

# CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

## NOTICE AND AGENDA

For a meeting to be held on Wednesday, 2 July 2025 at 7.30 pm at Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, WD3 1RL.

Members of the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:-

Councillors:

Chris Lloyd (Co-Chair)  
Jon Tankard (Co-Chair)  
Raj Khiroya  
Joan King  
Abbas Merali

Reena Ranger  
Mike Sims  
Tom Smith  
Cheryl Stungo

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*Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive*  
*Tuesday, 24 June 2025*

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. MINUTES**

(Pages 5 - 12)

To confirm, as being a correct record, the minutes of the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee, held on 12 March 2025, and for them to be signed by the Chair.

**3. NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

Items of other business notified under Council Procedure Rule 30 to be announced, together with the special circumstances that justify their consideration as a matter of urgency. The Chair to rule on the admission of such items.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of interest.

**5. LEISURE FACILITIES MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT**

(Pages 13 - 36)

Appendix A details the annual report from April 2024 – March 2025 from the council's leisure facilities management contractor, Sports and Leisure Management (SLM). The annual report shares a reflection on the previous 12 months'



work and outlines the work programme for the coming year.

Recommendation

- i. That the 12-month work plan presented by Sports and Leisure Management is noted.
- ii. That the 12-month work plan presented by Sports and Leisure Management be made available as part of the minutes of the meeting.

**6. CROXLEY COMMON MOOR MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025-2030** (Pages 37 - 140)

A new five-year management plan has been developed for Croxley Common Moor in Croxley Green. The new plan contains management actions over the next five years from financial year 2025/26 until 2029/30. The detailed actions relate to habitat management, scrub management, wildlife surveys for biodiversity and improvements to public access and signage.

Recommendation

That the Climate Change & Leisure Committee:

- i. Adopt the new five year Management Plan for Croxley Common Moor.
- ii. Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.
- iii. That public access to the report be immediate.

**7. WITHEY BEDS MANAGEMENT PLAN** (Pages 141 - 222)

A new ten-year management plan has been developed for The Withey Beds in Rickmansworth. The new plan contains management actions over the next ten years from financial year April 2025 until March 2035. The detailed actions relate to habitats and wildlife improvements for biodiversity, management of the wet woodland and a requirement for external funding in order to replace a smaller section of the current boardwalk.

Recommendation

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

- i. Adopt the new ten-year Management Plan for The Withey Beds.
- ii. Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.



## **8. HERTFORDSHIRE RETROFIT STRATEGY**

(Pages 223 - 316)

This report seeks approval of the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy (Appendix 2), which will formalise a structured approach to retrofit coordination, funding applications, and project delivery in alignment with the Commitment to Retrofit (Appendix 1), endorsed by a majority of members of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

Recommendation

That Members agree to:

- i. To approve TRDC formally endorsing and adopting the Hertfordshire Retrofit Commitment (Appendix 1) and Strategy (appendix 2) to facilitate knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and funding collaboration across local authorities and other key stakeholders in Hertfordshire.
- ii. To note the development of the action plan within the Strategy, which will be refined through multi-agency collaboration to establish a robust, long-term delivery model.
- iii. To note that officer time may be required to support the development of the Hertfordshire Retrofit body and the Action Plan.

## **9. South Oxhey Leisure Centre Solar Panels Business Case**

(Pages 317 - 358)

This report proposes that rooftop solar PV is installed at South Oxhey Leisure Centre, funded by council capital budget and repaid through a Power Purchase Agreement<sup>1</sup> with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM).

This report recommends that the Outline Business Case (OBC) is recommended to Policy & Resources Committee.

This report provides background context and a high-level overview of the OBC, which can be found in Appendix 1.

Recommendation

That:

- i. The Climate Change and Leisure Committee recommend officers seek contractor quotations and then recommend the OBC to the Policy & Resources Committee.

## **10. WORK PROGRAMME**

(Pages 359 - 362)

To receive the Committee's Work programme.

## **11. OTHER BUSINESS - if approved under item 3 above**

## **12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**



If the Committee wishes to consider the remaining item in private, it will be appropriate for a resolution to be passed in the following terms:-

“that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

(Note: If other confidential business is approved under item 3, it will also be necessary to specify the class of exempt or confidential information in the additional items.)

**General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at**  
[committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk](mailto:committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk)

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public on agenda items at the Climate Change and Leisure Committee meetings. Details of the procedure are provided below:

For those wishing to speak:

Members of the public are entitled to register and identify which item(s) they wish to speak on from the published agenda for the meeting. Those who wish to register to speak are asked to register on the night of the meeting from 7pm. Please note that contributions will be limited to one person speaking for and one against each item for not more than three minutes.

In the event of registering your interest to speak on an agenda item but not taking up that right because the item is deferred, you will be given the right to speak on that item at the next meeting of the Committee.

Those wishing to observe the meeting are requested to arrive from 7pm.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 any matters considered under Part I business only of the meeting may be filmed, recorded, photographed, broadcast or reported via social media by any person.

Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Legislation and the laws of libel and defamation.

The meeting may be livestreamed and an audio recording of the meeting will be made.





Three Rivers House  
Northway  
Rickmansworth  
Herts WD3 1RL

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## Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, WD3 1RL on Wednesday, 12 March 2025 from 7.30 pm - 9.52 pm.

**Present:** Councillors

John Tankard, in the Chair  
Steve Drury (Co-Chair)  
Chris Lloyd (Co-Chair)  
Anne Winter  
Reena Ranger  
Mike Sims  
Cheryl Stungo  
Stephen King  
Oliver Cooper

**Officers in Attendance:**

Emma Sheridan, Associate Director for Environment  
Charlotte Gomes, Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure  
Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer  
Anita Hibbs, Committee Officer  
Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner  
Josh Sills, Head of Customer Experience  
Adele Cassidy, Watersmeet Marketing Officer

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### **CCLH23/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ciaran Reed, substituting Councillor Oliver Cooper.

### **CCLH24/25 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee held on 16 October 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

### **CCLH25/25 NOTICE OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

### **CCLH26/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **CCLH27/25 BUDGET MANAGEMENT REPORT P10**



The Finance Business Partner introduced the report.

Officers responded to questions raised by Members seeking clarification on the homelessness fund, specifically regarding the increase in nighttime lets. Officers explained that the Council owns 54 temporary accommodation units, and when these are filled, they must source additional temporary accommodations from external suppliers, referred to as nightly lets. The increase in income for the financial year is attributed to the higher number of nightly lets utilised. They further elaborated on the billing process for these accommodations, noting that while there are costs associated with nightly lets, the Council can reclaim the expenses billed to those in temporary accommodation. Members requested further clarification on how this process translates into income, to which officers offered to provide further information later.

Members raised concerns regarding the gas and water costs associated with Watersmeet Theatre and the playing fields. They inquired about the possibility of conducting business switching comparison to identify cheaper options. Members focused particularly on the financial implications and the future of the theatre. Officers provided historical context, noting that Watersmeet had a revenue cost to the council of circa. £60,000 in the 2023-24 financial year which was like 2015. In the years leading up to the covid pandemic Watersmeet costs to the council reduced significantly generating a net direct surplus for the two years prior to the pandemic. Despite now being back to pre-pandemic audience attendance figures of circa. 50,000 per year and the financial position continuing to improve year on year, the operating costs remain higher than pre-pandemic levels due mainly to increased utility costs and increases in staff wages. The financial position is expected to continue to improve going forward. Officers acknowledged the need to review utility costs and providers noting the costs are high nationally and internationally and expected to go up again but confirmed the council had recently switch water provider because of this review.

Members emphasised the importance of securing the future of the venue, facing a financial gap due to a tenant's departure. The proposed forming a working group to explore commercialisation strategies and work with officers to address this shortfall. Officers responded by noting that a new tenant agreement is in place, which will fill that income gap going forward, while acknowledging the challenges in filling such a specialised space. Members highlighted the ongoing efforts and investments made by the team at Council and Watersmeet to ensure the theatre's sustainability and success despite financial challenges. Members also emphasised the need for reviewing the venue's financial losses, and officers advised that while Watersmeet is currently operating at a loss, it is in a relatively strong position compared to similar venues nationally. The discussion also touched on the implications of special expenses charged to residents, and the need for a more equitable financial approach. Overall, Members expressed a commitment to finding solutions for the venue's financial challenges while acknowledging the hard work of those in its operations.

Members expressed a positive outlook on the reported increase in revenue from fines associated with fly tipping, and they inquired about how the Council can both increase revenue and reduce fly tipping simultaneously. Officers responded by explaining that the revenue comes from court cases and fixed penalty notices, with a report on fly tipping expected later in the year to provide more details.

The Committee noted the report.

RESOLVED:

That Members note & comment on the contents of the report.

## **CCLH28/25 CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer provided an update on the report.



Mrs. Green spoke on the item; sharing her commitment to environmental conservation through daily litter picking and removal of waste from local areas and emphasised the need for greater Council involvement in protecting natural habitats and wildlife.

Officers acknowledged her efforts and suggested connecting with a local initiative aimed at recycling plastics collected from rivers.

Members discussed the financial savings achieved from the William Penn solar scheme, but which falls short of the anticipated £25,000 annual savings, and sought clarification on whether the savings are ramping up as expected. Officers reassured that the current sunny weather has positively impacted savings and emphasised the need to wait for a full year to assess the overall performance. The conversation also touched on the importance of carbon offsetting strategies to reduce CO2 emissions, with Members highlighting the urgency of advancing this work. Officers acknowledged the challenges faced in developing strategies due to lack of clear government mandates but expressed their commitment to collaborating with partners to address these challenges. The Committee also discussed potential collaboration with other councils to enhance offsetting efforts.

The Committee noted the report.

RESOLVED:

That:

The Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee note the progress being made towards the delivery of the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2024-2027, and support officers to continue their progress in accordance with the Action Plan.

#### **CCLH29/25 SOLAR CAR PARK CANOPIES AND COMMUNITY FUNDING FEASIBILITY STUDY OUTCOMES AND REPORT**

The Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer introduced the report.

Members raised concerns about the high capital costs and long break-even periods for these projects, questioning their viability given the uncertainty of future technology and potential changes in local authority status.

Councillor Anne Winter left the meeting at 20:50 and returned at 20:52.

Officers responded indicating that while the project appear technically feasible, further financial analysis is needed to determine their viability, and no commitments have been made. The conversation also touched on the complexities of the business cases, potential grants, and the importance of not becoming overly committed to these projects without clear financial justification. Members expressed scepticism regarding the cost estimates provided by the National Wealth Fund and emphasised the need for caution in pursuing these initiatives.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

that Members agree to:

- i. Officers pursuing the development of business cases for solar canopies at William Penn Leisure Centre car park and the Rose Garden car park, utilising a blend of grant funding, and internal budgets.



- ii. Note that the Feasibility Study detailed in Attachment 2 will be shared with the GSENGH, and neighbouring authorities in Hertfordshire.

## **CCLH30/25 RICKMANSWORTH AQUADROME PROJECT UPDATE REPORT**

The Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure introduced the report.

Mr. Harding spoke on the item; raising concerns about the Aquadrome path being closed for over a year due to safety concerns, with no evidence provided by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) to support this closure, and the maintenance of existing hydrological assets, which TRDC deemed unfit for purpose. The speaker called for transparency regarding the criteria used to assess the woodland path's safety and timeline for the hydrological report and called for immediate action to restore the woodland path and improve maintenance in the area.

The Associate Director for Environment provided an update on the Aquadrome path, stating that the hydrological work had been awarded to JBA Consulting in February 2024. The officer highlighted significant erosion issues affecting the river channel, the potential presence of asbestos, and noted that the existing infrastructure, including sluices and culverts, is outdated and blocked, leading to disrupted sediment transport and habitat connectivity. The officer emphasised the importance of expert judgment in managing river channels, stating that decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Following risk assessments, the closure of the public path was deemed necessary due to safety concerns related to erosion and flooding. The officer explained that the decision to keep the path closed had been made to protect public safety and the integrity of the wetland ecosystem, which is crucial for managing water levels, and confirmed that the closure of the path aligns with the Council's risk management strategy.

Members addressed the ongoing issues regarding the pathway safety and the delays in receiving the necessary reports from the Environmental Agency (EA) to allow the completion of the hydrological assessments. They highlighted the confusion among the public regarding the different classes of pathways managed by the Council and emphasised the need for a pragmatic approach to restore public confidence. They expressed concerns over the state of the pathways, the children's play area, and the overall management of the site. Officers responded by acknowledging the frustrations surrounding the EA timeline for the updated flood modelling and explained the legal distinctions affecting the pathway closures – namely a public right of way managed by Hertfordshire County Council and one without any designation. Officers affirmed the Council's commitment to improving the site and securing significant funding for necessary investments as outlined within the committee report.

Members sought clarification on the legal advice received concerning the reopening of the public right of way, emphasising the need for scrutiny over how delegated powers have been used by Council officers. Officers clarified those decisions regarding public right of way fall under the jurisdiction of the county council and not the committee. The conversation also touched on the existence of a petition related to the path closure, which did not receive the necessary numbers required to be presented to committee, the responsibilities of health and safety, and the specific delegations being requested for accepting lottery funding and then securing contracts to spend the funding.

In response to a question raised regarding the alleged repurposing of the Aquadrome bridge, officers responded by stating that this was in fact not true, and no repurposing will take place.

Councillor Steve Drury moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:



- i. To note the content of the report.
- ii. Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance, in agreement with the Lead Member, to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding in order that external funds were awarded for the Aquadrome Programme can be accepted by the Council
- iii. Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance, in agreement with the Lead Member, to enter into contracts above the value of £25,000 for works procured under the councils procurement and contracts procedure rules relating to those secured external bids.

### **CCLH31/25 PLAY SPACE STRATEGY 2025 - 2030**

The Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure introduced the report.

Members emphasised the importance of increasing adult participation in survey in the future, suggesting that physical presence during consultations may yield better results than online surveys. Officers acknowledged the challenges of engaging a wide audience but highlighted that children are the primary users of play areas. For specific play space projects, consultation will be delivered using a variety of online and in person methods, as was completed for Eastbury and Ebury play areas. The conversation also touched on specific issues such as delays in equipment installation, the importance of inclusive play, and the impact of longer grass policies on children's play opportunities. Officers reassured that play spaces are exempt from the alternative grass management regime. Officers also highlighted that the strategy outlines how play spaces will be inclusive, following the PiPA Wheel and that children shared the importance of bringing nature into their play and the opportunities long grass can bring to imaginative play. Officers also highlighted the play equipment due to be installed Eastbury will be carried out in a timely manner to ensure value for money for the council.

Members also raised some concerns about funding disparities and the impact of policy decisions on play opportunities for children in the community, in relation to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) applications. Officers reassured Members that they do and will work in partnership with other organisations as the strategy outlines and support them in their CIL applications if they wish to come forward, as they did with the recent Sarratt CIL application for improving their play facilities.

Members raised some concerns about the the grassland management at the Aquadrome and the impact on recreation, Officers highlighted the importance of developing a site master plan in consultation with the community. If successful, this will be completed as part of the Development Phase of the National Lottery Heritage Funded project. However, Officers emphasised that the Aquadrome is a nature reserve first and foremost, rather than just a recreation area.

Members raised concerns about the maintenance obligations of play areas funded by parish councils, questioning the continuity of these obligations when upgrades or refurbishments are due. Officers responded advising that they would need to review previous agreements to be able to provide the information later.

Councillor Jon Tankard moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

- i. To approve the Three Rivers Play Space Strategy 2025 – 2030.



- ii. To approve the updated Capital Programme for the period of this strategy and beyond (2025/26 – 2044/45) as detailed at Appendix C and within Appendix A.
- iii. To give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000 for the play space capital programme, subject to capital budget confirmation as part of the medium-term financial planning process.
- iv. To agree to the use of S106 funding to be used for the play space projects outlined in Appendix C, subject to the agreement from the legal team at the appropriate time.

### **CCLH32/25 WATERSMEET 50 YEARS**

The Head of Customer Experience introduced the presentation, and the Watersmeet Marketing Officer presented the slides.

Members raised questions regarding the attendance of two film events, noting that the actual turnout exceeded expectations: with 50 attendees for one movie, and 31 for the other. Concerns were raised about the affordability of tickets, and the need for better promotional strategies to attract more attendees. Furthermore, Members commented that the figures suggest that technical staff are being compensated below the real living wage, which could hinder attracting skilled workers. Officers clarified that the figures were estimates and responded by discussing the balance between commercialisation approach and community focus, mentioning the support from local volunteers, the donation of £5,000 from the Friends of Watersmeet, and the importance of word-of-mouth marketing. Furthermore, Members discussed how they could support the venue and attending events.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee note the Watersmeet Anniversary summary of detail for 2025.

### **CCLH33/25 HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2023-2028 - ACTION PLAN - YEAR ONE REVIEW**

The Strategic Housing Manager introduced the report.

Members inquired about the frequency of housing surveys and the impact of delayed homelessness prevention projects. Officers responded by highlighting that the Council have a statutory duty to prevent and relieve homelessness and this was being delivered at a high level, citing successful outcomes from the previous year, including 145 of the 472 homelessness applications received in the past year by the council being prevented, representing a 31% success rate in the prevention of homelessness. Officers also informed members that positive feedback on the council's performance in this area had been received from MHCLG.

Officers confirmed that these two projects were intended to go above and beyond our statutory duty to prevent and relieve homelessness and, despite delays in two specific projects aimed at further assistance, officers reassured members that significant progress has been made, and these projects will be delivered within the year.



Members emphasised the need for effective collaboration to prevent evictions. Officers responded to this to confirm that whilst a protocol has not yet been agreed with the Registered Providers within the district, this does not mean that successful partnership work is not undertaken with them and confirmed that the council consistently work in partnership with the Registered Providers in the district on a number of projects.

Councillor Steve Drury moved the recommendation as set out in the report, seconded by Councillor Chris Lloyd.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

Resolved:

That the Committee to review and note the Year One Review of the Council's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028 Action Plan.

### **CCLH34/25 WORK PROGRAMME**

Members requested various items to be added to the Committee's work programme, including Budget Monitoring P3, P6 and P10, but not P8, as officers clarified that P8 does not come to this committee; it is part of budget setting. Furthermore, the following items were also requested to be added on the work programme:

- Everyone Active presentation
- Watersmeet presentation
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Aquadrome update
- Housing and Homelessness update

Officers clarified that the Everyone Active item is scheduled for the July 2025 Committee, and the Citizens Advice Bureau item sits under the other service committee.

It was suggested that as the Watersmeet annual review presentation historically comes to the October committee, it be scheduled for the October 2025 Committee, and Members discuss with officers in advance what additional items they would like included in the presentation.

Members suggested that the Aquadrome update should be scheduled before or after the Aquadrome steering group meeting, and at least every six months.

In addition, Members requested an update on the Housing and Homelessness item on the work programme every six months as there were concerns regarding the performance of registered providers. In response, officers raised concerns about the Committee's ability to make decisions, versus merely scrutinising service delivery, and suggested consulting the constitution for clarity on the Committee's responsibility.

Members also requested a desire to be updated on any issues that may arise in the meantime, and items that are not suitable for this Committee could be discussed in Member briefings with the relevant officers.

A final point was raised regarding the installation of the air source heat pump at the Council office; despite significant reduction in carbon emissions, the initial year saw an increase in electricity costs due to international price fluctuations and changes in building usage. Officers confirmed that savings are now beginning to show in the second year and offered to provide further details from the report.

RESOLVED:



To receive the Committee's Work programme.

**CCLH35/25 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE**

There were no items of other business.

**CHAIR**



# COMMIT TEE REPORT

Leisure Facilities Management  
Annual Report



**Climate Change and Leisure Committee**  
**Wednesday, 2 July 2025**

PART I

**Leisure Facilities Management Annual Report**  
**ADE**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 Appendix A details the annual report from April 2024 – March 2025 from the council's leisure facilities management contractor, Sports and Leisure Management (SLM). The annual report shares a reflection on the previous 12 months' work and outlines the work programme for the coming year.

**2 Details**

- 2.1 The Council's three leisure venues, William Penn Leisure Centre, South Oxhey Leisure Centre and Rickmansworth Golf Course are all managed by Sports and Leisure Management (SLM).
- 2.2 The Council enjoys a good working relationship with Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) and regularly measures their performance against the specification through both formal meetings involving senior managers and day to day liaison between our dedicated contracts and commercial officer and the venue managers.
- 2.3 Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) contract started on 1 July 2018.

**3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.
- 3.1.1 Officers monitor the Leisure facilities management contract with Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) in a variety of ways, including the Leisure industry quality standard known as QUEST and regular site monitoring.

**4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.
- 4.2 The impact of the recommendations on the achievement of the Corporate Framework is:
- Responsive and responsible local leadership
  - Expand our position as a great place to do business
  - Sustainable Communities
  - Achieve net carbon zero and be climate resilient



**5 Financial, Legal, Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

5.1 None specific

**6 Recommendation**

6.1 That That the 12-month work plan presented by Sports and Leisure Management is noted.

6.2 That the 12-month work plan presented by Sports and Leisure Management be made available as part of the minutes of the meeting.

Report prepared by: Kelly Barnard, Leisure Assets Manager

**Background Papers**

APPENDIX A – SLM Annual Report – April 2024 – March 2025.







# **Everyone Active Annual Report**

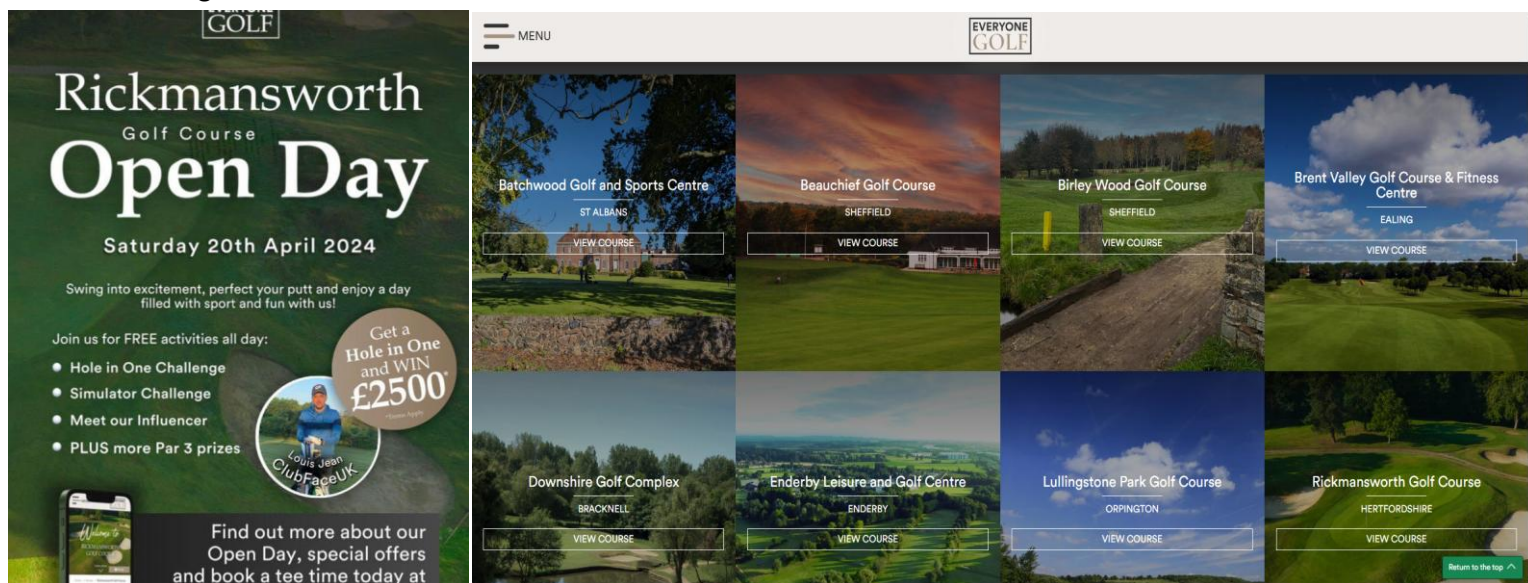
**April 2024 – March 2025**





## I. Executive Summary

Rickmansworth Golf Course hosted an Open Day on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The day was brilliantly attended with over 100 users varying in ages and abilities attending the day. Various challenges were run throughout the day such as a 'Hole in One' competition with a top prize of £2,500, Simulator and Par 3 challenges too. The day saw the launch of the new Everyone Golf brand including the new apps and dedicated golf website [www.EveryoneGolf.com](http://www.EveryoneGolf.com). Instagram golf influencer ClubFaceUK was in attendance to promote the facilities and run the exciting games and challenges.



South Oxhey Leisure Centre & William Penn Leisure Centre had a brilliant Easter 2024 with Let's Play delivering a fantastic holiday camp with 266 children attending and hearing very positive feedback from customers and colleagues. Both sites also run an Easter egg collection which were then dropped off to the local community foodbanks, and very well received.





South Oxhey Leisure Centre won 'Energy Reduction Site of the Year' at the Everyone Active Business Awards in May 2024. The awards cover the South East Region of Everyone Active which is over 100 sites and recognised the fantastic work the team have done at the centre in reducing their carbon emissions wherever possible.



South Oxhey hosted a charity Zumbathon event in June 2024. Over 150 people attend the event throughout the day, and £700 was raised on the day for MacMillan. We had 15 colleagues from South Oxhey, and neighbouring sites give up their free time in support of this event and ensure that all those attending had a great time.



To promote Drowning Prevention Week, William Penn & South Oxhey Leisure Centre promoted our new Rookie Lifeguard swimming lessons which incorporated aspects of the National Pool Lifeguarding Qualification course and life-saving skills. The courses have been a real success with over 50 children attending and have allowed students to increase their swimming skills whilst also learning valuable lifesaving skills.



May 2024 saw the launch of our first Community Health Café events commence. Exercise on Referral co-ordinators, delivered free blood pressure checks, posture assessments and healthy



nutrition information along with offering board games, social spaces and general social gatherings within the café areas. The event was a success firstly held at William Penn Leisure Centre but subsequently followed with future events also at South Oxhey Leisure Centre, which also were huge successes. The events have now become a regular feature at both facilities.



After South Oxhey's very successful charity Zumbathon in June 2024, William Penn hosted a 12-hour charity football match. Over 130 people participated in the event throughout the day, and £200 was raised on the day for our new corporate charity, Breast Cancer Now. We had members and colleagues take part and making it another successful day.



August 2024 saw Quest Annual assessments at both William Penn Leisure Centre and South Oxhey Leisure Centres. Both centres achieved a rating of 'Very Good'. As part of the future plans the teams are now hoping to achieve "Excellent" accreditation in 2025.



William Penn hosted Silver Sunday on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2024 which was a new initiative aimed at offering free taster activities to the over 50's. Sessions included badminton, pickleball, table tennis



and low intensity circuits classes. The event was very well attended, with a lot of the users now joining the weekly pickleball sessions



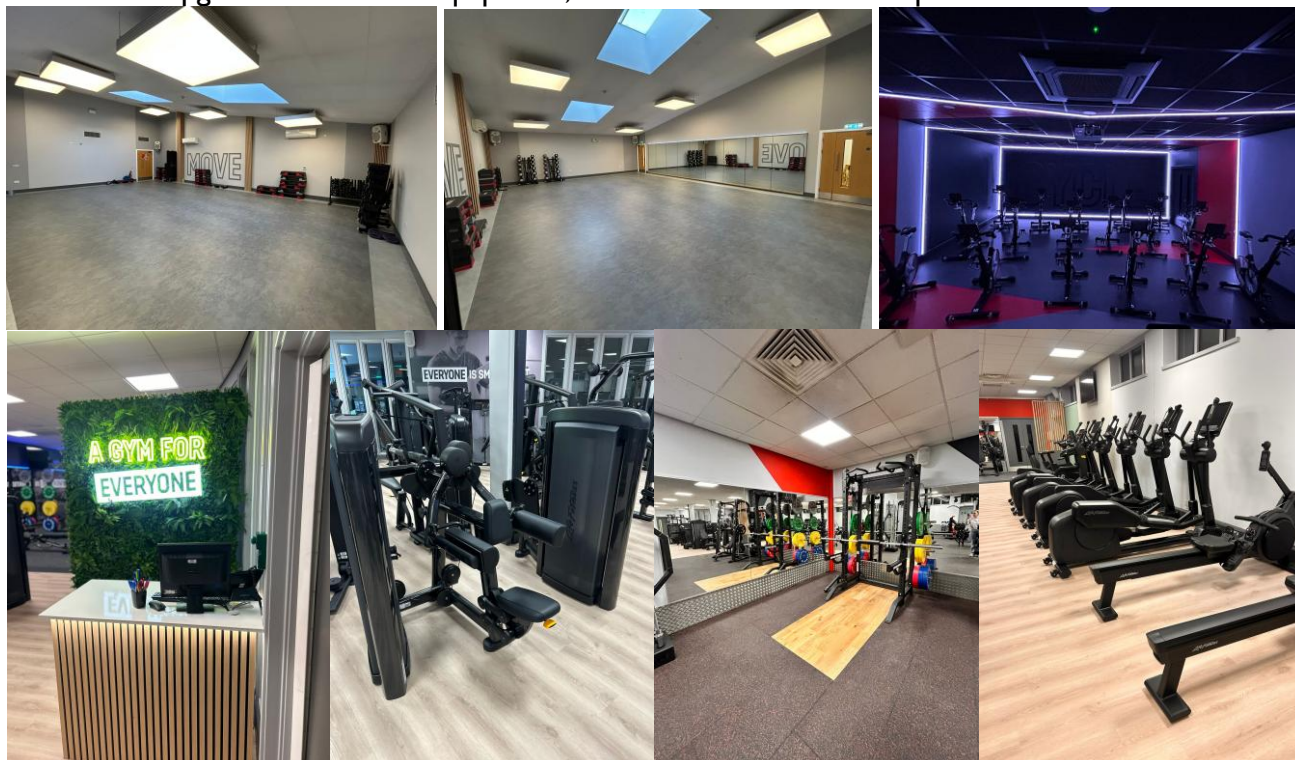
One of the most heartwarming stories and successes of the year was the help and support offered by our fantastic swim team to seven-year-old double amputee Oscar Connor. Oscar had both legs amputated at the age of two, but this did not stop him from conquering his fears and learning to swim. Oscars inspirational story received some brilliant PR and circulated and shared across the Watford Observer and Harrow Online.



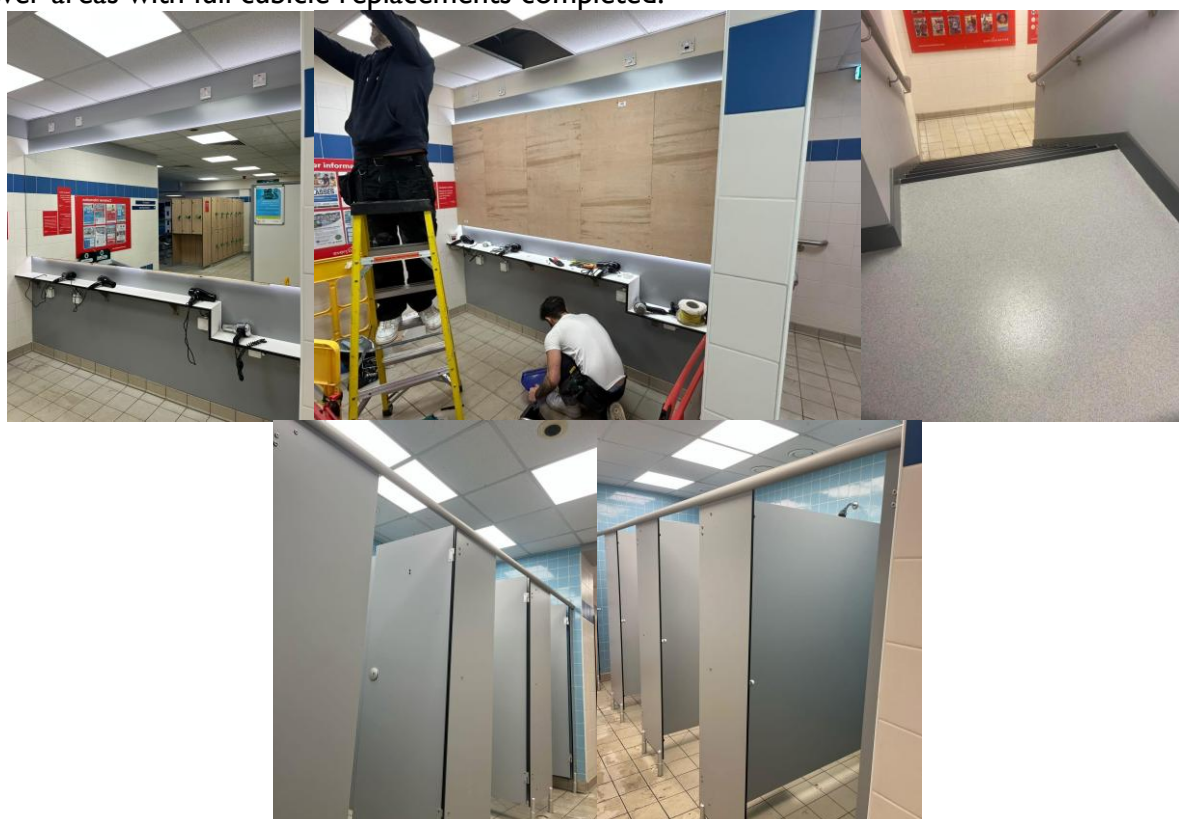
During the months of November and December 2024 William Penn Leisure Centre underwent a £500,000 investment into the fitness areas of the facility. Studio 1, Studio 2, the Spin Studio and the gym all had major refurbishment works. The works encompassed new flooring throughout, redecoration, lighting, ventilation and full kit replacements. The works have been extremely well



received by customers and colleagues. We have also been able to increase the occupancy of the classes with upgrades to the AV equipment, which has created more space.



Various upgrade works were completed around the Changing Village at William Penn Leisure Centre throughout January 2025. Vanity areas and the flooring and threads to the Changing Village entrance were replaced, painting and decoration works were completed to the entrance, and all shower heads were replaced. Following these works, further works were also completed to the shower areas with full cubicle replacements completed.





## 2. Attendance Summaries

<b>Total Attendance</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>% Variance</b>
William Penn Leisure Centre	406,142	452,501	+46,359	+11%
South Oxhey	326,390	342,923	+16,533	+5%
Rickmansworth Golf Course	73,249	53,827	-19,422	-26%
<b>Contract Total</b>	<b>805,781</b>	<b>849,251</b>	<b>+43,470</b>	<b>+4%</b>

<b>Adult Attendance</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>% Variance</b>
William Penn Leisure Centre	299,930	347,370	+47,440	+16%
South Oxhey	207,602	227,370	+19,768	+10%
Rickmansworth Golf Course	71,865	51,351	-20,514	-29%
<b>Contract Total</b>	<b>579,397</b>	<b>626,091</b>	<b>+46,694</b>	<b>+8%</b>

<b>Junior Attendance</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>% Variance</b>
William Penn Leisure Centre	106,212	105,131	-1,081	-1%
South Oxhey	118,788	115,553	-3,235	-3%
Rickmansworth Golf Course	1,384	2,476	+1,092	+79%
<b>Contract Total</b>	<b>226,384</b>	<b>223,160</b>	<b>-3,224</b>	<b>-1%</b>

In the 2024/25 period, total attendance across all facilities increased by 4%, driven primarily by a strong rise in adult participation, which grew by 8%. William Penn Leisure Centre led the growth, showing notable gains in both total (+11%) and adult (+16%) attendance. South Oxhey also saw moderate increases, while Rickmansworth Golf Course experienced significant decline in total (-26%) and adult (-29%) attendance, despite an impressive 79% surge in junior attendance. The decline in adult attendance at Rickmansworth Golf Course is largely attributed to a reporting issue in the previous year, whereby the booking system was programmed to report the total attendance at an event at each hour, for example a five-hour event with 100 attendees was reporting as 500 attendances rather than 100, thus inflating the 2023/24 numbers. Once corrected, the 2024/25 data presents a more accurate picture of regular usage.

Junior attendance is down by 1% against the contract figures. This is due to the Watford Gymnastics Club finding a new location and no longer using South Oxhey Leisure Centre, which previously contributed approximately 1,000 junior users per month.

William Penn has seen a reduction in the number of junior participants joining the swim scheme. This is due to increased competition from other local providers in the area, and whilst the lessons are competitively priced there has still been a reduction in numbers.

Overall, adult engagement continues to grow and junior figures indicate positive activity trends that are expected to improve further with strategic programme adjustments.

### 2.1 Membership statistics

#### Fitness Membership

	<b>March 2024</b>	<b>March 2025</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>William Penn LC</b>	3,128	3,282	+154
<b>South Oxhey LC</b>	2,533	2,722	+189
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,661</b>	<b>6,004</b>	<b>+343</b>



## Swimming Lessons

	March 2024	March 2025	Variance
William Penn LC	1,120	953	-167
South Oxhey LC	1,402	1,471	+71
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,522</b>	<b>2,424</b>	<b>-98</b>

Fitness memberships have grown over the previous twelve months. South Oxhey Leisure Centre is plateauing as the gym starts to reach capacity in the evenings. Gym and studio refurbishments at South Oxhey Leisure Centre are due in late 2025. We hope this continued investment and improvements will see an increase in memberships and general users.

Swimming Lessons numbers have reached capacity at South Oxhey Leisure Centre which shows great uptake by local residents and the effect a fantastic facility has had in the local area.

## 3 Environment

### 3.1 Environmental and Energy Management Plan Progress Updates

Five hundred solar panels were installed on the roof of William Penn Leisure Centre as part of a project, funded by Sport England, Swimming Pool Support Fund, to help decarbonise leisure centres.

1. The solar PV system has been operational since the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2024.
2. Since being switched-on it has generated the following benefits:

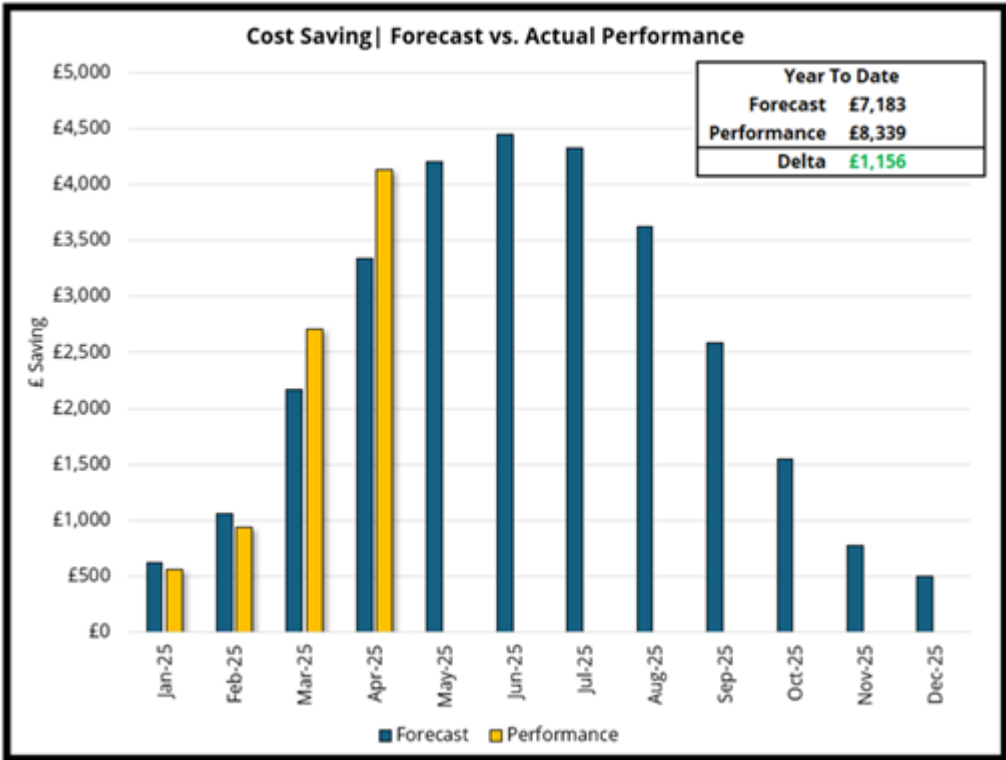
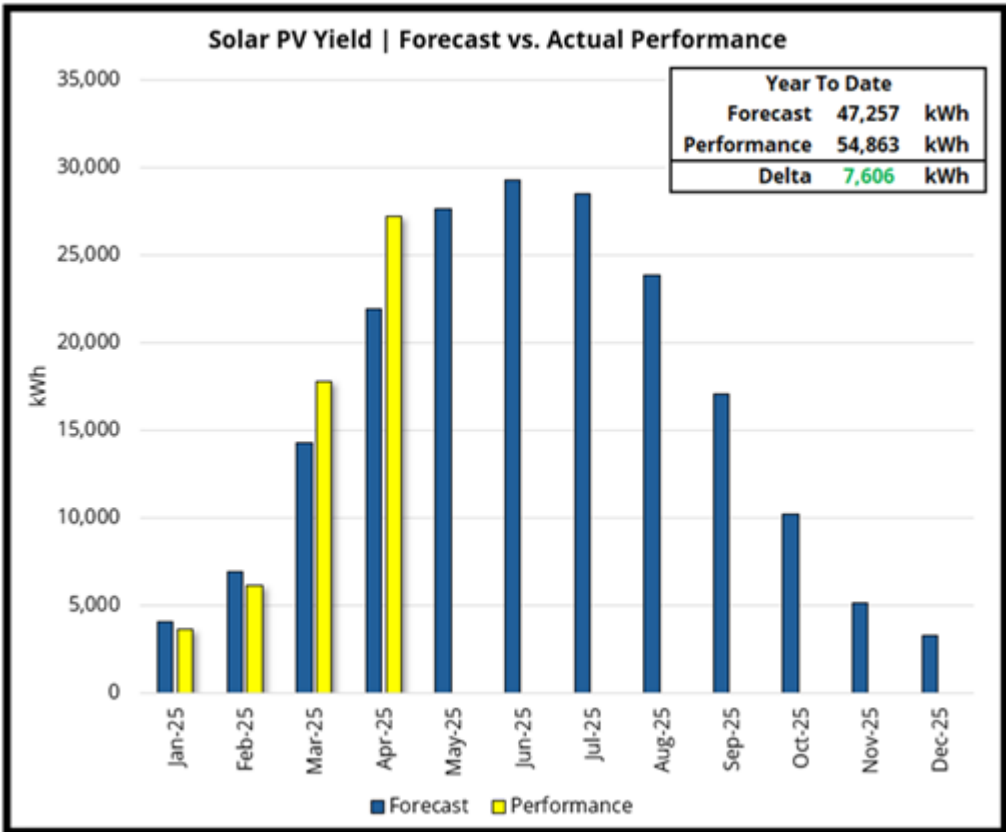
<b>£9,300</b> saved in electricity costs	
<b>27.72</b> tonnes of carbon saved	<b>38</b> equivalent trees planted
<b>58.35</b> megawatt-hours of electricity generated	<b>15</b> equivalent homes powered for a year

3. The solar PV system has an embodied carbon footprint of 130 tonnes and the current payback position is 21%.

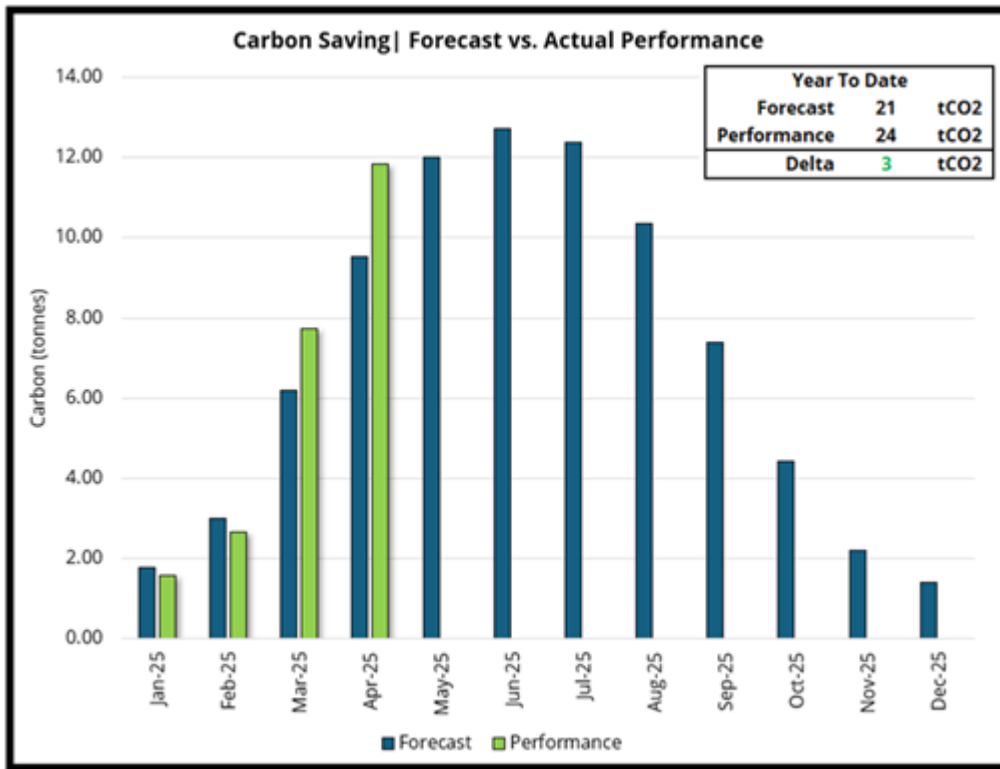
### Actual Performance vs. Forecast | 2025

1. After underperforming by -11% in both January and February, the solar PV system overperformed by +25% in March and +24% in April, resulting in an overperformance of +16% for 2025 to date.

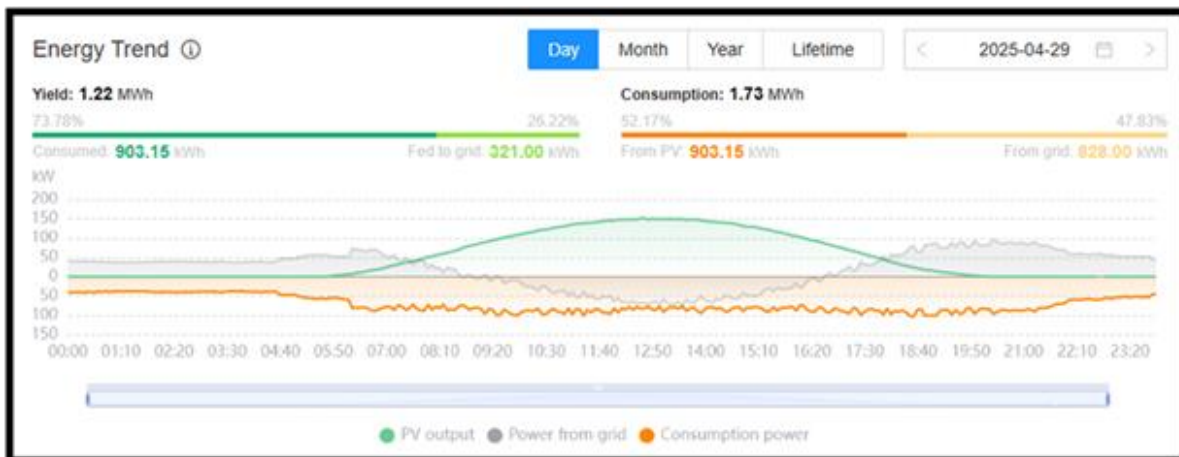






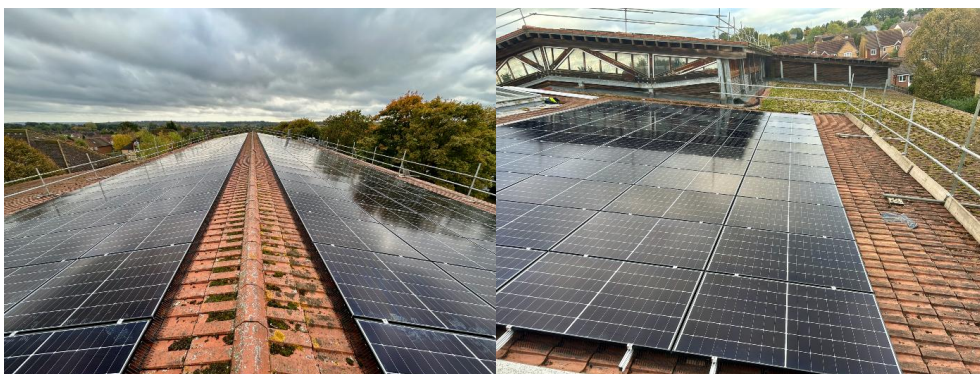


2. In April the solar PV system provided, on average, 44% of the leisure centres electricity consumption over a 24-hour period, compared with 31% in March.
3. On the Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> of April, the solar PV system generated 1,220 kilowatt-hours of electricity which represented 52% of the leisure centres electricity consumption over a 24-hour period.



Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025





Various works were completed within the plant room at William Penn Leisure Centre, funded by SLM, to aid the centres efficiency and effective operation. A new heat exchanger was installed for the boilers, new primary heat pumps installed, and new actuators fitted within the Building Management System giving greater control of heating and ventilation plant.



William Penn Leisure Centre benefited from pool filtration media replacement for both pools. The filter media change will help to deliver better quality water to the pools resulting in less chemical use and increased filtration. The filter media last for 10 years so this is a great investment by SLM not only in terms of water quality for our swimmers but also in long term chemical reduction.



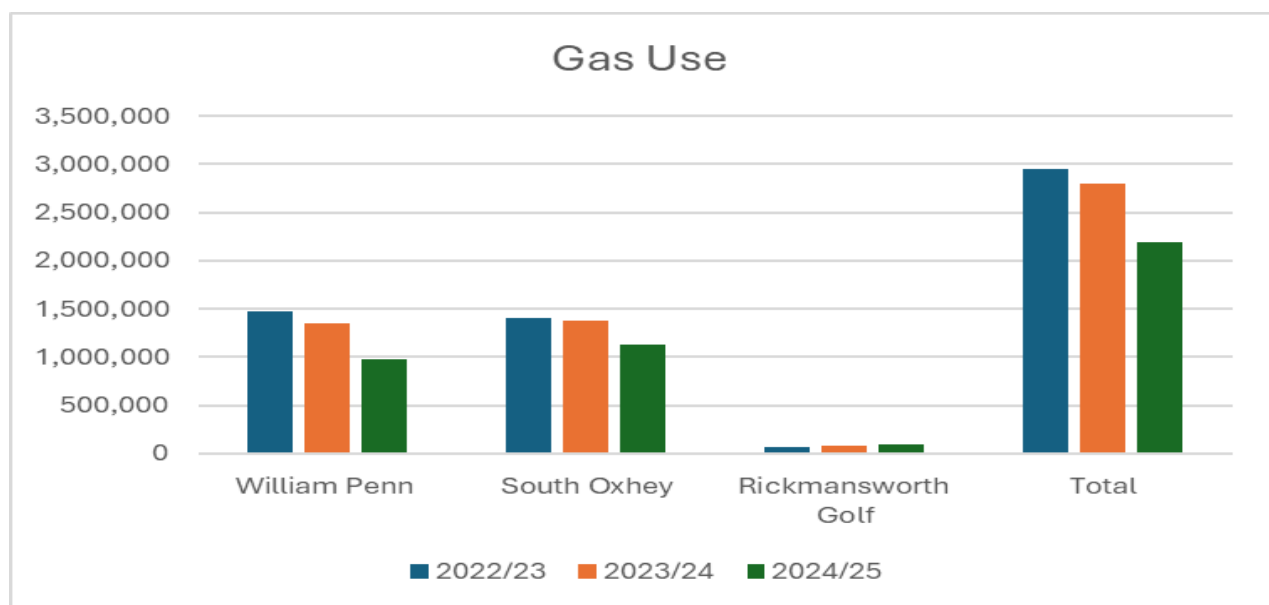
### 3.2 Utility Consumption

Month	Centre Name	Electricity (Kwh)	Gas (Kwh)
April	Rickmansworth GC	5,592	6,077
	South Oxhey	35,997	113,019
	William Penn	50,824	153,318
May	Rickmansworth GC	6,212	2,769
	South Oxhey	35,491	89,885
	William Penn	50,522	66,235



June	Rickmansworth GC	5,851	1,786
	South Oxhey	34,556	73,283
	William Penn	48,791	55,983
July	Rickmansworth GC	6,854	1,949
	South Oxhey	33,823	60,663
	William Penn	51,762	53,965
August	Rickmansworth GC	7,018	2,200
	South Oxhey	33,185	57,329
	William Penn	51,143	50,032
September	Rickmansworth GC	6,475	3,298
	South Oxhey	33,447	72,009
	William Penn	49,349	59,940
October	Rickmansworth GC	6,382	5,884
	South Oxhey	33,007	97,006
	William Penn	49,079	76,596
November	Rickmansworth GC	6,420	10,014
	South Oxhey	34,429	108,297
	William Penn	46,279	86,154
December	Rickmansworth GC	6,579	11,142
	South Oxhey	33,632	133,851
	William Penn	39,448	91,753
January	Rickmansworth GC	5,556	17,864
	South Oxhey	37,650	104,893
	William Penn	43,264	89,129
February	Rickmansworth GC	4,642	13,728
	South Oxhey	34,671	101,656
	William Penn	38,593	85,023
March	Rickmansworth GC	4,397	13,981
	South Oxhey	37,797	112,816
	William Penn	37,983	105,646

### 3.3 Utility Comparison Year on Year



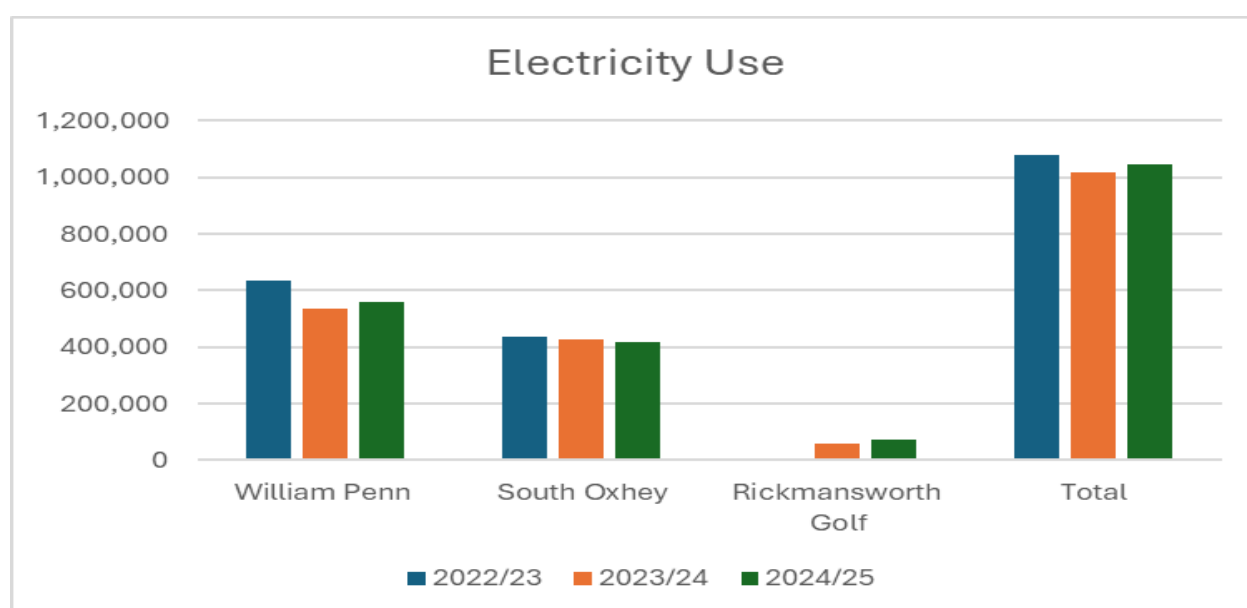
Gas	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Variance	Variance %
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William Penn	1,473,608	1,347,142	973,774	-373,368	-28%
South Oxhey	1,403,250	1,379,737	1,124,707	-255,030	-18%
Rickmansworth Golf	71,632	76,682	90,692	+14,010	+18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,948,490</b>	<b>2,803,561</b>	<b>2,189,173</b>	<b>-614,388</b>	<b>-22%</b>

Gas used across the three facilities has decreased by 22% year on year. Boiler efficiency works have been completed at William Penn Leisure Centre and amendments to variable speed drive programmes at both sites have been the contributing factors in this decrease.

Rickmansworth Golf Course has seen an increase in gas use attributed by increased occupancy of the club house. The greater food and beverage offering and extending kitchen opening hours has also increased the gas usage through kitchen equipment.



<b>Electricity</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance %</b>
William Penn	633,511	533,894	557,037	+23,143	+4%
South Oxhey	437,314	427,415	417,685	-9,730	-2%
Rickmansworth Golf	7,789	55,769	71,978	+16,209	+29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,078,614</b>	<b>1,017,078</b>	<b>1,046,700</b>	<b>+29,622</b>	<b>+3%</b>

Electricity usage has increased year on year. This year has seen a 3% increase with Rickmansworth Golf Course showing a large increase. This increase is linked to increased participation of golf and specifically an increase on the number of golf buggies which require regular charging to keep operational.

Reducing our energy consumption across the facilities is a corporate aim for the year ahead and more information on how we plan to achieve this is discussed further on in the report.

#### 4 Customer Forum Summaries

Customer Forums were held at all three facilities in each quarter of 2024 with attendance from users of the facilities being consistent across the year. Feedback regarding the facilities and activities on offer was positive and feedback regarding the colleagues was especially pleasing to hear.



Club forums were also held at all three facilities specifically for local clubs and block bookers of activities. Feedback was very good with some minor points for improvement.

5 Partnership Working

Throughout the year both South Oxhey Leisure Centre and William Penn Leisure Centre have ‘adopted’ schools. Adopting a school is an initiative designed to work with that school to increase the physical activity levels of the pupils and their families by offering them one month of free swimming for the whole family. The following schools have been adopted throughout 2024 and 2025; Oxhey Wood Primary School, Arnett Hills School, Woodhall School and St Meryl School. Throughout these adopted periods there was an average 2% increase of swimming pool use.



Summer activities kicked off with the ‘Everyone is Family’ is campaign. SLM have been running “Everyone is Family” for the past 4 years, and the scheme celebrates families being active together. This year we offered families the opportunity to enjoy badminton, table tennis, mixed racket sessions including squash as well as family swimming all for just £2 per activity. 104 families made use of the facilities during these sessions with multiple families attending more than once.

DOWNLOAD OUR ACTIVITY PLANS

TIPS FOR BETTER, MORE RESTFUL SLEEP

**EVERYONE IS FAMILY**

FOR LEGAL REASONS, ONLY THE SWIMMING POOL TOGETHER WITH THE OTHERS ONE IN THE POOL

FAMILY FRIENDLY RECIPE IDEAS

DAY	ACTIVITY	TIME
MONDAY	BADMINTON	12-4pm
TUESDAY	TABLE TENNIS	12-4pm
WEDNESDAY	TABLE TENNIS	12-4pm
THURSDAY	TABLE TENNIS	12-4pm
FRIDAY	BADMINTON	12-4pm

Please register at reception about our family events for the chance to win amazing prizes!

**SWIMMING CRASH COURSES**

Monday 29th July - Friday 2nd August 2024

11.30am	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
12.00pm	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 4

Monday 5th August - Friday 9th August 2024

11.30am	Stage 1	Stage 2	Breaststroke Clinic
12.00pm	Stage 1	Stage 2	Butterfly Clinic

Monday 19th August - Friday 23rd August 2024

11.30am	Stage 1	Stage 2	Rookie Lifeguard
12.00pm	Stage 1	Stage 2	Rookie Lifeguard

everyone ACTIVE

Once again, we offered free use of all the facilities to those working for the emergency services between Christmas and New Years Day as a small thank you, especially over the festive period. We also had Dementia UK & Breast Cancer Now visit the leisure centre, and all were very engaging with our members, and the community.





South Oxhey Leisure Centre hosted free Pickleball taster sessions in September 2024 which was well attended and had over 20 people in attendance for the free sessions and this has grown the attendance across the facilities to now being over 200 users per month participating in pickleball. Casual hire continues to be steady at the centre and the Pickleball festival held on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025. The festival was a great success and has seen a number of players from William Penn regularly attending Pickleball tournaments run by the NGB, with a number of the players picking up trophies including 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places.



### **Swim After Stroke**

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 marked World Stroke Day, which also fell on the day of our Swim After Stroke Sessions. Complimentary teas, coffees and snacks were put on after the session which was well attended by current and former participants. The sessions have gone from strength to strength after the BBC news piece completed last year.



### **External organisations**

Herts Help came down to visit and a positive partnership working, they visited site on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

### **International Women's Day**

South Oxhey & William Penn also hosted various events for International Women's Day throughout the week, between 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2025. William Penn offered free Glute Workshops, South Oxhey hosted Smoothie Days, and both sites offered bootcamp themed group exercise



classes. Feedback from the event was great and both sites are looking into hosting Glute Workshops and Bootcamp themed sessions as a change on the group exercise timetable.

## **6 Social Value**

Social value is a measurement of the benefits of the work companies do, the services they provide and the programmes they deliver for people and communities. It allows companies to measure the social and environmental impact of the work they do through improvements to an individual's well-being.

Using evidence based academic research, undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University, and funded by the Department for Culture, Media, Sport and Sport England, Social Value Calculator (SVC) gives operators the ability to accurately measure and value the impacts of sports and physical activity they offer.

Using the operator's current data and sector-wide benchmarks, SVC gives insight to the value in community savings generated across four key areas: Health care, Education, Wellbeing and Crime.

The benefit of monitoring this information includes.

- Gives stakeholders an indication of the social value created from investment in sport and physical activity.
- Supports funding applications and programme commissioning while identifying areas with high social value potential through targeted activity.
- Transparent evidencing of community impact of your programme or facility to align savings to specific social areas.
- Using local socio-economic and lifestyle data to profile participants, the model is appreciative of local contexts e.g. areas of high deprivation.

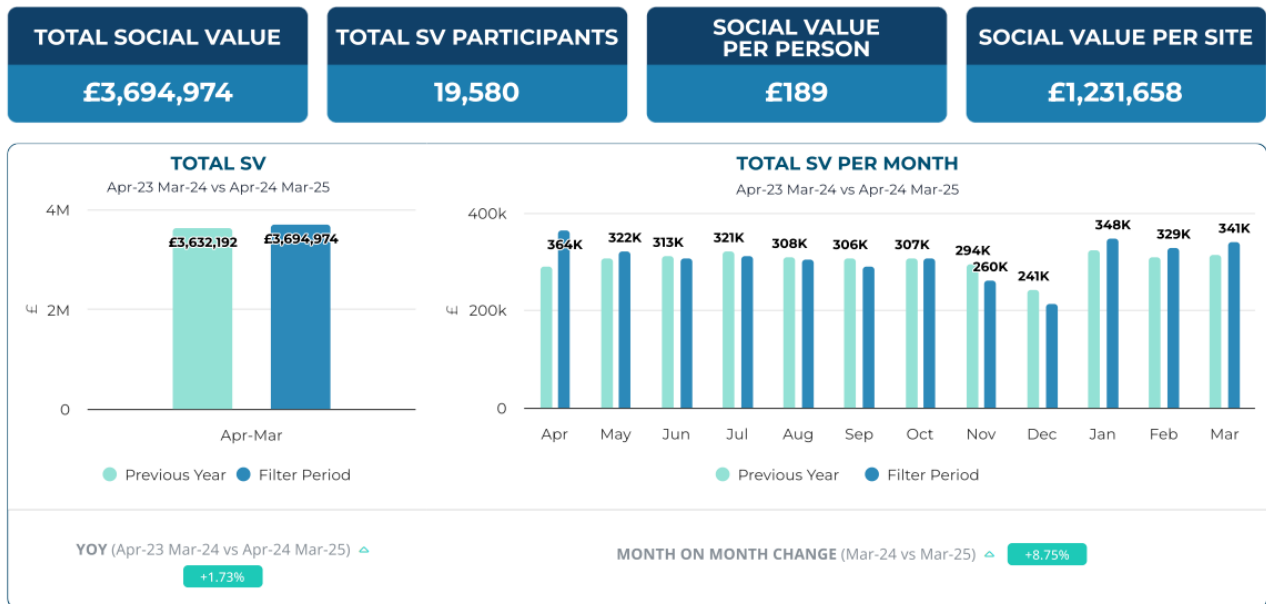
The graphic below shows a breakdown of the social value KPIs across the facilities within Three Rivers. As you can see the total social value has increased by 1.73% and £62,782 year on year.





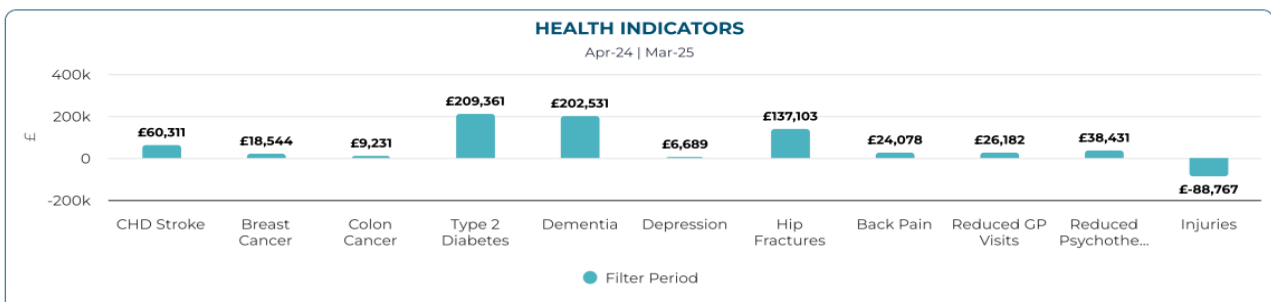
## 2 - SOCIAL VALUE DASHBOARD

The dashboard displays the main Social Value KPIs based on selected filters: 1-Total social value generated, 2-Total number of participants generating social value 3-Average social value per person, 4-Average social value per site. The total social value is then broken down by month within the selected time period and benchmarked against the same time period from the previous year.



The graphic below shows how this is broken down into the 4 key indicators.

### INDICATORS



#### HEALTH INDICATORS

The Social Value for **Physical and Mental Health** is calculated based on the health care cost savings for eight health outcomes based on the reduced risk and prevented cases combined with the reduced GP visits & psychotherapy usage for physically active people.

**The Subjective Wellbeing** outcome refers to the increase in life satisfaction. It is calculated by multiplying the value of increased wellbeing derived from a participant's engagement in sport by the number of unique people taking part.

**Individual Development** refers to the improvement in educational attainment and higher starting salaries gained through participating in sport at university.

**Social and Community Development** outcome represents the reduction in crime rates for young males and the social capital based on improved networks, trust and reciprocity.

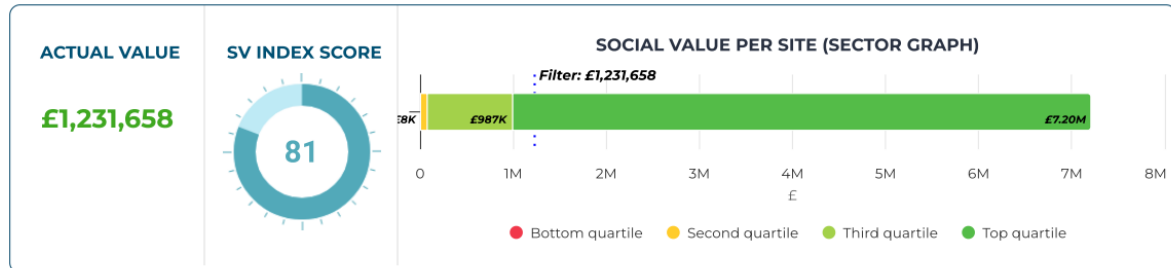
As you can see from the above graphic, the work detailed within this report delivered by the teams at the centres is having a very positive effect on reducing the impact of Type 2 Diabetes, Dementia and other health related factors affecting our communities. It is also showing improvement in educational attainment leading to higher salary employment and reducing the crime rates in the local communities based on improved networks, trust and reciprocity.





## 3 - BENCHMARKING

This section provides comparisons for the selected KPIs (social value per site, social value per person and social value growth) against the sector benchmarks. For each KPI, you can see the Actual Value, the Index Score and the Sector Graph, which groups all individual sites from the sector into four quartiles based on their performance in the selected KPI.



### SOCIAL VALUE PER SITE

The average social value generated by each site within the selected time period is calculated by the division of the total social value generated by the operator by the number of sites included in the filter. This value is then benchmarked with all sites the sector on the quartile graph.

**Actual Value:** The actual social value delivered by the operator (or the selected sites) within the selected time period.

**Index Score:** The percentage score (1 to 100) given to the operator (or the site) based on their performance against the rest of the sector – a higher score represents better performance (i.e. 100 is the best performing site/ operator).

**Sector Graph:** The graph with all sites from the sector matching the selected filters grouped into four quartiles based on their performance – i.e. Top Quartile includes the best performing 25% of the sites in the sector and Bottom Quartile included the worst performing 25% of the sites in the sector for the selected KPI.

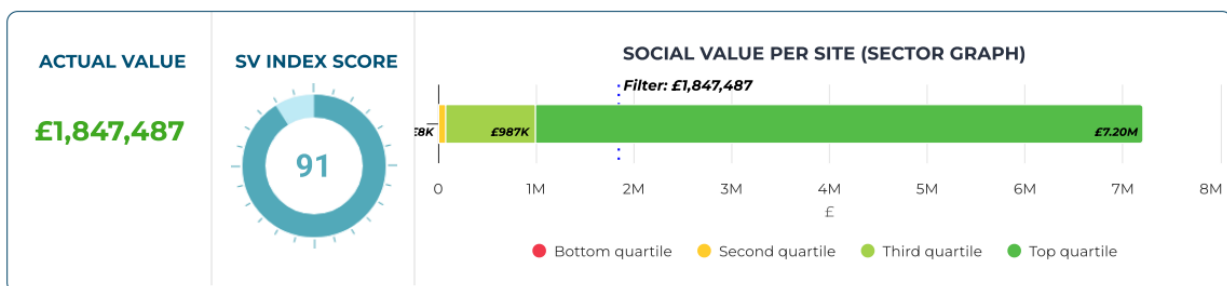
Through the benchmarking tool, we can also see that Three Rivers leisure facilities are performing in the top quartile when compared to the rest of the country's facilities, with an index score of 81% and average of £1.2m of social value delivered per site. A score of 100% would be the best performing area in the country.

If we were to remove Rickmansworth Golf Course from this comparison, due to the differing and smaller facilities the score would increase to an average value of £1.8m per site and an index of 91%. Which is amazing considering the size of the facilities and the competition and green space within the locality.



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## **7 12-month work programme**

### **Junior Participation**

Working alongside national governing bodies for sport and physical activity, key targets and initiatives are being designed to encourage use of the facilities, with a specific target on children aged 8 -14. The aim is to develop long term associations with sport and physical activity and create long lasting habits.

The swimming lesson scheme at William Penn Leisure Centre is under monthly review to ensure we are creating a diverse programme which meets the needs of the local community. Initiatives such as adopting a school or swim street will breakdown barriers as well as continuing with the Uk Shared Prosperity Funded Swimming Lessons across the facilities.

### **Decarbonisation of leisure facilities**

After the fantastic results already being seen in reduced electricity consumption at William Penn Leisure Centre after the installation of the solar panels, it is key to continue this progression of assisting the council in the decarbonisation of the leisure facilities.

In terms of scope one emissions from a centre level, all base level expectations are already accounted for through colleague training, effective monitoring, incentive schemes and low-cost changes to reduce emissions. Plans to continue to roll out ongoing education and reviews of our scope one emissions are firmly in place with ongoing reviews into further low-cost ways to reduce our carbon emissions. Installation of variable speed drives to all plant pumps is currently being reviewed along with increasing the level of control for all air handling plant, all of which will add small gains into becoming net zero.

However, the below grants have been secured by Three Rivers District Council to further decarbonise the leisure facilities and SLM will work with Three Rivers District Council to explore these plans and hopefully make them realities in the coming 12 months;

- £50,000 grant was awarded by the Low Carbon Skills Fund to form the heat decarbonisation plan for William Penn Leisure Centre. The resulting heat decarbonisation plan will help the council make an informed decision and potentially apply for further external grants to help install the air/ground source heat pump.
- £75,000 grant received from the Greater South East Net Zero Hub to further evaluate solar canopies at both South Oxhey Leisure Centre and William Penn Leisure Centre.
- EV chargers planned install at South Oxhey Leisure Centre in Summer 2025.

### **Female Participation in Golf**

Although the general usage of Rickmansworth Golf course for golf specific activities has increased over the past twelve months, it has been highlighted that female participation in the sport has not seen the same level of growth.

Everyone Golf have created a partnership with Jasmine Sanders, also known as The Jazzy Golfer. Jasmine is a golf influencer who is a passionate campaigner for Women's and Junior Golf. Jasmine hosts the CNN golf show "Living Golf" as well as being the founder of the UK Women's Golf Community (UKWGC), a thriving community of 10,000 women and girls.

Through our new partnership with Jasmine, Rickmansworth Golf Course will be represented on the UKWGC member directory offering discounts and incentives to female golfers to use the facilities.



We are also exploring the opportunity of becoming a hub site for the UKWGC if/when the proposed GolfPod facility has final planning approval. All these new partnerships will aid to grow women's golf at Rickmansworth Golf Course.

### **South Oxhey Leisure Centre – Fitness refurbishment**

We are now five years on from the opening of South Oxhey Leisure Centre with the extended red line and pool introductions and as such the facility is due replacement fitness equipment. Rather than just replace the fitness equipment with new kit, the plan is to complete a full fitness space refurbishment in a similar fashion to William Penn Leisure Centre as detailed in the report above.

Plans will mirror the works completed at William Penn Leisure Centre with redecoration of all fitness spaces as well as new state of the art equipment. The proposed timetable is to complete the works in November/December 2025 with the facility to step into 2026 looking fabulous.



## Climate Change and Leisure Committee Wednesday, 2 July 2025

### PART I

#### **Croxley Common Moor Management Plan 2025-2030 ADE**

#### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 New five-year management plan has been developed for Croxley Common Moor in Croxley Green.
- 1.2 The new plan contains management actions over the next five years from financial year 2025/26 until 2029/30. The detailed actions relate to habitat management, scrub management, wildlife surveys for biodiversity and improvements to public access and signage.
- 1.3 Officers are recommending that these plans are approved by the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing committee and adopted by the Council. Should the plans be approved, Officers will seek to implement the actions within the plans over the next five years. Work will be completed within existing budgets or subject to external funding.

#### **2 Details**

- 2.1 Plan development process
  - 2.1.1 The plans were developed and produced by Countryside Management Service (CMS) part of Hertfordshire County Council, who commissioned by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) to assist with the management of TRDC Open Space.
  - 2.1.2 Public consultation on the management plans was carried out in two stages. An initial period of consultation was held to encourage residents, site users, Friends of Croxley Common Moor, Councillors and other interested parties to share ideas and thoughts on the management of the woodlands over the next five years.
  - 2.1.3 Once draft plans had been completed, a second period of consultation was held to enable stakeholders to comment on draft versions of the plans. Minor amendments were made to the plans to produce the final version.
- 2.2 Consultation Process
  - 2.2.1 The initial consultation was held for 4 weeks from the 8 July to 5 August 2024.
  - 2.2.2 Public and stakeholder consultation, on the draft management plan, took place December 2024 / January 2025.
  - 2.2.3 A summary of engagement responses are included in the plan under 7.4 and have been grouped under subheadings which include: Public access, Scrub control, Thistle control, Ragwort, Gazing, SSSI, Surveys, River Gade, Climate change, Funding, Site management, OPM, FoCCM, Plan formatting.
- 2.3 Aim and Objectives



- 2.3.1 The aim and objective of the management plan is to provide a valuable, welcoming green space for the community whilst ensuring the nationally important biodiversity features are protected and enhanced.
- 2.3.2 The key detailed actions relate to environmental management in accordance with the Higher-Level Stewardship, wildlife surveys for biodiversity and improvements to public access and signage, these include;
- Annual scrub control contract clearing 1/3 of 'triangle field'.
  - Grazing in line with site HLS agreement.
  - Work with partner organisations to maximise opportunities for wildlife surveys

### **3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The officer recommendation is that the management plan for Croxley Common Moor is formally adopted by the Council.
- 3.2 Officers will then begin to implement the actions within the plans, subject to available funding where necessary.
- 3.3 If the plans are not approved by the committee, maintenance of the site will continue at a minimum level, but no additional improvements for biodiversity or public access will be undertaken.

### **4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed budgets. The proposals also relate to securing additional funding, as outlined within the report.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators for the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service Plan 2025-2028.
- 4.2.1 LNI04 - External Funding secured to support Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Projects and Activities.
- 4.2.2 LNI05 - Year on year increase in the area of land owned by Three Rivers District Council, being managed for biodiversity benefit.
- 4.3 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following Corporate Framework Objectives:
- 4.3.1 Sustainable Communities
- 4.3.2 Net Carbon Zero and Climate Resilient

### **5 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan includes an annual budget to maintain 13 sites with management plans, including the management of Croxley Common Moor. This is not sufficient to deliver the actions planned within the Management Plan as such the delivery of projects will be dependent on securing external funding which will need to be obtained in advance of projects proceeding.

### **6 Legal Implications**



- 6.1 All proposed works and equipment will be tendered within the Council's constitution and Contract Procedure Rules, where required.
- 6.2 The preparation of this plan is being undertaken in order to support compliance with the Council's statutory obligations and its Corporate Framework and Priorities.
- 6.3 The Council has a duty to have regard to conserving and enhancing biodiversity under S40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. This does not mean that the duty must be given greater weight than other matters and the Management Plan recommendations that are being presented within this report satisfy the duty, which is for the Council to 'have regard' when it exercises its functions.
- 6.4 Subject to the receipt of external funding, under the Council Constitution (as outlined in part 3, section 4.1.3 of the Council Constitution), Committee approval is required to enter into any contract above the value of £25,000.

## **7 Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 7.1 An Impact Assessment has been completed for these Management Plans.
- 7.2 On the whole the new Management plans should have a positive impact on the accessibility of the site.
- 7.3 Funding will need to be sourced in order to make these improvements.

## **8 Staffing Implications**

- 8.1 Delivering the Management Plan project and objectives as well as securing external funding in order to deliver these will be led by the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service.
- 8.2 In particular, it will require the time of the Leisure Assets Manager and the Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer.
- 8.3 Officers will also be working collaboratively and will require support and input from Officers in other services, including Regulatory Services, Property Services, Environmental Protection, Community Partnerships, Finance and Legal.

## **9 Environmental Implications**

## **10 Community Safety Implications**

- 10.1 None Specific

## **11 Public Health implications**

- 11.1 Accessible, well-maintained parks and open spaces have never been more vital to the health and wellbeing of individuals. Being able to connect with wildlife has a positive impact on both the physical and mental health and wellbeing of individuals.

## **12 Customer Services Centre Implications**

- 12.1 None Specific

## **13 Communications and Website Implications**



- 13.1 The website will be kept updated with any relevant changes to the site, following the adoption and ongoing delivery of the Management Plan.
- 13.2 Good news stories will be circulated and shared via the Communications team, including across a range of social media channels.

#### **14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications**

- 14.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.
- 14.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Leisure & Natural Infrastructure service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

<b>Nature of Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	<b>Risk Rating</b> <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Actions within the Management Plans are not implemented due to a lack of resources	Reputational damage to the Council	Implementation of the plans is monitored and reported to highlight any issues at an early stage	* Tolerate	4

- 14.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.



<b>Very Likely</b> ----- <b>Likelihood</b> ----- <b>Remote</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>4</b>	<b>High</b> <b>8</b>	<b>Very High</b> <b>12</b>	<b>Very High</b> <b>16</b>
	<b>Low</b> <b>3</b>	<b>Medium</b> <b>6</b>	<b>High</b> <b>9</b>	<b>Very High</b> <b>12</b>
	<b>Low</b> <b>2</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>4</b>	<b>Medium</b> <b>6</b>	<b>High</b> <b>8</b>
	<b>Low</b> <b>1</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>2</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>3</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>4</b>
	<b>Impact</b> <b>Low -----&gt; Unacceptable</b>			

#### Impact Score

4 (Catastrophic)

3 (Critical)

2 (Significant)

1 (Marginal)

#### Likelihood Score

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Remote (≤5%))

- 14.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

#### 15 Recommendation

- 15.1 That the Climate Change & Leisure Committee:
- 15.2 Adopt the new five year Management Plan for Croxley Common Moor.
- 15.3 Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.
- 15.4 That public access to the report be immediate.

Report prepared by: Kelly Barnard, Leisure Assets Manager,  
 kelly.barnard@threerivers.gov.uk



**Data Quality**

Data sources:

Public Consultation

Data checked by:

Andrew Taylor – Projects Officer, Countryside Management Service (CMS)

Data rating: Tick

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	✓
3	High	

**APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS**

APPENDIX A: Croxley Common Moor Greenspace Action Plan 2025 - 2030



Three Rivers District Council

# Croxley Common Moor

Greenspace Action Plan  
2025-2030





## OVERVIEW

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### Greenspace Action Plans

Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period of time; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site.

### Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held from the 8 July to the 5 August 2024 to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement will be completed in late 2024 enabling stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An associated engagement response document, published online as an appendix to this plan, will summarise comments received, and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

### Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved
v1	12/2024		MP	AT, LT	
v2	04/2025		MP		



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## 1.0 SUMMARY

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### 1.1 Site Summary

Site Name: Croxley Common Moor

Site Address: Moor Ln Crossing, Northwood, Watford

Grid Reference: TQ 081 948

Size: 39ha

Owner: Three Rivers District Council

Designations:

Level	Designation	Detail
Statutory	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	<p>Full citation with reasons for designation in appendices. Extract below:</p> <p>Croxley Common Moor is an extensive area of grass heath on freely draining sandy soils of the Colne Gravels adjacent to the River Gade. A variety of soil types, from acidic to fairly basic, supports a rich assemblage of plant species. The grassland types represented here include examples which are nowhere common in Britain and others which have been significantly reduced in area nationally through drainage and agricultural change.</p>
Statutory	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Local Nature Reserves are special places for wildlife, geological features, education, scientific



		research and/or enjoyment by local communities. As such LNRs recognise the importance of a site for both people and wildlife. In declaring the site as a LNR, TRDC accepted responsibility to ensure that the special interest of the site is maintained.
Statutory	Common Land	The Moor's status as Common Land gives the public right of access to walk across the site.
Statutory	Metropolitan Green Belt	The site falls within the London Metropolitan Green Belt, which restricts the growth of development in strategic rural areas on the edge of conurbations.
Non-Statutory	Local Wildlife Site:	Local Wildlife Sites are considered to be of "critical natural capital". A section of the site north of the River Gade and outside the boundary of the SSSI has been designated an LWS.

## 1.2 Vision Statement

*"Croxley Common Moor will be a site of the highest ecological value on the doorstep of local communities, giving high quality access to nature. The site will be a welcoming green space, where visitors are encouraged to connect with nature and gain a greater understanding of the important features which make Croxley Common Moor such a unique place."*



## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

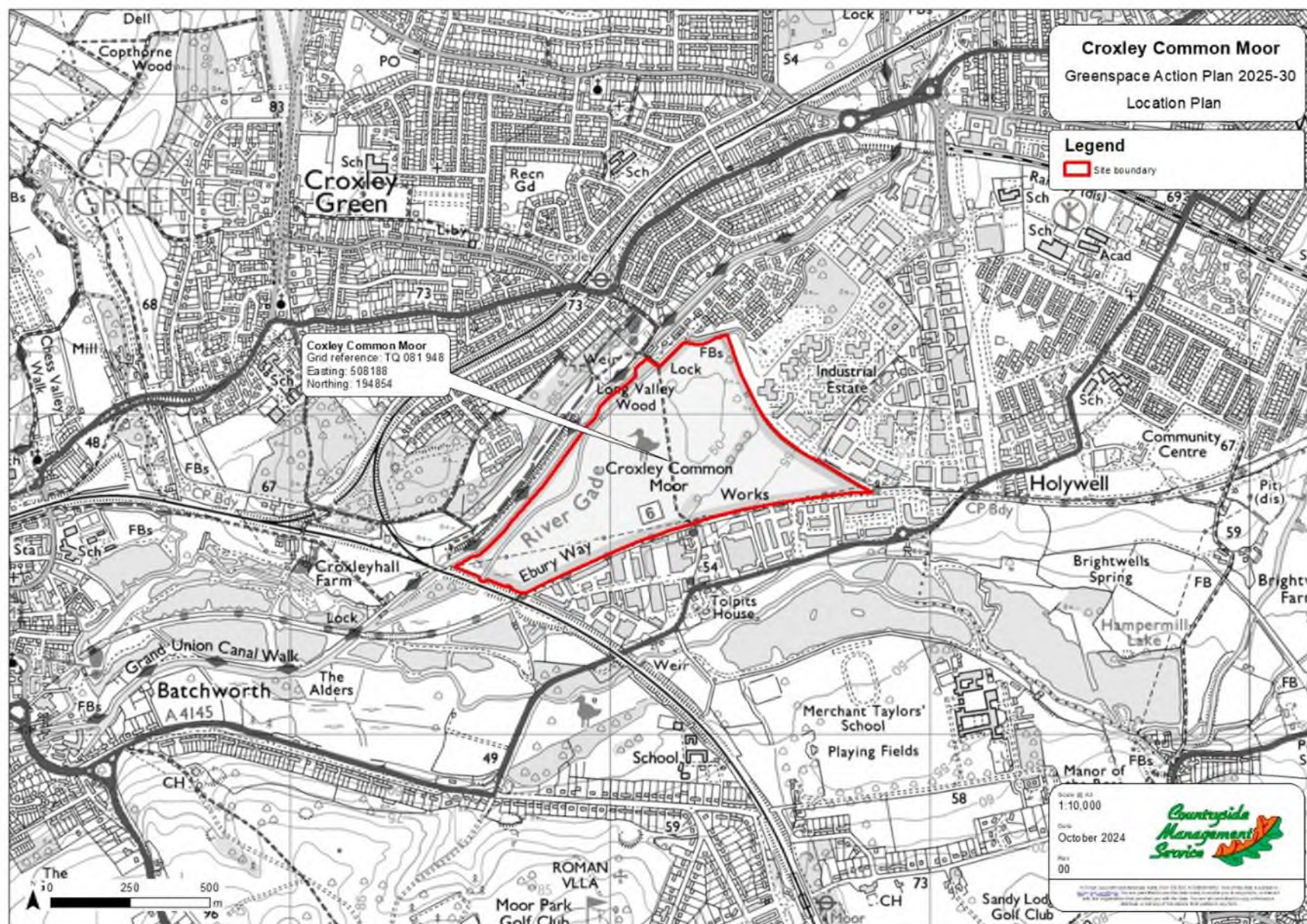
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### 2.1 Introduction

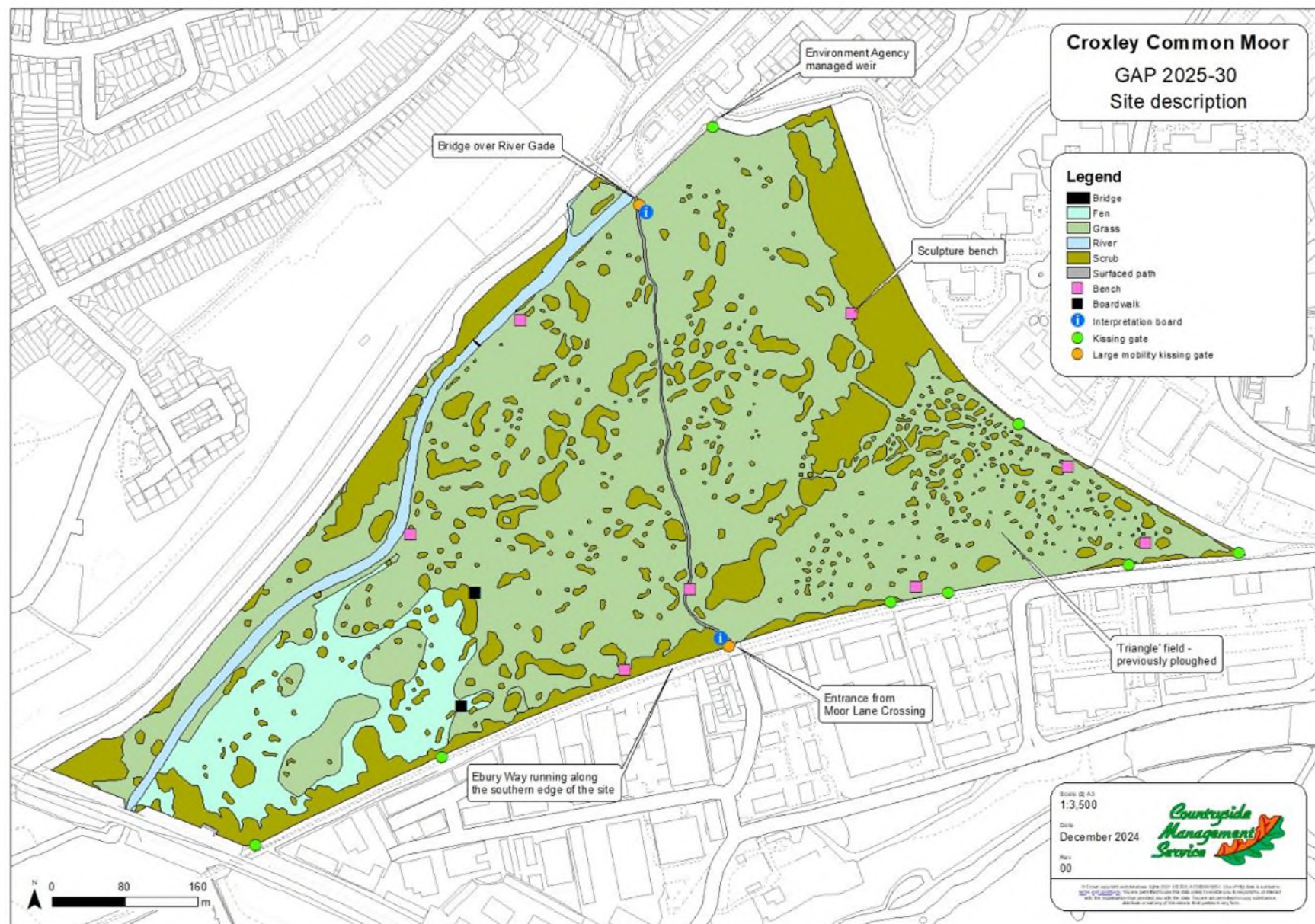
Croxley Common Moor is a nationally important open space located in Croxley Green, covering an area of approximately 39 hectares. The site is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and consists of a mosaic of wildlife habitats including trees, river, scrub, grassland, and wetland. The grassland is of the highest nature conservation and landscape value, consisting of a mixture of locally rare acid and neutral grassland communities. A range of soil types support a high diversity of plant species, including important acid heathland indicator species such as Petty Whin, Dyer's Greenweed and Heather, while areas of Hawthorn, Broom and Gorse give structural diversity. The Grand Union Canal and the River Gade run along the north-west of the site and areas along the River Gade are dominated by tall rush, grass and sedge communities. The diversity of habitats supports a wide variety of wildlife, in particular a rich invertebrate fauna, including several locally rare species.

The Moor is locally valued as a place to undertake a wide range of recreational activities including walking, wildlife watching and practical volunteering. It is used extensively by people from the local community and nearby business estates, and provides good access links between Rickmansworth, Watford and Northwood via the adjacent Ebury Way with which the site has multiple entrances. The site is managed jointly by Three Rivers District Council, the Countryside Management Service and the Friends of Croxley Common Moor (FoCCM), a local community group.

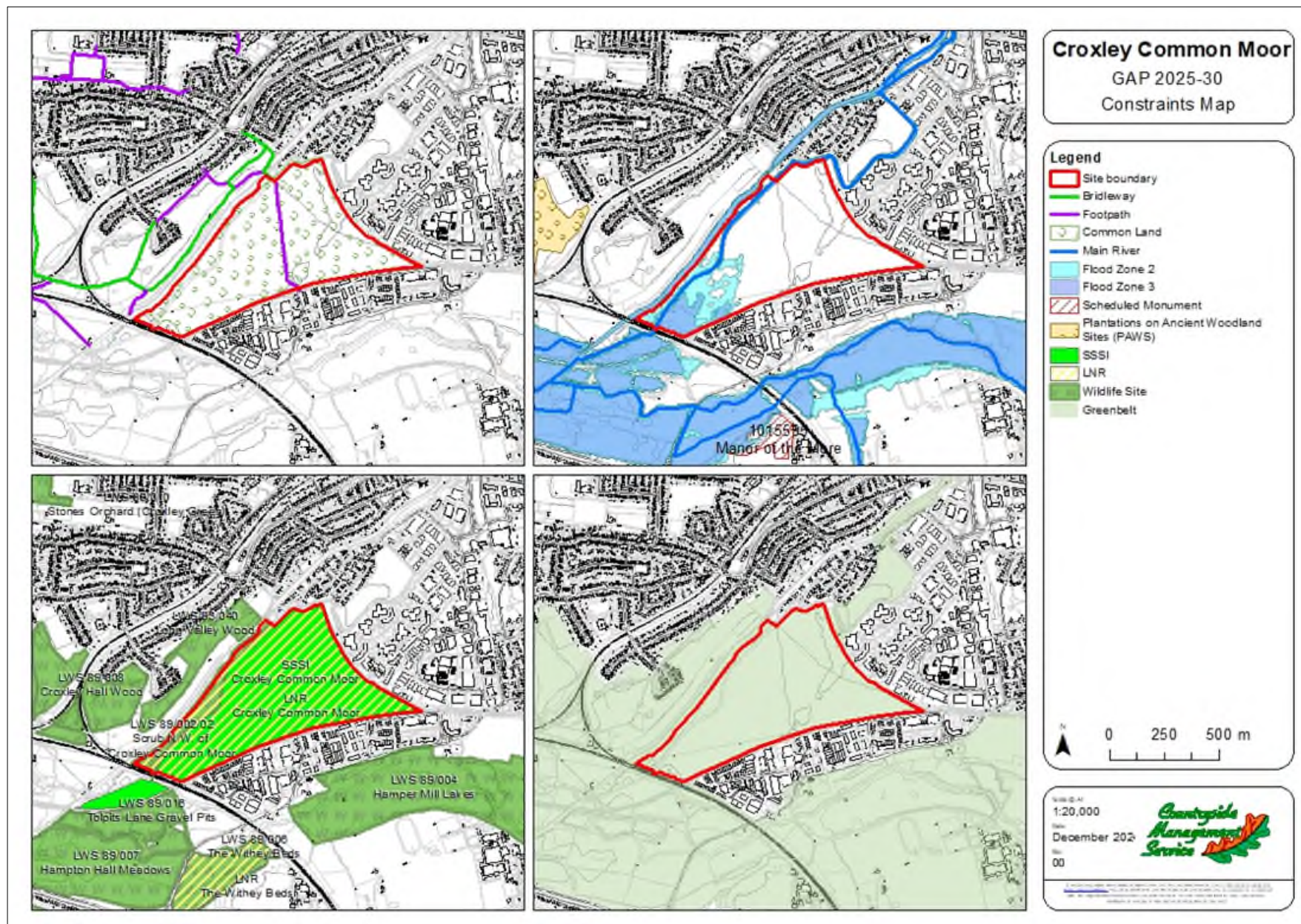














## **2.2 Geography and Landscape**

### **2.2.1 Landscape**

The site sits within the Croxley Moor Landscape Character Area, of which it is one of the listed distinctive features, displaying several of the key characteristics:

- areas of remnant and restored pasture.
- semi-natural habitats.
- recreational opportunities associated with waterways, Rights of Way and wetlands.

Management of the site can contribute to a number of the management guidelines for the character area, namely:

- promote opportunities to enhance the nature conservation value of riparian habitats and their importance as a wildlife corridor.
- improve the management of old meadows and pastures by ceasing fertiliser and herbicide application and introducing sensitive grassland management such as late hay cutting and low-density livestock grazing.
- encourage retention of traditional grazing patterns.
- support sympathetic management of key habitats including Croxley Common Moor and consider extending to other suitable sites.
- promote greater opportunities for public access throughout the area, providing links to existing routes.

### **2.2.2 Geology and Hydrology**

Sitting within the floodplain of the River Gade, Croxley Common Moor sits on an area of freely draining sandy soils on the Colne gravels.

Despite having little slope, topography varies across the site, both from natural river processes and human influence through small-scale gravel extraction. This varying topography, along with soils ranging between basic and acidic conditions, contributes to the mosaic of vegetation types found across the Moor.



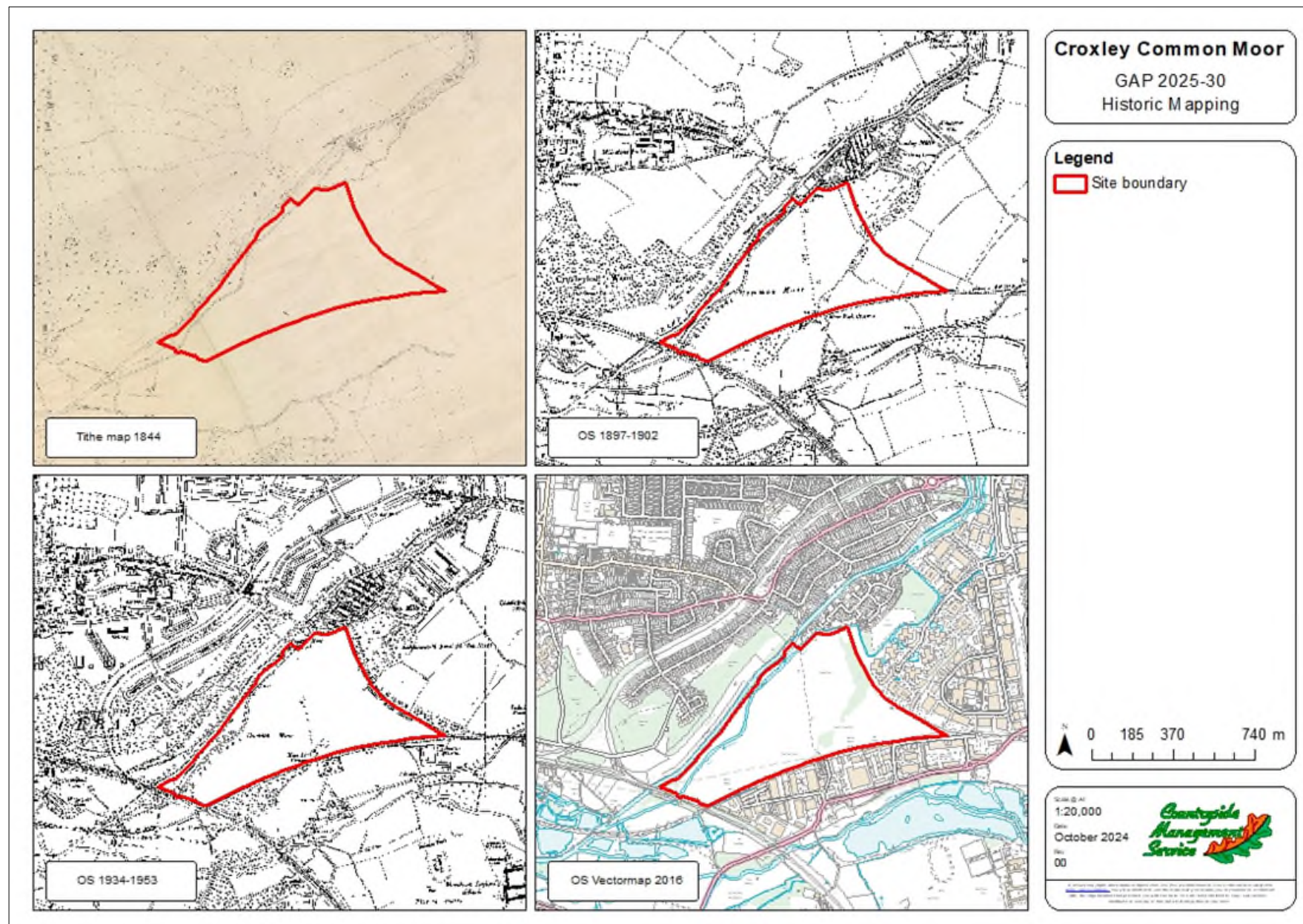
The varying topography across the site also creates varying hydrological conditions, with numerous wetter patches in lower lying dips and channels. The western end sits significantly wetter than the rest of the site, as indicated by the flood zone mapping.

### **2.3 History and Archaeology**

As historic common land, the site has a long history of grazing. A review of the Historic Environment Record shows archaeological records within the site boundary are limited to a bronze age spearhead find and a rectangular ditched mound of unknown age.

Historic mapping, shown below, reveals the site once sat within a much larger open landscape. As time progressed, mapping shows the gradual build-up of surrounding settlements and industrial use until the site becomes almost entirely surrounded. Mapping also gives an indication for some of the causes of differing conditions within the triangle section at the eastern end of the site. This area is shown as previously being part of an enclosed field network before becoming sectioned off by the building of the railway line serving the paper mill.







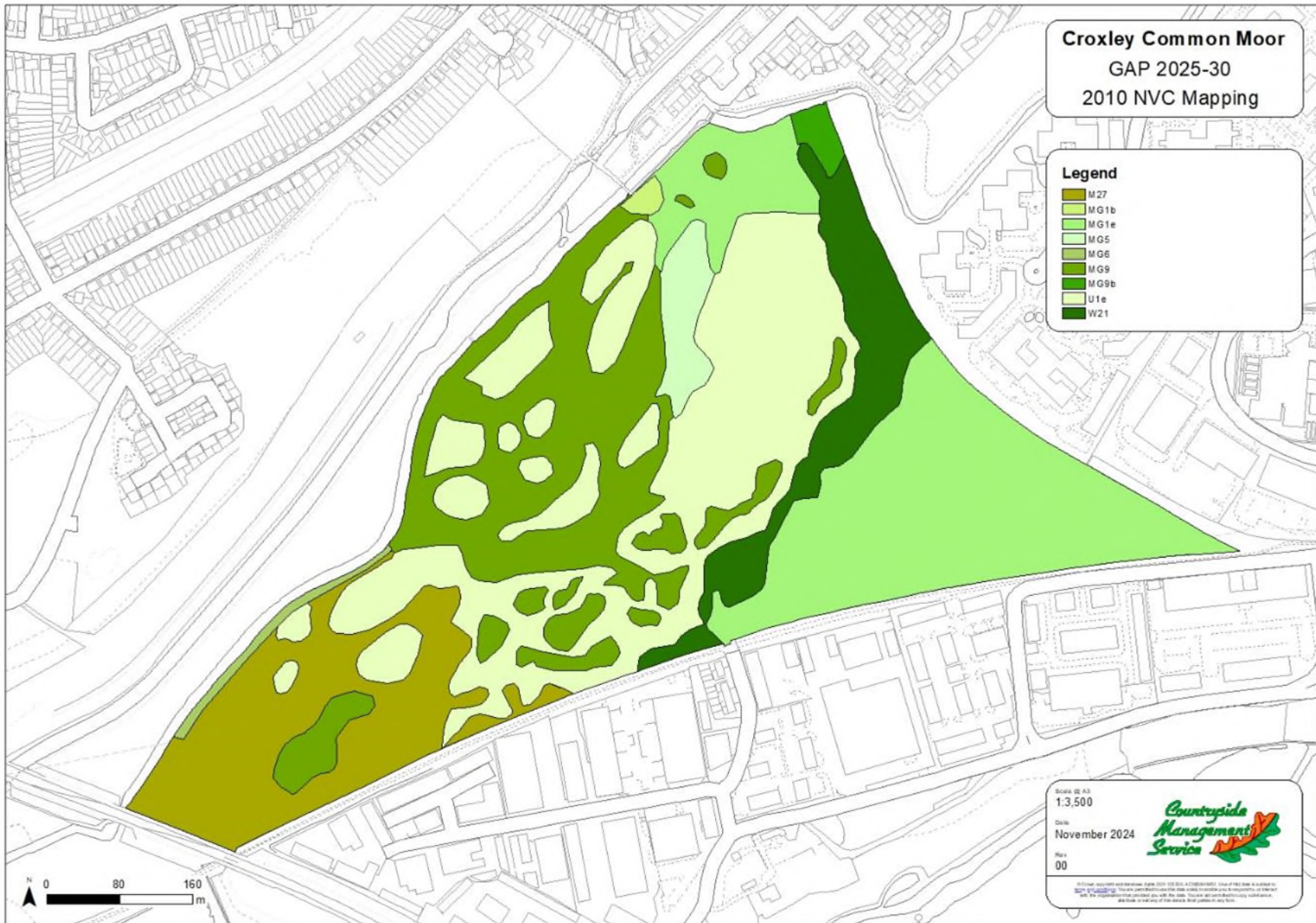
## 2.4 Habitats and wildlife

Croxley Common Moor consists of a mosaic of grassland, fen and scrub. In 2010, an National Vegetation Classification (NVC) survey of the site was undertaken, identifying eight distinct vegetation communities:

- U1e – *Festuca ovina* - *Agrostis capillaris* - *Rumex acetosella* grassland (*Galium saxatile* - *Potentilla erecta* sub-community)
- M27 – *Filipendula ulmaria* - *Angelica sylvestris* mire
- MG1b – *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland (*Urtica dioica* sub-community)
- MG1e – *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland (*Centaurea nigra* sub-community)
- MG5 – *Cynosurus cristatus* - *Centaurea nigra* grassland
- MG9 – *Holcus lanatus* - *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland
- MG9b – *Holcus lanatus* - *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland (*Arrhenatherum elatius* sub-community)
- W21 – *Crataegus monogyna* - *Hedera helix* scrub

Mapping produced from the NVC survey shows how the varying topography and soil conditions within the site has produced the mosaic of habitat conditions.







### 2.4.1 Grassland

Grassland makes up the majority of the site, with varying soil pH producing areas of both acid and neutral grasslands.

#### 2.4.1.1 *Acid grassland/heath*

Found largely in the higher areas of ground, acid grassland is characterised by species including Sheep's Sorrel, Petty Whin, Dyer's Greenweed and Mat Grass. Small areas of Heather survive, condition is currently variable with limited growth observed.



*Areas of acid grassland*

#### 2.4.1.2 *Neutral grassland*

Several neutral grassland habitats are found on the site, of varying quality. These include some of the wetter areas around hollows and ditch features, the lower quality grassland in the 'triangle' field at the east of the site, along with areas of species-rich grassland in some of the higher areas. Species found include Common Knapweed, Lady's Bedstraw, Common Bird's-foot Trefoil and Oxeye Daisy.





*Area of neutral grassland in wetter area*



*Neutral grassland found in 'triangle field'*

#### *2.4.1.3 Calcareous grassland*

A small area of calcareous grassland is found in one of the hollows towards the north of the site, characterised by species including Eyebright, Fairy Flax and Salad Burnet.

#### *2.4.1.4 Grazing*

Due to the nature of the Moor, with numerous large anthills and wetter areas, the most appropriate form of management is cattle grazing. This is also traditionally how the Moor would have been managed. The site is currently grazed annually between April and November with up to 30 livestock units. A new multi-year grazing contract has recently been procured to cover grazing for the next four years. The cost for this covers the supply of cattle to site along with associated management, such as daily checks and record keeping. The cattle currently grazing the Moor are kept to the same standards as organically reared cattle, this means they are not routinely wormed, unless worms have been detected following testing. This will help invertebrates on the Moor, particularly dung beetles, which can be negatively affected by worming treatments.





*Sussex cattle grazing the Moor*

#### **2.4.1.5 Injurious weeds**

Certain weeds if left unchecked have the tendency to spread and become dominant in the landscape, potentially outcompeting flora of higher ecological value. The Weeds Act 1959 requires the Council to control certain “injurious weeds” including Common Ragwort, Creeping Thistle and Spear Thistle. In recent years, Ragwort has been controlled through hand pulling by FoCCM and CMS volunteers, with arisings disposed of appropriately by the grazier.



*Ragwort*

#### **2.4.2 Scrub**

The characteristic scrub species on the moor are primarily Bramble, Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Willow, with Gorse and Broom found in more acid areas. A large area of Hawthorn and Blackthorn scrub runs through the centre of the site, whilst at



the western end of the site, dense young Birch growth has appeared in areas previously cleared of Willow.



*Young Birch growth*

Elsewhere, a range of scattered scrub is found across the site, both as mature blocks and as individual young growth.



*Indicative blocks of scrub*

### **2.4.3 Wetland**

#### **2.4.3.1 Fen**

Making up the majority of the wetter western end of the site, the area consists of large patches of sedge, along with characteristic species including Meadowsweet and Wild Angelica. Even in drier summers, this western section usually stays damp underfoot, whilst in wetter years can stay waterlogged over large areas all year.





*Fen area*

#### *2.4.3.2 Hollows and relic river features*

Lower lying areas found across the centre of the site consist of relic river features where channels previously ran across the site and man-made hollows from small-scale gravel extraction. These sections often sit wetter than surrounding higher ground and many hold water through the winter. They are often dominated by Rushes and species including Great Willowherb. Relic river features often also contain a layer of sediment, likely nutrient-rich, which will promote scrub growth, with drier conditions allowing bramble in particular to encroach.



*Hollow*

*Relic ditch feature*

#### *2.4.3.3 River Gade*

The River Gade is a chalk stream which flows east-west across the northern edge of the site before flowing onwards to Rickmansworth where it joins the River Colne. The banks are well vegetated through the site with marginal vegetation. Towards the



west of the site, Common Reed along the northern bank narrows the river channel through this section.



*River channel*



*Narrowing river channel*

At one point, heading towards the western end of the site, the river widens and a low point in the bank has formed, known as the 'beach' area. During the wet weather of 2024 the river flooded at this point, with water flooding some of the adjacent fen area.



*'Beach' area*

A number of structures are found along the river through the site. In addition to the bridge carrying the RoW across the river, a smaller concrete bridge is found downstream to the west. A metal barrier is found at the western end of the site where the river continues under the railway bridge to ensure the site remains stock proof, this can at times collect litter. In addition, a weir is found at the northern end of the



site, managed by the Environment Agency, which also allows pedestrian access from the Byewaters Estate.



*Barrier at western end of site*

#### **2.4.4 Trees**

Mature trees are scattered across the site, often found amongst areas of scrub, and include species including Ash, Oak and Willow.

#### **2.4.5 Important species**

The Moor was designated as a SSSI based on the botanical interest and rich plant assemblage of the site (see appendices for citation) and so management has primarily focussed on maintaining these species. However, such a botanically diverse site with a mosaic of habitat types will also support a wide range of wildlife species. Due to the site's designation and interest from external organisations, the site has had a number of surveys undertaken over the years, along with wildlife records submitted. Some of these include:

- 1982 Botanical survey
- 1996 Botanical survey
- 2003 Botanical survey
- 2010 NVC survey
- 2015 Botanical survey
- Butterfly records



- Moth trapping
- Riverfly surveys
- Glow worm surveys
- 2004 breeding bird survey
- 2016 breeding bird survey
- Spider records (1989-2003)

Botanical surveys have usually had one of two aims, to map habitat types, e.g. NVC communities, or surveying and mapping indicator species and rare plants on the Moor.

The site is known to support a rich invertebrate assemblage, with an importance for moths in particular. Records provided by Butterfly Conservation reveal 398 species recorded on the Moor since 2000, including several rare species. Croxley Common Moor is the only site in the UK where the Broken White Barred (*Aproaerema albipalpella*) has been recorded in recent years, with the last confirmed record from 2012. Other notable species include the Petty Whin Case Bearer (*Coleophora genistae*) which was last recorded in 2016 and is only known from one other site in Hertfordshire this century, and *Scythris potentillella* which was last recorded on site in 2014 and is the only known site in the county. The larval food plant for both the Broken White Barred and Petty Whin Case Bearer is Petty Whin (*Genista anglica*), and management efforts have previously been made to provide positive conditions for these species.

Other notable species include Small Heath and Brown Hairstreak butterflies, both species listed under S41 of the NERC Act, 2006. Brown Hairstreak has been a recent coloniser, with eggs observed on site for the first-time last winter on Blackthorn scrub. Brown Hairstreak is a good example of the often-conflicting demands of different species on management of a complex site such as Croxley Common Moor, relying as it does on Blackthorn, which in terms of grassland habitats would be seen as a threat and prioritised for removal.



## **2.5 Access, facilities and infrastructure**

### **2.5.1 Site entrances**

The main public entrance points to Croxley Common Moor are:

- Moor Lane Crossing – the main entrance within the southern boundary of the Moor, providing pedestrian, RADAR key access, and vehicular access.
- Mill Lane and the River Gade – the main entrance from Croxley Green Village and Croxley Tube Station. The bridge over the River Gade was largely replaced in 2019 along with improved surfacing on to the Moor.
- Byewaters Estate – access is restricted at this point to those who can easily negotiate steps. However, residents are able to access the Moor avoiding steps by following the path along the canal until reaching the Mill Lane entrance.
- Croxley Business Park – this entrance is used by the employees on the business park. The land on the other side is private and there is no Right of Way.
- Ebury Way – a number of pedestrian entrances are found along the Ebury Way. Several of these, particularly to the west, can become wet and muddy, restricting ease of access.

Kissing gates are located at pedestrian entrances to ensure the site remains stock proof.





*Entrance from Moor Lane Crossing*



*Bridge over the River Gade from Mill Lane*

## 2.5.2 Paths

A single public footpath (Croxley Green 017) crosses the Moor, which was surfaced along its entire length in 2021. This surfacing had the main aim of reducing erosion where the path was continually being widened as users avoided wet areas. It also aimed to encourage users to take a direct route to commute across the site, therefore taking some of the pressure off other, informal routes.

The remainder of paths across the site are desire lines, with particularly well-used routes along the river and linking to surrounding industrial areas.



*Surfaced Public Footpath*



*Informal desire line*



### **2.5.3 Boardwalks**

Two boardwalks have been constructed where well-used desire lines cross wetter areas, with the aim of creating a circular route around the site accessible for the majority of the year.



*Timber boardwalk*

### **2.5.4 Benches**

Timber benches are found across the site, predominantly in locations around the perimeter and along the river, some of which are in poor condition. Maintenance of benches is the responsibility of TRDC, with the exception of a single sculpture memorial bench which is the responsibility of Croxley Green Parish Council to maintain. This bench has recently been refurbished by the Parish Council.

### **2.5.5 Grazing infrastructure**

Grazing infrastructure on the Moor is limited to fencing. This consists of a mixture of stock fencing, barbed wire fencing and chain-link fencing. Much of the stock and barbed wire fencing is in poor condition and requires annual repairs prior to the commencement of grazing. No water troughs are present on site, with cattle using the river as a source of drinking water. Access for the grazier is primarily through the vehicle gate leading from Moor Lane Crossing.

### **2.5.6 Interpretation**

Two combination interpretation/noticeboards are found at the entrances either end of Public Footpath 017, leading from the bridge over the River Gade and from Moor Lane crossing. Noticeboards are updated with information from the Friends of



Croxley Common Moor and emergency contact details while cattle are on site. Interpretation boards are in good condition, having been updated in 2019, and should therefore not need replacing during the next five years.



*Interpretation board*

### **2.5.7 Signage**

Additional signage found on the Moor includes directional signage for PRow and promoted routes, behaviour signage, information on grazing, and Byelaw information.



*Directional waymarking*





*Grazing signage*

## 2.6 Site use and access

Croxley Common Moor is regularly used by local people for informal exercise, such as walking, dog walking, bird watching and running, and serves as a local resource for activities that enhance health and well-being. This can sometimes cause conflict between public access and biodiversity, for example, litter, barbecue use, path erosion, and the effects of high levels of dog walking on ground nesting birds and small mammals.

### 2.6.1.1 Walkers

The site has been designated as open access land under the CROW Act, giving the public the right of access on foot across the whole site.

While much of the Moor is accessible all year round, some paths are inaccessible due to flooding at certain times of the year or after prolonged, heavy rainfall.

The surfaced Public Footpath, Croxley Green 017 runs north/south across the site. This path is well used by Moor visitors and those passing through to reach either



Croxley Green to the north or the Ebury Way and Industrial Area on Tolpits Lane to the south.

Since obtaining brushcutters, FoCCM have undertaken clearance of Bramble and small scrub along some of the popular routes around the site to aid access, including along the river and through the area of scrub running through the centre of the site.

#### *2.6.1.2 Horse riders*

Horse riders have historically been permitted to access the site by agreement with the owners. Three Rivers District Council have required riders to sign an agreement to use the Moor appropriately and then issued a RADAR key, allowing access to the Moor through their RADAR gates.

#### *2.6.1.3 Model aircraft flying*

Model aircraft flying is permitted on the moor at certain times. A set of byelaws govern this activity.

#### *2.6.1.4 Car parking*

Croxley Common Moor does not have an official car park. The most convenient access by car is to the south with limited parking on Olds Approach. Visitors to the Moor are requested by signage to park on the industrial estate rather than Moor Lane Crossing.

#### *2.6.1.5 Fishing*

TRDC Byelaws do not permit fishing on their sites.

#### *2.6.1.6 Commons rights holders*

A single commoner holding rights on the site remains.

## **2.7 Site management**

### **2.7.1 Management Structure**

Three Rivers District Council as landowners are responsible for the implementation of the plan. Their role includes responsibility for:

- The statutory duty to manage land within the SSSI effectively and appropriately to conserve the special features of the site.



- Management works carried out by their in-house team of Grounds Maintenance staff.
- Administration and budget management.
- Acting as signatory for grant applications and claims.
- Member involvement and reporting.
- Appropriate support for FoCCM.

CMS advises on management, particularly where it relates to nature conservation, access and community involvement. They are responsible for:

- The production of Greenspace Action Plans for the site including engagement with partners and subsequent monitoring.
- Production of specifications, procurement, and contract monitoring for management works.
- Running volunteer task days through the mid-week volunteer group.
- Providing support to the FoCCM through work programmes, training, tools, risk assessment and governance.
- Support with events and PR.

## **2.7.2 Consents**

### *2.7.2.1 Common Land*

Croxley Common Moor is registered Common Land, and as such has distinct legal provisions, with Secretary of State permission required for works on site affecting access.

### *2.7.2.2 Natural England*

Croxley Common Moor is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. This designation is governed by Natural England and as such, they have produced a list of 'Operations Likely to Damage the Special Interest'. Assent is required if a proposed operation is likely to damage the notified features of the site.



Natural England also undertake site assessments to monitor condition of the site and advise on required management. A 'Whole Feature Assessment' was undertaken in summer 2024, with the site receiving a condition score of 'Unfavourable – recovering'. This is defined by Natural England as:

'The feature is not yet fully conserved but the necessary actions to achieve favourable condition have:

- been identified and recorded
- at least one action underway
- no actions behind schedule

Provided that the recovery work is sustained, the feature will reach favourable condition in time. At least one of the designated feature's mandatory attributes is not meeting their targets.'

### **2.7.3 Environment Agency**

The River Gade is a main river. An [Environmental Permit](#) must be obtained from the EA prior to undertaking certain activities on, over, under or within 8m of the river.

### **2.7.4 Finance**

Where specific projects are planned, it is important to be aware of the impact these will have on the general maintenance operations. Through continued well-planned maintenance regimes and projects, we aim to achieve this not just for the next five years but well into the future for Croxley Common Moor. Sources of external funding are regularly reviewed for any potential opportunities.

#### *2.7.4.1 Higher Level Stewardship*

Management of Croxley Common Moor has been supported since 2014 by a Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Agreement. This has recently been extended for five years to allow continued financial support to manage the site for the period of this plan. It is planned that an application will be made for a Countryside Stewardship Agreement to supersede the HLS agreement, with applications expected to open in 2025 with a rolling application window. Although there is likely to be significant demand for the new scheme when it opens, it is hoped Croxley Common Moor as an important SSSI would be a high priority site to enter a new agreement, clarification is being sought



from Natural England. The Capital Grant part of the scheme is open separately to the main agreement scheme, so this can be applied for to support scrub control in any interim period before the start of a new agreement.

### **2.7.5 Managing environmental impact**

The Council has a strong commitment to the environment and environmental sustainability and recognises the impacts its operations have on the environment. TRDC's dedication to protecting the environment is reflected in Council policies, strategies, commitments and partnerships. Some of these initiatives include:

- A presumption against the use of peat.
- A presumption against the use of pesticides, especially on designated landscapes such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Glyphosate will not be used in the district except for the control of Japanese knotweed.
- Only FSC timber is used across the district.
- All cleaning materials are phosphate free.
- TRDC was first certified with ISO 14001 in 2010. Although no longer certified, the Council strives to maintain the principles of the accreditation.

Working closely with organisations (such as the Forestry Commission and Hertfordshire County Council) in relation to biosecurity will provide up to date information on plant and tree health issues across the county and further afield.

### **2.7.6 Managing health and safety**

The main contact number for TRDC is listed on the site interpretation boards. The phone line includes an out-of-hours service, allowing members of the public to contact the council as required.

The FoCCM website lists contact details for TRDC, CMS, Croxley Green Parish Council and Croxley Green Residents Association, as well as the Friends themselves.

CMS and TRDC staff are subject to lone working protocols and risk assessments which are available upon request. CMS supply task specific risk assessments which are read and understood by staff and volunteers before any work is undertaken.



These risk assessments include requirements for training, PPE, equipment and the information required to be COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002) compliant. Work site specific risk assessments are carried out before tasks are underway to assess local hazards and environmental conditions.

#### *2.7.6.1 Dog control*

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in relation to dog control is in effect across the entirety of the Three Rivers District. For details, see

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/crime-and-safety/public-spaces-protection-orders>.

#### *2.7.6.2 Tree Health and Safety*

In line with TRDC's Greenspace and Tree Strategy, tree safety surveys are carried out in all TRDC parks, woodlands and open spaces, including Croxley Common Moor, with the resulting data entered into tree management software and essential remedial works undertaken to secure visitor safety.

Management of oak processionary moth (OPM) follows the latest [Forestry Commission guidance](#) regarding control requirements. Due to the invertebrate interest on the site, pesticide spraying for the control of OPM is not permitted, either on Croxley Common Moor, or adjacent sites (e.g. the Ebury Way).

### **2.7.7 Litter and waste management**

No litter bins are located on the Moor, with site users encouraged to take litter away with them. Litter picking is undertaken by FoCCM as part of regular task days.

Dog waste bins are located on the Ebury Way at the entrance from Moor Lane Crossing, and near the entrance from the Byewaters estate, emptied by TRDC. There are currently no plans to install litter bins on site.

### **2.7.8 Infrastructure maintenance**

Fencelines are checked annually prior to the commencement of grazing and repairs made as necessary.



### **2.7.9 Responding to site misuse**

The [‘Report it’](#) pages on TRDC’s website includes the option to report an issue with an outdoor area. The website also includes a section outlining TRDC’s approach and response to [‘Street care and cleaning’](#), which includes graffiti and fly-tipping.

## **2.8 Community involvement**

### **2.8.1 Volunteering**

The Friends of Croxley Common Moor (FoCCM) are a recognised Friends Group that delivers voluntary practical action, with monthly sessions run on the second Sunday of the month throughout the year, as well as holding additional brushcutting days. FoCCM provide critical input into the decision-making processes and management planning, they are a regular presence within the site, providing eyes and ears reporting to TRDC.

The FoCCM are valued ambassadors for the Moor, representing local people who have an interest in the site. The Friends contribute greatly to the programme of volunteer works including scrub clearance, invasive species control.

The FoCCM have a dedicated website which advertises task days, events and walks. A leaflet of the Friends’ activities has also been produced to advertise task days and to recruit new members. Their membership is open to anyone interested in taking an active part in the work and aims of the group.

CMS provide a “Friends of pack” which enables the FoCCM to work to agreed guidelines. The pack includes completed and template risk assessments, training requirements, key contact details, insurance and work programming information.

### **2.8.2 CMS volunteers**

In addition to FoCCM volunteer activities, management is supported through task days carried out by the CMS midweek volunteer group.

## **2.9 Marketing and communication**

Croxley Common Moor is promoted through a range of channels, including:

- The [TRDC website](#), which has a page dedicated to Croxley Common Moor including a link to the management plan.



- The [FoCCM website](#).
- The [FoCCM Facebook](#) page
- The [ParksHerts website](#), a mobile-first website application providing a single information point for over one hundred of Hertfordshire's parks and open spaces, from recreation grounds through to woodlands and award-winning flagship parks, irrespective of administrative ownership. It provides a way for people to discover and enjoy these places, supporting people to make outdoor exercise part of their everyday lives.
- CMS [leaflet webpage](#)
- CMS and Three Rivers District Council social media.
- Regular updates to councillors relating to planned works.
- Interpretation panels and noticeboards at site entrances providing information such as the activities of the FoCCM.
- TRDC site leaflet.
- FoCCM leaflet.
- Council notice boards located around the district, which also provide wider information about news and activities within the district.



## **3.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION**

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### **3.1 A welcoming place**

First impressions of an open space are important, and good access and interpretation provision goes a long way to set site standards, raise confidence in visitors using the site, promote awareness of the important aspects of the site, and enable visitors to navigate the site with ease.

During the last ten years, improvements have been made to both ease of access and the appearance of the main entrances at either end of Public Footpath 017, through renovations to the bridge over the River Gade, path surfacing, and replacement interpretation.

#### **3.1.1 Site entrances**

Some of the minor entrances can become muddy in wet weather, and at one entrance in particular from the Ebury Way, visitors have been attempting to improve access by placing pallets over these muddy areas. These look unsightly and are inappropriate on a SSSI, installation of a short section of boardwalk would both improve access and make a more welcoming entrance. There is also some redundant metal fencing at this entrance point which should be removed, and a new kissing gate installed. A further wet area to the east of this entrance would benefit from a short section of boardwalk to link to the public footpath.





*Pallets at muddy entrance*

Minor entrances would also benefit from welcome signage. QR codes have recently been produced linking to the website for Croxley Common Moor, and a simple welcome sign to attach to kissing gates, including the QR code, would allow visitors to easily access further information on the site. To provide clarity for site users, grazing signage should also be removed when cattle are not on site.

### **3.1.2 Site use and access**

The open access across the site has led to the development of numerous desire lines, resulting in pressure on grassland habitats in particular. Monitoring of desire lines will be undertaken as part of fixed-point photography monitoring and analysis of aerial photography. This should allow an understanding of how desire lines are developing and the potential impacts on wildlife habitats. Possible locations for further structures will be continually reviewed, particularly where access causes damage/erosion, and permissions sought as necessary.



## **3.2 Healthy, safe and secure**

### **3.2.1 Safe equipment and facilities**

Benches should be replaced when required, two are currently in need of replacement having fallen into disrepair.

### **3.2.2 Sink hole**

A small sink hole has opened up on the site, this is currently planned to be fenced off to remove access to the hazard, permissions are being sought for this.



*Sink hole*

## **3.3 Well maintained and clean**

### **3.3.1 Litter**

Litter will continue to be collected as part of volunteer activities. There are no plans to install bins on site.

### **3.3.2 Fencing**

Condition of fencing across the site is variable. Sections of chain link fence are generally in good condition, with only short lengths in need of repair. Stock and barbed wire fencing is largely in poor condition and requires annual repairs prior to the grazing season. Emergency repairs are covered by the grazier as part of the grazing contract, larger repairs are the responsibility of TRDC to undertake, either by contractors or CMS volunteers. As part of a future Countryside Stewardship application, stock fencing will be completely replaced.



## 3.4 Biodiversity, landscape and heritage

### 3.4.1 Habitat management

Croxley Common Moor has a long history of management to maintain the open habitats found on the site, with grassland and wetland habitats in particular requiring management to prevent succession to scrub and woodland.

#### 3.4.1.1 Grazing

In recent years, the site has largely been grazed by continental breeds, with a change to Sussex cattle for the 2024 grazing season. Grazing with traditional breeds, such as Sussex, has always been the ambition for the site as these breeds are more likely to venture into wetter areas and browse woody vegetation such as young scrub growth. This is beneficial both to manage fen vegetation and potentially reduce regrowth of scrub. There was a noticeable observed increase in evidence of grazing within the wetter western end of the site in 2024, suggesting the native breeds have had the predicted beneficial effect and so should continue to be preferred going forward. A multi-year grazing contract has recently been procured to give greater continuity to grazing of the site.



#### *Evidence of grazing within fen areas*

The whole site is open to grazing, with stock able to cross the river in places to graze certain areas between the river and the canal. During the last plan, a cattle exclusion area was fenced off around one of the main areas of Petty Whin growth. This was due to concerns over excessive grazing pressure on Petty Whin potentially negatively affecting the Broken White Barred moth. Cattle were excluded for much of the grazing season and gates opened in late summer to allow a low-level of grazing.



Due to a combination of poor condition of fencing, continued vandalism, and limited effectiveness, the fencing was removed.

Due to the status of the Moor as Common land, there are restrictions on fencing areas of the site to concentrate grazing in particular areas. This would be beneficial, for example to push cattle into wetter areas or areas of recent scrub control, to ensure these are grazed effectively. A method to overcome this would be to use virtual fencing with GPS collars which can be used to contain cattle in an area without the need for physical fencing. This is planned to be trialled during the next five years and implemented going forward if found to be effective. Implementation of virtual fencing would require promotion to inform site users, with signage explaining how the system works.

#### *3.4.1.2 Injurious weed management*

There is a general target from the HLS agreement of ensuring the coverage of injurious weeds is less than 5% within each grassland compartment, and therefore management is required to control these species.

##### *3.4.1.2.1 Ragwort*

Whilst an important constituent of the grass sward, providing habitat and food for a number of invertebrates, Ragwort can become dominant within grasslands at the expense of other species.

Control of the spread of Common Ragwort will be by manual removal by volunteers on FoCCM and CMS task days, through either hand-pulling or by using specialist hand tools such as Lazy-dog weed pullers. Pulling will be undertaken in late spring/early summer, when ground conditions are preferable for extraction of the whole root, and before plants start to go to seed.

Common Ragwort is also poisonous if consumed by cattle, with consumption most likely to occur if ragwort is pulled and left in situ as it becomes more palatable after drying. For this reason, pulled Ragwort will be removed from site, this is included as part of the grazing contract for the site. Dates will be agreed in advance so that the grazier can arrange removal, with no bags to be left on the Ebury Way.

Future Countryside Stewardship funding may also allow for further contractor ragwort control, this will be investigated as part of the application process.



#### *3.4.1.2.2 Creeping and Spear Thistle*

Thistle growth is mostly concentrated around the area of grassland near the northern entrance to the site from the bridge over the River Gade, as well as being an early coloniser of areas recently cleared of scrub. Management of Thistles is required to prevent them spreading across the site and becoming dominant, outcompeting less vigorous species. Brushcutting of Thistle areas will be included as part of CMS volunteer task days during the summer to help prevent the spread of thistles, ensuring cutting takes place before plants go to seed. Flailing of recently cleared areas of scrub will also be prioritised as part of any additional works funded through the contractor scrub control contract for the site.

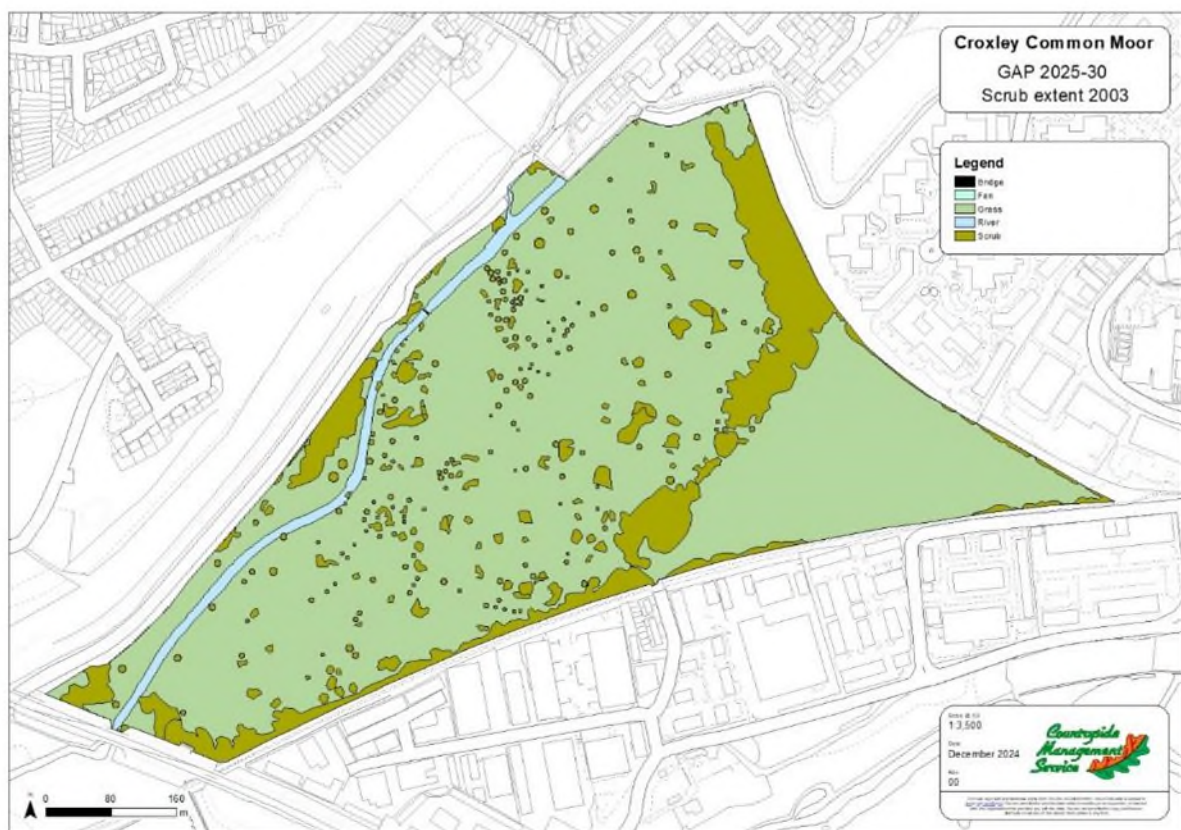
### **3.4.2 Scrub management**

Scrub is an important component of grassland habitats providing sheltered, sunny spots and nectar sources for invertebrates, such as butterflies, moths, bees and hoverflies, as well as important habitat for birds and small mammals. This is particularly true of the edges of grassland areas where scrub provides a graduated margin to surrounding woodland habitats, such as along the Ebury Way. Scrub adds variety to the landscape and provides a range of habitats, particularly if there is a diversity of size and maturity. It should therefore be actively managed, rather than eradicated completely. However, grasslands are dynamic habitats, and successional change can occur rapidly with areas quickly progressing to scrub and eventually woodland. Vegetation succession also leads, in the short term, to an increase in nutrient levels in the soil and a decline in species diversity.

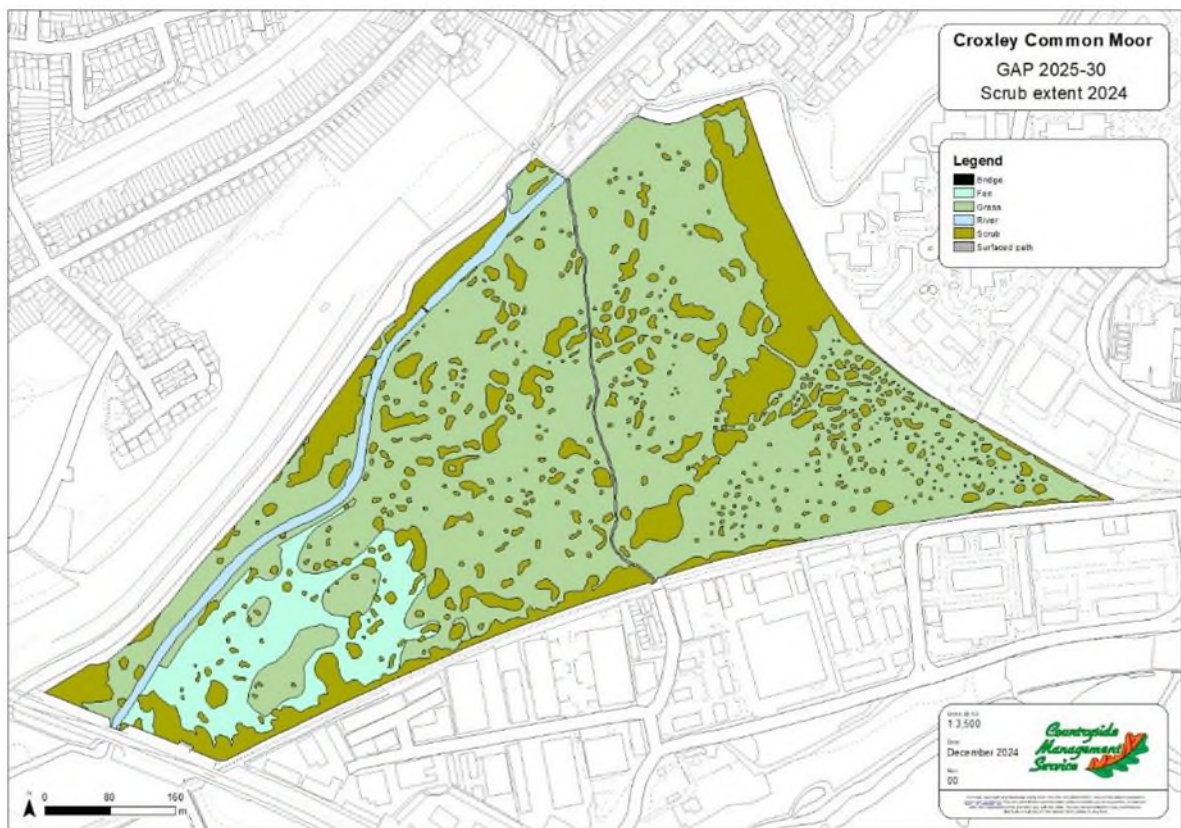
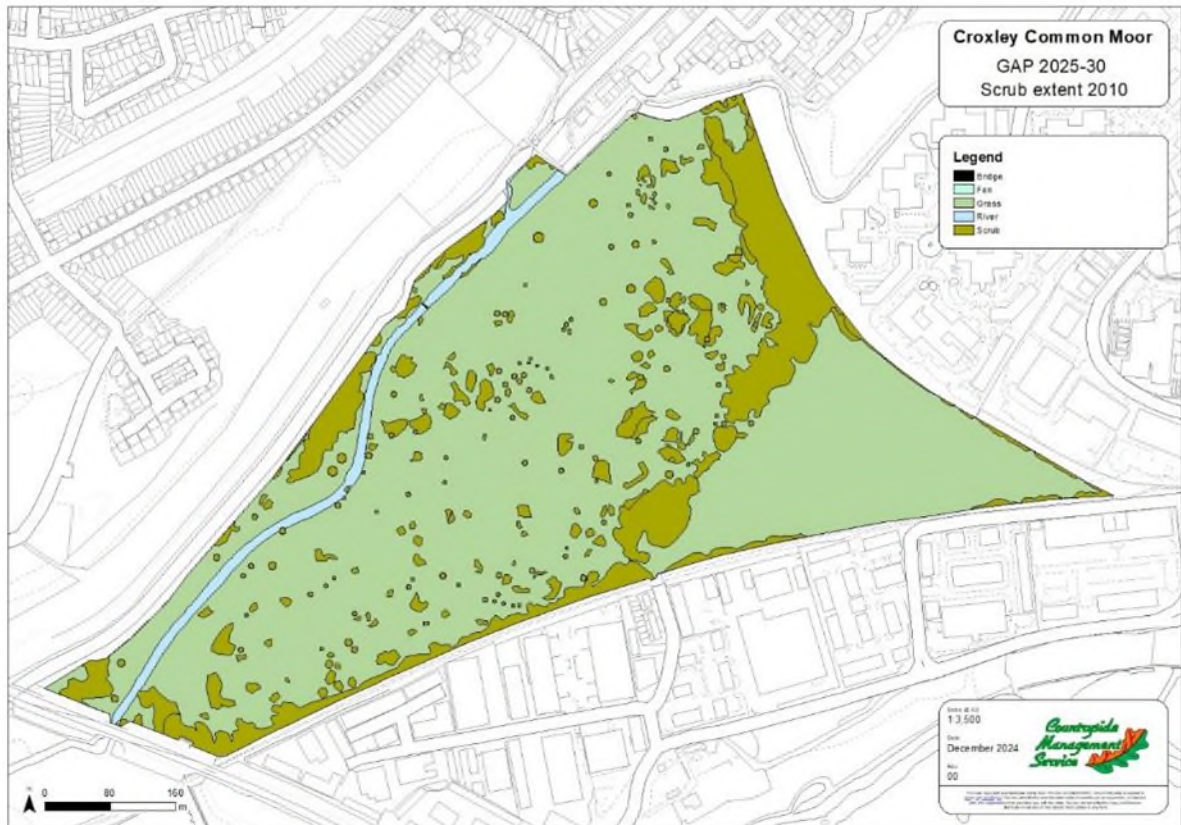
In previous plans a nominal target of a maximum of 10% scattered scrub cover was set. This was deemed to be the level at which there will be low impact on key grassland communities whilst retaining habitat and landscape diversity. Whilst 10% cover has been accepted as the target across the whole site, Natural England's Conservation Objectives deem that across the areas of particularly valuable grassland, levels should be no more than 5%. For the purposes of analysis, 'valuable grassland' includes the majority of the site, with the exception of the 'triangle field', the large scrub belt through the centre of the site, and areas to the north of the river. Mapping of aerial photographs has previously been used to calculate levels of scrub across the site. This process has been repeated for this plan, with results summarised below:



Year of analysis	% cover across whole site	% cover across valuable grassland
2003	17	
2010	18.5	12.6
2024	23.3	16.8









Scrub cover is well above target levels set by Natural England, and increasing, evidence that the current approach to scrub management has not been good enough and more needs to be done. Analysis of aerial photography shows that despite the significant efforts of both volunteers and through contractors, scrub has continued to expand across the site, both as a whole and within the valuable grassland areas. Some of this increase is due to the establishment of scrub in the 'triangle' field following the cessation of annual topping, though the mapping also indicates scrub has also expanded in many other areas.

Scrub control programmes have been in place for the duration of previous management plans, however, the observed increase in scrub cover indicates a change of approach is required in an effort to reduce the extent of scrub and bramble cover and increase the area of conservation grassland.



*An area following recent contractor scrub clearance*



*An area following recent volunteer scrub clearance*

The following sections outline the approaches to scrub control for both volunteer and contractor works, including changes to reverse the expansion of scrub.

#### *3.4.2.1 Volunteer scrub control*

Target areas for volunteer scrub control have been identified and mapped, this will largely be undertaken by FoCCM, with support from CMS task days. Cutting will mainly be undertaken by hand, supported through brushcutter use to tackle Bramble, with arisings burnt on site, as outlined in Specification 6.1.2. Ideally, arisings would be removed from site, however, previous efforts to chip material have proven problematic, primarily with how quickly material can be chipped and removed. Much



of the site is also difficult to access for vehicles due to wet ground conditions and anthills, and so numerous vehicle movements across the site to remove material would likely cause excessive damage.

Following advice from Natural England, areas of acid grassland and fen will be prioritised for scrub removal during this plan.

Within the areas identified, the approach to scrub removal will be to prioritise removal of smaller blocks of scrub, along with individual young, scattered scrub, whilst leaving larger blocks which are time consuming to clear. The benefits of this approach are:

- Younger, smaller scrub should be quicker to clear, process and burn than larger, more mature scrub, potentially allowing greater areas to be cleared.
- Areas cleared of smaller, scattered scrub are likely to re-establish as grassland more quickly.
- Removing this smaller scrub should maintain open areas and prevent these smaller blocks gradually expanding to join up and create larger blocks.

As outlined elsewhere, follow-up management after initial scrub clearance is vitally important to control regrowth. Some options for follow-up management are not possible due to TRDC policies, e.g. herbicide treatment of cut stems, however, a number of methods have been identified to give a more structured and intensive approach to management aimed at limiting regrowth. Approaches to this will include:

- prioritising additional contractor capacity within the multi-year contract to flail scrub regrowth and rank vegetation from recently cleared areas.
- cutting of stumps to ground level to be included in CMS task days to make future management easier.
- containing cattle in areas of recently cleared scrub during trials of virtual fencing to promote browsing of young scrub regrowth. The recent switch to native breed cattle should also help with this, being more likely to browse woody vegetation.



- monitoring grazing pressure across the site and increasing grazing density if appropriate, either through increased cattle numbers or extending the length of grazing period.
- cutting of young, isolated scrub within the grassland allowed during spring/summer where there is no risk to disturbing nesting birds.

Control of bramble growth within the fen will be specifically tackled through:

- increased use of machinery during CMS task days, with targeted brushcutting and mowing of Bramble within the fen area.
- use of virtual fencing to push cattle into the western end of the site to ensure greater grazing pressure within wetter areas.

#### *3.4.2.2 Contractor scrub control*

##### *3.4.2.2.1 Multi-year scrub contract*

The triangle of land to the south-east was converted for arable use just after the Second World War followed by reversion back to pasture. Consequently, the grassland is of lower conservation interest and greater habitat diversity is acceptable. This area was previously split into three, and a section topped each year. Following a change in grazier, this topping ceased and scrub has continued to develop. Some of the most mature scrub was recently cut and chipped, with chippings removed from site, however, this is not a sustainable method going forward. Therefore, a multi-year scrub control contract has been procured for the period of this plan, covering this 'triangle' field at the eastern end of the site, with a third being flailed annually, spread across the area to provide more of a mosaic of ages than the 'block' cutting approach previously employed.

This scrub contract also includes a 'day-rate' to allow for additional scrub control when budgets allow. Potential areas to be included in additional works include an area of scrub at the north-eastern end of the site previously cleared for bluebells, areas of bramble at the entrance from the Ebury Way, and clearance of parts of the central belt of scrub, particularly mature blackthorn where this shades out any ground flora.



#### 3.4.2.2.2 *Further scrub contracts*

In addition, external funding will be sought for three further scrub control contracts which will aim to tackle large blocks of scrub too large for volunteers to effectively tackle. These will cover:

- The fen area, including tackling the dense Birch growth at the southern end. Access to this area is difficult due to the wet conditions. To minimise disturbance, a temporary access point from the adjacent Ebury Way could be possible to aid access.
- Blocks of scrub in the central area of the site, many of which are found in historic channels and hollows.
- Blocks of scrub within the area east of the public footpath.

For each area, Natural England will be consulted on the most appropriate methodology for removal, this could include:

- Cutting and chipping, with chippings removed from site.
- Cutting and burning, with arisings burned in situ on a burning platform.
- Mechanical removal using machinery to pull out whole stems, including roots. Arisings to be chipped or burned, as above.

### 3.4.3 **River Gade**

No works are currently planned for the River Gade where it runs through the site. Concerns have been raised around erosion of the bank at the ‘beach’ area and the potential increase in flooding on to the Moor. Although flooding at this point may periodically affect access alongside the river, an increase in connection between the river and the floodplain is likely to be desirable, provided water quality is not bringing pollutants or excessive nutrients on to the site. The Environment Agency monitor water quality, along with abstractions, and Natural England are keeping a ‘watching brief’ of these to ensure the fen is not negatively affected, with the situation monitored.

Opportunities to contribute to wider, catchment-scale projects will be taken where appropriate, working with partner organisations.



#### **3.4.4 Mature trees**

Mature trees are found mainly at the northern 'point' of the site and within the large area of scrub running north-south which divides the site in two, with a number of these trees having collapsed. Works to mature trees should be restricted to health and safety works, and fallen trees retained to provide deadwood habitat where possible.

#### **3.4.5 Monitoring**

##### *3.4.5.1 National Vegetation Classification survey*

During the recent Whole Feature Assessment conducted by Natural England, it was noted that the stated NVC community of the fen had likely changed since the last survey was undertaken in 2010, and that a repeat survey would be beneficial. A new NVC survey of the whole site will be commissioned in summer 2025 to better understand how habitats have altered since the last survey, both in terms of habitat type and extent across the site.

In addition, the survey will replicate previous botanical surveys in mapping important and rare species to monitor how populations and extent of these species have changed.

##### *3.4.5.2 Rapid Grassland Assessments*

Rapid Grassland Assessment (RGA) monitoring will be undertaken to monitor both vegetation communities on the Moor and the effects of management operations, using the general methodology set out in the ['Magnificent Meadows' guide to RGA](#). The site will be split in to three broad areas (the 'triangle field', areas of acid grassland, and fen), with one area surveyed each year, leading to full site coverage every three years.

##### *3.4.5.3 Fixed-point photography*

The FoCCM have previously been undertaking fixed-point photography at a number of locations. This programme of fixed-point photography will be expanded to a greater number of locations and going forward undertaken on a 15-month timetable by CMS staff, with the aim of monitoring a number of areas of interest:

- Important habitats, particularly looking at scrub extent.



- Effectiveness of recent scrub control and levels of regrowth.
- Desire lines and how these may be affecting important habitats.

The use of a 15-month timing will allow seasonal changes to be encompassed in longer-term datasets.

#### *3.4.5.4 Further wildlife surveys*

Knowledge of the Moor and species found has been greatly improved by surveys and records from external organisations. We will work with these organisations to identify and undertake additional surveys to inform management work, particularly around butterflies and moths.

### **3.4.6 Climate change**

#### *3.4.6.1 Impacts on climate change of management activities*

Impacts of climate change will be considered in management decisions and when planning for the future. Examples of where this may be implemented include adjusting timing of grassland management due to changes in weather/seasonal patterns.

In addition, the impacts of management operations on climate will also be considered. Examples of this include evaluating methods used e.g., necessity for using machinery and comparing different methodologies. This will need to be done in balance with other factors, for example when comparing grazing and cutting, grazing is better suited to the wet ground conditions and presence of anthills, whilst also providing a more varied vegetation structure.

Environmental sustainability of contractors and reducing carbon emissions also forms part of evaluation criteria when tendering contracts for site management.

#### *3.4.6.2 Climate resilience*

Vegetation monitoring will help inform changes in species populations, and results used to inform management decisions to encourage as diverse a range of species as possible, particularly in the fen and species-rich grasslands.

The mosaic nature of habitats found at Croxley Common Moor will provide additional resilience to climate change and management should continue to promote this.



### **3.5 Community involvement**

#### **3.5.1 Volunteering**

The FoCCM will continue to be supported in delivering management activities. Meetings will be held between TRDC, CMS and representatives from the Friends every six months to discuss and plan work programmes. In addition, a 'scrub recce' will continue to be held annually in late summer to confirm working locations for the following autumn/winter scrub clearance.

Opportunities for corporate volunteering will also be utilised to increase resource for ongoing scrub control.

#### **3.5.2 Community involvement in management and development**

The production of this Croxley Common Moor Greenspace Action Plan 2025-30 follows a structured two stage engagement process to enable stakeholders the opportunity to feed into the production of the GAP. To ensure that the GAP serves the local community, stakeholders engaged in the consultation process include FoCCM, the Parish Council, local Councillors, local residents, and wildlife interest groups.

There are several opportunities for the local community to be involved in the management of the site. It is anticipated that the community will continue to directly engage with the site in a variety of ways:

- Through joining the Friends Group and participating in their tasks.
- Additional organised volunteer events, provided through the CMS Midweek Volunteer programme.
- Participating in events such as guided wildlife walks.

The creation of a new Greenspace Action Plan re-enforces the partnership between the Council, CMS and the Friends Group (as well as any other interested parties), and provides an opportunity to discuss, programme and deliver a variety of projects that contribute towards the achievement of the overall aims and objectives for the site.



### **3.6 Marketing and communication**

Marketing of the site will continue to be undertaken through the channels listed in Section 2.9. Online content should be kept under regular review to ensure information is up to date.



## 4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

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The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

### Aims

To provide a valuable, welcoming green space for the community whilst ensuring the nationally important biodiversity features are protected and enhanced.

### Objectives

**A. A welcoming place** – *To provide a welcoming green space for the enjoyment of the local community, finding a balance between biodiversity and public access*

A1 Maintain site entrances to form welcoming, appealing gateways to the Moor

A2 Maintain a suitable network of access routes across the site, including an additional boardwalk at the entrance from the Ebury Way

A3 Consolidate signage at main entrances to ensure clear communication to site users

**B. Healthy, safe and secure** – *To provide and maintain clear and safe public access onto, and around Croxley Common Moor*

B1 Carry out planned and reactive tree works to address safety issues

B2 Respond promptly to reports of misuse of the site, ensuring a proportionate response to anti-social behaviour

**C. Well-maintained and clean** – *To ensure that all aspects of Croxley Common Moor are kept clean and well maintained*

C1 Manage and maintain paths, boardwalks, benches, access infrastructure and signage

C2 Remove fly-tipping, undertake regular litter picking, empty litter bins, and carry out small scale vegetation management along access routes

**D. Environmental management** – *To ensure all aspects of site management are undertaken with sustainability as a guiding principle*

D1 Carry out management in compliance with the SSSI designation of the site



- D2 Carry out all management in accordance with the Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme for the site, and apply for future schemes where appropriate
- D3 Ensure all site activities adhere to relevant TRDC policies and strategies, including all work undertaken by contractors
- D4 Ensure ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable
- D5 Secure external funding to ensure the viability of capital works
- D6 Ensure impacts of climate change are considered in management decisions, both in terms of the effect of climate change on wildlife habitats and of carbon emissions from management operations
- D7 Carry out management according to environmental best practice

**E. Biodiversity, landscape and heritage – *To conserve and enhance the important wildlife, landscape and heritage features of Croxley Common Moor***

- E1 Carry out appropriate responsive management to conserve and enhance the mosaic of important wildlife habitats for which the site is designated a SSSI
- E2 Maintain a diverse range of grassland habitats, maximising areas for wildflowers and pollinators through continued grazing
- E3 Manage vegetation to promote the maintenance of a mosaic of wetland features across the site
- E4 Undertake a programme of scrub management with the aim of reducing scrub levels across the site, whilst maintaining a diverse range of age and structure of remaining scrub
- E5 Control invasive species
- E6 Protect and enhance chalk stream habitat through engaging with wider catchment partners
- E7 Monitor and record improvements to habitats and wildlife, including evaluating success of grazing through undertaking rapid grassland assessments



**Community involvement** – *To ensure engagement and involvement of local communities*

F1 Work with and engage key stakeholders

F2 Support volunteer activity at Croxley Common Moor and ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the GAP

F3 Support the Friends of Croxley Common Moor and encourage the local community to remain involved in site management in a structured and supported way

**F. Marketing and communication** – *To promote awareness and interest in Croxley Common Moor*

G1 Widely promote volunteer and community events at Croxley Common Moor, using both traditional and electronic media

G2 Utilise noticeboards to update site users of activities on site



## 5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

### 5.1 Annual and regular actions

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.1	Submit annual claim to Rural Payment Agency for Higher Level Stewardship (HLS).	D2	May	TRDC	TRDC	Officer time			
0.2	Grazing in line with site HLS agreement.	E2	Apr – Nov	CMS	Contractor	HLS	£9k		
0.3	Monitor effectiveness of grazing and adjust grazing pressure as appropriate.	E2	Ongoing	CMS	CMS	Officer time			
0.4	Annual scrub control contract clearing 1/3 of 'triangle field'.	E4	Sep – Feb	CMS	Contractor	General budget/ Countryside Stewardship	£7k	6.1.1	
0.5	Volunteer scrub control, including pre-scrub season planning meeting with FoCCM.	E4	Sep – Feb	CMS	Volunteers	Officer time		6.1.2	
0.6	Ragwort pulling and off-site disposal.	E5	May – Jul	CMS	Volunteers	Officer time			
0.7	Thistle control.	E5	Apr – Aug	CMS	Volunteers	Officer time		6.1.3	
0.8	Tree survey and proportionate risk management.	B1	Winter	TRDC	TRDC	General budget			

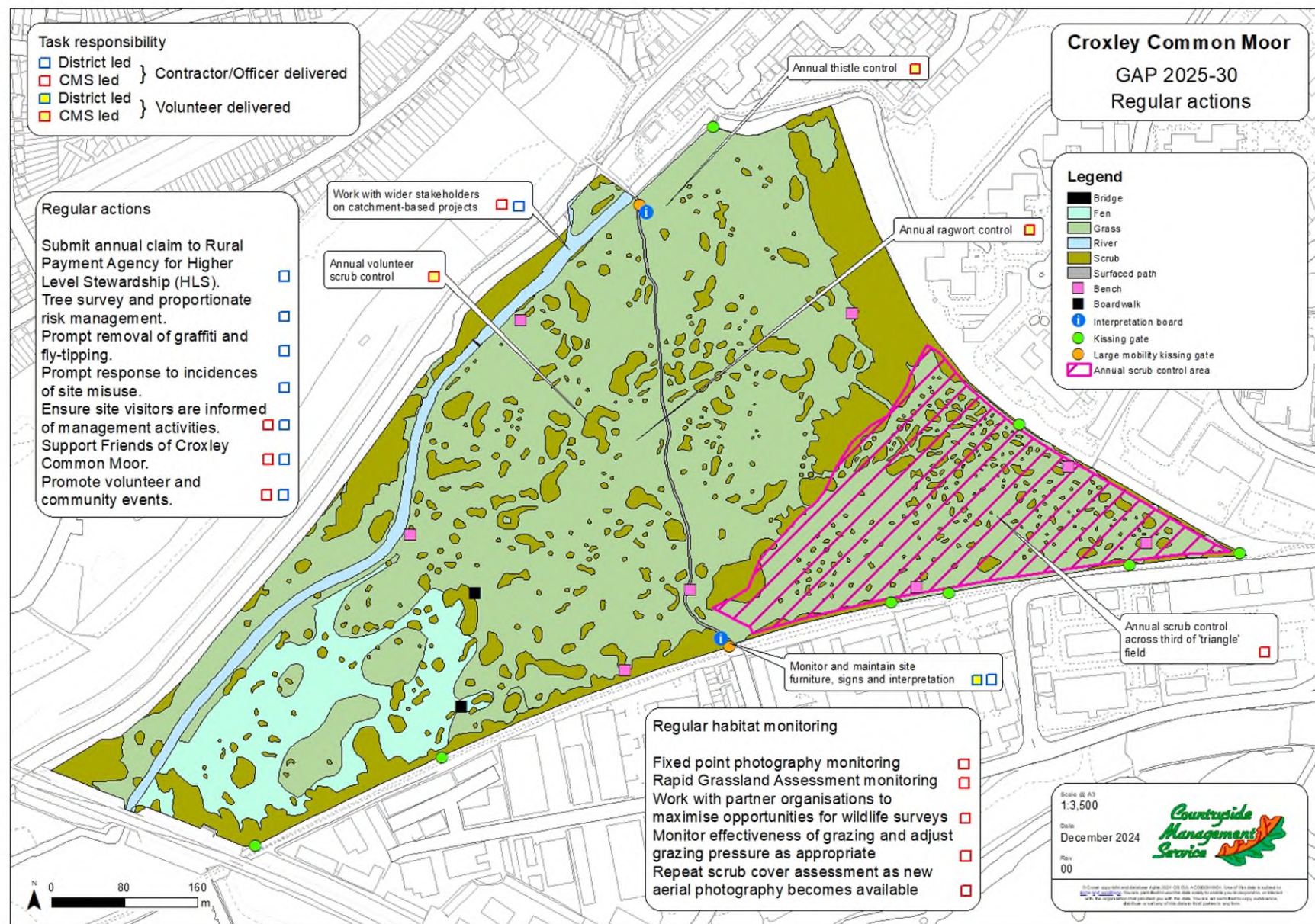


0.9	Monitor and maintain site furniture, signs and interpretation.	C1	All year	TRDC	Vols/ contractor	General budget			
0.10	Fence inspection/repair.	C1	Jan	CMS	Vols/ contractor	General budget			
0.11	Prompt removal of graffiti and fly-tipping.	B2	All Year	TRDC	Grounds maintenance contract	General budget			
0.12	Prompt response to incidences of site misuse.	B2	All Year	TRDC	Grounds Maintenance contract	General budget			
0.13	Ensure site visitors are informed of management activities.	G1, G2	All Year	TRDC	TRDC/ CMS	Officer time			
0.14	Fixed point photography monitoring.	E7	Every 15 months	CMS	CMS	Officer time			
0.15	Rapid Grassland Assessment monitoring.	E7	Jun/Jul	CMS	CMS	Officer time		6.2.2	
0.16	Repeat scrub cover assessment as new aerial photography becomes available.	E7	Ongoing	CMS	CMS	Officer time			
0.17	Work with wider stakeholders on catchment-based projects	E6, F1	All year	CMS/ TRDC	CMS/ TRDC	Officer time			
0.18	Support Friends of Croxley Common Moor.	F2, F3	All year	CMS	CMS/ TRDC	Officer time			
0.19	Promote volunteer and community events.	F2, F3	All year	TRDC	TRDC/ CMS	Officer time			

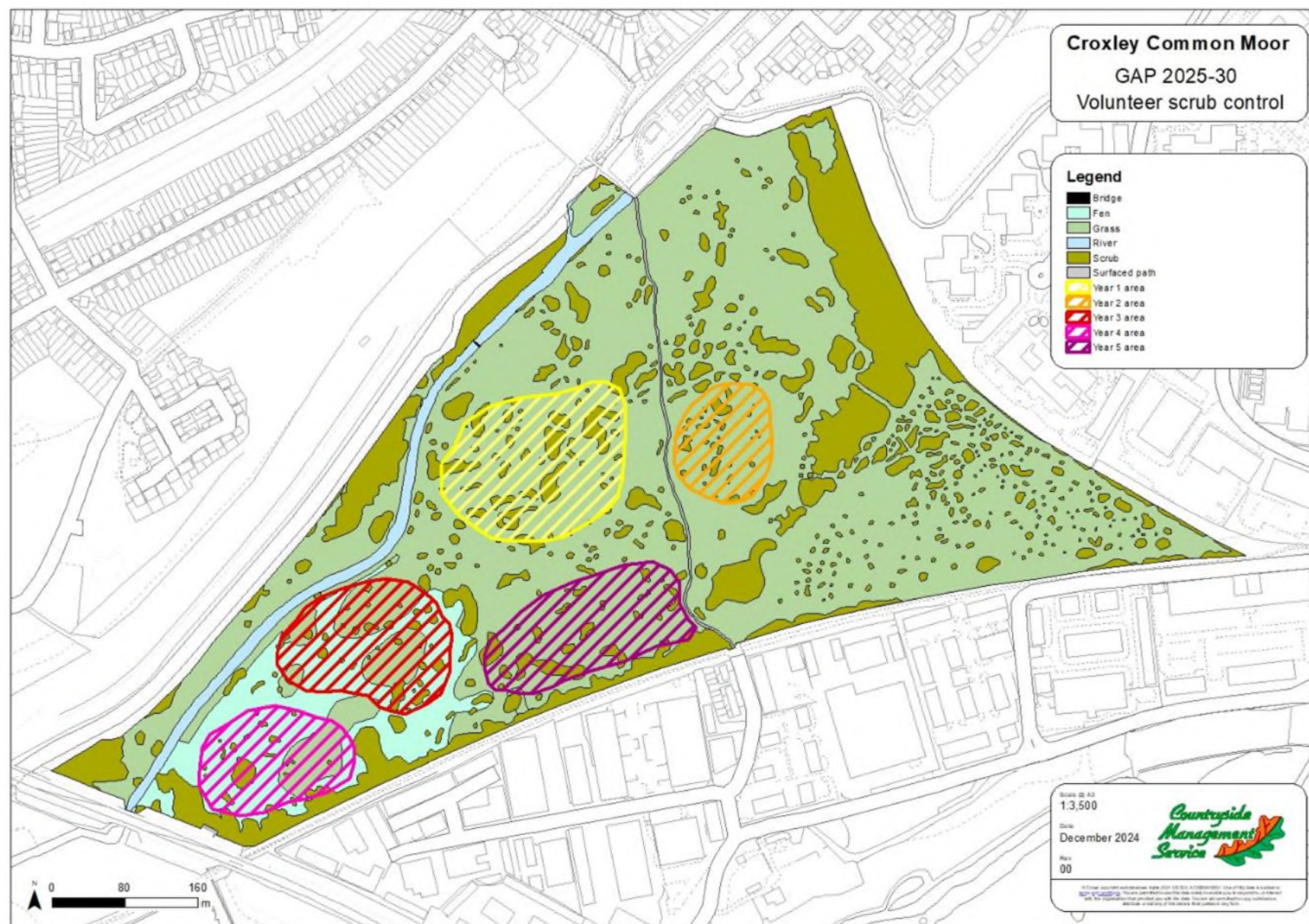


0.20	Work with partner organisations to maximise opportunities for wildlife surveys	E7, F1	All year	CMS	Partner orgs.	Officer time			
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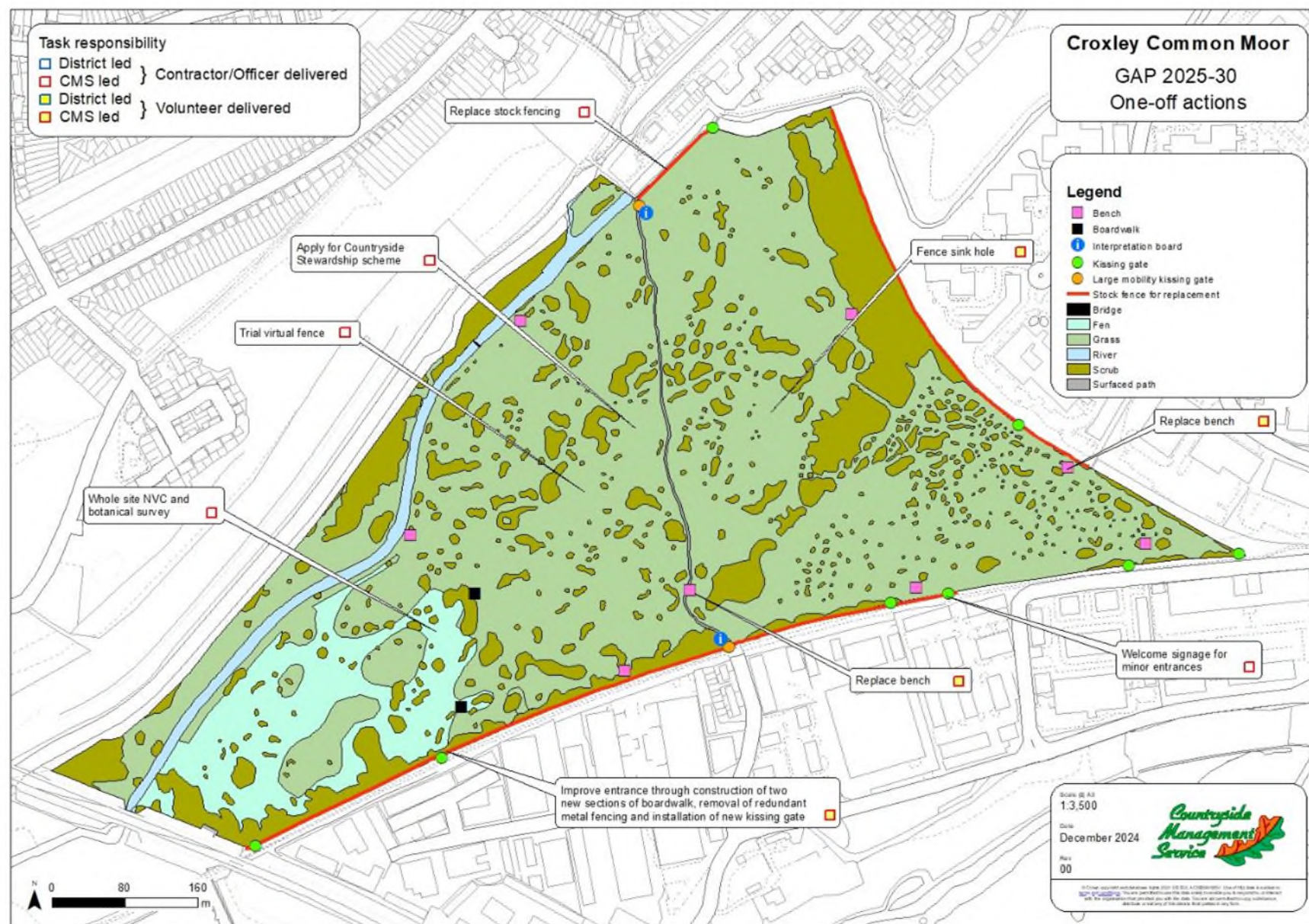
## 5.2 One-off actions

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
1.1	Whole site NVC and botanical survey.	E7	Jun/Jul 2025	CMS	Contractor	General budget	£5k	6.2.1	
1.2	Design and produce welcome signage for minor entrances.	A1	2025	CMS	Contractor	General budget	£2k	6.3.1	
1.3	Improve entrance from Ebury Way through construction of two new sections of boardwalk removal of redundant metal fencing and installation of new kissing gate.	A2	Summer 2025	CMS	Volunteers	General budget	£3k	6.3.2	
1.4	Bench replacement.	C1	Summer 2025	CMS	Volunteers	General budget	£500		
1.5	Fence sink hole.	C1	2025	CMS	Volunteers	General budget	£250		
1.6	Apply for Countryside Stewardship (CS) scheme to continue funding for habitat management.	D2	2025	CMS	CMS	Officer time			
1.7	Replace stock fencing around perimeter of site.	E2	Winter 2026/27	CMS	Contractor	Countryside Stewardship	£25k		
1.8	Trial virtual fencing.	E2	2026	CMS	Contractor	General budget			
1.9	Contractor scrub control – fen	E3, E4	Winter 2026/27	CMS	Contractor	Countryside Stewardship	£25k		

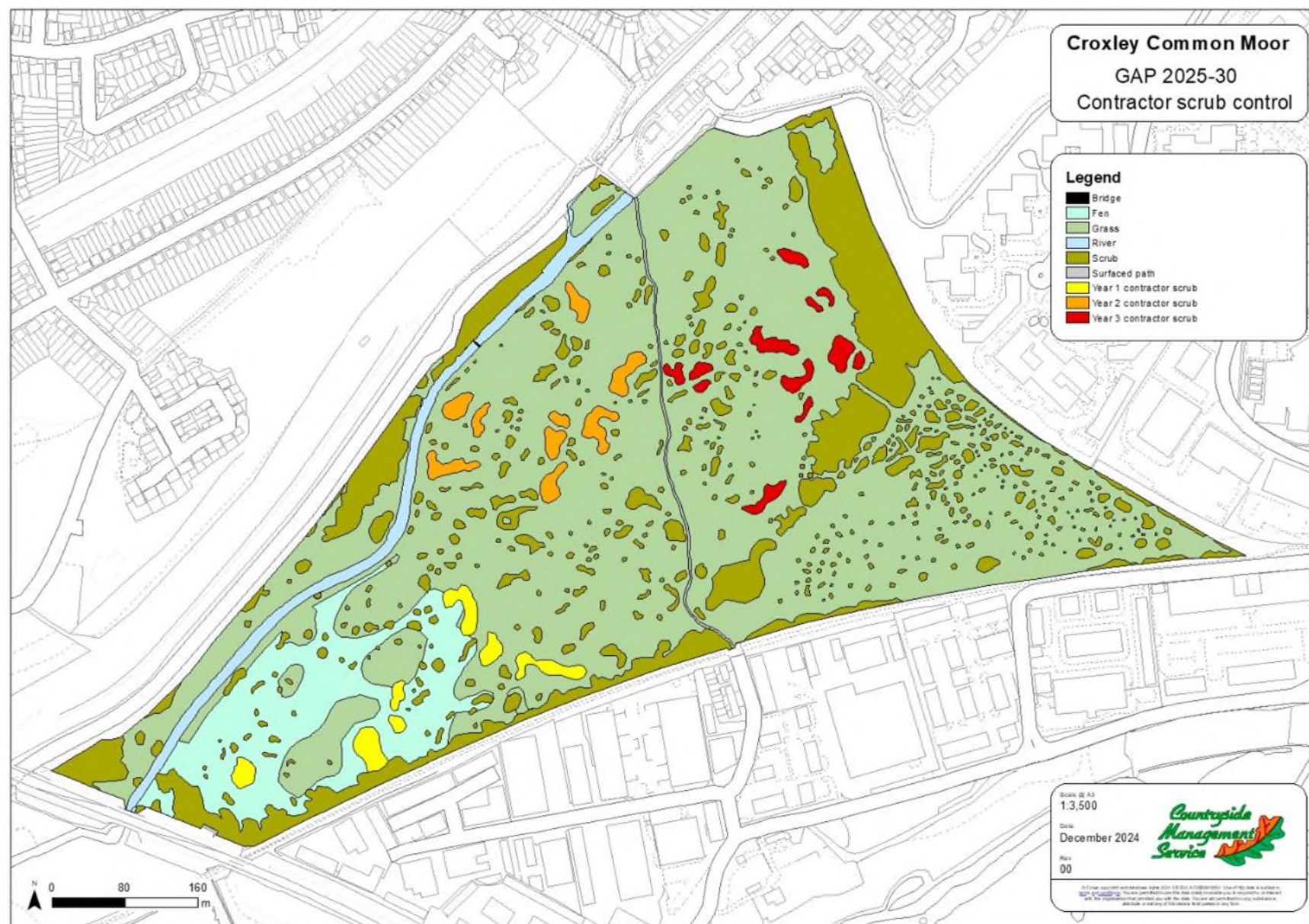


1.10	Contractor scrub control – centre of site	E4	Winter 2027/28	CMS	Contractor	Countryside Stewardship	£25k		
1.11	Contractor scrub control – east of footpath	E4	Winter 2028/29	CMS	Contractor	Countryside Stewardship	£25k		











## 6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

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### 6.1 Habitat management specifications

#### 6.1.1 Multi-year scrub control contract

Annual scrub control contract to support volunteer effort, to include:

- Flailing of 1/3 of scrub with tracked forestry flail within the 'triangle field', spread across the field to improve structural diversity.
- Flailing areas of Bramble/low scrub regrowth where management aim is scrub reduction and the restoration of grassland/wetland habitats. The need for arisings to be removed will be assessed once work is complete. Areas likely to include recent areas cleared by volunteers and scrub growth in nutrient-rich hollows such as dried-up channels.

#### 6.1.2 Volunteer scrub control

- Scrub will be cut with hand tools/brushcutter/pedestrian flail mower.
- Stumps are to be cut to knee height, in order that they can be located by a contractor/CMS officer to reduce to ground level.
- Fire sites will be located within the scrub control area. To limit soil enrichment, a fire site will be situated on ground where dense scrub has been cleared, away from any areas known to support Petty Whin. Only one fire site will be used per season, with ash removed. Fire sites not to be located within acid grassland areas.

#### 6.1.3 Thistle control

Control thistles in problem areas by cutting before going to seed to prevent spread and reduce vigour. Control to be undertaken through:

- Volunteer brushcutting during summer, cutting as low to the ground as possible.
- Flailing of recently cleared areas of scrub as part of scrub control contract.

Thistle control will likely need to be repeated several times over the course of the summer.



## **6.2 Wildlife surveys**

### **6.2.1 NVC and botanical survey**

Conduct a botanical survey of the entire site, consisting of:

- A full NVC, including mapping.
- A repeat of previously undertaken surveys for 'rare' species, with results mapped.

### **6.2.2 Rapid Grassland Assessment methodology**

Recording forms outlined below.



Survey date:

Condition indicator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Herb/grass ratio										
Vegetation height										
% cover negative indicator species										
% scrub cover										
% bare ground										
% litter cover										

Negative indicator species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Seen, but not in quadrats	Comments



Positive indicator species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Seen, but not in quadrats	Comments



## 6.3 Infrastructure specifications

### 6.3.1 Welcome signage

Design and produce A4 size welcome signage, following TRDC brand guidelines, and including QR code linking to site webpage. Signage to affix to metal kissing gates at site entrances.

### 6.3.2 Boardwalks

New sections of boardwalk will follow the same design as the existing boardwalk on site, consisting of:

- 90mm x 90mm x 1.25m pointed recycled support posts.
- 175mm x 47mm timber bearers and support struts between posts.
- 150mm x 47mm x 1.2m timber deck boards with weld mesh stapled on top.
- 47mm x 47mm timber kick rail.
- Bearers and supports fixed with M12 bolts.



*Existing boardwalk*



*Existing boardwalk construction detail*



## 7.0 APPENDICES

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### 7.1 Policy context

#### 7.1.1 HCC Strategies

##### 7.1.1.1 *Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy*

Hertfordshire County Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and have since committed to make Hertfordshire cleaner, greener and more sustainable.

HCC want to:

1. Lead in their own operations
2. Enable sustainability with their programmes, policies and decisions
3. Inspire businesses and residents to take action

The ambitions of the [Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy](#) include achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions before 2050, ensuring communities are ready for future climates and improve wildlife in our land and water by 20% by 2050.

##### 7.1.1.2 *Pollinator Strategy*

Hertfordshire County Council is committed to helping to conserve the UK's pollinators by ensuring it will consider the needs of pollinators in the delivery of its duties and work.

Vision:

Our local environment will be rich in pollinator habitats, helping support sustainable pollinator populations and making places more attractive for people to live and work in.

Aims: The Council will work to:

1. Ensure the needs of pollinators are represented in policy and guidance.
2. Protect, increase and enhance the amount of pollinator habitat in Hertfordshire to help prevent extinctions; and improve the status of any locally threatened pollinator species.



3. Increase awareness of pollinators and their habitat needs across local residents, businesses and other landowners.
4. Increase the contribution of land under the ownership of, or managed, by the Council to pollinator conservation.
5. Improve our knowledge and understanding of pollinators in our local area.

### **7.1.2 TRDC Strategies**

#### *7.1.2.1 Corporate Framework*

Each year, Three Rivers District Council updates its Strategic Plan. This is a document that brings together our high level, medium- to long-term objectives which, following consultation and analysis of data, the Council considers to be its priorities for the District.

It focuses on those areas where the Council has a lead role or can play a key part in delivering or influencing the outcomes. Its purpose is to guide the Council in its annual consultation, planning, resource allocation and performance management process. [Corporate Framework \(threeivers.gov.uk\)](https://threeivers.gov.uk)

#### *7.1.2.2 Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy*

Three Rivers declared a climate emergency and is committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2030 for their own emissions and by 2045 for the District.

The [Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy](#) sets out how the Council can improve and lead by example in our own operations. It also sets out how they will work with and assist the residents, businesses, and other stakeholders in the area to reduce their impact on the environment, improve sustainability and also adapt to and build resilience to a changing climate.

#### *7.1.2.3 Nature Recovery Strategy 2023-28*

The [Three Rivers Nature Recovery Strategy](#) specifically addresses the Council's approach to protection of the natural world within the District. At the heart of the strategy is a 5-year Action Plan, which identifies and prioritises actions to be undertaken for the benefit of Biodiversity.



The strategy also recognises the rich diversity of wildlife already present within the District, both within protected nature reserves as well as public open space, residential gardens, grass verges, and more.

#### 7.1.2.4 Pesticide Strategy

This strategy sets out how TRDC will reduce the unnecessary use of harmful chemicals.

#### 7.1.2.5 Tree Strategy

The [Tree Strategy](#) sets out TRDC's approach to a whole range of tree issues and identifies a number of specific and deliverable actions for TRDC to achieve over the five-year period of 2022-2027. These actions are intended to address many of the aims of TRDC's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy and serve as a 'road map' towards the sustainability goals of TRDC.

#### 7.1.2.6 Local Plan

The current [Local Plan](#) for the district was published in 2014. Three Rivers District Council is preparing a [new Local Plan](#) that will set out a vision and policy framework for the future levels of growth within the district until 2041. These documents include policies which relate to nature conservation.

## 7.2 SSSI Citation

File ref: 17 WAW S/420

**County:** Hertfordshire **Site Name:** Croxley Common Moor

**District:** Three Rivers

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under  
Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

**Local Planning Authority:** Three Rivers District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 083949 **Area:** 39.5 (ha) 97.6 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000:** 176 **1: 10 000:** TQ 09 NE, SE

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1969 **Date of Last Revision:** 1972

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1986 **Date of Last Revision:** -



**Act):**

**Other Information:**

The majority of the site is a Registered Common.

**Description and Reasons for Notification:**

Croxley Common Moor is an extensive area of grass heath on freely draining sandy soils of the Colne Gravels adjacent to the River Gade. A variety of soil types, from acidic to fairly basic, supports a rich assemblage of plant species. The grassland types represented here include examples which are nowhere common in Britain and others which have been significantly reduced in area nationally through drainage and agricultural change. Towards the western end of the site drainage becomes poor and the grassland grades into marshy areas with tall fen vegetation.

Dominating the species rich turf are Sheeps Sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, Common Bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Sheep's Fescue *Festuca ovina*, Mouse ear Hawkweed *Hieracium pilosella* and Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum*. The freely draining conditions also support abundant Sweet Vernal Grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*, Common Cat's-ear *Hypochoeris radicata* and Common Bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* with Betony *Stachys officinalis* more locally distributed. The botanical interest is enhanced by frequent Petty Whin *Genista anglica* and Dyer's Greenweed *G. tinctoria* and occasional Heather *Calluna vulgaris*. More basic conditions and active ant hills support Purging Flax *Linum catharticum* and Large Thyme *Thymus pulegioides*. Scattered scrub of Gorse *Ulex europaeus*, Broom *Cytisus scoparius* and Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* adds structural diversity to the site.

Rushes *Juncus spp.* and Sedges *Carex spp.* dominate the wetter areas with tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* and Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*. A county rarity, fen bedstraw *Galium uliginosum* is also present. The tall fen is characterised by Reed Sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima*, Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus*, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis* and Purple Loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*.

**7.3 Access statement**

The nature of Croxley Common Moor as a natural environment poses limitations to accessibility around the site, largely due to the terrain and natural features such as



ant hills, wet areas and vegetation. These limitations mean it is not possible to provide access for all across the whole site, however a number of features are already in place to cater for those with reduced mobility:

- Surfaced route along Footpath 017, linking Croxley Green to the Ebury Way across the site.
- Construction of two sections of boardwalk have increased accessibility through wet sections, connecting different areas of the site.

In addition, works identified within this plan will enhance accessibility on the site:

- Two new sections of boardwalk to improve access from the Ebury Way.
- Accessibility will be considered during design and delivery of access projects, including for example, ramp gradients and points of access on to boardwalks.

#### 7.4 Engagement response summary

Below is a summary of comments received from the second stage engagement process on the Croxley Common Moor Greenspace Action Plan 2025-30, carried out in winter 2024/25.

Theme of comments	Engagement response	Council response and outcome
<b>Public access</b>	Plan does not fully address balancing public access with biodiversity, for example conflicts such as litter, barbecue use, footpath erosion, effects of high levels of dog walking.	The status of the site as Common Land, can make managing access difficult, for example restricting the use of fencing etc.
	Additional suggested crossing points over wet ground welcomed, with further crossing points	Recycled plastic is currently used for legs of boardwalks to improve longevity, with timber



	over marshy areas requested. Suggestion of using recycled plastic for these to provide longevity.	used on top. This is thought to balance cost, more natural aesthetics, and longevity.
	Adding further crossing points would potentially increase footfall into sensitive areas, should this be encouraged?	No further crossings are planned; however this will be continually reviewed, particularly where access causes damage/erosion. This will include balancing any negative impacts of potentially increasing access to certain areas.
	Further information on monitoring of desire lines.	Plan updated clarifying approach further, monitoring will include fixed-point photography and analysis of aerial photos.
	Does the lack of dog waste bins increase discarding of bags on site? Is the reason for the lack of bins to discourage dogs?	
	There is a further dog waste bin at the weir entrance.	Plan updated.



	Further explanation of decision not to install litter bins.	Litter bins have previously been magnets for fly-tipping, focus is on encouraging site users to take litter away with them.
	Litter can be an issue, if keeping the no bin policy, more signage should be installed telling people to take litter home with them.	To be included in new welcome signage at site entrances.
	Plan should include acknowledgement that cycling occurs.	
	Could use of virtual fencing allow for modifications to site entrances to improve access for cyclists, people with disabilities and people with pushchairs.	There will still be a need to maintain a secure, stock-proof outer boundary with use of virtual fencing. There are no plans to modify entrances currently beyond those already outlined in the plan.
	Interpretation boards should be improved to provide more information on biodiversity, site history, management practices and clearer bylaws.	No current plans to renew interpretation boards during this plan period.



	Suggestion for use of QR codes on new signage welcomed.	No action required.
	Plan should include acknowledgement that though not permitted, fishing does occur.	
	Clarification on responsibility for repair and replacement of benches.	Plan updated.
<b>Scrub control</b>	Clarification around what is included in the 'important grassland areas' in coverage calculations.	Further detail provided.
	General consensus that more needs to be done to tackle extent of scrub on site. Suggestions of more hand labour, e.g. a small team working for a longer period on site, or increased use of low-ground pressure machinery to flail or uproot and dig out stumps. Recognition that this may not be	Advice and guidance taken will be taken from Natural England on most suitable methods for each specific area, with machinery used where possible to maximise efficiency.



	appropriate on all areas, e.g. to protect anthills.	
	Suggested changes of approach on division of tasks between contractors and volunteers welcomed, clarification around when this will be implemented.	To be implemented from start of plan.
	Change of approach to scrub management in 'triangle field' from cutting blocks to a mosaic approach welcomed.	No action required.
	Plan should have specified targets for each winter with % to be removed and clear explanation of methods.	Specific areas to be removed for each year are mapped within the action plans, as stated above, decisions on methods will be decided in conjunction with Natural England and will be different for different areas, a range of options included within the plan.
	Scrub control should focus on areas of acid grassland and the fen.	Noted, areas identified target these areas.
	Arisings should ideally be removed from site.	Details of previous efforts at removal added to plan,



	Clarification around why this hasn't always historically been done, lessons from efforts previously made, and how/when decisions on this will be made in the future.	along with difficulties encountered, such as underlying ground conditions restricting access, and the rate at which cut material could be chipped.
	No fires on areas of acid grassland.	Plan updated.
	Support for focussing efforts on managing areas of regrowth. This may also allow management of young scrub during the summer where there is no risk to disturbing breeding birds.	Agreed, plan updated.
	A number of areas identified as additional areas for scrub removal.	Areas added as potential for any additional capacity as part of multi-year scrub contract.
	Observation that 'relic river features' often contain a layer of sediment, likely nutrient-rich which will promote scrub growth.	Noted, plan updated.



	Request for arrangements to be made for stump reduction from volunteer scrub cutting.	Plan updated to include as part of work in all CMS task days when required.
<b>Thistle control</b>	Greater explanation of need to control thistles, i.e. is this to prevent natural succession.	Plan updated with further detail, management required to prevent thistle spreading and becoming dominant, outcompeting less vigorous species.
<b>Ragwort</b>	Ragwort appears to be a growing problem, are more resources required to tackle this.	Change to smaller, native cattle breed may help this through reduced ground disturbance. Potential for contractor effort if future Countryside Stewardship funding allows.
<b>Grazing</b>	General support for change to native breed cattle, though higher cost noted.	No action required.
	General support for virtual fencing, further information should be provided on site to explain how the system works.	Plan updated to include additional promotion around virtual fencing when confirmed.
	Request for cattle signs to be removed when	Plan updated.



	cattle are no longer on site.	
	Are cattle wormed, as this will affect presence of dung beetles.	Plan updated, current cattle herd not routinely wormed, only if worms detected following testing.
	Greater explanation of the £9k grazing costs and what this includes.	Plan updated.
	Clarification around responsibility/delivery for fence repairs.	Plan updated, emergency repairs are the grazier's responsibility under the grazing contract, larger repairs are TRDC's responsibility.
<b>SSSI</b>	Explanation required of what 'Unfavourable – recovering' status means and what actions are required.	Plan updated with Natural England definition.
	Clarification around the 'Consent for Operations Likely to Damage the Special Interest' – as TRDC is a public body, it is 'assent' that is required when it is believed the proposed operation is	Plan updated.



	likely to damage the notified features.	
<b>Surveys</b>	New NVC survey welcomed and interest in what results will reveal.	No action required.
	Implementation of Rapid Grassland Assessment monitoring welcomed.	No action required.
	Clarification on delivery of fixed-point photography.	Plan updated, to be completed by CMS staff.
<b>River Gade</b>	Further explanation of the requirements for permits for works within 8m from the channel.	Plan updated with link to Government guidance.
	Further explanation of reasons for not repairing bank near 'beach' area and rationale for encouraging connectivity with the river. Suggestion the area flooded already contains significant scrub growth – allowing to flood will add nutrients to encourage more growth. Access is also negatively affected.	Area will be monitored as part of fixed-point photography, decisions on future requirements will be based on advice from Natural England and the Environment Agency.



<b>Climate change</b>	Do we understand how climate change is affecting the site?	Planned vegetation monitoring will help provide insight going forward and inform future management decisions.
	Question around whether methane release from cattle has been calculated vs machinery use, and whether grazing is in line with carbon reduction.	Plan updated with section on Climate Change. Emissions also have to be balanced with other factors, though are a consideration in management decisions. Whilst cattle do emit methane, they also bring vital benefits to managing the wildlife habitats on the Moor.
	Further integration of climate resilience measures, e.g. enhancing floodplain connectivity.	Advice river connectivity to be taken from Natural England and Environment Agency. Maintaining diverse habitats are one of the best ways to maintain resilience of habitats against changing climate.
<b>Funding</b>	Potential to apply for CIL funding towards scrub control contract costs.	All potential sources of funding to be investigated.



	Are there any further funding sources for site management? Look beyond the 5-year plan to sustain longer-term funding.	
	Countryside Stewardship grants can be applied for without a Higher Tier agreement, this may unlock some funding sooner.	Noted, plan updated and Capital Grant to be applied for in any interim period before a new agreement.
<b>Site management</b>	Would like more involvement of Parish Council in site management.	
	Recognition that byelaws are not enforced, e.g. fishing, dog-related PSPO.	
	Clarification around what a 'proportionate response to anti-social behaviour' means.	
	What type of corporate groups do we approach, e.g. water and sewage companies, or more widely.	Companies not currently directly approached.



	Questions around extent of work by Grounds Maintenance staff on site.	Regular actions currently limited at Croxley Common Moor to emptying dog waste bins near site entrances.
<b>OPM</b>	Current guidance should be included.	Not included due guidance changing regularly, plan updated with link to Forestry Commission guidance page.
<b>FoCCM</b>	Are there any ways the council can support the Friends further?	Further consultation with Friends around any future support.
	Clarification around the Friends not being a 'constituted body', suggest replacing with 'recognised body'.	Plan updated.
	Recognition that further volunteer days brushcutting are held in addition to monthly task days.	Plan updated.
	Add FoCCM Facebook page to list of promotional outputs.	Plan updated.
<b>Plan formatting</b>	Several typos, numbering errors and suggestions	Amended.



	for improving clarity identified.	
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# TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

This toolkit is a self-assessment to help officers think about how their policies, projects, procurements, commissioning and services can align with Three Rivers' Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy. It also supports report authors to draft the environmental implications section on decision reports, and procurement strategy reports.

## How to use the tool

The self-assessment is intended to help officers reflect critically on their project or service's environmental impact. . It is a reflective tool, not a framework for approving or rejecting a decision, so it will work best if each question is considered honestly and carefully.

We envision this tool will be used early in the design of a project/policy/procurement to identify areas where environmental harms can be mitigated, and environmental benefits enhanced. If you would like advice, please discuss with your Head of Service, and contact the Climate and Sustainability Team if necessary. Once you are happy that your proposal is optimised, then complete this form, and copy the results in each section in to your decision report (committee/synopsis report) where applicable.

The next tab presents a set of questions about the proposal on a range of sustainability criteria. Each answer is colour-coded to indicate its environmental impact as below:



Colour code	Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some negative impacts sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Once you've selected your answer in the "Impact" column (C), then give the relevant score in the "Score" column (E). Higher scores indicate more sustainable proposals.

These questions should be considered for services, goods and projects we procure as well as those we deliver directly. Delivery models, specifications and tender evaluation should be shaped to ensure our contractors are aligned with our sustainability and net-zero commitments.

Against each area, the assessment presents prompts to highlight best practice suggestions and enable consideration of how negative impacts could be lessened on a project.

*This assessment was inspired by Jim Cunningham at Hammersmith and Fulham Council and developed by officers of Three Rivers Distrcit Council.*

Version                      Date



TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

**Guidance for use**  
Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed.

Please email your completed copy of the form to  
Joanna.Hewitson@threeivers.gov.uk.

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

Name of project/policy/procurement and date		
Brief description (1-2 sentences):		

Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy					
Question	Impact (select from list)	Score 1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (1-4)
1 What effect will this project have on overall energy use (electricity or other fuels) e.g. in buildings, appliances or machinery?	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	Where any work is required on the sites, local companies will be used to reduce the impact of emissions.	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
2 What effect will this project have on the direct use of fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
3 Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
4 Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? (e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per sq. m., no servicing with fossil fuels such as gas heating, EPC	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
5 Does this make use of sustainable materials / unputs in your project? E.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
6 Does this use more sustainable processes in the creation of the project? E.g. modular and off-site construction; use of electrical plant instead of petrol/diesel,	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
7 Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
8 Do any appliances or electrical equipment to be used have high energy efficiency ratings?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score		2.00			3.00

- Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**
- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
  - Include energy efficiency measures when carrying out refurbishment to deliver improvement in EPC ratings.
  - Replace gas boilers with renewable heating, such as heat pumps. Consider District Heat Networks where appropriate.
  - Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard.
  - Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material and timber frames.
  - Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
  - Install solar panels or other renewable energy generation, and consider including battery storage.
  - Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
  - Use energy-efficient appliances.
  - Install low-energy LED lighting.
  - Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.

Travel					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
9 Reducing travel: what effect will this project have on overall vehicle use?	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	Where any work is required on the sites, local companies will be used to reduce the impact of emissions.	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3
10 Will this project use petrol or diesel vehicles or EV, hybrid?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
11 Will this support people to use active or low-carbon transport? E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Opportunites for walking on site and as a though route. This will be enhanced by keeping paths clear of foliage and any path improvements	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
12 Will it be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
13 Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? Using e-cargo bikes; timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score		2.50			3.50

- Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**
- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.
  - Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new fleet.
  - Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.
  - Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.
  - Use zero-emission deliveries
  - Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries



Goods and Consumption						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
14	Has this project considered ways to reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, before acquiring newly manufactured ones?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	where there may be a need for tree felling, or the creation of habitats, consideration will be given to dead wood bring left on the site if applicableand if meeting the requirements of	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
15	Does it reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? <i>E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
16	Does it use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
17	Does it enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Interpretation around the site will show the benefits of nature and biodiversity.	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
18	Is there a plan to reduce waste sent to landfill in manufacture?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
19	Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recyled at end of its life?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
20	Has it taken steps to ensure any food it offers is more sustainable? <i>E.g. less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste; seasonal produce; locally sourced.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score			3.00			4.00

Ecology						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
21	What effect does this project have on total area of non-amenity green/blue space? (Amenity green space = playing fields, play areas, sporting lakes etc. Non-amenity= e.g. woodland, grassland, wetland,	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The management plan look at how the site is utilised	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
22	Does the project create more habitat for nature? E.g. native plants, trees, and flowers	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	There are a number of actions in the management plan to support the creation of or improvement of habitat for nature	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
23	Does it make changes to existing habitats and have a negative impact on nature? <i>E.g. use of pesticides, reduced extent and variety of plants, planting non-native species</i>	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The management plan looks at how habitats are protected and how new ones can be developed / introduced	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
24	Does it help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Interpretation on site will explain the benefits	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
Average Score			4			4

Adaptation						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
25	Does any planned project, construction or building use include measures to conserve water?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Mitigating the use of water by planting at the right time, planting the right species and use of hydration bags where necessary	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
26	Does anythe project , consider how to sustainably protect people from extreme weather?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	With the site being moorland we ideally do not want to encourage more trees on the site. As such the management of the site will be beneficial for flood risk and as a flood	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
27	Has any planned building work or infrastructure considered how to mitigate flood risk? <i>E.g. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); de-paving areas; green roofs</i>	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3		Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
28	Does any planned infrastructure or building work increase the overall footprint of hard surfacing? (as opposed to green or permeable surfacing)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
29	Has the project considered its own resilience to future extreme heat, flood risk, or water shortage?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	With the site being moorland we ideally do not want to encourage more trees on the site. As such the management of the site will be beneficial for flood risk and as a flood	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
Average Score			3.0			3.00

Engagement and Influence						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
30	Does this project raise awareness and understanding of the climate and ecological emergency, and the steps that people can take?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Potential for increased partnership working, environmental focused educational events and messaging	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
	Average Score		3			4
	Total Overall Average Score		2.92			3.6

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:
<div>- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership.</div> <div>- Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods.</div> <div>- Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life.</div> <div>- Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item.</div> <div>- Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare.</div> <div>- Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items.</div> <div>- Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.</div>

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: (Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)
<div>- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing.</div> <div>- Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls.</div> <div>- Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity.</div> <div>- Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides.</div> <div>- Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles</div> <div>- Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture and use of procured goods, e.g. water pollution; water consumption; land use change for farming; pesticide use; organic/regenerative farming methods</div>

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:
<div>- Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets</div> <div>- Re-use grey water in new developments</div> <div>-Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets</div> <div>- Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading</div> <div>- Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing.</div> <div>- Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS).</div> <div>- Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.</div>

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:
<div>- 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency.</div>

Now assesment is compelete copy and paste box into your business case, committee report. (under environmental implications 6).Whole assesment can be an appendix. Procurement tenders are expected to submit complete report with application.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.00
Travel	3.50
Goods and Consumption	4.00
Ecology	4.00
Adaptation	3.00
Engagement and Influence	4

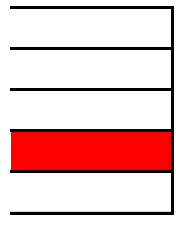


Total Overall Average Score	3.6
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List 1		List 2	List 3
Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	No	No
Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	To some extent	N/A
Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	N/A	
Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.	-1		
Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Yes	Yes
Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4		
Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3		
Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2		
Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.	-1		
Ok -		Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	
Light green (3)		Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	
Yellow (2)		Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	
Red (1)		Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.	
Grey (0)		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	







## Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (EIA)

EIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-users<sup>1</sup>. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups<sup>2</sup>

They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached these decisions.<sup>3</sup>

See end notes for full guidance. For further support or advice please contact the Community Partnerships Team

### Equality Impact and Outcomes Assessment (EIA) Template

First, consider whether you need to complete an EIA, or if there is another way to evidence assessment of impacts, or that an EIA is not needed

<b>Title</b>	Croxley Common Moor Management Plan 2025-2035	<b>ID No</b>	
<b>Team/Service</b>	<i>Leisure and Natural Infrastructure</i>		
<b>Focus of EIA</b>	<p>The formal adoption and implementation of a new ten-year management plan for Croxley Common Moor.</p> <p>The new plan contains management actions for the site over the next ten years from financial year 2025/26 until 2034/35.</p> <p>The implementation of the new management plan is the responsibility of the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service in partnership with Environmental Protection and Hertfordshire County Councils Countryside Management Service.</p> <p>The site remains open to the public at all times.</p> <p>The actions within the management plan considers opportunities to improve accessibility through the enhancement of pathways, keeping pathways clear and where bench replacement is required, these will include a back and arm rests.</p>		
<b>Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations</b>			



The overall impact should be positive by enabling a wide range of users to continue to access the site through enhancement of pathways and appropriate bench replacement when required.	
Potential Issues	Mitigating Actions
Not having the funding to support the delivery of the actions, which will have a positive impact on the accessibility of the site.	Existing budgets to be used to support the ongoing actions and external funding to be secured before other projects commence.
Inaccessibility of the site for those with disability requirements.	Enhancement of pathways, keeping pathways clear and where bench replacement is required, these will include a back and arm rests.
Actions Planned	
Continue to source additional funding to support the implementation of the action plan for Croxley Common Moor	

EIA sign-off: (for the EIA to be final an email must sent from the relevant people agreeing it or this section must be signed)

**Equality Impact Assessment officer:**

**Date:**

**Equalities Lead Officer:**

**Date:**

### Guidance end-notes

<sup>1</sup> The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- Knowledge: everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately in their work.



- 
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering policy options and/or before a final decision is taken – not afterwards.
  - **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and influence the process.
  - **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
    - **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services which provide services on our behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
  - **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty. It applies when a policy is developed/agreed, and when it is implemented/reviewed.
  - **Proper Record Keeping:** to show that we have fulfilled our duties we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

NB: Filling out this EIA in itself does not meet the requirements of the equality duty. All the requirements above must be fulfilled or the EIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge. Properly used, an EIA can be a tool to help us comply with our equality duty and as a record that to demonstrate that we have done so.

## **<sup>2</sup> Our duties in the Equality Act 2010**

As a council, we have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.

This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. The level of detail of this consideration will depend on what you are assessing, who it might affect, those groups' vulnerability, and how serious any potential impacts might be. We use this EIA template to complete this process and evidence our consideration

The following are the duties in the Act. You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact on people with protected characteristics (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- promote equality of opportunity. This means the need to: – Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people with protected characteristics – Take steps to meet the needs of equality groups – Encourage equality groups to participate in public life or any other



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activity where participation is disproportionately low – Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary

- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This means: – Tackle prejudice – Promote understanding

<sup>3</sup> **EIAs are always proportionate to:**

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The numbers of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposed policy on a protected group (e.g. disabled people), the more vulnerable the group in the context being considered, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be.



## Climate Change and Leisure Committee Wednesday, 2 July 2025

### PART I

#### Withey Beds Management Plan 2025-2035 ADE

#### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 New ten-year management plan has been developed for The Withey Beds in Rickmansworth.
- 1.2 The new plan contains management actions over the next ten years from financial year April 2025 until March 2035. The detailed actions relate to habitats and wildlife improvements for biodiversity, management of the wet woodland and a requirement for external funding in order to replace a smaller section of the current boardwalk.
- 1.3 Officers are recommending that these plans are approved by the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing committee and adopted by the Council. Should the plans be approved, Officers will seek to implement the actions within the plans over the next ten years. Work will be completed within existing budgets or subject to external funding.

#### **2 Details**

##### **2.1 Plan development process**

- 2.1.1 The plans were developed and produced by Countryside Management Service (CMS), part of Hertfordshire County Council, who were commissioned by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) to assist with the management of TRDC Open Space.
- 2.1.2 Public consultation on the management plans was carried out in two stages. An initial period of consultation was held to encourage residents, site users, Friends of the Withey Beds, Councillors and other interested parties to share ideas and thoughts on the management of the Nature Reserve over the next five years.
- 2.1.3 Once draft plans had been completed, a second period of consultation was held to enable stakeholders to comment on draft versions of the plans. Minor amendments and an amendment to the proposal for the boardwalk were made to the plans to produce the final version.

##### **2.2 Consultation Process**

- 2.2.1 The initial consultation was held for 4 weeks between the 8 July and 5 August 2025.
- 2.2.2 Public and stakeholder consultation, on the draft management plan, took place between 23 December 2024 and 20 January 2025.
- 2.2.3 A total of 5 responses were received as feedback to the public consultation process. These included Friends of the Withey Beds, Canal and Rivers Trust and



Councillors. The feedback received was supportive of the new management plan but had a focus on concerns regarding the proposed change to the damaged boardwalk.

- 2.2.4 Outside of the standard management plan engagement process, an additional briefing was held on the 7 May 2025 to discuss the concerns raised by the 3 Councillors and Friends of the Withey Beds – this outlined the need to balance public access against nurturing the unique habitats, along with highlighting extremely limited safe access to the site and the existing boardwalk being inaccessible for most of the year due to high water levels. In addition, Officers highlighted that full replacement of the boardwalk would cost in excess of £170,000 and there was no available funding for this. However, in response to the feedback, the management plan proposes a shorter section of boardwalk with viewing platform in the fens, along with river restoration work, where funding can be applied for to deliver this.

## 2.3 Aim and Objectives

- 2.3.1 To make The Withey Beds a welcoming, diverse, beautiful and tranquil green space for the use and enjoyment of all residents and visitors to the site, while protecting and conserving the important wildlife and habitats that are found there.

- 2.3.2 The key detailed actions relate to:

- Apply for funding to implement boardwalk and river proposals
- Review management in accordance with any new actions in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Thin scrub and trees around the river and back channel

## 3 **Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The officer recommendation is that the management plan for The Withey Beds is formally adopted by the Council.
- 3.2 Officers will then begin to implement the actions within the plans, subject to available funding where necessary.
- 3.3 If the plans are not approved by the committee, maintenance of the site will continue at a minimum level, but no additional improvements for biodiversity or public access will be undertaken.

## 4 **Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed budgets. The proposals also relate to securing additional funding, as outlined within the report.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators for the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service Plan 2025-2028.
- 4.2.1 LNI04 - External Funding secured to support Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Projects and Activities.



- 4.2.2 LNI05 - Year on year increase in the area of land owned by Three Rivers District Council, being managed for biodiversity benefit.
- 4.3 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following Corporate Framework Objectives:
  - 4.3.1 Sustainable Communities
  - 4.3.2 Net Carbon Zero and Climate Resilient

## **5 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan includes an annual budget to maintain 13 sites with management plans, including the management of The Withey Beds. This is not sufficient to deliver the actions planned within the Management Plan as such the delivery of projects will be dependent on securing external funding which will need to be obtained in advance of projects proceeding.

## **6 Legal Implications**

- 6.1 All proposed works and equipment will be tendered within the Council's constitution and Contract Procedure Rules, where required.
- 6.2 The preparation of this plan is being undertaken in order to support compliance with the Council's statutory obligations and its Corporate Framework and Priorities.
- 6.3 The Council has a duty to have regard to conserving and enhancing biodiversity under S40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. This does not mean that the duty must be given greater weight than other matters and the Management Plan recommendations that are being presented within this report satisfy the duty, which is for the Council to 'have regard' when it exercises its functions.
- 6.4 Subject to the receipt of external funding, under the Council Constitution (as outlined in part 3, section 4.1.3 of the Council Constitution), Committee approval is required to enter into any contract above the value of £25,000.

## **7 Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 7.1 An Impact Assessment has been completed for these Management Plans.
- 7.2 On the whole the new Management plans should have a positive impact on the accessibility of the site.
- 7.3 Funding will need to be sourced in order to make these improvements.

## **8 Staffing Implications**

- 8.1 Delivering the Management Plan project and objectives as well as securing external funding in order to deliver these will be led by the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service.
- 8.2 In particular, it will require the time of the Leisure Assets Manager, Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager and the Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer.



- 8.3 Officers will also be working collaboratively and will require support and input from Officers in other services, including Regulatory Services, Environmental Protection, Finance and Legal.

## **9 Environmental Implications**

## **10 Community Safety Implications**

- 10.1 None Specific

## **11 Public Health implications**

- 11.1 Being able to connect with wildlife has a positive impact on both the physical and mental health and wellbeing of individuals.

## **12 Customer Services Centre Implications**

- 12.1 None Specific

## **13 Communications and Website Implications**

- 13.1 The website will be kept updated with any relevant changes to the site, following the adoption and ongoing delivery of the Management Plan.
- 13.2 Good news stories will be circulated and shared via the Communications team, including across a range of social media channels.

## **14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications**

- 14.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.
- 14.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Leisure & Natural Infrastructure service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

<b>Nature of Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	<b>Risk Rating</b> <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Actions within the Management Plans are not implemented due to a lack of resources	Reputational damage to the Council	Implementation of the plans is monitored and reported to hi-light any issues at an early stage	Tolerate	4
The boardwalk is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reputational damage</li> </ul>	Implementation of the	Treat	8



left in a state of disrepair and damage without repair or replacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to the Council</li> <li>Risk of slip, trip or fall to public who ignore the cordons in place</li> <li>Financial implication if an injury occurred</li> </ul>	Withey Beds boardwalk and river enhancement proposal		
The full boardwalk is replaced	Financial implications to the Council for the initial replacement costs and ongoing maintenance	Implementation of the Withey Beds boardwalk and river enhancement proposal	Treat	8

- 14.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

<div>Very Likely</div> <div>Likelihood</div> <div>Remote</div>	Low	High	Very High	Very High
	4	8	12	16
	Low	Medium	High	Very High
	3	6	9	12
	Low	Low	Medium	High
2	4	6	8	
Low	Low	Low	Low	
1	2	3	4	
<div>Impact</div> <div>LowUnacceptable</div>				
<div>Impact Score</div> <div>Likelihood Score</div>				



4 (Catastrophic)	4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
3 (Critical)	3 (Likely (21-79%))
2 (Significant)	2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
1 (Marginal)	1 (Remote (≤5%))

- 14.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

## 15 Recommendation

- 15.1 That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:
- 15.2 Adopt the new ten-year Management Plan for The Withey Beds.
- 15.3 Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.

Report prepared by: Kelly Barnard, Leisure Assets Manager

### Data Quality

Data sources:

Public Consultation

Data checked by:

Andrew Taylor – Projects Officer, Countryside Management Service (CMS)

Data rating: Tick

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	✓
3	High	

## APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

APPENDIX A: The Withey Beds Greenspace Action Plan 2025 – 2035

APPENDIX B: The Withey Beds boardwalk and river enhancement proposal





# **THE WITHEY BEDS**

## **GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN**

**2025 – 2035**





## OVERVIEW

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### Greenspace Action Plans

Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period of time; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site.

### Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held between 8th July and 5th August 2024, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement between 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 and 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 enabled stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An associated engagement response document, published online as an appendix to this plan, summarises comments received, and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

### Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved



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## 1.0 SUMMARY

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### 1.1 Site Summary

Site Name:	The Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve
Site Address:	Moor Lane, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 1LJ
Grid Reference:	TQ 07903 94069
Size:	7.6 hectares (18.78 acres)
Designations:	Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Local Wildlife Site
Owner:	Three Rivers District Council

### 1.2 Vision Statement

The vision for The Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve over the next ten years is to continue to maintain and enhance the wide range of habitats and wildlife found here, while allowing for the local community to explore, learn about and enjoy this very special wetland.

This document sets out the management, maintenance and development framework for The Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve to work towards between 2025 and 2035. It is recognised that the systems in place to manage The Withey Beds are already very well established and described in previous plans. As such, the GAP seeks to identify subtle improvements and further refinement to the established systems.



## **2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**

---

### **2.1 Introduction**

The Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is a 7.6ha (18.78 acres) site located east of Rickmansworth; near the confluence of the Gade, Chess and Colne; close to the Grand Union Canal; and adjacent to Hampermill Lake, Hampton Hall Meadows and Croxley Common Moor. The Withey Beds lies within an extensive network of unimproved grassland and wetland habitats in the Upper Colne River Valley floodplain. The site is owned and managed by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC).

The site is adjacent to the River Colne and consists of areas of unimproved wet grassland/grazing meadow, tall herb swamp, wet woodland, wetland habitats, ponds, ditches, a backwater and scrape. The Withey Beds provides a mixture of relatively undisturbed habitats for wildlife and has been designated a Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site.

The Withey Beds are part of a string of important sites for prehistoric to medieval history where a number of historic artefacts have been found. More recent historic remains are visible at The Withey Beds in the form of a World War II pillbox, now used as a roost by bats.

The site is one of Hertfordshire's few remaining semi-natural wetlands and provides an important habitat for birds including kingfisher, Cetti's warbler, green sandpiper, water rail and barn owl; mammals including six species of bat; invertebrates including butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies and a number of nationally notable species including the oak jewel beetle, a solitary bee, Roesel's bush cricket and several species of soldier fly.

The site is accessible from Moor Lane and provides opportunities for informal recreation. Although these opportunities are limited by its location and lack of formal parking, The Withey Beds is highly valued by the local community.



# The Withey Beds

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Location Plan

The Withey Beds LNR  
Grid Ref: TQ 079 940  
Easting: 507900  
Northing: 194000

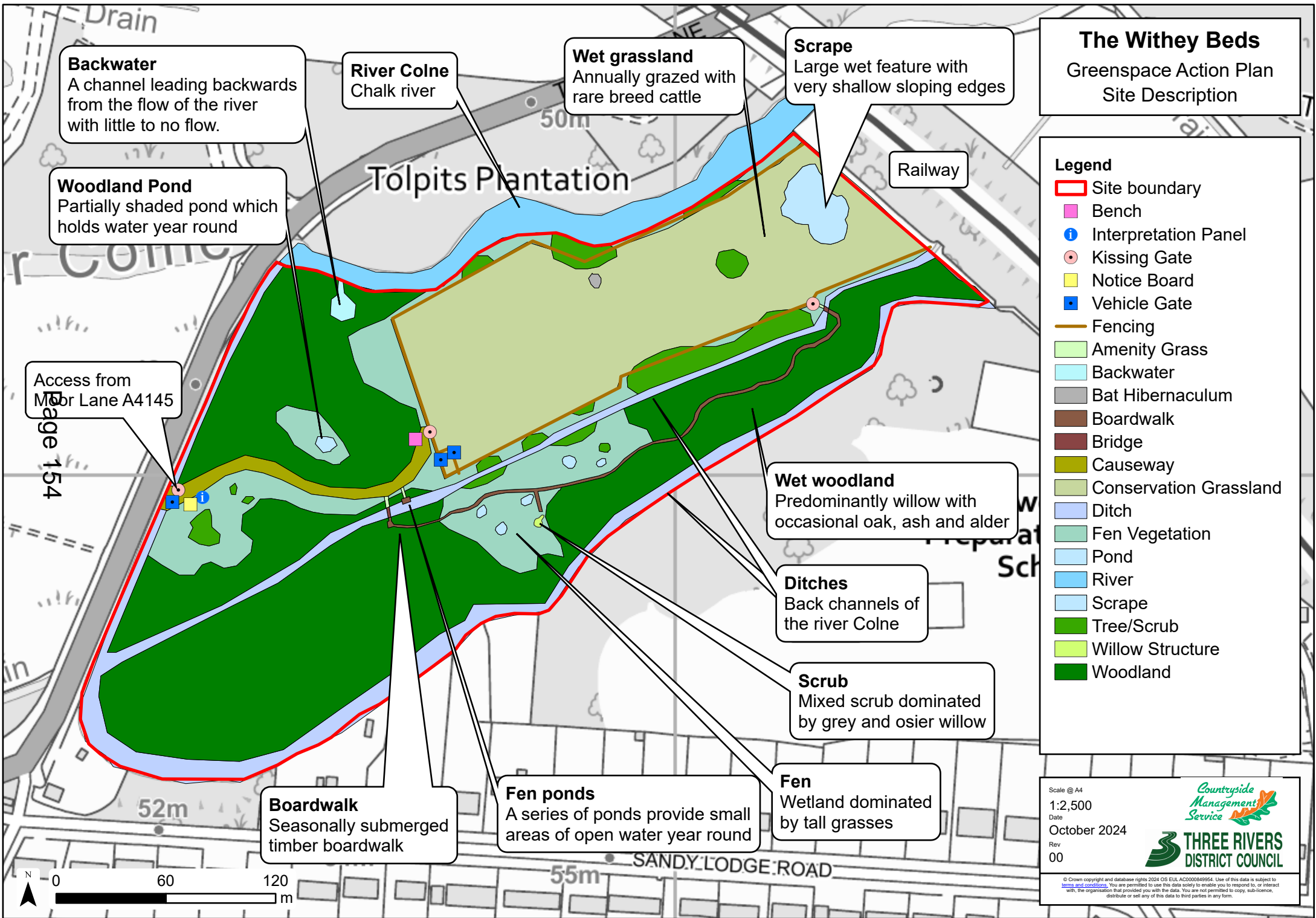
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Date  
October 2024  
Rev  
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# The Withey Beds

Greenspace Action Plan  
Site Description

## Legend

- Site boundary
- Bench
- Interpretation Panel
- Kissing Gate
- Notice Board
- Vehicle Gate
- Fencing
- Amenity Grass
- Backwater
- Bat Hibernaculum
- Boardwalk
- Bridge
- Causeway
- Conservation Grassland
- Ditch
- Fen Vegetation
- Pond
- River
- Scrape
- Tree/Scrub
- Willow Structure
- Woodland

### Backwater

A channel leading backwards from the flow of the river with little to no flow.

### Woodland Pond

Partially shaded pond which holds water year round

### River Colne

Chalk river

### Wet grassland

Annually grazed with rare breed cattle

### Scrape

Large wet feature with very shallow sloping edges

Railway

Access from Moor Lane A4145

Page 154

### Wet woodland

Predominantly willow with occasional oak, ash and alder

### Ditches

Back channels of the river Colne

### Scrub

Mixed scrub dominated by grey and osier willow

### Fen ponds

A series of ponds provide small areas of open water year round

### Fen

Wetland dominated by tall grasses

### Boardwalk

Seasonally submerged timber boardwalk

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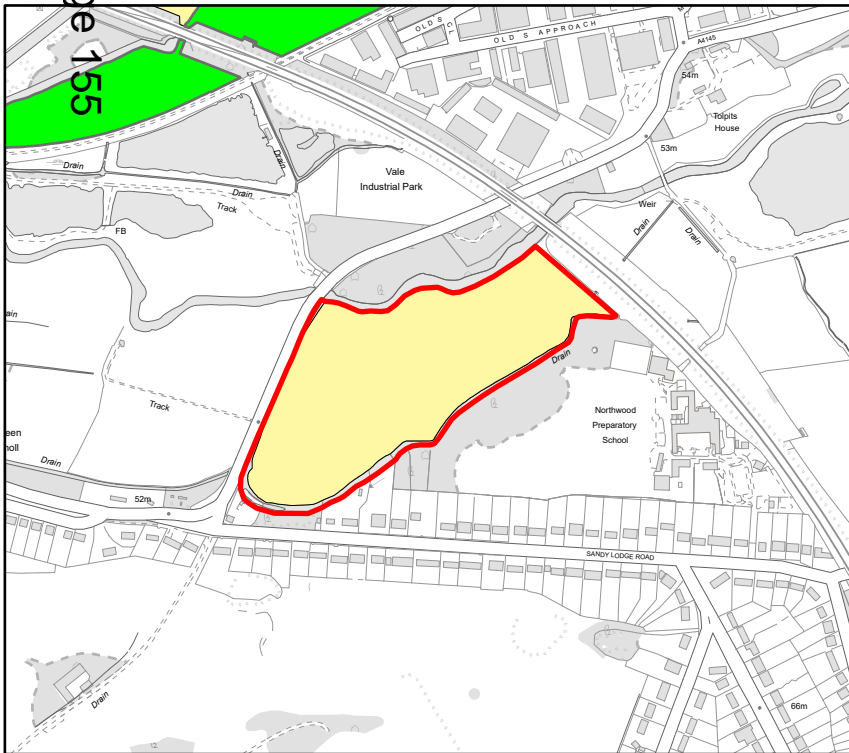
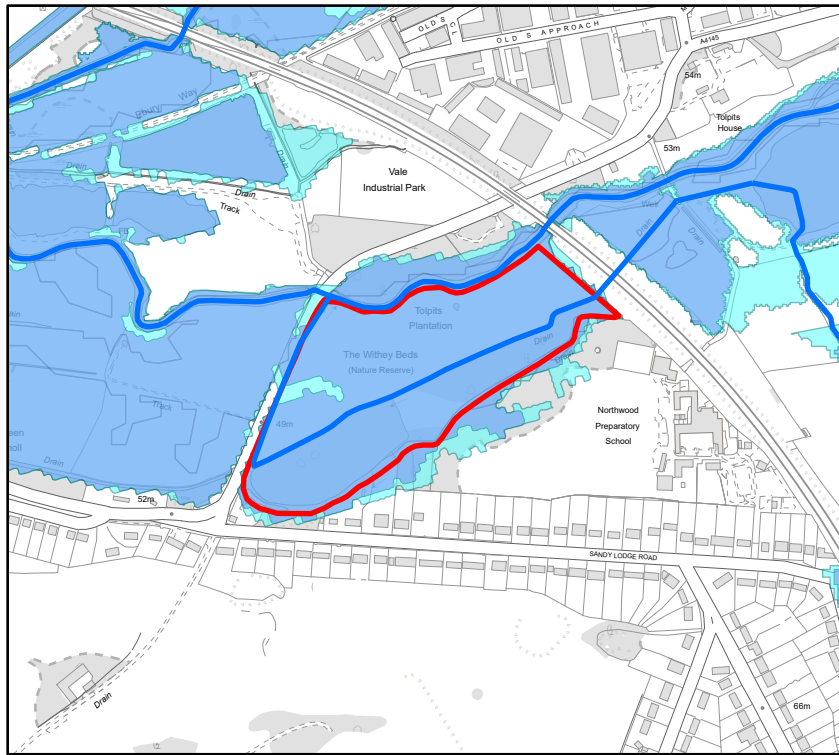
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Countryside  
Management  
Service

THREE RIVERS  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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# The Withey Beds

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Constraints Plan

#### Legend

- Site boundary
- Byway Open to All Traffic
- Restricted Byway
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Temp Closed Footpath
- Temp Footpath
- Unmetalled UCR
- Main River
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)
- Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)
- LNR
- NNR
- RAMSAR
- SAC
- SPA
- SSSI
- Wildlife Site
- Deselected Wildlife Site
- Local Geological Site
- Geosite
- Deleted Geosite
- Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Greenbelt



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Date

October 2024

Rev

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## 2.2 Site Designations

The Withey Beds was ratified as a Local Wildlife Site (reference code 89/006) in 1997 for its tall herb fen and swamps containing key indicators for such habitat. It is recorded as:

‘Alluvial site in the River Colne valley that supports a range of habitats including tall herb alluvial swamp, damp grassland, some dry grassland areas, scrub, scattered mature trees, wet woodland and a wide drainage ditch. The wet woodland, developed on the former withey beds, is dominated by Crack Willow (*Salix fragilis*) with Osier (*S. viminalis*) and other willows (*Salix spp.*). There are scattered mature trees of Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). A wide range of wetland plants have been recorded including Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Lesser Pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*) and Common Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*). The site is also important for birds and invertebrates with numerous dragonflies recorded from the site plus nationally notable diptera (for which the site is listed in the Invertebrate Site Register). Wildlife Site criteria: Fen and swamp indicators.’

The site was declared a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in 2003 by TRDC recognising it as a site which makes an important contribution to England's biodiversity and offers people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.

## 2.3 Geology and Hydrology

The geology comprises river alluvium over a chalk bedrock (Seaford Formation). This is overlaid by stoneless clayey, fine silty and fine loamy soils, typical of floodplains (Fladbury 3 series) on which wet grassland, flood meadows, and wet woodlands are characteristic habitats.

The slow permeability of the bedrock, substrata and the overlying soils leads the area to be highly affected by groundwater which is naturally high here as is typical for this type of soil scape. The fine clayey and silty soils lead to long periods of waterlogging especially in winter and do not respond as quickly to changes in the water level of the adjacent river as more freely permeable soils would.



The Withey Beds lies within a level river valley and only minor variations in ground level exist across the site. The majority of the site is within flood zone 3 in the flood plain of the River Colne, only the causeway is excluded which is in flood zone 2. Creation and maintenance of the backwater and back channel since the site was declared a LNR have improved connectivity of the floodplain to the river here.

Though the hydrology of the local landscape has been affected by the creation of canals and artificial lakes in the last 200 years The Withey Beds has remained largely unchanged during this period and retains its characteristic hydrology. This has been supported by the management of the habitats within the site and water levels on the site are now higher than they were twenty years ago. The hydrology and location of The Withey Beds enable the habitats to function as a natural 'wetland sponge' which can regulate river levels to help manage both flooding and drought problems. Flood water can be stored in soils or retained as surface water in ponds, scrapes and fen which reduces the volume of floodwater downstream. In dry periods river flows are maintained for longer periods as stored water is slowly released from these wetland habitats. This is an increasingly valuable ecosystem service as climate change increases the risk of extreme weather events.

## **2.4 Landscape Character**

The Withey Beds is located within Croxley Moor Landscape Character Area which was strongly shaped by industrialisation during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including mineral extraction, agricultural intensification, and the creation of transport corridors. A key feature of the landscape is the network of semi natural and man-made watercourses, the River Gade and the River Chess join the River Colne within 1.5km downstream of The Withey Beds.

Extensive and numerous waterbodies were formed following restoration of sand and gravel workings. Some of these have become valuable habitats for wildlife; notably Hampermill Lakes and Tolpits Lane Gravel Pits have been designated Local Wildlife Sites for their mosaic habitats which contain indicators of fen and swamp. The waterbodies of these sites support areas of good marginal and aquatic vegetation and are surrounded by grassland, scrub and ruderal habitats able to support a wide range of wildlife.



Scattered pasture, both remnant and restored, and semi-natural habitats survive throughout the area, giving an indication of the original landscape character prior to industrialisation. The most notable example of this is Croxley Common Moor, situated to the north of The Withey Beds, which is a historic grassland designated an SSSI and LNR for its diverse plant communities indicative of unimproved acid and neutral grassland. Hampton Hall Meadows and Moor Park Golf Course are also recognised for their mosaic habitats featuring unimproved grasslands as well as woodland habitats and wet features.

The numerous waterways in the local landscape provide good connectivity between habitats. Traditional field boundaries formed by hedgerows or lines of trees are also common within the landscape and can be used as habitat corridors between ecologically valuable sites.

## **2.5 History and Archaeology**

‘Withey bed’ is an old English term used to describe the growing of several species of willow for coppicing. They once formed an important part of the local village economy; supplying poles for basketwork, thatching, firewood and many other uses. The Withey Beds were traditionally coppiced to provide such products and this form of management resulted in the varied habitats now present becoming established.

The area around The Withey Beds is one of archaeological significance, it has produced numerous finds ranging from palaeolithic worked flints, to roman pottery, to remnants of medieval buildings. Adjacent to The Withey Beds is a Scheduled Monument, known as the Manor of the More, on which stood a medieval moated manor house, rebuilt and enlarged in the 15th century, the property of Cardinal Wolsey in the 16th, and a ruin by 1598.

The impact and features of more recent history are more readily apparent; the surrounding landscape was changed considerably by industrialisation and the construction of the canals and railways, including the widening and deepening of rivers including the Colne. The Withey Beds were relatively untouched by this industrial heritage and are now one of the few remaining semi-natural wetlands in Hertfordshire. The pillbox within the grazing compartment of The Withey Beds is a remnant from WWII, it is an octagonal structure with a porch on one side to protect



the entrance; this style was typically used for observation or as a light anti-aircraft position. There are also a set of tank traps nearby where Moor Lane crosses the River Colne surviving from WWII.



WWII pill box which is now a bat hibernaculum.

## **2.6 Habitats and Wildlife**

The diversity of habitats in The Withey Beds includes wet woodland, mature standard trees, swamp, marsh, neutral grassland, standing and fallen dead wood, open ditches, and the River Colne. It is this diversity which provides an ideal habitat for many species, including several invertebrates of high national importance and a variety of bird life.

### **2.6.1 Grassland**

The majority of the grassland is flooded annually between December and May and grazed by a small herd of Dexter cattle during the rest of the year. The grazing habits of this traditional breed create a diverse sward structure and promote a greater floristic diversity including meadowsweet, flowering rush, and marsh woundwort in the taller sward, and water mint, false fox sedge and meadow buttercup in shorter swards. Flooding by waters carrying nutrient rich sediments historically made flood meadows highly productive grasslands for grazing livestock, however it makes the grassland prone to excessive coverage of more vigorous species such as thistles and docks.

The causeway leading to the grazing compartment represents the driest area of grassland on the site and species growing here, such as red bartsia and zigzag



clover, reflect this. This area is mown periodically to maintain access for visitors and vehicles.

### **2.6.2 Wet woodland**

Wet woodland or carr is an important, rare habitat featured as one of the Forestry Commission's Regional Targets and a priority habitat for the UK. Apart from occasional tree management to enable safe use of the site by visitors, this area is managed through deliberate non-intervention allowing the habitat to be maintained through natural processes. There are scattered mature trees of pedunculate oak and ash, though crack willow and osier willow are the most prevalent species. The wet environment makes trees more susceptible to infections so they fall naturally more frequently than trees in drier conditions, this creates pockets of light for new growth and a constant supply of wet and rotting deadwood. All dead wood, including standing dead wood, is left in situ where it is safe to do so. The mature trees and deadwood are likely to provide excellent habitats for species such as woodpeckers and bats. There are a few young naturally regenerating trees.



Wet woodland during high water levels.

The wet woodland also contains a variety of wildflowers adapted to waterlogged soils and dappled shade, such as hemp agrimony, water forget-me-not and purple loosestrife. These nectar sources and the availability of deadwood enables the wet woodland to support invertebrates extremely well, both above and below the water's surface and therefore also a wide range of insectivorous species.



The Friends of The Withey Beds manage a small willow area to provide suitable material (withies) for basket weaving and use by local schools.

### **2.6.3 Wetland**

The Withey Beds contains a mosaic of wetland habitats in addition to the previously mentioned carr, including fen, scrapes and ponds, ditches, a backwater. A wide range of wetland plants have been recorded on site including wild angelica, meadowsweet, purple loosestrife, lesser pond-sedge and common comfrey.

The fen is dominated by reed sweet grass, with small patches of bull rush and occasional flowering plants and scrub.

Ditches running through the site are connected to the River Colne upstream of the site and at the western end of the site. They retain water year round and have dense vegetation on the banks dominated by grasses and rushes similarly to the fen.

The ponds and scrapes within the fen vary in depth and contain water throughout most, often all, of the year, providing refuges for aquatic animals through drier months. The depth of the water at the centre of these features hinders encroachment of emergent plant species though wetland grasses and reeds need to be cut back every few years to maintain areas of open water.

### **2.6.4 River Colne**

The River Colne is a chalk river, which are internationally rare and a priority habitat in the UK. Chalk rivers flow from underground aquifers and in their natural state are typified by good water quality and steady water temperatures. Healthy chalk rivers are characterised by clear waters, gravel beds with patches of in channel vegetation and gently sloping banks supporting rich marginal vegetation. Most of Hertfordshire's chalk rivers are degraded, but at their best they would support species like Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*), White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), and Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and plants such Water-crowfoot (*Ranunculus aquatilis*) and Water Starwort (*Callitriche stagnalis*).

This stretch of the River Colne (from the confluence with the Ver to the Gade) was recorded as being in moderate ecological condition in 2022. Several quality elements have improved since its previous assessment in 2019 though the phosphate levels



are higher than are acceptable, which poses the risk of algal blooms harming other aquatic life.

A number of willows along the riverbank at The Withey Beds are pollarded to maintain areas of light within the channel and enhancements were carried out in 2015 to improve the river habitat including the creation of gravel bars, which are vital to spawning for several species of fish and a wide range of aquatic invertebrates, and the backwater, which provides a refuge for fish out of the faster flowing and more exposed water of the main channel. Some of the bank is well vegetated with a similar species composition to the fen though scrub has developed along a substantial length of this stretch and is overshadowing the river.



River Colne with marginal vegetation (left) and with back channel leading into woodland (right).

### **2.6.5 Wildlife**

The large scrape and other temporary wet features which form during winter within the grassland attract a variety of wetland birds several species of duck, green sandpiper, and snipe. More elusive birds can be seen, or more often heard, in the fen and wet woodland, these include Cetti's warbler, grasshopper warbler and water rail. The site also offers valuable habitat for birds of prey, notably barn owl and hobby.

Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle have been recorded on the site and may well roost in the pill box which is known to have had bats roosting in it.

Most of the habitats on the site are utilised by grass snake and slow worm and reptile felts are maintained to monitor the presence these two species. Amphibians



are likely to use the ponds and palmate newts have previously been found in one of the ponds.

The Withey Beds is listed in the Invertebrate Site Register based on historic (1986) records of six nationally scarce species of fly including the four barred major (a soldier fly). Dragonflies and butterflies are commonly seen during summer though records for these are very limited.

Brown trout and a wide range of coarse fish such as dace, roach and perch are found in the River Colne near The Withey Beds and use the backwater.

Small patches of Himalayan balsam, an Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS), have been recorded on site. All landowners have a statutory duty to prevent the spread of INNS; for Himalayan balsam this is best done by pulling it up by hand before flowering as its seeds are highly dispersible. Seeds are most commonly transported downstream by the river but can also be spread by the bursting of the seed pod or be transported in mud or on clothing or fur. The site should continue to be monitored for all INNS, as the river corridor could be a potential source for incoming INNS.

## **2.7 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure**

The Withey Beds can be accessed from Moor Lane, where there is a kissing gate and a locked vehicle gate. There is no designated parking at the site, however the layby opposite the entrance on Moor Lane is sometimes used by visitors. The Withey Beds reserve is a 15-20 minute walk from Moor Park tube station however there are no formal pedestrian paths to the site.



Entrance from Moor Lane.



The grassland is surrounded by stock fencing with a corral with two field gates located at the end of the causeway for loading and unloading cattle. Kissing gates are located next to the corral and at the eastern end of the boardwalk. Additional stiles allow access to the riverbank and eastern edge of the site for volunteer activities along the river and edge habitats.

From the entrance on Moor Lane visitors can follow the causeway and take a circular route across the grassland across the eastern bridge, along the 300m boardwalk through the wet woodland and fen, which gives views of some of the wetland ponds and across the western bridge back onto the causeway. This circular route is 1km but is seasonal as the wet grassland becomes inaccessible when flooded or waterlogged. The boardwalk can be used for a larger portion of the year.

Damage to the boardwalk by a fallen tree was recently repaired however the structure is nearing the end of its lifetime and is frequently submerged through winter making it unsuitable for use during periods of high water levels. The viewing platforms at either end of the boardwalk require replacement as the supporting beams have begun to rot. A temporary barrier has been placed at the north end of the western bridge to deter public access while the boardwalk is out of use.

There is one bench looking across the grassland on the site and there is a notice board and an interpretation panel, which provides information on the wildlife and habitats present, next to the entrance from Moor Lane.

## **2.8 Community and Events**

The Withey Beds is fortunate in having an enthusiastic and knowledgeable Friends group. The Friends of The Withey Beds (FoTWB) undertake regular species monitoring and have been involved in delivering some of the habitat enhancements carried out over the past two decades. The FoTWB lead an annual guided walk on the site, but this has not been held while the boardwalk has been inaccessible. The FoTWB also publish a quarterly newsletter which covers recent wildlife sightings, management of the site and upcoming events, and a dedicated website for the nature reserve ([The Withey Beds – Local Nature Reserve](#)). The Withey Beds is also promoted on Three Rivers District Council website, the Visit Herts and Parks Herts websites and the Moor Park Residents Association website.



A leaflet for the site was produced in 2015 and is still largely accurate though the wet woodland has expanded since the illustrated map shown in the leaflet was made. This leaflet can be downloaded from The Withey Beds website.

Watford Piscators manage the adjacent fishery and fish along the section of the River Colne which runs the length of The Withey Beds. They report any water quality or fish issues to the Environment Agency.

The Withey Beds is part of the River Colne Catchment Action Network ([www.colnecan.org.uk/](http://www.colnecan.org.uk/)) as it is in the Upper Colne and tributaries. The partnership website provides details of the aims and objectives of the catchment partnership and provides a place to record details of all projects that are going on in the catchment.

## **2.9 Site Management**

Three Rivers District Council as landowners are responsible for the implementation of the plan through administration and budget management and ensuring routine maintenance activities are carried out by their Grounds Maintenance staff. CMS advises on management, particularly where it relates to nature conservation and community involvement and supports the Council through production of this GAP and arranging the completion of one-off management tasks by contractors or CMS volunteers.

Some tasks are carried out by the Friends of The Withey Beds, such as installing, maintaining and monitoring a number of bird boxes set up around the site, including those for woodpeckers, tits, robins and barn owls; and maintaining an area of osier willow using traditional techniques.

A period of public engagement accompanies the production of this management plan, enabling the local community and stakeholders to inform management of the site. All user groups with an interest in the site are aimed to be included in this process, and for their requirements to be considered as part of the planning process.

The Withey Beds is currently managed under an HLS agreement which was recently extended until October 2028. The HLS scheme contributes to the annual management costs of the site and requires that outputs of the original agreement are



maintained and the agreed activities are carried out, including grazing the meadow extensively with cattle and maintaining areas of fen.

The Colne catchment is part of the Thames river basin and therefore management of The Withey Beds should contribute to achieving the aims of the Thames River Basin Management Plan 2021-2027. Relevant measures set out in the plan include:

- reducing the amount of water abstracted from sensitive locations by using water more efficiently.
- preventing livestock from freely accessing watercourses, where they may cause poaching of soil [trampling and exposing bare ground which is then vulnerable to erosion] and release of sediment and pollutants,
- re-naturalising rivers and coast defences, including making space for water and coastal realignment.
- a stronger catchment focus for water resources, working collaboratively with other stakeholders to find innovative integrated solutions that give greater access to water and sustainable water use that promotes catchments resilient to climate change.

The Thames River Basin Management Plan 2021-2027 places emphasis on cross sector working. The catchment based approach has been a key mechanism to help facilitate better join up between sector groups and communities, so the sum of their collective action is more effective than their individual contributions.



## **3.0 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION**

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### **3.1 Habitats and Wildlife**

#### **3.1.1 Habitat management**

The mosaic of habitats and ecotones between them contribute to The Withey Beds' importance and value to wildlife, beyond the individual value of the component parts, because many species require multiple different habitats at different life stages. It is therefore important to maintain all the habitats present to a high quality.

The grassland will continue to be managed according to the HLS agreement, through grazing with small numbers of native breed cattle throughout months when the field is dry enough, to maintain a diverse sward and help prevent scrub encroachment. As in previous years, where thistles and other injurious weeds are frequent the field should be topped prior to cattle being put on. Similarly, the wet woodland will continue to be managed through non-intervention while the osier bed will be managed through rotational coppicing using the coppiced withies for traditional crafts such as basket weaving. The area of woodland in the northwest of the site has significant gaps in the canopy which can be allowed to fill in naturally by expansion of the woodland into these gaps. The traditional management of this site, grazing the floodplain meadow and coppicing willow helps to preserve the character of this site as well as providing valuable habitats.

The pillbox within the grassland will be maintained in a manner that bats can continue to roost in it and repaired as necessary. In line with the prescriptions of the HLS agreement, the structure, as both a valuable resource for wildlife and a feature of historic interest, will be protected from degradation so far as possible while maximising the ecological value of the surrounding habitats.

Scrub should be cut back on the fen and, if required, on the grassland every two to three years to prevent encroachment and reduce coverage in the fen to below 10%. Cut material can be stacked as habitat piles away from ponds and ditches. If material must be burned, it should be done away from wetland areas including the grazing compartment when the wind is low so the smoke does not blow towards properties, the road or railway. Small sections of the established scrub habitat around the edges of the grazing compartment should also be cut back, cutting different sections every two to three years to maintain a diversity of ages and promote flowering and fruiting.



Up to 20% of the vegetation in the fen should be cut and removed at the end of September (while water levels are lower) every two years to create space for plants which would otherwise be shaded out by tall grasses. Vegetation may also need to be cleared from the centre of the ponds and scrapes every few years to maintain areas of open water, no more than once every two years. The vegetation on the banks of ditches should be cut every two years for the same reason, the vegetation on one bank should be cut in the first two years and the opposite bank in the next two years. Ditches may require occasional desilting and should be surveyed to determine if this or any other maintenance actions are required every ten to twelve years.

Larger more prominent willows along the riverbank should continue to be pollarded on 7 year rotation to allow light into the channel. In addition, the scrub and trees around the river and back channel should be thinned to prevent overshadowing and ensure sufficient light reaches the river for the growth of aquatic vegetation. The river corridor could also be enhanced through the introduction of 'woody debris' to the channel to improve the morphology and flow rate of the river. This would include securing hinged trees into the river channel and building brash structures using material from the thinned scrub. These would narrow the river channel at normal and low water levels and create scours where the gravel bed of the river is exposed. Any improvements to the river corridor including the back channel should be implemented in coordination with the Environment Agency and Watford Piscators.

### **3.1.2 Species monitoring**

Species monitoring is an important method of measuring the quality of the habitats at The Withey Beds and their ecological value, therefore the range of existing monitoring carried out on the site should continue. These currently include:

- Riverfly surveys as part of the Angler's Riverfly Monitoring Initiative
- Otter and water vole surveys
- Monitoring of slow worms and grass snakes using reptile felts
- Bat surveys
- Rapid grassland assessments of the grazing compartment



These surveys are carried out with varying frequency depending on the recommended methodology and capacity of the organisations undertaking them. Results of these surveys are complemented by informal observations by the Friends of The Withey Beds and by members of the public. Wildlife site surveys are also carried out every 10 years.

To enable monitoring to continue the reptile felts should be replaced when they reach the end of their life and infrastructure enabling access to the riverbanks should be maintained.

Some taxa, particularly invertebrates, are not well represented among the records and holding public events aimed at identifying species within these groups would be beneficial both in establishing more complete environmental records and in promoting support for the site.

Any records collected should also be shared with Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre to support wider research and conservation aims.

### **3.1.3 Invasive non-native species**

Small patches of Himalayan balsam have been recorded on site and are removed annually by volunteers, pulling it up by hand in early summer before it is able to set seed. Where INNS are present, regular monitoring, especially in spring and summer prior to flowering, is required to locate them early and control them effectively. No other INNS have been recorded at The Withey Beds however there is potential for INNS to spread between sites either via contaminated items being brought on site or via natural transmission such as being carried down river.

Education is key in preventing the spread of INNS, it is important that people using the site and local landowners, especially those upstream, are communicated with about the importance of prevention. Those carrying out works, including volunteers, must follow appropriate biosecurity measures to prevent the spread of INNS.

Measures such as 'Check, Clean, Dry' can also be promoted to members of the public through seasonal posters and the FoTWB newsletter.



## **3.2 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure**

### **3.2.1 Access**

Regular mowing of the causeway is necessary to maintain access year-round. Mowing of the causeway is carried out as part of the grazing contract. A path could also be cut through the grazing compartment during summer to create a circular route around the site. Vegetation around the entrance also needs to be cut back periodically to maintain visibility for pedestrians and vehicles leaving the site. All arisings should be disposed of offsite to avoid further nutrient enrichment of the habitats.

An objective was identified in the previous GAP to support creation of a pedestrian route for people to visit The Withey Beds as part of a wider infrastructure project to improve travel networks by linking Moor Park station to the Tolpit's Lane Industrial Park with a safe walking route. This would also connect to the Ebury Way which is a significant active travel route. This has not yet been possible due to lack of suitable funding however should funding become available this would benefit local communities by improving opportunities for active travel and access to The Withey Beds as a public greenspace. While it is not within the scope of this document to deliver such a route, should plans to create this route develop, relevant council officers should liaise to ensure the benefits of improving access to The Withey Beds are realised.

Making The Withey Beds accessible for visitors must start before they reach the site, when they are deciding whether or not to visit. This is because the majority of people looking for access information are much less likely to visit a destination if they can't find the information they need. Accessibility information on The Withey Beds and ParksHerts websites is currently limited and could be improved. Collectively the websites provide information on how to reach the site but are missing other information which would be useful for people with disabilities such as a description of the terrain, the location of the nearest public toilets and other amenities, or what formats interpretation is provided in. The websites should be updated to reflect that there is not an accessible route along the boardwalk at present. The leaflet should be made accessible to a wider range of visitors by making a plain text version adapted for use with text to speech software available online.



The tussocky and sometimes tall sward and frequent soft ground of the grazing compartment make it unsuitable for many people to access but these features are important to the quality of the habitat. This could be improved slightly by cutting a path through the grassland between the two kissing gates however it is not practical to make the grazing compartment completely accessible, so it is important to maintain good views across the grassland and nearby areas of fen from the causeway. Where sections of the boardwalk are replaced, it must be to the same or higher standard with a usable width of at least 1.2m, non-slip level surface. Should the boardwalk be replaced it could be enhanced by incorporating a small hide to facilitate wildlife watching or interpretation relating specifically to the fen and wet woodland habitats.

### **3.2.2 Infrastructure**

The interpretation panel and notice board should be regularly cleaned by the Friends group and the notice board should be kept up to date with relevant information. Every few years the entrance sign should be re-oiled and the letters repainted to ensure the signage remains clearly legible. This can also be done by the Friends group/volunteers, but care needs to be taken when working near to the road.

The grazing infrastructure and gates must be inspected regularly to ensure they are fit for purpose and repaired as required. Vegetation around the gates, signage and bench should be cut regularly to ensure these can be used by visitors.

A number of timbers on the boardwalk are beginning to rot, this has been exacerbated by the structure being submerged for long periods of time. It would be preferable to replace this structure at a higher level, above typical flooding levels, however it would require in excess of £150,000 to replace this in its entirety. There are no funds currently available which would support expenditure of this size given the resulting increase in the quality of the site would be limited. To maintain some of the benefits of the boardwalk for visitors a shorter section of boardwalk will be replaced at a higher level, incorporating a viewing platform and turning place at the end of the boardwalk. This would enable visitors to walk to the middle of the fen and view the fen and the ponds within it, as well as the small area of wet woodland at the start of the boardwalk. The remainder of the boardwalk would be removed. Suitable funding will need to be secured to enable this work. Until such time as the boardwalk



replacement can be carried out the bridges adjoining the boardwalk at either end should be maintained to enable access for maintenance of the fen and pond habitats regardless of the state of the boardwalk. They also provide views along the ditch for visitors. Temporary barriers should be installed on the south end of the bridges, and removed from the north end, while the boardwalk is out of use.

### **3.2.3 Safety**

Tree Safety Surveys are carried out in all TRDC parks, woodlands, and open spaces, with the resulting data entered into tree management software and essential remedial works undertaken to secure visitor safety. Safety inspections of all other infrastructure is undertaken annually in April and any repairs carried out as required.

The Withey Beds experiences very little misuse though when it does occur it is important it is addressed promptly to make sure the site appears well cared for and does not attract further misuse. Fires are not permitted on the site and the locked vehicle gate on Moor Lane prevents fly tipping, though the latter does occur on the layby opposite the site. Dogs are permitted at The Withey Beds provided they are under control and do not disturb wildlife or enter the water, which can harm aquatic wildlife.

There are no bins on the site however littering is very limited and may not be deliberate, so it is not necessary or practical to install bins here. It may be beneficial to note that litter, including dog waste, must be taken home (or the nearest appropriate disposal point) and disposed of responsibly on associated webpages and future interpretation, thanking visitors for their help in protecting the habitats and wildlife here in this way.

Oak processionary moth (OPM) has not been found within The Withey Beds however this site is within the Established zone for this invasive species making it the responsibility of landowners to manage OPM on their land. If a potential OPM sighting is identified on site, either through the course of regular inspections, maintenance activities or reported to TRDC by a third party or member of the public, appropriate will be undertaken based current best practice and the level of risk posed to public health.

Asbestos is not known to be present at The Withey Beds however a small risk exists owing to the proximity of a former asbestos factory on Tolpits Lane and known



contamination at other nearby sites. The risk is limited for visitors to the site as asbestos is only a danger to human health when fibres become airborne, not if buried or underwater. To ensure the safety of contractors and visitors digging should be avoided and a survey be conducted prior to works if digging is required.

### **3.3 Sustainability**

#### **3.3.1 Environmental sustainability**

The Council has a strong commitment to the environment and environmental sustainability and recognises the impacts its operations have on the environment. TRDC's dedication to protect the environment is reflected in council policies, strategies, commitments, and partnerships. Some relevant initiatives include:

- Pesticides will not be used unless there are no alternative means of control. Glyphosate will only be used for the control of Japanese knotweed.
- Only FSC timber is used across the district.

The Withey Beds has been managed to maximise the positive impacts on the environment since it was acquired by the Council, this includes preventing livestock from freely accessing the river, minimising the water abstracted from the river for livestock by using nose pumps which are more water efficient than troughs and re-naturalising the river and wetland habitats. These actions are consistent with the measures set out in the Thames River Basin Management Plan 2021-2027.

As the frequency of extreme weather events and the risk of flooding increases with climate change the flood storage that is provided by wetlands like The Withey Beds and sites like it becomes ever more important. It is vital that The Withey Beds continues to be managed in a way that supports climate resilience by enabling it to effectively regulate the water level in the river and combat temperature increases in the aquatic habitats.

#### **3.3.2 BNG**

A formal habitat and condition assessment survey has not been undertaken as part of the development of this management plan. However, indicative current and



potential habitat types and conditions for the main habitats within The Withey Beds are provided in the tables below.

Table 1: Area habitats

Main habitat type	Area (ha)	Biodiversity metric habitat type	Current habitat condition	Potential habitat condition	Potential biodiversity net gain (biodiversity units)
Grassland	2.12	Floodplain grazing marsh	Moderate	Moderate	0
Grassland	0.12	Other neutral grassland	Moderate	Moderate	0
Wetlands	1.85	Lowland fen	Moderate	Good	1.98
Woodland	4.55	Wet woodland	Good	Good	0
Scrub	0.23	Mixed scrub	Poor	Moderate	0.78
Pond	0.02	Pond (non-priority)	Good	Good	0
Individual trees	0.11	Rural tree	Good	Good	0

Table 2: Linear habitats

Main habitat type	Length (m)	UKHab current habitat type	Current habitat condition	Potential habitat condition	Potential biodiversity net gain (biodiversity units)
Ditch	1420	Ditch	Moderate	Moderate	0
Watercourse	320	Other rivers and streams	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Maximising the condition of the grassland would require an increased diversity of plant species per square metre, a reduction in the extent of thistles across the site



and improvement of the quality of the ditches. To improve the condition of the ditches the diversity of species in the water and on the banks would need to be increased and thinning around banks would need to be carried out to reduce shading. The cover of scrub in the fen would need to be reduced to below 10% to achieve good condition in the fen and established areas of scrub cut back on rotation to increase the diversity of the age structure to achieve moderate condition of scrub.

In order for The Withey Beds to be put forward as an offsetting site for biodiversity net gain, a detailed survey of habitat type and condition would need to be carried out to confirm the habitat baseline, and a biodiversity net gain habitat management plan would need to be produced. The grassland and fen areas would not be eligible for inclusion until 2028 as they are in an HLS agreement.

### **3.3.3 Financial sustainability**

To ensure the ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable, the council will maximise the use of existing resources and endeavour to achieve proposed works within the available site maintenance budget or by securing external funding. A number of actions proposed within this document are funding and/or capacity dependent and external funding sources will be explored regularly to facilitate these prospective actions. A bid will be made to the Veolia Community Fund in the first year to support delivery of year 1 actions. The time that volunteers contribute is a valuable resource and should be made best use of in achieving the aims and objectives set out within this GAP. To this end, opportunities for achieving the most beneficial prospective actions of the plan through volunteer activity should be reviewed annually.

All works will be specified to ensure the best value for money is achieved with the funding available, balancing the ecological impact of the materials and supplier, the durability of the item, aesthetic value, and price. This means that sustainably sourced renewable materials are used for items which do not experience a significant amount of wear and tear or can have component parts replaced as and when required. For items which need to be more robust or cannot be replaced easily, metal (usually stainless steel) is most often used. Wood effect recycled plastic is used where having a more natural aesthetic is also important.



### **3.4 Community and Events**

The Withey Beds is a valuable community resource which provides opportunities to engage with and learn about the natural environment and understand the ecosystem services this environment delivers. It is important that this resource is promoted effectively and that community and volunteer activities on the site are supported.

The site has a good online presence with The Withey Beds website providing the most information about the site while other webpages provide a summary and link to the dedicated website for further information and how to join the Friends group. The site is not heavily promoted on social media.

The annual walk is not planned to be resumed without a circular route to follow around the site. Alternative events could be offered in summer when the range of wildlife to be found is greatest. As suggested in section 3.1.2 invertebrate identification events would provide environmental records as well as providing an interesting event for the local community. Events focussing on commonly recognised taxa such as bats or butterflies are often popular and may inspire some visitors to take part in citizen science. Opportunities for events during winter are more limited although The Withey Beds could be well suited to a dawn chorus event in late winter or early spring, when such events are best attended, as a number of songbirds have been recorded here. Online platforms should be used to promote these events as events at The Withey Beds can no longer be advertised at the Rickmansworth Canal Festival.

A period of public engagement accompanies the production of this management plan, enabling the local community and stakeholders to inform management of the site. All user groups with an interest in the site are aimed to be included in this process, and for their requirements to be considered as part of the planning process. Liaison with stakeholders will continue throughout the delivery of this GAP. The action plans will be reviewed and updated annually in response to feedback and information from stakeholders. Means for members of the public to provide feedback about the site should be easily accessible via the council website and promoted on the site noticeboards. It is important that the council and CMS continue closely liaising with local landowners and stakeholder organisations throughout the delivery of this GAP. To support collaborative working across the catchment a share learning between river enhancement projects, TRDC and/or CMS officers will attend



catchment partnership meetings and keep up to date with work across the River Colne Catchment Action Network (ColneCAN - [www.colnecan.org.uk/](http://www.colnecan.org.uk/))



## 4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

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The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

### Aim

To make The Withey Beds a welcoming, diverse, beautiful and tranquil green space for the use and enjoyment of all residents and visitors to the site, while protecting and conserving the important wildlife and habitats that are found there.

### Objectives

**A To protect and conserve the habitats and species that can be found at The Withey Beds for the benefit of its wildlife and aesthetic appeal.**

- A1 Maintain a mosaic of high quality wetland habitats through controlling encroachment of herbaceous and woody vegetation.
- A2 Enhance the river corridor by identifying and implementing in channel and morphological improvements and managing bank vegetation.
- A3 Continue to graze the grassland with rare breed cattle to promote structural and floristic diversity within the sward.
- A4 Undertake monitoring and repairs to the pill box.
- A5 Continue to monitor and record the wildlife within the site.
- A6 Monitor and control Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS).

**B To provide an area of open space that is well-maintained, safe and welcoming for local residents and visitors to enjoy, ensuring to maintain the correct balance between raising awareness of the site and protecting its wildlife.**

- B1 Maintain the entrance to be inviting by maintaining gates and signage and providing good sightlines along the road.
- B2 Improve access to, from and around The Withey Beds.
- B3 Undertake proactive response to the misuse of the site.



- B4 Monitor the grounds maintenance regimes (including grass cutting, litter collection) to ensure they comply with the contracted standard.
- B5 Maintain furniture, signage and structures including grazing infrastructure to a high standard, undertaking repairs as required ensuring a consistent style.
- B6 Carry out regular health and safety assessments of the facilities, natural features and general environment and undertake any repairs.
- B7 Maintain and regularly update the notice board.
- B8 Improve views across the various habitats within the site.

**C To ensure ongoing activities are financially and environmentally sustainable.**

- C1 Ensure the costs of ongoing maintenance are financially sustainable and make best use of the resources available by identifying approaches which will deliver multiple benefits.
- C2 Secure external funding to deliver proposed activities beyond annual maintenance.
- C3 Ensure all management is carried out according to environmental best practice, including a presumption against the use of herbicide, and planning management actions to minimise disturbance to wildlife.
- C4 Ensure impacts of climate change are considered in management decisions, both in terms of the effect of climate change on wildlife habitats and of carbon emissions from management operations.

**D To promote The Withey Beds as an important wetland site and valuable community resource, providing opportunities for local communities to engage with the site and its management.**

- D1 Promote the greater awareness and support for the site through a variety of media platforms, including on site interpretation, website and social media.



- D2 Encourage and support community and volunteer activity on the site and ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the GAP.
- D3 Maintain regular contact with key stakeholders and community groups and consult on decision making where appropriate.
- D4 Continue to offer all site users a variety of events and activities.
- D5 Continue to manage a small area of willows for basket weaving.



## 5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

### 5.1 Annual and Regular Actions

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.1	Cut around signs, furniture and entrances	B1, B2, B5	Apr-Oct	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	GM Contract		
0.2	Continue conservation grazing following HLS requirements.	A3, C3	Apr-Oct	TRDC	TRDC CMS	Stewardship grant	TBC		
0.3	Continue species and habitat monitoring across the site including otter, water vole, riverfly, reptiles and amphibians, dragonflies and damselflies, bats and flora.	A4, A5, D4	Ongoing	TRDC	TRDC CMS Vols FoTWB	TRDC Budget	Volunteer time		
0.4	Replace reptile felts when they reach the end of their life.	A5	When required	TRDC	FoTWB	TRDC Budget FoTWB	Materials Volunteer time		
0.5	Monitor for Invasive Non-Native Species and undertake any required control	A6	Ongoing	TRDC	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		



Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.6	Maintain wet woodland as non-intervention; allow expansion in the current extent only.	A1	Ongoing	TRDC	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
0.7	Remove rubbish and fly tip.	B3, B4	When required	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	GM Contract		
0.8	Clean interpretation panel and notice board.	B5	When required	TRDC	TRDC FoTWB	TRDC Budget	GM Contract		
0.9	Keep notice board content up to date.	B7	Ongoing	TRDC	FoTWB	Volunteer time	Volunteer time		
0.10	Tree risk management inspections and undertaking of works.	B6	Every 3 years	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	TBC		
0.11	Health and Safety inspections and undertaking of any works.	B6	Ongoing	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	TBC		
0.12	Undertake annual checks of the bridges, grazing infrastructure and furniture and undertake any immediate repairs.	B6	April	TRDC	TRDC CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	TBC		



Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.13	Promote Friends group and volunteer activities.	D1, D2	Ongoing	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS FoTWB	TRDC Budget, FoTWB	TBC		
0.14	<i>*Promote and run two events/activities a year at/about The Withey Beds.</i>	<i>D4, A5</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>TRDC</i>	<i>TRDC CMS FoTWB</i>	<i>TRDC Budget FoTWB</i>	<i>Staff/Vol time</i>		
0.15	Liaise/work with neighbouring landowners.	D3	Ongoing	TRDC	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	TBC		
0.16	Attend catchment partnership meetings and keep up to date with developments across the catchment; add projects to catchment website.	D3	When required	CMS	CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
0.17	Update TRDC 'The Withey Beds' web page and all other websites when required.	D1	Ongoing	TRDC	TRDC CMS FoTWB	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		



Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.18	Ensure ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable.	C1	Ongoing	TRDC	n/a	N/a	n/a		
0.19	<i>*Cut grass path through grazing compartment.</i>	B2	Summer	TRDC	FoTWB	N/A	Vol time		
0.20	Cut grass along causeway.	B2	Summer	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	TBC		
0.21	Continue to manage a small area of willows for basket weaving.	D5	Oct-Feb	TRDC	FoTWB	N/A	Volunteer time		
0.22	Seek external funding for capital works, in particular boardwalk replacement.	C2	Ongoing	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
0.23	Review potential for volunteer maintenance or replacement of sections of the boardwalk	B2, C1	Spring	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
0.24	Review and update annual action plans.	D2, D3	Yearly	TRDC CMS	ALL	TRDC Budget	Staff time		

**Abbreviations:** TRDC – Three Rivers District Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; FoTWB – Friends of The Withey Beds; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vols – Volunteers. *\*Task is dependent on funding/capacity*



- Task Responsibility**
- District led
  - CMS led
  - District led
  - CMS led
- Officer/ Contractor delivered
- Volunteer delivered

# The Withey Beds

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Annual Action Plan

#### Legend

- Bench
- i Interpretation Panel
- Kissing Gate
- Notice Board
- Vehicle Gate
- Amenity Grass
- Backwater
- Bat Hibernaculum
- Boardwalk
- Bridge
- Causeway
- Conservation Grassland
- Ditch
- Fen Vegetation
- Pond
- River
- Scrape
- Tree/Scrub
- Willow Structure
- Woodland

- Species and habitat monitoring
- Replace worn out reptile felts
- Monitor for INNS
- Remove rubbish and fly tip
- Undertake tree safety inspections
- Undertake safety inspections of infrastructure
- Promote the Friends group
- Promote and run events
- Liaise with neighbouring landowners
- Liaise with the catchment partnership
- Update associated webpages
- Ensure maintenance is financially sustainable
- Secure external funding for capital works
- Review potential for volunteer maintenance of boardwalk
- Review and update action plans

Vale Industrial Park

Weir

□ Conservation grazing

■ Cut grass path through grazing compartment

□ Cut grass on causeway

■ Manage willows for basket weaving

■ Clean interpretation and notice board

■ Update notice board content

Drain

□ Manage wet woodland through non-intervention

Northwood

□ Strim around furniture and entrances

Page 185



0 70 140 m

Scale @ A4

1:3,000

Date

December 2024

Rev

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## 5.2 Year 1 2025-2026

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
1.1	Install temporary barriers on the south end of each bridge	B6, C1	Apr-Jun	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	TBC		
1.2	Secure Flood Risk Activity Permit for river enhancements.	A2	Apr-Sep	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
1.3	Apply for funding to implement boardwalk and river proposals	C2	Apr-Sep	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
1.4	<i>*Thin scrub and trees around the river and back channel</i>	A2	Sept-Oct	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	external	TBC	2	
1.5	<i>*Create woody habitat structures within the river channel</i>	A2	Sept-Oct	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	external	Volunteer time		
1.6	<i>*Replace 80m of boardwalk from the western bridge and remove remainder</i>	B2, B5	Apr-Mar	TRDC	Contractor	external	£60,000		
1.7	Add accessibility information and accessible format interpretation to websites.	B2	Apr-Mar	TRDC, FoTWB	TRDC, FoTWB	TRDC Budget, FoTWB	Staff time		



1.8	Carry out a bat survey of the pill box. Undertake any repairs required, working with the local bat group.	A4	Survey Jul Works Dec-Jan	TRDC	TRDC Local Bat Group	TRDC Budget	Materials		
1.9	Review management in accordance with any new actions in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	C3	Apr-Mar	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		

**Abbreviations:** TRDC – Three Rivers District Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; FoTWB – Friends of The Withey Beds; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vols – Volunteers. *\*Task is dependent on funding/capacity.*



### Task Responsibility

- District led
  - CMS led
  - District led
  - CMS led
- } Officer/ Contractor delivered
- } Volunteer delivered

Vale

Industrial Park

- Create woody in channel
- habitat structures

Weir

Drain

## The Withey Beds

### Greenspace Action Plan

### Year 1 Action Plan

### Legend

- Bench
- i Interpretation Panel
- Kissing Gate
- Notice Board
- Vehicle Gate
- Amenity Grass
- Backwater
- Bat Hibernaculum
- Boardwalk
- Bridge
- Causeway
- Conservation Grassland
- Ditch
- Fen Vegetation
- Pond
- River
- Scrape
- Tree/Scrub
- Willow Structure
- Woodland

- Thin scrub and trees around the river and back channel
- 

- Install barrier

- Survey bat hibernaculum and undertake any repairs

- replace 80m of boardwalk removing remainder

- Install temporary barrier

- Secure FRAP for river habitat improvements
- Apply for funding to implement boardwalk and river proposals
- Add accessibility information and interpretation to websites.
- Review action plans with reference to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

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Scale @ A4

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Date

January 2025

Rev

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### 5.3 Years 2-5 2026-2030

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
2.1	Pollard large willows on rotation along the riverbank.	A2	Winter Y2	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	Contractor cost		
2.2	Cut back small sections within established scrub habitat.	A1	Oct-Feb Y2, Y4	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
2.3	Maintain scrub coverage in the fen to no more than 20%. Stack material at edges of fen as habitat piles, away from ponds and ditches.	A1	Oct-Feb Y2, Y4	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
2.4	Cut small areas of fen (<20%), removing arisings.	A1	Oct-Feb Y2, Y4	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
2.5	Cut bank vegetation around ditches.	A1	Oct-Feb Y2, Y4	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
2.6	Monitor scrape for growth of rank vegetation and remove if necessary.	A1	Oct-Feb Y2, Y4	TRDC	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
2.7	Manage ponds by boardwalk.	A1	Oct-Feb Y2, Y4	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		



2.8	Apply for new Countryside Stewardship agreement or equivalent agreement, likely alongside Croxley Common Moor.	A3	Yr 3 Apr	TRDC	TRDC CMS	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
2.9	Re-oil entrance sign and repaint letters.	B1	Y4	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
2.10	Review actions for years 6-10.	D3	Yr 5 Apr	TRDC CMS	ALL	TRDC Budget	Staff time		

**Abbreviations:** TRDC – Three Rivers District Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; FoTWB – Friends of The Withey Beds; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vols – Volunteers



**Task Responsibility**

□ District led	} Officer/ Contractor delivered
□ CMS led	
□ District led	} Volunteer delivered
□ CMS led	

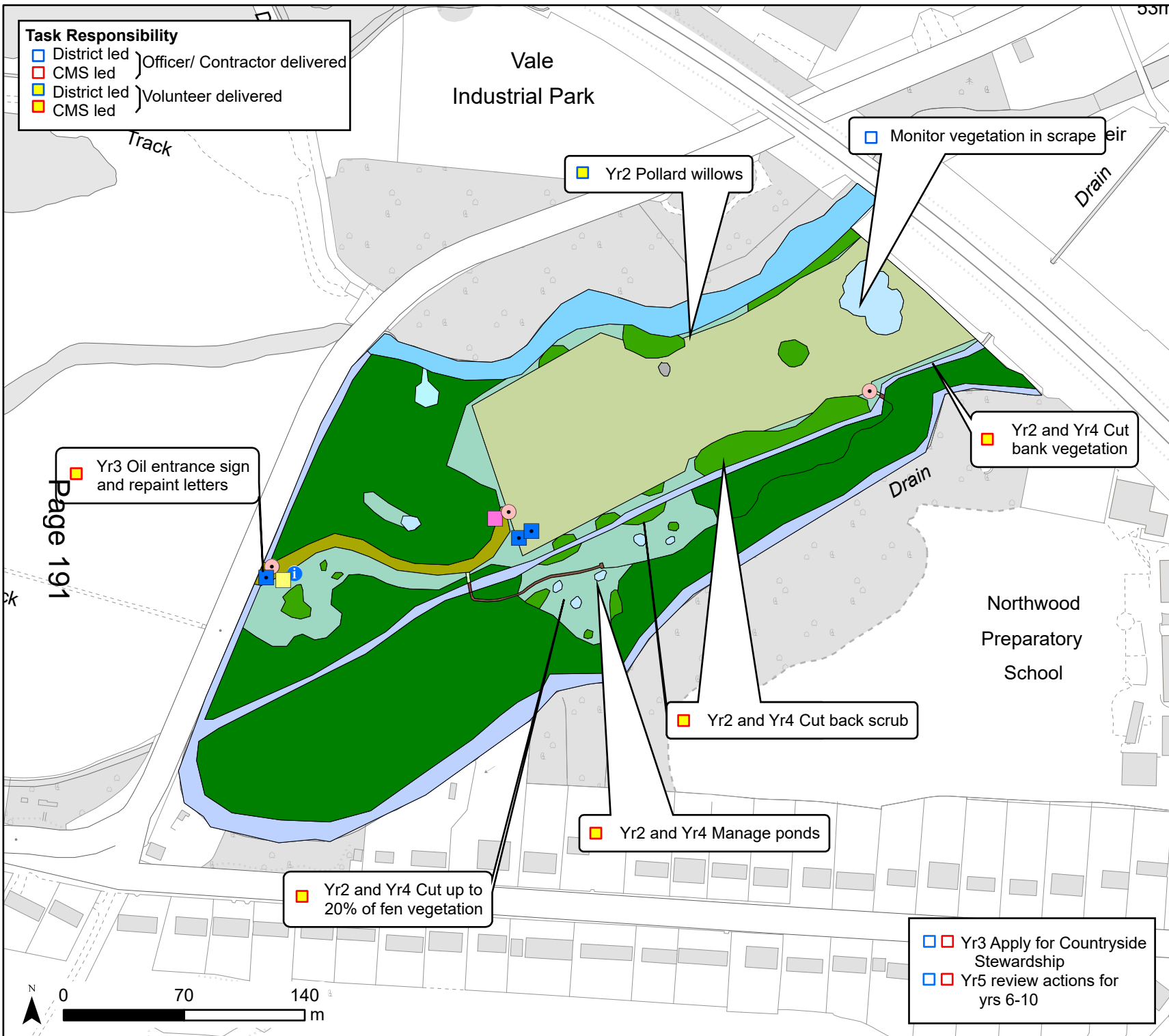
# The Withey Beds

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Year 2-5 Action Plan

**Legend**

- Bench
- Interpretation Panel
- Kissing Gate
- Notice Board
- Vehicle Gate
- Amenity Grass
- Backwater
- Bat Hibernaculum
- Boardwalk
- Bridge
- Causeway
- Conservation Grassland
- Ditch
- Fen Vegetation
- Pond
- River
- Scrape
- Tree/Scrub
- Willow Structure
- Woodland
- Amenity Grass
- Backwater
- Bat Hibernaculum



□ Yr3 Apply for Countryside Stewardship

□ Yr5 review actions for yrs 6-10

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#### 5.4 Years 6-10 2031-2035

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
3.1	Pollard large willows on rotation along the riverbank.	A2	Winter Y9	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	Contractor cost		
3.2	Survey ditches and carry out any works necessary such as desilting.	A1	Autumn Y7	TRDC CMS	TRDC CMS	TBC	TBC		
3.3	Cut back small sections within established scrub habitat.	A1	Oct-Feb Y6, Y8, Y10	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
3.4	Maintain scrub coverage in the fen to no more than 20%. Stack material at edges of fen as habitat piles, away from ponds and ditches.	A1	Oct-Feb Y6, Y8, Y10	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
3.5	Cut small areas of fen (<20%), removing arisings.	A1	Oct-Feb Y6, Y8, Y10	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
3.6	Cut bank vegetation around ditches.	A1	Oct-Feb Y6, Y8, Y10	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		



3.7	Monitor scrape for growth of rank vegetation and remove if necessary.	A1	Oct-Feb Y6, Y8, Y10	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget	Staff time		
3.8	Manage ponds by boardwalk.	A1	Oct-Feb Y6, Y8, Y10	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
3.9	Re-oil entrance sign and repaint letters.	B1	Y8	CMS	CMS Vols	TRDC Budget	Staff/Vol time		
3.10	Write new GAP and engage with all interested parties.	D3	Apr Y10	TRDC CMS	ALL	TRDC Budget	Staff time		

**Abbreviations:** TRDC – Three Rivers District Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; FoTWB – Friends of The Withey Beds; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vols – Volunteers



**Task Responsibility**

□ District led	} Officer/ Contractor delivered
□ CMS led	
□ District led	} Volunteer delivered
□ CMS led	

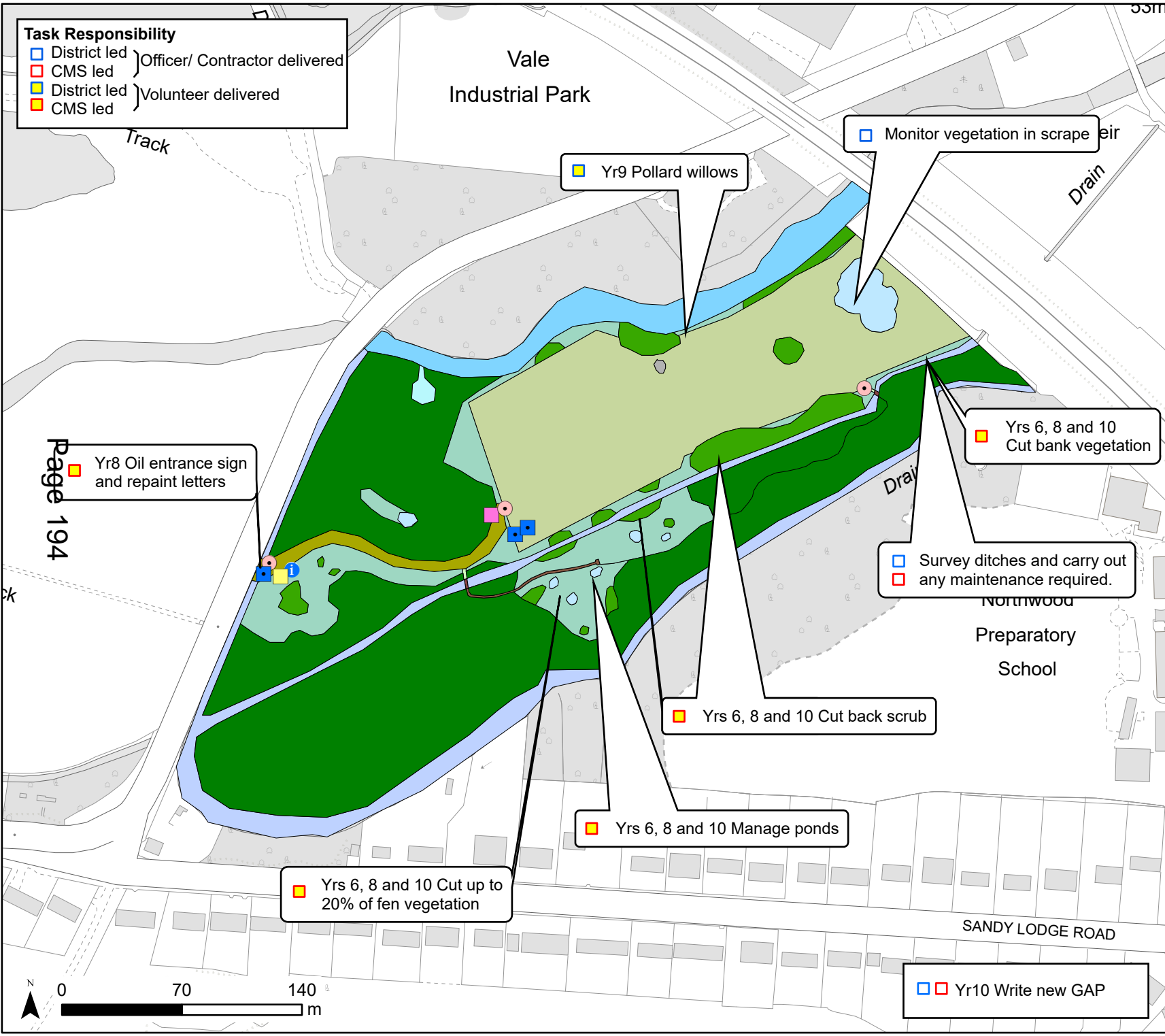
# The Withey Beds

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Year 6-10 Action Plan

**Legend**

- Bench
- Interpretation Panel
- Kissing Gate
- Notice Board
- Vehicle Gate
- Amenity Grass
- Backwater
- Bat Hibernaculum
- Boardwalk
- Bridge
- Causeway
- Conservation Grassland
- Ditch
- Fen Vegetation
- Pond
- River
- Scrape
- Tree/Scrub
- Willow Structure
- Woodland



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## 6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

1.	General prescriptions relevant to all works
Public safety	<p>Members of the public to be kept a safe distance from works with signs and or banks men. Access routes may require temporary closure.</p> <p>Contractors shall be responsible for safeguarding all materials and plant on site and shall ensure that all such materials and plant in no way or at any time, represent a danger or risk to the general public or authorised persons.</p> <p>Work will be left safe at the end of the day and any hazards will be protected to prevent public access.</p> <p>Asbestos risk – no dig</p>
Damage	<p>Any and all damage caused by the Contractor to land, property or any other permanent features shall be required to be made good by the contractor at their own cost.</p> <p>All works around the Scheduled Monument to be carried out sensitively, and with a watching brief if deemed appropriate, to avoid damaging the monument.</p>
Timing	<p>Unless otherwise stated, all habitat management work will be undertaken between 1st September and 28th February.</p> <p>All work will aim to be undertaken outside of wettest winter months to minimise damage to soils and tracks.</p>
Vehicles and equipment	<p>Machines and vehicles should not be left to idle and should be turned off to reduce air pollution and noise.</p> <p>Contractors should ensure that all equipment/plant/vehicles entering the work site be clean of all soil and plant material that may have accumulated from work on other sites. This is in order to prevent invasive plant species or other contaminants from being introduced to the site.</p> <p>All refuelling, including chainsaw, is to take place on a specifically designed spill containment device, away from watercourses with fuel spillage kits on site at all times.</p>
Waste disposal	<p>All spoil and cut material should be removed from site and disposed of responsibly and in accordance with current waste legislation, and the site be left tidy.</p>



2.	Tree thinning
Details	<p>Any thinning works will further the aim of reducing coverage of non-native species (e.g. sycamore) and encouraging natural growth/ regeneration of native species.</p> <p>Arisings to be disposed of appropriately through small amounts of deadwood stacking or removal off-site.</p> <p>Opportunities for deadwood creation should be realised through thinning works.</p> <p>Halo-thinning around crowded 'feature' trees will provide improved environmental conditions. Halo to be no larger in radius than half-height of feature tree.</p> <p>This site has the potential to support nesting birds and bats. Works to trees, scrub and hedges should be conducted outside of the breeding season. A survey of potential roosts should be carried out prior to the commencement of works. Should the contractor come across any evidence of bats (or any other protected species) then they should stop work immediately.</p>
Timing	<p>Thinning requiring mechanised techniques and/ or vehicles to be undertaken in autumn, to avoid worst weather conditions.</p> <p>Lighter thins involving volunteers can be undertaken at any stage between September and February.</p>



## 7.0 APPENDICES

### 7.1 HLS Agreement Summary

**The Withey Beds**  
**Part 2A**  
**Parcel based options Summary**

RLR field number	Field name	RLR field size (ha)	OPTIONS					
			Code	Description	Quantity (ha/100m/no.)	Start date	End date	Duration (years/months)
TQ07949204		7.47	A13	Non-payment option - permanent grassland for Article 13	2.50	01/11/14	31/10/24	10 Years
			HK16	Restoration of grassland for target features	2.50	01/11/14	31/10/24	10 Years
			HQ6	Maintenance of fen	0.70	01/11/14	31/10/24	10 Years
			HQ11	Wetland cutting supplement	0.70	01/11/14	31/10/24	10 Years
			HR2	Grazing supplement for native breeds at risk	2.50	01/11/14	31/10/24	10 Years



## 7.2 Engagement response summary

No	Date	Name	Comment	Action	Complete
1	23/12/24  Follow-up 03/01/25	Cllr Narinder Sian	<p>Support expressed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the comprehensive approach outlined in the plan to preserve and enhance this vital local nature reserve.</li> <li>- the emphasis on biodiversity conservation, particularly the management of rare habitats like wet woodland and chalk river systems.</li> <li>- the recognition of climate resilience, given the increasing risks of flooding and extreme weather events.</li> </ul> <p>Requests/suggestions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- include specific measures to secure funding for the replacement of the boardwalk, making it accessible year-round while maintaining its environmental sensitivity.</li> <li>- leverage online platforms and organise alternative local events to maintain community interest in the absence of Rickmansworth Canal Festival.</li> <li>- prioritise proactive invasive species management, coupled with public education</li> </ul>	<p>Amend Year 1 action plan accordingly.</p> <p>Amend text accordingly</p> <p>Highlight measures to reduce coverage of INNS.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>



			<p>campaigns to prevent the spread of non-native plants and animals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide information on asbestos risk and details of any ongoing monitoring given the proximity of a former asbestos factory and known contamination at other nearby sites</li> </ul> <p>Further comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced access and improved informational resources will encourage greater community involvement, which is crucial for the site's long-term success</li> <li>- Parking and access to the site along Moor Lane/Tolpits Lane is hazardous and not ideal</li> </ul>	<p>Propose public education through existing newsletter/seasonal posters. Such information can be added to interpretation when replacement is required.</p> <p>No information on asbestos available – acknowledge potential presence and risk in GAP and specifications.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
2	01/01/25	Friends of the Withey Beds	<p>Requests/suggestions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repair both platforms of the boardwalk to enable reopening.</li> </ul> <p>Further comments:</p>	<p>Include platform repair in actions marking clearly as a funding dependent action.</p>	<p>Yes</p>







			<p>Further comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This a hard nature reserve for all but the determined to get to, which is a shame, as once through the gate, the site is incredible.</li> <li>- The limited access due to flooding and closure of the boardwalk has negatively impacted visitor experience.</li> <li>- The access is a concern, particularly for families with children, the only parking is unofficial verge parking, where the area is strewn with rubbish, limited standing area and a busy road. As noted in the report, the approach is along a verge.</li> <li>- Support for Cllr Sian's comment regarding asbestos.</li> </ul>	however it should be made clear this is funding dependent.	
4	19/01/25	Cllr Chris Mitchell	<p>Requests/suggestions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Replacement or repair of the boardwalk and an estimated cost for such.</li> <li>- Explore options to improve access to the site such as formalisation of the layby or agreements with neighbouring landowners.</li> </ul>	<p>Include platform repair in actions marking clearly as a funding dependent action and explain in text that full replacement is not feasible due to prohibitive cost/ grant criteria.</p> <p>Delivery of off-site projects is not within scope of the</p>	Yes



			<p>Further comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support for comments made by Cllrs Sian and Tankard.</li> <li>- This is an important and unique site in the area. To help to make sure it is kept in the future on a sustainable basis we need to ensure it can be visited by a reasonable number of people.</li> </ul>	GAP however it should express broad support for plans should they arise.	Yes
5		Canal and Rivers trust	<p>Support expressed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management of waterways to enhance the ecological quality and character of the waterways considering the benefit this has for the health and wellbeing of communities and the economy.</li> </ul> <p>Further comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Trust have no detailed comments regarding this GAP.</li> </ul>		





## **THE WITHEY BEDS**

Boardwalk and River Enhancement





## **PROPOSAL FOR THE WITHEY BEDS BOARDWALK**

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The existing boardwalk at the Withey Beds is in poor condition, with parts rotting away and the decking frequently submerged through winter, meaning that it is often unsuitable for use. In addition, the viewing platforms at either end of the boardwalk have become unsafe for use, where supporting beams are rotten. It is for this reason the boardwalk is currently closed to the public.

There is a desire among local stakeholders to have the entire boardwalk replaced at a higher level, however the cost of doing this is prohibitive at £170,000. There are no grant schemes which would support such expenditure given the resulting increase in the quality of the site would be limited.

The minimum required to reopen the boardwalk is replacement of the western viewing platform with a continuation of the boardwalk. It should be noted that views from this platform are already restricted by the density of vegetation in the surrounding wet woodland. This would mean the rest of the boardwalk remained inaccessible during periods of high water levels, and the boardwalk would be liable to further deterioration.

Our preferred option is to replace a shorter section of boardwalk, up to 80m in length, incorporating a viewing platform and turning place at the end of the boardwalk. This is shown on the accompanying map. This would enable visitors to walk to the middle of the fen and view the fen and the ponds within it, as well as the small area of wet woodland at the start of the boardwalk. The remainder of the boardwalk would be removed. The cost of this is expected to be approximately £60,000.

The positives of this approach are that:

- It would increase the ecological value of the site by further reducing disturbance in the largest block of wet woodland on the site, protecting vulnerable species.
- It would maintain easy access to the fen for wildlife surveying and to facilitate maintenance activities for this habitat. The wet woodland is managed through non-intervention therefore access to the wet woodland is not required.
- The requirement for tree works would decrease as trees through the eastern wet woodland would no longer need to be managed to protect the boardwalk and people on it.
- The viewing platform in the fen could incorporate interpretation relating specifically to fen and wet woodland to help inform the visitors about these rare and important habitats.

The only negative is that there would no longer be a circular walking route around the site. However, during high water levels this is already impossible, due to surface water in the wet grassland. The grassland remained inaccessible throughout 2024.



## **PROPOSAL FOR ENHANCEMENT OF THE RIVER COLNE**

---

The river Colne is a chalk river, which is internationally rare and a priority habitat in the UK. Chalk rivers flow from underground aquifers and in their natural state are typified by good water quality and steady water temperatures. Healthy chalk rivers are characterised by clear waters, gravel beds with patches of in channel vegetation and gently sloping banks supporting rich marginal vegetation.

Enhancements were carried out in 2015 to improve the river habitat including the creation of gravel bars, which are vital to spawning for several species of fish and a wide range of aquatic invertebrates, the backwater, which provides a refuge for fish out of the faster flowing and more exposed water of the main channel, and some woody in-channel structures. This stretch of the river Colne (from the confluence with the Ver to the Gade) was recorded as being in moderate ecological condition in 2022 and some of the in-channel features delivered in 2015 remain evident. However, due to the growth of scrub on the banks, the section of the river adjacent The Withey Beds is largely overshadowed and appears turbid, with little in channel vegetation.

It is recommended that the scrub along the river is thinned, in addition to the ongoing programme of willow pollarding, to increase light levels and promote the growth of aquatic vegetation which will in turn help to bind sediment within the channel. Thinning scrub will also improve views of the river from the grazing compartment.

In-channel structures made of natural materials should be made using the brash and wood generated by the thinning to ensure a flow rate characteristic of a chalk river, strong enough to carry sediments and maintain a gravel bed, is maintained through this section of the river. Brash structures also provide refuges for small fish and silt up over time to become marginal habitat used by a different range of species.



## FUNDING

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The Veolia Community Fund has been identified as a potential source of funding for delivering these proposals as a single project. This fund offers grants of between £10,000 and £75,000 to projects which improve spaces for the benefit of the community including nature reserves.

The aims of this fund fit this project well for the following reasons:

- The plans for this project and the wider site have been informed by public consultation.
- Volunteers will be involved in delivering the river enhancement.
- Repairing the boardwalk will make the site more accessible for people with reduced mobility.
- It will support the ecological function of the river.
- It will support biodiversity within the river and wet woodland habitats in particular, and facilitate management to maintain current biodiversity within the fen.
- Using site won materials in the river enhancement minimises the project's carbon footprint and maximises biosecurity.

A Flood Risk Activity Permit for the river enhancement must be secured prior to submitting the grant application, therefore the earliest viable application submission window would close on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025, after which a decision would be received in September 2025.

The project must start within four months of the grant being awarded and be completed within 12 months of starting.





# The Withey Beds

Boardwalk and river enhancement proposal

- Legend**
- Amenity Grass
  - Backwater
  - Bat Hibernaculum
  - Boardwalk
  - Bridge
  - Causeway
  - Conservation Grassland
  - Ditch
  - Fen Vegetation
  - Pond
  - River
  - Scrape
  - Tree/Scrub
  - Willow Structure
  - Woodland



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# TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

This toolkit is a self-assessment to help officers think about how their policies, projects, procurements, commissioning and services can align with Three Rivers' Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy. It also supports report authors to draft the environmental implications section on decision reports, and procurement strategy reports.

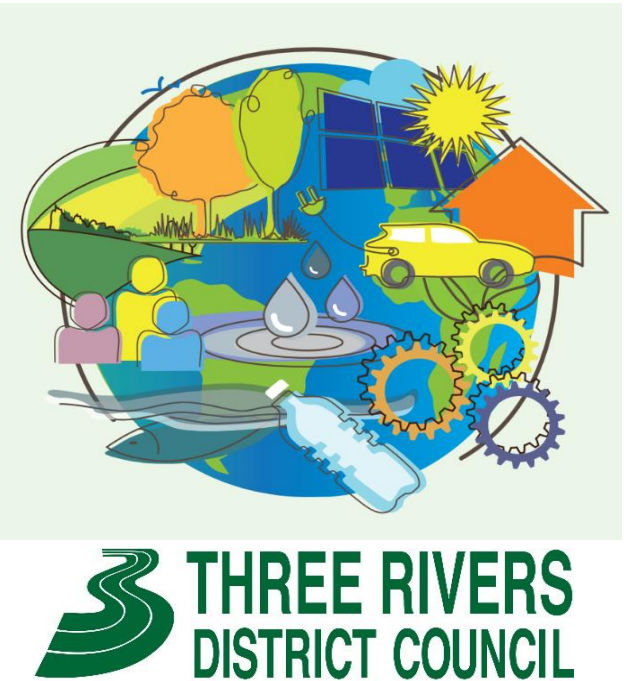
## How to use the tool

The self-assessment is intended to help officers reflect critically on their project or service's environmental impact. . It is a reflective tool, not a framework for approving or rejecting a decision, so it will work best if each question is considered honestly and carefully.

We envision this tool will be used early in the design of a project/policy/procurement to identify areas where environmental harms can be mitigated, and environmental benefits enhanced. If you would like advice, please discuss with your Head of Service, and contact the Climate and Sustainability Team if necessary.

Once you are happy that your proposal is optimised, then complete this form, and copy the results in each section in to your decision report (committee/synopsis report) where applicable.

The next tab presents a set of questions about the proposal on a range of sustainability criteria. Each answer is colour-coded to indicate its environmental impact as below:



Colour code	Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some negative impacts sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Once you've selected your answer in the "Impact" column (C), then give the relevant score in the "Score" column (E). Higher scores indicate more sustainable proposals.

These questions should be considered for services, goods and projects we procure as well as those we deliver directly. Delivery models, specifications and tender evaluation should be shaped to ensure our contractors are aligned with our sustainability and net-zero commitments.

Against each area, the assessment presents prompts to highlight best practice suggestions and enable consideration of how negative impacts could be lessened on a project.

*This assessment was inspired by Jim Cunningham at Hammersmith and Fulham Council and developed by officers of Three Rivers Distrcit Council.*

Version                      Date



TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

**Guidance for use**  
Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed.

Please email your completed copy of the form to  
Joanna.Hewitson@threerivers.gov.uk.

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

Name of project/policy/procurement and date		
Brief description (1-2 sentences):		

Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy

Question	Impact (select from list)	Score 1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (1-4)
1 What effect will this project have on overall energy use (electricity or other fuels) e.g. in buildings, appliances or machinery?	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	Where any work is required on the sites, local companies will be used to reduce the impact of emissions.	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
2 What effect will this project have on the direct use of fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
3 Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
4 Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? (e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per sq. m., no servicing with fossil fuels such as gas heating, EPC	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
5 Does this make use of sustainable materials / unputs in your project? E.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
6 Does this use more sustainable processes in the creation of the project? E.g. modular and off-site construction; use of electrical plant instead of petrol/diesel,	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
7 Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
8 Do any appliances or electrical equipment to be used have high energy efficiency ratings?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score		2.00			3.00

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
- Include energy efficiency measures when carrying out refurbishment to deliver improvement in EPC ratings.
- Replace gas boilers with renewable heating, such as heat pumps. Consider District Heat Networks where appropriate.
- Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard.
- Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material and timber frames.
- Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
- Install solar panels or other renewable energy generation, and consider including battery storage.
- Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
- Use energy-efficient appliances.
- Install low-energy LED lighting.
- Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.

Travel

Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
9 Reducing travel: what effect will this project have on overall vehicle use?	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	Where any work is required on the sites, local companies will be used to reduce the impact of emissions.	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3
10 Will this project use petrol or diesel vehicles or EV, hybrid?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
11 Will this support people to use active or low-carbon transport? E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Opportunites for walking on site and as a though route. This will be enhanced by keeping paths clear of foliage and any path improvements	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
12 Will it be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
13 Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? Using e-cargo bikes; timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score		2.50			3.50

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.
- Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new fleet.
- Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.
- Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.
- Use zero-emission deliveries
- Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries



Goods and Consumption						
	Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
14	Has this project considered ways to reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, before acquiring newly manufactured ones?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Where there may be a need for tree felling, or the creation of habitats, dead wood will be left on site.	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
15	Does it reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? <i>E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
16	Does it use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
17	Does it enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Interpretation around the site will show the benefits of nature and biodiversity.	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
18	Is there a plan to reduce waste sent to landfill in manufacture?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
19	Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recycled at end of its life?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
20	Has it taken steps to ensure any food it offers is more sustainable? <i>E.g. less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste; seasonal produce; locally sourced.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score			3.00			4.00
Ecology						
	Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
21	What effect does this project have on total area of non-amenity green/blue space? (Amenity green space = playing fields, play areas, sporting lakes etc. Non-amenity= e.g. woodland, grassland, wetland,	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The management plan look at how the open space is utilised	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
22	Does the project create more habitat for nature? E.g. native plants, trees, and flowers	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	There are a number of actions in the management plan to support the creation of or improvement of habitat for nature	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
23	Does it make changes to existing habitats and have a negative impact on nature? <i>E.g. use of pesticides, reduced extent and variety of plants, planting non-native species</i>	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The management plan looks at how habitats are protected and how new ones can be developed / introduced	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
24	Does it help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Interpretation on site will explain the benefits	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
Average Score			4			4
Adaptation						
	Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
25	Does any planned project, construction or building use include measures to conserve water?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Mitigating the use of water by planting at the right time, planting the right species and use of hydration bags where necessary	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
26	Does anythe project , consider how to sustainably protect people from extreme weather?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The actions plans will consider the diversity of tree species planted, consider sustainable drainage solutions and any areas of long grass will include a fire break	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
27	Has any planned building work or infrastructure considered how to mitigate flood risk? <i>E.g. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); de-paving areas; green roofs</i>	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3		Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
28	Does any planned infrastructure or building work increase the overall footprint of hard surfacing? (as opposed to green or permeable surfacing)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
29	Has the project considered its own resilience to future extreme heat, flood risk, or water shortage?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The actions plans will consider the diversity of tree species planted, consider sustainable drainage solutions and any areas of long grass will include a fire break.	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
Average Score			3.5			3.50
Engagement and Influence						
	Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
30	Does this project raise awareness and understanding of the climate and ecological emergency, and the steps that people can take?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Potential for increased partnership working, environmental focused educational events and messaging	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
Average Score			3			4
Total Overall Average Score			3.00			3.7
Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:						
- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership. - Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods. - Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life. - Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item. - Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare. - Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items. - Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.						
Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: (Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)						
- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing. - Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls. - Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity. - Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides. - Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles - Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture and use of procured goods, e.g. water pollution; water consumption; land use change for farming; pesticide use; organic/regenerative farming methods						
Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:						
- Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets - Re-use grey water in new developments -Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets - Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading - Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing. - Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS). - Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.						
Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:						
- 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency.						

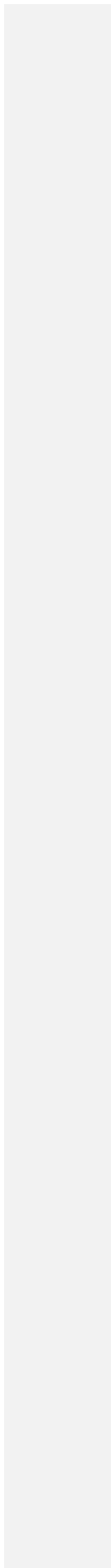
Now assesment is compelete copy and paste box into your business case, committee report. (under environmental implications 6).Whole assesment can be an appendix. Procurement tenders are expected to submit complete report with application.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.00
Travel	3.50
Goods and Consumption	4.00
Ecology	4.00
Adaptation	3.50
Engagement and Influence	4

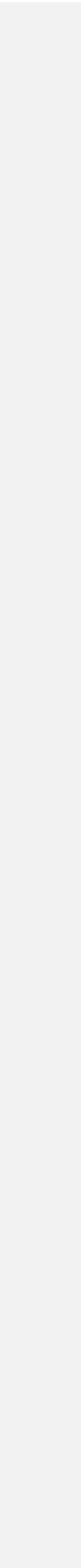


Total Overall Average Score	3.7
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List 1	List 2	List 3
Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	No
Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	To some extent N/A
Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	N/A
Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.	-1	
Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Yes
Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	
Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	
Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	
Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.	-1	

Ok -	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.






## Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (EIA)

**EIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.**

EIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-users<sup>1</sup>. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups<sup>2</sup>

They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached these decisions.<sup>3</sup>

See end notes for full guidance. For further support or advice please contact the Community Partnerships Team

### Equality Impact and Outcomes Assessment (EIA) Template

First, consider whether you need to complete an EIA, or if there is another way to evidence assessment of impacts, or that an EIA is not needed<sup>4</sup>

<b>Title <sup>5</sup></b>	The Withey Beds Management Plan 2025-2035	<b>ID No <sup>6</sup></b>	
<b>Team/Service<sup>7</sup></b>	Leisure and Natural Infrastructure		
<b>Focus of EIA <sup>8</sup></b>	<p>The formal adoption and implementation of a new ten-year management plan for The Withey Beds.</p> <p>The new plan contains management actions for the site over the next ten years from financial year 2025/26 until 2034/35.</p> <p>The implementation of the new management plan is the responsibility of the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service in partnership with Environmental Protection and Hertfordshire County Councils Countryside Management Service.</p> <p>The site remains open to the public at all times.</p> <p>The actions within the management plan considers opportunities to improve accessibility through the improvement of the boardwalk and keeping pathways clear.</p>		
<b>Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations <sup>9</sup></b>			
<p>The overall impact should be positive by enabling users to access the site with an improved boardwalk, subject to funding. The improved boardwalk is proposed to be shorter which will mean the loss of a loop walk, however due to the site being under water during certain periods</p>			



of the year, areas can be inaccessible, and a loop walk is not possible. The improved boardwalk will provide access to view the wetland areas.	
Potential Issues	Mitigating Actions
Not having the funding to support the delivery of the actions, which will have a positive impact on the accessibility of the site.	Existing budgets to be used to support the ongoing actions and external funding to be secured before other projects commence.
Inaccessibility of the site for those with disability requirements.	Enhancement of the boardwalk and keeping pathways clear.
Actions Planned <sup>10</sup>	
Continue to source additional funding to support the implementation of the action plan for The Withey Beds	

EIA sign-off: (for the EIA to be final an email must sent from the relevant people agreeing it or this section must be signed)

**Equality Impact Assessment officer:**

**Date:**

**Equalities Lead Officer:**

**Date:**

**Guidance end-notes**



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<sup>1</sup> The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- Knowledge: everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately in their work.
- Timeliness: the duty applies at the time of considering policy options and/or before a final decision is taken – not afterwards.
- Real Consideration: the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and influence the process.
- Sufficient Information: you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- No delegation: the council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services which provide services on our behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- Review: the equality duty is a continuing duty. It applies when a policy is developed/agreed, and when it is implemented/reviewed.
- Proper Record Keeping: to show that we have fulfilled our duties we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

NB: Filling out this EIA in itself does not meet the requirements of the equality duty. All the requirements above must be fulfilled or the EIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge. Properly used, an EIA can be a tool to help us comply with our equality duty and as a record that to demonstrate that we have done so.

## <sup>2</sup> Our duties in the Equality Act 2010

As a council, we have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with ‘protected characteristics’ (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership).

This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. The level of detail of this consideration will depend on what you are assessing, who it might affect, those groups’ vulnerability, and how serious any potential impacts might be. We use this EIA template to complete this process and evidence our consideration

The following are the duties in the Act. You must give ‘due regard’ (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).



- 
- promote equality of opportunity. This means the need to: – Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by equality groups – Take steps to meet the needs of equality groups – Encourage equality groups to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low – Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This means: – Tackle prejudice – Promote understanding

### <sup>3</sup> EIAs are always proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The numbers of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposed policy on a protected group (e.g. disabled people), the more vulnerable the group in the context being considered, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be.

### <sup>4</sup> When to complete an EIA:

- When planning or developing a new service, policy or strategy
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy
- When ending or substantially changing a service, policy or strategy
- When there is an important change in the service, policy or strategy, or in the city (eg: a change in population), or at a national level (eg: a change of legislation)

Assessment of equality impact can be evidenced as part of the process of reviewing or needs assessment or strategy development or consultation or planning. It does not have to be on this template, but must be documented. Wherever possible, build the EIA into your usual planning/review processes.

**Do you need to complete an EIA? Consider:**



- 
- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to any people because of their protected characteristics?
  - How many people is it likely to affect?
  - How significant are its impacts?
  - Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?

How vulnerable are the people (potentially) affected? If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EIA it is usually sensible to document why.

<sup>5</sup> **Title of EIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing

<sup>6</sup> **ID no:** The unique reference for this EIA. This will be added by Community Partnerships

<sup>7</sup> **Team/Service:** Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed

<sup>8</sup> **Focus of EIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'

This section should explain what you are assessing:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function?
- Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function? Please state where this is more than one person/team/body and where other organisations deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements.
- How does it fit with other services?
- Who is affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered? Who are the external and internal serviceusers, groups, or communities?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? Eg: what do you want to provide, what changes or improvements, and what should the benefits be? • What do existing or previous inspections of the policy, practice, service or function tell you?
- What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, service, legal etc)? The Act requires us to make these clear.

<sup>9</sup> **Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.



- 
- Countervailing considerations: These may include the reasons behind the formulation of the policy, the benefits it is expected to deliver, budget reductions, the need to avert a graver crisis by introducing a policy now and not later, and so on. The weight of these factors in favour of implementing the policy must then be measured against the weight of any evidence as to the potential negative equality impacts of the policy,
  - Are there any further recommendations? Is further engagement needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?

<sup>10</sup> **Action Planning:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.



Three Rivers District Council  
**Climate Change and Leisure Committee**  
**LARA Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy**

Date: 02/07/2025



**CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**  
**2 July 2025**

**LARA HERTFORDSHIRE RETROFIT STRATEGY**

**(DfE)**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy (Appendix 2), which will formalise a structured approach to retrofit coordination, funding applications, and project delivery in alignment with the Commitment to Retrofit (Appendix 1), endorsed by a majority of members of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

TRDC abstained from voting to endorse the Commitment at HCCSP as officers had not been able to obtain the required approvals via governance processes in the timelines that had been set. Hence this report.

- 1.2 This report outlines the objectives of the Strategy and proposes Three Rivers District Council's endorsement to continue to progress coordinated retrofit action in Three Rivers and across Hertfordshire.

**2 Description:**

- 2.1 For the purposes of this report, retrofit refers to any improvement work on an existing domestic building which improves its energy efficiency, through making it easier to heat, increasing its ability to retain heat for longer, and through replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy.
- 2.2 Energy use in existing homes contributes to around 20% of the UK's emissions<sup>1</sup>, and approximately one quarter of Three Rivers District's emissions, and 80% of the homes that will exist by 2050 have already been built<sup>2</sup> meaning decarbonising existing housing stock through retrofit is essential to the achievement of net-zero.
- 2.3 Retrofitting homes also delivers many benefits beyond reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including healthier more comfortable living environments, improved public health, energy demand reduction, bill savings for consumers, energy security, and local economic growth.
- 2.4 Of the 39,000 homes in Three Rivers District, almost two-thirds are classified as energy inefficient, with EPC ratings D-G<sup>3</sup>. While the council have worked hard to deliver grant-funded energy efficiency improvements to over 300 local lower-income homes since 2021, and has been a proactive leader in piloting a Retrofit One Stop Shop service for "able to pay" households, the scale of the retrofit challenge demands sustained, long-term action at-scale.

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<sup>1</sup> [Housing and net zero - House of Commons Library](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Climate Change Mitigation | UKGBC](#)

<sup>3</sup> Energy Savings Trust Decarbonisation of Housing in Three Rivers Report (2021)



- 2.5 The development of the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy was enabled by the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator project (LARA), funded by The MCS Foundation, Greater South East Net Zero Hub and Aurora.
- 2.6 The LARA initiative aimed to address the systemic challenges of delivering large-scale retrofit programmes. It provides a countywide approach to scaling up domestic retrofit delivery by increasing coordination, stakeholder engagement, and investment opportunities.
- 2.7 The LARA project brought together expertise from across Hertfordshire, including local authorities, training providers, social landlords, trade representatives, and community energy organisations, in the autumn and winter of 2024/25.
- 2.8 Through workshops and established partnerships, the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator project identified key objectives for increasing retrofit demand, capacity, and supply in Hertfordshire:
- **Goal 1:** Increase uptake and successful delivery of retrofit advice and measures.
  - **Goal 2:** Realise the co-benefits of retrofit in Hertfordshire.
  - **Goal 3:** Increase local supply chain capacity and quality through better access and control of resources, data and shared understanding.
  - **Goal 4:** Create a confident, trusted retrofit environment.
- 2.9 Based on these strategic goals, and a mission to: *“Collaborate in Hertfordshire to retrofit all homes in need, so that we enhance our environment and climate resilience, address fuel poverty, improve health and support local jobs.”*, the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy sets out a 3-year, structured and actionable roadmap for accelerating domestic retrofit in Hertfordshire (see Appendix 2).
- 2.10 The expected benefits of delivering a countywide retrofit strategy include:
- Enhanced collaboration across local authorities and key industry sectors.
  - Greater access to funding opportunities through joint applications and shared resource development.
  - Robust capacity-building and training to support the growth of the local retrofit supply chain.
  - Resource efficiency through strategic alignment with national and regional climate adaptation and sustainability goals, in particular those of HCCSP and the Hertfordshire Growth Board.
- 2.11 Given the importance of retrofit action to achieve net-zero targets, adopting and implementing the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy will strengthen the Council’s ability to deliver effective retrofit initiatives at-scale, support local economic growth, and contribute to local and regional sustainability goals.
- 2.12 Upon approval of the Strategy by Three Rivers, the following actions will be taken:
- The Strategy will be formally endorsed and presented to Hertfordshire Growth Board for wider adoption.



- The draft action plan will be further refined in collaboration with multi-agency stakeholders.
  - Initial engagement with the LARA project will focus on identifying priority actions, progressing opportunities for strategic alignment, and identifying funding and resourcing structures.
  - Regular progress updates will be provided via HCCSP and Hertfordshire Growth Board.
- 2.13 Additionally, stakeholders will establish the Hertfordshire Retrofit Body (the “Body” - name tbc) which will define the Terms of Reference, membership, and governance.
- 2.14 The Body’s first task will be to agree and approve a data-driven Retrofit Strategy and action plan(s) to identify and allocate resources for delivery. This Strategy, developed as a draft (Appendix 2) through the LARA project, will set out actions and priority actions that align with the shared vision outlined in the Commitment.
- 2.15 Stakeholders have identified immediate actions for priority investigation:
- develop a delivery vehicle, owned by stakeholders, which implements retrofit measures efficiently to share risk and increase benefit
  - establish a mechanism to promote trusted suppliers to ensure quality and capacity within the supply chain
  - prioritise early-stage actions to build momentum for wider implementation, creating a roadmap of tiered actions as capacity and resource permits.
- The Body may also form time-limited working groups consisting of representatives from some or all of its members to address specific projects such as:
- progressing a Retrofit Facilitation Service to:
    - raise awareness, provide advice and general information
    - coordinate existing markets to engage and progress suppliers; AND / OR
    - take on full renovation responsibility for works and the customer journey
  - creating a monitoring and reporting framework for KPIs and progress.
- 2.16 It is anticipated that TRDC’s Net Zero Innovation Project Manager and Climate Change and Sustainability Manager will be involved with the design of the “Retrofit Body”, and finalisation of the Strategy and subsequent Action Plan, but we are not committing ourselves to a specific role or funding.



## **Conclusions:**

### **3 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

3.1 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators.

- CP50 District carbon emissions reported as tCO<sub>2e</sub> equivalent.

### **4 Community Safety, Customer Services Centre, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

4.1 None as a result of this report.

### **5 Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no immediate financial implications associated with endorsing the Strategy. Setup costs for administration and oversight resource are to be allocated from external grants to deliver two years of administrative support across Hertfordshire.

5.2 Future financial considerations will be presented to the relevant committees as and when specific project funding applications or implementation strategies are proposed.

5.3 Endorsement of the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy will not impact the existing retrofit funding (Warm Homes Local Grant) secured by Three Rivers District Council to improve eligible homes in our district, and the council will not be expected to share this funding across Hertfordshire.

### **6 Legal Implications**

6.1 There are no immediate legal implications associated with endorsing the Strategy.

### **7 Staffing Implications**

7.1 Some officer time may be required to support the development of the Hertfordshire Retrofit body and the Action Plan, but this is not expected to be significant due to the large number of stakeholders contributing across the county.

### **8 Public Health Implications**

8.1 There are no immediate public health implications associated with endorsing the Strategy, however the actions resulting from the Action Plan to promote and accelerate the retrofit of cold and draughty homes across Hertfordshire will support public health by reducing the number of households suffering from cold, damp, and mould related illnesses.

### **9 Equal Opportunities Implications**

9.1 None as a result of this report.

### **10 Equality Impact Assessment**



- 10.1 A short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (Appendix 3) has been completed for this report recommending the Council endorse and adopt the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy. No negative impacts on groups or people with protected characteristics are anticipated through the adoption of the Retrofit Strategy.
- 10.2 Full Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for specific actions and proposals resulting from the Hertfordshire Retrofit Action Plan on a project-by-project basis where they are likely to impact people or groups with protected characteristics.

## 11 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

- 11.1 The recommendations proposed in this report will support the Council to progress the decarbonisation of Three Rivers (and Hertfordshire more broadly) through accelerating the retrofit of energy inefficient homes, and mitigate the contribution of the district's housing to climate change.
- 11.2 A sustainability impact assessment has been undertaken resulting in a score of **3.6**. See Appendix 4 for detail.

<b>Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary</b>	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	4
Travel	0
Goods and Consumption	3.5
Ecology	3.5
Adaptation	3
Engagement and Influence	4
<b>Total Overall Average Score</b>	<b>3.6</b>

## 12 Communications and Website Implications

- 12.1 The Communications team may wish to publicise the Council's endorsement of the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy on our channels to illustrate TRDC's partnership working and positive commitment to warmer, healthier, greener homes and local economic growth.

## 13 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 13.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.



- 13.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Climate Change and Sustainability service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
The Council fails to endorse and commit to the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy.	The Council is seen to not actively support cross-boundary partnership working and the improvement of existing homes, resulting in reputational damage. The Council is excluded from collective retrofit delivery schemes, and the benefits this can deliver (economies of scale, ease of procurement, consistency across county), hindering the delivery of the Council's Climate Strategy, and depriving residents of the benefits.	For the Committee to approve the recommendations.	Treat	6

- 13.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

<b>Very Likely</b> Likelihood	<b>Low</b> 4	<b>High</b> 8	<b>Very High</b> 12	<b>Very High</b> 16
	<b>Low</b> 3	<b>Medium</b> 6	<b>High</b> 9	<b>Very High</b> 12



	<b>Low</b> <b>2</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>4</b>	<b>Medium</b> <b>6</b>	<b>High</b> <b>8</b>
	<b>Low</b> <b>1</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>2</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>3</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>4</b>
	<b>Low</b> ----- <b>Impact</b> ----- <b>Unacceptable</b>			

#### Impact Score

4 (Catastrophic)  
3 (Critical)  
2 (Significant)  
1 (Marginal)

#### Likelihood Score

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))  
3 (Likely (21-79%))  
2 (Unlikely (6-20%))  
1 (Remote (≤5%))

## 14 Recommendations

### 14.1 That Members agree to:

- To approve TRDC formally endorsing and adopting the Hertfordshire Retrofit Commitment (Appendix 1) and Strategy (appendix 2) to facilitate knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and funding collaboration across local authorities and other key stakeholders in Hertfordshire.
- To note the development of the action plan within the Strategy, which will be refined through multi-agency collaboration to establish a robust, long-term delivery model.
- To note that officer time may be required to support the development of the Hertfordshire Retrofit body and the Action Plan.

Report prepared by: Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer

#### Data Quality

Data sources:

Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy

Data checked by:

Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer  
Data rating:

<b>1</b>	<b>Poor</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>X</b>



## **APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS**

**Appendix 1: Hertfordshire Retrofit Commitment (Final)**

**Appendix 2: Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy (Final)**

**Appendix 3: Short Equality Impact Assessment**

**Appendix 4: Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment**

Background Papers: N/A







## Commitment to Retrofit in Hertfordshire

### INTRODUCTION

This Commitment outlines a collaborative, cross-sector approach to retrofit in Hertfordshire, addressing climate change, health and wellbeing and economic inequalities. Retrofit is one of the most impactful actions we can take to enhance both our environment and our resilience, improve economic growth and tackle health disparities.

For the purposes of this document, retrofit refers to any improvement work on an existing domestic building which improves its energy efficiency, through making it easier to heat, increasing its ability to retain heat for longer, and through replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy. The retrofit system refers to the myriad of actors and factors that influence whether and how a home is retrofitted, including individuals and organisations who own or manage homes, or provide the materials, skills, funding, marketing, permissions and desire to undertake effective retrofit.

The retrofit system is complex and interconnected. This Commitment will articulate the power of aligned working to a common goal across the many facets of the retrofit system of Hertfordshire.



### **Foreword by Alastair Mumford, The MCS Foundation**

“The Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (“LARA”) project aims to create sustainable, local markets for retrofit and build the supply chain by helping local communities to develop and deliver a retrofit strategy together. Many councils in Hertfordshire have declared a climate emergency and in 2022 the built environment was responsible for 28% of the county’s greenhouse gas emissions, the second largest emitting sector after transport. Improving how we heat, cool and power our homes and buildings is one of the most effective ways to address the climate crisis.”

DRAFT



This document builds on the collaborative efforts of the LARA project in Hertfordshire and sets the pace and ambition for the county's retrofit agenda. We are proud to initiate a Retrofit Partnership for Hertfordshire with a mission to: *“Collaborate in Hertfordshire to retrofit all homes in need, so that we enhance our environment and climate resilience, address fuel poverty, improve health and support local jobs.”*

Our vision is that *“Every home is fit for now and for our future”*. The LARA project has shown that local authorities, training providers, construction organisations, social housing providers, community energy groups and other stakeholders in Hertfordshire are committed to and endorse this documented long-term programme. It is co-owned, flexible, and resilient, even in the face of political, financial, and social changes.

This document is endorsed by the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership, a partnership of all 10 district and borough councils, the county council and Hertfordshire Futures, as well as the participating colleges and training providers, housing associations, heritage groups, community organisations and contractors that helped to co-create it.



## **The Need for Retrofit**

For the UK to make its fair contribution in mitigating climate change and meet its legal net-zero target by 2050, most homes and other buildings need to make significant savings in greenhouse gas emissions. Existing homes account for around 20% of UK emissions and 80% of the anticipated housing stock in 2050 has already been built. Retrofitting has been found to be the most efficient and effective way to decarbonise our current building stock as indicated by the UK Climate Change Committee. In addition, retrofit offers many benefits beyond reducing greenhouse gas emissions:

- increased comfort with homes that are warmer in winter and cooler in summer, with greater ability to withstand future climate conditions
- energy savings and lower bills
- protection against rising energy prices
- reduced noise disturbance and improved air quality, helping prevent respiratory illnesses
- support for local jobs and economic growth.
- respond to and preserve heritage buildings in a changing climate



## **The LARA Process**

The LARA project brought together expertise from across Hertfordshire, using a systems-based, multi-agency approach to create this document. LARA is funded by The MCS Foundation, Greater South East Net Zero Hub and Aurora. It is delivered in collaboration with Ashden, Built Environment – Smarter Transformation, Connected Places Catapult, National Retrofit Hub, and the UK Green Building Council.

Through workshops and established partnerships, we have identified key objectives for increasing retrofit demand, capacity, and supply and agreed principles to inform how future system stewardship will be managed by the stakeholders.

- Work together.
- Evidence-led.
- Sustainably minded.
- Ambitious but realistic.

The outcomes from these discussions were grouped into four main goals as set out below.

The goals and subgoals were agreed, with suggested actions to be considered by the to-be-convened Hertfordshire Retrofit Partnership.



## **Goal 1**

### **1. Increase uptake and successful delivery of retrofit advice and measures**

- 1.1 Increase access to trusted advice and guidance.
- 1.2 Increase retrofit investment in private housing.
- 1.3 Increase retrofit investment in social housing.

This Goal aims to significantly increase the volume of retrofit measures being carried out in Hertfordshire and thereby become 'fit for now and the future'. By targeting private homeowners, private landlords and social landlords, we can address different needs and leverage different funding opportunities, addressing the necessity of reliable and consistent financial stability. The focus is on facilitating action and encouraging investment through grants and support.

## **Goal 2**

### **2. Realise the co-benefits of retrofit in the locality (Hertfordshire geography)**

- 2.1 Increase local economic benefits of retrofit.
- 2.2 Increase health and wellbeing benefits of retrofit.
- 2.3 Increase environmental benefits of retrofit.

This Goal focuses on maximising the benefit of retrofit to the locality to build a stronger business case and encourage greater engagement with the story of its success. This Goal will also help to reinforce the benefit of retrofit to stakeholders involved in delivering the strategy.

## **Goal 3**

### **3. Increase local supply chain capacity and quality through better access and control of resources, data and shared understanding**

- 3.1 Ensure adequate training capacity and quality.
- 3.2 Increase demand for training.
- 3.3 Increase quality of retrofit work.
- 3.4 Communicate clear access routes to the retrofit marketplace for supply chain.

Meeting the growing demand anticipated from the first Goal requires an enhanced supply chain including skilled workers and trusted suppliers. Importantly, for delivery of the Vision, this Goal also works towards ensuring quality within the supply chain. A key part of this Goal is ensuring that training programmes, business growth opportunities and career paths are available, particularly for micro and SME businesses.

## **Goal 4**

### **4. Create a confident, trusted retrofit environment**

- 4.1 Ensure local policies support retrofit.
- 4.2 Develop suitable governance and delivery arrangements.
- 4.3 Increase collaboration, sharing of data and learning.



This Goal ensures that the strategic framework for retrofit has strong governance and transparent, supportive policies and arrangements to ensure continued collaboration, data sharing and learning. Much of the retrofit system is affected by public policy and this Goal covers policy-related actions.

DRAFT



## Next Steps

Following endorsement of this Commitment by stakeholders, the next immediate steps following the launch of this document will be for stakeholders to establish the Hertfordshire Retrofit Body (the “Body” - name tbc) which will define the Terms of Reference, membership, and governance.

This Body would then need to create a formally constituted delivery structure to support the retrofit programme including:

- supporting the delivery of its constituent members’ shared building retrofit goals, notably those contained within this document;
- commissioning work in response to its constituent members’ shared priorities.

The Body’s first task will be to agree and approve a data-driven Retrofit Strategy and action plan(s) to identify and allocate resources for delivery. This Strategy, developed through the LARA project, will set out actions and priority actions that align with the shared vision outlined in this Commitment. Stakeholders have identified immediate actions for priority investigation:

- develop a delivery vehicle, owned by stakeholders, which implements retrofit measures efficiently to share risk and increase benefit
- establish a mechanism to promote trusted suppliers to ensure quality and capacity within the supply chain
- prioritise early-stage actions to build momentum for wider implementation, creating a roadmap of tiered actions as capacity and resource permits.

The Body may also form time-limited working groups consisting of representatives from some or all of its members to address specific projects such as:

- progressing a Retrofit Facilitation Service to:
  - raise awareness, provide advice and general information
  - coordinate existing markets to engage and progress suppliers; AND / OR
  - take on full renovation responsibility for works and the customer journey
- creating a monitoring and reporting framework for KPIs and progress.



**We are proud to support and endorse this Commitment to Retrofit in Hertfordshire.**

**March 2025**

<logos>

***Alphabetised and equal sized logos here.***

***[small print on the logos page]***

### **Implementation**

To implement this Commitment:

- all stakeholders take the document through their own internal processes for endorsement and adoption
- Hertfordshire Climate Change & Sustainability Partnership will formally endorse the Commitment
- Hertfordshire Growth Board will also formally endorse the Commitment
- there will be no revenue or capital liabilities from a stakeholder adopting this document and its principles
- the Body will then formalise its governance arrangements, develop a data-led Retrofit Strategy and create detailed action plans.



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**Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy 2025 to 2028**  
***Final text for stakeholder endorsement***  
***Spring 2025***



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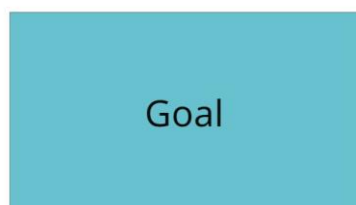


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## 1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy (the “Strategy”) sets out a three year, structured and actionable roadmap for accelerating domestic retrofit in Hertfordshire, ensuring clear priorities, governance, and implementation steps. In alignment with county wide Net Zero targets, the Strategy sets out to address inefficiencies in Hertfordshire's housing stock. It is a people-led approach to improve the energy efficiency in homes to a high standard through a diverse range of measures. Critically, the Strategy itemises how, by working collaboratively, more can be delivered.
- 1.2. Key strategic priorities include:
  - 1.2.1. **Increasing the uptake of appropriate retrofit measures** through enhanced advice services and financial mechanisms.
  - 1.2.2. **Maximising co-benefits** such as local economic growth, health improvements, and environmental resilience.
  - 1.2.3. **Strengthening the local supply chain** by boosting skills, quality assurance, and contractor capacity.
  - 1.2.4. **Ensuring a coordinated, trusted delivery model** through strong governance, partnerships, and policy alignment.
- 1.3. This strategy moves beyond pilot stage to establish a coordinated, structured, long-term delivery framework, establishing good governance and oversight to ensure transparency and effectiveness.
- 1.4. The Hertfordshire approach is summarised through this ‘Strategy House’ and the underlying goals and actions illustrated here. Shown here are each of the four goals (in teal) and then the associated actions. The actions are in grey under each goal, with Priority actions in dark blue.





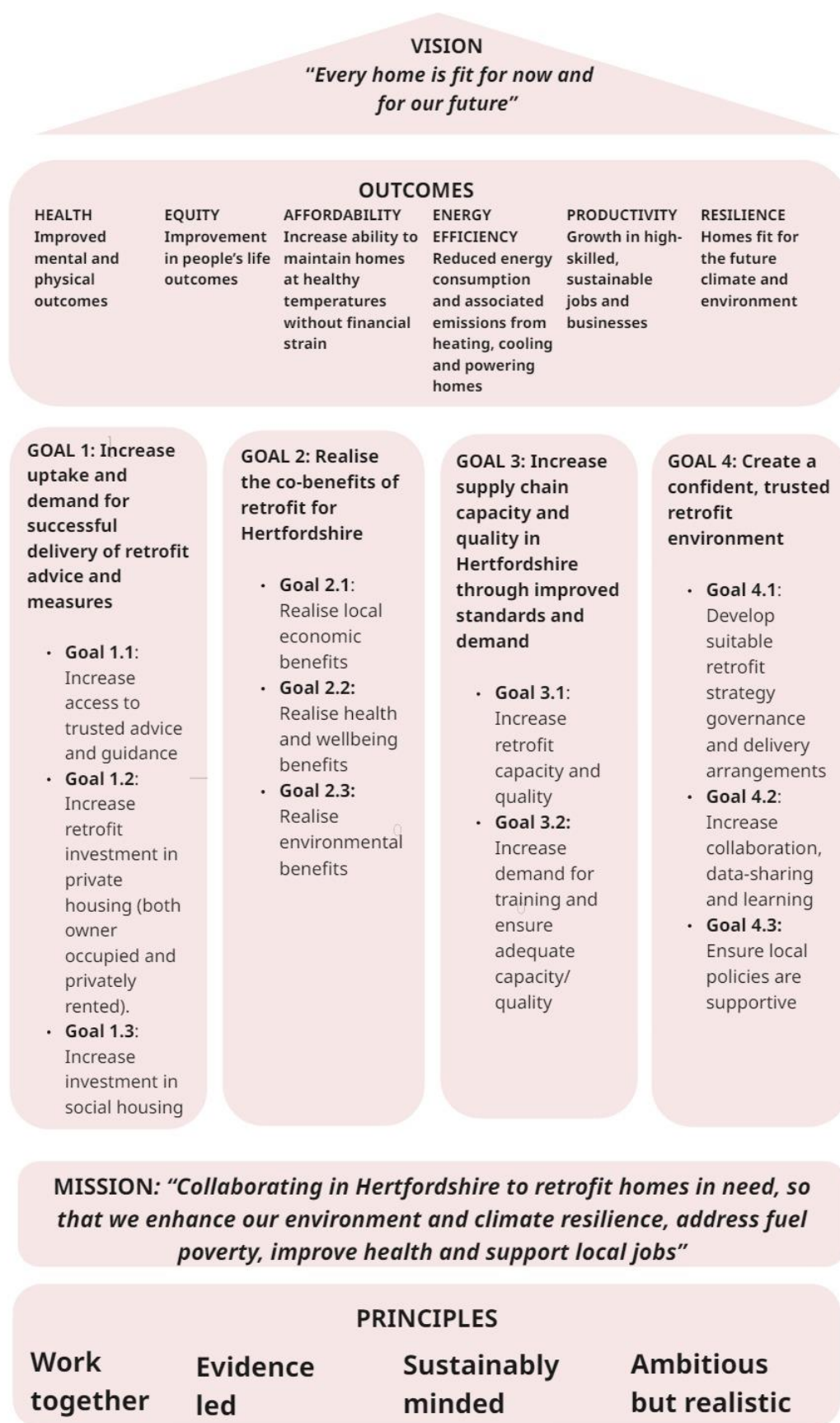
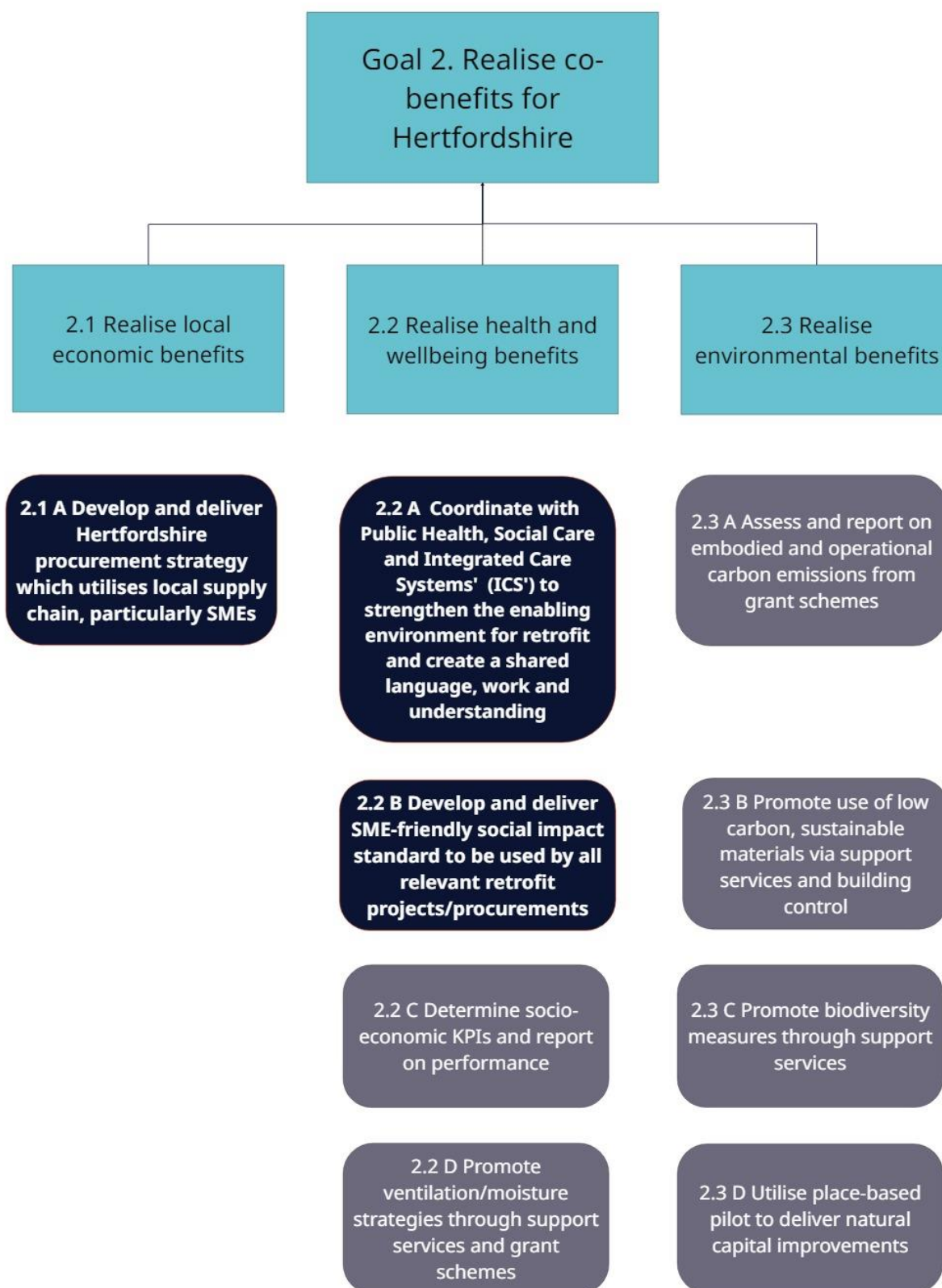


Figure 1: Strategy house, with the roof representing the vision and outcomes, supported by goals and resting on mission and shared principles.





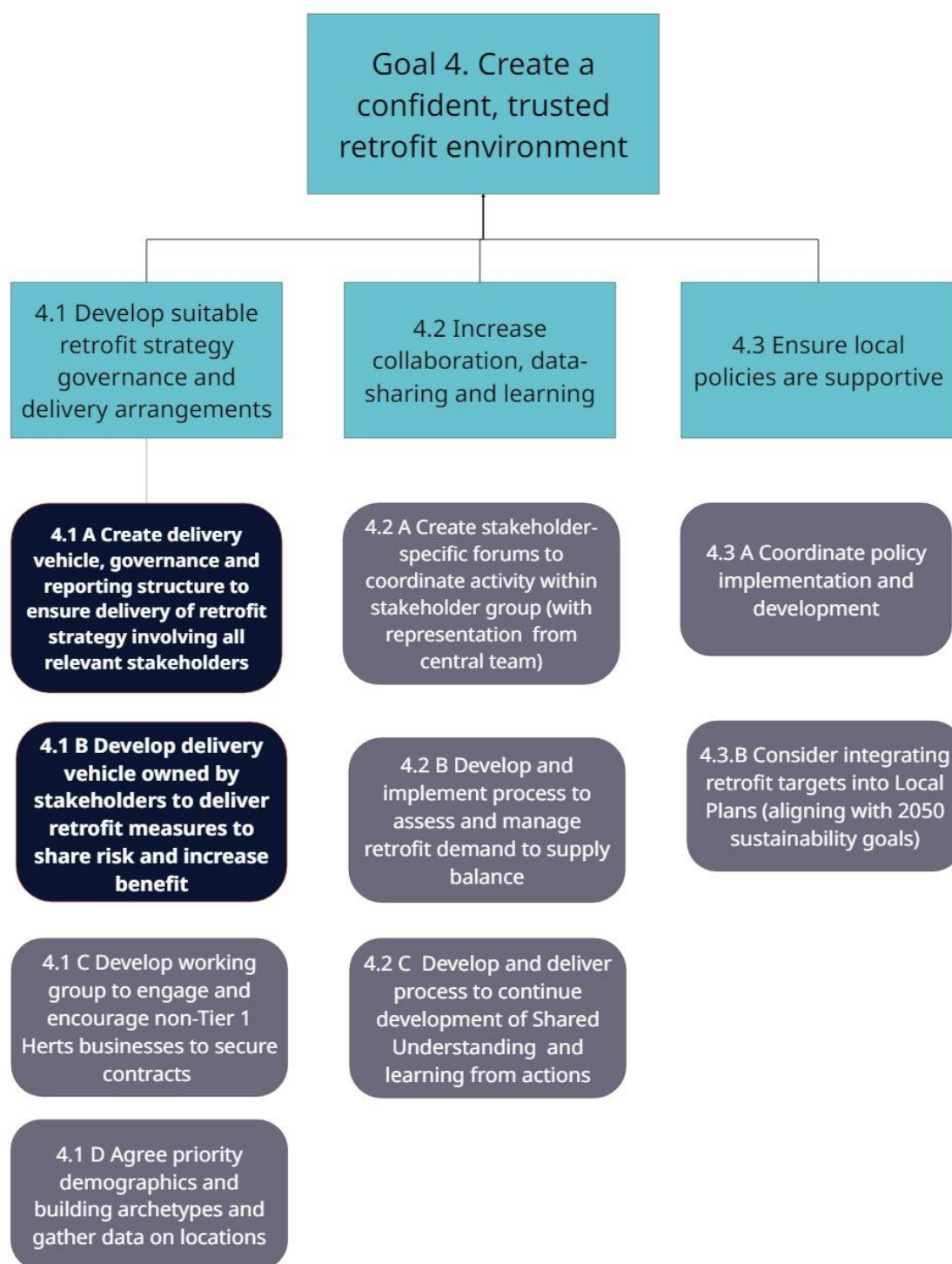














## 2. Definitions

The terms used in this document are defined as follows:

**Central Team:** The operational team responsible for the operational progress of the Retrofit Strategy for Hertfordshire. In its early stages this team will include the Manager and the Support Officer (HCCSP), Programmes Director (MCS Foundation), Chair of HSOG (Head of Sustainability, HCC) and the Chair of the Carbon Subgroup (Programme Manager, Carbon, HCC). Once a dedicated retrofit officer is recruited, that individual will also join the central team.

**Emissions:** refers to the release of greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming. This includes carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions, primarily generated from the burning of fossil fuels.

**External factors:** Any factors outside the direct control of stakeholders involved in the LARA process. These may include national policies on incentives to install retrofits, the financial markets' interest in investing in retrofit schemes, or the fluctuating price of electricity or fossil fuels that impact residents and the choices they may make.

**Governance Working Group:** The working group volunteered during the LARA process whose membership includes HSOG Chair, HCCSP Manager, and representatives from public health, training colleges, energy charities, and some of the local authority sustainability officers of Hertfordshire.

**Internal factors:** Any factors that can be influenced or controlled by LARA stakeholders. Examples include the ability to apply for available grants, a college expanding its training courses, or a community organisation sharing relevant communications with its audiences.

**Local:** predominantly means the geographic county of Hertfordshire with the qualifying phrases intending to mean:

- **Local demand:** The market for retrofit work, products and services within the geographic area of Hertfordshire.
- **Local contractors:** The practice of appointing contractors based in or near Hertfordshire, with preference given to those within 50 miles of Welwyn Garden City as the central point in Hertfordshire, where legally permissible. This approach supports the local economy by creating jobs, reducing traffic related emissions and congestion and strengthening the regional supply chain. It also enables closer collaboration with local training providers such as colleges and universities. Where local contractors are unavailable, proximity-based selection should still be considered, subject to procurement regulations.
- **Local benefits:** The co-benefits of retrofit work that improve the health, wellbeing and environmental conditions of the human and natural communities within Hertfordshire.

**Local Area Retrofit Accelerator or “LARA” Process:** Refers to the LARA process a series of three workshops involving key stakeholders from the retrofit supply chain in Hertfordshire. The outputs of this process include the LARA Commitment document and this Retrofit Strategy.

**Natural Capital:** The world's stocks of natural assets including geology, soil, air and water and all living things which provide ecosystem services essential to life and human wellbeing<sup>1</sup>.

**Task and Finish Group:** Any task-specific group formed from the pool of wider LARA stakeholders (and beyond), created to address a particular action or initiative related to the retrofit process.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://naturalcapitalforum.com/about/>



**Wider LARA Stakeholders:** The full list of representatives from stakeholder groups involved in the retrofit system in Hertfordshire, detailed in the appendices of this strategy.

*Any other terms, acronyms or references are expanded in the text or available on a simple internet search.*

## 3. The Retrofit Strategy

### Introduction

- 3.1.1. The Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy sets out how Hertfordshire can make progress in tackling greenhouse gas emissions (“emissions”) from the heating and cooling of domestic buildings and the alleviation of fuel poverty. The Strategy sets out a plan to support growth in the green sector, with investment in both private and social housing whilst creating skilled and well-paid jobs. The Strategy is centred around decision making which balances economic, social and environmental factors, and focuses on forward planning for the climate to come. These themes are captured in the [vision](#) and [mission](#) and are articulated in the [goals](#) and [actions](#) to achieve them.
- 3.1.2. The Strategy was developed as part of the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator project (“LARA”) held in the autumn and winter of 2024/25. This initiative considered a systems approach to tackling retrofit, using baselining and visioning to agree a series of actions and goals to lead to an agreed outcome. More details on LARA, the facilitators and funding, and the co-collaboration efforts of the participants to develop this Strategy, are provided in the [Appendices](#).
- 3.1.3. Identified strategic goals are:
  - Increasing the uptake of appropriate domestic retrofit measures through enhanced advice services and financial mechanisms.
  - Maximising co-benefits such as local economic growth, health improvements, and environmental resilience.
  - Strengthening the supply chain by boosting skills, quality assurance, and contractor capacity.
  - Ensuring a coordinated, trusted delivery model through strong governance, partnerships, and policy alignment.
- 3.1.4. To transition from strategy to implementation, the following immediate steps are recommended:
  1. **Establish oversight and operational mechanisms:** A governance body will oversee implementation and monitor progress. It will have broad stakeholder representation from the LARA stakeholder group while remaining independent of HCCSP. The exact structure and level of involvement will be shaped collaboratively to balance capacity and effectiveness.
  2. **Develop a financial roadmap:** Identify and align funding opportunities and needs with strategic priorities to ensure sustainable investment.
  3. **Launch targeted pilot initiatives:** Deploy early interventions to build confidence, refine delivery models, and scale successful approaches.
  4. **Enhance stakeholder coordination:** Formalise engagement mechanisms to continue collaboration across public, private, and community sectors.
- 3.1.5. By focusing on structured delivery, Hertfordshire can lead the way in scaling retrofit at pace and ensuring homes are fit for the future.
- 3.1.6. The Strategy has been endorsed by the following organisations:

[Page of Logos]



## 4. Vision & Mission

### Vision Statement

***“Every home is fit for now and for our future”***

### Mission Statement

***“Collaborating in Hertfordshire to retrofit homes in need, so that we enhance our environment and climate resilience, address fuel poverty, improve health and support local jobs.”***

## 5. SWOT Analysis

The Strategy is underpinned by a comprehensive shared understanding of the current retrofit system in Hertfordshire as at autumn 2024 (see [Appendices](#)), recognising the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

- 5.1.1. **Strengths** include established collaborative networks such as HCCSP and Hertfordshire Futures, a green skills programme, the pilot project experience through LARA, varied population types for testing retrofit models, homeownership levels that favour private funding, and a history of attracting grants.
- 5.1.2. **Weaknesses** involve a lack of clear regional priorities and alignment across stakeholders, skills gaps, procurement issues, and public misunderstandings of retrofitting. Addressing these will require strategic actions across governance, policy, and resource management.
- 5.1.3. **Opportunities** identified include the potential for developing a county-wide retrofit strategy, securing funding, promoting local job creation, leveraging innovation, working with local communities, and partnering with private investment. Also, aligning with health and social care objectives could provide opportunities to integrate retrofit with broader public health goals and broaden opportunities for identifying funding.
- 5.1.4. **Threats** primarily stem from a lack of consistent funding and access to grants, policy delays, capacity strain, and the urgency of climate change response. Regulatory changes and shifts in funding priorities could slow progress, so these will need to be managed with a clear, adaptable strategy.

This analysis provides a context for actions to sit within, addressing weaknesses while building on strengths, maximising opportunities and maintaining an awareness of the impact of external threats outside of the wider LARA stakeholders' influence.



## 6. Shared Principles

The Strategy is guided by four core principles that shape all actions and commitments by signatories:

### Work Together

- 6.1.1. Collaboration and partnership working require commitments to fairness, honesty, equity, and shared accountability.

### Evidence-Led Approach

- 6.1.2. Actions should be based on clear evidence, with data collection and evaluation ensuring continuous learning.

### Sustainability Focused

- 6.1.3. Solutions must balance environmental, economic, and social impacts while maximising local benefits.

### Ambitious but Realistic

- 6.1.4. The Strategy should balance risk awareness with bold action, aiming to optimize outcomes rather than maximise risks.

In May 2025, the Commitment to Retrofit was endorsed by stakeholders to ensure these principles remain at the core of all activities.

## 7. Outcomes

### Introduction

- 7.1.1. The Strategy is designed to deliver measurable improvements in the following areas:

- **HEALTH:** Improved mental and physical outcomes
- **EQUITY:** Improvement in people's life outcomes
- **AFFORDABILITY:** Increased ability to maintain homes at healthy temperatures without financial strain
- **ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** Reduced energy consumption and associated emissions from heating, cooling and powering homes
- **PRODUCTIVITY:** Growth in high-skilled, sustainable jobs and businesses
- **RESILIENCE:** Homes fit for the future climate and environment

- 7.1.2. These outcomes are interdependent and will be collectively achieved across all Strategy goals, reflecting the systems-based approach at the heart of this work. Progress will be monitored through a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which will be defined as part of [actions 2.2C, 2.3A, 4.1A and 4.2B](#). Some KPIs may rely on proxy measures where



direct measurement is challenging – for example, assessing the impact of ‘knowledge sharing’. At this stage we would expect the following to be part of that suite:

- Average EPC rating across Hertfordshire, adjusted for building age and tenure to provide a fair reflection of housing stock.
- Total number of retrofits completed and measures installed.
- Fuel poverty indices to track the impact of retrofit interventions.
- Number of people employed in retrofit careers, including apprenticeships and training completions.
- Number of accredited installers (e.g. MCS, Trustmark) operating in Hertfordshire.
- Health data: prevalence of health issues due to damp and/or mould.
- Collaboration and partnership activity: Amount of high-quality and impactful joint initiatives and strategic partnerships in the retrofit system.
- Amount of high-quality and impactful active community-funded retrofit projects and community energy organisations.
- Number of MCS accredited low carbon technology installations per year.
- Investment secured and delivered through a retrofit body (see [action 4.1 B](#))
- Monitored value for money of installing retrofit measures compared to a baseline.

## 8. Goals

The following goals and sub-goals have been determined:

- 1. Increase uptake and successful delivery of domestic retrofit advice and measures**
  - 1.1. Increase access to trusted advice and guidance
  - 1.2. Increase retrofit investment in private housing (both owner occupied and privately rented)
  - 1.3. Increase retrofit investment in social housing
- 2. Realise the co-benefits for Hertfordshire**
  - 2.1. Realise local economic benefits
  - 2.2. Realise health and wellbeing benefits
  - 2.3. Realise environmental benefits
- 3. Increase supply chain capacity and quality in Hertfordshire through improved retrofit standards and demand**
  - 3.1. Increase retrofit capacity and quality
  - 3.2. Increase demand for training and ensure adequate capacity/quality
- 4. Create a confident, trusted retrofit environment**
  - 4.1. Develop suitable retrofit strategy governance and delivery arrangements
  - 4.2. Increase collaboration, data-sharing and learning
  - 4.3. Ensure local policies are supportive



## Goal 1: Increase uptake and successful delivery of domestic retrofit advice and measures

- 8.1.1. **Rationale:** This goal is to directly increase the number of retrofit measures being carried out in homes in Hertfordshire and therefore become 'fit for now and the future'. The sub-goals split this between the two main domestic ownership groups: private (owner-occupied, and privately rented) and social housing. There are some actions that will help both tenures but there is value in treating them differently. For example, private homeowners and social landlords can access different grant schemes and are affected by different regulations. Individual behaviour as a tenant or an owner may need different approaches also. A large focus of this goal is in supporting and facilitating action and a reliance on grants and/or value for money evidence to help bring it about.
- 8.1.2. **Assumptions:** The goal assumes grants, low-interest loans or private investment will be accessed when a persuasive offer can be told and a supply chain able to deliver. Economic conditions will have a big impact on the ability to deliver this goal. The goal also assumes that any short-term increase in demand can be delivered by the existing supply chain or with minimal formal training concurrently with the increased supply chain capacity being developed through Goal 3.

## Goal 2: Realise the co-benefits for Hertfordshire

- 8.1.3. **Rationale:** This goal is to help drive take up of appropriate, high-quality retrofit measures by maximising the benefit it provides to the locality and therefore improve the local business case. For example, if people can see retrofit delivers local jobs and better life outcomes then they are more likely to engage with retrofit. Whether that be as an informal promoter, by purchasing measures or working in the supply chain. The sub-goals split this between the three main types of benefits: economic, social and environmental. This goal will also help to reinforce the benefit of retrofit to stakeholders involved in delivering the Strategy. Through articulating these co-benefits, there are opportunities for enhancing scarce resources through shared outcomes, aligned funding applications (where different groups are eligible for related but different resources) and broader stakeholder opportunities.
- 8.1.4. **Assumptions:** The goal assumes retrofit can deliver a wide range of benefits and that these can be measured directly or indirectly to determine performance.

## Goal 3: Increase local supply chain capacity and quality in Hertfordshire through improved retrofit standards and demand

- 8.1.5. **Rationale:** This goal is the counter to goal 1, developing supply to meet current and future demand. Importantly for delivery of the vision, this goal also works towards ensuring quality within the supply chain. This is important to ensure emissions-reductions are delivered but also to give consumers trust and confidence in the works and increase demand. The sub-goals split this between ensuring demand for training, capacity to deliver training and delivery of informal training support, particularly for micro and small to medium-sized (SME) businesses.
- 8.1.6. **Assumptions:** The goal assumes formal and informal training courses are available. Also, that there will be an increase in demand in the medium-long term. With many training courses taking c. 3 years to complete, work needs to start now to meet the stated demand growth.



## Goal 4: Create a confident, trusted retrofit environment

- 8.1.7. **Rationale:** This goal is to ensure the vision and strategy has a supportive and trusted ecosystem. Critically this goal covers the governance and people element needed to deliver the Strategy but also highlights actions to ensure continued collaboration. Much of the retrofit system is affected by public policy and this goal covers policy-related actions.
- 8.1.8. **Assumptions:** The goal assumes a governance arrangement can be achieved which all strategy signatories can agree to, which can be resourced for sufficient time to embed the growth of retrofit into 'business as usual' across Hertfordshire.

## 9. Conclusion: A Collective Commitment to Action

The Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy is not just a plan—it is a commitment to action. By aligning stakeholders, resources, and expertise, we are setting the foundation for lasting change in the way homes are adapted for a low-carbon future and the future climate. The journey ahead will require sustained collaboration, innovative approaches, and collective determination.

Success will be measured not just in KPIs but in warmer and cooler homes, healthier residents, thriving local businesses, and a community empowered to take charge of its energy future. The Strategy provides a clear path forward—now, it is up to all of us to turn ambition into impact.

With governance structures in development, funding pathways envisioned, and stakeholder partnerships established, the next steps are clear. Hertfordshire has the opportunity to demonstrate that a well-coordinated, place-based approach to retrofit can deliver meaningful results for people, the economy, and the planet.

From determined but disparate first steps in retrofit over recent years, this Strategy will be the acceleration Hertfordshire needs for a sustained, ambitious journey—one that ensures every home in Hertfordshire is fit for now and for the future.



## 10. Appendices

To maintain clarity and focus within the strategy document, details on developing the Strategy through LARA, and how key principles and outcomes were developed, have been moved to this Appendix. This section provides transparency on stakeholder engagement, methodology, and decision-making processes as well as an indicative direction to aid the development of action plans, budgets and planning for next steps.

### 1. The LARA Pilot

#### Introduction

- 1.1.1. This Strategy came from a series of workshops and working groups attended by stakeholders involved in retrofit within Hertfordshire. The Pilot team, consisting of experts in systems change ([Dark Matter Labs](#)), community engagement ([Collaborate CIC](#)) and the retrofit landscape ([MCS Foundation](#)) carried out research to help inform decisions and facilitated conversations enabling the Strategy to emerge. [Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership](#) (“HCCSP”) were the lead organisation for the process. The Pilot team worked closely with HCCSP from the start. An extensive list of stakeholders was developed with HCCSP. Interviews were held with a sample of stakeholders and findings were combined with desk-based research to build a picture of the area, the Locality Assessment. This then guided work at the first workshop to develop a Shared Understanding of how things were working currently. From this the attendees started to develop themes for a vision. This was then honed by one of the working groups (self-selected, smaller groups of workshop attendees, getting together between workshops) and approved at the next workshop. Once the vision was in place the stakeholders could start to develop the goals and actions needed. Importantly, they also agreed on the shared principles needed to ensure they can work together and achieve the vision.
- 1.1.2. A systems approach is a way of thinking about problems and solutions by considering the entire system, rather than just individual parts. It's a holistic and interdisciplinary method that emphasises how different elements interact. The Pilot also aimed to take a place-based approach, that is an approach using a collaborative process to address the needs of a community by working together to improve the quality of life. It involves understanding a place's social context and physical setting. In this context the place was Hertfordshire and stakeholders from across the retrofit system in Hertfordshire were invited to co-develop the Strategy.
- 1.1.3. The Strategy has the following defined terms:
  - **ACTIONS: Things done** by people and organisations in Hertfordshire in support of goals, by individuals or groups
  - **GOALS: Something Hertfordshire hopes to achieve** which is formed of multiple actions and achieved by multiple parties
  - **MISSION: How the work** needed to achieve the vision will be taken forward
  - **OUTCOMES: The result of something**, or the consequence of it, is the outcome
  - **STRATEGY: A plan** for Hertfordshire made up of multiple goals (under which sit actions) toward a wider mission and vision
  - **VISION: One sentence that describes the future-facing, longer term ambition** of the Strategy and offers inspiration and motivation
- 1.1.4. The Pilot was funded and led by The MCS Foundation which is a charity working to decarbonise all homes in the UK. The Pilot has been delivered in partnership with Ashden,



National Retrofit Hub, Greater Southeast Net Zero Hub and the UK Green Building Council. The Pilot team would also like to thank UK Green Building Council, who supported the workshops held in Hertfordshire. The workshops were designed by Dark Matter Labs and Collaborate CIC and delivered by The MCS Foundation and Collaborate CIC.

#### Organisations Represented:

Over 100 stakeholders took part in this project representing over 60 organisations across three workshops. This includes local authorities, Hertfordshire Futures, training colleges and institutions, private landlords and social landlords, community groups, local organisations responsible for supporting heritage areas (such as [Letchworth Heritage Foundation](#) and [Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme](#)), contractors responsible for building and retrofit work (including technical low emission installers and general construction companies with retrofit expertise), and energy advice charities:

Ashden	Grand Union Community Energy	Oaklands College
Black Architecture		PyramidEco
Braughing Old Boys School Community Trust	Greater South East Net Zero Hub	Sawbridgeworth Town Council
Braughing Parish Council	Green Heat Coop	Settle Housing Group
Broxbourne Council	HCCSP	St Albans City and District Council
Carbon Rewind Ltd	Hertford Regional College	Stevenage Borough Council
Centre for Ageing Better	Hertfordshire County Council	Sustain Homes
Clarion Housing Group	Hertfordshire Futures	Three Rivers District Council
Dacorum Borough Council	Hertsmere Borough Council	Thrive Homes
E.ON Energy	Knebworth Environment Group	University of Hertfordshire
East Herts District Council	Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation	Wates
Education for a Sustainable Future	LGA	Watford and Three Rivers Friends of the Earth
EELGA	Multiverse Consultants	Watford Borough Council
Energy Saving Trust	NEF	Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Envol Labs	North Herts & Stevenage Green Party	West Herts College
Estu Global	North Herts Council	

## 2. Vision and Mission

### Introduction

- 2.1.1. Work on the vision started during workshop one. Please see the [workshop report](#) for more information.



- 2.1.2. The vision exercise revealed several key themes shaping individual and organisational aspirations. These included achieving a net-zero Hertfordshire, fostering innovation, ensuring equity, financial and business sustainability, adaptability and resilience, and strengthening partnerships. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of inter-generational justice, affordable warmth, and community-centred approaches. The discussion then shifted to how stakeholders are already working together and how collaboration could be improved, focusing on spheres of influence. Councils can facilitate change through grants, policymaking, planning, multi-agency initiatives and as landlords, while businesses can influence customer demand, skills development, and investment in growth and new technologies. To enhance collaboration, participants recognised the need to work together on accessing funding, data sharing, building consumer trust, and connecting and growing supply chains.
- 2.1.3. A working group was set up to refine the vision. The working group drafted a vision statement that was reviewed and revised during Workshop two. Participants proposed an amendment to separate the statement into a vision and a mission. The agreed upon vision statement was: *“Every home is fit for now and for our future,”*. The mission statement says: *“Collaborating in Hertfordshire to retrofit homes in need, so that we enhance our environment and climate resilience, address fuel poverty, improve health and support local jobs.”* Following a voting system, the group adopted the vision and mission. Please see the [workshop report](#) for more information.

## 3. SWOT

### Introduction

- 3.1.1. The SWOT was developed over several phases. The Pilot team conducted qualitative and quantitative research published in the Locality Assessment with data gathered through desk-based research and stakeholder interviews. The Locality Assessment informed the workshops, particularly the Shared Understanding and set a baseline understanding of Hertfordshire’s retrofit system. The Locality Assessment report [\[insert link\]](#) details specific geographic and demographic information about the locality. It also provides insight into activity within the locality in relation to six pillars of a retrofit system<sup>2</sup>. The ‘six pillars’ are a tool to understanding a system as follows:
- Community:
    - Awareness and appetite for retrofitting from residents
    - Trust building
    - Participation & engagement
  - Skills and Training:
    - Market size and quality of works
    - Range of different programmes, tenures & building typologies
    - Skills pipeline needed for future works
  - Homes:
    - Building types and tenures across the area
    - Approach to the carbon and energy saving
  - Low carbon technology:

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<sup>2</sup> A process developed by [Dark Matter Labs](#)



- Heat pump 'readiness'
    - Energy generation & storage
    - Planning & infrastructure e.g. grid constraints
  - Financial resourcing:
    - Funding and finance
    - Variations across tenures & delivery models
    - Impacts on quality retrofit works e.g. user-centred service models
  - Governance
    - Ownership and governance
    - Procurement policy e.g. community wealth building
- 3.1.2. After Workshop one, the Shared Understanding Working Group met to start creating and refining a SWOT based on the Locality Assessment and outputs from the workshop. This was presented during Workshop two, and highlighted the county's strengths in collaborative networks, green skills programmes, and successful grant funding, while finding challenges such as resource limitations, skills gaps, and public hesitation. Opportunities included community engagement, local supply chains, and collective purchasing, counterbalanced by threats like funding uncertainty, supply chain constraints, and regulatory delays. This was reviewed and revised by the group and a revised SWOT put to stakeholders for approval, with 98% of stakeholders agreeing with the final document.

## Strengths

- 3.1.3. Strength 1: Collaborative networks and established governance
- Further information: Partnerships and governance already exist through HCCSP. Shared learning and alignment of county-wide goals. Collaboration opportunities through existing partnerships
  - Response: Build on through [action 4.1 A](#) and [action 4.1 B](#)
- 3.1.4. Strength 2: Established green skills programme
- Further information: Training providers are ready and waiting for students and trainers
  - Response: Build on through [action 3.2 A](#), [action 3.2 B](#) and [action 3.2 C](#)
- 3.1.5. Strength 3: Previous experience establishing pilot projects
- Further information: Development of retrofit projects, e.g. Greener Homes, and participation in LARA pilot
  - Response: Take experience into delivery of Strategy and particularly [action 1.1 A](#), [action 1.1 B](#), [action 1.1 D](#), [action 1.2 A](#), [action 2.1 A](#), [action 4.1 B](#)
- 3.1.6. Strength 4: Mixed populations, rural and urban
- Further information: Provides a good testing ground for different delivery models with large urban populations providing opportunities for large scale retrofit programmes or Heat Networks
  - Response: Can be utilised for [action 1.1 B](#) and [action 1.2 C](#)



3.1.7. Strength 5: High level of home ownership & affluence

- Further information: Good opportunity to test private funding models and opportunity to market retrofit projects to homeowners
- Response: Can be utilised by [action 1.1 A](#) and [action 1.1 E](#)

3.1.8. Strength 6: Similar housing archetypes in specific locations

- Further information: Housing tends to be built at scale in certain periods and locations e.g. Garden cities have very similar property types, making mass retrofit potentially less complex
- Response: Can be utilised by [action 1.1 A](#), [action 1.1 E](#) and [action 1.2 A](#)

3.1.9. Strength 8: Proven track record of attracting grant funding

- Further information: Councils and consortia successful in securing LAD and HUG funding under all rounds
- Response: Can be utilised across Strategy but particularly by [action 1.2 B](#) and [action 1.3 A](#)

3.1.10. Strength 9: Recognition of the climate emergency and political will

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Will support Strategy delivery and be supported by [action 2.2 C](#) and [action 2.3 A](#)

3.1.11. Strength 10: Established industry leaders e.g. GSK

- Further information: N/A
- Response: No specific actions but needs to be utilised by [action 4.1 A](#)

## Weaknesses

3.1.12. Weakness 1: Lack of objective priorities

- Further information: Range of options leads to potential for scattergun and disconnected approaches, potentially contradictory and/or unsuccessful
- Response: Strategy directly responds to weakness and supported by [action 4.1 A](#) and [action 4.2 A](#)

3.1.13. Weakness 2: Lack of retrofit strategy

- Further information: The absence of a formal Hertfordshire retrofit strategy limits clear direction and coordinated county-wide action on retrofitting, creating uncertainty in planning and project prioritisation
- Response: Development and endorsement of the Local Retrofit Strategy and managed going forward through [action 4.1 A](#)

3.1.14. Weakness 3: Limited resources and capacity

- Further information: Capacity constraints within local authorities could hinder the ability to deliver retrofit initiatives at the necessary scale
- Response: [action 4.1 A](#) aims to deliver central capacity to coordinate and deliver whilst facilitating others



3.1.15. Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Mitigated in part through demand development actions sitting under goal 1 but also directly through [action 3.1 C](#) and [action 3.2 D](#)

3.1.16. Weakness 5: Collaboration between all stakeholders could complicate project oversight if governance, roles, and responsibilities aren't clearly defined, especially in the absence of a guiding strategy

- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be mitigated through the Strategy itself and [Shared Principle 1](#) but also [action 4.1 A](#), [action 4.2 A](#) and [action 4.3 A](#)

3.1.17. Weakness 6: Limited stakeholder engagement and lack of public understanding

- Further information: Public and stakeholder understanding of retrofitting, especially around its adaptation benefits, may be limited, requiring further education and engagement efforts
- Response: Mitigated for the public through [action 1.1 A](#), then reporting on performance via [action 2.2 C](#) and [action 2.3 A](#), policy support via [action 4.3 A](#) and for stakeholders through engagement via [action 4.2 A](#)

3.1.18. Weakness 7: Procurement reticence

- Further information: Anxiety in public sector around risk, responsibility, and reputation, preventing 'preferred' suppliers being shared beyond LA organisations. Need for procurement to be inclusive of government legislation.
- Response: Mitigated through [action 2.1 A](#)

3.1.19. Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity

- Further information: The existing workforce is not equipped to meet the scale of retrofitting required (c. 500k homes by 2050)
- A lack of knowledge in the construction, materials and behaviour of traditional (pre-c.1919) buildings – approximately 25% of UK homes – may result in inappropriate retrofit interventions which can cause long term damage.
- Response: Mitigated in part through demand development actions sitting under goal 1 and supply actions under [goal 3.1](#) and [goal 3.2](#)

3.1.20. Weakness 9: Higher than national average of listed and conservation properties

- Further information: Could make retrofit programmes more complex, expensive and take longer to deliver
- Response: Possibly mitigated in part through [action 4.1 D](#) but needs monitoring as affects a number of actions such as [action 1.1 A](#) and [action 2.2 D](#)

3.1.21. Weakness 10: Limited numbers of community energy groups and not seen as a partner

- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be mitigated through [action 4.2 A](#) and possibly [action 4.1 A](#) but could be key to successful delivery of [action 1.1 A](#) and [action 1.1 B](#)

3.1.22. Weakness 11: Colleges ready but not getting students



- Further information: Training providers not getting demand for retrofit courses
- Response: Mitigated in part through demand development actions sitting under goal 1 but specifically via [action 3.1 C](#) and [action 3.2 D](#)

3.1.23. Weakness 12: Policy environment and communication from government

- Further information: Lack of short and long term supportive national policy and awareness campaigns supplemented by inconsistent communication when initiatives are launched.
- Response: Government policy sits outside of the Strategy's scope but may be mitigated through actions sitting under [goal 1.1](#), increasing consumer confidence through actions sitting under [goal 3.1](#) and [goal 3.2](#) and specifically [action 4.3 A](#)

3.1.24. Weakness 13: Lack of confidence in technology, installation quality and trusted and knowledgeable local intermediaries

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Mitigated through actions sitting under [goal 1.1](#), [goal 3.1](#) and [goal 3.2](#)

3.1.25. Weakness 14: Lack of public/householder demand

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Mitigated through actions sitting under [goal 1.1](#), [goal 1.2](#) and [goal 1.3](#)

3.1.26. Weakness 15: Lack of show homes and other visible/accessible opportunities to see tech in person

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Could be mitigated through specific actions as part of [action 1.1 A](#) and [action 1.1 B](#)

## Opportunities

3.1.27. Opportunity 1: Strategy development

- Further information: The opportunity exists to develop a county-wide Hertfordshire retrofit strategy, informed by local pilots, like the LARA project, and national climate priorities
- Response: Development of the Local Retrofit Strategy and specifically [action 4.1 A](#) to guide and ensure delivery of the [vision](#) and [goal](#)

3.1.28. Opportunity 2: Funding availability

- Further information: Strong collaborations through HCCSP's stakeholders could help secure and leverage potential and existing funding for retrofitting initiatives, enabling broader reach and more impactful results across both public and private buildings
- Response: Realisation specifically through [action 4.1 A](#) and actions under [goal 4.1](#) and [goal 4.2](#)

3.1.29. Opportunity 3: Innovation and knowledge sharing

- Further information: Programmes like LARA offer opportunities to co-create solutions and share knowledge across sectors, boosting the effectiveness of



retrofit projects. Herts Insight as a portal for aligning better data will help stakeholders reach aligned conclusions for action.

- Response: To be utilised by [action 4.1 A](#), and actions sitting under [goal 4.2](#) and [goal 4.3](#)

#### 3.1.30. Opportunity 4: National and local policy alignment

- Further information: Hertfordshire's commitment to green growth and climate resilience aligns with UK government priorities, which may attract policy incentives or increased funding
- Response: To be utilised by [action 4.1 A](#), [action 1.2 B](#) and [action 1.3 A](#)

#### 3.1.31. Opportunity 5: Local job creation

- Further information: Aligning ambition with a consistent work programme could help provide market stability and confidence to improve and keep workforce in the local area
- Response: To be utilised by actions sitting under goal 1 and mitigated through [action 2.1 A](#) and [action 4.2 B](#)

#### 3.1.32. Opportunity 6: Leverage co-benefits through aligned procurement

- Further information: Appetite for aligned procurement approaches proven through [Regional Climate Change Forum](#) procurement working groups and Supply Hertfordshire, with a possible undertaking for a countywide procurement charter to help align ambition for a sustainable supply chain
- Response: To be realised through [action 2.1 A](#) and supported by [action 4.1 C](#)

#### 3.1.33. Opportunity 7: Skills training and career development for young people

- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be realised through actions under goal 3

#### 3.1.34. Opportunity 8: Working with local communities

- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be realised through [action 1.1 C](#)

#### 3.1.35. Opportunity 9: Decentralise electricity grid and develop renewable heat networks

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Not specifically realised through actions but could well be part of response coming out of [action 1.1 B](#), [action 4.3 A](#) and [action 4.3 B](#)

#### 3.1.36. Opportunity 10: Mobilise the repair and maintenance industry

- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be realised through demand-side actions sitting under [goal 1.1](#), [goal 1.2](#) and [goal 1.3](#) and [action 3.1 A](#) and [action 3.1 B](#)

#### 3.1.37. Opportunity 11: Engage health professionals and align to health and social care objectives

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Realised through [action 2.2 A](#) and [action 4.3 A](#)

#### 3.1.38. Opportunity 12: Group buying



- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be realised through [action 1.2 A](#)

3.1.39. Opportunity 13: Retrofit as a springboard to encourage behaviour change

- Further information: N/A
- Response: No directly related action but feeds into [action 2.2 A](#)

3.1.40. Opportunity 14: Partnering with private investment

- Further information: N/A
- Response: No directly related action but feeds into [actions](#) sitting under [goal 1.2](#)

3.1.41. Opportunity 15: Local government reform

- Further information: Following the [English Devolution White Paper](#) outlining plans for local government reform, changes in funding and powers at a local level could affect mandate and resources to effect change in the county.
- Response: To be monitored by output from [action 4.1 A](#)

## Threats

3.1.42. Threat 1: Funding gaps or uncertainty

- Further information: Uncertainty around funding availability for retrofitting could delay projects or reduce their scope, securing continuous financial support is critical
- Response: To be managed by output from [action 4.1 A](#)

3.1.43. Threat 2: Funding bodies changing priorities

- Further information: Choice to follow the funding or develop a strategy that can stand alone, waiting for relevant funding to develop.
- Response: To be managed by output from [action 4.1 A](#) and an endorsed Local Retrofit Strategy

3.1.44. Threat 3: Capacity strain

- Capacity within local authorities could be overstretched, particularly as collaboration increases in scale and complexity. Capacity will also be challenged by potential challenges of local government reform.
- Response: To be managed by output from [action 4.1 A](#) and collaborative working facilitated through [action 4.2 A](#) and endorsement of [Shared Principle 1](#).

3.1.45. Threat 4: Regulatory and policy delays

- Further information: Delays in policy and shifts in direction cause uncertainty and slower progress
- Response: Mitigated through endorsed Local Retrofit Strategy and development of local market using actions under goal 1 and goal 3

3.1.46. Threat 5: Urgency of Climate Impact Response

- Further information: Shift of focus away from long-term retrofit plans, with resulting negative impacts on fuel poverty, carbon emissions, thermal comfort,



intergenerational equality, health and wellbeing and other interrelated impacts of inaction.

- Response: An important threat, particularly to potentially long-term initiatives such as action 1.1 B, that needs to be managed by output from [action 4.1 A](#) and data from [action 2.2 C](#) and [action 2.3 A](#)

3.1.47. Threat 6: Ability to conduct housing stock analysis

- Further information: Although potential sources of housing data exist (e.g. Herts Insights, Parity Projects, etc) these rely on knowledge and capacity to be able to create meaningful analysis and alongside an understanding of the right data queries. More detailed and accurate housing stock analysis relies on specific budget: but difficult to know whether the cost/benefit analysis aligns.
- Response: To be managed by output from [action 4.1 A](#) and collaborative working facilitated through [action 4.2 A](#) and endorsement of [Shared Principle 1](#), impacts on [action 1.3 B](#)

3.1.48. Threat 7: Difficulties in developing the workforce

- Further information: Loss of younger people in the workforce to neighbouring (cheaper) counties and London
- Response: To be mitigated through demand-side actions sitting under [goal 1.1](#), [goal 1.2](#) and [goal 1.3](#) and [action 3.1 A](#) and [action 3.1 B](#)

3.1.49. Threat 8: Supply chain constraints

- Further information: High demand for materials and technologies could lead to supply shortages
- Response: To be managed through [action 4.2 B](#)

3.1.50. Threat 9: Poor public perception and engagement in retrofit

- Resistance or apathy towards retrofitting due to financial, disruption and trust barriers
- Response: To be managed through [action 1.1 A](#), [action 1.2 B](#) and [action 1.3 A](#)

3.1.51. Threat 10: Liabilities from consortia and risk averse councils

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Key risk to be mitigated through output from [action 4.1 A](#) and an endorsed Local Retrofit Strategy with agreed [Shared Principles](#)

3.1.52. Threat 11: Energy pricing uncertainty and volatility

- Further information: N/A
- Response: Threat sits mainly outside of the Local Retrofit Strategy's scope but [action 1.1 A](#) will provide a response

3.1.53. Threat 12: Politicisation of climate change conversation

- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be understood more but [action 1.1 B](#) and [action 1.1 C](#) is in response, in part, to this Threat

3.1.54. Threat 13: Poor quality work undermines trust and confidence



- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be mitigated through actions sitting under [goal 3.1](#) and [goal 3.2](#)

3.1.55. Threat 14: Devolution process derails agendas

- Further information: N/A
- Response: To be managed by output from [action 4.1 A](#) and collaborative working facilitated through [action 4.2 A](#)

## 4. Principles

### Introduction

- 4.1.1. During workshop two, participants engaged in a systems simulation game to explore principles and strategies for collaborative retrofit initiatives in Hertfordshire. The exercise highlighted challenges such as siloed actions, lack of coordination, and minimal strategic oversight in Round 1. This evolved into greater collaboration, shared goals, and efficient resource use in Round 2. Groups then used this learning to reflect on real-life changes they want to see in Hertfordshire's retrofit system.
- 4.1.2. Key principles for a better retrofit system were identified, including equity, sustainability, collaboration, and accountability. Priorities found included shared vision, workforce upskilling, community engagement, targeted funding, and innovative financing models. The follow-up discussions emphasised leveraging local resources, fostering partnerships, and applying insights to real-world challenges to drive systemic change and accelerate retrofitting efforts effectively.
- 4.1.3. These shared principles will guide all activity by signatories to the Strategy. The governance agreements between signatories to the Strategy will formally ensure their importance. The principles below have influenced the goals and actions and are critical in achieving the vision.

### The principles

4.1.4. Principle 1: Work together

- Principle of collaboration and partnership working which may require commitments to fairness, honesty, equity, clear lines of accountability with risks shared
- "Collaboration is key, as we are stronger together"
- "A collaborative approach to resource allocation ensures that no region or group is left behind"

4.1.5. Principle 2: Evidence led

- Principle to ensure, wherever, possible that actions are based on evidence, data is gathered, and actions are evaluated to enable a sense of purpose
- "Generate enough activity to create learning in the market and improve over time"
- "Incremental progress ensures that strategies evolve and adapt as lessons are learned"

4.1.6. Principle 3: Sustainably minded

- Principle that solutions must balance and understand their environmental, economic, and social value whilst maximising local benefit



- “Solutions must balance environmental impact, cultural relevance, and long-term financial viability”

#### 4.1.7. Principle 4: Ambitious but Realistic

- Principle to help strive a balance between being too risk-averse and too careless which can only be done by understanding risks and collective accountability, some time aiming to optimise rather than maximise
- “Be realistic about ambitions and act on them—ambitious goals should be balanced with practical steps”

## 5. Outcomes, Goals and Actions:

### Outcomes

- 5.1.1. During workshop one, participants engaged in a visioning exercises. The results from this have informed the development of a set of outcomes for the strategy.
- 5.1.2. Data from Locality Assessments and national best practices informed outcome priorities.
- 5.1.3. Final outcomes were tested with stakeholders to ensure relevance and feasibility.

### Goals

- 5.1.4. During workshop two, participants engaged in a simulation game to explore principles and strategies for collaborative retrofit initiatives in Hertfordshire – see 5.1.1. Priorities identified included shared vision, workforce upskilling, community engagement, targeted funding, and innovative financing models. The follow-up discussions emphasised leveraging local resources, fostering partnerships, and applying insights to real-world challenges to drive systemic change and accelerate retrofitting efforts effectively.
- 5.1.5. The Pilot team then took the findings from workshop two and began drafting potential goals reflecting where stakeholders want to be, the vision, and the agreed priorities and principles. These were presented and agreed at workshop three.

### Actions for each goal

#### 5.1.6. Introduction

- 5.1.6.1. The Pilot team then took the findings from workshop two and started drafting potential actions reflecting where stakeholders want to be, the vision, and the agreed priorities and principles. These were presented, refined and agreed at workshop three.
- 5.1.6.2. Each action has the following further information:
  - CONTEXT: The problem or issue the action is planning to affect
  - APPROACH: High-level plan of how the action could be completed
  - ASSUMPTIONS: The assumptions are we making to justify the desired action
  - RESOURCES: Estimated resources needed to deliver the action: these are indicative costs to assist with planning, funding and prioritisation and will be subject to further specification, procurement processes and individual decisions by the particular working group or system actor who may be responsible for progressing that action.



- LINKS: Any other action that needs to be completed beforehand or are strongly linked
- STRATEGIC FIT: Which element of the SWOT and Shared Principles the action responds to and who the 'direct beneficiaries' who will see the primary benefit of the action

5.1.6.3. The phasing of actions will need to be determined. The Links section outlines dependencies and related actions. At this stage we recommend prioritising:

- [Action 4.1 A](#), "Create delivery vehicle, governance and reporting structure to ensure delivery of the Retrofit Strategy involving all relevant stakeholders". This should be the first action as it enables decision-making and ensures capacity to facilitate or directly deliver actions.
- [Action 4.2 A](#), "Create stakeholder-specific forums to coordinate activity within stakeholder group (with representation from central team)". This would be the second action as this could help distribute the workload of further actions.
- Action 2.2 C "Determine socio-economic KPIs and report on performance". This, along with KPIs and reporting frameworks within governance and reporting structures at 4.1A, will help to keep stakeholders engaged and secure external funding

**Error! Reference source not found.** below sets out the actions in **grey** under each goal, in **teal**, with Priority actions in **dark blue**.





Figure 3: goals and actions



All the proposed actions are linked together because the Strategy takes a systems-based approach – retrofit involves a web of linked challenges and opportunities that need to be tackled together, not in isolation. The following diagrams shows some of the strongest links (teal lines) and proposed pre-cursors (green lines with arrow pointing to second task)



Figure 4: action linkages and order



## Goal 1.1: Increase uptake and successful delivery of domestic retrofit measures

### 5.1.7. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- Weakness 12: Policy environment and communication from government
- Weakness 13: Lack of confidence in technology, installation quality and trusted and knowledgeable local intermediaries
- Weakness 14: Lack of public/householder demand
- Opportunity 5: Local job creation
- Opportunity 10: Mobilise the repair and maintenance Industry
- Threat 4: Regulatory and policy delays
- Threat 7: Difficulties in developing the workforce

### 5.1.8. **Action 1.1 A: Launch general support service providing advice and signposting via web, phone and email**

- 5.1.8.1. **Context:** Lack of knowledge and support is stopping citizens from carrying out retrofit measures and/or seeing benefit from said measures, can build on work by local community energy organisations
- 5.1.8.2. **Approach:** Research effectiveness of different approaches to establish *level of service* required to meet Strategy aims, potential service providers (including Hertfordshire-based organisations), secure budget, develop specification and procure delivery partner ensuring evaluation plan put in place
- 5.1.8.3. **Assumptions:**
- Provision of free bespoke advice and support will convert into action
  - Service providers are available locally/nationally who can deliver a suitable level of service
  - There is demand for local, free, one to one, retrofit and fuel poverty advice in Hertfordshire
- 5.1.8.4. **Resources:** Likely to require one or more entities to contract with a service provider and pay for service provision
- People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer
  - Money: c. £50,000 per year for external service provision
- 5.1.8.5. **Links:**
- Pre-cursor to all homeowner/ tenant support-related activity such as [action 1.1 D](#), [action 1.1 E](#), [action 1.2 A](#), [action 1.2 C](#), [action 2.2 D](#), [action 2.3 B](#)
  - Likely benefit from being in place prior to [action 1.1 B](#)
- 5.1.8.6. **Strategic fit:**
- Principle 1 Working Together: Potential for service to be acting on behalf of several stakeholders and supporting a range of local policy objectives



- Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners, tenants, local authorities, public health, supply chain
- Added-value potential through use of local contractor(s)
- Strength 3: Previous experience establishing pilot projects
- Strength 6: Similar housing archetypes in specific locations
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes
- Weakness 6: Limited stakeholder engagement and lack of public understanding
- Weakness 9: Higher than national average listed and conservation properties
- Weakness 10: Limited numbers of community energy groups and not seen as a partner
- Threat 9: Poor public perception and engagement in retrofit

5.1.9. **Action 1.1 B: Pilot a place-based approach to engaging citizens in retrofit**

- 5.1.9.1. **Context:** Many residents, particularly those in fuel poverty, are not engaging with retrofit grant initiatives due to a lack of trust in providers and poor understanding of the benefits. In Hertfordshire, 7% of households are in fuel poverty, but a large proportion of households are ineligible for funding. The challenge is to engage these households in retrofit efforts too.
- 5.1.9.2. **Approach:** Research potential engagement approaches and delivery partners, identify supporting contractors, engage with community energy groups, select a pilot location, secure budget, develop project specification and procure a delivery partner(s) ensuring evaluation plan put in place.
- 5.1.9.3. **Assumptions:**
- Better outcomes are possible through approaching and meeting people 'where they are'
  - People feel decarbonisation activity is done to them and not with them
- 5.1.9.4. **Resources:** Likely to require one or more entities to contract with a service provider and pay for service provision. Stronger internal collaboration between departments will also be necessary.
- People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer, Marketing/Communications Officer
  - Money: TBC
- 5.1.9.5. **Links:**
- Likely to benefit from [action 1.1 C](#) being started or completed first
  - May require [action 2.3 D](#) to be completed first or at least initial research
  - Likely will need [action 4.1 D](#) to be completed first
- 5.1.9.6. **Strategic alignment:**
- Principle 3 Sustainably minded: Potential to provide holistic support to a locality, maximising local benefit



- Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners, tenants, local authorities, social landlords, supply chain
- Strength 3: Previous experience establishing pilot projects
- Strength 5: High level of home ownership & affluence
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes
- Weakness 10: Limited numbers of community energy groups and not seen as a partner
- Weakness 15: Lack of show homes and other visible/accessible opportunities to see tech in person
- Opportunity 9: Decentralise electricity grid and develop renewable heat networks
- Threat 12: Politicisation of climate change conversation

5.1.10. Action 1.1 C: Engage and develop partnerships with trusted intermediaries (including faith groups) to support delivery of goals

- 5.1.10.1. **Context:** There is distrust in grant schemes and retrofit interventions more generally and therefore activities are needed to be delivered to rebuild relationships with communities and increase rates of retrofit delivery
- 5.1.10.2. **Approach:** Conduct stakeholder mapping and assessment, research best practice, determine engagement strategy, implement strategy, and develop partnership initiatives
- 5.1.10.3. **Assumptions:**
- Use of grants hindered by lack of trust in schemes
  - Partnerships with trusted intermediaries can increase delivery of retrofit measures
  - Trusted intermediaries (consider community, cultural, faith groups as well as GPs and other trusted advocates) can be engaged
  - [ECO](#) and other grant providers find it difficult to find eligible customers
- 5.1.10.4. **Resources:** Focus will be people but when moving into the engagement and delivery phase marketing spend may be needed, specialist support may also be needed. Note at the time of writing this strategy, no stakeholders are obligated to commit resource, and no fixed implementation timelines are agreed
- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer, community engagement specialists (TBC)
  - Money: c. £20,000 for external contractors and marketing activity.
- 5.1.10.5. **Links:**
- Precursor to [action 1.1 B](#) as potentially important in effective delivery of place-based initiative or could be incorporated
  - Likely will need [action 4.1 D](#) to be completed first
- 5.1.10.6. **Strategic alignment:**



- Principle 1 Work together: Collaborating fully with local community organisations by meeting them 'where they are' and building trust
- Direct beneficiaries: Local authorities, social landlords, ECO providers
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes
- Weakness 15: Lack of show homes and other visible/accessible opportunities to see tech in person
- Opportunity 8: Working with local communities, considering community, cultural, faith groups as well as GPs and other trusted advocates faith groups
- Threat 12: Politicisation of climate change conversation

5.1.11. Action 1.1 D Develop a 'Warm Homes Prescription' service facilitated by shared work on co-benefits

- 5.1.11.1. **Context:** Retrofit measures can deliver health benefits and with GPs being a critical part community health they can be utilised to engage those most in need
- 5.1.11.2. **Approach:** Conduct stakeholder mapping and assessment, research best practice, determine GP engagement strategy, consult with GPs on potential initiatives, develop business case
- 5.1.11.3. **Assumptions:**
- ECO providers struggle to find eligible customers but health service can
  - Health service pathways can deliver customers for grant schemes and benefit stakeholders
  - Retrofit measures can deliver health benefits
  - Best practice to be replicated
  - GPs can be engaged to partner in delivery of service
- 5.1.11.4. **Resources:** Focus will be people but when moving into the engagement and delivery phase marketing spend may be needed, specialist support may also be needed
- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer, Warm Home Prescription specialists (TBC)
  - Money: c. £20,000 for external contractors and marketing activity
- 5.1.11.5. **Links:**
- Benefit from [action 1.1 A](#) being completed first
  - Overlap with [action 1.1 C](#) so some activity could be incorporated
  - Strong link with [action 2.2 A](#)
- 5.1.11.6. **Strategic alignment:**
- Principle 1 Work together: Collaborating fully with local community organisations and helping to ensure equity by supporting those most in need
  - Direct beneficiaries: Public health, local authorities, supply chain
  - Strength 3: Previous experience establishing pilot projects



- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

5.1.12. Action 1.1 E Develop business plan to launch specialist technical support for homeowners

- 5.1.12.1. **Context:** The delivery of retrofits often requires detailed assessments of homes and occupants to determine the right solutions, correct design and checking that works have been done correctly
- 5.1.12.2. **Approach:** Research potential business models and comparative risks, consult with stakeholders on preferred models, develop fully costs business plan and secure funding
- 5.1.12.3. **Assumptions:**
  - There is a small but important market for paid-for technical retrofit services to enable development of sustainable market
  - Subsidising retrofit assessments increases engagement and can convert to action
  - Best practice to be replicated
- 5.1.12.4. **Resources:** Initially mainly a research and desk-top exercise but may require consultation with Procurement Officers in relation to securing external service providers
  - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer, Procurement Officers, independent Retrofit Adviser
  - Money: Minimal to develop business plan but would require seed funding (c. £250k +)
- 5.1.12.5. **Links:**
  - Service could be added on to general support service output from [action 1.1 A](#)
  - Link with [action 4.1 B](#)
- 5.1.12.6. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Principle 4 Realistic and ambitious: When the need has been fully figured out, striving to be entrepreneurial
  - Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners, supply chain
  - Strength 5: High level of home ownership & affluence
  - Strength 6: Similar housing archetypes in specific locations
  - Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

## Goal 1.2: Increase retrofit investment in owner occupied and private landlord housing

5.1.13. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- Weakness 14: Lack of householder/tenant demand
- Opportunity 5: Local job creation
- Opportunity 10: Mobilise the Repair, Maintenance Industry



- Opportunity 14: Partnering with private investment
- Threat 4: Regulatory and policy delays
- Threat 7: Difficulties in developing the workforce

5.1.14. **Action 1.2 A: Trial bulk-purchasing scheme for retrofit measures to deliver cost savings and quality installations**

5.1.15. **Context:** Cost of retrofit measures acts as a barrier to take up

5.1.15.1. **Approach:** Research potential providers of service and, if available, develop specification and procure delivery partner ensuring evaluation plan put in place.

5.1.15.2. **Assumptions:**

- Bulk-purchasing of low carbon retrofit technology can deliver costs savings to the consumer and still provide high quality customer service and installation
- A pilot could be developed like Solar Together for different retrofit measures (for example for Air Source Heat Pumps)
- There is a market for retrofit measures
- One or more entities will contract with a service provider and invest funding (likely for marketing campaign if like Solar Together model)
- Earlier Solar Together schemes show this type of initiative can deliver benefits

5.1.15.3. **Resources:** Likely to require one or more entities to contract with a service provider and invest in marketing campaign

- People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer, external service provider (TBC)
- Money: c. £50,000 for marketing campaign

5.1.15.4. **Links:**

- May benefit from launching after [action 1.1 A](#) has launched General Support Service
- Link with [action 2.1 A](#) as local SMEs could be supported in securing contract

5.1.15.5. **Strategic alignment:**

- Principle 2 Evidence led: Building on successful past projects to deliver more
- Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners
- Strength 3: Previous experience establishing pilot projects
- Strength 6: Similar housing archetypes in specific locations
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

5.1.16. **Action 1.2 B: Support eligible entities without capacity to apply for and deliver government grant schemes (incl. ECO)**

5.1.16.1. **Context:** Current grant schemes require local authorities ([Warm Homes Local Grant](#), [ECO LA Flex](#)) or social landlords (Warm Homes Social Housing) to secure



funding and deliver projects and some do not have the capacity to apply and/or deliver

5.1.16.2. **Approach:** Consult with stakeholders to figure out capacity/knowledge gap, develop plan to increase delivery with initial focus on ECO LA Flex as other grant schemes closed for applications, agree plan with stakeholders and implement

5.1.16.3. **Assumptions:**

- Majority of retrofit activity will be stimulated by grants or compliance
- Grant funded measures can deliver good outcomes
- Some local authorities and social landlords do not have internal capacity or access to match funding to secure and deliver grant schemes
- Best practice, particularly around e.g. ECO LA Flex, is available for replication
- E.g. ECO providers looking for properties but struggle to find so need intermediaries

5.1.16.4. **Resources:** Coordination, research and planning like to be main tasks and not require external support but may require analysis of housing stock

- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
- Money: c. £20,000 for analysis of housing stock

5.1.16.5. **Links:**

- Supported by [action 4.2 A](#)

5.1.16.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Principle 1 Working together: Providing support, sharing best practice, and making best of cost efficiencies through collaboration
- Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners, local authorities, e.g. ECO providers, supply chain
- Strength 8: Proven track record of attracting grant funding
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes
- Opportunity 4: National and local policy alignment
- Opportunity 12: Group buying
- Threat 9: Poor public perception and engagement in retrofit

5.1.16.7. **Development:**

- Proposed by LARA Project Team at Workshop three
- Endorsed by stakeholders at Workshop three and classed as Priority action
- Revised by LARA project team following feedback during Exercise Reviewing goals, actions and Priorities

5.1.17. Action 1.2 C: Introduce Private Landlord register and provide with guidance/ support

5.1.17.1. **Context:** Using register communications with private landlords can be improved and therefore their use of support service and grants



5.1.17.2. **Approach:** Consult with stakeholders to determine current services, research other models to provide options, consult with stakeholders on options, implement recommendations

5.1.17.3. **Assumptions:**

- Private rental properties are a considerable proportion of housing
- Private rental properties are often most in need of retrofit measures
- Majority of retrofit activity will be stimulated by grants or compliance
- Lack of enforcement capacity means opportunities to stimulate action are being missed
- Likely to be regulations coming in requiring improvement in performance of rental housing
- Best practice to be replicated

5.1.17.4. **Resources:** Research and planning at first but implementation may require addition of activities to existing staff or increase in capacity or use of external contractors to develop online service

- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
- Money: Dependent on preferred option

5.1.17.5. **Links:**

- Support element could be delivered through [action 1.1 A](#) so this may need to be completed prior to launch

5.1.17.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Principle 2: By engaging with private landlords, we can best determine needs and appropriate improvement actions to achieve mutual benefits
- Direct beneficiaries: Private landlords, local authorities, supply chain
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

5.1.18. Action 1.2 D Develop and implement retrofit measures plan for Building Control including planning policy

5.1.18.1. **Context:** Building control are often involved in home improvements, particularly extensions, so could support delivery of retrofit measures either within context of building regulation compliance or signpost to further support

5.1.18.2. **Approach:** Consult with building control stakeholders to determine need and potential new services, research any best practice in UK, develop options paper and implement recommendation(s)

5.1.18.3. **Assumptions:**

- There is an interaction point with Building Control at which retrofit could be stimulated
- Some retrofit measures can be delivered through ensuring compliance with building regulations – noting that not all retrofit measures come under building control.
- Building Control may lack up to date knowledge of retrofit design and installation best practice



- Homeowners carrying out building improvements may be encouraged to carry out retrofit measures when supported
- 5.1.18.4. **Resources:** Research and planning at first but implementation may require additional activities for existing staff or production of guidance
  - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
  - Money: Dependent on preferred option and required guidance documentation
- 5.1.18.5. **Links:**
  - May benefit from [action 4.2 A](#) and [action 4.3 A](#) being started or completed first
- 5.1.18.6. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Principle 1 Work Together: Engaging and working collaboratively with a stakeholder that can leverage an important trigger point
  - Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners
  - Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

## Goal 1.3: Increase retrofit investment in social housing

### 5.1.19. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- Weakness 14: Lack of public/householder and tenant demand
- Opportunity 5: Local job creation
- Opportunity 10: Mobilise the Repair, Maintenance Industry
- Threat 4: Regulatory and policy delays
- Threat 7: Difficulties in developing the workforce

### 5.1.20. Action 1.3 A: Provide support for those social landlords without capacity to apply for and deliver grant schemes (incl. ECO)

- 5.1.20.1. **Context:** Current grant schemes require local authorities (Warm Homes Local Grant, ECO LA Flex) or social landlords (Warm Homes Social Housing) to secure funding and deliver projects and some do not have the capacity to apply and/or deliver
- 5.1.20.2. **Approach:** Consult with stakeholders to determine capacity/knowledge gap, develop plan to increase delivery as grant schemes open for applications, agree plan with stakeholders and implement. Ensure awareness of [RISE](#) service and other products already providing this service to these stakeholders. Consider option of low-cost procurement framework such as Watford/Three Rivers to support coordinated approach.
- 5.1.20.3. **Assumptions:**
  - Majority of retrofit activity will be stimulated by grants or compliance
  - Grant funded measures can deliver good outcomes
  - Some local authorities and social landlords do not have internal capacity or access to match funding to secure and deliver grant schemes



- Best practice is available for replication
- Providers are looking for properties but struggle to find so need intermediaries
- 5.1.20.4. **Resources:** Coordination, research and planning likely to be main tasks and will not require external support but may require analysis of housing stock
  - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
  - Money: c. £20,000 for analysis of housing stock
- 5.1.20.5. **Links:**
  - Replication of [action 1.2 B](#) but for social landlords
- 5.1.20.6. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Direct beneficiaries: Tenants, social landlords, stock-holding local authorities, ECO providers, supply chain
  - Strength 8: Proven track record of attracting grant funding
  - Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programme
  - Opportunity 4: National and local policy alignment
  - Threat 9: Poor public perception and engagement in retrofit
- 5.1.21. Action 1.3 B Support social landlords in having up to standard housing stock data
  - 5.1.21.1. **Context:** Effective delivery of retrofit strategies needs to be built on good stock data and benefits grant applications
  - 5.1.21.2. **Approach:** Consult with social landlords to determine current level of data, research standards and best practice, determine gap, develop business case for improving data and secure internal/external funding
  - 5.1.21.3. **Assumptions:**
    - Levels of building stock data vary between social landlords
    - Best practice and/or standard is available
    - Having good stock data provides financial savings for social landlords and therefore a business case for investment can be made
  - 5.1.21.4. **Resources:** Research and planning at first but implementation may require addition of activities to existing staff or external specialist support (software)
    - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
    - Money: Dependent on preferred option
  - 5.1.21.5. **Links:**
    - May need completion to enable [action 1.3 A](#) and [action 4.2 A](#) to be effective
    - May need [action 1.3 C](#) to be completed in parallel
  - 5.1.21.6. **Strategic alignment:**
    - Direct beneficiaries: Tenants, social landlords
    - Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes



- Threat 6: Ability to conduct Housing stock analysis

5.1.22. Action 1.3 C Support integration of retrofit into regular asset management by social landlords

- 5.1.22.1. **Context:** Social landlords continually carry out improvement works, and this provides opportunity to expand into retrofit measures at less of an opportunity cost than when doing separately
- 5.1.22.2. **Approach:** Consult with social landlords to determine current practices, research best practice, develop business case for additional investment in retrofit over and above 'business as usual' and options paper and consult to determine improvement action
- 5.1.22.3. **Assumptions:**
- Opportunities to add retrofit measures to general maintenance being missed
  - Guidance available on how to integrate retrofit into general maintenance
- 5.1.22.4. **Resources:** Research and planning at first but implementation may require addition of activities to existing staff or external specialist support (software)
- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
  - Money: Dependent on preferred option
- 5.1.22.5. **Links:**
- May need [action 1.3 B](#) to be completed in parallel
- 5.1.22.6. **Strategic alignment:**
- Direct beneficiaries: Social landlords, tenants, supply chain
  - Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

5.1.23. Action 1.3 D Link up social landlord and private tenure grant schemes to maximise benefit/efficiencies

- 5.1.23.1. **Context:** Social landlords will be carrying out grant-funded and non-grant funded retrofit works which may be in areas with non-social housing property and therefore economies of scale could be found.
- 5.1.23.2. **Approach:** Consult with social landlords and local authorities to determine current and planned works, assess to see if opportunities to deliver works in partnership, develop business case and options paper and consult to determine improvement action
- 5.1.23.3. **Assumptions:**
- Costs can be reduced through pooling works
  - Grant schemes available for both social and non-social housing
  - Procurement and contractual strategies can be delivered to enable partnership delivery of retrofit measures
- 5.1.23.4. **Resources:** Research and planning at first but implementation may require addition of activities to existing staff or external specialist support (procurement, contracting)
- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer



- Money: Dependent on preferred option

5.1.23.5. **Links:**

- Likely need [action 4.2 A](#), [action 1.2 B](#) and [action 1.3 A](#) to be completed first

5.1.23.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Local authorities, social landlords, private landlords, tenants, homeowners
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes

## Goal 2.1: Realise local economic benefits

5.1.24. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- N/A

**5.1.25. Action 2.1 A: Develop and deliver Hertfordshire procurement strategy which utilises local supply chain, particularly SMEs**

5.1.25.1. **Context:** Current procurement policies and processes hinder involvement by local contractors, particularly SMEs and therefore minimise local benefit

5.1.25.2. **Approach:** Create procurement working group with representation from local authorities and social landlords to review processes/policies, develop potential intervention(s) (e.g. standard tender template, reduced data entry requirements for contractors), consult on interventions and agree improvement plan.

5.1.25.3. **Assumptions:**

- There are significant barriers to smaller (Tier 2 and 3) installers in procurement, which limits the growth of the sector)
- Local benefit can be provided and comply with regulations
- Local suppliers can deliver greater socioeconomic value
- Public procurement regulations allow for emphasis on local suppliers
- SMEs report a perception of complexity and technicality in public procurement which hinders their involvement

5.1.25.4. **Resources:** Likely to require specialist procurement input and potentially legal advice and may well need IT support to develop online systems

- People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer(s)
- Money: £20,000 - £30,000 for legal support, £20,000 for web support/data entry

5.1.25.5. **Links:**

- Pre-cursor to [action 2.2 B](#)
- [action 1.2 A](#) may benefit from action 2.1 A being completed first

5.1.25.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Supply chain (local)
- Strength 3: Previous experience establishing pilot projects



- Weakness 7: Procurement reticence
- Opportunity 5: Local job creation
- Opportunity 6: Leverage co-benefits through aligned procurement

## Goal 2.2: Realise health and wellbeing benefits

### 5.1.26. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- N/A

### 5.1.27. Action 2.2 A Coordinate with Public Health, Social Care and Integrated Care System's (ICS') to strengthen the enabling environment for retrofit and create a shared language, work and understanding of it

- 5.1.27.1. **Context:** Retrofit can deliver public health benefits but there is a lack of understanding, capacity and process to enable this to happen
- 5.1.27.2. **Approach:** Develop Retrofit and Health working group with representation from public health, social care and ICS', review existing policy framework and determine improvement actions
- 5.1.27.3. **Assumptions:**
  - Some public health grant schemes can benefit from retrofit
  - Retrofit can deliver public health and social benefits
- 5.1.27.4. **Resources:** Likely to require stakeholder time for meetings and officer time to develop material for working groups, research aspects of the work
  - People: Project Manager, public health/social care officers
  - Money: Dependent on need for additional research
- 5.1.27.5. **Links:**
  - Links with [action 4.3 A](#)
  - Likely a pre-cursor to [action 1.1 D](#)
- 5.1.27.6. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Direct beneficiaries: Public health, local authorities
  - Opportunity 11: Engage health professionals and align to health and social care objectives
  - Opportunity 13: Retrofit as a springboard to encourage behaviour change

### 5.1.28. Action 2.2 B: Develop and deliver SME-friendly social impact standard to be used by all relevant retrofit projects/procurements

- 5.1.28.1. **Context:** Social value is a defined term and part of public procurements which enables contractors to invest in specific activities that deliver social good
- 5.1.28.2. **Approach:** Determine best practice in social value standards, review with stakeholders (including SMEs), secure stakeholder approval and then implement standard in public sector procurements
- 5.1.28.3. **Assumptions:**
  - Levels of social value from projects could be improved



- Best practice available for replication
- Maximising social value may increase take up of retrofit measures
- 5.1.28.4. **Resources:** Researcher needed to review existing standards, working group of procurement officer to create draft then stakeholder group to consult with
  - People: Project Manager, procurement officers
  - Money: Dependent on need for additional research and legal advice
- 5.1.28.5. **Links:**
  - Will likely need [action 2.1 A](#) completed first or in parallel
- 5.1.28.6. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Direct beneficiaries: Supply chain, local authorities, social landlords
  - Opportunity 13: Retrofit as a springboard to encourage behaviour change
- 5.1.29. Action 2.2 C: Determine socio-economic KPIs of the Strategy and report on performance
- 5.1.29.1. **Context:** Socio-economic benefits of retrofit is important to stakeholders and therefore performance needs to be evaluated to figure out progress towards outcomes.
- 5.1.29.2. **Approach:** Research socio-economic KPIs and data sources as well as data gathering processes, map against outcomes, consult with stakeholders on findings, develop improvement action proposal with budget requirements, consult with stakeholders and implement
- 5.1.29.3. **Assumptions:**
  - Reporting on impact important to keep stakeholders engaged and secure external funding
  - KPIs can be found to measure direct/in-direct impact
- 5.1.29.4. **Resources:** Research and planning at first but implementation may require addition of activities to existing staff or external specialist support (data gathering)
  - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
  - Money: Dependent on final process
- 5.1.29.5. **Links:**
  - May receive help from integration into [action 2.3 A](#).
- 5.1.29.6. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Direct beneficiaries: System-wide
  - Strength 9: Recognition of the climate emergency and political will
  - Weakness 6: Limited stakeholder engagement and lack of public understanding
  - Threat 5: Urgency of Climate Impact Response
- 5.1.30. Action 2.2 D: Promote ventilation/moisture strategies through support services and grant schemes
- 5.1.30.1. **Context:** Some houses suffer from poor ventilation and damp and making buildings more air-tight or installing insulation can cause other problems



- 5.1.30.2. **Approach:** Research best-practice strategies, consult with stakeholders on findings, develop improvement actions for use by support services and grant scheme designers
- 5.1.30.3. **Assumptions:**
- Retrofit can deliver improved ventilation
  - Benefits of good ventilation strategies not well known
  - Improved ventilation can deliver health benefits
  - Best practice strategies can be found
- 5.1.30.4. **Resources:** Research and planning at first but implementation may require addition of activities to existing staff or external specialist support (technical guidance)
- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
  - Money: Dependent on final process
- 5.1.30.5. **Links:**
- Will require [action 1.1 A](#) to be completed to enable provision of support to population
- 5.1.30.6. **Strategic alignment:**
- Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners, tenants, health services
  - Weakness 9: Higher than national average listed and conservation properties

## Goal 2.3: Realise environmental benefits

### 5.1.31. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- N/A

### 5.1.32. Action 2.3 A: Assess and report on embodied and operational carbon emissions from grant schemes

- 5.1.32.1. **Context:** Delivering retrofit measures requires materials and these will come with their own carbon footprints which negatively impact on the carbon-savings the measures are delivering
- 5.1.32.2. **Approach:** Research embodied carbon of retrofit measures to decide if process possible (e.g. database available), develop reporting process, consult with stakeholders, implement improvement action
- 5.1.32.3. **Assumptions:**
- Awareness of carbon impact from measures can deliver change in behaviours
  - Embodied carbon tool available
- 5.1.32.4. **Resources:** Mainly research activity at first then consultation but may require technical support to develop reporting tool
- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
  - Money: Dependent on final improvement action



5.1.32.5. **Links:**

- May benefit from focus on [action 2.2 C](#) prior to completion or integration of actions.

5.1.32.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: System-wide
- Strength 9: Recognition of the climate emergency and political will
- Weakness 6: Limited stakeholder engagement and lack of public understanding
- Threat 5: Urgency of Climate Impact Response

5.1.33. Action 2.3 B: Promote use of low carbon, sustainable materials via support services and building control

5.1.33.1. **Context:** Delivering retrofit measures requires materials and these will come with their own ecological footprints which negatively impact on the sustainability benefits the measures are delivering

5.1.33.2. **Approach:** Research databases of low carbon, sustainable materials, develop information sharing process, consult with stakeholders, implement improvement action. Consider use of Energy Technology List and other independent sources of best practice data.

5.1.33.3. **Assumptions:**

- Retrofit works offers opportunity to carry out improvement measures
- Low carbon materials available

5.1.33.4. **Resources:** Mainly research activity at first then consultation but may require technical support to develop reporting tool

- People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
- Money: Dependent on final improvement action

5.1.33.5. **Links:**

- Implementation will be dependent on completion of [action 1.1 A](#) and would be supported by [action 1.1 E](#)

5.1.33.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Supply chain
- Threat 5: Urgency of Climate Impact Response

5.1.34. Action 2.3 C: Promote biodiversity measures through support services

5.1.34.1. **Context:** Biodiversity in the UK is declining, with many species threatened with extinction and the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. Resources and expertise exist and potentially interconnect with HNRS, Local Authority Biodiversity Duty and other regulatory expectations, that can be amplified through partnership working.

5.1.34.2. **Approach:** Consult with HNRS to highlight biodiversity measures that could be included in a retrofit, develop information sharing process, consult with stakeholders on ability to implement measures, implement improvement action

5.1.34.3. **Assumptions:**



- Measures possible that can have positive nature impacts
- Best practice available for replication
- 5.1.34.4. **Resources:** Mainly research activity at first then consultation but may require technical support to develop reporting tool
  - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
  - Money: Dependent on final improvement action
- 5.1.34.5. **Links:**
  - Implementation will be dependent on completion of [action 1.1 A](#) and would be supported by [action 1.1 E](#)
  - Link with [action 2.3 D](#)
- 5.1.34.6. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Direct beneficiaries: System-wide
  - Threat 12: Politicisation of climate change conversation
- 5.1.35. Action 2.3 D: Utilise place-based pilot to deliver natural capital improvements
  - 5.1.35.1. **Context:** Natural capital in urban areas is decreasing due to the expansion of built-up areas, leading to the loss of green spaces, destruction of natural habitats, and reduced biodiversity, ultimately impacting ecosystem services like air purification, water filtration, and climate regulation as cities grow and develop
  - 5.1.35.2. **Approach:** Research natural capital improvement measures/schemes, develop information sharing process, consult with stakeholders on ability to implement measures, implement improvement action
  - 5.1.35.3. **Assumptions:**
    - Delivering nature improvements can build trust and therefore aid place-based initiatives
    - Communities engage with natural improvements more than retrofit
  - 5.1.35.4. **Resources:** Mainly research activity at first then consultation but may require technical support to develop reporting tool
    - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
    - Money: Dependent on final improvement action
  - 5.1.35.5. **Links:**
    - Implementation will be dependent on [action 1.1 B](#) and may be considered a pre-cursor
    - Link with [action 2.3 C](#)
  - 5.1.35.6. **Strategic alignment:**
    - Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners, tenants
    - Threat 12: Politicisation of climate change conversation



### Goal 3.1: Increase local supply chain capacity and quality through improved retrofit standards and demand. Strategic fit (across all goal actions):

- Weakness 12: Policy environment and communication from government
- Weakness 13: Lack of confidence in technology, installation quality and trusted and knowledgeable local intermediaries
- Opportunity 7: Skills training and career development for young people
- Threat 4: Regulatory and policy delays
- Threat 13: Poor quality work undermines trust and confidence

#### 5.1.36. Action 3.1 A: Develop and manage lists of good and trusted suppliers

- 5.1.36.1. **Context:** Quality within the supply chain is an issue and holds back take up of measures through a lack of consumer confidence
- 5.1.36.2. **Approach:** Research best practice within UK, create procurement working group with representation from local authorities and social landlords to review findings and develop proposals, consult with supply chain and develop business plan. Consider incentives for suppliers to be on list to ensure integrity and variety.
- 5.1.36.3. **Assumptions:**
- Holder of list can manage risk of 'recommendation'
  - Definition of 'good' is possible and can be assessed against
  - Intervention can help to match supply and demand and to increase commissioner/consumer trust
- 5.1.36.4. **Resources:** Likely to require research time and legal advice to decide how to manage risk
- People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer(s)
- 5.1.36.5. **Money:** £20,000 - £30,000 for legal support
- 5.1.36.6. **Links:**
- If to be used by public sector organisations may benefit from completion of [action 2.1 A](#) beforehand
- 5.1.36.7. **Strategic alignment:**
- Direct beneficiaries: Homeowners, social landlords
  - Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity
  - Opportunity 10: Mobilise the Repair, Maintenance Industry
  - Threat 7: Difficulties in developing the workforce
- 5.1.37. Action 3.1 B: Develop and deliver support network for local installers with training including Continuing Professional Development sessions
- 5.1.37.1. **Context:** Retrofit knowledge within the supply chain is low but there is likely to be a number of installers who could be engaged with and a network grown
- 5.1.37.2. **Approach:** Research best practice within UK, produce options paper, consult with stakeholders, revise and develop business plan and secure funding
- 5.1.37.3. **Assumptions:**



- Appropriate qualified and non-qualified courses are available
- Best practice available to be replicated
- Demand from installers
- 5.1.37.4. **Resources:** Likely to require research time and then project management to develop options paper and secure funding, possible external contractor support
  - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
- 5.1.37.5. **Money:** £20,000 - £30,000 for external support and run engagement activities
- 5.1.37.6. **Links:**
  - May benefit from completion of [action 2.1 A](#) beforehand so supply chain can see demand generation activity happening and therefore encourage engagement
  - Would tie in with launch of specialist support service under [action 1.1 E](#)
  - Could support [action 3.1 A](#)
- 5.1.37.7. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Direct beneficiaries: Supply chain
  - Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity
  - Opportunity 10: Mobilise the Repair, Maintenance Industry
  - Threat 7: Difficulties in developing the workforce
- 5.1.38. Action 3.1 C: Develop and deliver apprenticeship support service for stakeholders (particularly businesses)
- 5.1.38.1. **Context:** Supply chain often finds it difficult to take on apprentices, but capacity is falling and therefore we need to engage new entrants
- 5.1.38.2. **Approach:** Research best practice within UK, produce options paper, consult with stakeholders, revise and develop business plan and secure funding
- 5.1.38.3. **Assumptions:**
  - Full cost of apprenticeships to employers is hindering their use
  - Apprentice completion rates are an issue
  - Funding can come from apprenticeship levy transfer schemes
  - Successful support models to be replicated, such as flexi-apprenticeship model
  - Current apprenticeship offers not increasing numbers of entrants of diversification
  - Apprenticeships can encourage people into supply chain
- 5.1.38.4. **Resources:** Likely to require research time and then project management to develop options paper and secure funding, possible external contractor support
  - People: Project Manager, Project Support Officer
- 5.1.38.5. **Money:** Dependent on chosen option(s)
- 5.1.38.6. **Links:**



- May benefit from completion of [action 3.2 A](#) and [action 3.2 B](#) first

5.1.38.7. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: New entrants, supply chain
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes
- Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity
- Weakness 11: Colleges ready but not getting students

## Goal 3.2: Increase demand for training and ensure adequate capacity/quality

5.1.39. Strategic fit (across all goal actions):

- Weakness 12: Policy environment and communication from government
- Weakness 13: Lack of confidence in technology, installation quality and trusted and knowledgeable local intermediaries
- Opportunity 7: Skills training and career development for young people
- Threat 4: Regulatory and policy delays
- Threat 13: Poor quality work undermines trust and confidence

5.1.40. Action 3.2 A: Develop process between supply chain, commissioners, and training providers to ensure training provision meets needs

5.1.40.1. **Context:** There are interconnections between the supply chain, contract commissioners (e.g. local authorities, social landlords) and training providers which would benefit from support and coordination

5.1.40.2. **Approach:** Research current informal/formal relationships between stakeholders, research any best practice nationally, figure out gap, develop options paper, consult with stakeholders, develop business plan and secure funding to implement

5.1.40.3. **Assumptions:**

- Better coordination can deliver benefits to stakeholders
- Best practice available that can be replicated
- Mismatch is holding back delivery of retrofit measures

5.1.40.4. **Resources:** Likely to require research time and project management with further activity dependent on chosen improvement actions

- People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer(s)

5.1.40.5. Money: TBC when improvement actions determined

5.1.40.6. **Links:**

- Could support effective delivery of [action 3.1 C](#) and [action 3.2 B](#)

5.1.40.7. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Supply chain, local authorities, social landlords, training providers
- Strength 2: Established green skills programmes



- Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity

5.1.41. Action 3.2 B: Develop installer and training-provider collaboration (e.g. trainer mentoring, on-site training)

- 5.1.41.1. **Context:** Training providers may find it difficult to keep up with development and best practice within the supply chain
- 5.1.41.2. **Approach:** Research any current links between local training providers and the supply chain, research best practice, develop options paper, consult with stakeholders, develop business plan and secure funding to implement
- 5.1.41.3. **Assumptions:**
  - Valuable knowledge can be transferred from supply chain to training providers and back again
  - Learning opportunities at live retrofit sites
- 5.1.41.4. **Resources:** Likely to require research time and project management with further activity dependent on chosen model
  - People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer(s)
- 5.1.41.5. **Money:** c. £50,000 per year for delivered service
- 5.1.41.6. **Links:**
  - May benefit from completion of [action 3.2 A](#) first
  - May well benefit from [action 3.1 A](#) and [action 3.1 B](#)
- 5.1.41.7. **Strategic alignment:**
  - Direct beneficiaries: Supply chain, training providers
  - Strength 2: Established green skills programmes
  - Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity

5.1.42. Action 3.2 C: Secure funding to deliver training provision improvements

- 5.1.42.1. **Context:** Training providers require improvement in training facilities to meet demand for retrofit training and to meet demand for increased levels of trainee knowledge
- 5.1.42.2. **Approach:** Review and update current training provision and any national best practice/ standards, figure out gap, develop options paper, consult with stakeholders, develop business plan and secure funding to implement
- 5.1.42.3. **Assumptions:**
  - Funding can be secured to deliver improvements
  - Training centres may not have adequate facilities to teach all retrofit measures
- 5.1.42.4. **Resources:** Likely to require research time and project management with further activity dependent on chosen improvement actions
  - People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer(s)
  - Money: TBC when improvement actions determined
- 5.1.42.5. **Links:**



- Benefit from completion of [action 3.2 A](#) first

5.1.42.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Training providers
- Strength 2: Established green skills programme
- Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity

5.1.43. Action 3.2 D: Engage with careers services and coordinate retrofit careers promotional activity, with a focus on diversifying the workforce

5.1.43.1. **Context:** A career in the construction sector is often not seen as a good career path and particularly for women, minorities and disadvantaged groups

5.1.43.2. **Approach:** Research careers advice system in locality and current provision, research any national best practices, figure out gap, develop options paper, consult with stakeholders, develop business plan and secure funding to implement

5.1.43.3. **Assumptions:**

- Current supply chain capacity will not meet demand in 3-yrs
- Greater levels of diversification in the supply chain would have positive impact
- Lack of retrofit career knowledge is hindering promotion by advisors

5.1.43.4. **Resources:** Likely to require research time and project management with further activity dependent on chosen improvement actions

- People: Project Manager, Procurement Officer(s)
- Money: TBC when improvement actions determined

5.1.43.5. **Links:**

- Would benefit from completion of [action 3.2 A](#) first

5.1.43.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Careers services, supply chain, training providers
- Weakness 4: Lack of marketplace for graduates or potential employees for skills programmes
- Weakness 8: Skills shortage and limited installation capacity
- Weakness 11: Colleges ready but not getting students

## Goal 4.1: Develop suitable retrofit strategy, governance and delivery arrangements

5.1.44. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- Opportunity 2: Funding availability

5.1.45. Action 4.1 A: Create delivery vehicle, governance and reporting structure to ensure delivery of retrofit strategy involving all relevant stakeholders

5.1.45.1. **Context:** The Local Retrofit Strategy will require a centralised or decentralised team to deliver, and processes put in place to ensure decisions are effectively taken on behalf of stakeholders



5.1.45.2. **Approach:** Put in place LRS project delivery team and board to develop and deliver actions either directly or via stakeholder/third-party

5.1.45.3. **Assumptions:**

- Needs to be a central point bringing together and transferring knowledge
- LRS will require ongoing support to ensure delivery of outcomes
- Critical to success is ownership of strategic goals
- Lack of capacity is holding back interventions to increase retrofit

5.1.45.4. **Resources:** Likely to require Project Manager and Project Officer(s) and then board representatives from stakeholders

- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
- Money: c. £100,000 per year to run project delivery team

5.1.45.5. **Links:**

- Recommend as pre-cursor to all other actions

5.1.45.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Local authorities, social landlords, training providers, community energy organisations, supply chain
- Strength 10: Established industry leaders e.g. GSK
- Weakness 1: Lack of objective priorities
- Weakness 2: Lack of retrofit strategy
- Weakness 3: Limited resources and capacity
- Weakness 5: Collaboration between all stakeholders could complicate project oversight if governance, roles, and responsibilities aren't clearly defined, especially in the absence of a guiding strategy
- Opportunity 1: Strategy development
- Opportunity 2: Funding availability
- Opportunity 3: Innovation and knowledge sharing
- Opportunity 4: National and local policy alignment
- Opportunity 15: Devolution
- Threat 1: Funding gaps or uncertainty
- Threat 5: Urgency of Climate Impact Response
- Threat 10: Liabilities from consortia and risk averse councils
- Threat 14: Devolution process derails agendas

5.1.46. **Action 4.1 B: Develop delivery vehicle owned by stakeholders to deliver retrofit measures to share risk and increase benefit.**

5.1.46.1. **Context:** Retrofit is an emerging market with limited capacity in the supply chain and high costs therefore ways to maximise capacity, minimise costs and maximise benefits can support development of a wider supply chain



- 5.1.46.2. **Approach:** Research existing examples of best practice, form working group to review, develop proposals for consultation and then develop business plan.
- 5.1.46.3. **Assumptions:**
- Risks can be reduced through becoming managing agent
  - Potential for SPV to deliver greater benefits to stakeholders
  - Emerging models to be replicated
- 5.1.46.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out research and develop business plan
- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
  - Money: TBC
- 5.1.46.5. **Links:**
- Require [action 4.1 A](#) to be completed first
  - May benefit from following [action 1.1 A](#)
  - Could be used to deliver measures as part of [action 1.1 B](#)
  - May be incorporated with [action 1.1 E](#)
- 5.1.46.6. **Strategic alignment:**
- Direct beneficiaries: Local authorities, social landlords
  - Strength 1: Collaborative networks and established governance
  - Weakness 10: Limited numbers of community energy groups and not seen as a partner
- 5.1.47. Action 4.1 C: Develop working group to engage and encourage non-Tier 1 Herts businesses to secure contracts
- 5.1.47.1. **Context:** Achieving the strategic vision will require an increase in supply chain capacity and SMEs can find it difficult to win contracts and therefore will not be stimulated to invest
- 5.1.47.2. **Approach:** Define draft terms of reference for Working Group, invite stakeholders to take part, review and agree terms of reference, find chair and arrange meetings
- 5.1.47.3. **Assumptions:**
- Recognises the need for distinct support for non-Tier 1 contractors, either directly or through existing frameworks and contracts with Tier 1 contractors
  - Already has momentum and commitment through LARA
  - Non-tier 1 contractors struggling to win local retrofit contracts even though they can deliver specification
- 5.1.47.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out development and then facilitate meetings
- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
  - Money: Minimal
- 5.1.47.5. **Links:**
- Require [action 4.1 A](#) to be completed first



- Probable pre-cursor to [action 2.1 A](#)
- Provide feedback for options coming from [action 2.2 B](#)

5.1.47.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Supply chain (local)
- Strength 1: Collaborative networks and established governance
- Strength 3: Previous experience establishing pilot projects
- Opportunity 6: Leverage co-benefits through aligned procurement

5.1.48. Action 4.1 D: Agree priority demographics and building archetypes and gather data on locations

5.1.48.1. **Context:** With limited resources the use of prioritisation could enable more efficient delivery of vision

5.1.48.2. **Approach:** Use Locality Assessment and Herts Insight to develop potential prioritisation models, consult with stakeholders, develop final plan and implement

5.1.48.3. **Assumptions:**

- Some demographics may be considered to have greater need than others and/or resonate with vision more, or groups in greater need may already have been extensively targeted through grant funding.
- Metrics available to decide demographics and/or archetypes
- Data can be found to decide locations of prioritised demographics/archetypes

5.1.48.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out development and then support, directly and indirectly through stakeholders, the evidenced prioritised demographics/archetypes

- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
- Money: TBC when approach is determined

5.1.48.5. **Links:**

- To be completed prior to [action 1.1 B](#)
- Likely need to be completed prior to [action 1.2 B](#) and [action 1.3 A](#)

5.1.48.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: TBC
- Weakness 9: Higher than national average listed and conservation properties

5.1.48.7. **Development:**

- Developed by Procurement Working Group
- LARA Project Team revised and proposed action at Workshop three
- Endorsed by stakeholders at Workshop three



## Goal 4.2: Increase collaboration, data-sharing and learning

### 5.1.49. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- Opportunity 2: Funding availability
- Opportunity 3: Innovation and knowledge sharing

### 5.1.50. Action 4.2 A: Create stakeholder-specific forums to coordinate activity within stakeholder group (with representation from central team)

5.1.50.1. **Context:** Critical to success is continued collaboration within stakeholder groups

5.1.50.2. **Approach:** Define draft terms of reference for Stakeholder Groups and appropriate stakeholder types, invite stakeholders to take part, review and agree terms of reference, find chair and arrange meetings

5.1.50.3. **Assumptions:**

- Stakeholders will see value in continuing to collaborate
- Sharing of knowledge will improve benefits and ability to achieve vision

5.1.50.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out development and then facilitate meetings

- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
- Money: Minimal

5.1.50.5. **Links:**

- Require [action 4.1 A](#) to be completed first and then likely pre-cursor to all further actions

5.1.50.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: System-wide
- Weakness 1: Lack of objective priorities
- Weakness 5: Collaboration between all stakeholders could complicate project oversight if governance, roles, and responsibilities aren't clearly defined, especially in the absence of a guiding strategy
- Weakness 6: Limited stakeholder engagement and lack of public understanding
- Weakness 10: Limited numbers of community energy groups and not seen as a partner
- Threat 1: Funding gaps or uncertainty
- Threat 14: Devolution process derails agendas

### 5.1.51. Action 4.2 B: Develop and implement process to assess and manage retrofit demand to supply balance

5.1.51.1. **Context:** If demand outstrip supply consumers may lose interest and prices increase and if supply outstrips demand suppliers may lose interest and disinvest, with both scenarios creating a lag on rectification

5.1.51.2. **Approach:** Decide process to ascertain supply and demand, consult with stakeholders, revise and implement plan



5.1.51.3. **Assumptions:**

- Demand and supply can be figured out through consultation with supply chain and commissioners of services (e.g. local authorities, social landlords)
- Demand and supply can be determined to a level that enables corrective/improvement actions
- actions can be put in place to alter levels of demand or supply
- actions can be put in place to ensure demand and supply balance in the future

5.1.51.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out development and then deliver process

- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
- Money: TBC

5.1.51.5. **Links:**

- Require [action 4.1 A](#) and [action 4.2 A](#) to be completed first

5.1.51.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Training providers, supply chain, local authorities, social landlords
- Opportunity 5: Local job creation
- Threat 8: Supply chain constraints

5.1.52. Action 4.2 C: Develop and deliver process to continue development of Shared Understanding and learning from actions

5.1.52.1. **Context:** In a complex system we can't be sure what will work, so we need to continually learn, adapt and improve

5.1.52.2. **Approach:** Develop evaluation framework based on Shared Understanding process, consult with stakeholders, develop final plan and implement

5.1.52.3. **Assumptions:**

- Indicators can be found to figure out progress
- Learnings from actions can lead to improvements

5.1.52.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out development and then facilitate learning process

- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
- Money: TBC when process determined

5.1.52.5. **Links:**

- Likely to need [action 4.1 A](#) and [action 4.2 A](#) completed first
- Could be incorporated with [action 2.2 C](#)

5.1.52.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Local authorities, social landlords, training providers, community energy organisations, supply chain



## Goal 4.3: Ensure local policies are supportive

### 5.1.53. **Strategic fit** (across all goal actions):

- Opportunity 3: Innovation and knowledge sharing

### 5.1.54. Action 4.3 A: Coordinate policy implementation and development

- 5.1.54.1. **Context:** Retrofit offers a wide range of benefits and therefore touches on several policy areas
- 5.1.54.2. **Approach:** Map stakeholder policies relating to retrofit benefits, review areas to see how or if retrofit incorporated, consult with relevant stakeholders and determine improvement actions, implement actions.
- 5.1.54.3. **Assumptions:**
- Critical to success is to continue co-development of actions and policy across system
  - Greater alignment can improve outcomes and unlock resources
  - Benefits of retrofit known
- 5.1.54.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out development and then facilitate delivery of improvement action but will require input from public sector policy officers
- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
  - Money: TBC
- 5.1.54.5. **Links:**
- May benefit from [action 4.2 A](#) being completed first as a policy group could be set up
  - Likely links with [action 2.2 A](#)
  - Potential pre-cursor to [action 1.2 D](#) to give rationale/ support for improvement actions
- 5.1.54.6. **Strategic alignment:**
- Direct beneficiaries: Local authorities, public health
  - Weakness 5: Collaboration between all stakeholders could complicate project oversight if governance, roles, and responsibilities aren't clearly defined, especially in the absence of a guiding strategy
  - Weakness 12: Policy environment and communication from government
  - Opportunity 9: Decentralise electricity grid and develop renewable heat networks

Opportunity 11: Engage health professionals and align to health and social care objectives

### 5.1.55. Action 4.3 B: Consider integrating retrofit targets into Local Plans (aligning with 2050 sustainability goals)

- 5.1.55.1. **Context:** A local plan outlines how an area will develop in the future and created by a local planning authority following consultation
- 5.1.55.2. **Approach:** Review existing Local Plans for retrofit inclusion, find best practice nationally, determine potential improvements, consult with relevant stakeholders,



implement improvement actions, considering relevant policy changes from central government and any upcoming local government reorganisation and its implications to align policies and plans with aligned retrofit targets.

5.1.55.3. **Assumptions:**

- Local Plans are a statutory instrument and so can put weight behind retrofit ambitions and influence building control

5.1.55.4. **Resources:** Project Manager and Project Officer(s) to carry out development and then facilitate delivery of improvement action but will require input and on-going support from planning officers

- People: Project Manager, Project officer(s)
- Money: TBC

5.1.55.5. **Links:**

- May benefit from [action 4.2 A](#) being completed first as a Planning group could be set up
- Links with [action 4.3 A](#)

5.1.55.6. **Strategic alignment:**

- Direct beneficiaries: Local authorities

Opportunity 9: Decentralise electricity grid and develop renewable heat network



# TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

This toolkit is a self-assessment to help officers think about how their policies, projects, procurements, commissioning and services can align with Three Rivers' Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy. It also supports report authors to draft the environmental implications section on decision reports, and procurement strategy reports.

## How to use the tool

The self-assessment is intended to help officers reflect critically on their project or service's environmental impact. It is a reflective tool, not a framework for approving or rejecting a decision, so it will work best if each question is considered honestly and carefully.

We envision this tool will be used early in the design of a project/policy/procurement to identify areas where environmental harms can be mitigated, and environmental benefits enhanced. If you would like advice, please discuss with your Head of Service, and contact the Climate and Sustainability Team if necessary.

Once you are happy that your proposal is optimised, then complete this form, and copy the results in each section in to your decision report (committee/synopsis report) where applicable.

The next tab presents a set of questions about the proposal on a range of sustainability criteria. Each answer is colour-coded to indicate its environmental impact as below:

Colour code	Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some negative impacts sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Once you've selected your answer in the "Impact" column (C), then give the relevant score in the "Score" column (E). Higher scores indicate more sustainable proposals.

Against each area, the assessment presents prompts to highlight best practice suggestions and enable consideration of how negative impacts could be lessened on a project.

*This assessment was inspired by Jim Cunningham at Hammersmith and Fulham Council and developed by officers of Three Rivers Distrcit Council.*

Version                      Date





TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Guidance for use

Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed.

Please email your completed copy of the form to  
Joanna.Hewitson@threeivers.gov.uk.

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

Name of project/policy/procurement and date		LARA Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy
Brief description (1-2 sentences):		This report seeks approval of the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy (Appendix 2), which will formalise a structured approach to retrofit coordination, funding applications, and project delivery in Hertfordshire.

Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy					
Question	Impact (select from list)	Score 1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (1-4)
1 What effect will this project have on overall energy use (electricity or other fuels) e.g. in buildings, appliances or machinery?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	accelerate retrofit (improving the energy efficiency of domestic buildings) across Hertfordshire, and the actions arising from the Strategy's adoption will contribute to	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	4
2 What effect will this project have on the direct use of fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy aims to accelerate retrofit (improving the energy efficiency of domestic buildings) across Hertfordshire, and the actions arising from the Strategy's adoption will contribute to	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	4
3 Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
4 Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? (e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per sq. m., no servicing with fossil fuels such as gas heating, EPC "A" or BREAM "excellent").	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A no new buildings targeted in retrofit activities.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
5 Does this make use of sustainable materials / inputs in your project? E.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
6 Does this use more sustainable processes in the creation of the project? E.g. modular and off-site construction; use of electrical plant instead of petrol/diesel,	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
7 Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	to accelerate retrofit (improving the energy efficiency of domestic buildings) across Hertfordshire, and the actions arising from	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	4
8 Do any appliances or electrical equipment to be used have high energy efficiency ratings?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score		4.00			4.00

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
- Include energy efficiency measures when carrying
- Replace gas boilers with renewable heating, such as heat pumps. Consider District Heat Networks where appropriate.
- Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard.
- Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material, wool- or hemp-based insulation, and timber frames.
- Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
- Install solar panels or other renewable energy generation, and consider including battery storage.
- Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
- Use energy-efficient appliances.
- Install low-energy LED lighting.
- Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.



TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Travel					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
9 Reducing travel: what effect will this project have on overall vehicle use?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
10 Will this project use petrol or diesel vehicles or EV, hybrid?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
11 Will this support people to use active or low-carbon transport? E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
12 Will it be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
13 Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? Using e-cargo bikes; timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score		#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.

- Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new fleet.

- Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.

- Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.

- Use zero-emission deliveries

- Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries

Goods and Consumption					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
14 Has this project considered ways to reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, before acquiring newly manufactured ones?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Increasing the retrofit of existing buildings avoids demolition and re-development by keeping current housing stock in use.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	3
15 Does it reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
16 Does it use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
17 Does it enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Increasing awareness of and support around domestic retrofit will help households reduce their energy use, and use more renewable and low-carbon technologies for power and	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	4
18 Is there a plan to reduce waste sent to landfill in manufacture?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
19 Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recyled at end of its life?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
20 Has it taken steps to ensure any food it offers is more sustainable? E.g. less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste; seasonal produce; locally sourced.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score		3.50			3.50

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership.

- Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods.

- Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life.

- Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item.

- Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare.

- Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items.

- Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.



TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Ecology					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
21What effect does this project have on total area of non-amenity green/blue space? (Amenity green space = playing fields, play areas, sporting lakes etc. Non-amenity= e.g. woodland, grassland, wetland,	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
22Does the project create more habitat for nature? E.g. native plants, trees, and flowers	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
23Does it make changes to existing habitats and have a negative impact on nature? <i>E.g. use of pesticides, reduced extent and variety of plants, planting non-native species</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
24Does it help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score		#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!
Adaptation					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
25Does any planned project, construction or building use include measures to conserve water?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
26Does anythe project , consider how to sustainably protect people from extreme weather?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
27Has any planned building work or infrastructure considered how to mitigate flood risk? <i>E.g. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); de-paving areas; green roofs</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
28Does any planned infrastructure or building work increase the overall footprint of hard surfacing? (as opposed to green or permeable surfacing)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	N/A	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
29Has the project considered its own resilience to future extreme heat, flood risk, or water shortage?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Accelerating retrofit of domestic dwellings in Hertfordshire will help them stay warmer in winter and cooler in summer, helping residents adapt to the impacts of climate	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	3
Average Score		3.0			3.00
Engagement and Influence					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
30Does this project raise awareness and understanding of the climate and ecological emergency, and the steps that people can take?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	domestic retrofit will help households reduce their energy use, and use more renewable and low-carbon technologies for power and heat, which will help to reduce household	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	4
Average Score		4			4
Total Overall Average Score		3.63			3.6

Now assesment is compelete copy and paste box into your business case, committee report. (under environmental implications 6).Whole assesment can be an appendix. Procurement tenders are expected to submit complete report with application.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	4.00
Travel	#DIV/0!
Goods and Consumption	3.50
Ecology	3.50
Adaptation	3.00
Engagement and Influence	4
Total Overall Average Score	3.6

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:  
(Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)

- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing.
- Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls.
- Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity.
- Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides.
- Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles
- Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets
- Re-use grey water in new developments
- Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets
- Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading
- Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing.
- Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS).
- Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency.



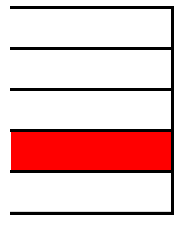
TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.



List 1		List 2	List 3
Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	No	No
Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	To some extent	N/A
Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	N/A	
Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigation	-1		
Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Yes	Yes
Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4		
Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3		
Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2		
Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigation	-1		
Ok -		Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	
Light green (3)		Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	
Yellow (2)		Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	
Red (1)		Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.	
Grey (0)		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	







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# Equality impact Assessment



Project Information	
<b>Project Name</b> <i>This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing</i>	LARA Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy
<b>Service Area</b> <i>Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed</i>	Climate and Sustainability
<b>EIA Author</b> <i>Name and Job Title</i>	Ellie Nathan – Net Zero Innovation Project Manager
<b>Date EIA drafted</b>	03/06/2025
<b>ID number</b> <i>This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team</i>	

Executive summary	
<b>Focus of EIA</b> <i>A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.</i>  <i>Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'</i>  <i>This section should explain what you are assessing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?</i></li> <li>• <i>(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.</i></li> </ul>	<p>The report seeks approval of the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy, which will formalise a structured approach to retrofit coordination, funding applications, and project delivery in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Retrofit refers to any improvement work on an existing domestic building which improves its energy efficiency, through making it easier to heat, increasing its ability to retain heat for longer, and through replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy.</p> <p>The Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy aims to deliver on four strategic goals to increase retrofit demand, capacity, and supply in Hertfordshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal 1: Increase uptake and successful delivery of retrofit advice and measures.</li> <li>• Goal 2: Realise the co-benefits of retrofit in Hertfordshire.</li> <li>• Goal 3: Increase local supply chain capacity and quality through better access and control of resources, data and shared understanding.</li> <li>• Goal 4: Create a confident, trusted retrofit environment.</li> </ul> <p>The adoption of the Retrofit Strategy itself is unlikely to have any material impact on people/communities with protected characteristics, however the implementation of the Retrofit Strategy, through the resulting Action Plan, may positively impact some people/groups with protected characteristics such as elderly people and disabled people who could benefit from energy</p>



	efficiency improvements to their homes. Lower-income households are also likely to benefit from advancing retrofit in the county, though not technically a group with protected characteristics.
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Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	Potential Issue <i>Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur</i>	Mitigating Actions <i>How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?</i>
Age	Elderly people may benefit from grant and support schemes for home energy efficiency improvements, through the direct impacts of a warmer, healthier home living environment, and also through avoiding scams/poor quality work through the provision of a potential independent retrofit advice/support service.	Positive impacts can be realised by ensuring communication about initiatives with elderly residents through appropriate channels and working in partnership with key stakeholders e.g. CAB, Age UK etc.
Disability	Disabled people may benefit from grant and support schemes for home energy efficiency improvements, through the direct impacts of a warmer, healthier home living environment.	Positive impacts can be realised by ensuring communication about initiatives is accessible to disabled residents and shared through appropriate channels, working in partnership with key stakeholders e.g. CAB, disability support charities, social prescribers etc.
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	N/A	
Pregnancy or maternity	N/A	
Race	N/A	
Religion or belief	N/A	



Sex	N/A	
Sexual Orientation	N/A	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A	
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces personnel.	N/A	

### Actions Planned

*In this section you can add information on additional or proactive steps you are taking that enhance equity, engagement or equality of access to services, as well as those mitigating actions identified in the section above that will be undertaken.*

*The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.*

- Full Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for specific actions and proposals resulting from the Hertfordshire Retrofit Action Plan on a project-by-project basis where they are likely to impact people or groups with protected characteristics.
- We plan to work closely with the Partnerships team to implement any actions resulting from the Retrofit Strategy which can positively contribute to equalities, health, and fuel poverty initiatives in Three Rivers.



Additional Information
<i>Space to provide any additional information in relation to protected characteristics or equity, diversity, equality and inclusion.</i>

Sign off:

Equalities Lead Officer	Date







Three Rivers District Council

**Climate Change and Leisure  
Committee Report  
Outline Business Case for the  
Installation of Rooftop Solar PV at  
South Oxhey Leisure Centre**

Date: 02/07/25



**Climate Change, and Leisure Committee**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025**

PART I

**Outline Business Case for the Installation of Rooftop Solar PV at South Oxhey Leisure Centre**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 This report proposes that rooftop solar PV is installed at South Oxhey Leisure Centre, funded by council capital budget and repaid through a Power Purchase Agreement<sup>1</sup> with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM).
- 1.2 This report recommends that the Outline Business Case (OBC) is recommended to Policy & Resources Committee. This report provides background context and a high-level overview of the OBC, which can be found in Appendix 1.

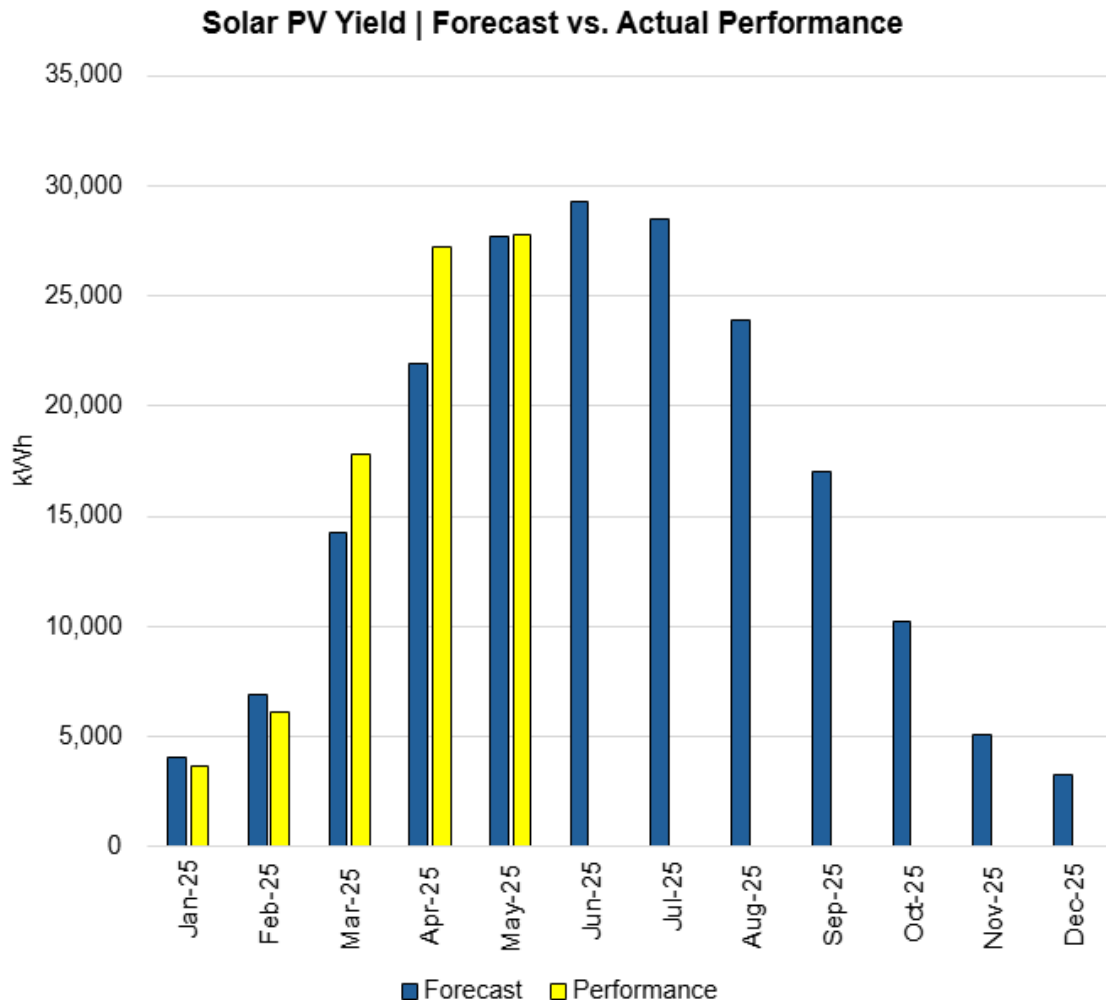
**2 Details**

- 2.1 Three Rivers District Council are committed to achieving net zero by 2030 for our own emissions and to inspire and enable a net zero district by 2045. Achieving net carbon zero and being climate resilient is one of four core pillars of the corporate framework. Residents endorsed this as a priority in the recent resident survey conducted in February-March 2024 when environment/climate change ranked as the 3<sup>rd</sup> biggest concern for households.
- 2.2 Most of the council's carbon emissions are emitted from two main sources 1) council buildings (including leisure centres) and 2) council vehicle fleet. To achieve net zero, the council must reduce carbon emissions from its vehicle fleet by ~850 tonnes per year by 2030 and reduce carbon emissions from its "core buildings" (excluding small buildings like pavilions) by ~838 tonnes per year by 2030.
- 2.3 In 2022, the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) conducted a survey of the council's core buildings to establish a baseline of emissions. The survey revealed that the core buildings emitted 942 tons (t) of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the 2019/20 fiscal year. APSE also projected a trajectory towards net-zero based on the completion of a suite of building decarbonisation projects. One of the projects recommended by APSE was the installation of rooftop solar PV at South Oxhey Leisure Centre (SOLC).
- 2.4 Since then, several decarbonisation projects have been implemented (or planned) across the council estate, which are expected to result in savings of 104 tCO<sub>2</sub>. Most recently, a 500-panel rooftop solar PV system was installed at William Penn Leisure Centre which by June 17<sup>th</sup> 2025 over this calendar year has saved over £15,000 and 41 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> and is performing 10% ahead of forecast at the end of May. See Figure 1.

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<sup>1</sup> A **power purchase agreement (PPA)** is a **long-term contract** between an electricity generator and a buyer. In this agreement, the buyer agrees to purchase electricity at a pre-negotiated price for a specified duration, usually ranging from 5 to 20 years. The PPA outlines the terms of energy delivery and pricing, ensuring a stable revenue stream for the energy supplier.





- 2.5 The rooftop solar PV at William Penn Leisure Centre was funded by a grant from the Swimming Pool Support Fund and Sport England. The council also applied to Sport England for a grant for rooftop solar PV at SOLC, but our application was unsuccessful.
- 2.6 SOLC consumes 153,594 kWh of electricity per year and is one of the biggest electricity consuming buildings in the council estate.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the installation of rooftop solar PV would have a big impact on the council's efforts to become net zero by 2030.
- 2.7 As such, council officers have been working to 1) confirm the feasibility of installing rooftop solar PV at SOLC and 2) exploring alternative potential fundings sources.
- 2.8 One potential funding source officers have explored is using council capital budget to fund the solar PV, repaid through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA).
- 2.9 A Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is a financial arrangement whereby the council would install and fund the solar PV and agree to sell SLM the solar electricity at a unit rate of £0.1393 pence per kWh which aligns to Schedule 18 (Utilities) of the leisure contract. PPA's are commonly used in conjunction with

<sup>2</sup> 2019/2020 data as per APSE energy audit.



solar PV. Schedule 18 of the of Leisure Contract addresses risk arising from utility tariffs. The current rate of 13.93p is the original 11p rate agreed in Schedule 18 with indexation applied each year since 2018. This rate will increase each year with new indexation and will be reflected within the contract variation if the solar install goes ahead.

- 2.10 A PPA requires specialist legal advice to setup which typically costs ~£2,500. Proper repair and maintenance (which would be the council's responsibility) is important
- 2.11 The Council will need to procure a maintenance and repair contract to keep the solar PV operational. The projected cost ~£1,120 per year this is likely to increase in line with the utility price indexation. At present SLM have sole responsibility for maintenance at South Oxhey Leisure Centre so this will also require a variation to the existing SLM contract.
- 2.12 The current Leisure Services Contract with SLM expires in 2038. A new price for the solar electricity will form part of the negotiations with the new Leisure Services Contract provider. A normal PPA unit rate is based on the market rate of electricity at the time the PPA is agreed. PPA unit prices are typically ~5p less than the market rate, to incentivise the use of a renewable tariff. The present open market price to supply William Penn is 20p, which would equate to a potential PPA rate of 15p/ kwh.
- 2.13 The Outline Business Case can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.14 Feasibility Study Summary**
- 2.15 The feasibility of rooftop solar PV at SOLC has been evaluated from a technical, financial and legal (including planning permission) perspective.
- 2.16 The feasibility study showed that installation is feasible and that SOLC is a good candidate for rooftop solar PV.
- 2.17 The feasibility of a solar canopy at SOLC was also evaluated as part of a wider study across seven council owned car parks. While both rooftop solar PV and a solar canopy are feasible with less than 10 year return on investment, the roof top solar is the more favourable.
- 2.18 Table 1 below shows how the canopy and rooftop systems and benefits compare.

	Solar Canopy	Rooftop Solar
Solar Capacity (kWp)	143	140
Annual Generation (MWh)	134.7	126.3
No. Panels	318	280
Indicative Capital Cost (£)	£287,868	£118,421
Project IRR (%)	12.7%	20%



Net Present Value (£,30-year)	£290,998	£313,528
Breakeven Year	9	4.5
Cumulative Net Income (£,30-year)	£664,835	£534,929
Carbon Savings (Lifetime, tCO <sub>2</sub> )	815	1,122
Estimated Embodied Carbon (tCO <sub>2</sub> )	253	83

Table 1 Solar Canopy & Rooftop Solar Comparison

- 2.19 The rooftop solar PV and solar canopy arrays are of a similar size and comparable in terms of energy generation and carbon savings. However, rooftop solar is cheaper and so compares favourably in financial terms such as breaking even 4.5 years earlier than a solar canopy so officers recommend prioritising rooftop solar PV

## 2.20 Outline Business Case Summary

- 2.21 A PPA requires specialist legal advice to setup which typically costs ~£2,500. Proper repair and maintenance (which would be the council's responsibility) is important, failing to keep the solar PV operational could invalidate the PPA. Therefore, the council would seek to enter a solar PV maintenance and repair contract projected to cost ~£1,120 per year. £5,500 has been allocated to cover the cost of procurement and installation.
- 2.22 The forecasted cost of the rooftop solar PV is £110,421 and is predicted to generate PPA revenue of £17,585 per year. **Please note that the exact cost of the rooftop solar PV will be confirmed through contractor quotations before consideration by the Policy & Resources committee.**
- 2.23 Additionally, the council is forecasted to benefit from a £9,659 revenue saving per year from a reduction in the subsidy it pays SLM under the utility indemnification clause of the leisure contract.
- 2.24 The total cost of the solar PV is forecasted to be £118,421 (solar PV cost + project management cost + PPA setup cost) plus an ongoing repair and maintenance cost of £1,120 per year.
- 2.25 The total benefit to the council is therefore forecasted to be £26,134 per year. The capital financing costs are estimated to be £16,579 resulting in a net income of £9,555 per year. Excluding capital financing charges there is a payback period of 4.5 years or 5.1 years after allowing for interest costs of £4,737 per year.
- 2.26 The Inverters may need to be replaced once during the 25 year period, and likely to cost approximately £15,000 at today's prices, which is less than the revenue for one year. This would need a contingency from the year when the warranties expires, which would be established at procurement but likely to be between 5-25 years.
- 2.27 The rooftop solar PV is forecasted to save 24.43 tCO<sub>2</sub> per year and 1,122 tCO<sub>2</sub> over its lifetime. The estimated embodied carbon of the rooftop solar PV is 83 tCO<sub>2</sub> resulting in a carbon payback period of 3.4 years.



- 2.28 The rooftop solar PV will be owned by the council and therefore will not be impacted by the end of the leisure contract with SLM. Additionally, SLM have agreed to the submission of this OBC and entering a PPA with the unit rate aligned to the leisure contract.

### **3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The council has the option of not installing rooftop solar PV at SOLC. However, this option results in Strategic Risk 10: Failure to deliver net-zero carbon commitments - Impacts negatively on the council's ability to achieve net zero by 2030.
- 3.2 The council has the option of funding the rooftop solar PV at SOLC through a council loan to SLM and repaid through a management charge increase. This option was considered and provisionally proposed to SLM. However, SLM have stated their preferred approach is using a PPA rather than a council loan.
- 3.3 Due to the availability of capital budget for council building decarbonisation, the lack of available grant funding, SLM's preference for a PPA approach and that achieving net carbon zero is one of four core pillars of the corporate framework, our recommended approach is to use capital budget to fund the solar PV at SOLC, repaid through a PPA with SLM.

### **4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 4.1 The programme to decarbonise council buildings is set out in the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy (2023-2027).
- 4.2 Installing rooftop solar PV at SOLC will contribute to 3 key themes in the Corporate Framework 2023-2026:
- 4.3 "Net Carbon Zero & Climate Resilient": The rooftop solar PV will remove 24.43 tCO<sub>2</sub> annually and 1,122 tCO<sub>2</sub> over its lifetime. The council class carbon emissions from Leisure Centres as Scope 3 (indirect) emissions. Therefore, reducing SOLC's carbon emissions will support the council's commitment to be net zero by 2030.
- 4.4 "Provide responsive and responsible local leadership": By installing rooftop solar PV on one of our core buildings we will show residents and businesses that we are leading by example and will encourage others to follow.
- 4.5 "Support and enable sustainable communities": The rooftop solar PV will help improve both the environmental and financial sustainability of SOLC. SOLC is an important community building which rooftop solar PV will help make cleaner, greener and more resilient.

### **5 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 It is recommended that existing council capital budget is used to fund this project. Therefore, it is recommended that the OBC should be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
- 5.2 The exact value of the solar PV system will not be known until contractor quotations have been received which identify the actual cost of the rooftop solar PV. It is envisaged that this will be prior to the Policy & Resources Committee meeting so the actual budget requirement can be considered.



- 5.3 The capital financing costs will be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee, when contractor quotations will have been received.

## **6 Legal Implications**

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report are fully in line with the expectations on local authorities to take local action on climate change contained in the Climate Change Act 2008.
- 6.2 Installation of rooftop solar PV at SOLC will require a contract variation with SLM and may require modifications to the lease agreement with Hertfordshire County Council. Officers have reviewed the legal implications and do not believe they stop the installation of rooftop solar PV.
- 6.3 A contract will be required between the procured contractor and TRDC.

## **7 Staffing Implications**

- 7.1 The Leisure Assets Team will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance contract and invoicing requirements
- 7.2 The Property Team will be supervising the design and installation with support from Climate Change Team and the SOLC Manager and SLM Regional Manager.
- 7.3 The Climate Team will oversee the procurement and project management

## **8 Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 8.1 A Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment has been completed and can be found at Appendix 2. There are no negative impacts identified as arising from the project.

## **9 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications**

- 9.1 A sustainability impact assessment can be found at Appendix 3 with an average total score of 3.13.

<b>Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary</b>	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.40
Travel	N/A
Goods and Consumption	3.00
Ecology	N/A
Adaptation	N/A
Engagement and Influence	3.00
<b>Total Overall Average Score</b>	<b>3.13</b>



## **10 Community Safety Implications**

10.1 None.

## **11 Public Health implications**

11.1 None.

## **12 Customer Services Centre Implications**

12.1 None.

## **13 Communications and Website Implications**

13.1 Once installed the website will be updated, and communication will be required.

## **14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk> with the climate emergency listed as a strategic risk.

14.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Climate and Sustainability service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

14.3

<b>Nature of Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>
The Council fails to act to reduce its' CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	The council net zero target of 2030, corporate framework net zero carbon theme and requirements of the Climate and Emergency Sustainability Strategy are unlikely to be met and importantly the council will not be addressing the climate emergency and thus will contribute further to the increase in global warming and its' consequences.	For the Committee to note and continue to provide a mandate for officers to progress decarbonisation projects.	Treat	6
Damage to the leisure centre roof due to solar PV installation.	There is an inherent risk with solar PV of damaging the roof either during installation or afterwards because of the additional weight.	This risk will be mitigated by carefully reviewing (with help from the Property Team) the panel mounting system and installation method the solar PV design recommends. The solar	Treat	6



		PV installer will commission a structural roof survey before installation to confirm the roof can support the weight. The survey will be included in the total cost and will be shared with TRDC before installation. A Building Surveyor (in house) will oversee and sign off the design and installation.		
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- 14.4 In officer's opinion the risk that the council fails to act to reduce its emissions would prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and therefore presents a strategic risk.



## **Recommendation**

14.5 That:

The Climate Change and Leisure committee recommend officers seek contractor quotations and then recommend the OBC to the Policy & Resources Committee.

Report prepared by: Joanna Hewitson, Climate and Sustainability Strategy Officer,

## **Background Papers**

None

## **APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS**

**Appendix 1: Outline Business Case for the Installation of Rooftop Solar PV at South Oxhey Leisure Centre**

**Appendix 2: Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment**

**Appendix 3: Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment**







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# OUTLINE BUSINE CASE

05/06/2025

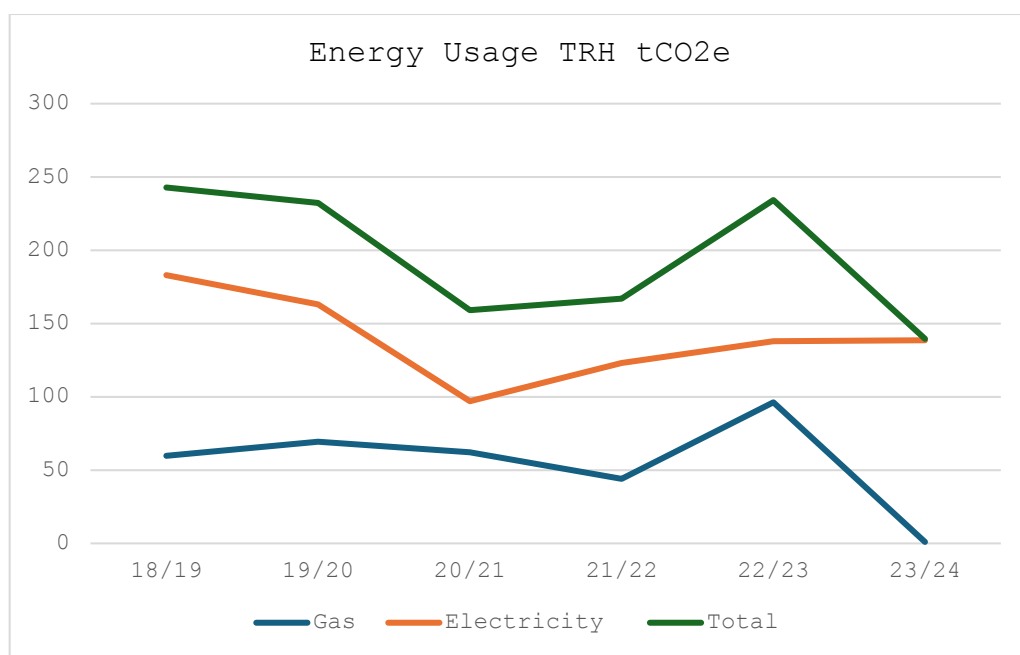
Installation of additional  
rooftop solar PV at Three  
Rivers House funded by  
council capital budget and  
repaid through electricity cost  
savings



## 1. Executive Summary & Recommendations

Provide a summary of key points of the Business Case and recommendations for the governance group to consider.

- 1.1 This Outline Business Case (OBC) recommends that additional rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) is installed at Three Rivers House (TRH), funded by council capital budget and repaid through electricity cost savings.
- 1.2 A full feasibility study has not been undertaken, as the presence of existing rooftop solar PV at TRH already demonstrates its viability.
- 1.3 The cost of the solar PV system is £50,813 (excluding VAT) which has been identified through a competitive tender process.
- 1.4 The solar PV system is predicted to generate ~£9,635 of electricity cost savings per year, resulting in a payback period of ~5.1 years.
- 1.5 The solar PV system is forecasted to save 6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (tCO<sub>2</sub>) per year and 152 tCO<sub>2</sub> over its lifetime. The estimated embodied carbon of the rooftop solar PV is 28 tCO<sub>2</sub> resulting in a payback period of 4.6 years.
- 1.6 The installation of additional solar PV will complement the server room upgrade (2022/23) and Air Source Heat Pump installation (2023/24) which helped reduce the buildings carbon emissions by 95 tonnes (or 40%) in 2023/24 compared to the previous year.
- 1.7 Figure 1 demonstrates the significant decline in energy consumption since 2018/19, even when considering the impacts of the COVID years.



	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Reduction on 22/24
Gas	60	69	62	44	96	1	
Electricity	183	163	97	123	138	139	
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>40%</b>

Figure 1 Three Rivers House Gas and Electricity use

- 1.8 We acknowledge that local government reformation introduces



uncertainty around the future ownership of Three Rivers House. However, with a payback period of only ~5 years, combined with the added benefits of improving the building's saleability and rentability, we suggest installation of additional solar PV is still a sensible investment.

## **2. Objectives**

What is the programme/project or growth bin aiming to achieve/what changes will it bring about?

- 2.1 The objective of this project is to contribute to the council having a net zero building estate and to meet its ambitions, as set out in the approved Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy, where the council committed to achieving net zero by 2030 for our own emissions. An important element of the council's ambition to achieve net zero is the decarbonisation of council buildings. The installation of additional rooftop solar PV at Three River House will support the council's corporate plan objective to achieve carbon net zero.

## **3. Background and context**

What events, policies, issues, risks or opportunities have prompted this programme/project or growth bid? *Provide benchmarking data where relevant.*

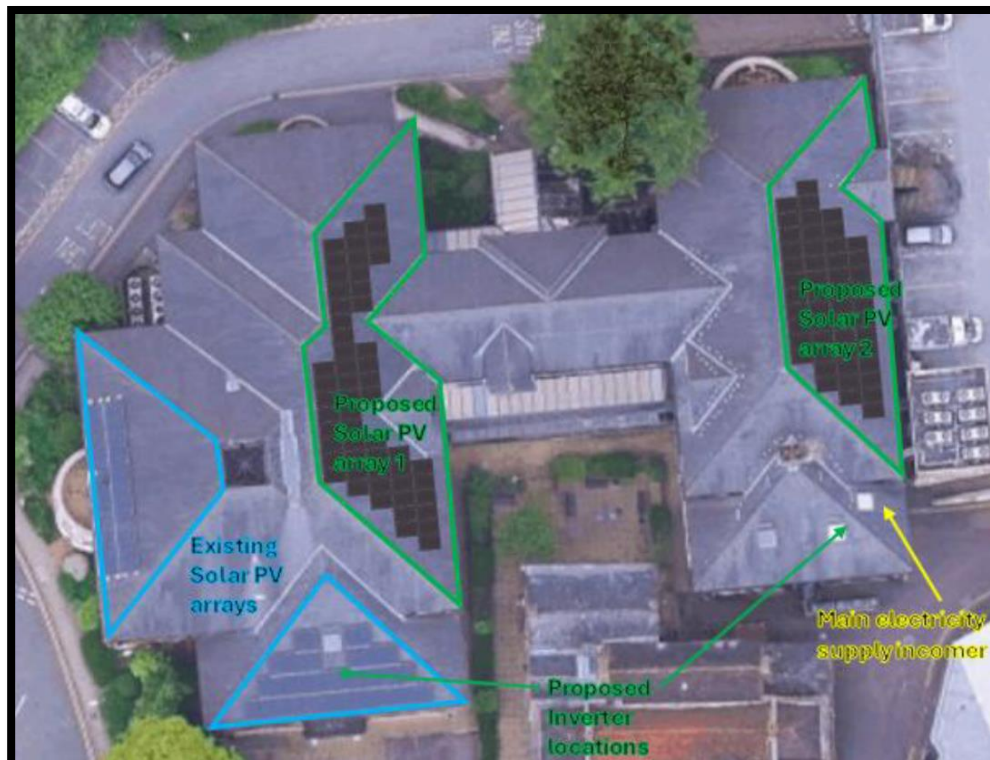
- 3.1 In 2018, a 17.5 kw solar PV system was installed at TRH consisting of 65 x Seraphim All Black 265w panels connected to a Fronius Symo-7.0 7kw Invertor and a Fronius Symo-10.0 10kw invertor. The solar PV system generates ~10MWh per year.
- 3.2 In 2022, the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) completed energy surveys of the council's core buildings. The APSE surveys identified a range of potential projects that could reduce the carbon emissions of the buildings. APSE recommended the installation of additional rooftop solar PV at TRH.
- 3.3 In 2023, a structural roof survey was completed which raised no significant concerns about the installation of additional rooftop solar PV at TRH.
- 3.4 In February 2025, the council allocated £500k of additional capital funding per year (for financial years 2025/26, 26/27, and 27/28) for decarbonisation projects to help the council to achieve its net zero target.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.5 In May 2025 a competitive tender process was completed, supported by Watford Borough Council, to identify the optimum solar PV design and installer to a maximum budget of £50,000.
- 3.6 The council received ten tender proposals which were scored on quality (60%) and price (40%). The highest scoring proposal was submitted by Chiltern Solar.
- 3.7 Chiltern Solar is a Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) accredited solar PV installer established in 2011 and based in Chesham, Buckinghamshire. Chiltern Solar installed the existing solar PV system at TRH in 2018 utilising Fronius Symo invertors.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://moderngov.threerivers.gov.uk/documents/g1461/Agenda%20frontsheet%2025th-Feb-2025%2019.30%20Full%20Council.pdf?T=0>



- 3.8 Chiltern Solar have proposed a 47.70 kWp comprising of 106 450w PV panels. <sup>2</sup> The PV panels will be connected to 2 Fronius Symo invertors which will convert Direct Current (DC) electricity in mains electricity (AC).
- 3.9 Using 2 additional Fronius Symo invertors enables the solar generation of both the existing and new PV systems to be monitored through one online monitoring tool. This is an advantage as it will enable solar PV performance reporting at TRH to be undertaken through one monitoring tool, rather than two (i.e. having separate monitoring tools for the existing and new PV systems).
- 3.10 Figures 2 and 3 identifies the roof area where the proposed solar PV system will be installed.



Blue Box = Existing solar PV  
Green Box = Proposed roof area for new solar PV  
Green Arrow = Proposed inverter locations for new solar PV  
Yellow Arrow = Main electricity meter location

Figure 2 Proposed Solar PV Locations (Aerial Photograph)

<sup>2</sup> kWp stands for kilowatt-peak, and it refers to the maximum output of a solar power system under ideal conditions. 450w means a PV panel can generate 450 watts of electricity when exposed to full sunlight.



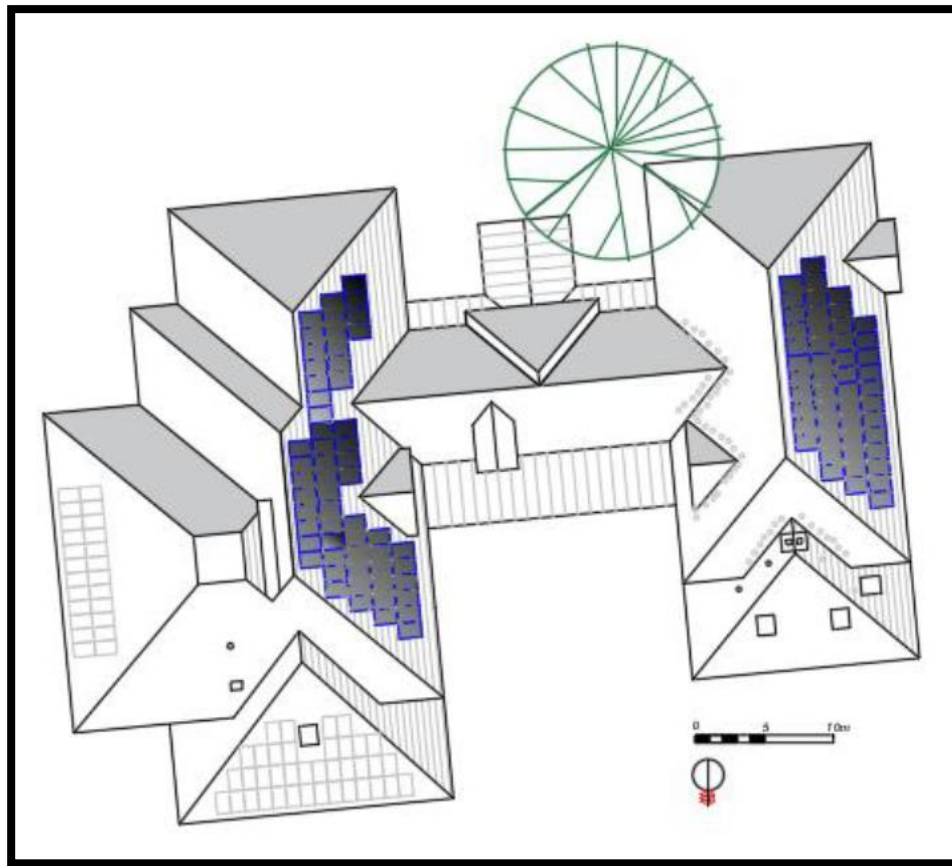


Figure 3 Proposed Solar PV Locations (Plan)

- 3.11 The solar PV panels will be mounted to the roof using the Fastensol pitched roof mounting system. The mounting system will be black, as will the PV panels, so the new PV system matches the existing system. A product called SolarFlash will be used to help ensure the installation of the mounting brackets does not cause water ingress in the building.
- 3.12 Chiltern Solar predict that the solar PV system will take 10 working days on-site to install the solar PV system which will require scaffolding.
- 3.13 Chiltern Solar propose scaffolding with a working platform along the two main east floor roof gutter lines, along with edge protection (with meshing and toe boards) up each roof. A hoist will be used, guided by two banksmen, to lift the PV panels onto the roof. The exact location of the scaffolding and the secure storage compound is to be agreed with the Property & Major Projects Team.
- 3.14 Building tenants will be informed of the works before work starts on-site. A one-hour power shutdown will be required for the final system connection. The power shutdown will be undertaken in partnership with Projects & Facilities Manager to ensure a safe shutdown and minimal disruption to tenants.
- 3.15 It is envisaged that planning permission is not required because the PV system is under 50KW and therefore falls within permitted development rights. However, because TRH is located in a conservation area, we are seeking additional advice/confirmation from the Planning Team.
- 3.16 The solar PV system is predicted to generate 35,646 kWh of solar electricity and save 6 tCO<sub>2</sub> and ~£9,635 per year, resulting in a payback



of ~4 years.

- 3.17 The quoted cost of the solar PV system is £48,038 (excluding VAT). Please note that this cost does not include several items the council may want to consider, at an additional cost:
- Structural Survey: Chiltern Solar did not specify a structural survey because one was carried out in 2023. However, that structural survey was not based on a specific solar PV design. Now we have the proposed design (roof location, number of panels, layout etc) another, more specific structural survey could be completed. The estimated cost of the survey is £1,075 (exc VAT).
  - Bird Blocker: A bird blocker is a mesh that stops birds nesting under the PV panels. The estimated cost is £1,700 (exc VAT).
  - Building Consumption Monitoring: Additional functionality that enables the electricity consumption of the building from the grid, and solar electricity export to the grid, to be monitored through the same online tool as solar PV generation. This enables more detailed performance reporting (e.g. peak electricity demand periods vs peak solar generation periods). The estimated cost is £1,000 (exc VAT).
  - Annual Maintenance & Repair Contract: A contract with the solar PV installer to visit TRH on an annual basis to clean, test, maintain and repair the solar PV system. The estimated cost is unknown.
- 3.18 It is recommended that a structural survey and bird blocker are added to the project as it helps reduce the risk of significant structural and operational issues in the future.
- 3.19 The new solar PV array is forecasted to generate 8% of TRH's electricity needs and therefore export minimal electricity to the grid. Therefore, it is suggested Building Consumption Monitoring is not needed and can be easily added later if required.
- 3.20 While regular maintenance and repair is best practice to maintain the efficiency of the solar PV system, access to the roof at TRH is challenging and would require costly scaffolding to undertake the works. Therefore, it is suggested that an Annual Maintenance & Repair Contract is not included.
- 3.21 Table 1 shows the financial proposition of the solar PV based on the forecasted cost of £50,813:

Table 1 Financial Proposition

Capital Cost (inc structural survey & bird blocker)	£50,813
Forecasted Annual Electricity Saving	£9,635
Return On Investment (in years)	5.1
Net Present Value (25 years at 3.5% discount rate)	£103,536

- 3.22 Installing rooftop solar PV at TRH will contribute to 3 key themes in the Corporate Framework 2023-2026:
- 3.23 "Net Carbon Zero & Climate Resilient": The rooftop solar PV will remove 6 tCO<sub>2</sub> annually and 152 tCO<sub>2</sub> over its lifetime. The council class carbon emissions from TRH as Scope 1 (direct) emissions. Therefore, reducing TRH's carbon emissions will support the council's commitment to be net zero by 2030. The programme to decarbonise council buildings is set out



- in the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy (2023-2027).
- 3.24 “Provide responsive and responsible local leadership”: By installing additional rooftop solar PV on our headquarters, we will show residents and businesses that we are leading by example and will encourage others to follow.
- 3.25 “Support and enable sustainable communities”: The rooftop solar PV will help improve both the environmental and financial sustainability of TRH. TRH is an important community building which rooftop solar PV will help make cleaner, greener and more resilient.

What other programmes, projects or services does it link to?

- Property & Major Projects



**4. Options**

Complete high level details for each option being considered



	Option 1 – Do Nothing	Option 2 – Recommended	Option 3 – Wait for grant funding
<b>Description of the Option</b> <i>A brief description including what is in and out of scope</i>	Do not install additional solar PV at TRH.	Rooftop solar PV is installed at TRH funded by council capital budget and repaid through electricity cost savings	Wait for grant funding to become available to fund the additional solar PV at TRH negating the need for the council to fund the solar PV.
<b>Timing</b> <i>Approximate start, end and delivery dates</i> <i>Include key milestones</i>	N/A	Corporate Management Team – 24 <sup>th</sup> June Joint Leadership Team – 8 <sup>th</sup> July Policy & Resources Committee – 8 <sup>th</sup> September Project Start – Q4 2025	Timing unknown. At the time of writing no grant funding is available.  The primary source of funding for solar PV to public buildings (excluding schools and hospitals) is the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. However, the PSDS focuses on heat decarbonisation. So, while the PSDS will provide grant funding for solar PV, it must be installed in conjunction with a heat pump. TRH already has a heat pump (part funded by the PSDS) and so will not be eligible for PSDS funding in the future.  Please note that grant funding is often awarded through a competitive process, so even if eligible grant funding becomes available, there is no guarantee the council will be successful in its grant application.
<b>Costs and resources</b> Include capital and revenue costs Include staffing requirements	£0	£48,038 quoted cost for solar PV system £1,075 estimated cost for structural survey £1,700 estimated cost for bird blocker	£0



Cashable Benefits <i>High level benefits that will deliver savings against a specific budget code</i>	N/A	£9,635 - forecasted annual electricity savings	None – until grant funding becomes available.
Non-Cashable Benefits <i>Benefits such as efficiency savings and increased customer satisfaction</i>	None	6 Scope 1 tCO <sub>2</sub> emissions saved per year.  152 lifetime Scope 1 tCO <sub>2</sub> emissions savings.  Demonstrates best practice.	None – until grant funding becomes available.



<p>Risks and Opportunities <i>High level risks and opportunities associated with the option</i></p>	<p>Risks: Strategic Risk 10 – Failure to deliver net-zero carbon commitments - Impacts negatively on the council's ability to achieve net zero by 2030.</p> <p>Opportunities: None</p>	<p>Risks: There is an inherent risk with solar PV of damaging the roof either during installation or afterwards because of the additional weight. This risk will be mitigated by carefully reviewing (with help from the Property Team) the panel mounting system and installation method the solar PV design recommends. Additionally, we will commission another structural roof survey, based on the proposed PV design, before installation to confirm the roof can support the weight.</p> <p>The solar PV could generate less electricity than forecast which would reduce the electricity cost savings to the council and lengthen the payback period. Alternatively, the solar PV could overperform forecast and generate more benefits than estimated in this OBC.</p> <p>Opportunities: The opportunity is for the council to install solar PV on one of the council's biggest electricity consuming buildings.</p>	<p>Risks: No grant funding becomes available for which the project is eligible, or the council is not successful in its grant application resulting in:</p> <p>Strategic Risk 10 – Failure to deliver net-zero carbon commitments - Impacts negatively on the council's ability to achieve net zero by 2030.</p> <p>Opportunities: In December 2024 the UK Government published the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan. The mass deployment of solar PV is a key strategic action. While the Action Plan doesn't promise new, or more, solar PV grants, it is reasonable to assume that solar PV grants will be available in the future.</p>
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**5. Engagement with support services**

What early engagement has taken place with support services, eg. Finance, HR. Legal, Digital? This is critical to programme/project/growth bid success.

- 5.1 The Property & Major Projects and Climate Change & Sustainability teams collaborated to undertake the solar PV tender and create this OBC.

**6. Data Protection**

Has a Data Privacy Impact Assessment been conducted for the programme/project/growth bid? Is one required? When will it be undertaken?

- 6.1 Not required.

**7. Equalities Impact**

Has an Equalities Impact Assessment been conducted for the programme/project/bid? Is one required? When will it be undertaken?

- 7.1 A Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment has been completed. There are no negative impacts identified as arising from the project.

**8. Sustainability Impact**

Has a Sustainability Impact Assessment been conducted for the programme/project/growth bid? Is one required? When will it be undertaken?

- 8.1 The Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed as per the table below.
- 8.2 The project scores highly in the homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy section as it will improve energy efficiency and reduce grid electricity use.
- 8.3 The project scores highly in the goods and consumption section because solar PV panels can be recycled.
- 8.4 The project scores highly in the engagement & influence section as installing solar PV on a community building and point of local interest will demonstrate best practice.
- 8.5 All other sections are not applicable due to limited nature of the project.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.40
Travel	N/A
Goods and Consumption	3.00
Ecology	N/A



Adaptation	N/A
Engagement and Influence	3.00
<b>Total Overall Average Score</b>	<b>3.13</b>

## 9. Decision making and governance

What decision making group will this business case be presented to?

9.1 This OBC has been reviewed by the Head of Property & Major Projects, Associate Director for Environment and Director of Finance.

9.2 If approved, this OBC will be considered by:

- Joint Leadership Team on 08/07/25
- Policy and Resources Committee on 08/09/25.

What decision making group will monitor the programme or project during its lifetime and ensuring the quality of its outcomes?

- The Climate Change & Sustainability Team will produce quarterly and annual reports to track solar PV key performance indicators.

## 10. Next steps

If this Outline Business Case is agreed, what immediate activities will follow to develop the Full Business Case/Options Appraisal (eg. More detailed planning and costing, discussions with/involvement of others)?

- Name Chiltern Solar as the preferred supplier and prepare to appoint them on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, if OBC approved by the Policy & Resources Committee.

Meeting where <i>authority to proceed</i> was obtained	Date of meeting







# Equality impact Assessment



Project Information	
<b>Project Name</b> <i>This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing</i>	Three Rivers House Solar PV Project
<b>Service Area</b> <i>Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed</i>	Climate Change and Sustainability Property and Major Projects
<b>EIA Author</b> <i>Name and Job Title</i>	Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Manager
<b>Date EIA drafted</b>	06/06/25
<b>ID number</b> <i>This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team</i>	CC005

Executive summary	
<b>Focus of EIA</b> <i>A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.</i>  <i>Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'</i>  <i>This section should explain what you are assessing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.</i></li> <li><i>Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?</i></li> <li><i>(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.</i></li> </ul>	<p>This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) evaluates a project to install solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to the roof of Three Rivers House in Rickmansworth.</p> <p>Three Rivers House is the council's headquarters and is among the highest electricity-consuming council buildings. The installation of solar PV panels will reduce the carbon emissions of the building and help the council to achieve its aim of carbon net zero operations by 2030.</p> <p>Reducing carbon emissions is essential to tackling climate change, as excess carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere, leading to global warming and its associated environmental impacts</p> <p>This EIA accompanies a report which outlines the proposed rooftop solar PV design for Three Rivers House. The report also identifies the environmental benefits and financial costs and savings of that design.</p> <p>Because the project is limited to the roof of Three Rivers House it has no impact on the wider community and will not disadvantage residents, including those residents with protected characteristics.</p>



Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	<b>Potential Issue</b> <i>Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur</i>	<b>Mitigating Actions</b> <i>How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?</i>
Age	None	N/A
Disability	None	N/A
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	None	N/A
Pregnancy or maternity	None	N/A
Race	None	N/A
Religion or belief	None	N/A
Sex	None	N/A
Sexual Orientation	None	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	None	N/A
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers,	None	N/A



people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces personnel.		
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Actions Planned
<p><i>In this section you can add information on additional or proactive steps you are taking that enhance equity, engagement or equality of access to services, as well as those mitigating actions identified in the section above that will be undertaken.</i></p> <p><i>The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.</i></p> <p>None</p>

Additional Information
<p><i>Space to provide any additional information in relation to protected characteristics or equity, diversity, equality and inclusion.</i></p> <p>None</p>

**Sign off:**

Equalities Lead Officer	Date
Shivani Davé	06/06/2025







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TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

**Guidance for use**  
Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed.

Please email your completed copy of the form to [Joanna.Hewitson@threerivers.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.Hewitson@threerivers.gov.uk).

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

<b>Name of project/policy/procurement and date</b>		Installation of Additional Rooftop Solar PV at Three Rivers House (Business Case)
<b>Brief description (1-2 sentences):</b>		The proposal aims to install rooftop solar PV at Three Rivers House. <i>The assessment has been scored to show risk of not refinancing the climate change team (column E) , and the benefits (row f) of taking action to provide a finacially resileint workforce.</i>

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Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy					
	Question	Impact (select from list)	Score (-1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list) Revised Score (1-4)
1	What effect will this project have on overall energy use (electricity or other fuels) e.g. in buildings, appliances or machinery?	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Solar PV will reduce grid electricity use at Three Rivers House.	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect. 4
2	What effect will this project have on the direct use of fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Solar PV will provide renewable electricity to the Air Source Heat Pump that replaced the gas boilers in 2023.	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed. 3
3	Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed. 0



4	<b>Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? (e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per sq. m., no servicing with fossil fuels such as gas heating, EPC "A" or BREAM "excellent").</b>	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Solar PV will improve the energy efficiency of the building by reducing the requirement for grid electricity.	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
5	<b>Does this make use of sustainable materials / unputs in your project? E.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete</b>	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2	Solar PV panels are not made from recycled materials.	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.	2
6	<b>Does this use more sustainable processes in the creation of the project? E.g. modular and off-site construction; use of electrical plant instead of petrol/diesel,</b>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
7	<b>Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff</b>	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Solar PV will increase the supply of renewable energy.	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4
8	<b>Do any appliances or electrical equipment to be used have high energy efficiency ratings?</b>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
<b>Average Score</b>			<b>3.40</b>			<b>3.40</b>

Travel						
	Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
9	Reducing travel: what effect will this project have on overall vehicle use?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
10	Will this project use petrol or diesel vehicles or EV, hybrid?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
11	Will this support people to use active or low-carbon transport? <i>E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0



12	Will it be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
13	Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? <i>Using e-cargo bikes; timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score			#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

Goods and Consumption						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
14	Has this project considered ways to reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, before acquiring newly manufactured	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
15	Does it reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? <i>E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
16	Does it use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
17	Does it enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
18	Is there a plan to reduce waste sent to landfill in manufacture?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
19	Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recycled at end of its life?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Yes. Solar PV panels can be recycled.	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3
20	Has it taken steps to ensure any food it offers is more sustainable? <i>E.g. less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste;</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score			3.00			3.00

Ecology						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
21	What effect does this project have on total area of non-amenity green/blue space? (Amenity green space = playing fields, play areas, sporting lakes	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0



22	Does the project create more habitat for nature? E.g. native plants, trees, and flowers	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
23	Does it make changes to existing habitats and have a negative impact on nature? <i>E.g. use of pesticides, reduced extent and variety of plants,</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
24	Does it help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score			#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!
Adaptation						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
25	Does any planned project, construction or building use include measures to conserve water?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
26	Does anythe project , consider how to sustainably protect people from extreme weather?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
27	Has any planned building work or infrastructure considered how to mitigate flood risk? <i>E.g. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); de-paving</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
28	Does any planned infrastructure or building work increase the overall footprint of hard surfacing? (as opposed to green or permeable surfacing)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
29	Has the project considered its own resilience to future extreme heat, flood risk, or water shortage?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area,	0	Not Applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score			#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!
Engagement and Influence						
Question		Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
30	Does this project raise awareness and understanding of the climate and ecological emergency, and the steps that people can take?	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	By installing rooftop solar PV on one of our core buildings we will show residents and businesses that we are leading by example and will encourage others to follow	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3
Average Score			3			3
Total Overall Average Score			3.13			3.1



Now assesment is compelete copy and paste box into your business case, committee report.  
(under environmental implications 6). Whole assesment can be an appendix. Procurement  
tenders are expected to submit complete report with application.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.40
Travel	#DIV/0!
Goods and Consumption	3.00
Ecology	#DIV/0!
Adaptation	#DIV/0!
Engagement and Influence	3.00
Total Overall Average Score	3.13



**Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**

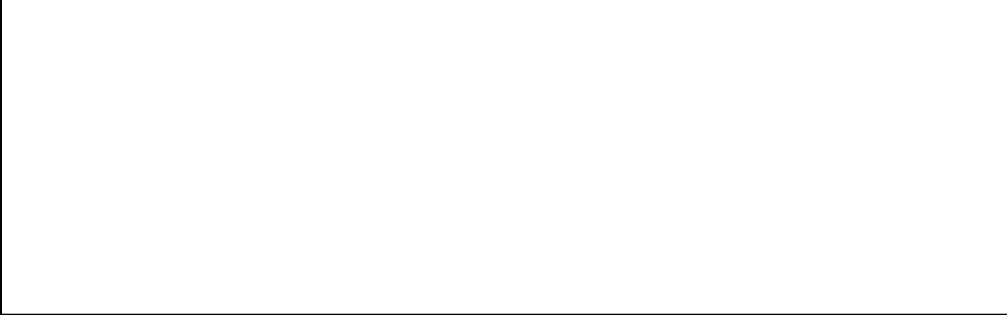
- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
- Include energy efficiency measures when carrying out refurbishment to deliver improvement in EPC ratings.
- Replace gas boilers with renewable heating, such as heat pumps. Consider District Heat Networks where appropriate.
- Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard.
- Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material and timber frames.
- Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
- Install solar panels or other renewable energy generation, and consider including battery storage.
- Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
- Use energy-efficient appliances.
- Install low-energy LED lighting.
- Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.



**Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**

- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.
- Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new fleet.
- Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.
- Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.
- Use zero-emission deliveries
- Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries





**Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**

- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership.
- Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods.
- Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life.
- Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item.
- Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare.
- Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items.
- Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.

**Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:  
(Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)**

- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing.
- Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls.
- Plant native plants and perennials rather than non-native ornamental



- Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity.
- Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides.
- Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles
- Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture and use of procured goods, e.g. water pollution; water consumption; land use change for farming; pesticide use; organic/regenerative farming methods

**Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**

- Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets
- Re-use grey water in new developments
- Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets
- Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading
- Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing.
- Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS).
- Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.

**Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**

- 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency.







**CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE - 21/05/2025 - 19/05/2026**  
**WORK PROGRAMME**

No.	Items to be considered	Link to Strategic Plan	Date of Next Meeting	Purpose of the Report	How the work will be done	Responsible Officer	Outcome Expected
1.	Croxley Common Moor Management Plan 2025-2030		2 Jul 2025		Croxley Common Moor Management Plan 2025-2029	Kelly Barnard, Leisure Contracts and Landscape Officer	
2.	Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy		2 Jul 2025	A report seeking approval to endorse and adopt the Hertfordshire Retrofit Commitment and Strategy.	Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy	Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer, Ellie Nathan, Domestic Sustainability Officer	
3.	South Oxhey Leisure Centre Solar Panels		2 Jul 2025		South Oxhey Leisure Centre Solar Panels	Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer, Ellie	



No.	Items to be considered	Link to Strategic Plan	Date of Next Meeting	Purpose of the Report	How the work will be done	Responsible Officer	Outcome Expected
						Nathan, Domestic Sustainability Officer	
4.	Withey Beds Management Plan 2025-2035		2 Jul 2025		Withey Beds Management Plan 2025-2035	Kelly Barnard, Leisure Contracts and Landscape Officer	
	Leisure Facilities Management Annual Report		2 Jul 2025	Annual report from April 2024 – March 2025 from the council's leisure facilities management contractor, Sports and Leisure Management (SLM)	Leisure Facilities Management Annual Report	Kelly Barnard, Leisure Contracts and Landscape Officer	
6.	P3 Budget Management Report		15 Oct 2025	This report covers this committees financial position over the medium term (2025-2028) as at Period 3 (end of June 2025)	P3 Budget Management Report	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner	
7.	Croxley Hall Woods Management Plan		15 Oct 2025	A new management plan for Croxley Hall Woods	Croxley Hall Woods Management Plan	Alex Laurie, Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer	



No.	Items to be considered	Link to Strategic Plan	Date of Next Meeting	Purpose of the Report	How the work will be done	Responsible Officer	Outcome Expected
8.	P6 Budget Management Report		14 Jan 2026	This report covers this committees financial position over the Medium term (2025-2028) as at Period 6 (end of September 2025)	P6 Budget Management Report	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner	



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