities to connect with nature. Birds and wildflowers in particular are always near.

A park for all

Children of all ages, adults and older people all find plenty to see and do. Every day the park offers a beautiful space to visit and spend time in, where everyone can feel valued and 'at home'. The park is clearly cared for and people love it.



Boat and lily ponds, false bridge and boat pavilion. Photo Simon Roberts (taken for a feature in The Guardian)



Dereham Band playing in a Sunday afternoon, photo Simon Roberts



FOEP free tree walk with expert, Richard Hobbs, photo Stuart Beard



The skatepark on a summer's day: skateboarders, full bike stands and people stopping to enjoy the action



Boaters and, in the distance, touch rugby, photo Simon Roberts



Blossom time in the rose garden

2.2 Good and safe access

Entrances

These are well-located around the park and separate drivers from pedestrians, cyclists and scooter users. There are zebra crossings near busy entrances.

Open 24/7

The park is open 24hrs a day year-round. Large areas are well-lit and feel safe. Use of the park at dusk and at night is quite high and increasing.

The skate park and the tennis courts have floodlit and are on timers. These are well-used in the evening. The rotunda, bandstand, several avenues and the car parks are also well lit.

Walking

Travelling on foot is a realistic and attractive option for many. The park is within walking distance (up to 30-40 minutes) for roughly a third of the city. Routes take pedestrians through attractive neighbourhoods with tree-lined roads, local shops and amenities.

The park forms a natural extension to walks around the UEA Broad or along the [Yare Valley Way](#).

FOEP is keen to build links with University of East Anglia and Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts with a view to shaping an offer for visitors to this side of the city. Parking at the UEA visitors are ideally placed to explore the Yare Valley, Eaton Park, UEA Broad and the Sainsbury Centre.

Cycling

Bluebell Road cycle path – good off-road access from Earlham, Eaton, Cringleford, Hethersett and UEA. Norwich's Blue, Green and Pink 'Pedalways' pass near Eaton Park offering good routes from the north, east, west and south west and from the city centre.

Eaton Park has good numbers of cycle stands. FOEP audited provision in 2022 and has identified additional locations.

Hire bikes and scooters

[Beryl Bikes](#) hire scheme parking bay for bikes and scooters near main South Park Avenue entrance.

Travelling by bus

[25 bus service](#) every seven minutes (Monday to Saturday), every 10 minutes (Sundays and bank holidays) from Norwich Train Station via the city centre. Stops South Park Avenue, Colman Road and Bluebell Road serve Eaton Park.



Norwich bus map

Travelling by car

Eaton Park is off the outer ring road south west of Norwich. Two small car parks with disabled parking spaces. Parking is free but limited to three hours in term time.

On high days and holidays the car parks and access to them become congested. Some people who can only get to the park by car are discouraged from coming. There is a need to shift travel from vehicles to sustainable travel options.

Vehicles in the park

Vehicle access is limited to café suppliers, Norwich City Services Limited (NCSL) staff, event contractors and boaters. There's a 5mph speed limit and agreed access routes. Gates have key codes. There are problems with wheel damage caused by NCSL. Routes and vehicles used new reviewing.

2.3 Signage

Main signs and notice boards

There are two main kinds of signs. Information signs are modular and provide static information over several years at a time. Notice boards hold posters that are updated annually or more frequently.

Information signs

The three Information Signs can be located near the main entrances at the east and west ends and beside the central rotunda. The main panel has either a park plan or a quote and list of facilities. Smaller panels hold information on dogs and sports.

The signs are robust and well-located but the plan and much of the information is either out of date or no longer relevant.

Notice boards

FOEP has two notice boards on the north and south sides of the park. These display posters for events, sports groups, the miniature railway, regattas, the defibrillator, and contact details for sports groups, the police and the City Council.

Several groups and facilities have their own notice boards: cycle speedway, miniature railway, pétanque, pitch and putt, runners and tennis.

Finger posts and way makers

There are finger posts next to the rotunda, in the rose garden and beside the children's play area. These are in poor condition and in some cases incorrect.

A one mile running route is waymarked with wooden posts.

Brown signs

The two main entrances for vehicles are marked with brown signs. There is also a sign at a key junction half a mile away on the corner of the ring road and Unthank Road.

2.4 Equal access for all

Access to green space

Eaton Park is surrounded on three sides by residential areas including large areas of council and ex-council houses and flats. Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows nearly half of the nearest 4436 households live in flats or terraced houses.

Eaton Park provides invaluable open space, rich in nature, offering solitude or sociability and many sports and activities. 29% of households don't have a car or van so the park's easy accessibility by various means of sustainable travel also helps.

Connecting with others

ONS statistics show 17% of local residents live in one person households. Eaton Park is a safe and welcoming place for people to visit whether on their own or with friends, family or a group.

Long stretches of level, shaded avenues attract many users and informal as well as formal communities of dog owners, walkers and runners have developed. Amongst these, saying hello is a growing habit creating a real sense of community.

Disabled access

Level access throughout the park though some pathways are in poor condition. Retro-fitted ramps to rotunda buildings, boat pavilion and false bridge. DDA accessible toilets with RADAR keys are located in the rotunda and at the Crazy Golf.

The play area has a good range of equipment accessible to children of all abilities. Eight parking spaces are designated for use by Blue Badge Holders. Car park congestion can be off putting and sometimes make them inaccessible.

Toilets

Toilets are well-located: in the south east quadrant of the rotunda there are womens' (with simple baby changing facility), mens' and an accessible toilet. A second, smaller set are in the pitch and putt hut beside the West car park.

All toilet facilities are dated and require investment

Financial access

Eaton Park provides a wide range of activities that are free for all to use.

- waymarked 1 mile running route
- free couch to 5k running groups
- outdoor ping pong
- play area
- boating
- basketball
- five-a-side and kick around football
- pétanque
- cricket, boules and softball kits can be hired for a returnable deposit

Where activities are paid for there are discounts with a number of them using the Norwich City Council 'Go 4less' scheme, for example *Pitch and putt and footgolf*: half price

Norwich Parks Tennis good value with £35 a year per household for use of the floodlit tennis courts.

Eaton Park Crazy Golf offers significant group discounts and reductions for over 60s and students.

Park people on the day

NCSL runs the pitch and putt hut and staff, identified by their orange fluorescent jackets, often work in the rose garden or drive trucks to empty bins, take down goal nets etc. FOEP volunteers wear yellow fluorescent jackets with a large FOEP logo.

FOEP members are often approached by people to answer questions or provide feedback. NCSL staff are also often approached.

There are no longer park keepers but NCSL and FOEP can help users to feel that there are people they can go to who are involved in caring for the park or who might help them if they need it.

There is the potential to promote the pitch and putt hut as a source of general information.

Staff in trucks are cut off from the public and a combination of electric utility trucks and cargo bikes would make staff easier to interact with as they go about their work.



"I think we owe our sanity to this park"

*Sue Mills, retired teacher and
Up the Tempo running group graduate
talking about the park and COVID.
January 2023*

3. Diverse and high quality facilities, activities and services

Sports in Eaton Park

Athletics

City of Norwich Athletics Club uses Eaton Park as a meeting point for evening sessions. Other clubs including Norfolk Gazelles use the park for occasional evening sessions.

Basketball

Fenced-in, hard surface court beside the west car park and skate park. Drop in and free to use.

Cricket

Two artificial pitches available to hire mid-April to mid-August. Used in local leagues and informal games.

Quick cricket sets (stumps, bats and balls) free to hire from the pitch and putt hut.

Cycling

Park as cut-through

Many people cycle through Eaton Park. In particular it's part of a safe route from the city centre/ Golden Triangle to the hospital, UEA and Research Park.

Learning to ride a bike

The park is safe for young children on balance bikes. It's also used by a local national standard cycle instructor for training adults.

Community Cycle Club

FOEP and Eaton Park Community Centre have set up Eaton Park Community Cycle Club. The group

- champions bike stands in the park
- runs monthly group rides
- has bikes to try including a tandem and a tandem trike
- organises Dr Bike days
- pairs people with visual impairment with trained pilots and tandems.

Cycle Speedway

Norwich Stars Cycle Speedway takes part in local and regional leagues, racing Sundays, March to October. Independent and self-funding the club maintains the track and has a shipping container base.

The club has club mark recognition and is affiliated to British Cycling. It offers coaching, free loan of bikes and and free 'come and try' sessions.

The group is keen to have a proper club house and would like to install floodlighting to extend use of the facility.

Croquet

Norwich Croquet Club, independent, self-funding club managing its own greens and club house. Offers golf (easy version good for beginners) and association croquet. Mostly a summer sport, some players continue through winter.

Fitness instructors

Various - boot camp, buggy fit, Tai chi.

Football

Pitches are well-used by local clubs. Refurbished 2022 including new, mobile goals. Two cage goals for five-a-side, one grass and one in the MUGA.

Footgolf

Played on the pitch and putt course, three afternoons a week.

Petanque

Full size terrain located behind the café. Boules sets free to hire from the café for a small deposit.

Pitch and putt

18 hole pitch and putt course open daily, 9am to last round. Eaton Park Pitch and Putt Club offers social play and competitions for the over 50s.



Norwich Croquet Club, independent and self-funding.



The starting line for parkrun, the UK's tenth best attended of these free, weekly Saturday 9am timed runs.



Floodlit tennis with Norwich Park's Tennis on an autumn evening



Cricket on the artificial wickets. Photo supplied by Norfolk Cricket Board



Up the tempo, warm down stretches at the bandstand



A family game of soft ball, kit provided free by Norfolk Cricket Board

Running

Long stretches of level, tree-lined pathways offer 5k and 1 miles routes. The rotunda is ideal for warm ups and gathering for events such as parkrun. Grassy areas are ideal for doing 'intervals' and the community centre is a base for City of Norwich Athletic's Club's evening sessions.

parkrun and junior parkrun

Free, timed 5k run Saturdays 9am, average attendance 400. Total for 2022 18,500 runs. 2k run for 4 to 14 year olds Sundays.

Up the Tempo community running club

Funded, free couch to 5k running classes, three courses a week running three times a year. The club has built and continues to nurture a large mid-week mornings running community.

Skatepark

Demonstration and event standard 1000 square metre concrete park. Floodlit, good mix of transition and street obstacles for riders of all abilities. Popular with skate boarders, BMXers, in-line skaters and scooter-riders, 4 years to 50+. Young friends of users and older park users alike enjoy watching the skatepark in action.

Table Tennis

Two outdoor table tennis tables located behind the café from where equipment can be borrowed for free for a small deposit.

Tennis

Seven flood lit courts booked out by and managed by Norwich Park's Tennis (NPT). Online booking offers households competitively priced year round access (£35 in 2022, £65 for use of all city courts).

NPT is Lawn Tennis Association-affiliated and offers coaching for all ages, competitions, social events and free come-and-try sessions. NPT's contract includes the requirement to operate a sink fund to ensure future sustainability.

Touch rugby

Mixed gender, non-contact team sport. Resident club Norwich Rebels. Marked up pitch below boat pond. Suitable all ages and abilities, inclusive and friendly.

Ultimate frisbee

Growing in Norwich; mixed gender, non-contact team sport. Marked field located below boat pond.

Play and recreation

Eaton Park Crazy Golf & Putting Green

Seven days a week, April to October, weekends and school holidays for the rest of the year. Passes and loyalty cards available.

Play area

- fully fenced and gated
- trees of different sizes provide shade and nature
- benches, picnic tables and bins
- picnic tables outside play area for people with dogs to wait
- large expanses of loose fill safety surfaces
- range of challenging activities
- specialist junior and toddler area
- inclusive play equipment

Miniature Railway

Norwich and District Society of Model Engineers' (NDSME) first track opened in 1958. The large site includes two stations and a tunnel and passes through a large, undulating area of meadow.

Sunday afternoon trains have been a tradition for generations of families. They run Sunday Easter to October and increasingly throughout the year including popular Christmas specials.

Adults £1.50, children £1. Several times a year NDSME promotes afternoons as fundraisers for local charities.

Yacht Pond

One of the finest boatponds in Europe it holds 960,000 gallons of fresh water. An attraction for general visitors as much as model boaters themselves.

Wide range of boats in use includes toy boats, Thames sailing barges, yachts, ferries and submarines, many hand-built.

The boat house is home to Norwich Model Boat Club which hosts regular meets and regattas. There are set days for sub-groups such as speed boats and yachts.

On event days model boats are displayed beside the pond and visitors enjoy meeting and chatting with their makers.

Gentle exercise and relaxation

Walking

Walking is the most popular activity. Level access, shade from trees, and benches all make the park's glorious avenues ideal for all ages and abilities.

FOEP's Summer evening nature walks
Experts draw attention to wildflowers, birds and trees and people share knowledge and interests as they walk. Free to all and well attended (up to 50 people). Promoted in notice boards and social media.

Benches

Benches are places to contemplate the world, take a rest, enjoy nature and for both solitude and company. 75 benches are located;

- beside the boat and lily pond to take advantage of the relaxing qualities of the water;
- in the rose garden – popular with all ages and especially families
- along the avenues for walkers to rest, watching sports, reading
- beside the speedway, skatepark and miniature railway

There is also fixed seating for over 100 around the bandstand. The area is popular with families and friends meeting up.

Eaton Park Café and Deli

The popular, dog-friendly café is run by Norwich's independent café The Bicycle Shop. It scores 4.5 on Trip Advisor.

The kitchen is small but there's a large garden and undercover seating. Various formats and configurations have been trialled to make the best of the space and find a way through Covid. Investment in picnic benches, adding a deli and adopting outdoor queuing to improve serving efficiency have all helped.

The café uses local suppliers and offers a good range of veggie, vegan and gluten free options. Low cost options such as £1 teas sit alongside alongside a core menu of good food sold at a reasonable, mid-range prices.

Menus range from £3 baps to Nigella's black pudding hash. There are homemade pasties, cakes and scones as well as Tunnocks Tea Cakes and Pombears.

The management has a track record of creative collaborations with park groups, young creatives, musicians and cultural organisations. Having survived Covid there is the potential to continue to develop the café including evening opening and live music. FOEP is keen to collaborate on events and activities.



Miniature railway poster



Winter train ride through the meadow



Red hot pokers beside the boatpond



Saturday yacht racing (above), cruiser below



Eaton Park Café garden in the summer



Café support for Friends of Eaton Park

Events and activities

Events are organised by FOEP and by NCC's Events team which hires out part of the park to promoters. The Events team also provides a management framework for larger FOEP events.

FOEP events and frequency

- 3-4 band concerts
- 6-8 nature walks and events (trees, birds, fungi, meadows, butterflies)
- 2-4 Heritage Open Days and roof top tours
- Christmas Sing-along and Fair (organised with the café)

FOEP events are free. They have a low impact on the park as they use existing infrastructure such as the bandstand and target people living near the park.

Commercial events via NCC

- Oktober Fest
- Whitsun Fairground
- Thai Festival
- August bank holiday tribute bands and film evenings

These take place near the play area and involve generators, marquees, rides and large trucks. There has been vehicle

damage but the grass has proved resilient. The Events team monitors noise levels and any other areas of possible contention for local residents. Audiences are encouraged to leave cars at home.

Volunteering

An estimated 250 people volunteer for the various groups that plan and deliver activities, raise funds and help the park be the vibrant community hub that it is.

FOEP organises for members and local companies the following volunteering options:

- monthly gardening
- litter picking
- bench cleaning
- woodland pathway work
- hosting events
- meadow surveys
- planting meadow flowers

Other groups run annual programmes of tournaments, regattas, social events and training. Members also volunteer

- painting pavilion buildings
- on weekly railway maintenance and building sessions
- maintenance of the boat pond

Schools

FOEP works with two local primary schools Bluebell and Colman Road. Activities typically include wildlife, arts, litter picking and a sports day/picnic. In 2023 year 10 pupils from Parkside Special School will join FOEP's monthly gardening group for work experience.

Eaton Park Community Centre

The Community Centre was built and then run, from 1982 to 2020, by and for the local community. At this point the by now elderly committee resigned. NCC Community Enabling Officers approached FOEP for help finding a way to keep the centre open.

A small committee was formed of user group members. The Chair is FOEP's vice chair. FOEP provides a [web page](#) for the centre and the Chair of the Friends helps with communications.

The centre re-opened in 2021 and has attracted new users as well as returning ones. It offers a variety of social, cultural and sporting activities for all ages and is hired by locals for family celebrations.

The Community Cycle Club and installation of a swift nest box are two early collaborations with FOEP.



Family photoshoot during a FOEP roof top tour



FOEP volunteers planting seedling trees and litter picking. Transport from the vice chair's cargo bike



Art session with pupils from Bluebell School. Photo Stuart Beard



Fungus Day; microscope provided by mycologist Kay Yeoman from UEA. Photo Stuart Beard



Aviva employees laying woodchip to reinforce the pathway in Bluebell Wood



Children from Bluebell School cleaning benches in the rose garden

4 Safe and secure

4.1 Safe equipment and facilities

Several park facilities need regular inspections to be safe for use:

- play area
- multi use games area
- casual football goals
- skate park

Risk assessments and safety standards inform the frequency of inspections:

- visual inspections Monday – Friday
- operational inspections, quarterly
- inspection by independent play inspector, annual
- joint inspection by NCSL and NCC, annual
- new equipment, post installation inspection.

Findings are recorded using specialised software with action taken and timescale of rectification defined in the NCC document *Play Service Management and Safety Procedure*. All staff carrying out play inspections are RoSPA qualified.

Formal sports facilities

NCC's bookable sports facilities, are inspected before bookings take place to ensure pitches, equipment and changing areas are ready as per risk assessments.

Prior to play, surfaces of pitches will be level and flat where practicable and free of stones, debris, faeces, glass and litter. Equipment such as goals and corner flags will be checked to ensure safe and ready.

Sports clubs

Clubs running sports and recreational clubs or concessions are responsible for safe equipment and facilities as outlined in their leases.

Defibrillator

Located on the bandstand. Eaton Park Community Centre and parkrun/Junior parkrun are responsible for it. Weekly checks are incorporated into parkrun preparations and funds held by the Community Centre. A memorandum sets out responsibilities.

Lifebuoys

One on each side of the lily pond. Weekly checks by NCSL during school holidays and bi-weekly in term time.

Events

All events in the park are individually risk assessed. This work is coordinated and overseen by NCC's Events Team.

Accident and incident reporting

Park users can report accidents or incidents using 101 or 999 or direct to park and city council staff.

Hazards will be isolated immediately with Parks and Open Spaces staff following up with an investigation and review of any accident or incident. These are reviewed by the Parks Manager to agree necessary action and forward to the health and safety team for record. A RIDDOR report is submitted to the HSE for serious accidents.

NCC's website has online forms to report anti-social behaviour such as dog-related incidents, graffiti and fly-tipping. FOEP submits most of these ASB reports. Members of the public occasionally email FOEP about incidents and FOEP passes the details on. Incidence levels are kept under review so that action can be taken when needed.

4.2 Personal security

Park planning

Park design such as low level planting, clear intersections and lighting in car parks and key avenues helps park users to feel safe.

Floodlighting of tennis courts, the skate park and the central bandstand/rotunda encourage more people to come to the park at night and help make it safer.

Getting help

NCSL staff are identifiable by orange high vis jackets with company logos. Staff will answer questions or signpost people to NCC, FOEP or the police.

Staff have access to smart phones to report issues or follow procedures in an emergency.

Park users can find emergency contact details on notice and information boards and FOEP's website.

Police assistance

NCC has good contacts with local police officers and liaises with them if there are incidents of anti-social behaviour. Solutions most often involve temporary increases in police patrols.

4.3 Dogs – behaviour and mess

Eaton Park welcomes responsible dog owners and their dogs and FOEP's website provides detailed information for people bringing dogs to the park.

On site, signs ask owners to keep their dogs under control and not to let them go in the children's play area or on the pitch and putt course.

Dog mess can be disposed of in all general litter bins. NCC has a city-wide team with authority to issue FPN's under the clean neighbourhoods act 2005 if owners do not clear up dog mess.

Resource pressures mean officers are unable to patrol parks unless a detailed case is built with multiple complaints (dog/owner descriptions times dog walked etc). However dog mess is not a problem.



5 Well maintained and clean

5.1 Litter and waste management

Litter overview

Litter collection and bin emptying is on a regular programme. Collections are increased during peak season and events.

Litter picking is a daily activity and park staff are encouraged to clear litter no matter what they are working on. Random APSE ground inspections by council staff regularly give the park an 'A' rating.

Dual compartment bins allow users to dispose separately of litter and mixed recycling. Bins are carefully located around the park to meet users' needs.

Volunteers

FOEP organises 4 to 6 litter picking sessions a year. These often focus the edges of the park and wooded areas. Individual members of the Friends and other members of the public routinely pick up litter.

Litter has visibly diminished in the last decade and is not generally a problem.

Footpaths

Footpaths are maintained at a good level. Mechanical sweepers are used to clean the main avenues and car parks monthly; less used paths twice-yearly. Mechanical sweepers also discourage weed growth decreasing the need for herbicides.

Fly tipping

Fly tipping is reported through the City Council's online reporting system. Items are removed within 24 hours. If evidence of offenders can be identified a council officer will be asked to visit and gather evidence as part of an investigation.

Graffiti

FOEP reports graffiti using the NCC's online facility. Offensive or hate-related graffiti is removed within two hours, most is dealt with in 24 hours but may take up to 14 working days. Graffiti on the listed buildings is painted over as agreed with NCC's conservation team.

Street furniture in the park

NCSL staff are contracted to clean signs and bins and to remove flyposting, chewing gum etc. This has not been happening and needs to.

FOEP organises occasional bench cleaning sessions.

5.2 Horticultural maintenance

Overview

Operations are contracted out to Norwich City Services Limited (NCSL) who are responsible for:

- maintenance of hard and soft landscape areas
- services
- buildings maintenance
- cleaning
- routine inspections under the direction of NCC

NCSL is owned by Norwich City Council (NCC). The company is required to produce detailed work programmes and specifications for each area of work.

NCC uses the web-based mapping system GIS for its grounds maintenance records. NCSL staff have access to this.

Monthly meetings between NCC and NCSL monitor service delivery and performance.

Friends of Eaton Park's (FOEP) gardeners have taken on responsibility for several flower beds and other areas.

Norwich City Services Limited overview

Flower beds, shrub beds and hedges will be cultivated annually. Displays will be weed-free.

Shrubs, roses, hedges and herbaceous borders will be maintained so that they do not grow across footpaths, obscure sight lines or cause a hazard or nuisance to park users.

Shrubs

Maintained to be healthy and vigorous and to maximise the aesthetic qualities of each genus.

Roses

High quality plants maintained to be healthy and vigorous with good levels of flowering wood.

Hedges

Maintained to provide high quality hedges that are healthy, vigorous, neat and tidy.

Herbaceous borders in the rose garden

High quality, healthy and vigorous herbaceous displays which maximise the aesthetic qualities of each specific genus and achieve high levels of flowering wood.

Plants will be lifted, split and replanted once every four years.

Grass

The frequency of cutting will depend upon the area to be cut and prevailing conditions. Following cutting, all areas should be free of litter and debris with grass cut to the standard required.

Friends of Eaton Park gardeners

FOEP gardeners meet one morning a month to maintain

- four bandstand flower beds
- two lily pond beds
- one boat pond bed
- two raised herb beds in the café garden
- fruit trees in North Park Meadow
- occasional deadheading of roses

Conditions can be challenging and the Friends have adapted planting to respond to flooding, dry conditions and damage from young children.

New planting is undertaken with plants grown by members of the Friends, either self-seeded or grown from cuttings; and as opportunities arise.

5.3 Arboricultural and woodland maintenance

Arboricultural maintenance

Norwich City Council manages risk via the document *Tree Safety Management Procedure*.

The frequency of tree safety inspections is based on a matrix that takes into account:

- land use
- frequency of use
- species and age of the tree,
- whether or not there is a structural support in place

Additional inspections will be undertaken when defects or damage are identified.

The Ezytree management system is used to record data, inventory analysis and tree maintenance. GIS mapping is also used.

Tree removal

Dead, diseased, dying or dangerous trees are removed when they pose an unacceptable risk to public safety or property.

Standing decaying and deadwood is a valuable habitat and will be retained where desirable, safe and practical to do so.

Where landmark, ancient or culturally important trees are identified as posing an unacceptable risk to public safety a detailed decay mapping survey, and where appropriate, professional identification of pathogens will be undertaken, to ensure the correct recommendations are made before trees are removed or heavily reduced.

When a decision is made to remove a tree, excluding in emergencies, arboricultural officers will post information notices on the tree and notify ward councillors in advance of the work.

5.4 Building and infrastructure maintenance

Overview

Eaton Park has several grade II listed buildings and structures. Distinctive features include use of an early concrete and large areas of dry stone walling in character areas.

Identifying issues

Parks officers check the exterior of historic buildings and structures twice a year. FOEP reports damage and other issues direct to the Park's team. Through its website and social media FOEP also

provides a useful conduit for problems spotted by members of the public.

Additionally, tenants and user groups report issues relating to the interiors of the buildings.

Dealing with repairs

When defects to paths, fences, railings, walls, furniture, drains etc are reported problems are inspected to identify works needed. Norwich City Council Property Services (NCCPS) is responsible for ordering remedial works.

Routine maintenance

NCCPS schedules contractors to undertake routine servicing and testing of electrical appliances, lighting, heating, water and guttering.

Listed buildings

NCC's conservation team manages the park's listed buildings and structures working in close consultation with Historic England. This is dealt with in more detail later.

New buildings

These will only be considered where essential for operational purposes and improvements to visitor facilities.

Equipment maintenance

All tools, plant, vehicles, machines used to carry out maintenance and operations within the park as part of our grounds and building maintenance contract and are the responsibility of NCSL.

FOEP has built up its own collection of gardening tools. The group owns several mattocks and a tree popper and plans to buy an Austrian scythe.



6.Environmental management

6.1 Environmental impact and climate change mitigation

Context

This section looks at how management of Eaton Park addresses the impact of climate change.

Norwich City Council's documents *Environmental Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy* also impact on management of the park.

Flooding

French drains have been installed around footpaths that are known to flood. Heavy rain causes the bandstand to flood badly.

Tree planting

Trees provide shade, help lower temperatures and capture carbon. NCC and FOEP have identified several locations for tree planting in both small groups and quite large areas. New trees will be chosen with biodiversity in mind.

While small areas of trees may be paired with a single bench or picnic tables, in two areas there is the potential to work long-term towards areas of large trees that are spaced widely and amongst which

amenities such as picnic tables and benches, trim trails and outdoor ping pong tables would be sited.

Soil

NCC doesn't buy peat or plants grown in peat. Composts are bought from local suppliers.

FOEP has good connections with Norfolk County Council's Master Composters Scheme and is investigating the possibility of locating a compost facility in the café garden. This could take waste from FOEP NCSL grass cuttings and coffee grounds from the café.

Compost could be used in beds managed by the Friends and elsewhere, including on the rose garden.

There is a need to improve quality and water retention. The rose garden and in particular the three rose beds would benefit from the addition of manure.

Watering

Irrigation has ceased except for exceptional circumstances such as newly planted beds, trees and sports pitches.

Water-intensive planting is being replaced with drought resistant planting.

Energy use

There is a need to replace lamps in light columns with low energy LED bulbs.

NCSL is moving to using battery-operated leaf blowers, hedge cutters, strimmers and ride on mowers. As equipment fails it will be replaced with electric equivalents.

NCC includes sustainable practice in its procurement criteria and requires contractors/suppliers to assess their environmental impact. NCC prioritises working with local companies.

6.2 Waste minimisation

Leaf clearance

Leaves are collected at the end of autumn and taken to allotment sites close to the park for leaf mulch. Some are left in a heap at the edge of North Park Wood for use by FOEP.

Green waste

The aim with horticultural and arboricultural work is to maximise reuse of waste materials/by products, where possible, onsite.

Wood chip is used for pathways and mulching. This has been previously delivered as needed and generated from

work on trees around the city. In future more wood chip generated from work in the park will remain on site, in particular for maintaining the pathway in Bluebell Wood.

Cuttings from shrub and hedge maintenance are shredded on site and returned to the beds.

Recycling

Recycling bins are provided at key points throughout the park. The café provides two different types of recycling bin.

The café is part of the national [Refill](#) scheme and will re-fill people's water bottles. FOEP and NCC plan to explore the possibility of installing water fountains.

6.3 Chemical use

NCC has Safe Working Procedures in place to ensure all pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers are properly applied and their use minimised. These procedures ensure relevant legislation is followed and that records are properly kept and maintained.

NCC aims to minimise the use of chemical products and actively seeks alternative approaches where possible. Should there

be no alternative to chemical usage then products are selected from an approved list, preventing the use of environmentally unfriendly products.

Chemicals currently used in the park are

- Glyphosate(Trustee 450) and chikara which is a pre-emergence and should stop weeds from growing for up to 5 months
- fertilizer and herbicide as part of the football pitch maintenance regime.

Use of chemicals is limited through use of practices such as using mulching suppress weed growth and ensuring turf is well drained to avoid moss growth.

NCC is currently auditing existing chemical use to reduce and ultimately cease the application of chemical based herbicides, pesticides and fungicides for all grounds maintenance activities. Its expected the audit, trials and options moving forward will be completed in 2023.

FOEP is keen to see the practice of cutting or using chemicals to suppress grasses around the base of trees ended. Grassy areas around trees are known to be useful

habitat for caterpillars falling from trees which will pupate in the ground nearby.

This practice can be promoted by FOEP to the public as, similar to conservation cut and meadow areas, providing food and habitat for wildlife in the park.

Pest control

Rats and other pests are monitored and outbreaks controlled only as and when necessary.

7 Heritage and conservation

7.1 Brief History

At the start of the 20th century Norwich Corporation, now Norwich City Council, began to buy land with a view to developing parks when funding became available. In the case of Eaton Park 80 acres of fields and market gardens were bought for £900.

The years following the First World War were a time of unemployment and hardship. Using government grants, the Corporation began to create parks as a means of providing unemployment relief. The plan at Eaton was to make a sports park. At the time, the National Playing Fields Association recommended local authorities adopt a minimum standard of 5 acres (20,000m²) of public open space for every 1,000 people, “of which at least 4 acres (16,000m²) should be set aside for team games, tennis, bowls and children’s playgrounds”.

For three and a half years over a hundred men were employed to build the bandstand, pavilions, and model boating and lily ponds. Tennis courts (there were 47), cricket squares, bowling greens, other sports and leisure areas and gardens were

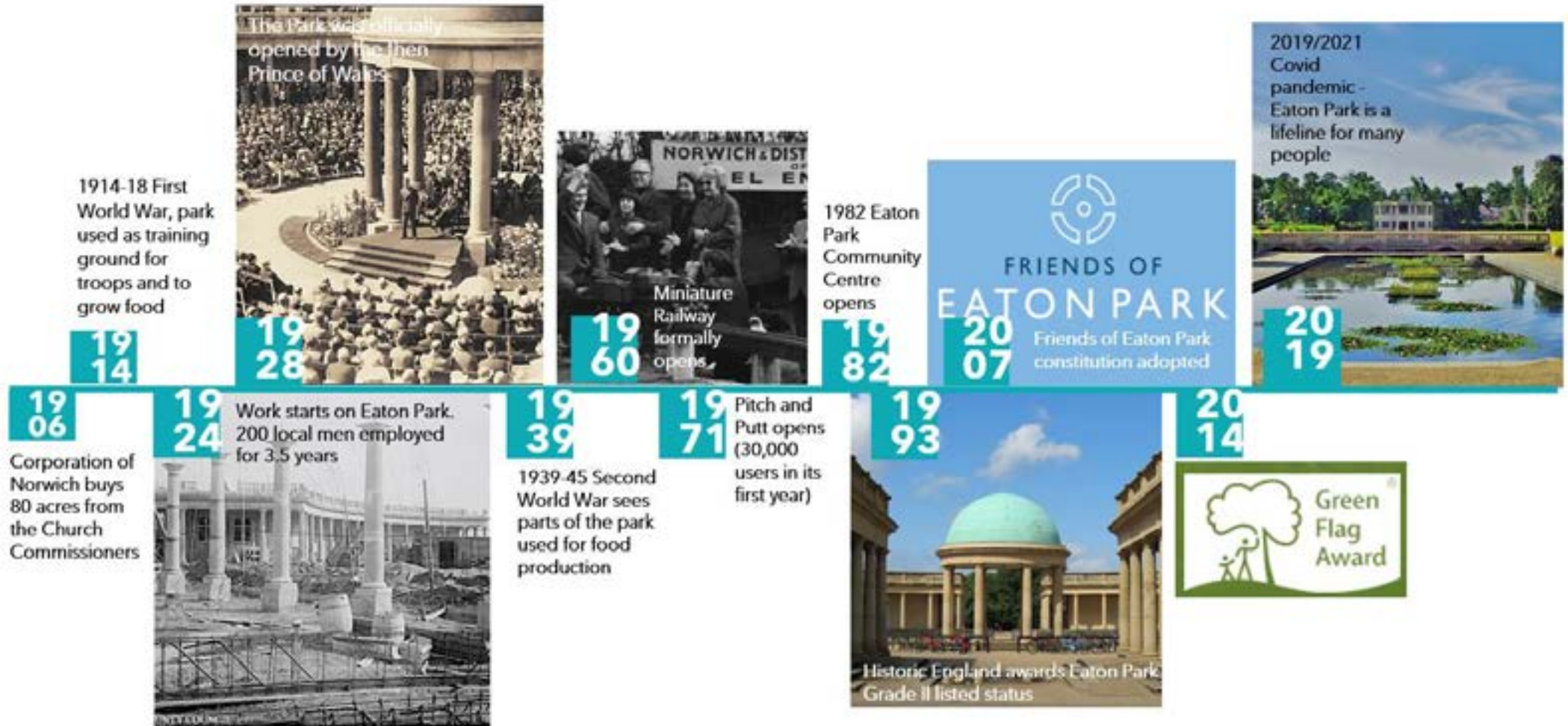
created. In 1928 the Park was officially opened by the then Prince of Wales.

The key figure in the creation of the Norwich parks was Parks Superintendent Captain Arnold Sandys-Winsch. Read about him [here](#). Friends of Eaton Park has funded a bench in his name, and a second in memory of the local men who built the park. Both benches are located beside the model boat pond.

In 1998 Eaton Park was one of three parks to benefit from an extensive refurbishment programme funded by a Heritage Lottery grant of £4.2m. Today, Eaton Park is one of 23 parks in Norwich many of them originally designed by Captain Sandys-Winsch.



Eaton Park Timeline



7.2 Management and conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora and landscapes

Landscape overview

Professor David Strand from Dickinson College Pennsylvania, a specialist in the politics of parks, noted that Eaton Park was a park where one could experience Norfolk's "big skies".

Planting of pines (the Brecks) and Holme Oaks (Holkham and North Norfolk) firmly locate the park in its county of Norfolk.

In Eaton Park, sports pitches, fields, tracks and greens; ponds, a play area and a miniature railway are arranged within a formal network of tree-lined avenues.

Two dramatic circular centre pieces are provided by the rose garden, where planting of trees and flowers provides the drama; and the rotunda, with its grade II listed bandstand and rotunda colonnades.

The boat and lily ponds bring the pleasures of being beside water. Planting, of red hot pokers and pampas grass beside the boatpond and hornbeams beside the lily pond, provide attractive accents and reflections.

Early photos look bleak, with small trees barely making an impact on the vast open space. Over the park's 90 years its trees and hedges have been added to and grown and there are meadows now too.

The formal core remains untouched but beyond the sports fields and in corners throughout the park there are wilder areas and there's space for nature.

Grasslands, meadows and wildflowers

Much of Eaton Park consists of close-mown amenity grassland and sports pitches. These support few plant species and limited invertebrates, though birds use them for feeding, resting and preening.

Of greater wildlife value are areas of bulbs or wildflower managed under conservation cuts. These are mostly found around the edges of the park and in the pitch and putt.

FOEP has championed meadows organising wildflower walks, seed gathering, planting and identification sessions.

The meadows are outside of the central, listed areas of the park. They are North Park Meadow (1.5 acres), the little

meadow (by the MUGA) and two railway meadows. North Park Meadow is invertebrate-rich with a very good range of wildflowers. Cut pathways discourage people from walking on it.

North Park Meadow has a single annual cut with removal of arisings. Two members of FOEP have been on Norfolk Wildlife Trust scything courses. In summer 2023 FOEP and NWT will host Norwich's first scything showcase in North Park Meadow.

Seeds or plug plants are of local or UK provenance. FOEP volunteers use mattocks to break the sward for sowing.

FOEP has recorded 103 wildflowers and grasses and their locations. A list of these can be found in Appendix 4.

Hedgerows

Eaton Park contains some of the best hedgerow habitat in Norwich. The park is framed with a beech hedge and there are many internal hedges along pathways and around individual attractions.

Hedges inside the park include dramatic, beautifully maintained long stretches of yew. Recent additions for the railway and crazy golf are of mixed native species.



Napweed and Essex Skipper in North Park Meadow. Photo Stuart Beard



Meadow saxifrage, North Park Meadow



Wildflower walk



Roesel bush cricket, North Park Wood, Photo Stuart Beard



Heron on the false bridge



Bank of violets in the pitch and putt

The perimeter hedge is maintained to a height that separates people in the park from the outside world but allows residents to see into the park from upper stories. The pitch and putt hedge is kept higher to reduce the risk of injury from golf balls.

On the southern end of the pitch and putt the hedge has been deepened with a layer of native trees to improve it as a wildlife habitat and food source.

Trees

Overview

FOEP describes Eaton Park as an 'arboretum for Norwich' and organises annual tree walks attracting up to 50 people. The park has a huge number of different trees and many different settings in which to enjoy them.

There are over 1,100 trees of all ages from newly planted to over-mature. Some trees including large oaks pre-date the park. Many trees date back to the 1920s. A second swathe of planting occurred in the '70s, mostly around the park edges.

There are more broadleaf than pine trees. Many trees are non-native species but recent planting has been of native species. The quantity and variety of species are a

valuable biodiversity resource, providing wildlife with food, shelter and habitat.

NCC's Tree team is responsible for the park's trees. NCC's policy is to replace lost trees. Funding for new trees is obtained from funding bids, the [Trees for Norwich](#) scheme and by FOEP.

Woodlands

Most of the north and south sides of the main park are tree-lined. On the north side there are three deeper areas of trees and shrubs, one of which is now known as North Park Wood.

FOEP undertakes simple woodland management in these areas (coppicing, planting and thinning), mostly working with Norwich Fringe. Work in North Park Wood follows *The Biodiversity Plan 2015*.

FOEP has developed and cares for a small community orchard of apples, pears and plums beside North Park Wood.

The pitch and putt includes several quite large wooded areas. Bluebell Wood is the park's most important area of woodland. It comprises two distinct areas: an older area of established woodland with veteran oaks on the steep slope to Bluebell Road and a younger upper section on flat land

beside the pitch and putt. The latter is mostly hawthorn and ash.

Bluebell Wood is managed by Norwich Fringe, with help from TCV and FOEP. Aims and objectives are set out in the *Bluebell Wood Management Plan*.

Deadwood

Dead wood is an important habitat for invertebrates, which are in turn eaten by birds and mammals.

In the main park safety concerns mean that standing and fallen deadwood is rare. A few mature trees contain small amounts of deadwood and felled small-diameter deadwood is left in North Park Woods and other areas as habitat. Most deadwood is in Bluebell Wood, where both standing and fallen deadwood is allowed to remain.

Tree-lined avenues

The park has many glorious tree-lined avenues in different stages of repair depending on the species and time of planting.

Different approaches to the replacement of ageing or dangerous trees have been trialled. A complete new avenue of walnut trees was been planted to the east of the rotunda. To the west chestnuts reaching

the end of their lives are being replaced with longer-living lime trees with removal and replacement on an ad hoc basis.

As other avenues such as the whitebeam avenue beside the miniature railway fall into disrepair great care will be taken to identify the best way forward to sustain these important features, to ensure they are resilient into the future and to inform the public on thinking behind the schemes.

Pine trees

Several groups of pine trees bring with them a feel of the Norfolk's Brecklands. These have recently sustained losses and replacement trees planted though these also sustained losses in the dry summer.

With redwoods planted on the north side of the park there is a need to remove some of the weaker trees to allow others to grow to their full potential.

Feature trees

Stretches of narrow leaved ash and hornbeam are two of the park's most popular tree features; the former for their autumn colour, the latter for their shape and lily pond reflections.

There are a good number of holme oak (characteristic of north Norfolk). A Judas

tree and cork oak are amongst some of the more rare species.

Fungi, lichens and bryophytes

These are poorly recorded but three Fungus Day events held by FOEP with mycologist Kay Yeoman from UEA have revealed there to be a good number of different kinds of fungi in the main park as well as hotspots such as Bluebell Wood.

Large mature trees, deadwood, benches and historic buildings provide excellent habitat for lichens, mosses and liverworts.

Eaton Park's importance to wildlife

Norwich City Council's Biodiversity Plan 2022-25 aims to

"Create a city where biodiversity can sustainably recover and thrive, halt species decline and increase species diversity and abundance by 2030."

Eaton Park is central to a key green corridor in the city. It links the Yare Valley, Earlham Park, UEA and the UEA Broad, and the gardens, street trees and green spaces of this side of Norwich.

In 2008 FOEP commissioned from Norfolk Wildlife Trust the report *Eaton Park -*

Biodiversity value and suggested wildlife habitat enhancements. The group has championed nature ever since and in 2011 won Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership's *Community Biodiversity Award*.

FOEP supports biodiversity by:

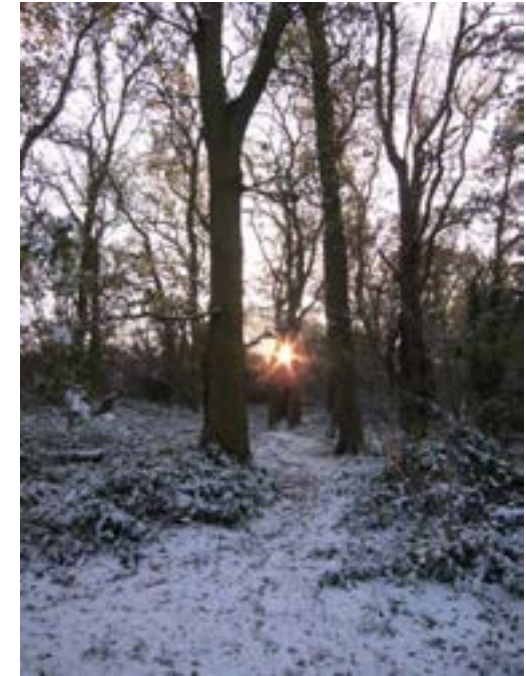
- bulb and wildflower plug planting
- gathering and planting wildflower seeds
- bramble removal creating space for wildflowers
- creating glades, planting whips and coppicing to improve woodland habitat
- championing meadows and creating the conditions for public acceptance of conservation cuts
- putting on free open days, walks and talks
- introducing school children to nature in the park
- building contacts and seeking advice from experts to inform developments in the park
- informing and educating the public through Facebook and information folders in the café and Friends' Room



Narrow leaved ash beside the crazy golf.
Photo Tom Albrighton



Eaton Park's 'big Norfolk skies'. Photo
professor David Strand



Bluebell Wood in winter



Sycamores in the pitch and putt. Photo
Caroline Flatt



Replacement pine tree going in



Plane trees provide shade from the sun

- improving the pathway in Bluebell Wood to stop wildflowers from being trampled
- installing bird and bat boxes
- partnering with local wildlife groups on events and activities (Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Norwich Bat Group, Norwich Swifts, Norfolk branch of Butterfly Conservation, Richard Hobbs, tree expert
- recording wildflowers, grasses and birds and working to record invertebrates, fungi, lichen etc
- tying in with national campaigns such as CPRE's Star Count, RSPBs Big Garden Bird Watch and Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly count.

Invertebrates

Intensively managed amenity grassland is of limited value to invertebrates but there are many areas that support a wide range of species.

FOEP has organised moth hunts and butterfly days with the Norfolk branch of Butterfly Conservation. The addition of meadows to the park has attracted new species including regular sightings of the Essex Skipper and a colony of rare wasp spiders.

The Lily Pond attracts dragonflies and damselflies. Larva, water beetles, water boatmen and water snails are present. Appendix 3 includes a list of butterflies and moths. There is a need to monitor invertebrates more formally.

Fish, amphibians and reptiles

Two large coy carp, some goldfish and possibly other small fish species are present in the Lily Pond.

There is little suitable habitat for amphibians and reptiles though both common toads and common frogs have been seen.

The miniature railway enclosure offers a potential site for a wildlife pond. This would require lining as the soil is sandy.

Birds

Birds, more so than mammals, are highly mobile and several species in the park are transient visitors rather than resident.

Wooded areas, hedgerows and formal gardens are likely to be of most benefit to birds as they offer feeding opportunities and nesting cover.

FOEP has installed eight woodcrete bird boxes in North Park Woods and five on

the south side of the park. See appendix 3 for a list of park birds.

Mammals

Recorded mammals: bats, foxes, grey squirrels, moles, rabbits, voles and shrews. Tree damage could be evidence of roe or muntjac deer.

For much of the year bats can be easily seen at dusk over the ponds and meadows, in the rose garden and in open areas near pine and other trees.

FOEP have installed bat boxes on the north side of the park and plans to organise a bat survey in 2023.



7.3 Conservation of buildings and structures

Overview of built environment

The park is a grade II* listed. It is one of five registered sites in the city of Norwich which form part of a set of public parks laid out in the 1920s and 1930s by the then Parks Superintendent, Captain A Sandys-Winsch. Eaton Park, Norwich 1928. Historic England's reasons for designation can be found in appendix 5.

Issues

The park is over ninety years old. Open 24/7 it is very well used and while structures such as the bandstand and false bridge are in good condition in other places wear and tear and damage are evidence. Typical problems are:

- missing paving slabs
- damaged dry stone walling
- chipped and damaged concrete
- dirt and graffiti
- flaking paint

Issues are reported by FOEP. Some are dealt with quickly:

- paving slabs are replaced
- graffiti goes in 24 hours
- dry stone walls are repaired

This leaves the following consistent problem areas:

- false windows, doorways and drain pipes in the rotunda need cleaning
- there are lumps of dried toilet paper on the pale blue ceilings of the rotunda colonnades
- there is evidence of where graffiti has been removed
- dirt goes un-dealt-with
- bandstand flooding

Additionally, the rose garden fountain began life as an artwork commissioned during an HLF-funded renovation of the park. It has not worked since 2014.

Solutions

NCC's Conservation Team will advise on methods and materials following guidance in Historic England's document [Conservation Principles](#).

Ultimately resource needs to be found to restore and re-paint the rotunda exterior. Until then FOEP will explore options to clean and smarten problem areas.

FOEP would like to mend the fountain, restoring it to the centrepiece and much-loved family attraction it had become.



The fountain in its heyday, adopted by families as a water play area



Construction of the bandstand dome



Rotunda colonnades



Crowds at the bandstand on the opening day



Construction of the southern rotunda quadrants



Opening day in 1928. Captain Sandys-Winsch is the tall man to the right of the Prince of Wales



The Prince of Wales meets some of the local men who worked on the park

8. Community involvement

8.1 Background

This section starts with an overview of the make up the park's local community and looks at how the park meets the needs of this specific population and areas for improvement.

It goes on to look at ways in people get involved in the park through FOEP and other groups. FOEP's role as a voice and a channel for communication between park users, groups and local communities is also explored.

8.2 About the local community

Information is taken from the Office for National Statistics Neighbourhood Statistics. It relates to data from 2015 for the seven LSOAs (Lower Layer Super Output Areas); E01026810, E01026814, E01026815, E01026838, E01026859, E01026858 and E01026860) that make up Eaton Park's local community.

The local population is 14,469 and is made up of 4436 households.

Nearly half of residents live in flats or terraced houses so have no, or fairly limited access to outdoor space.

29% of residents don't have access to a car or van.

17% of people live in one person households.

A breakdown of residents by age reveals the most distinctive feature of this area of the city to be the high proportion of young people from 15 to 29, and in particular 20-24 year olds. This is due to proximity of the University of East Anglia.

The 2021 census lists Norwich as the UK's second least religious city.

Crime and anti-social behaviour per 1000 population is under half that of figures for the whole of Norwich.

8.3 Meeting the needs of the local community

Green Space, community and exercise

In an area where half the population have limited access to outdoor space and 29% don't have access to a car, the park is a large, accessible and welcoming green

space with many different facilities, activities and communities, and space to enjoy nature and quiet contemplation too.

Benches and the café encourage people to meet up with friends and family here socially. This aspect particularly came to the fore during Covid.

Running groups, the play area, table tennis, petanque and the skate park are facilities that are free and open for all to use and that naturally generate community.

Cricket, croquet, cycle speedway, football, ultimate frisbee, pitch and putt and touch rugby are sociable sports with their own communities.

Groups of less than 50 people don't need to book to use the park. Increasingly the park is being used informally by families and other groups for birthdays, weddings and other get-togethers.

There are good options for children from toddlers to teenagers, starting with the children's play area which was described by the Guardian as "one of the best in the region".

Petanque, Junior parkrun, outdoor table tennis, the MUGA, 5-a-side football and the boatpond are free to use and good for families or friends to do together.

Eaton Park is an ideal environment for learning to ride a bike and many adults as well as children start their cycling lives here. The Community Cycling Group and Cycle Speedway offer sociable and accessible ways to take cycling further.

The skatepark is used by children as young as four on scooters and adults in their forties on skateboards and roller skates. There are strong skateboarding and BMX communities, mostly of teenagers and people in their twenties.

Families are encouraged to explore wild areas of the park with seasonal Nature Detectives Trails. In 2023 FOEP will trail an Easter Nature Trail and run a 'Postcard from the Park' project for children.

For older visitors the park brings community amongst the walkers, runners and dog walkers.

The park's level pathways and benches are ideal for people who are less mobile.

FOEP encourages people to extend their visit to include Bluebell Woods and has laid down woodchip to improve pathways.

As we adjust to climate change the park's trees offer invaluable shade that make the park use-able even on the hottest days. FOEP and NCC are keen to plant more to create community spaces with shade from the sun.

A sense of Community

In an area with many non-believers, and at a time when many people are struggling the park offers opportunities for the community to come together and enjoy shared activities and interests. Sports, boating and miniature trains are all sources of community.

FOEP is keen to build community through its events. The Christmas event is a 'sing-along' with seasonal and traditional songs as well as carols. Like all FOEP events it's free and open to all. It is very popular.

FOEP's free summer evening nature walks attract 30-50 people at a time to come and learn about and share enjoyment of nature in the park.

The group's sessions gardening, gathering wildflower seeds and coppicing woodland all feel like precious moments to share. Many friendships begin working and playing in Eaton Park.

The bandstand and rotunda provide an iconic and naturally theatrical space to host free, outdoor events. Recent ones have included an early morning Eid celebration, a traditional Whitsun fairground, Thai Festival and a Black Lives Matter protest.

Setting the tone

The presence of a large and beautiful park is a massive bonus for this part of the city. The fact that it is visibly valued and cared for builds a sense of confidence that "all is well" and that the community's weight is behind the park. People see the park is valued but this helps people to feel that they are part of a 'good' community.

2009's seminal park user survey revealed people's love for the park. This affection was also captured in 2017's Love Parks Week's photography project.

8.4 Friends of Eaton Park (FOEP)

Involving and engaging with people

FOEP offers a range of rewarding ways for members and others to get involved in the park:

- Being on the management committee
- Liaising and working with Norwich City Council staff
- Helping with social media
- Photography
- Gardening
- Woodland and meadow development
- Organising and helping out with events and activities
- Doing guided tours and talks
- Talking with the public at events, walks and talks
- Litter picking
- Designing posters and updating noticeboards
- Cleaning benches
- Doing research into history
- Checking and updating the website
- Liaising with the public over sponsorship enquires
- Updating scrapbooks and information folders

FOEP has a committee of eight and 118 members, some thirty of whom are regular volunteers. In 2022 volunteer hours were nearly back to pre-Covid at a fraction short of 1000 hours.

FOEP organises events that shine a light on nature and heritage in the park, and band days and a Christmas celebration that are inter-generational community celebrations, free and open to all.

A well-connected voice for the park

There is a very high awareness of FOEP through the our website and Facebook page. Both offer easy ways to get in touch with FOEP.

FOEP promotes and provides information and interpretation for Eaton Park. It inspires individual park users and enables them to get the most out the park. It also makes possible connections between different user groups.

FOEP's members are informed advocates and through them the group has informal but strong connections with user groups and partners including:

- Eaton Park Café & Crazy Golf
- Eaton Park Community Centre
- Earlham Library, Christ Church

Eaton, The Beehive Pub

- Good Gym (running volunteers)
- Local newspapers
- Norfolk Cricket Board
- Norwich Cycle Speedway, Norwich Cycling Campaign and Cycling UK
- Norwich Croquet Club
- Norwich Park's Tennis
- miniature railway and boaters
- wildlife and gardening groups and organisations
- parkrun, CONAC and other running and athletics groups

When particular issues arise FOEP consult directly with contacts in relevant groups.

The Friends work with three local schools offering class sessions and volunteering opportunities for older pupils.

In 2023 we plan to discuss the possibility of doing annual school assemblies and look at sharing information with schools for them to share with parents.

FOEP's Sunday afternoon events take place in and around the Friends' room which is in rotunda. This is an opportunity for people to talk with FOEP volunteers and look at displays and resources and to write in the Visitor Book.

Local businesses

Team away days (2-3 a year) help staff and companies connect with, learn about and contribute to the park.

Understanding people's needs

Ongoing engagement between FOEP and the local community (as outlined in section 9, Marketing and Communication) enables us to understand people's changing needs and aspirations.

Identifying problems

Over the years FOEP has helped identify issues and concerns (the lack of benches, previous café problems, concern over removal of trees and, more recently, inadequate washing facilities in the toilets) and has worked with the city council to resolve them.

8.5 Other groups in Eaton Park

A good number of groups make Eaton Park their home. They provide many different opportunities to meet and spend time with others who share similar interests from sports making models, to trains and boating.

Park groups are well-organised and have good connections with NCC officers and

other users. This helps them to ensure that their constituencies are well connected, listened to and served.

- Norwich Croquet Club
- Norwich Park's Tennis
- the running community (parkrun, Up the Tempo, CONAC)
- the miniature railway
- the Community Centre
- the Model Boat Club
- Norwich Stars Cycle Speedway

8.6 Norwich City Council

The City Council has very good connections with the park communities:

- *Parks and Open Spaces* works closely with FOEP and with sports and other groups
- *Communities Directorate* organises the Open Spaces Network and facilitated FOEP's new partnership with the Community Centre
- *Leisure and Cultural Services* oversees events in the park, provides advice and support and leads on events development ensuring new hirers aren't creating problems for the local community.

Most weeks Norwich's Mayor (2021&22) runs in Eaton Park and the Sheriff opened the 2022 Christmas Carols and Fair.

“Norwich City Council and Friends of Eaton Park have shaped a highly effective way of working that is a model for a public/voluntary partnership.”

Helen Mitchell, Chair Friends of Eaton Park, January 2023



Park historian Andy Anderson cuts the cake at Eaton Park's 90th birthday celebration. Photo Stuart Beard



The Mayor of Norwich meets Marsh volunteers cleaning benches



Local musicians busking on the bandstand



The Friends' room on Heritage Open Days. Photo Stuart Beard



FOEP's meadow group after a planting session



Children from Bluebell School planting bulbs beside the crazy golf

9 Marketing and communication

9.1 Background

There isn't a budget for marketing. In terms of resource there is some input from NCC's Communications Team but marketing is mostly undertaken by Friends of Eaton Park (FOEP).

FOEP's interest in marketing and communications dates from research undertaken in 2014. This identified a lack of information on how to find out about and get involved in park activities.

The Chair is an experienced cultural consultant with considerable experience of marketing and communications. She leads on marketing planning and delivery with support from the committee.

The now extensive marketing collateral has nearly all been developed for free, with the Friends paying for investments such as initial website set up and print.

This section details resources and marketing objectives while a Communications Plan (appendix 2) provides more detailed information and tactics.

9.2 Objectives

To raise awareness of the park, its facilities, user groups and the events and activities that take place.

To encourage more people to visit Eaton Park for pleasure and recreation, and for health and wellbeing.

To raise awareness and increase interest in of Eaton Park's inspiring history and its importance as a green space for wildlife.

To encourage more people to sign up for or get involved in sports and other activities.

To encourage people to cherish Eaton Park and 'tread lightly' when they visit, travelling sustainably, disposing of litter with care and respecting other park users.

To encourage people to support or get involved in 'helping Eaton Park thrive'.

9.3 Resources

Websites

Norwich City Council's website has a page for Eaton Park [here](#). Information is useful and accurate but limited and in a standard format with just one image.

[FOEP's website](#) is a comprehensive gateway to Eaton Park. It is well-written, authoritative, user-friendly and visually strong with many good images.

It includes; listings of park activities and groups, visiting information, wildlife and heritage, volunteering, joining the Friends, 'Frequently Asked Questions', annual reports and details of committee members and key partners and park management. See Communications Plan for more info.

Other websites

On [Trip Advisor](#) the Park is listed as #13 of 151 places to go in Norwich and gets 4.5 out of 5. Link is to the FOEP website.

On [Google Maps](#) Eaton Park Café, Eaton Park Crazy Golf, the skatepark and Pitch and Putt have individual listings in addition to Eaton Park's own listing. The park gets 4.7 out of 5.

Social media (FOEP)

Facebook: 6600 followers. With shares, posts reach up to 11000 households a week. Posts communicate key messages and promote events and activities.

FOEP has built a relationship of trust, respect and liking with its followers. This

helps set the tone for the park and its relationship with its communities.

Rare criticisms are responded to constructively and offer useful insights into people's interests and concerns.

Twitter: @eatonparkfriend has 2250 followers and is used to promote one-off events.

Instagram: The relatively new @eatonparknorwich has 170 followers. #eatonpark has had 12,350 posts.

Visit Norwich and Visit Norfolk offer park listings and the former offers events listings too. Both link to FOEP's website.

Newsletters and press

Just Eaton and Cringleford free paper:
See Communications Plan.

Christ Church Eaton Newsletter:
See Communications Plan.

Norwich Evening News and EDP
FOEP provides press release, listings and often photographs. The Chair is often asked to comment on park matters.

BBC Radio Norfolk and BBC Norfolk
Occasional interviews based on approaches or, more rarely, PRs.

Posters

See communication plan for design, content and use of posters.

Notice and information boards

There are two notice boards with large park plans and some key information.

FOEP manages two information boards. These are carefully organised and provide information on park groups, activities and events.

The Community Centre, cycle speedway, and tennis have their own boards. FOEP manages boards for running and pétanque.

FOEP Updates and Annual Reports

6 to 8 e-newsletters go FOEP members annually. Annual reports are placed online and shared with stakeholders and FOEP members.

From Easter 2023 new information folders will be placed in the café and Friends Room. These will have information on wildlife, sports, events etc and the latest updates.

FAQs and Fact Sheets

Fact sheets have been developed and are available as downloadable PDFs for more detailed areas such as [Bench Sponsorship](#) and park heritage.

Partnerships

FOEP organises some activities in partnership with groups such as NCC's Open Spaces Network, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation. Partnership activities are a chance to raise the profile of the park and its activities as events feature in partners' own marketing.

9.3 Information and interpretation

The Friends' Room

FOEP opens its room to the public on event and volunteering days. Displays include historic photographs, a timeline and other information about the park and its history.

The website and social media

The pages 'About/History' provide an overview of the history of the park, information on Colonel Sandys-Winsch, who created the park, oral history accounts, photographs, and a link to the pilot for a radio programme 'Parklife' that is based on Eaton Park.

The Friends sell copies of the book 'The Captain and the Norwich Park's (published by The Norwich Society) at events. They also provide details of places where the book can be bought in Norwich.

Walks, talks, events and tours

FOEP organises a range of free walks talks and tours, some led by FOEP members and others by experts who lead them in tandem with FOEP members.

Examples include:

- bird, tree and meadow walks
- nature in Eaton Park
- gardening in Eaton Park
- rooftop tours (short tours conducted on the roof of one of the rotunda quadrants and including a photo opportunities for visitors)

In 2022 FOEP undertook its first talk to a group outside the park, earning a small fee for FOEP funds.

Heritage Open Days and Roof Top Tours are used by FOEP to shine a light on park heritage. FOEP regularly encourages park users to bring with them or email photos and memories.

New memories and photos are added to displays in the room and, where appropriate, to the website.

Visiting groups

FOEP regularly welcomes the following groups to Eaton park:

- Good Gym (running volunteers)
- Bluebell and Colman Junior Schools
- Aviva and Marsh Insurance volunteers

Each session begins with an introduction to the park and there are opportunities throughout to share other information.



10. Management

10.1 Implementation of the management plan

In the 5 year life of this plan it is intended that it will provide the basis for decision making, guidance for routine park maintenance and for prioritising projects according to park policies, the action plan and council strategies.

10.2 Council priorities

How the Eaton park management plan relates to other plans, policies and strategies

Eaton Park supports the council's Corporate plan 2022-2026 in the following ways.

People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city

High quality, well designed and maintained parks and open spaces contribute to people feeling safe and reduce anti-social behaviour and crime. Conversely, low quality, poorly designed and maintained parks and open spaces have a detrimental effect on anti-social behaviour, crime and peoples' feeling of safety. They become a drain on resources and in particular the

police when they have to respond to issues in parks and open spaces

A range of cultural, leisure and social opportunities such as events and activities in parks and open spaces bring diverse communities together and contribute to reducing inequalities

Parks and open spaces make a significant contribution to physical and mental health from the provision of sporting activities through to walking and relaxing in a clean and pleasant environment.

Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city

Eaton Park provides access to nature and delivering the actions set out in this plan will be key in protecting and enhancing the environment and biodiversity.

Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city

Essential to achieving this will be to ensure that Eaton Park is managed effectively and that funding is sustainable to enable good quality services meet the needs and aspirations of our residents.

A Parks and Open Space Strategy is currently being drafted. This sets out the path to greater financial security and

sustainable funding for all our parks and open spaces. It will also be a key document in prioritising staff resources and provide a vision for those delivering it.

The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish

High quality open spaces contribute to a vibrant economy attracting businesses, investment and skilled people to the city. Conversely low quality parks and open spaces have a detrimental effect on the local economy.

Other links

This management plan links to and contributes to a wide range of other policies and strategies including:

- The Local Development Plan
- Neighbourhood strategy
- Housing strategy
- Environmental strategy
- Biodiversity strategy
- Tree strategy
- River Wensum strategy
- sports strategies including the Greater Norwich sports and physical activities strategy, the

local Football facilities plan and playing pitch strategy.

- Strategies and policies relating to health, healthy living and well-being

10.3 Finance

Norwich City Council's budget process is designed to ensure resource allocation aligns with council priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2022-26. (To protect and invest in our parks, green spaces and biodiversity.)

Eaton Park does not have its own revenue budget, but forms part of the overall budget for all Parks and Open Spaces.

Recent capital projects include:

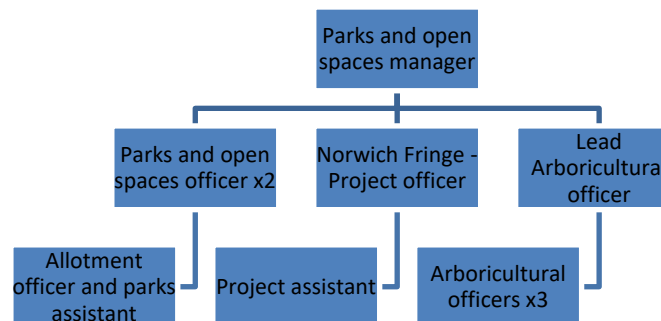
- petanque terrain (FOEP funded)
- refurbishment of the park depot and restoration of surrounding wooded areas
- changing room shower replacement
- rose garden wall refurbishment
- 5 year pathway-improvement programme
- football pitch refurbishments
- thirty new benches since 2016 (FOEP funded or organised)

The financial situation currently being faced by all local authorities means that the service is constantly having to identify savings. Until now this has been possible by looking at different ways of doing things, more efficient ways of working or absorbing work from posts that have been cut at the council, generating indirect savings. Reducing costs and maximising income are ongoing priorities.

10.4 management structures

Eaton Park is one of 23 of parks owned by Norwich City Council and managed by its Parks and Open Spaces Team. Day-to-day management falls to the council. Park maintenance is contracted to the in-house company Norwich City Services Ltd.

Norwich City Council's Parks and Open Spaces Team, organisational structure:



Parks and Open Spaces Manager responsible for:

- strategic planning
- managing stakeholder relationships
- approving projects,
- financial management
- managing the Parks and Open Spaces team

Reports to the Head of Service for Development and City Services and plays an important role in identifying projects.

Parks and Open Spaces Officers

- provide support for the Park and Open Spaces Manager
- be in regular communication with maintenance contractors, preplanning and adjusting programmes of work
- build relationships with stakeholders and volunteers
- oversee practical implementation of management projects and maintenance works
- carry out inspections, quality checks and assess the service levels of the day-to-day operations
- manage allotments and parks assistants
- monitor park budgets

- work with contractors and stakeholders to ensure smooth delivery of projects, monitor assets, and respond to issues in the park

Allotment Officer and Parks Assistant

- carry out a range of park management and technical functions while supporting the parks and open spaces team
- assists in day-to-day operation of the park, working with contractors and other stakeholders
- monitors assets and respond to issues in the park.

Arboricultural Officers

Manage and develop tree stock

Norwich Fringe

Maintain Bluebell Wood and support work in other wooded areas as negotiated.

The Parks team also pulls in expertise across and beyond NCC, landscape architects, surveyors, planners, Events Team, conservation officers, health and safety experts, community enabling, police and County Council officers.

Norwich City Services Ltd

Responsible for the maintenance of the hard and soft landscape areas of the park,

services, buildings maintenance, cleaning and routine inspections under the direction of Norwich City Council.

Friends of Eaton Park

The Friends was set up in 2007 with the aim 'to help Eaton Park thrive'.

NCC's Park team has worked closely with the group from the start. The group's key areas of work are:

- communications and marketing
- support with park development
- gardening
- woodland and meadow work
- events and activities
- championing biodiversity and sustainability
- shaping and promoting the bench sponsorship campaign
- raising funds to pay for...
- installing new capital items – typically facilities that are free for all to use such as outdoor ping pond and pétanque
- being a channel of communication between the park, its users and groups, and NCC's Parks Team
- seeking and sharing examples of best practice

FOEP provides bespoke support as needed. The Chair was part of the selection panel for the café franchise, has attended meetings and provided informal or written feedback on recreational franchises, events, parking and other matters, and has edited and written much of this plan.

10.5 Monitoring the management plan

NCC and FOEP will review and update the plan annually prior to Green Flag submission. The review will incorporate new information (visitor, tree and ecological surveys), take changing circumstances or opportunities into account and assess achievements over the year in terms of policy and project. For more significant changes a wider consultation will take place.



10.6 Action Plan – updated January 2024

The Project Register is a dynamic component of the Management Plan and sets out potential projects and management actions for the Eaton Park over the next 5 years. The implementation of all future projects and the timescales of delivery are dependent on funding and resources. *2024 updates and completed actions are in italics.*

A welcoming place

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Park signage	Park wide	Enhance entrances to the two western corners of the park/Bluebell Wood with signs and simple wooden posts Replace hand-painted, wooden North Park Avenue entrance sign like for like. <i>To be actioned with funding obtained in 2023 from the CIL fund.</i>	To provide a friendly and welcoming environment for all	Create Enhance		<i>Spring 2024</i>
Information panels	Parkwide	Update park plan on information signs Audit, update and renew the three information signs at west and east entry points and beside the rotunda. Add the site plan to one side of the west car park sign. <i>To be actioned with funding obtained in 2023 from the CIL fund.</i>	To provide a friendly and welcoming environment for all	Enhance		<i>Spring 2024</i>
User parking	Car parks	Consider opportunities to resurface degraded car parks. <i>Delayed by one year.</i>	To provide good and safe access for all	Restore		<i>Autumn/winter 2024</i>
Bike Racks	Feature areas	The Friends have recently carried an audit of bike stand provision. Locations have been identified for five new bike racks and additional stands are needed in two existing racks. <i>To be actioned with funding obtained in 2023 from the CIL fund.</i>	To increase number of visitors and users. To provide good and safe access for all	Enhance Reinforce		<i>Spring 2024</i>
Benches	Parkwide	Review and update bench audit and identify gaps in seating. Seek sponsorship through FOEP-fronted bench campaign. <i>3 new benches installed 2024 – ongoing successful campaign.</i>	To provide a friendly and welcoming environment for all	Reinforce		2023-2028
Woodland pathways	Woodland	Improve perimeter woodland footpaths. Ongoing application of wood chip by FOEP and its corporate volunteer schemes	To provide good and safe access for all	Enhance		2023-2028

Healthy, safe and secure

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Play Condition Assessment	Children's play area	Assess the condition of the play area and carry out end of life survey to ensure funding is in place when equipment needs refurbishing. <i>To be funded by Norwich City Council from income/capital receipts. Designs commissioned, consultation to take place spring 2024.</i>	To provide children with a range of opportunities to play, learn and develop	Conserve		Late Spring 2024
Inclusive Access Audit (including DDA)	Parkwide	Carry out an Inclusive Access Audit of the park every ten years.	To provide good and safe access for all	Conserve		2024
Drinking water fountains	Key features	Investigate the installation and funding of two drinking fountains. Work with FOEP to seek funding.	To improve environmental sustainability	Create		2025
Sports provision	Football	Football pitch refurbishments and old goals removed and replaced with movable goals to allow pitch rotation. <i>Completed summer 2023.</i>	To provide a wide range of opportunities for informal and competitive sporting and other activities	Enhance		2023
	Changing rooms	Consider opportunities to upgrade changing rooms and identify funding stream – Identified by local football facility plan. <i>Funding obtained from CIL, the FA and Norwich City Council income/capital.</i>	To increase the number of visitors and users	Enhance		Summer 2024
	Tennis	Maintain 7 high quality courts for EA Tennis/community use. <i>All courts resurfaced autumn 2023.</i> <i>Update lighting to limit light pollution supporting biodiversity and make more energy efficient.</i>	To provide a wide range of activities that are either free or good value for users	Enhance		2023 Autumn/winter 2024
	Football	Improve pitch quality to alleviate shortfalls on the youth 9v9 pitch. Consider as a hub site to cater for all football hosted on Norwich park sites.		Enhance Create		2024

	Vehicles in the park	Parkwide	Reduce motor vehicles and damage to verges in pedestrian areas. Audit use by grounds staff, clubs and delivery vans and identify alternatives.	To improve environmental sustainability	Enhance		2024
		Parkwide	Review NCSL use of 3.5t vehicles and consider use of electric utility vehicles and cargo bikes (also possibly electric)	To improve environmental sustainability	Enhance		2024
	Car park charging	Car parks	Introduce parking charges. Completed. Promote healthier sustainable forms of transport via communications messaging	To improve environmental sustainability	Create Communicate		2023 ongoing

Clean and well maintained

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Soil erosion and damage to benches	Benches	Install grass protective surface for picnic benches beside play area Replace damaged rose garden benches through FOEP bench sponsorship scheme. Completed. Continue to monitor and update bench schedule and to promote FOEP bench sponsorship scheme	To provide a friendly and welcoming environment for all	Restore Communicate		2024 2023
Sports provision	Multi use games area	Resurface MUGA as identified in the local football facility plan. Delayed.	To provide a wide range of opportunities for informal and competitive sporting and other activities	Conserve		2024
	Petanque	Re-surface Petanque terrain		Conserve		2024
	Changing rooms	Consider opportunities to upgrade changing rooms including creating facilities for women, and identify funding stream – identified by local football facility plan. Funding obtained.		Upgrade		2024
			To increase the number of visitors and users To provide a wide range of activities that are either free or good value for users	Reinforce		2024

Environmental Management

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Bird boxes – art installation	Rotunda	Remove original bird/insect box themed artwork which has deteriorated and become dangerous. Explore potential for a replacement artwork. <i>Substantial new artwork 'Homage to Thomas Browne' to be installed in 2024.</i>	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Restore		2023 2024
Compost bins	Café	FOEP install three wooden, enclosed, locked compost bins in the café garden behind the yew tree hedge by the bins. <i>Installed by FOEP in winter 2023.</i> Engage public in composting, soil and carbon capture	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Create Communicate		2023 Ongoing
Park lighting	Main avenues	Upgrade existing pillars with LED lighting Review impact of lighting on nature and adjust as possible	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Enhance		2024
Pesticide use	Parkwide	Review existing pesticide use, trial alternatives, review and complete final report. Trial no-cut/no pesticide policy around trees providing habitat for caterpillars to populate. Engage the public in thinking around creating space for wildflowers and grasses	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Enhance Conserve Communicate		2023-2028
Park staff using electrical equipment	Parkwide	Increase use of handheld electrical equipment. <i>Petrol equipment replaced with electric at end of life.</i> Where possible encourage use of hand-held tools Engage the public in move to increased use of hand or electric powered tools	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Enhance Communicate		2023-28
Meadows	Parkwide	Develop the park's four meadows and conservation cut areas. Explore possibilities for additional meadows and expanding conservation cut areas. <i>Small increases to conservation cut areas in 2023.</i> Engage the public in the need for wildflowers and meadows. <i>Major meadow scything day held in partnership with Norfolk Wildlife Trust summer 2023.</i>	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Sustain Enhance Communicate		2024

	New areas of trees, small and large	North of skatepark Old putting green	Plant spaced-out tall trees to create a large new shaded area for picnicking, games and activities. Small areas of tree planting in areas away from listed centre, sometimes linked to seating or picnic tables.	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Create		2023-2028
	Trees for Eaton Park programme	Whole park	Work with Tree team & FOEP to adapt the 'Trees for Norwich' scheme for Eaton Park. Added to FOEP website spring 2023. Seek expert advice drought resistance trees. Monitor, mulch and water young trees until self-sufficient.	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Enhance Resource		2023
	Horticulture / waste management / climate change adaption	Parkwide	Reduce use of chemicals by increasing natural mulching, and composting. Reinstate use of manure for rose beds. Digestate trialled in 2023, paid for by Norwich City Council, spread by FOEP & Norwich City Services. Explore options to convert park timber and leaves to usable products for park use. Identify storage options. Monitor flooding (bandstand, pathways) and seek to mitigate. See French drain plan below.	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Enhance		2023-28
	Trees	Pitch and Putt	Tree survey to understand what we have and how we can create greater biodiversity and sustainability. Completed.	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Enhance Conserve		2023
		Veteran trees	Oak tree T769 to continue with phased program of retrenchment pruning, phase two summer 2023.	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Conserve		Phase 2 '23 Phase 3 '26 Phase 4 '29
		Tree-lined avenue replacement	Explore the best way to maintain and replace as needed. Eaton Park allocated a dedicated Tree Officer. Annual review of 2023 Tree Audit will inform tree works. Avenue of Whitebeams to remain, with removal of dead wood and ongoing review ref long-term future. FOEP support Tree Team with public comms.	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Create Restore Communicate		2024-28
	Woodland	North park avenue woodland	Thin out and coppice woodland areas to create glades and low shrubby areas for wildlife. Delayed. 25 Coastal redwoods planted too closely together. Remove 50% ensuring enough space to grow and thrive. Completed.	To improve environmental sustainability and biodiversity	Enhance Conserve		2024-6

Heritage and conservation

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Fountain	Rose garden	To undertake research into how to mend the fountain/play area and add a facility for water purification. <i>Some initial research undertaken in 2024 and possible partner identified.</i> To work with FOEP to seek funding opportunities	To maintain Eaton Park to a high standard To provide children with a range of opportunities to play	Restore		2024
Buildings	Parkwide	Review and audit vacant or under-used assets (old putting/bowling huts, north west quadrant of the rotunda). Restore or repurpose as needed to increase occupancy and income. <i>Discussions ongoing over potential youth arts company basing itself in the redundant bowling green hut.</i>	To increase the number of visitors and users To maintain Eaton Park to a high standard	Restore Create Enhance Conserve		2024
Heritage open days	Parkwide	Annual HODs in September plus roof top tour and heritage open day in May. <i>New heritage lead takes over and additional team member recruited in 2023.</i> Pop up roof top tours in the months between. Recruit and train more volunteers in heritage and tours.	To provide a range of cultural and learning opportunities	Reinforce		2023-2028
Model boating in Eaton Park	Boat pond	Work with Norwich Model Boat Club to celebrate, build interest and increase participation in model boating	To provide a range of activities that are free or good value	Enhance		From 2023
Restoration of vernacular building	Old putting green hut	Identify project partners and funding to restore the shed, potentially for use by a boat hire facility or similar.				2024
Care of historic buildings	Rotunda	With the Conservation Team identify simple tasks that can be undertaken by volunteers, and resources needed, to enhance and care for the rotunda quadrants. Run trial sessions, refine techniques Install French drains 1. to avoid mud splatter of boat pavilion and 2. to help with flooding of bandstand flower beds.	To maintain Eaton Park to a high standard	Restore Enhance Enhance		2023-4

Community involvement

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Information folders	Communications	New information folders for the public to browse in the café and Friends Room. Inside them interpretation and information on family activities, nature, history, sports and how to get involved in things in the park. Completed.	To increase the number of users and visitors	Create		From 2023
Advocacy during events	Events	FOEP volunteers and members to act as informed advocates for the group and the park at free FOEP events and generally. Buy more FOEP hi-vis jackets to support more frequent and larger groups working in the park. Completed, bought by City Council.	To empower users, user groups and others to contribute to care and development of the park	Enhance		From 2023
Small regular events Easter to December	Events	Annual programme of small nature and heritage events. Research and target groups working with disadvantaged communities (refugees, disabled etc) Promote events to locals and champion sustainable travel.	To increase visits To spread visits more evenly Improve sustainability			2023-2028 2024 Ongoing
Cycle development	Eaton Park as cycle hub	Increase take up of led bike rides, building cycling confidence. Additional of mid-week rides to 10 Saturday rides. Very good take-up with some sessions led as two separate groups. 2-3 Dr Bike sessions annually, keeping bikes on the road. Offer training in bike maintenance and bike ride leadership. Three new ride leaders trained in 2023. Annual cycle event and social media encouraging cycling Seek funding to install additional bike stands. Funding obtained via Cill. FOEP support bid with research & planning.	To improve sustainability	Enhance		2023-5
Local companies	Woodlands Historic buildings	Increase number of team building days with local companies. One extra a year to a maximum of 6. One in 2023. Increase Good Gym visits to 4 a year. One in 2023. Buy kit and identify techniques for cleaning the rotunda. Set up FOEP group to increase volunteer involvement. Group identified. Meeting early 2024.	To empower others to care for the park	Enhance		Ongoing
Local trusts and companies	Resources	Approach Norwich Consolidated Charities and others about funding to refurbish the rose garden fountain.	To ensure the park is sufficiently resourced	Restore		2024

Marketing and communication

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Communication and feedback		Add to FOEP's social media communications options a visitors book for use on event days. <i>(completed)</i> . Increase availability of FOEP newsletter to include councillors, stakeholders, café and FOEP's room visitors	To empower users, user groups and others to contribute to care and development of the park.	Enhance Reinforce Create Communicate		2023-2028
FOEP		Review website structure to increase the focus on sustainability, events and opportunities to join the friends and get involved	To increase the number of users and visitors To provide good and safe access for all	Enhance		Ongoing
Survey		To further understand park users changing needs and the quality of services provided.	To empower users, user groups and others to contribute to care and development of the park	Enhance Reinforce		2024
Travel and transport / parking		Encourage use of sustainable travel and transport – cycling, walking and public transport FOEP Sustainable Transport Group to work on incentivisation (with support of Eaton Park Café). Clarify parking discounts for Blue Badge holders. <i>(Completed and promoted on FOEP's website)</i>	To provide good and safe access for all To improve sustainability	Reinforce Enhance		2023-2028

Management

Project	Character area	Action	Link to aims	Action	Status	Timescale
Communication and feedback	NCC, NCSL and FOEP	Improve buy-in to park vision, and communication and understanding between FOEP, NCSL and NCC with a get-together for staff and volunteers to share successes, concerns and news.	To empower users, user groups and others to contribute to care and development of the park	Create Enhance		2024
	Park Officer	Parks and open spaces officer to continue to meet with park groups and concession holders on a regular basis		Enhance Conserve Reinforce		2023-2028
Resourcing	All	To review pricing policy and communications for events and sports hires to increase both income and activity	To ensure the park is sufficiently resourced	Resource		2024-2028
Resourcing	FOEP	To increase income from membership and donations To conduct specific fundraising campaigns for trees, benches and specific projects such as the fountain	To ensure the park is sufficiently resourced	Enhance Conserve Resource		2023-2028

