

The Tarn 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 a site. A Plan forms part of a process for evaluating performance against agreed standards, 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.

Name of Site: The Tarn

Address: The Tarn,
 Court Road,
 New Eltham, SE9

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 parks@greenwich.gov.uk

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

Due for Revision: 2012
Writing Timescale: tba
Approved: tba
Adopted: tba

Purpose of this Management Plan

This Management Plan will be used as a tool to aid the effective management of the Tarn.

A range of representatives from the Community will be consulted in the production of this plan and their views will be considered in the development of a vision for The Tarn Park. Full details of the consultation can be found in section ** (*once undertaken*) of this plan. It is hoped that this plan will help to encourage relationships between the Council and the community and provide access to information on the management approach to this site.

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. It is envisaged that the plan will provide a framework around which any future decisions concerning this site will be taken.

In addition, it is hoped that the management plan for The Tarn will assist with allocating existing and securing additional resources for this site.

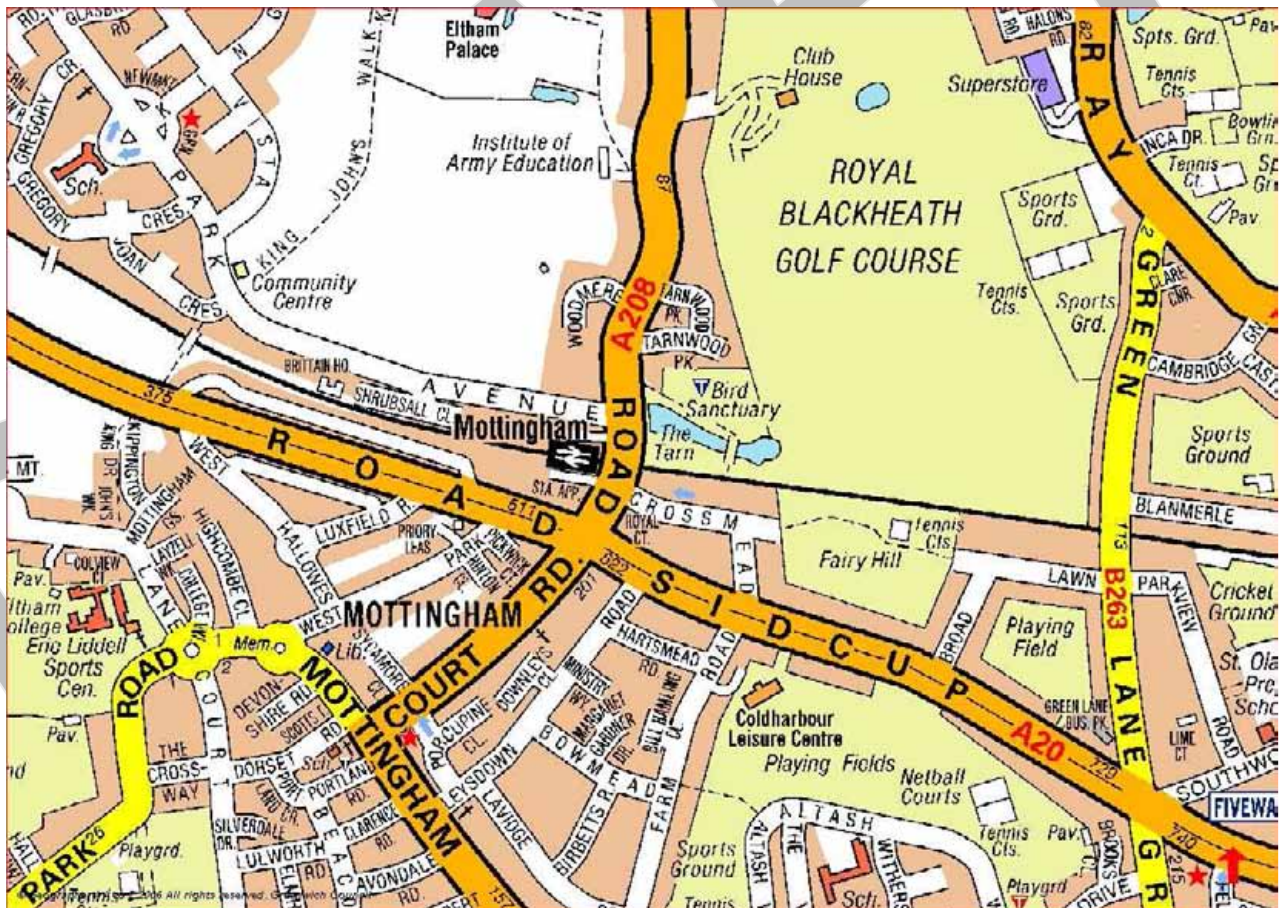
SITE INFORMATION/DESCRIPTION

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.

The Tarn is a public park of around 19.2 hectares, located two miles South of Eltham Town and is accessed from Court Road (A208). The park is situated east of Court Road and is close to Mottingham Station and the Royal Blackheath Golf Course. The Sidcup railway line to Dartford forms the Southern boundary of the park.



The Tarn is owned and managed by Greenwich Council, with management and maintenance being carried out by the Parks and Open Spaces Department, located within the Directorate of Culture and Community Services.

Heritage and History

A Summary of The Tarn's Heritage and History can be found in Appendix II.

Landscape

The Tarn occupies 9 acres of woodland lawns, shrub beds and a lake. As the name of the park suggests, the lake is the main feature. The lake is in the centre of the park and is fed by a small stream which drains to the River Quaggy. In heavy rain, it acts as a reservoir for storm water from the A20 run-off. Anti-pollution booms prevent pollution entering lake (via rainwater from the A20), in order to protect the water creatures and maintain the water quality in the lake. Additionally there are floating platforms for the ducks.

The wooded area within the Tarn is currently closed to the public. It accounts for one third of the total 9-acre area, providing a natural habitat for birds and animals.

Wildlife and Ecology

One third of the park is designated as a bird sanctuary. Tall trees, bushy shrubs, and dense undergrowth create a natural environment that attracts many birds and insects. Beech, oak, birch, elder, holly, ivy, stinging nettle, and bramble provide food and shelter for the inhabitants. The sanctuary is currently closed to the public and serves as a tiny enclave where wildlife remains undisturbed in its own domain.

Many saplings have been planted since the Dutch Elm disease spread across lowland England in the late 1960's and the Tarn now has numerous evergreens and many deciduous trees and shrubs.

However, a formal tree survey has not been carried out for this site.

Tree management of the site will: -

- Comply with the overall management plan for The Tarn
- Undertake the work identified within the Tree Survey
- Preserve and enhance the existing landscape

Seventy-three species of birds have been recorded at the Tarn including Common sandpiper, pied flycatcher, grey heron, little grebe, Shelduck, and swan-white Aylesbury. Four species of mammals have also been recorded (namely, the grey squirrel, red fox, brown rat and hedgehog)

Aquatic plants within the lake provide rich nourishment for birds, insects, and other lake dwellers including pond snails, newts, fish water shrimps, and numerous species of aquatic insects including the larvae of dragonfly and damselflies.

Infrastructure within the park

Buildings

The park contains a W.C./Office building.

The W.C./Office building is a brick block cavity construction with Norfolk Pan tiled pitched roof. The building line steps back behind the roof eaves line to provide a canopy over the front of the office. The extended roofline is supported on natural timber circular posts (tree trunk sections). The soffit of the canopy is rendered on expanded metal and the flooring in this area is York Stone paving.



At the time of writing, the building is in fair condition.

There are approximately 8-10 benches around the perimeter of the lake, many of which have commemorative plaques in memory of loved ones.

There is a tarmac pathway that enables users to walk around the perimeter of the park/lake which would benefit from resurfacing in places.

Visitor Attractions facilities and Activities

As detailed above, the main attraction at the Tarn is the lake and the associated wildlife, in particular the birds.

An Ice Well (refurbished with funding awarded by the HLF) is sited at the entrance to the Tarn. An information board detailing the origins and uses of the well was erected following the refurbishment of the well.

Access

There are excellent public transport links to enable access to the Tarn. Access within the Tarn is good with tarmac pathways throughout. A sign at the park entrance states no access for dogs, cyclists.

The main entrance is over 1 in 14 gradient, but can be used for wheelchair access. Throughout the park are a number of steps.

The Park is open daily by 9am and closed by dusk (times vary throughout the year and hours of daylight).

Train

Mottingham Rail Station is situated directly opposite the park.

Buses

Buses 126, 161 and 124 service the park.

Car

There is no car parking space available within the Tarn, although parking spaces can frequently be found in neighbouring roads.

Who uses the site, where they come from, patterns of use and behaviour

The local park keeper described the park as being 'like the resident's back garden' and the main users of the park are local residents, in particular, young families. Through observation and speaking with the local park keeper, it would appear that there a steady stream of visitors throughout the day both during weekdays and weekends.

One of the primary uses of the park is for feeding the ducks and birds along with walkers following the Green Chain Walk.

Demographic Information

The information relates to Middle Park and Sutcliffe ward as whole and not specifically to The Tarn

The resident population of Middle Park and Sutcliffe, as measured in the 2001 Census, was 12,832 of which 47 per cent were male and 53 per cent were female. The resident population of Greenwich was 214,403, of which 48 per cent were male and 52 per cent were female.

According to the census survey, 88.4% of the residents in the ward are classed as 'White' with 12.6 % of the surrounding being of ethnic origin. People in the 30-59-age bracket represented the highest proportion on the ward population, the average age being 38.2 years 20.8% of the ward's population were under 16 years.

The level of employment was slightly below the Greenwich average and is 5% below the national average 15.34% have two or more cars or vans whilst 35.53% of the ward's population have no car or van.

Stakeholders

Greenwich Council

- Culture & Community Services (P&OS)
- Strategic Planning (property Services, planning control)
- Chief Executives (Communications)
- Neighbourhood Services (Neighbourhood Panels/Representatives)

Agencies

- (Police, Fire & Rescue Service),

Community

- Fledgling Friends of groups

Politicians

- Local Ward Councillors

Community consultation

A fledging 'Friends of the Tarn' has recently been established.

A process of consultation will need to be undertaken with the Friends of group and other stakeholders residents to ensure the site best meets the needs of visitors and to identify priorities for improvements to the site, barriers to use etc.

An assessment of the cultural and aesthetic value

The Tarn is an extremely aesthetically pleasing park. The trees and shrubs bordering the park make it feel intimate and tranquil, giving visitors the impression that they are in small woodland away from a residential area and main road. The Tarn is an oasis of charm.

Management of the site

The management of the park described in this management plan is the responsibility of the Parks & Open Spaces service within Greenwich Council.

The Parks and Open Spaces department are located within the Directorate of Culture and Community Services. A staff structure plan for the department is shown in Appendix III.

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

Staff Presence

A park keeper provides a regular staff presence between sunrise and sunset (times vary according to the time of year). The broad role of a park keeper is to ensure the safety of the public visiting the park, provide assistance where appropriate, daily inspection, opening and closing of gates & facilities, litter-picking and the collection of passes and income from sports where appropriate.

Grounds maintenance is provided by the Council's own workforce. The District Manager responsible for the grounds maintenance staff initially inspects standards. A further check is carried out by Quality Control Officers, who are centrally based staff, reporting to the Assistant Operations Manager. Senior management carry out random checks.

Budget Information

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

Horticulture operations

Currently it is not possible to identify expenditure specifically related to The Tarn as finances generally come 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

A local resident distributes a number of leaflets to park users and the public around the Tarn and information can also be found on the Greenwich Council website, Green Chain website and the parks explorer website.

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PART II: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GET TO?

VISION

The vision for The Tarn is to maintain and protect its unique charm and further encourage the variety of species of birds and wildlife it already attracts. *(To be developed further by the Friends of group to ensure their vision for the Tarn is incorporated).*

General Objectives (DRAFT)

- To reduce Anti Social Behaviour in the park
- To improve the health and well being of visitors and residents by offering a well maintained and quality park for relaxation
- To protect 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 the park celebrate and promote the borough's rich diversity and that it is accessible to everyone

ANALYSIS & ASSESSMENT

Ecology

The Tarn has both ecological and environmental significance and has been appointed a new Site of Nature Conservation Importance. It is also part of the Green Chain Walk.

SINCs are non-statutory and range in size from a small meadow to large blocks of woodland. They fulfil at least one of the following conditions:

- They contain good examples of a particular type of semi-natural habitat
- They contain species of flora and fauna which have restricted distribution in the area
- They are of significant nature conservation value within an urban area
- They are of countywide importance.
- There are several reasons for identifying SINCs. Primarily it is to try to maintain the sites as important places for wildlife.

Currently, the lake in the park is not dredged on a regular basis and it is recommended that this takes place in shorter intervals to enable the lake to become more cleaner and more accommodating for all of the wildlife that reside in the lake.

A local resident has alleged that young ducklings have difficulty accessing the platforms within the lake. This may be a problem when they are require feeding by the mother, and could be explored further.

Rats are frequently witnessed within the Tarn. Signage has been erected to try and discourage people from leaving food/ground feeding birds to try and deter them.

The site is already rich in wildlife, but there is the potential to increase this further by additional planting (for example, buddleia, lavender, thistle, stinging nettles and other wild flowers), with a view to attracting further wildlife and in particular, butterflies. An interested local resident has undertaken some preliminary investigations regarding this and has suggested that the area to the rear of the Tarn has the potential to become a butterfly garden.

As the Tarn is so rich in wildlife, there is the potential to use the site for educational purposes for example, organised tours for school children from local schools.

The site may benefit from additional interpretation signage. This could be explored further through consultation.

Management

It has been identified that Management of the Tarn currently appears to satisfy the wider users of the site. However, further consultation is needed to ascertain user needs and aspirations.

History

Dating back to 1760, the ice well in the NW corner of the Tarn originally supplied Eltham Lodge (now the clubhouse of the Royal Blackheath Golf Course) - with ice and is one of 2500 still in

existence in Britain. This, along with the Tarn's links with Eltham Palace, makes the Tarn of historical interest within the local area.

Sport & Recreation

There are no formal sport facilities within the Tarn and development of sport facilities would not be appropriate and compromise the tranquillity of the Tarn.

Visitor & Community needs

A process of consultation will be undertaken with stakeholders and the local community to explore issues such as barriers to use, priorities for improvement. Findings of the consultation will be incorporated into the plan once undertaken.

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STRENGTHS

- Charming and tranquil
- Attracts a wealth of wildlife, in particular birds
- Home to an Ice Well dating back to 1760
- Has a fledgling Friends of group
- Part of the Green Chain walk
- Good local park enjoyed by local residents/visitors who wish to relax and enjoy the range of wildlife in a beautiful and intimate setting
- Has achieved SINC status

CHALLENGES

- Vandalism within the park – particularly after the park is closed (including life saving rings, bins, picnic benches being thrown into the lake which is hazardous to the birds and wildlife).
- The site has not had a tree survey
- Rat population (food supply supported by people feeding the birds/ducks).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Undertake consultation with Friends group and local community to explore visitor/community needs and explore issues such as barriers to use, priorities for improvement, etc
- Support fledgling Friends of the Tarn
- Undertake a tree survey of the park
- Investigate what measures (possibly with the assistance of an ornithologist/RSPB) might be taken at the Tarn to improve the habitat for the birds e.g. adapting the platforms to enable young ducklings to access the platform more easily when feeding from the mother
- Investigate whether additional interpretation signage (about the birds and water wildlife) would be of benefit
- Investigate developing the Tarn as an educational site for children from local schools
- Investigate increasing diversity of the site further by additional planting to attract further wildlife – for example, development of a butterfly garden
- Continue to monitor/take action to reduce rat population where appropriate
- To improve awareness/use of site by all sections of the community
- Reduce ASB/vandalism (particularly after the park has closed) to prevent furniture/bins/rings being thrown into the lake and threatening birds and wildlife

PART III: HOW WILL WE GET THERE

ACTION PLAN

Timescales as given in this document are as following;

Short Term – Within one-two years from adoption of this plan

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

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

Recommendation	Detail of Specific action	Timescale Start	Responsibility	Reviewed
Undertake consultation with Friends group and local community to explore visitor/community needs and explore issues such as barriers to use, priorities for improvement, etc	Share draft plan and incorporate comments as appropriate Undertake surveys in park	Short Term		
Support fledgling Friends of Group	Advertise interest in local papers, on website, signage within the park Include in consultation process Arrange for the Park Keeper to discuss with 'regulars' to see if they are interested	Ongoing		
Undertake a tree survey within	Liaise with tree officer to schedule	Medium		

the park		Term	
<p>Investigate whether improvements could be made to the Tarn to improve habitat for birds (for example, possible adaptation of platforms to enable young ducklings to access the platforms more easily)</p>	<p>Make enquiries to see whether there is a local ornithologist who might be able to assist</p>	<p>Short Term</p>	
<p>Investigate benefits of additional interpretation signage (about the birds/wildlife)</p>	<p>Include as part of consultation process</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Investigate possibility of working with local schools to enable children to visit the site and learn about the wildlife</p>	<p>Contact local schools</p>	<p>Long Term</p>	
<p>Reduce ASB (particularly after the park is closed) and takes steps to prevent furniture/bins being thrown into the lake)</p>	<p>Carry out full assessment of ASB at site in consultation with local users of the site Liaise with Police and other agencies as appropriate Develop a site-specific action plan to address issues identified in assessment</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Investigate possibility of increasing the biodiversity of the site further by additional planting (e.g. buddleia, lavender, thistle, stinging nettles and wild flowers) with a view to attracting further</p>	<p>Investigate further through consultation and consider in light of draft biodiversity action plan (to be released shortly)</p>	<p>Long Term</p>	

<p>wildlife in particular butterflies Continue to monitor/take action to reduce rat population</p>	<p>Continue to educate visitors about leaving excess food in the Tarn (through signs and education via the park keeper) Implement appropriate action from monitoring</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>To improve awareness/use of site by all sections of the community</p>	<p>Review how site is currently marketed. Investigate ways of improving marketing of site (through the use of different mediums etc) and through improvements to current marketing material</p>	<p>Medium Term</p>	

PART IV HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN WE'VE ARRIVED

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Action Plan to The Tarn will be reviewed annually by Parks Management Staff responsible for the site, and the Management Plan will be fully reviewed and updated every five years.

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 as well as new information can be documented, and the action plan can be regularly reviewed and completed works documented within it as part of the Parks Service business planning process.

Upon review, the new management plan will make note of the works performed and review the success of those works in the action plan section.

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.

The thematic objectives (community safety, biodiversity, education and culture, culture & events, tackling inequality, sport, health & well being) are all relevant to the management plan for the Tarn.

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.

Through consultation with local residents/visitors, the management plan for The Tarn supports these aims by ensuring accessibility of the site and that it meet the needs of the local community. It is envisaged that it will also assist with achieving the aim of mainlining the site to a high standard.

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.

Community Open Space

The UDP refers to The Tarn 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.

Green Chain

The UDP also designates The Tarn as Green Chain. Policy reference O5 under the section 'Protecting Open Land' sets out what the objectives of this designation are. The objectives 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 Area, refer to the UDP proposals map and second draft alterations maps.

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).

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.

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APPENDIX II: Summary of Site Heritage and History

Little is known of the Tarn's early history. It is possible to speculate that the Tarn was stocked with fish for traditional medieval Friday and Lenten diet. Perhaps the Heron, geese and swans featured in vast quantities on bills of fare for the late 15th century banquets at Eltham Palace. The Tarn is the nearest other stretch of water to Eltham Palace. It is certain that the 'The Tarn' is a comparatively recent name and that it had previously been called 'Starbucks Pond'. It is so indicated on maps of the early and late 19th century, but by 1903 appears as Eltham Tarn.

The name Starbuck's Pond is linked with a family in the 16th century who were thought to have left the area in the late 17th century yet it appears the name was attached to the pond itself for a further two hundred years. The ice well located in the northwest region of the park, was initially placed there for the use of Eltham Lodge. There was no artificial means of making ice therefore the purpose of the ice well was to preserve blocks of ice cut from the lake in winter in to the warmer spring weather. Ice wells are found in association with many great houses of the 17th-19th centuries and are a variety of shapes and sizes. The one found at the Tarn 'worked' in the same manner as a vacuum flask by insulating in the cold and excluding the warmth. Sited in a shaded spot, it is a brick-lined hole in the damp ground. The walls are of cavity construction and the well is drained. The top opening was north facing for extra coolness and the well would have been very thickly insulated with a conical straw-thatched roof. The octagonal pointed pan tiled roof on the present shelter seems to echo an antique theme.

The house at the northwest corner of the park now outside its fence used to be part of the property and seems to date from the late 19th century.

Directories indicate that it was occupied by members of 'the gentry' who held, the Tarn on short-term leases from the crown. From 1914-29 male members of the Rocke family were residents at the Tarn. The tarn was left unoccupied in 1933 and the lake was untended and grew stagnant and overgrown.

In 1964 major work was undertaken at the Tarn. An attempt was made to improve the North-western corner of the lake. It was shallow and not in the main flow of water so it was inclined to stagnate. An extra flowerbed was constructed and a rockery, waterfall and pond created. In the 1970's the fencing had to be replaced, with chain link rather than close-board, and there were fresh plantings to replace old trees and provide extra colour on the ground in spring and summer. In 1981 the drainage system was improved. This involved the building of a new weir, adding a second four foot diameter pipe at the inlet, two large outlet sluices, and an electrically operated sluice gate, to control the outflow. The lake suffers from various types of pollution, in recent years oil has occasionally seeped into the lake and water birds have been adversely affected. The Court Conservation societies adopted a small rockery plot in autumn 1982 and, jointly with the Parks department, were aiming to provide an interesting all-season garden. There are various gifts of trees to the Tarn by the people of Mottingham and Eltham that represents the high regard locals have for the Tarn.

APPENDIX III: Parks and Open Spaces Management Structure

