

Maryon Park Management Plan

2021-25

(updated Jan 2023)



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PART I: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Park Address & Contact Details

Park Address: Maryon Park
Maryon Road
Charlton
London
SE7 8DH

Contact Detail: Parks, Estates & Open Spaces
Oxleas Woods Centre
Crown Woods Lane
Shooters Hill
London
SE18 3JA

Tel. 020 8856 0100

Email parks@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

The Parks Strategy & Development Team can be contacted for any further information (using the contact details provided above).

There is an active Friends of Group for Maryon Park and contact details can be found on their web site at www.friendsofmaryonparks.org

There is also a community food growing group at Maryon Park and contact details can be found on their web site <https://maryonparkcommunit.wixsite.com/website>

Introduction - What is a Park Management Plan?

Management Plans are an essential aid to the efficient and effective management of a site. A Plan forms part of a process for evaluating performance, consulting and involving people, strategic planning, and providing continuity. Individual plans are 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.

What is the purpose of this Management Plan?

One of the action points arising from the Green Spaces Strategy was that each park would have individual plans. Parks and Open Spaces expect that the plan will provide a framework for any future decisions concerning this site and that the regular reviews will inform future strategic and management planning. Also, we expect that the management plan for Maryon Park will assist with allocating existing and securing additional resources for developments on this site that this management plan specifies.

The document outlines future actions/priorities for this site. This management plan, therefore, provides measurable benchmarks for use in the future.

Several 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. Appendix II lists the primary documents impacting on the development of this plan.

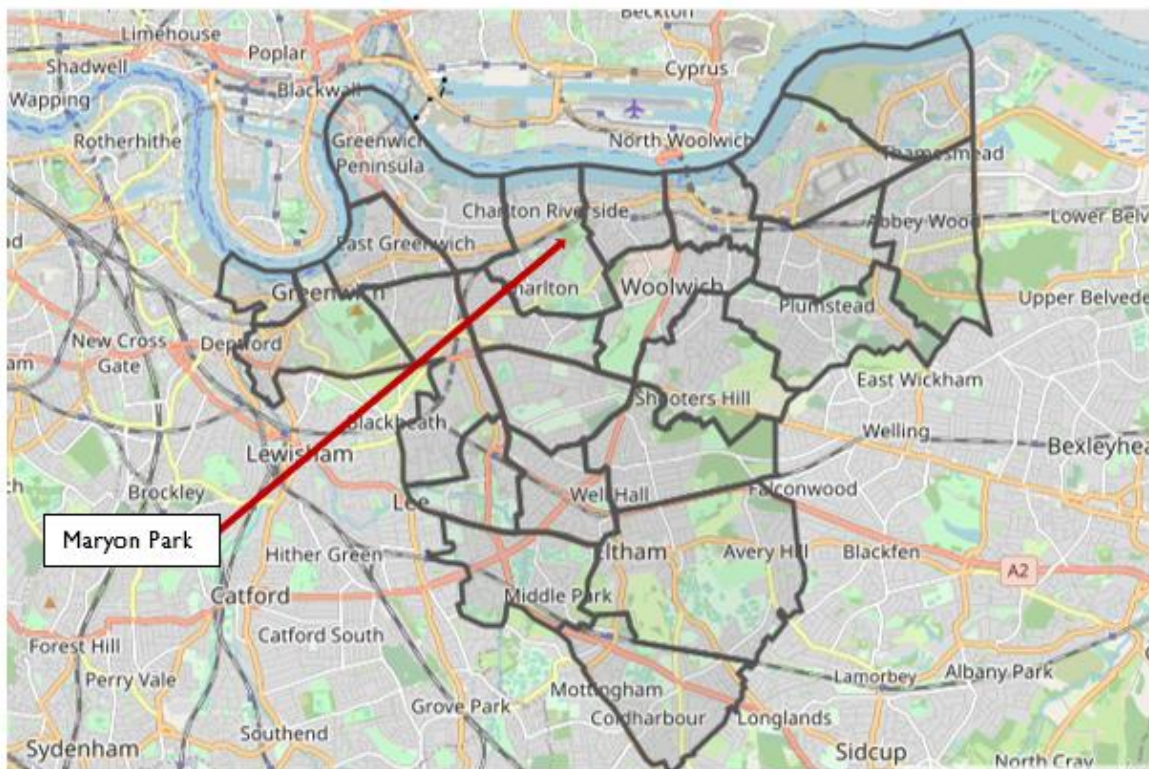


Maryon Park has benefited from funding from the £1 million parks investment project

Description of Park

Maryon Park is owned by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and is maintained by the Royal Borough of Greenwich Parks, Estates and Open Spaces Department.

Maryon Park occupies approximately 7.5 hectares and is classified as a 'Local Park'. The park is gated and opens daily, times slightly varying according to season. There are no leases affecting the public part of the park. Maryon Park is located in the Charlton Village and Riverside Ward of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.



Location of the park within the London Borough of Greenwich

The park is full of character and has many facilities on offer for visitors. Facilities in the park include, basket-ball and tennis courts, children's playground, toilets, and an outdoor gym. The Green Chain Walk, Capital Ring Walk and Charlton Loop Walk all run through the park and the park is on the cycle network.

Within Maryon Park itself there are two sections of the Park, each of which are of quite distinct in character. These two halves are separated by a railway cutting which is part of the North Kent Line currently operated by South-Eastern Railways. The line runs through tunnels and cuttings underneath the Park and is only visible from one footpath going over the railway line.

The topography of the southern part of the Park is shaped like an amphitheatre, which makes it an ideal location for staging events. School sports days are held in this area along with informal football of a weekend. It also ensure that the park remains peaceful and tranquil area despite the high-density house and busy roads surrounding the park.

The park has many mature trees, an arboricultural survey takes place every 5 years. The last survey took place in 2018.

Heritage of the Park

Maryon Park was at one stage all part of the Maryon-Wilson estate (see Appendix I), along with Charlton, Hornfair, Maryon Wilson, Gilberts Pit and Barrier Park. The Maryon- Wilson's were once the Lords of the Manor of Charlton and their family house was located in Charlton Park (now known as Charlton House). Most of the park was once entirely covered by what was known as the 'Hanging Wood'. This was an area frequented by highwaymen and so named as it was the place where a number were executed for this crime. More detailed information about the history of Maryon Park can be found in Appendix I.

The southern section of the park was landscaped around 1908 when the park was purchased by the London County Council. The initial landscaping included the tennis courts, the children's open air gymnasium (the very first of its type) and the planting out of Cox's Mount, the large mound in the north east corner of the park, with Poplar's and other species. The top of Cox's Mount is maintained as amenity grass. A bandstand was also erected as part of the initial landscaping, but this became derelict and was removed in the 1970's.

Maryon Park was a set location for the 1966 cult film "*Blow Up*" directed by Michelangelo Antonioni and produced by Carlo Ponti. A mystery thriller starring David Hemmings as a London fashion photographer who believes he has unwittingly captured a murder on film. Also starring Vanessa Redgrave, Sarah Miles and John Castle. The film was set within the mod subculture of the Swinging Sixties in London.



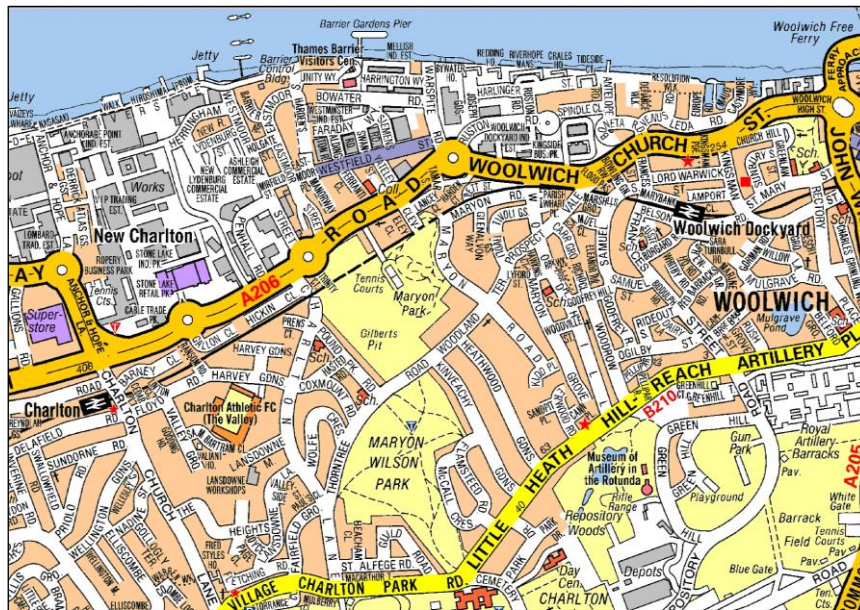
The northern section of the park, directly adjacent to the Woolwich Road, was only transformed into a public park after widening of the A206 Woolwich Road in 1996. During the course of this project, the houses and land adjacent to this section of the road were acquired under compulsory acquisition, demolished and the land re-integrated into the road with the remainder transformed into a landscaped open space that was handed over to Greenwich Council. In 2015 a plaque was installed at the northern extension by the eastern gate in memory of Henry Edward Kenny Private in 1st battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment who was awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery in the battle of Loos.



Northern extension to the park

Access to the Park

The park is surrounded by mainly residential roads and the A206 Woolwich Road on the north side, which is serviced by regular bus routes. The nearest train stations are Charlton and Woolwich Dockyard, both of which are approximately a 20-minute walk.



The park and its immediate surroundings

The park has entrances from Thorntree Road, the Woolwich Road (A206), Clevely Close, Gilberts Pit and Maryon Road. The majority of the park is accessible by wheelchair, however there is a small number of places within the park that are not wheelchair accessible such as the pathways from Thorntree Road and Gilberts Pit that climb up the walls of the pit, as they have a large number of steps and the slopes are very steep. All the pathways within the park are paved with either concrete or bitumen.

Geology and Landscape

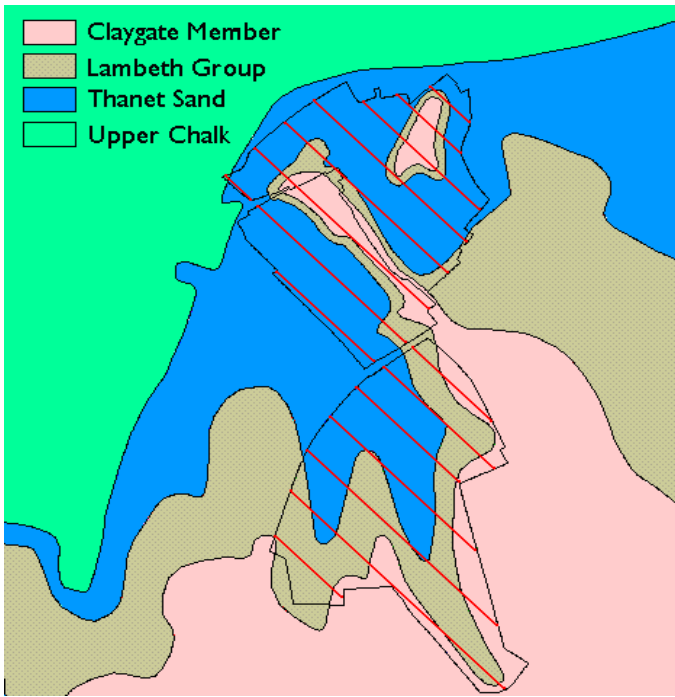


The natural areas within the Park are mainly restricted to the steep slopes that make up the ridge between Maryon Park and Gilberts Pit and the area behind the railway cutting. The area that makes up the ridge between the two parks is part of the Gilberts Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** and has been fenced with two-meter palisade fencing by English Nature. Maryon Park and the neighbouring Gilberts Pit are on a single large piece of land, most of which was the site of two large aggregate pits. The method of landscape formation and consequent re-use has resulted in two adjoining parks of very different character.

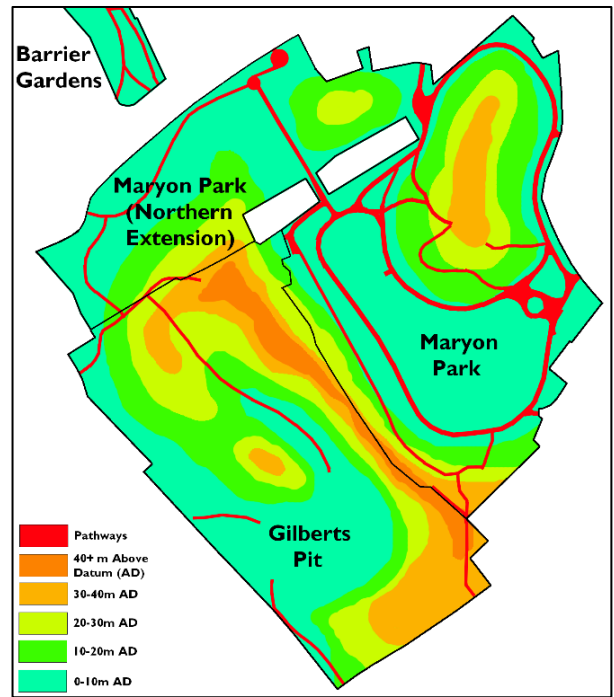
** SSSI is a formal conservation designation.

Usually, it describes an area that's of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains - or even important geological or physiological features that may lie in its boundaries.

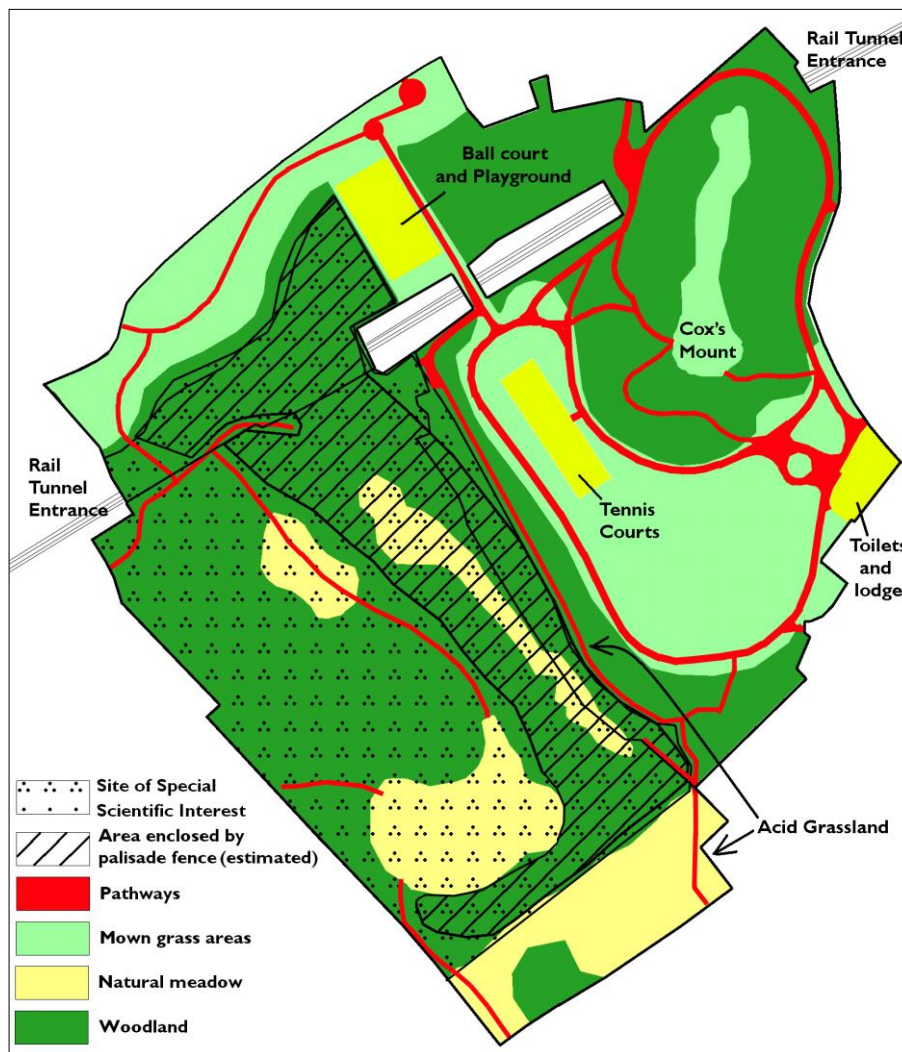
http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/geodiversity/englands/sites/local_ID34.aspx



The varied Geology of the park



Topography of Maryon Park/ Gilberts Pit



Map of Maryon Park and Gilberts Pit

Park Infrastructure

Furniture and Signage

The park also contains a variety of litter bins, dog bins and seating, all located at strategic locations within the park. The signs within the park are mostly Green Chain directional signage and interpretational signs. The playground signage advises that no dogs are allowed in the playground and young children should be supervised. Signage is located at each entrance with the opening and closing times of the park. Notice boards are also present in the park.



Signage at Maryon Park

Buildings within the Park

A Park Lodge is located next to the main park entrance in Maryon Road with public toilets and staff yard immediately to the west. The lodge and amenity block were built in 1896. In the past there were several other buildings within the Park, including a Victorian bandstand and a Café building. The bandstand was removed in the 1970's and the café was removed in 2002. The public toilets are free to use and were re-furbished in 2015. A disabled toilet was installed as part of these improvement works.



The park lodge, public toilets and staff yard

Recreational & Sporting Facilities

Basket-ball Court

The basket-ball court is surrounded by a three-meter palisade fencing on two sides and located next to the playground. The ball court was fully refurbished in 2021. The photo below shows Council Leader Danny Thorpe and local Councillors playing on the basket-ball court at Maryon Park with school children from Thorntree Primary School.



Tennis Courts

There are two tennis courts in Maryon Park which were refurbished (repainted and remarked) in 2021 funded from Section 106 monies. The tennis courts are free to use and are well used by local people, particularly in the summer.



The tennis courts at Maryon Park

Children's Playground

The playground was first installed by Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson in 1895 and was the first outdoor gymnasium of its type in London. Today the play equipment conforms to the EN1176 and EN1177 Play standards. Visual Inspections are carried out on a regular basis, with a detailed inspection on a bi-monthly basis and an independent inspection on an annual basis. Funding from the £1 million parks improvement project and ward budget refurbished the playground in 2021 to provide more exciting and inclusive play equipment for children.



Outdoor Gym

As part of the improvement works to the park in 2021, new outdoor gym equipment was installed in the northern extension to provide exercise equipment for park visitors.



Park User Information

Currently, the main users of the parks are all from the local area and mainly use the park for casual recreation such as sports, jogging, children's play, dog walking or as a through route.

Friends of Maryon & Maryon Wilson Parks

There is an active Friends Group that meet regularly and work closely with The Royal Borough of Greenwich to make improvements to the park. Through partnership working the Friends Group and therefore local residents have a greater say in what happens to their local park. The current Friends Group has been established since 2001 and also covers neighbouring parks - Maryon Wilson Park, Gilberts Pit and Barrier Park. The Friends Group have successfully applied for funding such as Ward Budget to make improvements in their park.

Maryon Park Community Growing Area

The Maryon Park Community Garden is a local 'not-for-profit' community project established originally in 2013 by the Friends of Maryon and Maryon Wilson Parks. An overgrown plot of land (that used to be a Greenwich Council plant nursery) at the edge of Maryon Park, was converted by The Friends Group into a organic food growing garden. This community-based project for local people to grow their own food has been supported by the Royal Borough of Greenwich with funding from the Capital Growth, The Olympic Transform Fund, City Hall, Bags of Help and the London Woodland Trust. It has since become a group in its own right and includes a community orchard, a teaching area and a forest school. The Group holds regular event in the Community Garden.



Park Events

The park is regularly used for sports days in the summer months by local schools. Events organised by the local community are held annually in the park such as the Maryon Park Big Picnic. The Royal Borough of Greenwich also organised "Sparkle in the Park" in 2021 - a Christmas light trail, free to Greenwich residents, which attracted over 24,000 visitors to the park from the 1st to the 5th December. There was also market stall, a funfair and live music performances for visitors to enjoy.



The Christmas light trail at Maryon Park in 2021

Demographics of the Charlton Ward and Woolwich Riverside Ward

The demographic information contained in this section is gathered from the 2011 Census Information as summarised on the Greenwich web site, under 2011 Census Ward Profiles. The information relates to Charlton Ward and Woolwich Riverside Ward as a whole and not specifically to the area surrounding Maryon Parks.

2011 Census Information	Charlton Ward	Woolwich Riverside Ward
Resident population of Ward	12,950	19,100
Population density (person per sq km)	6,475	5,968.8
% Area of green space	31.6%.	34.9%.
% of children 0-15	23.6%	27%
% of persons working age	65.6%	66.2%
% of persons 65+	10.8%	6.8%

Stakeholders

The Royal Borough of Greenwich

- Communities Environment and Central (Parks, Estates & Open Spaces)
- Directorate of Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills (Property Services, Planning Control)
- Chief Executives Department (Communications / Community Engagement)
- Neighbourhood Services (Neighbourhood Panels/Representatives)

Community

- Friends of Maryon & Maryon Wilson Parks
- Maryon Park Community Garden
- Charlton Society
- Thorntree Primary School and Woodhill Primary School

Agencies

- Police, Fire & Rescue Service
- Green Chain Walk

Business

- Businesses in local shopping parade (Charlton Village)

Politicians

- MP and Ward Members

Management of the Park

The management of the park described in this management plan is the responsibility of the Parks, Estates & Open Spaces service located within the Directorate of Communities, Environment & Central for The Royal Borough of Greenwich. The Parks, Estates and Open Spaces Senior Management Team are accountable for the overall management responsibility of the Service.

Individual management functions and key functions are identified as follows:

- Horticultural Grounds Maintenance
- Park Rangers Service
- Parks Strategy and Development
- Ecology & Conservation
- Arboricultural Maintenance
- Business Support – Sports lettings, complaints monitoring

Staff on Site

Horticultural Maintenance staff responsible for the Maryon Park are directly employed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich. A team of 1 -2 gardeners maintain Maryon Park and other parks in the area. Their role is to undertake varied horticultural/ground maintenance works in the Park. The team works closely with the Friends Group.

Mobile Park Rangers visit the park seven days a week and open and shut the park gates. Closing times vary with the seasons. Their role is to carry out patrols, assist members of the public, daily inspections of facilities and play equipment, and to carry out minor repairs. Litter picking and bin emptying are carried out on a daily basis as required and occasional incidents of graffiti are normally removed within 3 working days but often on the same day. Waste is taken to the Council's waste transfer station. The Rangers

Security of the Park

The Park contains signage that show emergency telephone numbers in the event of an accident or emergency. Antisocial behaviour (ABS) is closely monitored, and records are kept, analysed for trends, risk assessed, and responsive action taken. All staff are required to report any repairs or vandalism to their line manager. The Royal Borough also works closely with the local safer neighbourhood team.

Environmental Management

Parks, Estates & Open Spaces horticultural and arboricultural work is managed in conjunction with an Environmental Management System that conforms to the internationally respected EN ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Standard. Parks, Estates & Open Spaces Environmental Policy and Management System is externally audited and certified against the ISO 14001 to ensure the service is delivered in an environmentally sustainable manner and to reduce any negative effects on the environment that may be caused by grounds maintenance operations.

All green waste from Maryon Park is taken to Holbrook Yard. Parks arrange for a contractor to shred the green waste into a mulch, which is then reused on shrub beds in the Winter. Small wood is chipped, and large wood is sometimes left on site to create wood piles to encourage bio-diversity and potential habitats for stag beetles and other invertebrates.

Health and Safety Management

Staff are able to access Health and Safety information via a 'Red Folder', which is located at every depot where staff are based. The contents of the Red Folders include a list of first aiders, list of PA1 PA6A certificate holders, COSHH assessments, Risk Assessments and the Environmental Management System Manual. The Directorate's Health and Safety Policy is available on staff notice boards and on the Council intranet.

The vehicles used by the Parks, Estates and Open Spaces department are maintained by The Royal Borough's Fleet Management Service. The Borough is accredited to the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS). FORS is a voluntary accreditation scheme for fleet operators which aim to raise the level of quality within fleet operations, and to demonstrate which operators are achieving exemplary levels of best practice in safety, efficiency, and environmental protection. In addition to this, staff perform routine checks on all machinery before use.

Management and Repairs of Park Infrastructure

Part of the role of staff is to monitor the condition of buildings and infrastructure and report items requiring repair or attention. Maintenance and repairs are undertaken on a proactive basis. Smaller repairs are dealt with via the boroughs property service department who arrange responsive repairs from a delegated budget. Larger repairs are organised by the Strategy & Development team taking into account budgets and priorities.

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 sites covered in this plan 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 the Royal Borough of Greenwich Property Services, in the Directorate of Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills. Planned works are carried out on a strict basis of corporate priorities. Responsive repairs are carried out for minor items as and when they arise.

External Funding and Investment

External funding from a number of sources aids the improvement works at Maryon Park. Funding applications are regularly being sought to secure funding such as Section 106.

Investment – “Playground to Stadium”

The Council is committed using the opportunities created by the 2012 Olympics to create a legacy of improved infrastructure sports facilities in the Borough's Parks & Open Spaces. To meet this ambition, it has approved a £4.77 million investment programme. Funding from this programme has been allocated for Maryon Park and will help deliver a number of priorities identified in this plan. A detailed scheme and estimate report was developed in 2011 and approval by the council.

Major refurbishment of the paths and steps up to Coxes Mount and refurbishment of the tennis courts was carried out in 2011 from this budget.

Investment – “£1 Million Parks Improvements”

In October 2020, Cabinet approved how the funding should be allocated and the scope of works to be included. Cabinet considered residents priorities along with of other factors when making their decision and it was agreed that the funding should be allocated to 11 park sites including Maryon Park. Improvements funded by the £1 Million include the refurbishment of the playground, repainting of step handrails, step repairs, replacement of damaged bins and repainting other bins.

Marketing

Information about parks within the borough can be found on The Royal Borough of Greenwich website www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk

PART II: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GET TO?

VISION

The plan aims to aid the efficient and effective management of the site to create a safe, clean and enjoyable experience for the local community and visitors and help to achieve the Boroughs strategic intentions by developing a vibrant and sustainable park.

General Objectives

- To encourage recreational use of the park, improve visitor facilities and increase popularity of the park with the broader public.
- To improve the health and wellbeing of visitors and residents by offering a well maintained and quality park for active recreation and/or relaxation.
- To manage and maintain the park at Green Flag standard and continue to achieve the award.
- Improve access to the site for all sections of the community
- Develop a sense of community spirit, encourage community involvement and cohesion
- Enhance the ecology, encourage urban wildlife, increase biodiversity and sustainably manage the park.
- Increase perceptions of safety and discourage vandalism so that the Park provides a safe and secure place for all members of the community to use
- Continue to monitor for Anti-Social Behaviour and take action to prevent further occurrences.
- To make a positive contribution to the general well-being of the Charlton Area

STRENGTHS

- An active Friends Group
- A community garden project within the park
- The parks benefit from regular staff presence
- The park has extensive and well researched history
- The park was the 'shooting location' for a cult movie, Blow Up
- The park is on the Green Chain Walk and the Capital Ring Walk, both considered strategic walks.
- There is consistent park furniture within the park
- The park benefits from a range of facilities to offer visitors

CHALLENGES

- A small area of Japanese Knotweed in the Park. This has been treated with a stem injection gun annually since 2012, regrowth will continue to be treated until eradicated
- The parks are situated in an area that has been designated an 'Area of Social Deprivation'
- The park is subject to varying levels and different types of Anti-Social Behaviour

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue consultation with stakeholders
- Reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the park
- Improve awareness / use of site by all sections of the community
- Seek funding and investment
- Improve the playground and sports facilities
- Improve infrastructure within the park



Stairway leading to Gilberts Pit.

PART III: HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

ACTION PLAN 2021 - 2025

Timescales as given in this document are as follows;

- Short Term – Within one to two years 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

Action required	Detail of Specific action	Timescale (Long, medium & short term)	Responsibility	Status of Work
Continue consultation with stakeholders	Ongoing consultation with 'Friends of Group / The Community Garden Project / Ward Councillors London Geodiversity Group. Carry out wider consultation with local community to include priorities for improvement / barriers to use etc.	Ongoing	Parks, Estates and Open Spaces	Consultation with stakeholders on their priorities.
To achieve a recognised standard for the park	Continue to apply for a Green Flag Award (ongoing after application)	Ongoing	Parks, Estates & Open Spaces	Achieving
To reduce two stroke petrol usage (departmental)	To investigate and test battery operated handheld grounds maintenance equipment with a view to having 25% of the handheld fleet battery operated by the end of 2023	Long Term	PE&OS	Achieved 2022
Reduce Anti-social Behaviour	Continue on going monitoring of ASB at site in consultation with local users. Liaise with Police and other agencies as appropriate	Ongoing	Parks, Estates & Open Spaces / Community Police	ASB recorded. Joint action with other agencies taken if appropriate.

Action required	Detail of Specific action	Timescale (Long, medium & short term)	Responsibility	Status of Work
Make improvements to the tennis courts	Arrange for the tennis courts to be re coloured and remarked out. Funded by Section 106 monies	Short Term	Parks, Estates & Open Spaces	Completed in October 2021 Cost included with infrastructure works
To improve awareness / use of site by all sections of community	Review how site is currently marketed. Investigate ways of improving marketing of site (using different media etc) and through improvements to current marketing material	Long Term	Parks, Estates and Open Spaces	Use social media to promote the parks and events
Seek inward investment	Identify potential funding sources and apply for funding to support improvements to the park and to support The Friends Group	On- going	Parks, Estates and Open Spaces	Identify funding as appropriate
To carry out improvements to the playground equipment within the park	To refurbish the playground to install challenging and inclusive play equipment, install new playground signage and additional benches as part of the £1 Million Parks Improvement Scheme	Short Term	Parks, Estates and Open Spaces / Friends Group	Playground refurbished in September 2021 Cost £60,000
To install an outdoor gym	To use funding from Section 106 and ward budget to provide an outdoor gym in the Maryon Park extension area.	Short Term	Parks, Estates & Open Spaces / Friends Group	Outdoor Gym installed in October 2021 Cost £11,600
Carry out Infrastructure repairs to the park	Identify areas that need repair and liaise with DRES colleagues to undertake repairs as part of Planned Maintenance. Including; Patch repairs to pathways Major repairs/rebuilding to the retaining wall	Ongoing	Parks, Estates and Open Spaces / DRES	Patch repairs in paths completed in 2021

	adjacent to the raised path; Removal of a redundant set of steps that were in poor condition.			Retaining wall and steps to be completed by March 2022 Cost £146,400
Control Japanese Knotweed	Undertake annual treatment of Japanese Knotweed using stem injection control measures as appropriate within the park.	Ongoing	Parks, Estates & Open Spaces	Ongoing Annual Treatment of Japanese Knotweed

Important Note: Improvement actions requiring investment are subject to funding being secured. There are no additional funds available from the Council unless it has been identified against a specific action.

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

MONITORING AND REVIEW

A working copy of the Management Plan will be kept 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, Estates & Open Spaces 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

History of the parks

Historic context for Charlton Estate

The origin of the name Charlton comes from ‘ceorle’, the Saxon name for husbandman, and ‘ton’, a town. The simple meaning of the name Charlton is a country place, or village.

Early settlements in the Charlton area include a Roman settlement from c.50 to 400BC. This was located at what is now Maryon Park and Gilbert’s Pit. Subsequent Anglo-Saxon and Danish settlements probably lay not far from the present-day Charlton Village centre.

After the Norman Conquest in 1066, William the Conqueror granted the Manor of Charlton to his half-brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who then granted it to his brother Bloett, Bishop of Lincoln. In 1093, Robert Bloett granted the Manor to the Monastery of St. Saviour, Bermondsey. Charlton was attached to the Priory of Bermondsey until the Dissolution.

Charlton became a Royal Manor when it was assigned by an act in jointure to Elizabeth, Queen of Henry VII.

In 1603, James I of England sold Charlton manor for £2000 to John Erskine, a councillor who aided him to the English throne. In 1607, John Erskine sold the property to Adam Newton for £4500, tutor of Prince Henry and builder of Charlton House.

In 1657, Charlton House was purchased from Henry Newton (son of Adam Newton) by Sir William Ducie. Little is known about his occupancy, except that he made a number of repairs to the house in 1659. He died in 1679 and his representatives sold the property to Sir William Langthorne. In 1715, Langthorne died and his nephew Sir John Conyers inherited the estate. The estate was then passed down through various descendants until in 1767, the property came under the ownership of the Maryon-Wilson family, where it remained until 1923, when the final remains of the estate was sold to the London County Council.

Park History

Maryon Park forms part of what was the ancient Hanging Wood. The wood has many historical associations with Highwaymen and *footpads* and was used by them as a retreat after carrying out nefarious activities at Shooters’ Hill and Blackheath. There are a number of newspaper accounts of such incidents; in 1732 for example: “*On Sunday morning, the Reverend Mr. Richardson, who keeps a school at Lewisham, going to preach at Woolwich, was attacked by a footpad in Hanging Wood, who robbed him of a guinea (leaving him but two pence) and then made off.*”

Samuel Pepys, the famous diarist, also related his dread of Hanging Wood when he was obliged to travel to Woolwich.

However, in 1796, in his *Environs of London*, Lysons wrote more positively of the woods: “*There are in character about ninety acres of woodland called Hanging Wood, belonging to the Lord of the Manor, through which there is a very pleasant walk to Woolwich. The wood, the variety of uneven ground, and the occasional views of the river, contribute to make the neighbourhood remarkably picturesque.*”

William Bance took this positive approach in 1844:

*“Hail Hanging Wood! Thy beauties are unsung
 Unheeded by the bards renowned-and why?
 They passed not through thee, or they would havwe strung.
 Their lyres, to sing in richer strains than I
 Can sing of thee. To Richmond’s famous hill-
 To Windsor’s famous forest-bards have raised
 The song of praise: -and shall my muse be still
 Nor sing of thee most worthy to be praised?
 Hail even to thee! Although so ominous
 Of evil, and of dark deeds is the name
 Our fathers gave thee; handing down to us
 As we shall to our children, too the same
 Even I remember thee a dismal wood
 Through which I dared not pass at curfew time
 And whispering tales have curdled my young blood
 Of how thy shades have sheltered many a crime
 But this was ere the matlock, ace, and plough
 Had yet dispersed the gloom from off thy face
 And time had made thee, just what thou art now
 A lovely place, a most enchanting place*

The Park is laid out on the floor of one of the larger of the Charlton sandpits and therefore shares a similar history to that of the adjacent Gilbert’s Pit, as part of the manorial grounds (as in the Valley, home of Charlton Athletic FC) held by the Maryon-Wilson family from 1767.

Quarrying began in what was to become Maryon Park in the early eighteen hundreds, and continued until 1870, when quarrying began in what was to become Gilberts Pit. The lowest 3 metres of the stratum (called ‘blackfoot’ or ‘strong loam’) were used for brass casting; the next 4 metres (‘soft loam’) were used for iron moulding. The upper, white sand was used for glass making and other uses included spreading on parlour floors before carpets became widely available.

In 1889, Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson prescribed, gratis, 12 acres of land for the London County Council to become Maryon Park. Its dramatic, mostly sunken form is due to its history as dug out chalk, sand and gravel pit. The partially vegetated tall hillock that lies at the north end of the park was known locally as Cox’s Mount.

Cox’s Mount and its approaches became known as such when a gentleman named Mr Cox rented the area in 1838. He planted poplars around the mount and at one stage he rented it to the Lord Mayor, who erected a summerhouse on the summit and invited friends to visit and watch the ships on the Thames. Later in the 18th Century, the mount was used as a semaphore station.

In 1849, workers for the South Eastern Railway Company, while tunnelling under part of Maryon Park as part of the works on the new North Kent line (opened the same year) came upon a pre-existing cave *“of considerable dimensions cut in the chalk and flint rocks. A great quantity of sand had fallen in one end blocking up the side from which one apparently entered. Four chambers forming alternate recesses from the main cave were also discovered, leading in a westerly direction. The atmosphere in the cave was perfectly dry and pure, presenting a strange contrast with the damp atmosphere generally*

experienced when tunnelling. The men turned their discovery to good account the following Sunday, when they lit the whole tunnel with candles, and conducted visitors over the caves, charging them 3d for each admission. Probably the newly discovered cave had close connection with the Romano-British encampment known to have existed above.” (A.H.Bagnold) Another possibility is that the tunnels were Deneholes of (possibly) pre-Roman origin, as the description fits that of many other multi-chambered Deneholes found in Kent. To complete the railway line, two railway tunnels were constructed to pass under Hanging Wood. One 150 yards in length, the other 100 yards, lined with bricks manufactured by William Dawson of Plumstead. It is not now known in which of the two railway tunnels the other historic tunnels were discovered.

The new park with an entrance in Mount Street (now closed) was levelled off, grassed over and opened to the public in 1890, to great ceremony, by Sir John Lubbock on behalf of the LCC; ‘Handsome triumphant arches were erected by the inhabitants for the occasion’ and “a golden key was handed over by Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson and a reception was held at the Charlton Assembly Rooms.’



Maryon Park.

Old Charlton.

1046. 9.

The grassed area was too restricted for cricket to be played, although one of the conditions of the gift was that kids from the training ship Warspite, which lay at anchor off Charlton, should be free to play. Five years later, Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson presented one third of an acre more land for the formation of an open-air children’s gymnasium with an additional entrance in the lower Woolwich Road. The following Year, a decorative iron bandstand replacing an old rustic one was also erected and over £4,000 spent on general improvements including a keeper’s lodge and toilets.

In 1908, a further seven acres of the disused sandpit were acquired, including Cox’s Mount and provision was made for another entrance from Maryon Road and a larger grassed area.

In 1925 and 1929, a total of eleven additional acres were purchased to allow for widening of Thorntree Road and a new southern entrance to the park by a flight of steps.

Apart from regular band concerts, the park was also the venue for the first LCC open-air theatre when the 300-year-old Earl Armstrong Repository Company was invited to perform.

During World War Two, Cox's Mount was used by the Home Guard as a look out point.

Maryon Park featured extensively and atmospherically in the 1960's cult-classic film *Blow Up* directed by Michelangelo Antonioni, starring Vanessa Redgrave, Sarah Miles and David Hemmings. A small commemorative plaque was installed in a recessed seating area next to the tennis courts. This was removed by vandals.

Within the last twenty years, there have been significant changes to the north end of Maryon Park. When the Woolwich Road was widened, the area of terraced houses adjacent to the road was demolished to allow a large roadside space to be newly landscaped. This new space, including semi-circular seating areas and new trees and plants, became the counterpart to a corresponding new park (Barrier Park) across the road which leads, to the Thames Barrier.

APPENDIX I I

Policies and legislation affecting park management

As highlighted earlier in the plan, Greenwich Council's Parks and 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.

Parks & Open Spaces Strategy

The 10 year Strategy, adopted in 2017 is centred on the following seven themes.

Park and open spaces management: Ensuring our parks and open spaces are well managed, maintained in good condition and are safe to use;

Community engagement: Ensuring we actively engage and work in partnership with local residents to provide good quality parks that meet the needs of the local community;

Nature and biodiversity: Ensuring that areas and habitats are provided for wildlife and that they are protected from inappropriate development;

Environmental management: Maximise resource efficiency by increasing recycling opportunities, establish better use of essential energy sources and controlling the use of pesticides and chemicals;

Recreation, health and wellbeing: Ensuring that parks provide spaces for active recreation and quiet reflection and contribute to the health and well-being of the local community;

Regeneration and local economy: Ensuring our parks are well designed, attractive to visitors and encourage enterprise and employment of local people; and

Culture and heritage: Ensuring our parks are places for culture and that their heritage is preserved and celebrated.

Service Plan

The Parks, Estates & Open Spaces department aims to develop, manage, ensure accessibility and maintain to a high standard the borough's Parks, Estates and 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.

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 and 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 and events, tackling inequality, sport, health and well-being) are all relevant to this management plan.

Biodiversity 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.

Parks, Estates and Open Spaces Service Plan

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 9001:2015- Quality Management System

The Parks, Estates & Open Spaces arboricultural services is accredited to the ISO 9001:2015. The ISO 9001 Quality Management System is used by the Royal Borough to manage their activities and resources to guarantee a quality service. The ISO 9001 helps the Royal Borough achieve customer satisfaction because it provides a framework for service analysis and definition and for the improvement of processes. The four main parts covered under the Quality Management System are (i) management responsibility (ii) resource management (iii) process management and (iv) measurement, analysis and improvement.

ISO 14001: 2015 - Environmental Management System

The Parks, Estates & Open Spaces horticultural and arboricultural services are managed in conjunction with an Environmental Management System that is accredited to the internationally respected EN ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Standard. The Royal Borough's grounds maintenance and tree maintenance activities are controlled to ensure the service is delivered in an environmentally sustainable manner and to reduce any negative effects on the environment that may be their operations. Parks, Estates & Open Spaces works towards sustainable development and continual environmental improvements.

ISO 45001:2018 - Health, Safety & Wellbeing Management System

The Parks, Estates & Open Spaces arboricultural services is accredited to the ISO 45001:2018 which provides a framework for managing Occupation Health & Safety risks and opportunities. The aim is to prevent work related injury and ill health to workers and to provide safe, healthier workplaces by eliminating hazards minimizing risks by taking effective preventative and protective measures. The intended outcomes of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System include

(i) continual improvement of performance, (ii) fulfilment of legal and other requirements and (iii) achievement of Health & safety objectives.

Core Strategy

Local Councils have a duty to prepare a Core Strategy by law. The Greenwich Core Strategy (CS) sets out the vision for use of the land in the Royal Borough, and provides the main guidance for making decisions on individual planning proposals. The document is intended to cover the period 2013 – 2028. It is a legal document with the following purposes:-

- To provide a framework of acceptable uses within the Royal 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

Maryon Park has the following designations and references to the CS.

- Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) OS1, OS2, OS (a).
- Green Chain OS3.
- Green Chain Walk OS3.
- Area of Special Character DH (I).
- Site of Nature Conservation Importance OS4.
- Site of Special Scientific Interest OS4.
- Capital Ring IM (b).

The CS may be viewed at the Directorate of Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills, Planning Department, Crown Building, 5th floor, 48 Woolwich New Road, SE18 6HQ, or alternatively at a local library or online.

Metropolitan Open Land

All Metropolitan Open Land as defined on the proposals map will be maintained and its open character protected from inappropriate development. The following uses are considered generally appropriate within Metropolitan Open Land unless they would result in an adverse change to the character of the land.

South East London Green Chain and Walk

Areas of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) forming part of the South East London Green Chain as defined on the Proposals Map and the associated Green Chain Walk will be promoted and enhanced as an accessible, regional and local outdoor recreational resource and visual amenity.

Areas of Special Character

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.

Biodiversity (Site of Nature Conservation Importance & Site of Special Scientific Interest)

Royal Greenwich's rich biodiversity and geodiversity will be protected, restored and enhanced, including the priority habitats and species identified in the Greenwich Biodiversity Action Plan.

Walking and Cycling (Capital Ring)

The Royal Borough is committed to protecting and enhancing Royal Greenwich's

footpaths and cycle ways and new developments should provide for the needs of their users.

Dog Control Orders

Dog fouling has been recognised as being a problem within many of The Royal Borough's parks and open spaces. The Public Space Protection Orders, Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it possible for local authorities to introduce Dog Control Orders. These orders would make it an offence for persons in control of their dog(s) to:

- Not clean up after their dog has fouled.
- Have more than 4 dogs in their control at one time.
- Not to have their dog on a lead in designated areas
- Not to have their dog on a lead and kept on a lead when instructed to do so by an authorised officer.
- To allow their dog(s) to access designated dog exclusion areas.

Tenancy Services Officers, Officers from Parks, Estates and Open Spaces, Police Community Support Officers and the Dog Warden are authorised to issue fixed penalties.

Legislation

The Parks, Estates & 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 PE&OS.

- Alcohol Consumption in Public Places Order 2003
- Control of Pesticide Protection Act 1986
- Country Code 1981
- Countryside 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 National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949
- The Weeds Act 1959
- The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981
- Safer Neighbourhood Act 2005

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