



Kent Country Parks

# Teston Bridge Country Park Management Plan 2025-2030



Updated: Jan 2025 by Mark Gracey - Ranger Services Manager

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# 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## 1.1 Location and Site Description

The Country Park is in the parish of Teston and in the district of Maidstone Borough Council. It has been owned by Kent County Council since 1970 and open as a Country Park since 1978.

The site totals 32 acres (12.2 hectares) and is a mixture of amenity grassland, grazed wildflower meadows, woodland plantings, wetland habitat, riverside habitats, and hedgerows.

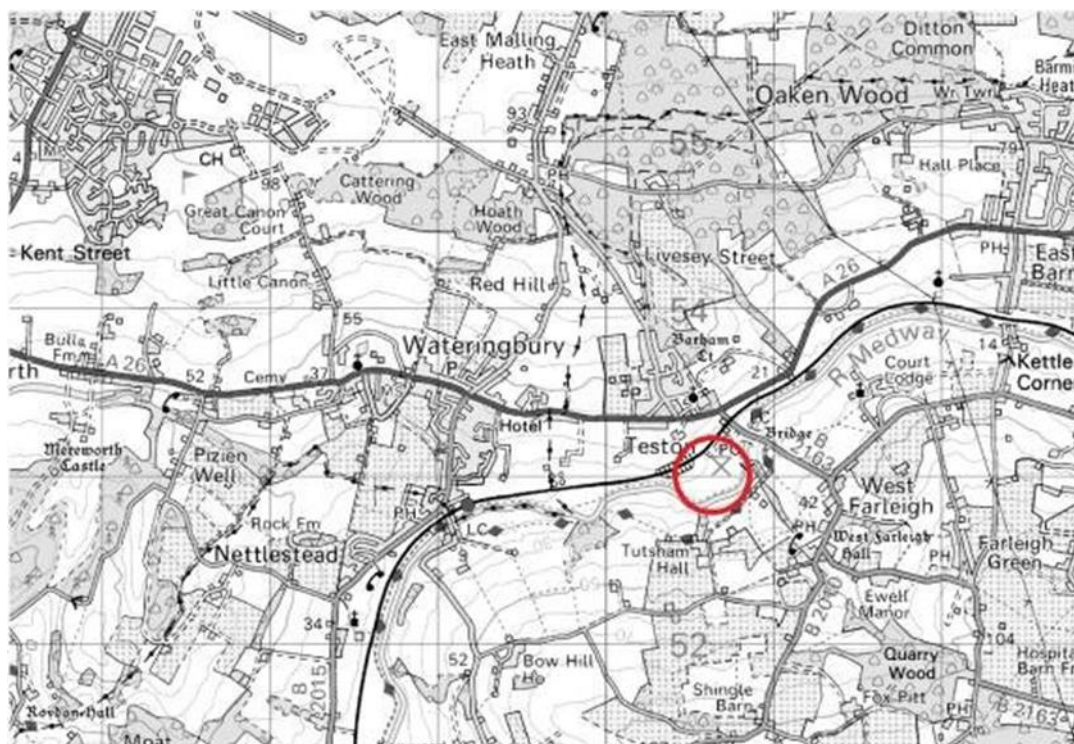
To the north lie the village of Teston and the A26 road. The site boundaries are defined by a railway line to the north, Teston Lane to the east, the Medway River to the south and a hedgerow to the west. The River Medway corridor is designated by Maidstone Borough Council as a Special Landscape Area.

Fig 1 below shows an outline boundary marked in red.





Fig 2 below shows its wider location



## 1.2 Contact Details

Teston Bridge Country Park, Teston Lane, Teston, Maidstone, Kent, ME18 5BX

Grid Reference: TQ 7045 5295.

Telephone Number: 03000 411811 (Lullingstone Country Park as park is unmanned)

## 1.3 Directions to Site

Teston Bridge Country Park is sign-posted off the A26 between Barming and Wateringbury. From the West this links into the A228 to Tonbridge or West Malling and in the East the A229 into Maidstone.

## 1.4 Map Coverage

Teston Bridge Country Park is covered by Ordnance Survey mapping on the following maps: OS Landranger map no. 188 (1:50,000)

OS Explorer map no. 148 (1:25,000)

### 1.4.1 Photographic Coverage

General views are available and held by Kent County Council, who also hold aerial photographs from 1946, 1990 and 2008. The Kent County Council Planning Department hold all of these.

Fig 3, the image below, is from Kent View, 2016 (KCC intranet, 2023)



## 2 Management of the Site

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Teston Bridge Country Park is owned and managed by Kent County Council (KCC).

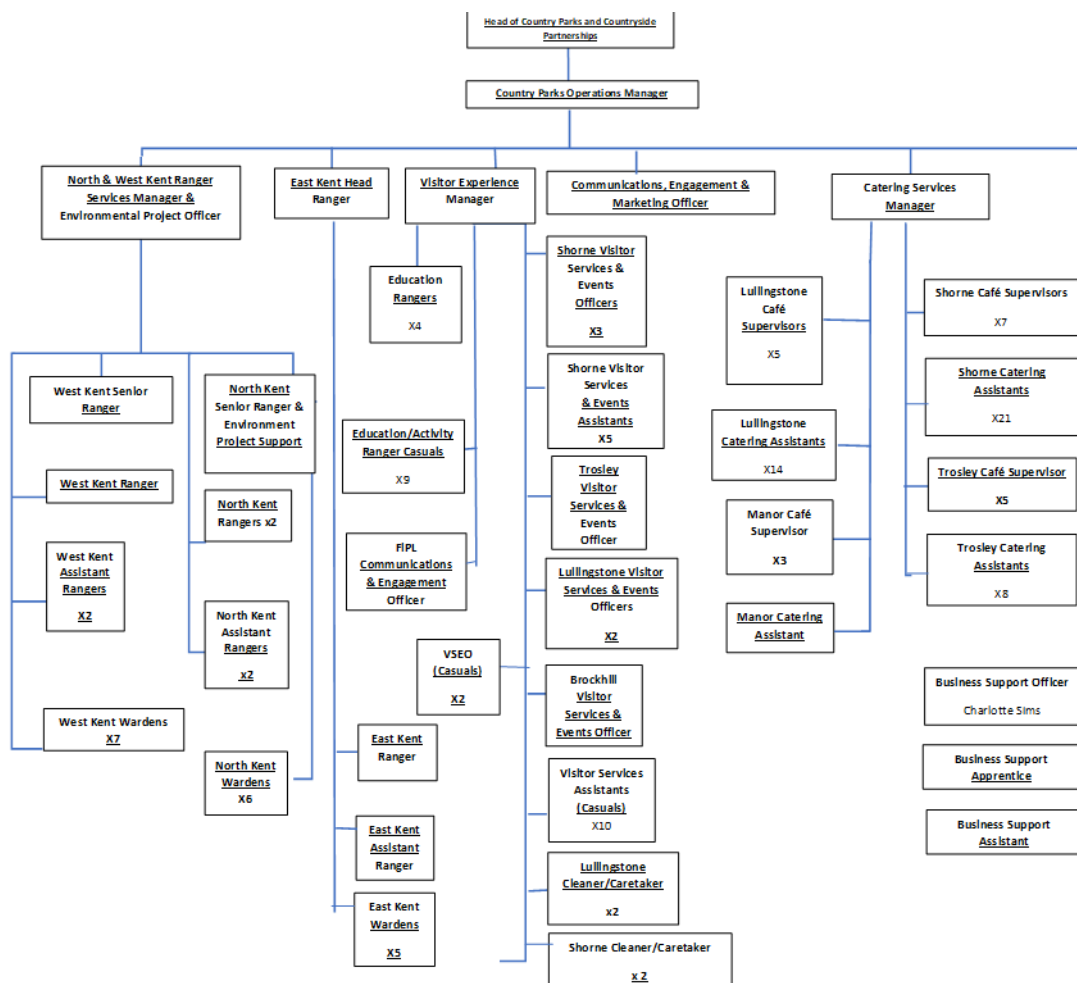
The Country Park forms part of a network of 9 county council-owned sites, which total 810 hectares and is part of the North and West Kent area team which manages Shorne Woods, Lullingstone, Trosley, Manor Park, Teston Bridge Preston Hill and Dryhill. They cover a wide range of habitats including chalk grassland, deciduous and coniferous woodland, and meadow. They are managed to increase interest in, and understanding of, nature conservation.



This management plan will run from January 2025 until January 2030. The management plan is reviewed and updated annually by the Ranger Services Manager as part of the Green Flag process and adheres to the Kent County Council corporate requirements for the management plan.

Most of the management work outlined in this Management Plan will be undertaken by KCC staff and volunteers, who own a range of equipment for general estate maintenance. The North and West Kent's ranger team are flexible so work across 7 sites as and when required, so for larger works up to 9 rangers can be allocated to the task. The West Kent team has a Senior Ranger, Ranger and two Asst Rangers responsible for the day to day works at Teston, Lullingstone, Trosley, Preston Hill and Dryhill with the overarching Ranger Services Manager role responsible for management planning, grant applications and producing work plans. Wardens help to manage the site 7 days a week.

A brief outline of the staff structure is given in *Fig 4* below:



Teston Bridge Country Park is managed by KCC both as a nature conservation site and a recreational resource; the provision of recreational facilities being a major factor in site

management. Further details are given in *Section 6*. There is a visitor centre and separate secure works compound adjacent to the main car park.

## 3 Wider Policies and Strategies Affecting the Site

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### 3.1 Local wildlife site

In 2009 Teston Bridge Country Park was classified as a Local Wildlife Site. This status was awarded due to the site supporting a wide range of species, including two county-scarce plants and several UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species including three reptile species.

### 3.2 Queen Elizabeth Field in Trust

In 2012 the site was designated a Queen Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup> Field in Trust so protected for future generations.

### 3.3 Maidstone Millenium River Park

Teston Bridge is part of the Maidstone Millenium River Park. This is a 10km linear park adjacent to the River Medway linking Teston Bridge to Allington Lock.

### 3.4 Tree Preservation Order (TPO)

There is no TPO in place at Teston Bridge Country Park

### 3.5 Green Flag award

The Park has been awarded the Green Flag award every year since 2009. As part of this process the site has an annual inspection based on a desk-based assessment and field evaluation. This award is awarded every year to parks that show continuous improvement in all areas encompassing all aspects of the park management and

organisational infrastructure including conservation, customer focus, Finance, community engagement and health and safety.

Independent judges judge the scheme annually against a set-criteria used as a standard nationwide for country parks.

## 3.6 Biodiversity/Habitat Action Plans

The Ancient and/or Species-rich Hedgerows Habitat Action Plan (HAP) includes among its objectives the encouragement of the positive management, restoration, and re-creation of hedgerows. It adds that priority should be given to, among others, hedgerows which reconnect other habitats.

The Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh HAP sets out the targets to maintain the extent and quality of existing areas of semi-natural grazing marsh and to bring all existing areas of semi-natural grazing marsh into appropriate management.

The Standing Open Water HAP seeks to restore to favourable condition those sites that have been damaged or neglected, particularly within important sites and landscapes. One of the specific targets related to this objective regards the identification of sites containing invasive, non-native species and the establishment of a programme of removal.

Wet Woodland HAP sets out the objectives of maintaining the current extent of wet woodland and developing management plans for wet woods which are not in management.

## 3.7 Kent County Council Internal Policy and strategies

The parks have their own 2023-2028 strategic plan that links into wider KCC objectives. [https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/148854/Kent-Country-Parks-Strategy-2023-28.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/148854/Kent-Country-Parks-Strategy-2023-28.pdf)

The site adheres to the [Kent County Council Environment Policy \(2015\)](#) and Kent County Council general statement of policy on health, safety, and welfare at work (October 2021).

As part of KCC the site also works within the ISO14001 quality standard.

Kent County Council has internal teams focused on climate change and monitoring KCCs climate change performance:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/climate-change/climate-emergency-statement/our-climate-emergency-performance>

There is also a carbon net zero action plan with an aim of being carbon neutral by 2030, that can be found here:

[https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/122291/KCC-Net-Zero-action-Plan.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/122291/KCC-Net-Zero-action-Plan.pdf)

The parks are part of the Kent Nature partnership <https://kentnature.org.uk/>

## 4 VISION AND AIMS FOR THE SITE

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### 4.1 Vision

Teston Bridge Country Park aims to provide a welcoming, safe environment for all ages and backgrounds whilst protecting and conserving the habitat diversity on site.

The overall vision for the country parks in Kent is for the county to be renowned for its great country parks, operating a service which meets the needs of the people of Kent and its visitors, and which is securely funded into the future.

### 4.2 General Aims

The overall vision for the country parks in Kent is for the county to be renowned for its great country parks, operating a service which meets the needs of the people of Kent and its visitors, and which is securely funded into the future.

### 4.3 Conservation Management objectives and obligations

Teston Bridge Country Park will be managed to protect and enhance three main features of ecological interest: grazing meadow; riverside habitat; and amenity grassland and recreational areas.

The grazing meadows consist largely of the semi-improved pastures at Tutsham Meadow and Coombe Hill, on the west of the country park. The main objective for this area is to maintain and enhance it for nature conservation and public use.

## 4.5 Visitor Services Objectives

Public enjoyment and recreation are a key feature of the site. The site aims to attract more visitors at off peak times (mid-week & winter months).

Strategic aim 3 of the Kent Country Parks Strategy 2023-2028 has an objective of “Continue to review all business areas to maximise income and investigate new ideas which are supported by a strong business case.” This is to work towards making the service fully self- sufficient in the future.

# 5 CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

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## 5.1 Physical

The climate in Kent is moderately Continental. In comparison to the rest of the British Isles, it generally has higher summer temperatures, whilst winter temperatures tend to be slightly lower than the rest of Southern England, with the county often being subject to brief cold spells. Rainfall levels tend to be below the UK average.

Teston Bridge Country Park falls within the Wealden Greensand Natural Area as defined by Natural England. Natural Areas are sub-divisions of England, each with a characteristic association of wildlife and natural features. They provide a way of interpreting the ecological variations of the country in terms of natural features, illustrating the distinctions between one area and another. The Wealden Greensand Natural Area largely coincides with the outcrop of Weald Clay which forms an elongated horseshoe around the older rocks of the High Weald. It is predominantly a low-lying region dominated by wet, heavy clay soils. The topography is gently undulating, with steep-sided stream-valleys, ridges, and plateau.

Lowland heath is the most characteristic habitat of the Natural Area, although much less common than in the past. Many ancient woodlands have survived throughout the area,



though often in fragmented patches and on steeper slopes. The Natural Area also includes parts of several river valleys, notably the Arun, the Rother, and the Wey. The area is crisscrossed by a network of main rivers and tributary streams with a range of characteristics from wide and open banked rivers with fringing marginal vegetation to tiny, shaded woodland streams. Running water habitats and their associated wetland fringes of damp meadows, wet woodland and fen or marsh are an important component of the character and ecology of the Natural Area.

The immediate surroundings of Teston Bridge Country Park are characterised by a rural landscape dominated by arable fields, pastures, and orchards. There are numerous hedgerows and several parcels of woodland, part of which are of ancient origin. To the north lie the village of Teston and the A26 road. The site boundaries are defined by a railway line to the north, Teston Lane to the east, the Medway River to the south and a hedgerow to the west.

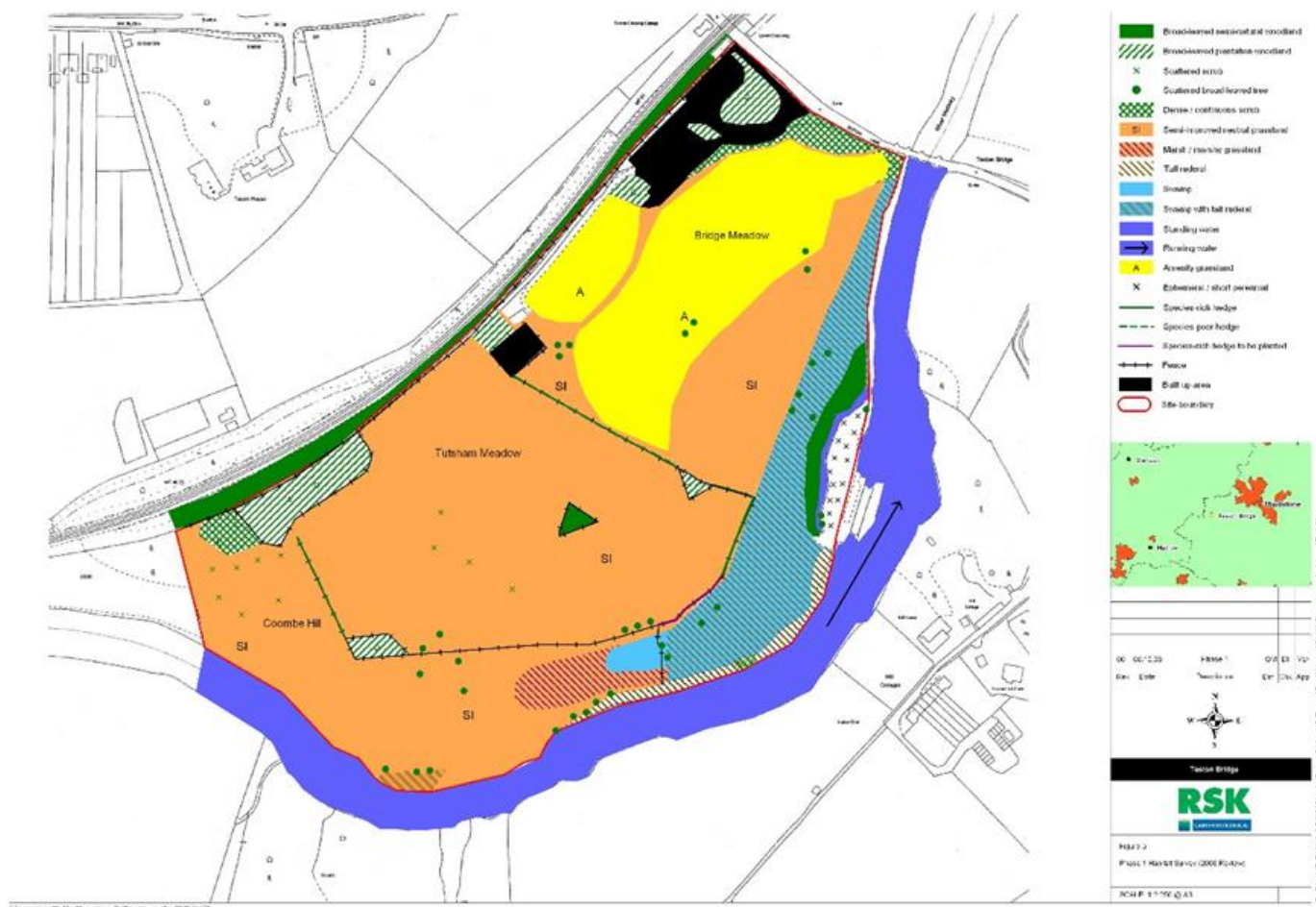
Teston Bridge Country Park lies on the Medway River Valley and overlies deposits of silts and sands. The River Medway runs along the site's southern boundary and has had a direct influence on the geology and soils.

The soils in the area may be described as paleo-argillic brown earths, formed from parent material which is cretaceous glauconitic sandstone, limestone, and associated drift (chiefly brickearth and Plateau Drift). These soils are characteristically deep, well-drained and loamy (often silty). Locally they can occur with shallower soils over limestone and can be associated with stony, loamy-over-clayey soils, some with impeded drainage.

In terms of the topography of Teston Bridge Country Park, the eastern half of the site is predominantly flat, gently sloping towards the river. Here the ground is approximately 10 m above sea-level. To the west the site is on a very slightly steeper gradient with the north-west corner of the site at approximately 20 m above sea-level falling to about 5 m along the river. The riverbanks are 1-2 m high and steep in places.

## 5.2 Habitats and Vegetation Communities

Figure 5- Habitat map



### 5.2.1 Broadleaved plantation woodland

Small blocks of plantation woodland are of relatively recent origin and do not conform to any of the NVC communities. The woodland to the west of the site next to the railway line comprises an even-aged mixture of *Acer campestre* (Field Maple), *Corylus avellana* (Hazel), *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn), *Fraxinus excelsior* (Ash) and *Quercus robur* (Pedunculate Oak). The ground is compacted, and the field-layer is very sparse, except for small amounts of *Iris foetidissima* (Stinking Iris) and *Rubus fruticosus* agg.

(Bramble) at the edge. Other smaller copses on the site may contain additional woody species such as *Alnus glutinosa* (Alder), *Prunus domestica* (Wild Plum) and *Salix* species (Willows), but they are no richer in terms of their ground flora.

### 5.2.2 Broadleaved semi-natural woodland

The area adjacent to the River Medway contains numerous scattered trees and locally they form woodland with a canopy consisting of *Alnus glutinosa* (Alder) with an understory of *Salix fragilis* (Crack-willow). The field-layer is species-poor and characterised by an abundance of *Urtica dioica* (Common Nettle) in the absence of tall rich-fen species such as *Phragmites australis* (Common Reed). This woodland is loosely referable to the NVC type W6b *Alnus glutinos a-Urtica dioica* woodland, *Salix fragilis* sub-community.

### 5.2.3 Scrub and hedge



An area of scrub at the extreme western end of the site consists of *Prunus spinosa* (Blackthorn) with other woody species including *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn), *Fraxinus excelsior* (Ash) and *Prunus domestica* (Wild Plum). The field-layer contains large amounts of *Conium maculatum* (Hemlock) and *Urtica dioica* (Common Nettle). This scrub has been described as W21a *Crataegus monogyna-Hedera helix* scrub, *Hedera helix-Urtica dioica* sub-community (Kent Wildlife Trust 2002).

Patches of scrub dominated by *Rubus fruticosus* agg. (Bramble) are found adjacent to Teston Lane and on the upper slopes of Coombe Hill and are referable to the broad NVC type W24 *Rubus fruticosus-Holcus lanatus* underscrub. Where there is an abundance of *Cirsium arvense* (Creeping Thistle) mixed in, the scrub is best referred to the sub-community W24a *Rubus fruticosus-Holcus lanatus* underscrub, *Cirsium arvense-Cirsium vulgare* sub- community.

A hedge along the western edge of Tutsham Meadow is dominated by *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn) with *Acer campestre* (Field Maple), *Corylus avellana* (Hazel), *Prunus spinosa* (Blackthorn) and *Rosa arvensis* (Field-rose).

## 5.2.4 Tree diseases and pests

Annually the rangers survey the trees for Phytophthora, Chalara and other tree diseases and fell any that are at risk of falling on pathways.

Chalara is widespread on site. Trees will be monitored and any dieback within proximity to paths or infrastructure will be removed, all others left as standing deadwood.

Areas affected by disease will be left to regenerate naturally using the seed stock on site.



## 5.3 Grassland

### 5.3.1 Rough grassland



Tutsham Meadow consists of rough grassland pasture. The most abundant grasses are *Agrostis stolonifera* (Creeping Bent) and *Dactylis glomerata* (Cock's-foot) together with *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire-fog) and *Lolium perenne* (Perennial Ryegrass). Of the forbs, *Achillea millefolium* (Yarrow), *Centaurea nigra* (Common Knapweed), *Plantago lanceolata* (Ribwort Plantain), *Rumex acetosa* (Common Sorrel) and *Trifolium pratense* (Red Clover) are frequent, *Lotus corniculatus* (Common Bird's-foot-trefoil) and *Ranunculus repens* (Creeping Buttercup) are locally abundant.

The grassland on Coombe Hill is broadly similar although it is being colonised to a greater degree by *Rubus fruticosus* agg. (Bramble) and tall ruderals such as *Cirsium arvense* (Creeping Thistle). The sward is more open on ant hills and where there is localized rabbit grazing with species including *Cerastium glomeratum* (Sticky Mouse-ear), *Potentilla erecta* (Tormentil), *Prunella vulgaris* (Selfheal), *Trifolium dubium* (Lesser Trefoil) and *Veronica arvensis* (Wall Speedwell).



Tall grassland at the edges of Bridge Meadow and along the towing path in the northern half of the site is dominated by the coarse grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* (False Oatgrass) together with tall, conspicuous forbs such as *Cirsium arvense* (Creeping Thistle), *Heracleum sphondylium* (Hogweed), *Rumex obtusifolius* (Broad-leaved Dock) and *Urtica dioica* (Common Nettle). This grassland is clearly referable to the NVC type MG1b *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland, *Urtica dioica* sub-community.

### 5.3.2 Marshy grassland

The area at the bottom of Coombe Hill, along the River Medway, consists of damp grassland which forms a mosaic and transitions with a range swamp and tall-herb communities. The dominant grass species here is *Agrostis stolonifera* (Creeping Bent) together with *Alopecurus pratensis* (Meadow Foxtail), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire-fog) and *Lolium perenne* (Perennial Ryegrass). The rush *Juncus effusus* (Soft-rush) is also present in small amounts together with abundant *Potentilla anserina* (Silverweed) and frequent *Rumex crispus* (Curled Dock). Other wetland species at various levels of abundance include *Alopecurus geniculatus* (Marsh Foxtail), *Epilobium hirsutum* (Great Willowherb), *Equisetum palustre* (Marsh Horsetail), *Glyceria maxima* (Reed Sweet-grass), *Lycopus europaeus* (Gypsywort), *Persicaria maculosa* (Redshank), *Phalaris arundinacea* (Reed Canary-grass) and *Ranunculus sceleratus* (Celery-leaved Buttercup). This grassland does not conform closely to any NVC type.

### 5.3.3 Amenity grassland

Amenity turf in the area known as Bridge Meadow is regularly mown and dominated by the grass *Lolium perenne* (Perennial Ryegrass). This is mown approximately 16 times between April and September.



## 5.4 Swamp and tall herbs

Most of the area along the River Medway is characterised by a heterogeneous mixture of swamp and tall herb vegetation types together with scattered trees and scrub. Vegetation types recorded from this area are described as follows:

- Swamp vegetation dominated by *Glyceria maxima* (Reed Sweet grass) occurs in patches and occupies a shallow overflow ditch. Various wetland plants at low abundances include *Caltha palustris* (Marsh-marigold), *Filipendula ulmaria* (Meadowsweet), *Lythrum salicaria* (Purple-loosestrife) and *Sparganium erectum* (Branched Bur-reed). This vegetation is referable to the NVC type S5b *Glyceria maxima* community, *Alisma plantago-aquatica*-*Sparganium erectum* sub-community.

- Some of the vegetation is characterised by an abundance of *Epilobium hirsutum* (Great Willowherb) with tall semi-ruderals such as *Cirsium arvense* (Creeping Thistle) and *Urtica dioica* (Common Nettle). This vegetation was recorded as S26 *Phragmites australis-Urtica dioica* tall-herb fen (Kent Wildlife Trust 2002). However, in the absence of *Phragmites australis* (Common Reed) and based on analysis of the quadrat data, it is better assigned to the NVC type OV26e *Epilobium hirsutum* community, *Urtica dioica-Cirsium arvense* sub-community. Vegetation containing *Epilobium hirsutum* (Great Willowherb) may also be referable to other sub- communities of OV26.
- The tall grass *Phalaris arundinacea* (Reed Canary-grass) is locally dominant in patches where it gives rise to the NVC type S28 *Phalaris arundinacea* tall-herb fen.
- An area is dominated by *Carex* cf. *acutiformis* (Lesser Pond-sedge) or possibly *Carex acuta* (Slender Tufted-sedge), which was recorded during the NVC survey (Kent Wildlife Trust 2002).
- The invasive plant species *Impatiens glandulifera* (Indian Balsam) was previously more abundant along the River Medway.

### 5.4.1 Tall ruderal herbs

Tall ruderals such as *Cirsium arvense* (Creeping Thistle) and *Urtica dioica* (Common Nettle) are locally present, for example on Coombe Hill.

## 5.5 Flora

### 5.5.1 Vascular plants

No species of international or national importance have been recorded. Three Locally Scarce species were recorded during a botanical survey (Kent Wildlife Trust 2002). Locally Scarce species are those which occur in less than 5% of the 1044 tetrads (2 km<sup>2</sup>) in Kent (Philp 1982) and are important at county level. The three species are:

- *Bidens cernua* (Nodding Bur-marigold). It is a local species in Kent only occurring in 27 tetrads. It is confined to the edge of rivers, ponds, and streams (Philp 1982). It was growing in the dry ditch adjacent to the car-park and was recorded in September 2003 from near the bench adjacent to the bridge (Kent Wildlife Trust 2002).
- *Carex acuta* (Slender tufted sedge). In Kent, this species is very local, although it can be frequent where it does occur, and is found at the edge of rivers (Philp 1982). It is recorded from 16 tetrads. At Teston Bridge Country Park it was recorded adjacent to the River Medway in the swamp/fen vegetation.
- *Rorippa amphibia* (Great Yellowcress). It occurs in 44 tetrads in Kent, being rather local but quite common where it does occur (Philp 1982). It grows by rivers, streams and occasionally ponds. It was recorded adjacent to the River Medway in the swamp/fen vegetation.

Two invasive species were recorded at Teston Bridge Country Park: *Heracleum mantegazzianum* (Giant Hogweed) and *Impatiens glandulifera* (Indian Balsam). The former occurs in the swamp/tall-fen communities adjacent to the River Medway. It is an invasive alien species and a notifiable plant under *Section 9* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) which makes it an offence to plant or cause it to grow in the wild. Himalayan Balsam also occurs in the swamp/tall-fen communities along the river where it forms dense stands. Although not included in the Wildlife and Countryside Act as other species, it is a vigorous species which can out-compete smaller native plants reducing biodiversity and potentially causing soil erosion problems.

### 5.5.2 Fungi

10 fungi species are recorded from the site (Kent Wildlife Trust 2002). None of these are of local or national importance.

## 5.6 Fauna

### 5.6.1 Mammals

In total, 22 mammal species have been recorded from the site. In addition, there is a record of Water Vole, outside of the site boundary, on the south bank of the River Medway. A known Noctule roost has been recorded outside of the site boundary, on the opposite side of the River Medway. Of these 22 species, the following are designated at international or national level as worthy of protection:

- Badger (*Meles meles*).
- Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*).
- Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*).
- Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*).
- Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).
- Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*).
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*); and
- Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*).
- Water Vole (*Arvicola terrestris*).

Additional mammal records include:

- Brown Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*).
- Common Shrew (*Sorex araneus*).
- Field Vole (*Microtus agrestis*).
- Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*).
- Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*).
- Mink (*Mustela vison*).
- Mole (*Talpa europaea*).
- Muntjac Deer (*Muntiacus reevesi*).
- Pygmy Shrew (*Sorex minutus*).
- Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*).
- Stoat (*Mustela erminea*).
- Water Shrew (*Neomys fodiens*).
- Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*); and
- Wood Mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*).



### 5.6.1.2 Bats

5 species have been identified at Teston Bridge. *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* (Common Pipistrelle), *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* (Soprano Pipistrelle), *Myotis daubentonii* (Daubenton's Bat), *Nyctalus noctula* (Noctule) and *Plecotus auritus* (Brown Long-eared Bat).

## 5.6.2 Herpetofauna

The wet meadow and overflow ditch at Teston Bridge Country Park provides suitable habitat for a wide range of reptiles and amphibians. Six species were recorded by site staff including:

- Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*).
- Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*).
- Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix*).
- Palmate Newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*).
- Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*); and
- Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*).

## 5.6.3 Birds

The complex of grassland, small woodland copses and wetland habitat provides a range of wildlife habitats for migrant and breeding birds. *Appendix A* provides a list of the 94 species recorded at Teston Bridge Country Park. The 67 species highlighted in bold are considered as possible breeding birds *i.e.*, suitable breeding habitat occurs on the site and the species is known to breed in the area. The list is divided in species which are designated at international or national level as worthy of protection, and those which have no formal designation.

Birds listed on the Red list are species of high conservation concern.

Globally Threatened according to IUCN criteria, and include:

- those whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years; and
- those that have declined historically and not shown a substantial recent recovery.

A total of 11 *Red List* species are recorded and possibly breed at Teston Bridge Country Park. These include *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* (Bullfinch) and *Emberiza schoeniclus* (Reed Bunting).

Amber Listed birds are species of medium conservation concern. They have an unfavourable conservation status in Europe, and include

- those whose population or range has declined moderately in recent years.
- those whose population has declined historically but made a substantial recent recovery.
- rare breeders; and
- those with internationally important or localised populations.

A total of 27 *Amber List* species are recorded and possibly breed at Teston Park. These species include *Falco tinnunculus* (Kestrel), *Anthus pratensis* (Meadow pipit) and *Tringa totanus* (Redshank).

*Tyto alba* (Barn Owl) and *Alcedo atthis* (Kingfisher) are listed on *Schedule 1* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and receive special protection under *Sections 1(4) and 1(5)* which in addition to the protection given to all birds, makes it an offence to:

- disturb any such bird whilst building its nest or whilst it is in or near a nest containing dependant young; and to
- disturb the dependant young of such a bird.

Turtle Dove (*Streptotelia turtur*), Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*), Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) and Corn Bunting (*Miliaria calandra*) are all considered to be priority species within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1998).

#### 5.6.4 Fish

The River Medway supports several species of fish including Barbel (*Barbus barbus*), Bream (*Abramis* species), Chubb (*Squalius cephalus*), European Eel (*Anguilla Anguilla*), Perch (*Perca* species), Pike (*Esox lucius*), Roach (*Rutilus* species) and Ruffe (*Gymnocephalus cernuus*). Of these the species of nature conservation value are the

Barbel, listed in Appendix II of the Habitats Directive, and the European Eel, which is a priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

## 5.6.3 Invertebrates

### 5.6.3.1 General

Invertebrate surveys in 2009 revealed a rich and diverse invertebrate fauna, especially those associated with wetlands and animal dung. Two species which are currently assigned nationally rare, Red Data Book 3 (RDB3) and five species which are noted as Nationally Scarce. The RDB3 species are *Dorycera graminum* (picture book fly) and *Passaloecus clypealis* a solitary wasp. Of the nationally scarce species, three are often associated with fenland vegetation, with two having more generalist habitat requirements. These act as useful indicators (as do other records) of the importance of the wetland area of vegetation.

There are records of the UK BAP species the depressed river mussel 4 *Pseudanodonta complanata* in the river Medway just downstream of the Country Park. The cased caddis fly *Molanna angustata*, a river snail from the family Viviparidae and the white-legged damselfly 12 *Platycnemis pennipes* indicate the river has good quality in this area. Additionally, *Ephemera vulgata*, the infrequently recorded burrowing mayfly, is recorded in the river and the cuckoo bee *Sphecodes niger* has been recorded from the picnic area.

Additional invertebrate records include the Banded Demoiselle (*Calopteryx splendens*), a damselfly, and the invasive Chinese Mitten Crab (*Eriocheir sinensis*) which was recorded from the overflow ditch after flooding.

### 5.6.3.2 Lepidoptera

Of the Lepidoptera species recorded by Kent County Council, 23 species are butterflies and 8 are moths.

Butterflies species include:

- Brimstone (*Gonepteryx rhamni*).
- Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*).
- Comma (*Polygonia c-album*).
- Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*).
- Essex Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*).
- Gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*).
- Green-veined white (*Pieris napi*).
- Holly Blue (*Celastrina argiolus*).
- Large Skipper (*Ochlodes venata*).
- Large Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis polychloros*).
- Large White (*Pieris brassicae*).
- Meadow brown (*Maniola jurtina*).
- Orange Tip (*Anthocharis cardamines*).
- Painted Lady (Vanessa (*Cynthia cardui*)).
- Peacock (*Inachis io*).
- Red admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*)

Currently no butterfly surveys are carried out on site.

#### 5.6.3.4 Molluscs

Nine species of molluscs were recorded as incidental records (KWT 2002):

- a snail (*Discus rotundatus*).
- an amber snail (*Succinea putris*).
- Duck Mussel (*Anodonta anatina*).
- Garden Snail (*Helix aspera*).
- Hedgehog Slug (*Arion intermedius*).
- Marsh Slug (*Deroceras laeve*).
- Netted Slug (*Deroceras reticulatum*).
- River Snail (*Viviparus viviparus*); and
- Swan Mussel (*Anodonta cygnea*)

## 6 Past Land-use

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The site was used as grazing pasture before becoming a Country Park. Teston Bridge Country Park was bought by Kent County Council in the 1970s. The site was opened by the County Council in 1978 after the bridge was restored.

## 7 Management Objectives

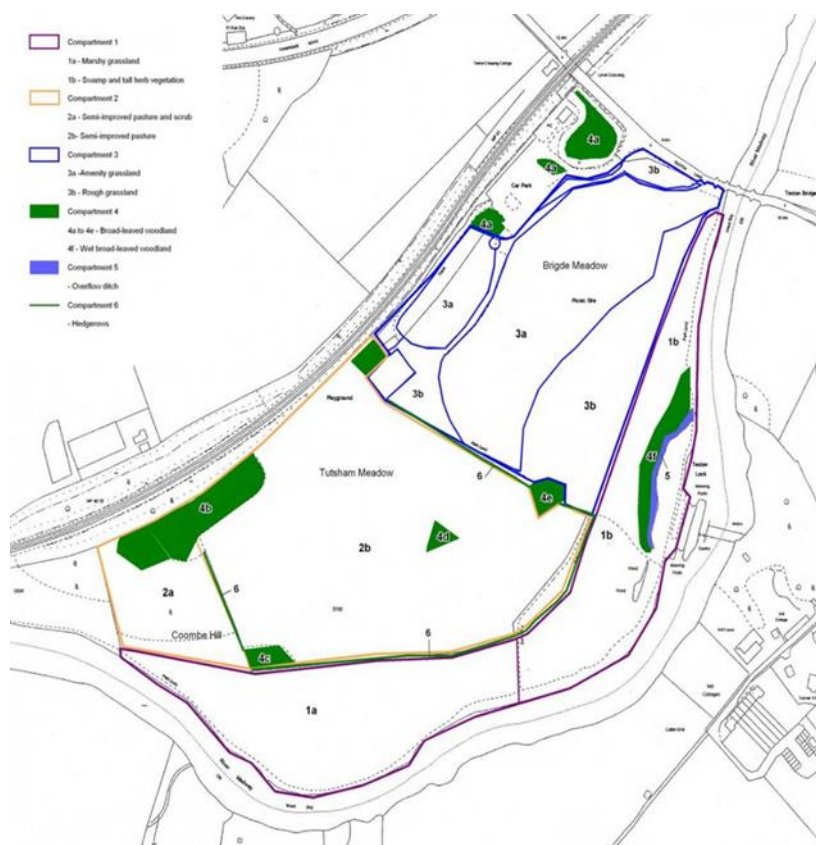
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### 7.1 Conservation Management Prescriptions and Operations

The site has been divided into compartments and sub compartments to enable specific management of key habitats. The compartment description is shown below and figure 6 overleaf shows a map.

- 1a Marshy grassland
- 1b Swamp and tall-herb vegetation
- 2a Semi-improved pasture and scrub (Coombe Hill)
- 2b Semi-improved pasture (Tutsham Meadow)
- 3a Amenity grassland (Bridge Meadow)
- 3b Rough grassland and scrub
- 4a Broad-leaved woodland
- 4b Broad-leaved woodland
- 4c Broad-leaved woodland
- 4d Broad-leaved woodland
- 4e Broad-leaved woodland
- 4f Wet broad-leaved woodland
- 4g Scattered trees
- Overflow ditch and scrape area
- Hedgerows





The prescriptions for each compartment are as follows:

Habitat	No.	Management prescription
Marshy grassland	1a	<p>Graze between August and December</p> <p>Weed control</p> <p>Invasive species control</p> <p>Maintain riverbanks by minimum intervention</p>
Swamp and tall-herb vegetation	1b	<p>Invasive species control</p> <p>Rejuvenate periodically</p> <p>Maintain riverbanks by minimum intervention</p>
Semi-improved pasture	2a, 2b	<p>Maintain successful conservation grazing regime</p> <p>Weed control</p>
Scrub	2a, 3b	<p>Monitor encroachment over grassland</p>

Amenity grassland	3a	Maintain current mowing regime
Rough grassland	3b	Maintain current extent Encourage limited scrub growth
Broad-leaved woodland	4a	Preserve naturally occurring dead wood Remove non-native tree species Enhance suitability for marsh orchid
	4b	Selective thinning Establish a field-layer Preserve naturally occurring dead wood Remove non-native tree species
	4c, 4e	Preserve naturally occurring dead wood Remove non-native tree species
Wet broad-leaved woodland	4f	Maintain current extent Preserve naturally occurring dead wood Remove non-native tree species
Scattered trees	4g	Maintain mature specimens Preserve naturally occurring dead wood Introduce pollarding
Overflow ditch and scrape area	5	Open tree cover Clear vegetation yearly in the autumn by cutting and clearing up to 20% each year Prevent silting-up Dig out ponds to maintain wetland for longer in summer months Maintain riverbanks by minimum intervention
Hedgerows	6	Adopt a wildlife friendly maintenance

## 7.2 Woodland management objectives and action plans

### 7.2.1 General woodland objectives

Aim to preserve naturally occurring dead wood in all woodland compartments. Both standing and fallen dead wood, provide valuable habitat for a range of plants, fungi, invertebrates, and breeding birds. Where it is present naturally, either in the form of dead standing trees or fallen branches, it should be preserved unless it does not represent a risk for the health and safety of visitors.

Logs and branches obtained from tree felling and selective thinning can also be utilised by forming piles of dead wood. Each pile should be large enough to provide a sheltered environment, especially at its interior. The piles should be in protected, shaded areas to reduce disturbance and favour moist conditions.

#### **Selective thinning –Compartment 4b**

Compartment 4b has a closed canopy which prevents the field-layer from developing and supporting a higher diversity of species. The aim is to thin out the canopy of this compartment to allow more light to the woodland floor, encourage the development of a field-layer and attract a wider range of animal species by providing more ecological niches and consequently more food sources.

Selective thinning can contribute creating a diverse habitat with a varied age structure. No more than 10% of the compartment should be felled at any one time. Thinning should target non-native species of trees, if present and/or trees in unhealthy or poor conditions. Selection should also aim to provide a variety of age classes. Brushings will be left on site if considered appropriate for the provision of dead wood, otherwise, they will be removed and chipped.

#### **Maintain current extent – Compartment 4f**

There is a small open stand of wet woodland along the River Medway. It has a moderate importance for nature conservation, being a priority habitat under the UK and Kent BAP and of semi-natural origin. It also forms a valuable mosaic with surrounding swamp communities. Its size should be maintained at current levels, avoiding it spreading further at the expense of swamp vegetation. Trees in poor or unhealthy conditions may be felled. A few trees should also be felled to limit the amount of shade cast onto the overflow ditch in compartment 5.

### **Maintain mature specimens – Compartment 4g**

Existing mature specimens of native trees should be carefully preserved as they can be associated with numerous animal species and add character to the local landscape. Maintenance should focus particularly on the health conditions of the trees and visitor's health and safety. Basic management includes the removal of single branches to reduce the size and weight of the crowns, prevent toppling of the trees and comply with health and safety regulations.

### **Recruit new trees – Compartment 4g**

In recent years, numerous trees have established themselves, either because self-sown or planted, in open areas such as Tutsham Meadow, Bridge Meadow and in rough grassland in Compartment 3b. Over time, the objective should be to create areas of grassland covered by a scatter of mature trees forming a very open canopy. This would enhance the park's landscape and would re-create, at least in grazed areas, a habitat type like wood pasture, which represents a traditional form of woodland management. The specimens to be preserved should be selected on several criteria, including the following:

- type of species – only native species, particularly Oak, Beech and Ash.
- health condition – no disease or pathology affecting the specimen.
- growth form – vigorous forming an open and balanced crown; and
- age – between two or more specimens, select that in more advanced stage of growth.

To prevent damage from grazing livestock, saplings and young trees should be protected by using appropriate cattle-proof fences.

### **Introduce pollarding – Compartment 4g**

Pollarding is a traditional form of management of trees which has been used for centuries since medieval times. It would seem appropriate to introduce this traditional form of management on site if resources allow. The recruitment of new mature trees to create areas of parkland is already under way and some of the maiden trees may be pollarded. Pollarding should be carried out on trees of 20-50 years at a height of 2-3 m. It should be applied at cycles of 25-30 years. Species which usually respond well to pollarding are Oak, Willow and Ash. Suitable locations include areas of grassland (Compartments 2a, 2b, 3a and 3b) and riverside vegetation (Compartments 1a, 1b, 4f).

## 7.2.3 Scrub and hedgerow

### Monitor scrub encroachment over grassland – Compartment 2a, 2b, 3b

Current stands of scrub should be preserved as they add structural diversity to the physical environment and are particularly beneficial for invertebrates and birds. The main stand of scrub is found in the northern half of Coombe Hill 2a but there is also a smaller patch bordering the northern end of Bridge Meadow 3b. Scrub encroachment onto adjacent grassland should be prevented. This should be relatively easy at Bridge Meadow where the frequent cutting regime should keep any scrub growth in check.

The development of *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn) and *Rubus fruticosus* (Bramble) scrub should be allowed on the upper slopes of Coombe Hill, by maintaining its current extent. Any spread should be kept controlled by annual cutting of material at the edges. This area is also subject to grazing by livestock.

A patch of scrub between the paved car park and the overflow car park is known to host breeding Tree Sparrows (*Passer montanus*). Intervention here should be reduced to a minimum to avoid disturbance of this Red-listed species.

### Maintain hedgerow – Compartment 6

A hedge has been planted along the southern boundary of Tutsham Meadow Compartment 2b. This hedge represents a long wildlife corridor, improving connections between several separate areas of woodland.

The hedgerow needs yearly management and cutting of the weed species around it in mid-summer.

Flail trimming should only be carried out, when the hedge is resistant enough. Ideally the finished hedge will be approximately 1.5-2.0 m high and between 1.5 m and 2.5m wide.

### Adopt a wildlife-friendly maintenance - Compartment 6

A relaxed cutting regime for hedges should be adopted to re-create a more natural structure in the vegetation, reduce maintenance costs, and allow higher flower and seed production. Trimming should be scheduled over a period of two to three years. In this plan 2020 and 2023

It should also be carried out in late winter, when birds are not breeding, and plants are less sensitive due to the small amounts of sap contained in their branches. A late winter cut also gives time for birds and invertebrates to harvest a greater quantity of fruits



## 7.2.7 Health and safety trees

The site operates a 3-zone health and safety inspection regime. For full details see appendix F. The ranger teams are qualified in basic tree inspection and carry out ongoing surveys throughout the year and zone 1 is inspected annually by a qualified arboriculturist. Over the course of this plan the following works will be undertaken.

### Health and safety tree work action plan

**Zone 1 = tree inspector**

**Zone 2 and 3 = Ranger team**

YEAR	Compartment	Zones to be inspected	Date completed
2021	All	Zone 1, 2 and 3	12/21
2022	All	Zone 1	11/22
2023	All	Zone 1	10/23
2024	All	Zone 1 and 2	12/2024
2025	All	Zone 1	
2026	All	Zone 1, 2 and 3	
2027	All	Zone 1	
2028	All	Zone 1 and 2	
2029	All	Zone 1	
2030	All	Zone 1	

## 7.3 Grassland

### Maintain current mowing regime – Compartment 3a

This compartment at Bridge Meadow should be devoted primarily to amenity use and should be maintained closely cut through frequent mowing. Current mowing regime should be maintained, mowing is carried out by contractors.

### **Increase grazing pressure – Compartments 2a, 2b**

The stocking density prescribed by the previous management plan was equal to 1 cow per 0.75 ha. The aim is to achieve a light grazing pressure, which in turn promotes variation in vegetation structure and overall species diversity. The site was heavily grazed with Hebridean Sheep in 2011 to hit the grass hard. Since then, cattle and ponies have grazed the site. The grazing regime will be re assessed yearly dependent on sward growth. In 2023 the ponies were permanently removed from site

Coombe Hill received cattle grazing in 2012 to graze out some of the harder grasses at the bottom of the hill. The grazier owns a herd of Sussex cattle that shall be employed to do this for 2-3 months in the summer. Coombe hill will never be of great quality grassland as each year it gets flooded and high levels of nutrients get dumped at the bottom of the hill. It is however very good for birds and insects living in the reeds and a patch of thistle at the bottom of the hill. Spread is contained by cutting every 3 years. This is regularly monitored and revised as necessary. In this plan this should be done in Feb 2026 and 2029.



## Weed control – Compartments 1a, 2a, 2b

All these compartments suffer from a small number of weed species in particular Spear Thistle and Broad-leaved Dock. Weed species compete with other plants for moisture and nutrients and can reduce the growth and survival of other species, ultimately the species- richness of the sward. It is an offence to permit the growth of the following species, which must therefore be controlled if they become established on a site:

- Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense*;
- Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*.
- Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*.
- Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*.
- Curled Dock *Rumex crispus*.
- Broad-leaved Dock *Rumex obtusifolius*; and
- Ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*.

The presence of the species listed above can be beneficial at low frequencies as they add to the biodiversity of the site. Patches of thistles are used for breeding by Reed Bunting, a species listed in the Red List of species of high conservation concern. To benefit the local Reed Bunting population, some of the existing dense stands of thistles will be preserved, although they will not be allowed to spread over surrounding grassland. A large stand at the bottom of Coombe Hill is one such example.

A combination of grazing and hand-pulling should be sufficient to prevent weeds from being conspicuous in the sward. Hand-pulling should be carried out in May – early June over three consecutive years to remove individuals. An appropriate level of grazing (see previous prescription) should suffice to maintain their frequency at low levels. Monitoring will be necessary to establish whether further removal is necessary. In this plan this work should be done in 2025, 2027 and 2029.

Herbicides should not be normally used to prevent damages to non-target species but can be applied if the control methods described above are ineffective or not viable for lack of resources. In 2008, site staff applied Grazon 90 by weed wiping to control a large stand of Creeping Thistle at the bottom of Coombe Hill. A final treatment was carried out in 2009 after which non-chemical control methods were resumed. Herbicide application was carried out by trained professional and was subject to approval by the Environment Agency where it takes place near water.

### **Graze between August and December – Compartment 1a**

Marshy grassland in Compartment 1a has been subject to a constant management regime for 20 years, being cattle grazed between August to December under an annual tenancy.

There is no clear boundary between Compartments 1a and 2a, as the drier grassland of Coombe Hill grades into the marshy grassland alongside the River Medway through a gradual transition. The main target for Compartment 1a should be to maintain current extent and avoid scrub or weed encroachment. This can be achieved by adopting an adequate grazing regime and keeping the patches dominated by Creeping Thistle under control.

### **Maintain current extent and encourage limited scrub growth – Compartment 3b**

This compartment should be kept at its current extent by cutting once a year during October or November. A fifth of the area should be left uncut each year to ensure the vegetation structure is as varied as possible. This operation should be carried out using either a tractor- mounted flail or a brushcutter. If using a brushcutter, all arisings should be removed from the area to ensure low soil fertility.

To increase habitat diversity, limited amounts of scrub should be allowed to establish over Compartment 3b. In this way new ecological niches will be introduced benefiting especially birds, reptiles, and invertebrates. Scrub will be established simply by sparing certain areas from cutting. A total of 4-5 small patches of scrub should be created and then maintained.

### **Invasive species control – Compartment 1a**

Individuals of Himalayan Balsam were found in this compartment and should be controlled. The target should be to control the expansion of this invasive species preventing loss of biodiversity and soil erosion. Total eradication is not advisable as the plant would continue to re-colonize the site using the River Medway as a means of dispersal.

The plant is shallow-rooted and can be removed easily by hand-pulling. This technique is effective where there is good access and should be carried out in late spring/early summer when the plant is visible but not flowering. Where possible the pulled plants should be removed for composting or burning. Herbicides should be avoided due to the proximity with the River Medway.

## 7.4 Swamp and water bodies

### **Invasive species control – Compartment 1b**

Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed are found in this compartment. The former occurs in dense stands and should be controlled in the way indicated above. A few individuals of Giant Hogweed are known from the site and should be removed if they represent a potential danger for visitors or if they begin to form dense stands, out-competing other native species. Control should be done through spraying with Roundup or another glyphosate-based herbicide. The operation of spraying should be carried out by a suitably qualified person.

Since Giant Hogweed represents a health hazard, protective clothing should be worn during treatment to safeguard against contact with the sap. As the hairs can penetrate light fabrics, operators should wear full Personal Protective Equipment, including face shield, gloves, protective overalls, wellingtons, and should avoid working in direct sunlight.

### **Rejuvenate periodically\* – Compartment 1b**

Swamp vegetation is characterised by tall-herb communities which are variously dominated by wetland species. If left unmanaged, this habitat would be first colonized by scrub and then wet woodland. The target should be to preserve a mosaic of different habitats maintaining the highest possible structural diversity which in turn is a condition necessary for high levels of biodiversity. The current proportion between various habitats seems balanced and should be broadly maintained.

Vegetation should be cut on rotation to allow greater structural diversity and avoid eliminating any plant community at any one time. In consideration of limited resources available in terms of workforce, a longer cutting cycle may be more suitable as it requires less effort each year. Compartment 1b should be then divided up into 5 zones and only one of these should be cut each year on rotation. Vegetation should preferably be cut by hand using traditional tools, such as scythes, and/or brushcutter. Hand cutting allows local variations in structure, can be carried out in areas which may not be reached by heavy machinery and avoids compaction of the ground. Cuttings should be preferably removed to encourage lower soil fertility and prevent introduction of large quantities of dead organic material into the adjacent River Medway.

\*This compartment prescription has a lower priority compared with the control of weeds and invasive species. This means that if resources are not sufficient to carry out all the prescriptions, swamp vegetation may not be cut for a year or two.



### **Open tree cover – Compartment 5**

This area is owned by the environment agency so any work should be approved by them before work is to be carried out. There is an overflow ditch contained within the wet woodland of Compartment 4f. It is subject to seasonal flooding from the River Medway and its size and shape fluctuate during the year. The development of aquatic and water-margin vegetation is currently hampered by the presence of intense shading cast from trees growing along the ditch banks. The target is to remove a few of these trees to allow a greater light intensity to reach the ditch surface and banks and encourage higher plant and species diversity.

Only trees standing along the ditch southern bank should be removed as they are those contributing more to the shading. Trees to be felled should be selected on several criteria including the following:

- type of species – non-native species and species not typical of wet conditions.
- age – young immature and old decaying trees.
- health conditions – diseased specimens or trees with unbalanced or poor growth; and
- health and safety – trees or branches that represent a hazard for visitors or that are likely to be a hazard in the future.

When disposing of dead wood, consideration should be given to its ecological value and to the possibility of finding for it a location on site.

### **Maintain riverbanks by minimum intervention**

The northern bank of the River Medway is characterised by a diverse wetland environment which supports a wide range of species, including small mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates. This habitat requires low maintenance, and its species richness should be preserved by adopting a minimum intervention regime. The colonisation by trees, scrub and invasive species should be monitored.

### **Clear Vegetation – Compartment 5**

Wetland areas and ponds require normally low maintenance. A vegetation cut should be conducted every 3-5 years to avoid trees and scrub encroachment and favour the permanent establishment of smaller

herbs. It should be undertaken in summer when the ground is firmer, and the area can be more easily accessed. August would be a suitable month, coming after the flowering and fruiting of most plants and after the main bird breeding season. The cut should be applied on rotation with no more than a third of the wetland area cut at any one time. Such regime would promote structural diversity and, in turn, be beneficial to a wider range of species, particularly invertebrates. Cut material should ideally be removed off site to encourage lower soil fertility.

### **Prevent silting-up - Compartment 5**

The accumulation of silt and vegetation litter should be monitored. The scrape should never dry up during the year and the scrape should hold some water for most of the year, drying out only in July and August. If the scrape is subject to silting-up, periodical dredging becomes necessary, approximately once every five years. Silt should be dug out between October and December when it is less likely to disturb breeding birds and other protected species such as amphibians. No more than a third of the area should be dredged at any one time to reduce disturbance on local wildlife.



## 8 HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

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### 8.1 General Introduction

There are no notable archaeological features as part of the site. The adjacent road bridge spanning the River Medway is a grade 1 listed structure that dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. The bridge was fully restored in 1978.





## 9 VISITOR MANAGEMENT

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### 9.1 General

The management of Teston Bridge Country Park will be influenced by the need to provide an area for public recreation for the estimated 125,000 visitors per year. Kent County Council need to provide and maintain the amenity area, car-park, permissive and statutory rights-of ways, picnic tables and litter bins as well as interpretative material to increase the education resource. The site must be run cost neutrally to ensure financial sustainability.

The site is open from 9.00 am every day except Christmas Day and closes at dusk. Locking times are displayed at the entrance of the site.

#### 9.1.1 General aims and objectives

- To maintain, improve and extend the path network throughout the site via a programme of regular maintenance and upgrade works.
- The Country Park must meet all legal and other obligations. Liaise with the Maidstone Victory angling club annually to discuss site issues such as maintenance of fishing swims and bank-side structures.
- Work with Skanska to ensure all buildings and facilities are clean and well-maintained.
- Ensure the toilets are open 364 days a year.
- Ensure path network is managed to maintain year-round access.
- Ensure all site staff and contractors are fully in accordance with KCC Health and Safety policy. Undertake training where necessary.
- Ensure all volunteers' and local groups comply with KCC Health and Safety.
- Framework, provide suitable training and supervision.
- Ensure all site staff implement Risk Assessment actions.
- Undertake daily, weekly, monthly, and annual site checks.
- Undertake annual tree inspections.
- Undertake monthly inspections of site furniture.

## 9.2 Buildings

Toilets are provided adjacent to the visitor centre. Male, female, disabled toilets, and baby changing facilities are available. These were refurbished in 2021.

A warden's office and storeroom are on site and a private mobile food outlet is housed on site.

The building's maintenance is carried out under a KCC wide facilities services contract with Skanska. Issues are logged and then resolved subject to a service level agreement prioritizing works. Any issues with the contract are flagged to the KCC property team who ensure all works and inspections are conducted accordingly. The visitor services team log all building issues.

## 9.3 Car Park

There is a surfaced car park on site and in 2021 the overflow car park was surfaced due to an increase in visitor numbers all year round.

ANPR cameras are used to monitor the car park and Euro car parks are employed to monitor and enforce the parking rules. The equipment, signage and cameras were funded by Euro car parks. The pay and display machines are maintained by Metric who are contracted to repair any faults within 24 hours, site rangers carry out routine repairs.

The drainage ditches around the car park were reprofiled and a culvert put in from the Network Rail pipe into the drainage ditches to reduce the risk of car park flooding. The main pipe from the drainage ditch under the meadow to Teston Bridge was replaced in Autumn 2021. The outflow is adjacent to the bridge.

## 9.4 Site Furniture and Signage

New orientation boards were installed at all site entrances and the car park signage updated in 2022.

Picnic benches and benches are replaced on a rolling programme.



## 9.5 Footpaths and Internal Path Network

Teston Bridge Country Park has one Public Right of Way crossing through the site. This is KM4 which is the riverside path.

There are no bridleways or cycle paths within the park all other paths are permissive only.

In 2021 a 500m circular easy access path was created linking the car park to the bridge, then onto the lock and back up to the play area and car park. This increased the accessibility of the site all year round.



## 9.6 Marketing and events

The site is promoted by roadside brown tourism signing and is marked on the Ordnance Survey map as a Country Park. In addition, Teston Bridge Country Park is mentioned in the County Council Countryside Sites promotional literature and the website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/kent-country-parks>. Additional website marketing is done through Explore Kent <https://explorekent.org/>

An event proforma is used by site staff to ensure all events are managed effectively with a marketing schedule part of the form. This can be seen in appendix E.

KCC currently employs a full-time marketing officer to coordinate marketing and publicity for the Country Parks. This member of staff is responsible for press releases, adverts, posters and online marketing like Facebook and Instagram. The website was updated in 2020. Nominated site staff manage Facebook pages for each of the main sites and the sites have Instagram accounts also.

A Country Parks event list is published on the web each year and posters advertise events on parish notice boards and in local shops as well as on Facebook.

An Accessibility guide for the park was created by Access Able in June 2023 and is available in hard copy and through the web pages here: [Teston-Bridge-Country-Park-Accessibility-Guide\\_June2023.pdf \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

## 9.7 Visitors

Visitor surveys (2004, 2007, 2014, 2016, 2021) are conducted to ensure constant feedback is received about the park. In addition, Green Flag judges provide feedback reports annually, which provide invaluable annual feedback on park management.

The country parks strategy 2023-2028 underwent both corporate and public consultation before being accepted by the council. There were 376 respondees to the consultation in 2022 and a report into the findings was produced. A full copy of the report is available on request.

An Equalities Impact Assessment is completed for all new projects and decisions, this includes increasing parking charges, installing new play equipment, provision of new services. These can be found on the KCC website.

Mosaic data is used to analyse the demographic, ethnic diversity and population living within a 30-minute drive of the park. This was last done in 2022.

## 9.8 Fishing and mooring

The stretch of the river below the lock boasts one of the highest levels of fish stocks along the entire River Medway. Pike, Chubb, Barbel, Roach, Perch and Bream are all in plentiful supply. A rod license is available from the Environment Agency to fish at Teston Bridge Country Park.

The rights to fishing are leased to a local angling club and the bank bailiff regularly patrols to sell day tickets on behalf of the Fishing club who hold the license to the site. The fishing club are responsible for maintaining the swims and the bank edge and replacing the swims subject to consultation with the ranger team.

Two mooring posts are available on the Medway in compartment 1a. There is no access onto the site from these mooring posts. The EA have confirmed that KCC are responsible for these mooring posts.

## 10 Environmental management

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This section summarises all the environmental management references made throughout other sections.

Kent County Council has internal teams focused on climate change and monitoring KCCs climate change performance. Each team has an Environmental Sustainability lead and then there are green champions within those teams. On the public webpages there is lots of info on how to help save the planet:

[KCC and the environment \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/climate-change/climate-emergency-statement/our-climate-emergency-performance>

There is also a carbon net zero action plan with an aim of being carbon neutral by 2030, that can be found here:

[https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/122291/KCC-Net-Zero-action-Plan.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/122291/KCC-Net-Zero-action-Plan.pdf)

A low emissions plan can be found here: [Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy - Kent County Council](#)

KCC has an action plan for engaging communities [Kent Green Action - Kent County Council](#)

The parks are part of the Kent Nature partnership <https://kentnature.org.uk/>

The council has an Environmental policy (2020) that can be found here:

[https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/10669/KCC-Environmental-Policy.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/10669/KCC-Environmental-Policy.pdf)

### *General park management*

- No peat is used on site and glyphosate is used only to spot treat invasive species such as Giant Hogweed. A herbicide record is kept on site.
- All woodland brash and arisings from park maintenance are left on site as habitat piles or corridors.
- All woodland materials must be from sustainable sources.
- All plants and trees must be sourced from 'plant healthy certified' nurseries.
- Where possible electric hand tools have been introduced to reduce the use of fossil fuels
- The waste is separated on site using the on-site bins and also by the collection company at their depot.
- The park has an electric van which is used to travel between other sites.
- All aspects of the parks response to climate change are monitored to see if the impacts are in detriment to the habitats or particular species.

- In 2019 the cesspit has been converted into a treatment plant that enables the treated water back into the environment so thus reducing the need for the cesspit to be emptied and reducing lorry use.
- The pay and display machines on site are solar powered as is the sensor for the petrol interceptor.

## 11 HEALTH AND SAFETY

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### 11.1 Health, Safety and Security

Kent County Council has a central Health and Safety Advisory Team, whose role is to ensure that all departments follow corporate policies and legislation regarding the safety of both staff in the workplace and visitors to our sites. The advice that the Kent Country Parks team receives includes:

- Creative solutions to health and safety management challenges
- Advice on legislation and policy
- Advice and assistance on risk assessment
- Training and instruction for health and safety management
- Full back up and support following health and safety incidents
- Pressure management and change management staff support tools
- Audit services to check compliance and support developments

An internal KNET holds all the information staff and managers require including forms and guidance. The main health and safety and welfare at work policy was reviewed in 2022, there is also a 'blue book' on KNET that gives staff all details about their working terms and conditions.

The Kent Country Parks team has a designated member of staff to take the lead on consulting with the corporate team, ensuring all park staff are updated on changes in law and that all staff undertake the relevant training to their position. All Kent Country Parks staff therefore undertake core training in health and safety when they begin in a new post, and then will be given further training according to the needs of

their role. Health and safety areas that are particularly relevant to the parks setting, and for which staff adopt specified practices, include:

- Accident/incident reporting
- COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)
- Driving at work
- Fire (and fire safety in the workplace)
- First aid
- Food hygiene
- Lone working
- Management of contractors
- Manual handling
- Occupational health
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Risk assessment
- Violent behaviour
- Working at height
- Safeguarding for children and young people
- CDM regs 2015

In addition, emergency plans have been developed for all sites (last updated October 2022) and are stored in all offices and at head office.

Site contractors either complete a permit to work and submit a risk assessment for all works conducted on site that is authorised by the Officer who commissioned the work or for larger contracts an NEC3 Engineering and Construction short contract is completed. Any contract over £50,000 goes through a competitive tender process.



All non-specialist contractors must be from the KCC approved contractor list. KCC aims to use local contractors and materials in all contracts where possible.

Risk assessments are reviewed annually and updated, when necessary, these are stored electronically.

All archaeology projects undertaken are individually risk assessed.

Health and safety is an agenda item at the monthly team meeting.

A training matrix is maintained for all staff with all ranger staff required to be certified before they use any power tools, machinery and vehicles and catering staff to be food hygiene certified. Education rangers are Level 3 Forest School practitioners. All staff are first aid trained.

## 11.2 Standard practices

Teston Bridge Country Park has its own on-site health and safety plans in addition to the central plans. There are daily, monthly, annual, and seasonal inspections conducted by the Countryside Wardens. If any issues arise these are reported back to the Ranger team who also ensure that the checks are conducted. They sign a weekly inspection sheet to advise the ranger team that all checks have been conducted.

Standard instructions are maintained, see Appendix F, for annual inspections including tree inspections, first aid kits, trailers, machinery, PPE are issued centrally. Some of these are conducted by authorised staff, others are contracted out to specialist services, and these include Tree inspections, PAT tests and fire extinguisher tests.

Site contractors either complete a permit to work and submit a risk assessment for all works conducted on site that is authorised by the Officer who commissioned the work or for larger contracts an NEC3 Engineering and Construction short contract is completed. Any contracts over £10,000 go through a competitive tender process. KCC aims to use local contractors and materials in all contracts where possible. The documentation is reviewed by the central Health and Safety team on an annual basis.

## 11.3 Risk Assessments and Staff Training

For all tasks and where machinery or tools are used a Risk Assessment is produced and is available to all staff and or volunteers, where necessary training is given on all machinery before it can be used. Explanation such as tool talks and health and safety checks are conducted before all activities. An electronic version of all risk assessments is available, an example can be found in appendix F. These are reviewed annually by the wider Country Parks team with the last review occurring in October 2024.

Kent County Council is also an Investor in People and as such all-site staff have a personal development plan which lists all training undertaken during their employment with the council. All staff undertake core training that includes:

- Lone working
- Dealing with difficult customers
- Manual handling
- Risk Assessments
- Basic Fire Awareness
- First Aid appointed persons

Wardens have access to a warden's handbook for the site which summarises all important information that they need to know. This was reviewed in October 2024. There is also a volunteer Health & Safety manual summarising the most relevant risk assessments for the volunteer team. A risk assessment and policies folder is held at each site for staff who do not have access to the electronic versions.

All staff complete an annual occupational road risk assessment before they can drive any Kent County Council vehicle. No vehicles can be driven off-road driving unless a basic off-road driving course has been undertaken.

## 11.4 Fire Plan

A fire plan has been undertaken for the site which identifies rendezvous points, locations of fire hydrants and safety equipment, vehicle access points, available water supplies and other hazards on site. The plan is for the building and the wider site. A copy is held in the site office and at the head office in Maidstone. The FM provider, Skanska, also conduct a building fire risk assessment.

## 11.5 Tree Inspections

Tree inspections are completed throughout the site. The Country Park is divided into three zones for tree inspections. The annual inspection of zone 1 is conducted by qualified arboroculturalists, continuous visual inspections of zones 2 and 3 are carried out by park staff who have basic training in identifying tree health. This policy was audited by insurers in Aug 2021 to ensure it was fit for purpose. The zoning details can be seen in Appendix F.

## 11.6 Teston lock

The lock area and canoe pass land is owned and managed by the Environment Agency. They are responsible for all the fences, boarding jetties, lock and site infrastructure in this area. Site staff report in any issues for the Environment Agency to repair.

# 12 SITE MAINTENANCE

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## 12.1 Maintenance of Equipment and site furniture

Wardens complete daily, monthly, and seasonal checks and report back to the ranger team any risks or defects they identify if they cannot resolve them themselves. Each week they sign an inspection sheet to confirm they have conducted all the inspections. Details of these inspections are listed below.

### 12.1.1 The Daily Checks

A daily site patrol and litter pick is undertaken by site wardens on rotation through the week. Consideration is given specifically to the car park area, picnic area, adventure playground. In addition, the pay and display parking machines are emptied, and building checked to ensure it is alarmed and secure and the bins and dog bins are emptied if required.

### 12.1.2 Weekly Checks

The Site Wardens undertake weekly checks when they are on site. These include:

- check rubbish bins.
- check adventure playground
- check river edge
- check mown areas (broken glass *etc*).
- check dog bins.
- check notice boards for posters; and
- patrol and litter pick site
- 

### 12.1.3 Monthly Checks

Monthly site checks by Site Wardens include:

- check stability of banks adjacent to paths.
- check Extinguishers are in correct locations.
- check gates and kissing gates.
- check path conditions.
- check boundary fence.
- check internal fences in grazing area
- check all picnic benches are still in place and in good condition

Maintenance of equipment and the landscape is conducted by Kent County Council Rangers and Wardens with a few exceptions.

The Wardens are responsible for the opening and closing of the site and maintaining a safe environment for visitors to enjoy. This is regulated by the Wardens daily, weekly, and monthly checks of site and site infrastructure which are listed in the Wardens

Checklist (see appendix 3). This includes daily litter picks, regular emptying of dog waste bins, reporting vandalism and cleaning of the toilet facilities.

All litter and dog waste are collected on a weekly basis by Countrystyle - organised as part of the central facilities management contract with Skanska.

During the Spring/Summer season the amenity grassland is mowed fortnightly by an external contractor (Landscape Services Ltd).

An independent annual check of the play area is undertaken by RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) of the play area equipment. Rangers (RPII trained) conduct quarterly operational checks and wardens (RPII trained) carry out a weekly visual check.

#### 12.1.4 Annual Checks

The following annual checks are undertaken:

- Ranger staff are responsible for the testing or commissioning of testing for all tools and equipment e.g., winches, chainsaws, trailers, electrical tools and appliances, motorised vehicles, safety hats and hand tools.
- COSHH assessments (carried out by Ranger staff).
- Risk Assessments (carried out by Ranger staff).
- Occupational Road Risk Assessments (filled in by individuals).
- *Other Checks (seasonally dependent)*
- Spread grit/salt on icy surfaces around the car park
- Inspect trees after strong winds/gales and heavy snow.

#### 12.1.5 Other Checks (Depending on Season)

- Winter ice checks around ponds to prevent access and ensure the water-edge is safe.
- spread grit / salt on icy surfaces around the car park and around the visitor centre.
- check trees after gales; and
- check for flooding and subsidence on paths after heavy rain.

A record of inspection is kept for when weekly, monthly, and annual safety checks are made and by whom. The site inspection forms are held digitally.

### 12.1.6 Other Checks including litter and vandalism

The pay and display machines are maintained by Euro Car parks through a centrally managed contract with a contractual obligation to attend with 24 hours of fault reporting.

General waste and recyclable waste are removed weekly from the site as part of the FM contract.

If fly tip is located on-site, then it is collected up by a member of staff and put in our waste collection area awaiting disposal by an approved waste contractor. If fly tip is not on site but nearby then we liaise with the appropriate borough council who have dedicated fly tip teams who will come out and remove it.

Vandalism is dealt with as soon as possible including repairing anything that is damaged i.e. benches, gates, signs etc.

### 12.1.7 Buildings Maintenance

Skanska have been awarded a 5-year (2022-2027) contract to manage all Kent County Council buildings in North and West Kent as part of a Facilities Management agreement. This includes all works to the interior and exterior of the buildings. Issues are reported to a helpdesk then actioned. An SLA exists to monitor performance and financial penalties are issued if they do not meet their agreed targets. Site staff raise a task and then Skanska investigate and resolve the issue according to their priority protocol. KCC property team monitor and manage the Total Facilities Management contracts for performance.

Skanska cover all aspects of the health and safety and pre-planned maintenance of the building including things like fire alarm testing, fire risk assessment, Legionella testing, PAT testing, fixed wire testing, drainage, waste, heating systems, plumbing, fire extinguisher checks, CCTV, intruder alarms, door fixings, light fixtures and general repairs and maintenance as requested by park staff.

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### 12.1.8 Brand guidelines

When signage needs to be replaced a brand guideline exists which includes ladder boards, main site noticeboards, waymarker posts, benches, and finger posts. All parks when replacing old furniture use these guidelines to ensure a corporate style is maintained throughout the parks service.

### 12.1.9 Site equipment and furniture

An inventory of site equipment is conducted annually and an electronic version is stored on site so that it can be easily updated.

## 13 EDUCATION

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If anyone expresses an interest in having an educational visit to the site our team of education rangers can facilitate any enquiries.

## 14 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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A liaison group for local stakeholders was set up in 2022 and meets twice a year. The group involves the parish council, fishing club, café, EA. This provides a useful forum for the local community to engage with site staff and have a formal minuted meeting. The parish clerk sends the park queries from the local parish and we feedback on work commitments and plans and use their comments to help inform decision making.

The West Kent Country Parks team has a group of volunteers that meet every Wednesday to do work around the various sites within the team's portfolio of sites, one of which is Teston Bridge Country Park. The group have made a major contribution to the management of Teston Bridge Country Park; assisting with path maintenance; stock fencing and general estate maintenance.

We also produce site notices and interpretation material which is displayed on the notice boards throughout the park, informing the visitors of upcoming work, projects that are in progress or works that have been done. A new information board will be installed as visitors enter the meadow to replace the old one that was in the middle of the car park.

Over summer 2024 Teston held events in line with HAF, and 67 tickets were sold/issued.



KCC Liaise and work with the Environment Agency, Medway Valley Countryside Partnership (MVCP) and Public Rights of Way Team. KCC assisted the Environment Agency in the refurbishment of Teston Lock and Fish Pass in 2013. In summer 2021 The EA advised they needed to completely replace Teston lock and needed to conduct major site works from Sep- Dec to set up the project. This involved large scale earth removal and the creation of a track strong enough to support a large crane across the meadow down to the lock. They also constructed a crane pad and compound area to enable them to conduct their work. In 2023 they proposed to conduct the replacement work and KCC work with them to try and ensure this work happens as smoothly and as least disruptively as possible. Due to EA issues this project was delayed until 2024 and will be downscaled. This is due to be completed in Spring 2025

## 15 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

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An annual revenue budget is provided by Kent County Council to fund the day-to-day operations of the park. Due to pressures in the wider organisation this is not enough to fund all site services, so staff are focused on generating income to offset the site's running costs.

Additional money is available through a modernisation of assets budget which is allocated by the head of country parks based on information submitted by site staff.

The country parks service costs 28p per person per year to the people of Kent (April 2021) and has moved from 46% self-financing to 81% from 2009-2023.

The park's main income streams are:

- car park pay and display income.
- café income from the Café lease.
- Income from the renting of a space by a paddle board training firm

The Countryside budgets are managed by the Ranger Services Manager and the visitor centre and café budgets by the Visitor Services and Events manager and Café manager. The Operations manager oversees all budgets. KCC have a policy of paying all invoices within 28 days of receipt.

Skanska manages the budget for the building's maintenance under Facilities Management contracts set up in November 2023.

Opportunities for additional income streams have been investigated by KCC special projects team and private consultants and upon investigation proved to be uneconomic for the site or the site has proved not suitable to the providers. These include:

- Becoming a camping and caravan site
- Music festivals
- Disc Golf
- Golf football
- Free running/parkour
- Selling Christmas trees
- Having a temporary ice-skating rink installed
- Private fun fairs using the site.
- Renting land to private events
- Hosting fun fairs

- Launching hot air balloons
- Hosting farmers markets
- Hosting car boot fair

In 2020 the covid period saw a massive increase in visitor numbers with the park full nearly every day from April until July. The parks remained open during lockdown to allow for local exercise and Teston saw a large volume of visitors from Maidstone with increase in numbers of canoeists and paddle boarders. The Park generated more income than its running costs allowing us to replace a large amount of signage on site.

## 16 POTENTIAL THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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### Climate change

Monitoring and observing change over time is an integral part of the park management with regards to tree diseases and the change in weather patterns. All aspects of management are affected by increasingly wet and warm, winters and prolonged hot spells in the spring and summer leading to almost arid conditions. Many paths that historically were unsurfaced are now topped to allow year-round access and timber extraction as they were impassable due to standing water caused by the increase in rainfall in some months, like October and November 2019.

### Environment agency

The Environment Agency are exploring options to conduct biodiversity enhancement works on site as part of their lock project which could improve some of the marginal habitat on site.

## 17 REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## 18 APPENDICES

### *Appendix A – Work completed within this plan.*

Date	Persons involved	Comp	Description of work
Jan 20	Rangers		Sleeper bridge damaged by storm repaired
			H and S tree work completed
			Broken fencing repaired
Feb 20	Rangers		Scrub clearance in Coombe Hill
March 20- 13 May 20			Lockdown, park was closed due to covid lockdown
May 20	Rangers		14 <sup>th</sup> May hand sanitisers and social distancing signs put up
	Rangers		Farrier and Vets in for ponies
June 20	Rangers		Fixed fencing and gate damage on site
			SUP setting up paddleboard activity base on the site
July 20	Rangers		Fencing and gate repairs
			Repaired memorial tree guard
			Himalayan Balsam pulled along riverbank
			New play bark topped up play area surfacing
Aug 20	ROSPA		Play area inspections
Sep 20	Rangers		Memorial bench installed nr play area
			Strimmed around petrol interceptor
Oct 20	Rangers		Pony health checks
Dec 20	Rangers		H and S trees work completed
Jan 21	Rangers		Scrub regrowth cleared in Coombe Hill
			Biodigester alarm sounding
			Fallen tree in Tutsham meadow
Mar 21	Rangers		Fencing repairs in Coombe Hill
April 21	Rangers		Removed old site ladder signs
			Repaired fencing in Tutsham meadow

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May 21	Rangers		Pony health checks
			New picnic benches constructed and installed
			Teston existing easy access path widened to 2m and new link from car park to bridge created
			Drainage from cesspit and river outflow pipe issues investigated with AMEY
			Overflow car park surfaced with stone and sleeper edge
June 21			Giant Hogweed treated
			Himalayan Balsam pulling along the bank
Aug 21	Ranger		Play bark in play area topped up
Sep 21	Rangers		Tutsham meadow fencing replaced
Oct 21	Rangers		Scrub clearance in Tutsham meadow
			Pony health checks
Jan 22	Rangers		New ladder sign installed by moorings
			Gate into overflow car park repaired
			Culvert constructed from Network rail outflow pipe under overflow car park entrance into existing drainage ditch to reduce flooding in car park
Mar 22	Rangers		Ponies suffering from laminitis
			Storm damaged trees made safe
Apr 22	Rangers		Play sculptures delivered
	Environment Agency		EA lock replacement preliminary works began, access track for crane across meadow to Lock, crane pad installed by fish pass, earth mounded up. Works from April to October.
			Ponies' health checks
			Bollards installed in overflow car park
	Playdale		New play area installed by Playdale with wet pour surfacing
May 22	Rangers		Giant Hogweed treated
June 22	Rangers		Fitted water harvester to trough
July 22	Rangers		Replaced damaged gates
Aug 22	Rangers		Fence repairs in Coombe Hill and paddock
			Horse's hooves trimmed
Sep 22	Rangers		Coombe Hill water trough repaired
Oct 22	Rangers		H and S trees cut
			Scrub clearance in Tutsham meadow
Feb 23	Rangers		Trees around fishing swims cut back

Apr 23			Pony put down other pony rehomed
	Rangers		Kissing gates repaired
May 23	Rangers		Car park lines repainted
July 23	Rangers		Fallen trees cleared from site
			26 <sup>th</sup> July- 5 Aberdeen Angus cattle on site
August 23	Rangers		3 new benches installed
			Floating guard added to water trough to protect them from wild birds
October 23	Rangers		24 <sup>th</sup> October- cattle removed from Teston
December 23	Contractor		Environmental mitigation works in overflow car park started, hedge bay created
February 2023	Rangers + Vols		Scrub clearance Coombe Hill
April 2024	Rangers		Clearing overhanging branches from car park
	Rangers		Filled kissing gate entrances with Type 1.
	Rangers		Livestock fencing
May 2024	Ranges		Giant Hogweed removal
	Rangers + Vols		Tidying car park area + overflow
June 2024	Rangers + Vols		Clearing Himalayan Balsam
July 2024	Rangers		Strimming playground and picnic area. Cut overhanging branches
	Rangers		Giant Hogweed removal
September 2024	Rangers		Health and Safety Trees

## Appendix B – Species records

Table 1- Birds

*Bird species recorded from Teston Bridge Country Park. Noteworthy species are those designated at international or national level.*

### Notes

**bold** – species listed in Schedule 1, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

\* – species potentially breeding at Teston Bridge Country Park.

KCC – incidental records from Kent County Council staff.

KWT – Kent Wildlife Trust (2002)

English name	Latin name	Source
<b>Noteworthy species</b>		
<b>Barn Owl*</b>	<b><i>Tyto alba</i></b>	KCC
Blackbird*	<i>Turdus merula</i>	KCC
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	KCC
Bullfinch*	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	KCC
Canada Goose*	<i>Branta Canadensis</i>	KCC
Carrion Crow*	<i>Corvus corone</i>	KCC, KWT
Collared Dove*	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	KCC, KWT
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	KCC
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	KCC
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	KCC
Coot*	<i>Fulica atra</i>	KCC, KWT
Corn Bunting*	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	KCC
Cuckoo*	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	KCC
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	KCC
Dunnoek*	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	KCC
Feral Pigeon*	<i>Columba livia</i>	KCC
<b>Fieldfare</b>	<b><i>Turdus pilaris</i></b>	KCC
Goldcrest*	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	KCC
Goldfinch*	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	KCC
Great Spotted Woodpecker*	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	KCC
Great Tit*	<i>Parus major</i>	KCC
<b>Green Sandpiper</b>	<b><i>Tringa ochropus</i></b>	KCC
Green Woodpecker*	<i>Picus viridis</i>	KCC, KWT
Greenfinch*	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	KCC
<b>Greylag Goose</b>	<b><i>Anser anser</i></b>	KCC
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	KCC
House Martin*	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	KCC

Jackdaw*	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	KCC
Jay*	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	KCC
Kestrel*	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	KCC
<b>Kingfisher*</b>	<b><i>Alcedo atthis</i></b>	KCC
Lapwing*	<i>Vallenus vallenus</i>	KCC
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	KCC
Linnet*	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	KCC
Little Gull	<i>Larus minutus</i>	KCC
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	KCC
Magpie*	<i>Pica pica</i>	KCC
Mallard*	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	KCC, KWT
Manardin*	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	KCC
Meadow Pipit*	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	KCC
Mistle Thrush*	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	KCC
Moorhen*	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	KCC
Mute Swan*	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	KCC
Nuthatch*	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	KCC
Pheasant*	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	KCC
Pied Wagtail*	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	KCC
Redpoll*	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>	KCC
Reed Bunting*	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	KCC
<b>Redwing</b>	<b><i>Turdus iliacus</i></b>	KCC
Redshank	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>	KCC
Robin*	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	KCC
Rook*	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	KCC
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	KCC
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	KCC
Skylark*	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	KCC
Snipe*	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	KCC
Song Thrush*	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	KCC

Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	KCC
Spotted Flycatcher*	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	KCC
Starling*	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	KCC
Stock Dove*	<i>Columba oenas</i>	KCC
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	KCC
Swallow*	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	KCC
Tawny Owl*	<i>Strix aluco</i>	KCC
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	KCC
Treecreeper*	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	KCC
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	KCC
Turtle Dove*	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	KCC
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	KCC
Wigeon	<i>Anas Penelope</i>	KCC
Willow Warbler*	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	KCC
Woodpigeon*	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	KCC
Wren*	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	KWT
Yellowhammer*	<i>Emberiza citronella</i>	KCC, KWT
<b>Other species</b>		
Blackcap*	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	KCC,KWT
Blue Tit*	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	KCC
Chaffinch*	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	KCC, KWT
Chiffchaff*	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	KCC
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	KCC
Garden Warbler*	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	KCC
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	KCC
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	KCC
Grey Wagtail*	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	KCC
House Sparrow*	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	KCC
Lesser Whitethroat*	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	KCC
Little Grebe*	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	KCC



Long-tailed Tit*	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	KCC
Reed Warbler*	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	KCC
Sedge Warbler*	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	KCC
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	KCC
Whitethroat*	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	KCC

**Table 2 – Moth lists**

**Teston Country Park Moth**

list for 18/09/2009

Recorder; David Gardner

Code	Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
29	Ectoedemia atricollis	Ectoedemia atricollis	Unstated
67	Stigmella plagicolella	Stigmella plagicolella	Local
75	Stigmella floslactella	Stigmella floslactella	Unstated
83	Stigmella atricapitella	Stigmella atricapitella	Unstated
84	Stigmella ruficapitella	Stigmella ruficapitella	Unstated
88	Stigmella samiatella	Stigmella samiatella	pRDB 3
89	Stigmella basiguttella	Stigmella basiguttella	Local
99	Stigmella hybnerella	Stigmella hybnerella	Unstated
107	Stigmella regiella	Stigmella regiella	Unstated
123	Tischeria ekebladella	Tischeria ekebladella	Unstated
263	Apple Leaf Miner	Lyonetia clerkella	Common
264	Bedellia somnulentella	Bedellia somnulentella	Unstated
282	Caloptilia elongella	Caloptilia elongella	Unstated
284	Caloptilia rufipennella	Caloptilia rufipennella	Unstated
288	Caloptilia stigmatella	Caloptilia stigmatella	Common
289	Caloptilia falconipennella	Caloptilia falconipennella	Unstated
301	Parornix betulae	Parornix betulae	Unstated
303	Parornix anglicella	Parornix anglicella	Unstated
320	Phyllonorycter quercifoliella	Phyllonorycter quercifoliella	Unstated
323	Phyllonorycter oxyacanthae	Phyllonorycter oxyacanthae	Common

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332	Phyllonorycter corylifoliella	Phyllonorycter corylifoliella	Unstated
333	Phyllonorycter salictella viminiella	Phyllonorycter salictella viminiella	Local
342	Nut Leaf Blister Moth	Phyllonorycter coryli	Common
345	Phyllonorycter rajella	Phyllonorycter rajella	Unstated
360	Phyllonorycter kleemannella	Phyllonorycter kleemannella	Unstated
367	Phyllocnistis saligna	Phyllocnistis saligna	Unstated

## Teston Bridge Country Park Flowers Survey June 2008

### MEADOWS:

Germander Speedwell

Ground Ivy

Scarlet Pimpernel

Creeping Buttercup

Dock

Red & White Clover

Lesser Stitchwort

Birds Foot Trefoil

Hop Trefoil

Selfheal

Bindweed

Tufted Vetch

Common Vetch

Forget Me Not

Siberian Iris Scented Mayweed

Mountain Sorrel

Comfrey

Forget Me Not

White Mustard

Black Horehound

Marsh Marigold

### Wetland species:

Water Mint

Burnet

Sacrifage

Lesser Stitch Wort

Himilayan Balsam

*Appendix C Incidental sight species records*

*Appendix D Past Management Post 2020*

### Appendix C, Marketing Checklist

<b>KCC COUNTRY PARKS</b>					
<b>EVENT COSTINGS PROFORMA</b> (Please note all information provided on this section of the pro forma will be transposed directly to booking bug for ticket sales and to marketing materials)					
Park					
Lead Officer					
Date Proforma Completed					
Event Name					
Event Date					
Additional Event Date (s) (multiple date events only)					
Event Time	Start (enter time below)	End (enter time below)			
Time slots	Please provide required times slots				
	Start (enter time below)	End (enter time below)			
Space for more detail on time slots					
Event Objective	Income Generation				
Event Short Description (Max 255 characters, this should be a short, snappy, exciting description of the event that will appear on the first page of booking bug to encourage people to look further or make a booking. This will also be used on marketing materials)					



<b>Event Long Description</b> (Max 1000 characters, this should be used to provide further detail on the specifics of the event e.g. what the event is about, what the customer will experience, what is included in the ticket price, age restrictions, parking arrangements, indoor or outdoor, are dogs allowed, any other information the customer might need before booking)						
<b>Maximum Number of Tickets Per Session/Date</b>						
<b>What date are tickets to be made available for sale</b>						
<b>Minimum time before event bookings can be made</b>						
<b>Age Restrictions</b>						
<b>Are children to be accompanied by an adult</b>						
<b>Is this event suitable for babies/toddlers</b>						
<b>Are dogs allowed</b>						
<b>Is this event suitable for people with:</b>	<b>Physical disabilities</b>		<b>If no, why</b>			
	<b>Partially sighted</b>		<b>If no, why</b>			
	<b>Hearing impaired</b>		<b>If no, why</b>			

Has a KCC risk assessment been undertaken? When and by whom?	Yes					
Is booking in advance required?	no	Who will take the bookings?				
Are additional staff resources required?	no	Who?				
Is there any third-party involvement?	no	Who?				
Volunteers - will you be using volunteers	no	How many?				
Booking questions needed e.g., name of attendee, age of attendee, meal choices if catering included (please be specific about the information you need from the customers and the relevant booking questions will be built for you)	n/a					
Booking questions per booking or per attendee?						
Resources needing to be booked on Booking Bug (e.g., function room, outdoor space)						
What hard copy marketing materials are required (e.g., site posters, external venue posters, flyers)						
What digital marketing materials are required (e.g., social media posts, webpage updates, events listings, Yammer)						
<b>Expected Event Income and Revenue</b>						
The following are subject to VAT		Ticket Price	Quantity	Price including VAT		
Ticket Sales	One Adult			£0.00		
	One Child	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Family (2+1)	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Family (2+2)	£0.00	0	£0.00		

	Family (2+3)	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Concessions (please specify)	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Catering	Food	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Drink	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Anticipated Parking Income (If outside normal opening hours)	Parking (outside of normal opening hours)	£0.00		£0.00		
Other Revenue (Please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
The following are not subject to VAT						
Room Hire Income (if charged separately to tickets)	Room hire / Outdoor Venue Hire	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Programmes	Programmes	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Other Revenue (Please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Total				<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>Expected Event Costs</b>		Expected Cost	Quantity	Total expected cost		
Staffing (Please specify job title, hourly rate and number of hours as per example)	<i>e.g. - Casual Events Guru</i>	<i>£9.99</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>£39.96</i>		
				£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Catering				£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Hire of Equipment (please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
3rd Party Costs e.g., event specialists (please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Events Materials (please specify)		£5.00	1	£5.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Marketing (please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		

Any Other Cost (Please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Total			0	<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>Expected Profit / Loss on Event</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>Event To Go Ahead?</b>				
<b>Marketing Activity</b>	Responsible person	Date Required	Date Completed and By Whom			
Tickets loaded on to booking bug	BS					
Tickets available for sale	BS					
Hard Copy Marketing Materials Designed and Provided to Lead Officer	BS					
Digital Marketing Materials Designed and Scheduled for Posting	BS					
<b>EVENT EVALUATION</b> (Please note event evaluations must be completed within 7 days of the final date of the event by the named lead officer)						
<b>Actual Event Income and Revenue</b>						
The following are subject to VAT		Price	Quantity Sold	Price excluding VAT		
Ticket Sales	One Adult	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	One Child	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Family (2+1)	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Family (2+2)	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Family (2+3)	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Concessions (please specify)	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Catering	Food	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Drink	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Anticipated Parking Income (If outside normal opening hours)	Parking	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Other Revenue (Please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		


The following are not subject to VAT						
Room Hire Income (if charged separately to tickets)	Room hire / Outdoor Venue Hire	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Programmes	Programmes	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Other Revenue (Please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Total			0	£0.00		
<b>Actual Event Costs</b>		Actual Cost	Quantity	Total Actual Cost		
Staffing (Please specify job title, hourly rate and number of hours as per example)	<i>e.g. - Casual Events Guru</i>	<i>£9.99</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>£39.96</i>		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Catering	Food	£0.00	0	£0.00		
	Drink	£0.00	0	£0.00		
Hire of Equipment (please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
3rd Party Costs e.g., event specialists (please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Events Materials (please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Marketing (please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Any Other Cost (Please specify)		£0.00	0	£0.00		
Total			0	£0.00		
<b>Actual Profit / Loss on Event</b>	#REF!					
<b>Was the event objective met?</b>						
<b>If not, why not?</b>						
<b>Was this event suitable for disabled people?</b>						

<b>If not, why not?</b>				
<b>Did you use Volunteers?</b>				
<b>If yes, how many volunteer hours were provided?</b>				
<b>What would you have done differently?</b>				
<b>Were there any external factors affecting the event?</b>				
<b>What was the weather like on the day?</b>				
<b>What percentage of bookings were made via online systems?</b>				
<b>Were there any comments regarding making bookings via online systems?</b>				
<b>How successful was the marketing for this event?</b>				
<b>Any other comments?</b>				
<b>Are you planning to go ahead with this event next year 2021?</b>				
<b>Completed forms are to be emailed to <a href="mailto:kentcountryparksbusinesssupport@kent.gov.uk">kentcountryparksbusinesssupport@kent.gov.uk</a></b>				




## Appendix D Health and Safety

## KCC Standard Instructions



**Kent County Council**  
**Environment & Economy - Country Parks**  
**Health & Safety - Standing Instructions**



ANNUAL CHECKS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
BUILDING INSPECTIONS	I	X										
COSHH ASSESSMENTS		I	X									
RISK ASSESSMENTS		I	X									
VEHICLES - paperwork to be brought to monthly meetings			I	X								
OCCUPATIONAL ROAD RISK ASSESSMENT (at appraisal)				IX								
TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORIES				I	X							
FIRE EXTINGUISHERS					I	X						
ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTS - FIXED EQUIPMENT - PORTABLE BUILDINGS					I				X			
ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTS - FIXED EQUIPMENT - PERMANENT BUILDINGS (Every 5 years- 2001/2005/2009)					I				X			
ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTS - PORTABLE EQUIPMENT (Every 2 years - 2002/2004/2006/2008)					I				X			
PLAY EQUIPMENT							I			X		
CHAINS/SAW INSPECTIONS									I		X	
WINCHES INSPECTIONS									I		X	
SAFETY HATS									I		X	
TREE INSPECTIONS - P1 every year										I	X	X
P2 every 2 years (2004 / 2006 / 2008)		X								I		
P3 every 3 years (2004 / 2007 / 2010)		X								I		
TRAILER INSPECTIONS										I	X	

Key: I Instruction to be Given X Confirmation of completion due

## Tree Zones

### KCC country parks – Tree inspection policy

Each Country Park will be zoned for tree inspections and the East Kent Head Ranger and North and West Kent Ranger Services Manager will be responsible for producing a zoning map which will be reviewed annually.

The sites that this policy covers are the 9 Country Parks and the 3 Countryside sites that the parks manage on behalf of the KCC estates team. The total land area is approximately 1200 acres.

These sites are:

North Kent area-	Shorne Woods Country Park –	292 acres/116 ha
	Manor Park Country Park-	52 acres/ 21 ha
West Kent area-	Lullingstone Country Park-	494 acres/200 ha
	Trosley Country Park-	170 acres/68 ha
	Teston Bridge Country Park-	32 acres/12 ha
East Kent area-	Brockhill Country Park	
	Pegwell Bay	
	Grove Ferry	
	White Horse Wood	
Countryside sites:	Preston Hill (WK)-	232 acres/94 ha
	Dryhill picnic site (WK)-	22 acres/9 ha Parkwood (EK)

**The zone 1** inspections will be initiated annually by Country Parks management and be competitively tendered to arboricultural experts. The inspection will be carried out in early Autumn. Trees will be individually numbered, and a full report submitted with work specifications and priority response times. Areas likely to have a footfall of more than 15 people per day. Zone 1 includes:

Well used assembly points, pedestrian routes, roads, footpaths, buildings, car park, woodland boundary abutting properties and the highway.

**The Zone 2** inspections will be ‘standing instructions’ that are initiated by the country parks Business support team. The inspections will be conducted by park staff trained to LANTRA basic tree inspection course level or above.

This will be a zoned survey utilising the compartment and sub compartments that the Country Parks have. Each compartment will be inspected and any areas with a likely footfall of between 5 and 15 per day will be checked.

A form will be completed for each tree or group of trees that have works conducted on them. A separate form will be kept for trees requiring ongoing monitoring.

**The Zone 3** inspections will be ‘standing instructions’ that are initiated by the country parks Business support officer. The inspections will be conducted by park staff trained to LANTRA basic tree inspection course level or above.

A form will be completed for each tree or group of trees that have works conducted on them. A separate form will be kept for trees requiring ongoing monitoring.

**Priority (time scale to do works)**

**1 – 24 hours**

**2 – 3 months**

**3 – 6 months**

Zone	Criteria	Inspection frequency	By whom
Zone 1 (red) (High Risk)	All areas bounded by roads, car parks, buildings, play areas and paths with a footfall greater than 15 persons per day	Annual inspection	Country Parks tree inspector
Zone 2 (Amber) Medium risk	All paths/bridle ways/land with a footfall greater than 5 persons but less than 15 persons per day	Ground based Inspection every 3 years	By Rangers
Zone 3 (green) Low risk	All paths/land with a footfall of less than 5 persons per day	Ground based Inspection every 5 years	By Rangers
All zones (no Colour)	All	AFTER SEVERE STORMS	By Rangers

*Appendix I Example Risk Assessment Form*



Activity / Operation/ Event: Hand cutting tools - bowsaws, loppers, slashers, billhooks, axes, hand cycles, secateurs.					Assessment Date: 17/01/21		
Establishment: Kent Country Parks.					Review Date: 17/06/23		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>Step 2</p> <p>Risk Rating</p> <p>Step 4</p> </div> <div> <p>Step 1</p> <p>Step 3</p> <p>Step 5</p> <p>Action &amp; Review</p> </div> <div> <p>Date completed</p> </div> </div>							
Identify the hazards	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing?	Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Is anything further needed?	Action required	Responsible person	
Bowsaw The saw blade	User of tools, visitors, other works. Crush, blows to head and limbs, cuts, and lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools, using appropriate PPE (gloves ( <i>when needed and correct</i> ), steel toe cap boots, yellow vest, hard hat while in felling areas)	Medium	Supervision of students/ volunteers  Work with another person to help when needed. Give direction and support	Supervision of students, volunteer	Rangers	

Shorne Woods Country Park Management Plan 2021-2026

loppers	User of tools, visitors, other works. Crush, blows to head and limbs, cuts, and lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools. using appropriate PPE (gloves ( <i>when needed and correct</i> ), steel toe cap boots, yellow vest, hard hat while in felling areas)	Medium	Be aware of anyone under the branch or stem being cut.			
Slashers, bill hooks, hand cycles, axes, shears	User of tools, visitors, other works. Crush, blows to head and limbs, cuts, and lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools. using appropriate PPE (gloves ( <i>when needed and correct</i> ), steel toe cap boots, yellow vest, hard hat while in felling areas)		Stay at least 2 clear tool lengths from others while using the tool. <b>Use tool correctly do not muck about – Keep tool sharp</b>			
Secateurs	User of tools, visitors, other works. Crush, cuts & lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools. using appropriate PPE	Low	Be aware of anyone under the branch or stem being cut.			

<b>Assessor Name(s):</b> Kevin Jennings	<b>Job Title:</b> Ranger
<b>Signature:</b> KJ	<b>Review Date:</b> 17/06/23

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>		<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Step 5</b>
<b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Who might be harmed and how?</b>	<b>What are you already doing?</b>	<b>Risk rating</b>	<b>Is anything further needed?</b>	<b>Action &amp; Review</b>

<p>Spot hazards by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>walking around your workplace</li> <li>asking those doing the task what they think</li> <li>checking manufacturers' instructions</li> <li>considering health hazards</li> </ul>	<p>Identify groups of people, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employees</li> <li>temporary / agency staff</li> <li>contractors</li> <li>volunteers</li> <li>members of the public</li> <li>children (including work experience)</li> <li>lone workers</li> <li>pupils</li> <li>service users</li> </ul>	<p>List what is already in place to reduce the likelihood of harm or make any harm less serious, examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>guarding</li> <li>training</li> <li>procedures, safe systems of work</li> <li>personal protective equipment (PPE)</li> </ul>	<p>Trivial , low, medium , high or stop (please see matrix below )</p>	<p>You need to make sure that you have reduced risks 'so far as is reasonably practicable'.</p> <p>An easy way of doing this is to compare what you are already doing with good practice. If there is a difference, list what needs to be done.</p>	<p>Remember to prioritise. Deal with those hazards that are high-risk and have serious consequences first.</p> <p>List:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actions required.</li> <li>who needs to do them?</li> <li>by when</li> <li>Check actions completed</li> </ul>
--	--	--	--	---	--



