

# The Course Management Plan 2008



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## **PART I: WHERE WE ARE NOW**

### *INTRODUCTION:*

#### **What is a park management plan?**

Management Plans are an important aid to the efficient and effective management of any site. A Plan forms part of a process for evaluating performance, consulting and involving people, strategic planning and providing continuity. Individual plans will be specific to each park and will deliver aims and objectives specific to the needs of the local community who will be directly involved in its formulation.

A Park Management Plan also provides an excellent opportunity to collate a wealth of information relating to the park that the management authority possesses, into a single comprehensive document.

If you require any further details about this plan please contact:

Address: Parks & Open Spaces:  
Shooters Hill depot  
Opposite Eaglesfield Rd  
Woolwich  
SE18 4LX

Tel. 020 8856 0100  
Email [parcs@greenwich.gov.uk](mailto:parcs@greenwich.gov.uk)

This park is allocated a technical officer who can be contacted for any further information (using the contact details provided above).

#### **What is the purpose of this management Plan?**

As well as developing a Green Space Strategy, the production of individual management plans for each park is good practice and was one of the Action Points from the Green Space Strategy.

This Management Plan is intended to provide a vital resource for parks staff in maintaining and developing The Course as a resource for the community and will be under constant informal review, with an annual review of progress (of the action plan) and continuing management prescription and a 5 year comprehensive review in 2012.

Full details of the public consultation used to create this plan can be found in Appendix x (ONCE UNDERTAKEN) of this plan.

It is expected that the plan will provide a framework within which any future decisions concerning this site will be taken and that the rolling reviews will inform future strategic and management planning. In addition, it is hoped that the management plan for The Course will assist with allocating

existing and securing additional resources for developments on this site that this management plan specifies.

Future actions/priorities for this site are identified in the action plan to this document. This management plan therefore provides a benchmark against which future progress can be measured.

### **Wider Policy Context**

The Management Plan has been written within the context of a wide framework of national, regional and local policy statements and strategies.

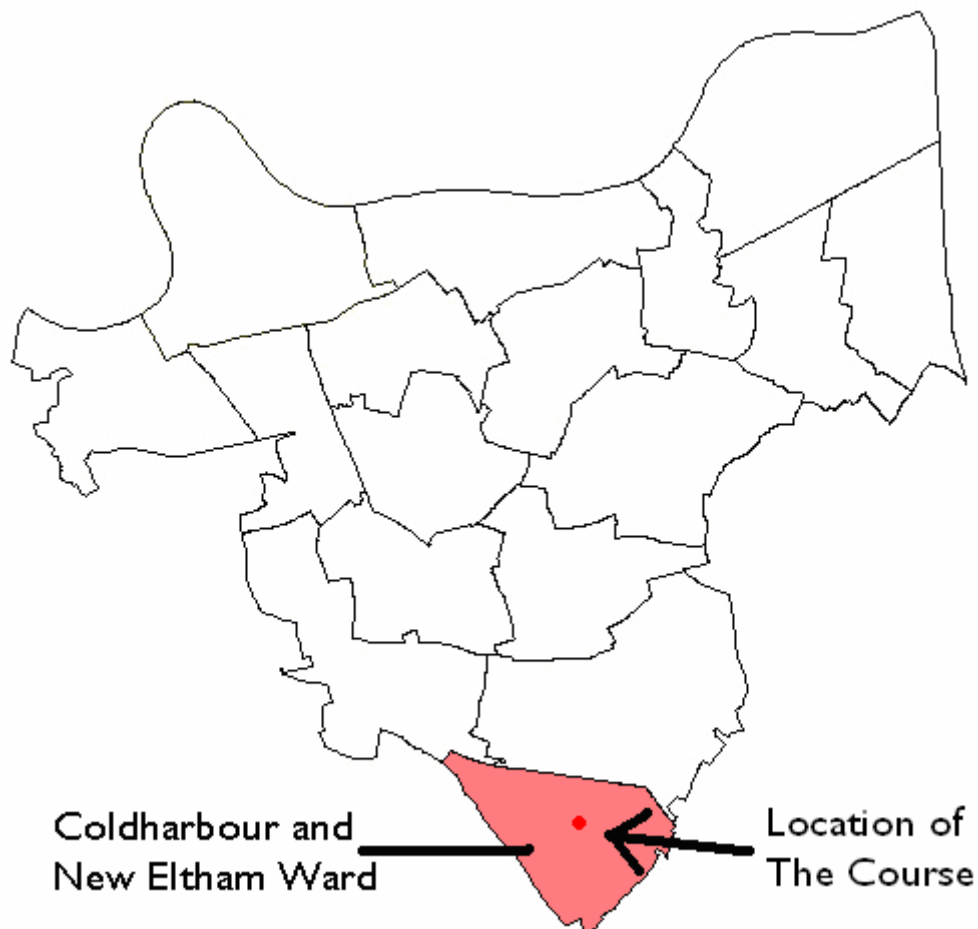
A number of strategies have been considered in the production of this document to ensure that the priorities identified in this plan deliver and compliment the appropriate aims and objectives identified in them.

The main documents impacting on the development of this plan are listed in [Appendix I](#)

## *SITE DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION BASE*

### **Brief description of the park**

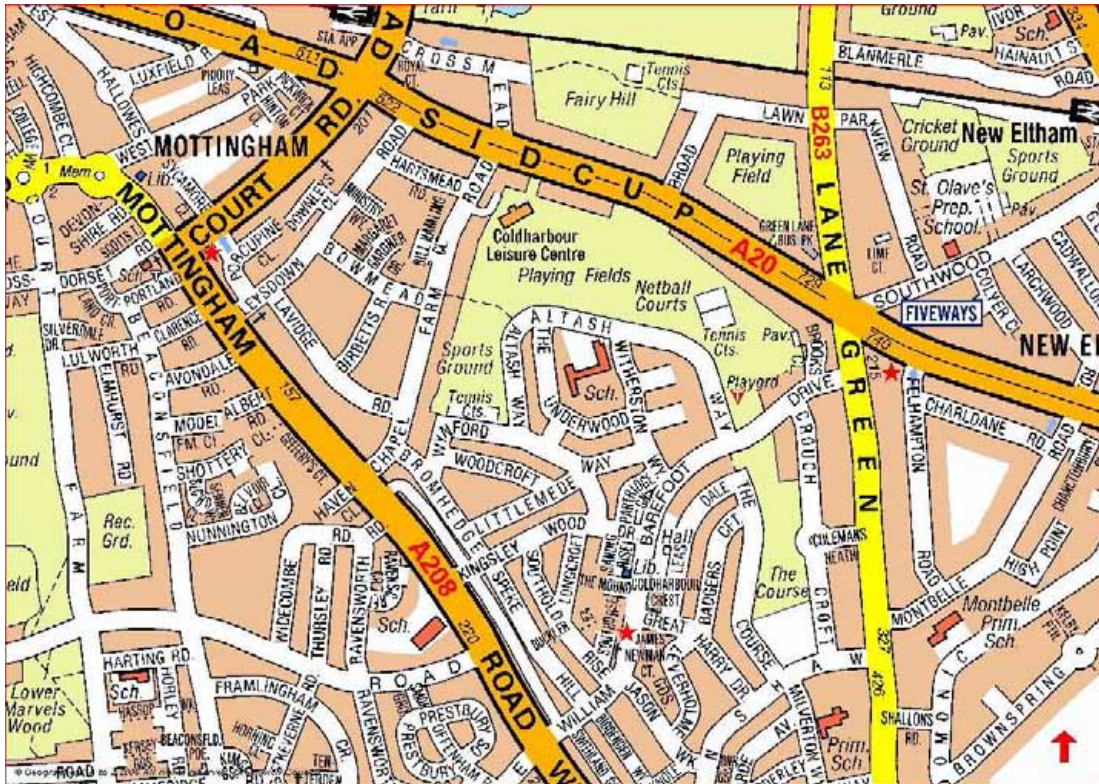
The Course is a north/south linear open space of 3.83 hectare located within the Coldharbour and New Eltham Ward of the London Borough of Greenwich.



The Course is owned and maintained by Greenwich Council, with no leases affecting any part of the site.

Responsibility for the maintenance of The Course falls to the Greenwich Council Parks and Open Spaces Department.

The park is bounded on much of its perimeter by roads, as shown by the diagram over side.



The geology underlying The Course is London Clay, which results in poorly drained boggy ground unless slopes or manmade improvements allow adequate drainage.

The Course is classified by the Greenwich Green Space Strategy as *Local Park*

### **Biology**

The park is composed of large areas of grass maintained at an amenity standard, with a number of trees scattered around the site. Trees on the site include Hornbeam (*Carpinus spp*), Ash (*Fraxinus spp*), Willow (*Salix spp*), Rowan (*Sorbus spp*) and London plane trees (*Platanus x hispanica*).

There is a row of trees along the east and west sides of the northern half of the park, comprised of willow and poplars.

### **Fences, Furniture and Signage**

The park is open onto the roads that border its western (The Course) and northern (William Barefoot Drive) sides. The road that runs next to its eastern side (Crouch Croft) is partially fenced with a 1.8 metre railing. In the past it has been proposed that this side be fully fenced in order to stop stolen cars from being driven onto this area, but this type of activity appears to be declining in frequency over recent years.

### **Buildings**

There is only one building within the park, which is currently used as youth facilities that is run by the Directorate of Children's Services.

It also has a storage area on its western end that was used for storing horticultural equipment.

### **Antisocial Behaviour**

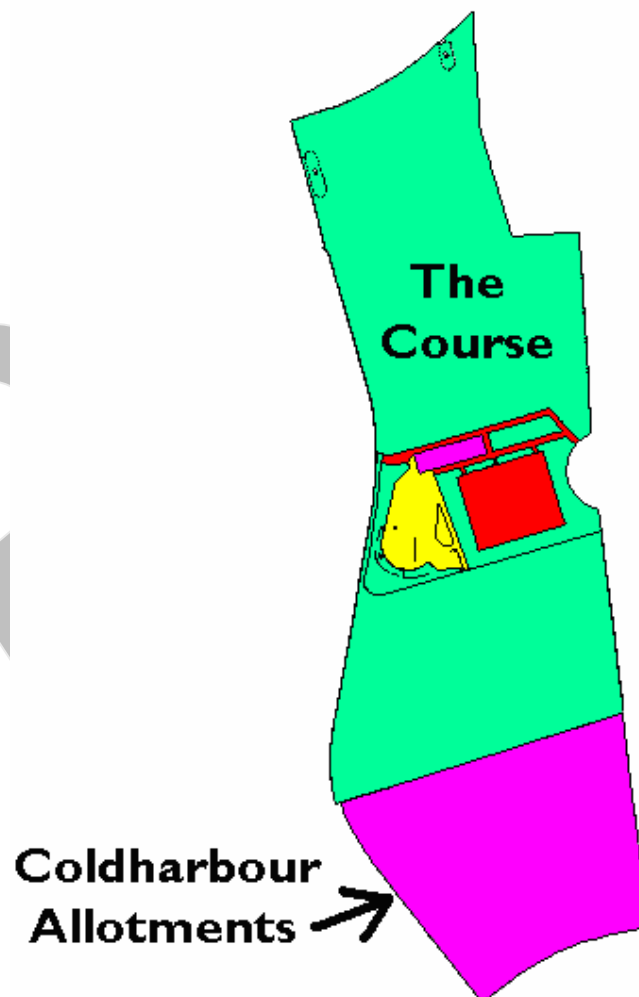
Antisocial behaviour within the park at the moment mainly consists of graffiti on the building. In order to try and combat this, a graffiti artist was recently contracted to cover one side of the

building in a single large graffiti panel. At the time of writing, this has worked very well as a deterrent and has been in place for several months without being defaced. It may be possible to do the same for the rest of the building.

In the past, the open areas of the park have been subject to illicit vehicles being driven in the park and subsequent dumping although this appears to have reduced recently. When cars were dumped during the winter months, they frequently had to be left until early summer, as wet, boggy ground within the park prevented their removal.

### **Access**

The only pathways within the park are for accessing the building, playground and southern area. The southern area of the park is almost completely flat, so it is accessible to disabled users, provided the ground is dry. When boggy, it would be very difficult for disabled users to access any area within the park at all, excepting the central section around the pathways.



### **Public Transport Information**

The nearest rail stations to The Course are either New Eltham or Mottingham National Rail Stations which are both on the Dartford loop line.

Bus routes 314, 160 and 162 run from Eltham Train Station to William Barefoot Drive.

### **Arboricultural Survey**

To date, The Course has not been the subject of an arboricultural survey.

An arboricultural survey of The Course should be undertaken.

Further management of the Course would: -

- Comply with the overall management plan for The Course
- Undertake the work identified within the most current tree survey
- To preserve and enhance the existing landscape by replacing a tree when removed and reviewing capacity for additional planting.

### **Park User Information**

#### **Demographics of Coldharbour and New Eltham Ward**

The Demographic information contained in this section is gathered from a variety of sources, including the 2001 Census and the Neighbourhood Statistics website, but summarised on the Greenwich 2002 Ward profiles of the Council's Intranet site.

The information relates to Coldharbour and New Eltham as a whole and not specifically to the area surrounding The Course

The resident population of the Coldharbour and New Eltham Ward, as measured in the 2001 Census was 12425, of which 48% were male and 52% were female.

The 2001 Census indicated that the majority of people living in this Ward were white. People in the 30 – 39 Y.O. age bracket represented the highest proportion of the Ward population, the average age being 40.6 years. 18.8% of the Ward's population were under the age of 16 years.

The level of employment was 2.4% above the Greenwich average but just below the national average. 26.5% of the population have access to 2 or more cars or vans whilst 27.4% of the Ward's population have no access at all to a car or van. This data suggests that many residents in this ward either have a preference for private transport, or do not have ready access to public transport.

## **Stakeholders**

### Greenwich Council

- Culture & Community Services (P&OS)
- Strategic Planning (Property Services, Planning Control, Green Chain)
- Chief Executives (Communications)
- Neighbourhood Services (Neighbourhood Panels/Representatives)
- Children's Services

### Community

#### Parks Users

Children using the playground and their parents.

### Businesses

GLL (Coldharbour)

### Agencies

Police, Fire & Rescue Service

### Politicians

Coldharbour and New Eltham local MP

Ward Members

## **Management of the site**

### **Management Structure**

The management of The Course is the responsibility of the Parks & Open Spaces Department within Greenwich Council.

The Parks and Open Spaces Department is located within the Directorate of Culture and Community Services. Individual management functions are devolved and key functions are identified as follows:

- Horticultural Maintenance
- Park Keepers, Rangers and Parks Security
- Parks Development
- Fixed Equipment Playgrounds
- Ecology & conservation
- Tree & Woodland maintenance
- Administration – Sports lettings, complaints monitoring

A diagram showing the management structure of the Parks and Open Spaces Department is shown in Appendix II

## **Budget Information**

The budgets used to maintain parks and open spaces are currently split into two areas, Horticulture Operations and Property Services.

Horticulture & Park Keeper Operations

Currently it is not possible to identify expenditure specifically related to The Course, as finance generally comes from a central fund.

Property Services

The corporate budgets for both planned and responsive maintenance of the Council's property infrastructure are held by Greenwich Property Services in the Directorate of Strategic Planning. Planned works are carried out on a strict basis of corporate priorities and, as a consequence, P&OS has to compete against other service departments for a share of the limited funds available. Responsive repairs are carried out for minor items as and when they arise.

**Marketing**

Marketing of the park is currently limited and is mainly in the local area. However, there is some information regarding the parks on the internet which at the time of writing requires updating.

## **PART II: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GET TO**

### *VISION*

The vision for the parks within this plan should be to continue to provide a quality local park, and to support and be led by the local residents and community as appropriate. Consultation with the local residents and community will be on-going.

### **General Objectives**

- To reduce Anti Social Behaviour
- To improve the health and well being of visitors and residents by offering a well maintained and quality park for active recreation and/ or relaxation
- To protect our biological assets and increase biodiversity
- To realize the potential of the park as a cultural and historical place to visit through a programme of publicity, information and events
- To work with the local community in identifying local priorities for funding of the park
- To ensure that the activities and events in our parks celebrate and promote the borough's rich diversity and that our parks are accessible to everyone

### *ANALYSIS & ASSESSMENT*

#### **The Course**

There is the potential to plant more trees on the site.

There is little limited scope to develop the site to accommodate sporting facilities due to poor drainage and topography.

### *STRENGTHS*

- Open space with a variety of amenity trees. Has the potential for more formal tree plantings
- Play facilities including play area and tennis

### *CHALLENGES*

- Signage is minimal
- Furniture on site is a mixture of designs
- ASB, in particular graffiti on sides of community centre not currently 'painted' with the graffiti panel

### *RECOMMENDATIONS*

- Undertake consultation with stakeholders and feed results into plan as appropriate
- Investigate possibility/benefits of additional tree planting
- To reduce ASB
- Investigate possibility of painting the other sides of the community centre (similar to that of the northern side) an attempt to reduce the graffiti on the building
- To secure Inward Investment as appropriate

## PART III: HOW WILL WE GET THERE

### Action Plan

Timescales as given in this document are as following;

Short Term – Within one year from adoption of this plan

Medium Term – Within three years from the adoption of this plan

Long Term – Five years and more from the adoption of this plan

Recommendation	Action	Timescale (Long/Medium/Short Term)	Responsibility	Reviewed
Undertake consultation with stakeholders to investigate issues such as barriers to use, priorities for improvement	Undertake consultation with stakeholders. Carry out surveys in parks Review/amend plan where appropriate	Short Term		
To reduce ASB	To take steps to reduce ASB – in particular graffiti	Ongoing		
To seek Inward Investment as appropriate	Undertake work to identify/secure new funding streams as appropriate	Ongoing		

## **PART IV: HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN WE'VE ARRIVED**

### *MONITORING AND REVIEW*

This Action Plan to this Management Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and the Management Plan updated every five years by Parks Management Staff responsible for the parks

There will also be a need to keep a working document copy of the Management Plan within the parks office so that issues and changes that arise can be documented along with new information pertaining to the park.

Upon review, the new management plan will make note of the works performed and review the success of works in the Action Plan.

## **APPENDIX I: Legislation, policies and strategies affecting park management**

As highlighted earlier in the plan, Greenwich Council's Parks & Open Spaces department operates within a wide framework of national, regional and local policy statements and strategies. The main documents impacting on the development of this plan are listed below.

### **The Greenwich Strategy**

The Greenwich Strategy sets out the vision for Greenwich Borough as being the place to live, work, learn and visit. This vision underpins all of the strategies produced by Greenwich Council and directly impacts on all service plans and service delivery.

### **The Cultural Strategy**

Parks & Open Spaces is one of six 'areas' considered by the Cultural Strategy. The Strategy has five over-arching themes: - Equality and Access, Sustainability, the Cultural Economy, Achievement and Excellence and Partnerships. All of these aims are relevant to this management plan and have been considered in developing the opportunities and priorities for this site.

### **Green Space Strategy**

The Green Spaces Strategy sets out the Council's strategic intentions for its green assets and its vision of the positive contribution that Greenwich's open networks make to our lives.

### **Parks & Open Spaces Service Plan 2006-7**

The Parks & Open Spaces department aims to develop, manage, ensure accessibility and maintain to a high standard the borough's Parks, Open Spaces, Woodlands, Tree Stock, Cemeteries, Playgrounds, Sports Pitches, Allotments and other outdoor facilities. To meet the needs of the community and deliver the Council's core objectives where applicable to the service, and specifically regarding the provision of a clean and well cared for environment and supporting Health and Quality of Life for the local community.

### **ISO 9001:2000 – Quality Management System**

Quality Management System ISO 9001: 2000 is used by organisations to manage their activities and resources to guarantee a quality service. This management system is based on eight quality management principles:

- Customer Focus
- Leadership
- Involving People
- Process Approach
- System Approach to management
- Continual Improvement
- Factual Approach to decision making
- Supplier relationship, which benefit both sides.

The Parks & Open Spaces department is currently ISO 9000 accredited.

## **Unitary Development Plan**

Local Councils have a duty to prepare a Development Plan by law. The Greenwich Unitary Development Plan (UDP) sets out the vision for use of the land in the Borough, and provides the main guidance for making decisions on individual planning proposals. The document is intended to cover the period 2001 – 2011 (or 2016 in some instances) it is a legal document with the following purposes

To provide a framework of acceptable uses within the Borough, defining areas where development is not desired or where it needs to be carefully directed and;

To provide a detailed basis for the control and development

The UDP may be viewed at the Directorate of Strategic Planning, Planning Department, Peggy Middleton House, Woolwich, SE18, or alternatively at a local library.

The Course is designated by the Greenwich UDP 2006 under the following designations.

- Metropolitan Open Land
- Green Chain

In addition to these designations, the UDP has several policies that deal with Park Facilities and Community Benefits that affect the parks.

### Metropolitan Open Land

Policy references **01**, **02**, **03** and **04** under the section 'Protecting Open Land' set out what the acceptable land uses and allowable developments are within areas designated as MOL. These policy references are too lengthy to reproduce here. The policies are broadly meant to control development or alterations to existing land that would be inappropriate to MOL and have an adverse affect on the character and usage of the open space.

### Green Chain

Policy reference **05** under the section 'Protecting Open Land' sets out what the objectives of the Green Chain designation are. The main objectives of this policy are as follows

- To improve and encourage the provision of suitable recreational facilities, with an emphasis on those serving a wide area of South East London and/or requiring open land.
- To safeguard the open land from built development and maintain its positive contribution in providing a visual and physical break in the built-up area of London.
- To conserve and enhance the visual amenity and ecological aspects of the landscape.
- To improve public access to and through the area.
- To promote an overall identity for the area in order to increase public awareness of available recreational facilities.
- To encourage the collaboration and co-operation of the various public and private agencies, owners, organisations, clubs, etc. in the area to achieve the above objectives.

For the extent of the Green Chain Areas in Greenwich, refer to the UDP proposals map and second draft alterations maps.

### Community Open Space

The UDP refers to **Queens Gardens** as Community Open Space.

Policy Reference O7 in section 2.4 of the Greenwich UDP refers to Community Open space. Policy O1 refers to MOL policy.

O7 Public and private open space areas defined as Community Open Space on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded from built development. New buildings and extensions to existing buildings will only be permitted where they are ancillary to the existing land use, are limited in size and extent, sensitively sited, and are compatible with neighbouring development.

Changes of use of existing buildings in ancillary use will be considered in the light of Policy O1. Where existing built development within parks and public open spaces becomes surplus to demand, the Council may allow the sites to be redeveloped for specialist sporting development (which combine the use of outdoor and indoor space), subject to the criteria set out in Policy O1.

#### Areas of Special Character

**D28** Within Areas of Special Character defined on the Proposals Map, special consideration will be given to the safeguarding, restoration and enhancement of character, scale and quality of open spaces and associated buildings. Skylines and distant views both to and from the Areas of Special Character will be protected.

#### Community Benefits

**O10** The Council will seek to secure improvement and enhancement of existing parks and public open spaces, where major development places increased demand on existing areas, and, where appropriate, the creation of new parks and public open spaces in line with Policies O9 and C3, through planning obligations and conditions on planning permissions in line with Policy SC2.

#### Park Facilities

O12 The Council will seek to enhance open space by the provision and encouragement of appropriate park facilities (e.g. seating, children's play equipment, refreshment facilities, outdoor tennis courts, pitch and putt, sports pitches and changing facilities and Arts, Culture and Entertainment facilities, such as open air performance spaces, sculpture and visual imagery and areas for cultural exhibition and study) within suitable parks and public open spaces. Facilities should be of a high standard of design and quality and respect local nature conservation interests. Such facilities should be safe to use and accessible to all. (See Policies D5, D6 and D7).

### **The Bio Diversity Action Plan**

The Greenwich Biodiversity Action Plan will be the first co-ordinated approach to conserving Greenwich's biodiversity. The aim of the plan is:

'To ensure the conservation, enhancement and public appreciation of the biodiversity of the London Borough of Greenwich'.

The Biodiversity Action Plan focuses on locally important habitats and species and has actions drafted to ensure that they cover all relevant habitats and species. Initially actions may be focussed on those under the most pressure or where most advantage can be gained. However, it allows for all important habitats and species to be covered.

The Biodiversity Action Plan has been developed in partnership with local and regional groups and organisations and is currently in a draft stage. Once the final draft is agreed it will be released for wider consultation before a final plan is adopted.

## Legislation

The Parks & Open Spaces department operates within the frameworks set out by the following legislation, and therefore, the legislation may impact upon the delivery of service of the Parks and Open Spaces department both financially, through planning and human resources. This is not a comprehensive list but is indicative of key pieces of legislation relating to P&OS.

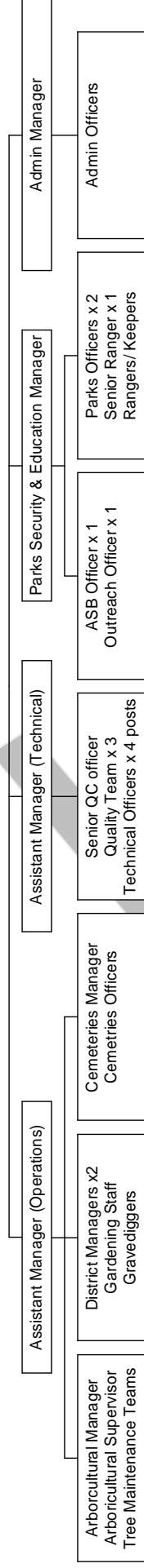
- Alcohol Consumption in Public Places Order 2003
- Clean Neighbourhoods Act 2004
- Control of Pesticide Protection Act 1986
- Country Code 1981
- Country side and Rights of Way Act 2000 and increments
- Countryside & Right of Way Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1998
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1998
- Litter Act 1983
- Ministry of Housing and Local Government Provisional Order Confirmation (Greater London Parks & Open Spaces Act )1967
- Occupiers Liability Act 1957
- Road Traffic Act 1988 (as amended 1991)
- The 2004 Country Code
- The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 & Dogs Act 1871??
- The National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949
- The Weeds Act 1959
- The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

In addition there are numerous bye-laws that relate to specific parks.

The Council is currently reviewing the adoption of the Cleaner Neighbourhoods Act 2005

## APPENDIX II: Management structure

Table showing management structure of Greenwich Council Parks and Open Spaces



## **APPENDIX III: Historic Context**

The Course would have been part of the Eltham Palace estate. Eltham Palace had three wooded deer parks, these being; the Great Park, Middle Park and Horn Park. After the ravages of the Civil War, Eltham palace was used as a farm and the Great Hall became a barn. The palace's three parks were stripped of their timber for shipbuilding in around 1660 by Sir Thomas Walsingham. For much of the time since the dissolution of Eltham Palace Estate, the land was used as farmland, most of which was taken up by Coldharbour Farm.

The Coldharbour Estate (total area 155 acres) was purchased by the council from the crown commissioners in 1946. The surrounding Coldharbour Housing Estate was completed in 1959. "Social amenities" such as a community hall library and cinema were mentioned in the estate plan and summary, however, parks, gardens allotments and general open spaces are not mentioned in any historical documents in regards to local assets features or amenities other than wide roads and open spaces.