



Radipole Park and Gardens MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PLAN 2020

National Lottery Heritage Fund Parks for People: PP-17-03557

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APPENDICES ATTACHED AS SEPARATE DOCUMENT

1. Introduction

This plan was written by the Project Group responsible for the Radipole Park and Gardens (the Park) redevelopment project, with specialist input from Crystal Johnson, Project Manager. The plan covers the whole Radipole Park and Gardens site, which is the focus of the Parks for People project, and should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Plan, Activity Plan and Design Specification.

The Masterplan for the Park was developed by Aileen Shackell Landscape Design, with input from Deborah Evans (DE Landscape Heritage Ltd), and Rachel Osborne (Crickmay Stark Architects). These plans and drawings are included in the Design Specification document. Other specialist input has been received from:

- Dorset Wildlife Trust (Ecological, Biodiversity and Bat Surveys)
- KMC Consulting (Site audit)
- Dencher Consulting Engineers (Structural Engineers)
- Godsell Arnold Partnership Ltd (Drainage Consultants)
- Peter Gunning Partnership (Quantity Surveyors)

The statement of Heritage Significance was written by Deborah Evans. Further information regarding the significance of the Park is included in the Conservation Plan, together with a detailed condition report.

1.1 Consultation

Consultation for the project has been wide ranging, as it is crucial that all stakeholders are fully supportive. Integral to the success of the project is a sense of community ownership and ensuring that it meets the needs of potential visitors and users. It is also important that it does not duplicate a function or service already provided in the town, or be in competition with existing organisations, facilities or agencies.

A comprehensive consultation programme has been implemented which included focus meetings with specific groups, family fun days, school assemblies, face to face surveys, online questionnaires, observational surveys, voting opportunities, displays and presentations.

In addition to better understanding audiences and what they value about the park and gardens, consultation focussed on specific areas including:

- Sports and Play
- Heritage and Landscape
- Café and Toilets
- Accessibility
- Education
- Biodiversity
- Volunteering

During the project development key local organisations have also been consulted including, Weymouth Area Development Trust, Weymouth Museum Trust, RSPB (Radipole Nature Reserve), Dorset Council cultural services, Lawn Tennis Association, Stepping into Nature, Kingston Maurward College, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Public Health Dorset, Active Dorset, Dorset Local Nature Partnership, Weymouth Library, Dorset Race Equality Council, Basketball England, Ping England.

Weymouth Town Councillors have been kept up to date on the project through Councillor briefing sessions and regular committee reporting.

1.2 Scope of the Plan

This Plan addresses management and maintenance issues for both the project realisation and the ongoing operation of the Park over a 10-year period. It has been developed as a practical document offering a checklist and schedule covering all activities required to maintain the site in good condition. It also addresses the management and resource requirements needed to ensure the future viability of the Park as a public facility.

1.3 Links to other Planning Work

This Plan links to the documents listed in the Bibliography in Appendix 2. The project has been developed with close reference to the priorities and aims of a number of local plans as detailed in Appendix 3.

The development of the project for Radipole Park and Gardens has been overseen by a Project Group including Weymouth Town Council parks and open spaces team and members of the Friends of Radipole Park and Garden ('the Friends'). Weymouth Town Council already has policies and plans relating to the conservation the Park and its management and care. FORPG has also adopted a number of policies relating to its work with the community and local volunteers. A list of all relevant policies and plans is included as Appendix 3.

1.4 The Project – and what it will cover

This Project covers the whole of the Radipole Park and Garden site as this, in its entirety, is the focus of the Parks for People application. For the purposes of assessment and analysis the site has been considered in three sections:

1. Formal gardens (Southern end of the site)
2. Sports facilities (middle of the site, including tennis club, public tennis courts, basketball court and MUGA)
3. Amenity area (Northern end of the site including car park, play area, recreation grass and the community orchard)

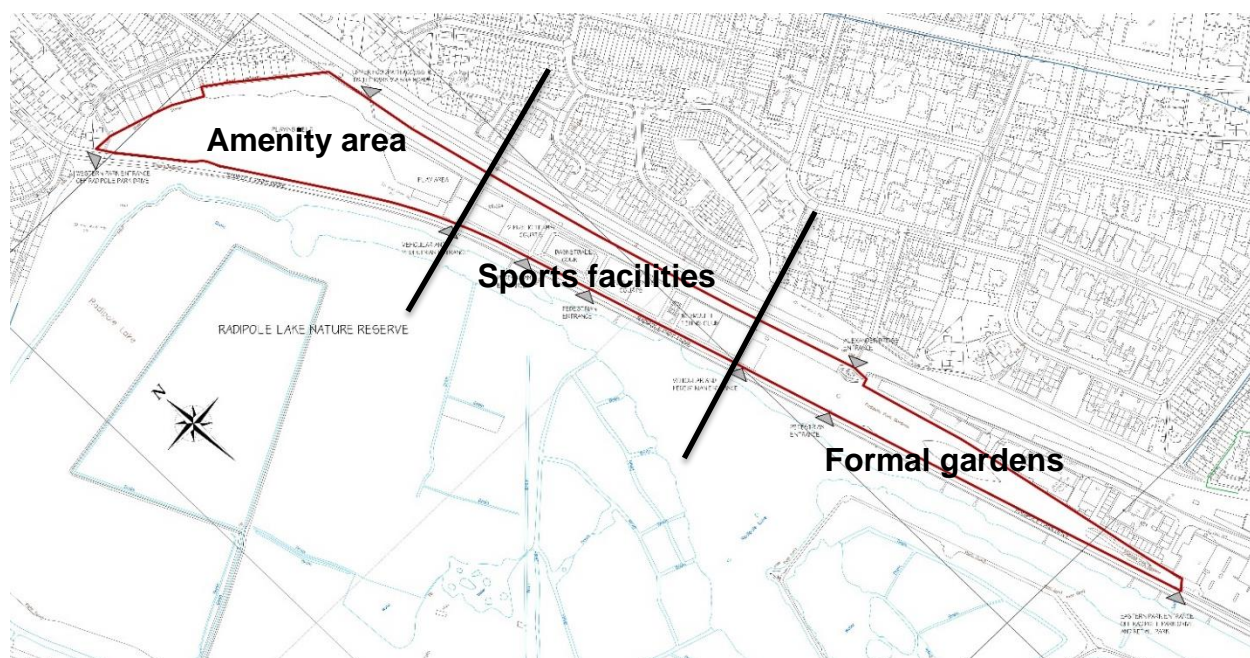


Figure 1 – The site has been divided into three sections for the purposes of this report

1.5 Project Aims

The Project includes improvements across capital, activity and management operations. The overarching Project Aims are:

- 1 To ensure that Radipole Park and Gardens delivers as a high-quality inclusive, recreational facility for the general public, encouraging greater community engagement and reducing anti-social behaviour
- 2 To enable diverse audiences to learn more about the park as a natural resource through the provision of both formal and informal learning opportunities
- 3 To provide opportunities for people to engage with the natural environment and to enable varied health and wellbeing benefits
- 4 To conserve, enhance and celebrate the biodiversity and landscape value of Radipole Park and Gardens
- 5 To promote and conserve the historical and cultural heritage associated with Radipole Park and Gardens
- 6 To offer opportunities for people and organisations to get involved in the operation of Radipole Park and Gardens
- 7 To improve accessibility and offer inclusive opportunities to currently underrepresented groups, including those who suffer from mental and physical disabilities
- 8 To ensure financial and environmental sustainability and meet all legal and other obligations

The Action Plan in section 4 of this Management and Maintenance Plan details what will be achieved within the next ten years and how the park will be managed and maintained to the highest standard. These actions have been grouped according to the project aims which seek to capture the management aspirations of the project over the next ten years. They emphasise particular areas of development such as the provision of learning and interpretation opportunities and the development of the ecology and biodiversity of the site.

Progress against these aims will be assessed annually with a major review at the end of five years to inform the direction of the next phase of operation.

2. Understanding the Heritage

2.1 History

A detailed history of Radipole Park and Gardens is given in the Conservation Plan. In summary, the first evidence of human occupation in the area of Radipole Park and Gardens dates to the Roman Period c.43AD. Radipole Lake has also provided some evidence of the Iron and Bronze ages and, particularly in burials, of Viking occupation.

During the Medieval period a village, on the site of the Roman settlement, stood on the shoreline of the tidal Backwater, the area was excavated in 1975 and designated a Scheduled Monument.

C. 1720 ‘magical waters’ were discovered in the Backwater near Radipole: *‘The spring was reported as rising in a small island in the middle of a river and was used by local people to cure their cattle and dogs of scab and mange’*¹. Consequently, more sulphur springs were discovered in an area at the north end of the estuary. The Radipole Sulphurated Hydrogen Spa Pump-room was built on this site and opened in 1831.

These discoveries coincided with Weymouth’s growing reputation as a health resort promoting the benefits of ‘sea bathing’. King George III visited for the first time in June 1789, he returned almost annually between 1791 – 1805. During these visits, Weymouth essentially became the Court with Parliamentary business and Society attending the small town.

The Backwater remained an important working port behind the polite frontage of Weymouth throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Industry associated with the Backwater included brickworks, timber ponds, mills etc. Unsurprisingly for an area associated with a port, the Backwater also supported a tradition of smuggling².

In 1872 a low dam wall was built on the northside of Weymouth harbour to try to control the level in the waters upstream. It had been created with a view to maintaining higher water levels in the Backwater and to help with an ongoing sewage problem caused by the gradual expansion of Weymouth. Unfortunately, this had a detrimental effect on those living and working upstream of the dam wall. Instead of the tidal ebb and flow that twice daily scoured the estuary floor and carried the silt and discharged sewage out to sea, it was now trapped behind the dam and lay festering on the banks of the estuary at low tide or within the large timber ponds that once lined the shore. Mills based alongside the river Wey upstream of the estuary later sued the council for the loss of waterpower and earnings.

The popularity of Weymouth as a seaside resort was boosted by the arrival of the Great Western and South Western Railway in 1857 and an increase in ferries and cargo ships from Weymouth’s main port.

¹ *The History and Hydrogeology of the Weymouth Spas*, J D Mather & H C Prudden 2007.

² Local author and historian Debby Rose talks of a particular kiln that once stood on the sandy shoreline, it belonged to one of her more colourful ancestors, Emmanuel Charles, the landlord of the now aptly named Smugglers Inn at Osmington. Emmanuel was a man notorious in the region as the ringleader of local smugglers. *The History of Radipole Park and Gardens Creation*, Friends of Radipole Park, 2019.

As industry declined, the Backwater became a focus for land reclamation³. This coincided with a growth in social conscience promoting open green spaces or parks where people of all social classes could spend their free time. They were viewed as social hubs that could deliver a positive effect, a place where a person could enjoy fresh air, sunshine and relaxation, even entertainment in the form of music. Up until then parks and gardens were solely for the rich and titled.

In 1833 the Parliamentary Select Committee on Public Walks returned a report to parliament after having made a survey on how much accessible open space there was in and around Britain's main towns and cities. The report spoke of great benefits that parks could bring as a whole and Weymouth was one of the first towns to act upon it.

On the 4th June 1834 the entire town joined the grandiose celebrations of the laying of the foundation stone of the embankment wall, built to reclaim a part of the Backwater. The plan was to create 50 acres of prime land complete with park gates, sweeping carriage drives and a crescent of elegant homes. Unfortunately, insufficient infill, poor drainage, flooding and unsanitary conditions from the still tidal Backwater's sewage outlets put off well-heeled patrons necessary to fund the scheme and the scheme stalled.

Part of the site was built – as working class back to back terraces – which survive as 'Park district' and remains as one of the most deprived areas of the town today.

Despite this, Weymouth Council again promoted the area as an alternative, all year-round attraction to Weymouth's esplanade and beach. They were also seeking a solution to its use as the main receptacle for Weymouth's sewers. In November of 1872 gentrification began with town councillor Groves suggesting that, *'whilst the names of streets were being altered, the Backwater should not be called the Backwater but Radipole Lake'*.

The late nineteenth century also saw the construction of the Western Parade or Esplanade along the west side of the railway and the construction of Alexander Bridge. This was intended to offer an alternate destination to the seafront and to promote the area more widely to developers.

In c.1890 a private investor presented a new scheme to create 'Gardens in the Backwater and Radipole Lake'. The scheme would include a carriage drive to avoid chill easterly winds, and 'a music pavilion &c.' As an important source of funding, houses and villas would be built around 'the lake' the *'fetid mud flat would, in a short time, become brilliant gardens and recreation grounds.'* (Southern Times and Dorset County Herald 9th August 1890). Unfortunately, adequate funding for the scheme did not materialise.

Towards the end of 1921, following recommendations from the Treasury, government set aside £10 million to be allocated for public works in areas of high unemployment in the form of loans to local councils. In Weymouth work started in 1921 on the reclamation of the Backwater starting with the creation of the new Embankment Road, now known as Westham bridge. The proposal to create a new road along the east side of the lake was announced in January 1923. Construction work started in 1925 and Radipole Park Drive was completed by 1931.

In 1926 a new scheme to alleviate unemployment was identified: the infilling of marshy ground between the new road and the railway embankment to create playing fields, sports grounds and recreation grounds. Following further discussion, the Radipole Lake Development Committee (RLDC) was set up to *'prepare a comprehensive scheme for dealing with the whole area of Radipole Lake'* and to identify a method of income generation from the remaining underutilised lakeside areas.

³ Reclamation of land was a necessity for the growth of Weymouth. The town's foundation was originally upon a narrow sandspit, tightly constrained by Weymouth bay on one side and the Backwater on the other. By its very geographical nature Weymouth was severely restricted as to where it could expand.

The masterplan of c.1927 survives for the park (and wider scheme) which records a series of interconnected artificial islands within the lake. Other proposed features, such as a bandstand, refreshment pavilion and bowling greens were also not realised and some that were such as 'the model Yachting pond' realised as a much-altered paddling pool⁴.

By the May 1933 the formal gardens were finished. White, requested that his assistant gardener Cox was to be kept on maintain the gardens. Other developments included tennis courts open to the general public in reflection of the growing popularity of sports. These included a superior grade 'Exhibition Court' for competition. Renown players such as Pancho Gonzales, Donald Budge and Fred Perry would eventually play here.

In February of 1936, White and consultant engineer Mr Deane, were asked to submit plans and tender for the next portion of the work in the overall Radipole Lake scheme. This would deliver five additional tennis courts, four bowling greens, gardens, the yacht pond and an ornamental pond for wild birds. By 1937, the council were looking for additional funding to the tune of £44,500.00. However, the outbreak of World War II put all future plans for Radipole Park Gardens and Melcombe Regis Gardens on hold. In June 1940 the park was requisitioned by British Southern Command. The paddling pond was used as a dump and training area while a practice trench was dug across the 'Green'.

In November 1944, US troops took over in preparation for the D-Day landings. Their 'area' included the public car park, use of on-site facilities such as public lavatories, four hard tennis courts and the tennis pavilion. The soldiers were billeted in marquees erected in the Alexander area⁵.

Following the war, the first priority for Weymouth Council was to repair the damage to the park caused by its requisition. Ground had been churned up by heavy vehicles and drains were broken, which contributed to on-going flooding issues.

In 1939, Edward White petitioned the council for payment for some of the earlier design work. He failed: the council were focussed instead on a new road along the west side of the lake.

However, in 1947 rubble and debris from the town's bombed out buildings began to be dumped in the lake to make new paths. The Council appeared to be progressing with the main lake scheme as part of the greater promotion of Weymouth although opposition to the scheme on environmental matters was growing. By 1949 the Council for the Preservation of Rural England made 'a most emphatic protest' concerned that 'one of the most important bird sanctuaries in the south of England' and the 83 hectares remaining of Radipole lake officially became a nature reserve.

Despite this, Radipole Park and Gardens continued as a much-loved Weymouth park, despite their periodic flooding⁶. However, their maintenance had become an on-going burden to the Council and in 1956 it was proposed to replace them with a car park. Following a public out-cry, the plans were rejected.

⁴ 'WEYMOUTH PARK SCHEME RADIPOLE LAKE DEVELOPMENT SPORTS FACILITIES' [...] *The layout of the scheme includes provisions for a dozen tennis courts, two bowling greens, a cricket ground, two hockey grounds, three football pitches, a putting gold course, a children's pond, a yachting pond, a restaurant and tea garden and a harbour from which small boats will ply for hire. It also provides for a central feature the nature of which has not yet been decided, a number of small islands which will be ornamental to the lake and a new road on the west side of the lake to form a circular drive round the Park.* (Western Gazette 26th May 1933).

⁵ Recollections from local people include salvaging tinned food dumped by the troops on their dispersal and the excitement of playing around the camp where live-firing exercises were sometimes held! *The History of Radipole Park and Gardens Creation*. The Friends of Radipole Park, 2019.

⁶ The most serious incidents of flooding occurred in 1955 and 2012.

2.2 Heritage Significance

Radipole Park and Gardens may not be recognised by Historic England's *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens* but they represent a much-loved and unusual example of an adjunct to a far greater and unrealised scheme by a grand landscape designer, reduced and refined to fit a unprepossessing site in a semi-derelict area while retaining key design elements. The original intention of the project, to help alleviate unemployment for local men, may not have been fully realised but the function of the site as a place of contemplation, exercise and community purpose was and it remains. Unlike many similar parks, Radipole has survived almost intact despite diminishing resources. Its location ensures it remains a key connection between town, suburbs and the Backwater while its relative privacy and seclusion sustains a usually peaceful atmosphere.

The original design intentions to combine sport, community and nature also remain and are perfectly in-tune with current public agendas at national and local level.

The Conservation Plan further examines the significance of Radipole Park and Gardens under the following headings: Historic interest, Communal interest, Archaeological interest, Architectural and artistic interest and Ecological interest.

3. Current Situation

3.1 Background to the Project

The Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens formed in 2006 and at that time identified many problems with the Park, which are still evident today and will be addressed through the Project. At that time a possible Lottery bid was discussed but it was not until July 2015 that a project enquiry was made by the Friends. The response from the Lottery was that the project had potential but would need to be led by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (WPBC).

A period of inactivity followed before a project team was brought together by WPBC, with involvement from the Friends, and a Round 1 application was submitted in August 2017. Following the success of the application, a team of consultants was appointed to develop the project to the Round 2 application.

In April 2019, local government reorganisation resulted in the formation of Weymouth Town Council. Radipole Park and Gardens along with a number of assets previously owned by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (no longer in existence) was transferred to the new Town Council. Subsequent negotiations and legal agreements then transferred the Parks for People project to Weymouth Town Council, which is now the official applicant.

3.2 The site



Figure 2 - Location of Radipole Park and Gardens

Radipole Park and Gardens is situated within easy walking distance to the north of Weymouth town centre and to the west of Melcombe Regis. The narrow, linear site is aligned north/south and bound by a main road, Radipole Park Drive and the main London/Weymouth railway line to the west and east respectively. The site extends to 6.65 hectares.

The Park is adjacent to the RSPB Swannery Nature Reserve, Radipole Park Drive. It offers year-round interest with stunning summer bedding, shrubs, herbaceous perennials and bulbs. It has a variety of trees, as well as a walkway of Weeping Willows, along with tennis, basketball and football facilities, a play park, skate park and open space area suitable for ball games, picnics and community events.

The Park is owned and maintained by Weymouth Town Council. It lies within the electoral ward of Melcombe Regis and is within the conservation area of Weymouth town centre.

Radipole Park and Gardens is designated as local open space by Policy C9 of the Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review. This policy protects the form and function of the site by preventing built development that is not ancillary to the recreational and amenity value of the gardens. However, the policy does allow such local open space to be used flexibly, depending on the open space needs of the area, i.e. for formal parks, informal recreation, children's play or formal sport, etc.

The Park is within the town centre conservation area and is subject to Local Plan Review Policy B8, which requires the character and appearance of such areas to be preserved or enhanced, with specific reference to open spaces, views, gardens and hedges that contribute to the character.

A full condition assessment of the site is included as Appendix C of the Conservation Plan.

3.3 Layout, access and transportation links

Radipole Park and Gardens is a narrow linear site which runs north from a discrete entrance off Radipole Park Drive near the town centre. The size and historic layout of the site was directly influenced by its proximity to the road and railway, including areas of historic railway sidings, now light industrial units. The site widens as it moves north and concludes in a large triangular area of amenity grass.

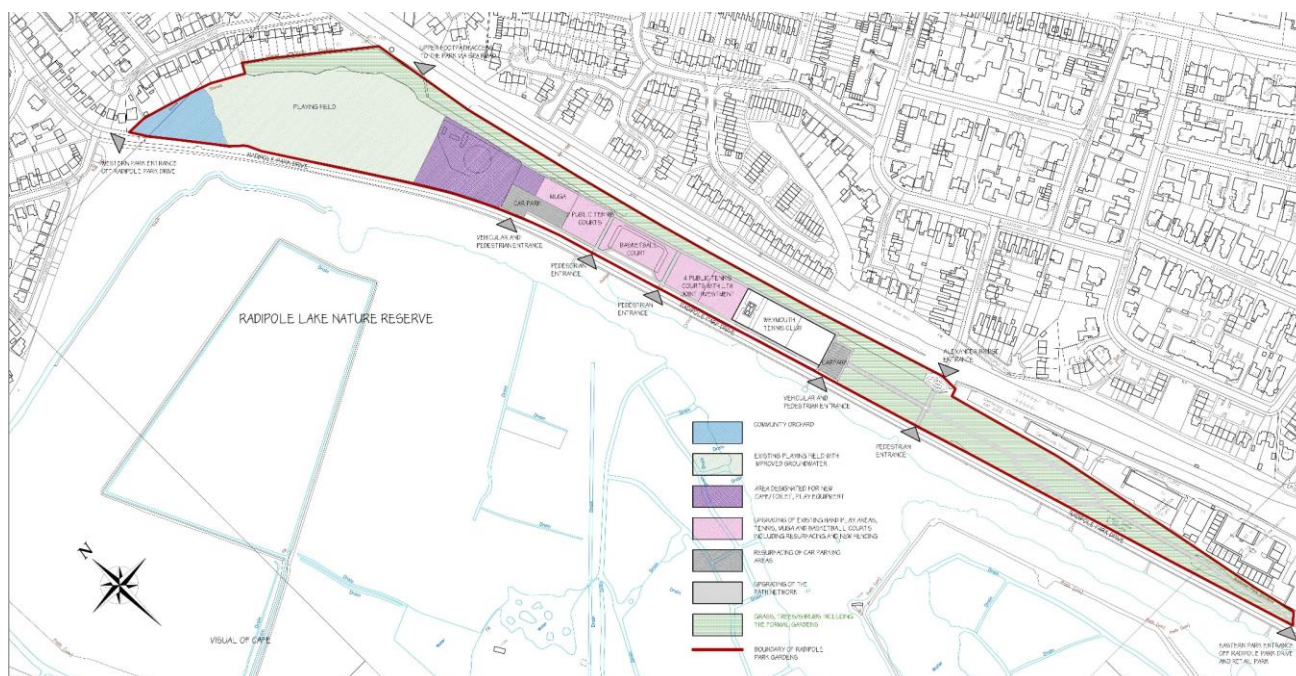


Figure 3 - Site plan showing key features

The site retains its historic division into three distinct but interconnected areas i) formal gardens, ii) sports facilities and iii) amenity area.

The southern entrance to the site is off Radipole Park Drive and adjacent to the entrance to a local Aldi store. The formal gardens are enclosed and intimate with a gentle serpentine footpath running between rockwork, shrubs and trees. This path leads to a central oval lawn surrounded by the main path. The path separates areas of lawn ornamented by formal planted beds and specimen trees and shrubs. To the north of the oval, the path continues on its original alignment and it is crossed by a west/east cross axis. This axis connects east to a footbridge over the railway, Alexander

Bridge, to Hanover Road and provides a second key link to the town centre. Dense tree and shrub planted banks, and hedge and screen planting along the roadside and railway embankment dispel the close proximity of the town to the Park and provide a popular retreat for residents and office workers.

To the north of the formal gardens, the path leads to the sports facilities comprising a small car park which bounds the south side of a series of tennis and basketball courts which span the narrow site and a multi-use games area (MUGA). The southern-most courts are managed by Weymouth Tennis Club. These are bound to the west and east by straight paths which connect the formal gardens to a large open area of amenity grass to the north. The amenity area includes a second car park, children's play area and a small skate equipment.

The amenity area is surrounded by a continuation of the boundary paths. A continuation of the hedge and boundary trees also form a formal boundary to the site along its west side. To the east more mature tree planting along the foot of a steep scrubby bank separates the park from the private gardens along the south side of Coronation Road above.

The park concludes at its northwest end in a triangular area of young orchard which was planted and is maintained by the Friends of Radipole Park and a small area of wildflower planting, also introduced by the Friends.

The formal path circulation provides the framework for the landscape, its generous proportions, particularly in the formal gardens, and extent links the different areas of the landscape together. Vehicle access to the site is from Radipole Park Drive to two car parks i) south of Weymouth Tennis Club and ii) south of the play area. The site is open access with only simple metal restricted height barrier to limit access to the car parks.

Three further pedestrian and cycle accesses to the site off Radipole Park Drive are found to the north of the Weymouth Tennis Club pavilion and to the north and south of the historic Tournament tennis courts, now a basketball court. These routes link to concrete, i.e. modern, footpaths along the east side of the road besides the site and to a cycle lane and wide footway along the west side of the road. This cycle path connects to Route 26 of the National Cycle Network which runs along the opposite side of Radipole Lake.

Weymouth Station is less than 400m away from the Park and offers a direct link to London. Any bus travelling to Weymouth stops within half a mile of the Park, either at the bus depot or the Kings Statue on the sea front.

On the opposite side of Radipole Park Drive is Radipole Lake which is fed by the River Wey from the north. The lake forms part of a large area of freshwater lagoon with extensive reed beds, the lake itself being an important national RSPB reserve. This distinctive landscape contributes to the setting of the site and helps connect it with the more rural landscape to the north and west of Weymouth.

3.4 Built features and facilities

Formal Gardens: within the gardens there are no built structures

Sports provision: The central area of the site is composed of sports facilities and a small car park. Weymouth Tennis Club has 4 'all year' tennis courts available to members. The Tennis Club uses the old 'pavilion' building as a club house. In addition, there are currently seven tennis courts open to the public all year free of charge. A basketball court and MUGA are also open to the public all year free of charge.

Amenity area: To the north of the site a modern play area and small skate park are situated off the car park. Within the play area a large, irregularly shaped area contained within a dwarf brick wall, contains play equipment. This was originally a paddling pool. The play area leads to a large area of grassland, informally used for dog walking, football and some events. To the north of the site there is small area of wildflower planting and a community orchard surrounded by hedging, this was developed by the Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens.

3.5 Topography

Radipole Park and Gardens are low lying with much of the site below the water level of the adjacent lake. This contributes to periodic flooding and waterlogging particularly in the northern area of the Park. The western edge of the site is assessed by the Environmental Agency as 'High Risk' falling to 'Low Risk' to the east. Proposals to alleviate the waterlogging are being developed as part of the development of the project. The Management and Maintenance Plan will also include take flood risk and waterlogging into consideration and it will be a design consideration for the heritage café, play area and new landscaping of the park.

3.6 Geology and soils

The site lies within an area of Weymouth estuary known as the Weymouth Anticline. This is composed of layers of sedimentary rocks – oolitic deposits - that have been laid down over time, but which have buckled and twisted to form ridges and valleys, carrying rivers that feed into the River Wey and out into the sea. The main floor of Radipole lake and indeed virtually the whole Radipole area comprises of a top layer of Oxford clay in which can be found numerous fossils, including turtle stones (septaria). Much of the land within the site boundary was reclaimed from the area of the adjacent lake.

Soil found within the area of the site is classified as loamy saltmarsh soils or loam and clay recognised by slow permeability and seasonal wetting with a notable acid content. Historically, the site has also been subject to the introduction of imported topsoil.

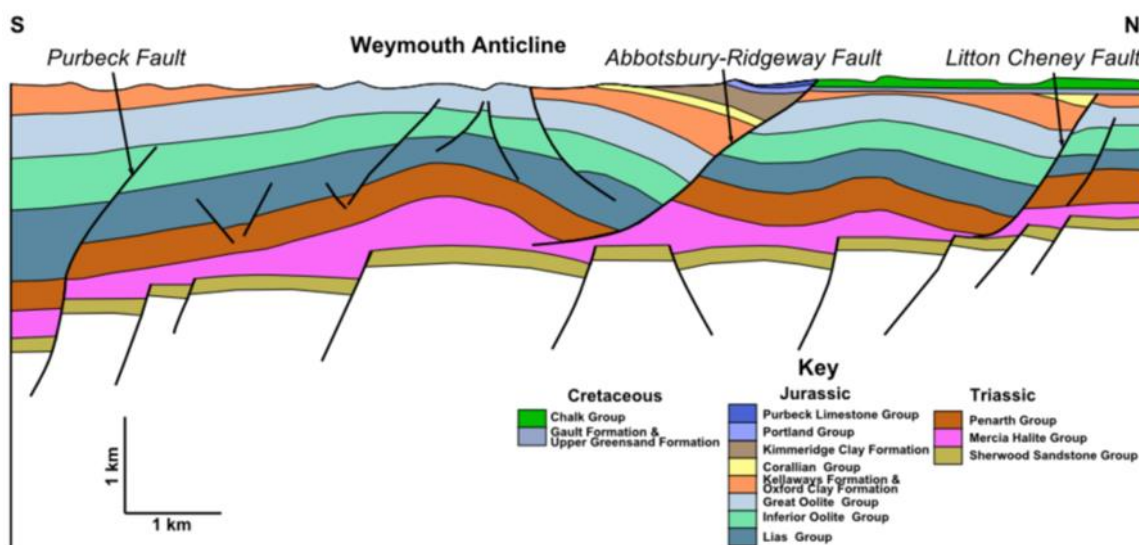


Figure 4 - Diagram showing the rock formation of the Weymouth anticline; courtesy Wikimedia

3.7 Climate

Weymouth is situated at the western end of the central southern coast of the United Kingdom. It has a maritime climate with weather patterns predominantly Atlantic in origin. As such the wind tends to be south westerly and warm. A range of hills known as the Ridgeway, approx. three miles to the

north effectively renders the whole Weymouth area in a rain shadow due to their effect on relief rainfall. This results in a lower annual rainfall for Weymouth than the overall average for Dorset and higher than average sunshine figures when compared with the rest of the United Kingdom. Below is a summary based on figures supplied by Weymouth & Portland Borough Council readings.

Rainfall annual average approx. 750mm per year
Sunshine hours average 1600-2000 per year
Temperature range -6 to +30 degrees Celsius.

In the United Kingdom there is a general trend towards milder winters and warmer summers. It is projected by some sources that rainfall may increase where others suggest a reduction, so a clear conclusion on which to base planning cannot be drawn except to say that recent trends indicate an increase in the frequency of, e.g. Heavy rainfall over a short period, events. As far as wind is concerned, there are no indications that the direction from which the wind predominates will change or indeed that the overall average wind speed will increase although recent trends show an increase in the frequency of high wind speed events. These tend to be from the south or south west in this region, directions from which the gardens have some protection but easterly and south easterly winds do fall directly upon the gardens and bring problems with scorch from both wind and salt due to the very close proximity of the sea. Air temperatures tend to remain above freezing due to the influence of the sea approx. 30m away and only fall below freezing when large cold air masses move in from the continent.

The site is exposed to south-westerly winds which can carry salt into the Park and gardens. Some trees along the west boundary bend in the direction of the prevailing wind and the site is characterised by many plants typically associated with a maritime climate such as Holm oak (*Quercus Ilex*), *Escallonia* and *Elaeagnus*.

3.8 Tree and vegetation cover

The southern area of the site is well-planted with a mix of specimen and native trees and shrubs. Some trees, such as Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*), Blue Atlas cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*), Holm oak (*Quercus Ilex*) and the Weeping willow (*Salix* sp.) which line the north section of the central path within the formal gardens, are original. These have been supplemented over time with other specimen trees such as Red oak (*Quercus borealis*), Snakebark maple (*Acer* sp.) and various ornamental shrubs. Some specimens have been planted as memorial trees.

The robust hedging (including *Ilex*, *Ligustrum* and *Griselinia*) helps contain the site and separates it from the busy Radipole Park Drive.

In contrast the northern area of the site is more open with planting restricted to the boundaries. Here trees such as English oak (*Quercus robur*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) are maturing with smaller native trees such as Field maple (*Acer campestre*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) occurring along the eastern slope.

3.9 Ecology

The site functions as an important corridor and habitat for wildlife between the town centre and suburban housing to its north and northeast and between Radipole Lake and the town. Nest boxes are found within the site.

Radipole Park and Gardens lie adjacent to the Radipole Lake reserve (RSPB Swannery Nature Reserve). This coastal lagoon of reed and marsh is a SSSI and it is owned by the RSPB being one of 180 national reserves. The Wild Weymouth Discovery Centre is found on the reserve. The reserve is particularly important habitat for rare reed bed birds such as Bearded tits (*Panurus biarmicus*) and for mammals such as otter (*Lutra lutra*) and water voles (*Arvicola amphibious*). The reserve is an important sanctuary for migrating birds.

Habitat within the site has been identified as improved amenity grassland, semi-improved grassland, inundation grassland (the playing field), orchard, scrub, scattered mixed trees and formal shrubberies and flower beds. Native flora within the site includes Strawberry clover (*Trifolium fagiferum*), Fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*), Bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and Oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) which are all 'Dorset Notables'⁷.

Natural England has identified the area of the formal gardens as 'part of a woodland priority habitat network and a high priority for woodland improvement' on account of the variety and maturity of ornamental and native tree and shrub planting⁸.

The close proximity of the site to Radipole Lake increases the probability of Protected Species, such as otter and water vole, using the park for foraging or habitation. A bat report dated December 2018, recorded seven species of bats foraging within the site. The most common species were *Pipistrellus* sp., followed by *Myotis* sp. (Natterer's and Bechstein's bats), *Eptesicus serotinus*, *Plecotus* sp and *Nyctalus* sp.⁹

A variety of birds have also been recorded at the site such as Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*), Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), Green Finch (*Chloris chloris*) and Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*).

A survey of plants and shrubs has been completed and is attached as Appendix E of the Conservation Plan. Similarly, a volunteer recently completed a visual survey of bird species visiting the site which has been used in the orientation map illustrated in section 3.2 of the Interpretation Plan (Activity Plan - Appendix 6).

3.2.8 Hydrology and Drainage

The area of the proposed café is currently grassed and has no formal surface water drainage. The rest of the site is a mix of grassed play areas, a hard-surfaced car park and hard surfaced sports courts/pitches. The car park and sports courts/pitches have positive drainage via a network of gullies.

Radipole Park Drive to the west of the site is drained via highway gullies. The gullies drain directly into Radipole Lake via a number of outfalls. It is understood that bed levels in the lake have risen to a point where the outfalls are below bed level; this results in frequent flooding of Radipole Park Drive. Floodwaters on the road typically drain into the lake very slowly, taking days to completely subside.

The drainage networks serving the park are shown on historic plans to also outfall into the lake; it is assumed that the outfalls are similarly submerged.

3.11 Services

There is currently no mains gas or electricity to the site. Mains water historically fed the paddling pool although it is thought that the underground pipework will need replacing.

Water and Sewer – In the new plans the incoming water supply and the foul drainage will connect to the existing services at the end of Coronation Road at the north end of the park. The foul drainage

⁷ A Baseline Ecological Survey of Radipole Park and Gardens with Ecological Recommendations. Dorset Wildlife Trust, November 2018

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Radipole Park Gardens Bat Report, Dorset Wildlife Trust, December 2018

will be pumped via a pump station beneath the café. It may be possible to use the existing water supply pipework from the same location as a conduit.

Electricity – A new electricity supply will be brought into the park; it will come off the mains supply running down Radipole Park Drive.

4 Visitors

Radipole Park and Gardens has high communal interest and is a valued daily experience for many local residents and office workers. Its tripartite character offers space for contemplation, formal and informal sport. It is also a place of celebration – a favourite for wedding photographs - and a place of commemoration memorialising local people, national figures such as Diana, Princess of Wales and international events, such as the Holocaust.

The local community saw off proposals to reduce the gardens to a car park in 1957 and a zoo in 1967.

Today the site is championed by the Friends of Radipole Park who continue to help foster support from within the local community and town council to secure investment in the park and to promote its history and benefits more widely. The Friends have been responsible for new initiatives, such as the community orchard and meadow at the north end of the site which offer opportunities for informal learning as well as recreation.

The Friend's Group organises events in the gardens, encouraging current users to visit the park more frequently and open the park to potential new visitors. They also promote the park and gardens through a blog on their website and regular posts on their Facebook pages.

The Activity Plan includes detailed analysis of current and potential visitors. It recognises that although the park attracts a significant number of visitors it is a resource that could be better used to provide significant benefit to the local community in terms of providing free structures activities, combating social isolation and improving physical and mental health and wellbeing. Key finding supporting this conclusion are:

- Radipole Park and Garden is situated on the border of Melcombe Regis which has a high percentage of residents located in the top 20% nationally for Multiple Deprivation.
- Melcombe Regis has been identified as 'hot spot' for risk of loneliness.
- Weymouth has three areas that are worse than the English average for child obesity.
- Weymouth has a greater proportion of social care users not having enough social contact, or not involved in valuable activities.¹⁰
- The percentage of people reporting that they have bad health in Weymouth is higher than the national percentage.
- In June 2014, Weymouth and Portland Borough Council adopted the Sports Facilities Strategy 2014 – 2019. The Strategy highlighted the physical and psychological health benefits of sport and physical activity, contributing to reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour, delivering economic benefits and playing an important role in improving social cohesion.

¹⁰ Dorset County Council Adult Social Care Survey 2016

4.1 Public Use

In August 2018 Linetop Counter Software was installed at all 13 entrances of the park and gardens. The counters not only record numbers of people entering the park but can also show which entrances are the busiest, on what days and at what times; this has been valuable in deciding where new facilities will be located. From the installation date in July 2018 to May 2019, approximately 350,000 people visited the park and gardens. We also know which events attracted the most people, with the Family Fun Day being the most popular.

The Project has been informed by extensive consultation which included research into the use of the park. A public questionnaire carried out in August 2019 indicated walking, use of children's play area, dog walking and relaxation as the most common reason for visiting the park.

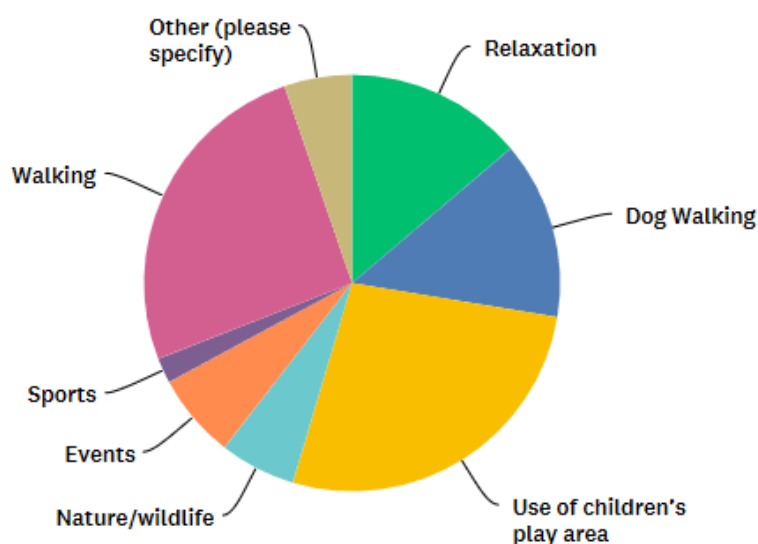


Figure 5 – reasons that people visit the park

Several observational surveys in the park and playing field, on different days of the week returned the following notes:

- There were more female than male visitors during weekdays.
- On a weekend day the ratio of female to male visitors is more evenly distributed.
- There was a consistently high number of younger children demonstrating that the park is very much a family destination.
- The number of older children, aged between 11-16 years was minimal
- Visitors classed as 'Older People' only make up 6.6% of the visitor profile, which is not reflective of the Weymouth demographics.

During other consultation events, people were asked to write down what they value about Radipole Park and Gardens. The responses clearly demonstrate the positivity that people feel about the park as many people view it as a special place to build memories with family and friends. Other comments included:

- *It's my safe space to gather my thoughts*
- *it helps my depression*

- *we sit remembering good times*
- *it lifts my mood*
- *I have thinking time*

Full consultation findings are included as Appendix X of the Activity Plan.



4.2 Interpretation and Learning

There is currently very little interpretation within Radipole Park and Gardens. Weymouth Town Council provide simple welcome signs at the main pedestrian and vehicular accesses and the Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens maintain five notice boards. These predominantly give information on forthcoming events, although a map of the site has recently been installed on a board in the southern carpark.

The Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens run an annual programme of events which include themed activities linked to the history and nature of the Park. The Friends include information on the heritage of the Park in displays at these events and their website includes historic information.

Much of the historical research for the Project has been undertaken by Sue Hogben, who is an active member of the Friends committee. She has amassed a significant collection of photographs and historic information relating to the park and will be a key member of the interpretation team going forwards. An Interpretation Plan for the park has been developed and is included as Appendix 6 of the Activity Plan.

Through the project development links have been made with a number of local schools. Whilst the Parks and Open Spaces Service does not have the resources to provide a formal schools offer; the Activity Plan will build on these contacts to provide a range of resources that will be equally applicable to community and school groups.

The Friends do offer outreach talks on Radipole Park to local community groups. This offer will be more formalised and built into a structured programme of events. These will focus on the themes of heritage and nature as detailed in the interpretation plan. More detail on the proposed education provision for Radipole Park and Gardens is given in the Activity Plan.

4.3 Volunteering

A Friends group was established in 2006 with the purpose of promoting the conservation and continued enjoyment of the site. As a wholly voluntary organisation, the Friends work in close collaboration with Weymouth Town Council's parks and open spaces department.

The group has the following five aims:

- Work in partnership with the landowners, Weymouth Town Council, in the development and management of Radipole Park and Gardens.
- Encouraging local residents to use the Park and Gardens more and to take an active interest in its upkeep.
- Help the local authority to raise substantial funding for the enhancement of the Park and Gardens.
- Carry out practical projects to enhance the Park and Gardens and its environs.
- With the Council, work towards 'Green Flag' status for the Park and Gardens and to maintain that standard to secure the Park and Gardens long term, for future generations to enjoy.

Among the contributions of the Friend's is a Community Orchard, planted in 2012. Thirty-eight trees were planted, and wildflower meadows have been established beneath them. The area is enjoyed by local playgroups who bring their children along to study wildlife and nature and enjoy picnics out in the fresh air as well as other visitors.

The Friends have been instrumental in researching the history of the park and its community in part to support a successful Stage I application to the NLHF 'Parks for People' grant programme in 2017.

Part of this work involved community consultation which identified a new 'vision' for the park and gardens and supported the following actions: i) making space for longer grass, ii) retaining and enhancing the meadow, iii) retaining and enhancing the orchard, iv) increasing the deadwood resource on site and v) erecting bat and nest boxes.

The Project will build on the active interest in volunteering as demonstrated by the Friends success. More details on this are given in the Activity Plan.

4.4 Stakeholders

It is important to recognise that there are several significant stakeholders using the site and their involvement and association with the site is differing in its typology.

Tennis Players - Weymouth Tennis Club is located in the Park and lease their site from Weymouth Town Council. They have four hard courts with floodlights and a practice wall. The Club operates on a membership basis with varying fee categories. The Club has a weekly schedule of classes and training sessions aimed at all ages and abilities.

Alongside the Tennis Club the site has six public tennis courts available for use free of charge. Although there is evidence that the public value the provision, observational surveys indicate that many of the courts are not used on a regular basis. This would suggest that the level of provision is excessive for the demand.

Residents of the Borough - Radipole Park Gardens are embedded within the community of Weymouth and to a lesser extent Portland. It provides numerous facilities but, above all, is an area for peaceful contemplation and relaxation. It is also viewed by many as an indicator of how the Authority shows civic pride and professionalism in service delivery. The Friends Group is comprised of residents but many more use the gardens that would never attend a Friends Group meeting, they have to be recognised in having a stake in the gardens as they form the main group of users.

- Residents enjoy the gardens as a destination to visit or call into as part of a wider visit or walk.
- The gardens are viewed with civic pride and indicate Council competency and policy.

Visitors to the Borough - Weymouth is a major resort in the central and south west coastal area and, as such, has a large number of visitors. These visitors have the same needs as the residents and use the gardens in a similar way but are more likely to visit more frequently if they stay for more than a day. They, along with the residents, are the consumers of the garden product and expect a good quality facility to be provided.

- Visitors enjoy the gardens as a destination to visit or call into as part of a wider visit or walk.
- The gardens form part of a wider resort package that visitors wish to use during their stay.

There are also a number of stakeholders have some form of responsibility for the maintenance of green spaces or an interest in how they are used:

- Weymouth Town Council - Landowners for key areas of public realm; responsible for delivering local services such as allotments, parks, open spaces and play areas.
- Dorset Council - Planning authority, responsible for environmental services, community partnerships, tourism and leisure. The new Dorset Council also has responsibility for highways, co-ordinating public transport and associated signage and infrastructure. Maintain public rights of way.
- Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens – A very active group which runs an annual programme of events and activities in the park. The Friends have been the driving force behind the Project

and are keen to remain proactively involved throughout its realisation and to support the future operation of the Park.

- Environment Agency – Many greenspaces have direct links to the environment agency through flood defence schemes and waterways. They are particularly relevant to Radipole Park and Gardens as it sits within a flood plain and therefore has very specific development constraints imposed by the EA.
- Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) – Commissioned to produce ecology, biodiversity and bat reports as part of the Development Phase. DWT continue to be supportive of the project and have offered ongoing advice and support.
- RSPB – Manage Radipole Lake Nature Reserve and its small visitor centre. Staff at the Radipole site are keen to work with the Park on mutual programming and to support activities. They are also interested to explore potential for more coherent marketing and audience development in the area.
- Kingston Maurward College – Key partners in the delivery of the Sensory Garden. Michelle Brown, a landscape design tutor at the college, is designing the garden free of charge and students will be engaged in its construction. The College is also keen to explore additional opportunities to provide workshops in the space.
- Weymouth Area Development Trust – Formed in 2017, WADT have a number of projects in the local community, with empowering the community being one of their key strategies. They are also looking at a Tourist Information service which could be important for the future promotion of Radipole Park and Gardens.
- Dorset AONB – Interested in the interpretation of landscape and the culture within it. Dorset AONB currently run programmes such as Stepping Out which is keen to explore partnership opportunities for activities in the park linked to health and wellbeing.
- Heritage and cultural organisations in the town – see list Appendix 4. Whilst these organisations might not have a formal remit to work within parks and greenspaces, they may occasionally use the Park for the delivery of activities e.g. outdoor theatre, guided walks

4.5 The Organisation

Radipole Park and Gardens are owned and managed by Weymouth Town Council. It is one of eight parks in Weymouth. Greenhill Gardens has held Green Flag status since 2006 and Sandsfoot Gardens was first awarded the Green Flag status in 2012. The general approach to the maintenance of the parks promotes the conservation of ‘natural, landscape and structural features’¹¹.

Weymouth Town Council operates a committee structure. The Full Council meets 8 times per year and is Chaired by the elected Mayor for that year. The Council is supported by the Town Clerk who functions as Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer. There are 5 standing committees, each with an elected Chair and Vice Chair, covering the areas of: Services, Human Resources, Finance & Governance, Full Council and Planning & Licensing.

Parks and Open Spaces report to the Services Committee. The Services Committee oversees the operation of revenue budget-based operations only. The organisations officer body is headed by a Town Clerk, supported by a Deputy Clerk and 2 corporate managers. The Authority has 48 staff on the payroll.

¹¹ The Management of Green Flag Gardens, Weymouth Town Council, 2019
Weymouth Town Council
National Lottery Heritage Fund, Parks for People reference PP-17-03557

4.6 Policy context

Radipole Park and Gardens falls within National Character Area 138, Weymouth Lowlands although in itself it is not typical of the predominant landscape types associated with the Jurassic Coast or Dorset AONB.

West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, 2015¹² sets out the planning strategy for Weymouth. This remains the current strategy until new plans are developed for Weymouth Town Council in early 2020. The key areas of policy concerning the site are:

- A Strategic approach to environment and climate change which advocates *Development should protect and enhance the natural environment - its landscape, seascapes and geological conservation interests, its wildlife and habitats and important local green spaces* (p.12).
- WEY1: Weymouth town centre strategy area. This includes the southern area of the site – the formal gardens – but they are not explicitly mentioned in the supporting text nor in that describing sub area WEY3, Station Area and Swannery Car Park. Instead, it advises that ‘development must, as far as practicable’ i) *retain and enhance the area’s rich and distinct local character and notable landmarks*, and ii) *recognise the need to manage residual flood risk*¹³.

Radipole Park and Gardens is an important and established green space in Weymouth. *Policies COM4: New or Improved Local Recreational Facilities and COM5: The Retention of Open Space and Recreational Facilities* can be applied to Radipole.

Policy ENV6: Local Flood Alleviation Scheme may also apply to the site on account of its close proximity to Radipole Lake.

4.7 Leases and Covenants

There are no known covenants on the site.

Weymouth Lawn Tennis Club has a full repairing lease on an area of the site including four courts and a club house building, which are designated for private use by their members.

At present there are no other leases on the site although the new café will also be let on a full repairing lease. Details of the proposed arrangements for this are given in the Café Business Plan which accompanies the Management and Maintenance Plan.

4.8 Byelaws and Protection Orders

The Park is covered by the Byelaw for Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces. It was revised in 2005 to allow for action to be taken against more modern activities that can cause nuisance to other users of the gardens.

There is a Council byelaw that prevents cycling throughout the gardens, with the exception of the crossing from Alexander Bridge to Radipole Park Drive.

¹² The Melcombe Regis Board Strategic Plan, 2017-2021 can be seen to complement the Local Plan by championing the important contribution public landscapes and positive living environments make to community health and well-being.

¹³ The site is included in the Dorset Historic Towns Survey as Weymouth Historic Urban Character 10, Radipole lake and shore

The Weymouth & Portland Dog Related Public Space Protection Order 2016 came into force on the 1st June 2016. The Order has six sections:

Section 1 – General provisions.

Section 2 – Removal and disposal of e.g. faeces.

Section 3 – Dogs to be excluded from identified areas.

Section 4 – Dogs to be kept on a lead in identified areas.

Section 5 – Dogs to be kept on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer.

Section 6 – Penalty.

There are various designations that must be adhered to across the site:

- Dogs are excluded from the play area, sports pitch and all hard courts.
- Dogs must remain on leads in the gardens.
- Dogs are allowed off leads on the playing field.

Dog Wardens are employed by Dorset Council, their role includes the ultimate action of prosecution but, trying initially, to focus on education and awareness within the community.

The Public Spaces Protection Order for Weymouth and Portland was previously extended for 12 months in March 2019 and is due to expire in May 2020. It is the intention of Dorset Council to have a single dog related PSPO, drawing East Dorset, North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Orders in to one.

5 Current Management and Maintenance

The site is cared for by a central Parks team consisting of 4 office and administrative staff, 16 grounds staff and 2 seasonal workers. This team carries out all normal management and maintenance activities in accordance with an approved Annual Work Plan aligned to priorities contained in the Weymouth and Portland Corporate Plan, 2016 – 2019¹⁴. The priorities are: i) Building a stronger local economy, ii) Empowering thriving and inclusive communities, iii). Improving quality of life and v) Developing successful partnerships. The Parks team is supported by the Friends groups.

The Parks and Open Spaces Service commission a biannual review of each park using the KMC performance management system. It is designed to provide data in site specific format that provides very detailed information about individual sites that can then be collated to provide a general overview of a service or area of delivery.

The system assesses the quality of service provision, the value of the open space to the community, resource allocation and customer satisfaction. It enables the Parks and Open Spaces Service to measure improvements and introduce the concept of community involvement in the management of open spaces. In 2019 the review was completed with the additional brief of assessing work required for Radipole Park and Gardens to achieve Green Flag Status.

The 2019 KMC report is attached as Appendix 11. A summary of findings and recommendations for improvement are given in Section 3.

¹⁴ The Plan is due for renewal by the new Weymouth Town Council. The new Plan is likely to be agreed in early 2020 although the general focus and vision of the Plan are unlikely to be significantly altered.

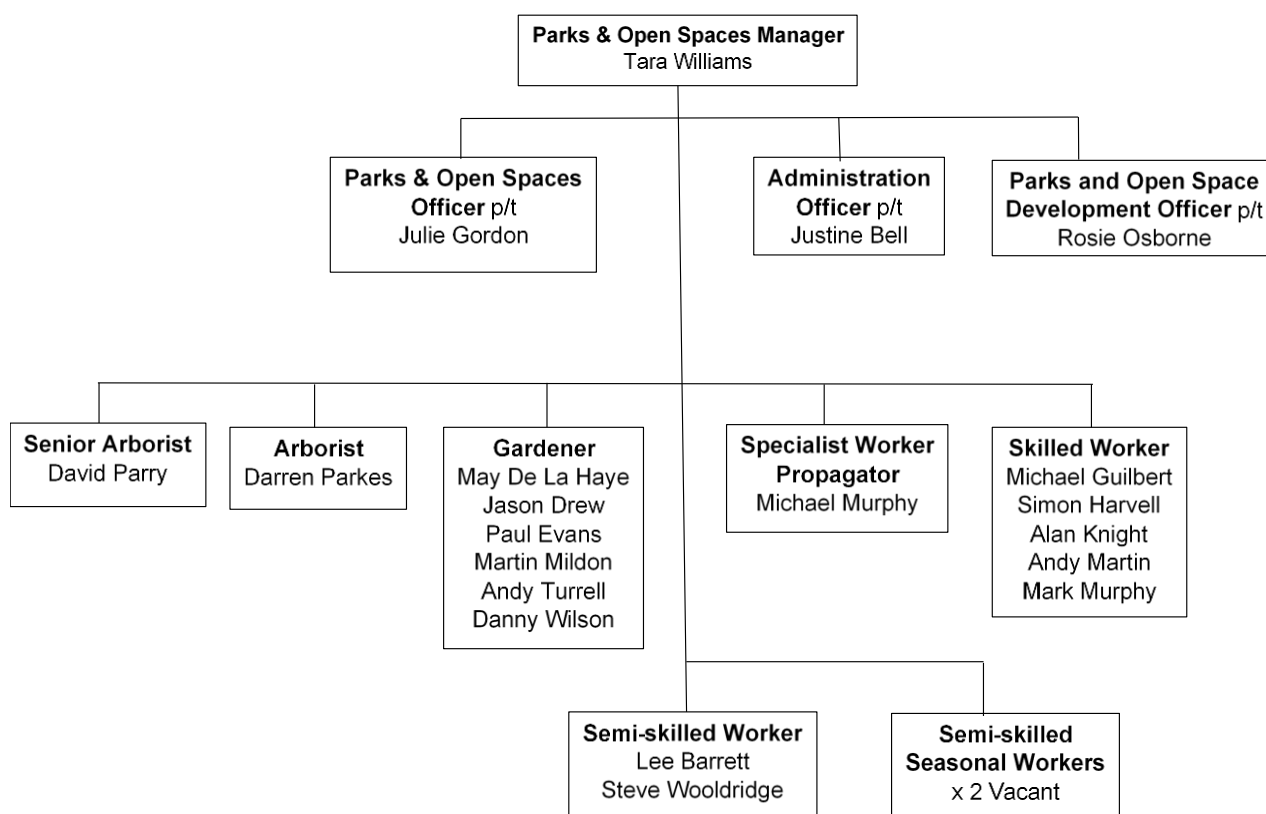


Figure 6 - Organogram of Parks and Open Spaces team

The Parks and Open Spaces team works to an annual schedule of maintenance (attached as Appendix 1). There is one full time gardener dedicated to Radipole Park and Gardens who is on site all year round and undertakes routine grounds maintenance duties including, hedge cutting, sweeping hard surfaces, tending the herbaceous borders and shrub beds, waste and litter collection and cutting the grass surrounding the herbaceous borders.

This is then bolstered by an area based mowing gang who undertake grass cutting on a cyclical basis. The team may also be directed to do additional cuts if required for an event. Other duties undertaken by this team include hedge cutting, seat maintenance and cleaning of notice boards, signs, etc.

The play area is inspected and maintained by the Play Area team and the trees are inspected and maintained by the Arboricultural team. All staff are employed by Weymouth Town Council.

5.1 Litter and Waste Management

There are 12 litter bins located at various points within the park and garden, they are well maintained and replaced when necessary. Litter picking at the site is undertaken daily.

The litter bins are emptied daily, including Saturdays and Sundays, from May to October. During the winter period bin emptying reduces to 3 times per week, the only exception to this is Christmas when no operations take place on bank holidays but will occur every other day between 27th to 31st December.

At present we do not have recycling facilities available at the park and garden. However, residents can recycle at our other Green Flag gardens. Non segregated litter and rubbish collected from the

bins is currently sent to landfill although future plans will look at solutions for segregating waste for recycling.

Efforts are made to recycle green waste:

- Amenity grassed area clippings are left in situ.
- Grass clippings around the central herbaceous bed are composted.
- Grass edgings are reused to fill hollows and dips.
- Any arisings from tree and shrub maintenance is chipped on site and return to the shrub beds as a weed control.
- All other green waste is taken to the composting facility at Lodmoor, approx. 1.5 miles away. Here the material is processed and returned for use on the site as both a soil conditioner and mulch.

5.2 Grassed Areas

The park and gardens offer a number of large areas of open well-maintained grassland that allows the public to enjoy picnics, walks, ball games and general outdoor pursuits. Most of the park and gardens consists of short mown grassland dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*).

The height of the grass is kept between 20 and 50mm throughout the year. The level of maintenance will depend on the level of use, with increased repair, fertilising and scarifying of those areas subject to heavy wear. Most repairs to turf will be carried out in the autumn or spring, with areas either re-turfed or seeded. Grass edges, whether they are against paths or fences will be cut at the same time as the rest of the grass using strimmers.

Sports pitch maintenance is carried out by a roving grounds maintenance team. The team undertakes all routine work to the football pitch, including mowing, marking out and pitch repairs and improvements.

5.3 Hedges

The hedge running alongside the playing field provides a valuable green screen to visually block passing traffic from users of the garden. It is prone to wind and salt scorch as well as drought in the summer months and growth is affected as a result. Mechanical cutting using electric hand-held machines is carried out, avoiding nesting birds, to the inside of the hedgerow a minimum of two operations a year. The hedge is flailed from the roadside in May and October. The quality is acceptable but growth is patchy. The hedge is maintained to 4ft and provides reasonable traffic noise reduction.

5.4 Planting

The Park has a number of mixed shrub beds containing various species that provide seasonal variety, floral interest but limited wildlife habitat. The shrub beds located in the gardens are restricted in places and shrub growth is limited as a result but acceptable.

The shrub beds adjacent to the hard courts were planted up in 2008. Several specimens are overgrowing others and consideration will have to be given to replanting or re-working the bed over the life of the plan. The beds are mulched to retain moisture and suppress weeds.

As a result of a decline in funding for public parks, mixed herbaceous borders were planted in 2013 to replace annual bedding. The plantings have been really successful and growth has been good. The soil is prone to drying out, irrigation and staking/tying is required. Routine thinning/division etc.

will be required over the life of the plan, as will the application of rotted FYM or composted organic material on an annual basis.

Within the formal gardens there are tens of thousands of Crocus corms planted. This brings an impressive splash of colour to the gardens at a time when little else is in flower or leaf. The arisings are collected at the end of May and taken to the local composting facility.

The wildflower meadow adjacent to the community orchard adds an additional type of biodiversity. Grass cuttings take place once during May and October. Grass arisings from the second cut are turned after seven days and left for a further seven days before collection, this is to allow the wildflower seed to mature and disperse and return year on year.

5.5 Trees

Trees are generally allowed to grow to their full potential with management focussed on safety, crown lifting and formative pruning as required. Tree pruning, felling and planting will always be guided by the health and safety of the public and Council officers. Management of the tree population (the number, density, species choice and location) is important to ensure the safety and perceived safety of park users.

Pruning of tree branches, where they might obstruct the adjacent highway or paths within the park, are done routinely. Basal growth is cut periodically.

The trees are formally inspected by an Arboricultural Officer on a three-year cycle, however, observations about their condition are undertaken following storms. The trees in Radipole Park and Gardens were last inspected in 2017 to ensure that they have no major defects, such as fungal decay that might cause structural failure of the trunk or branches. All priority recommended works have been carried out.

Several of the trees within the gardens were donated as part of the Council tree donation scheme; many have commemorative plaques.

There are 40 fruit trees in the Community Orchard, including a variety of Apricot, Apple, Cherry, Cobnut, Pear, Plum and Quince trees. The orchard was created thanks to an individual donation of £500 and a contribution of £500 from the Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens. The Woodland Trust provided a number of Whips to produce a protective hedgerow around the orchard.

5.6 Sports facilities

There is a MUGA, basketball and 6 tennis courts that are open to the public throughout the year and are maintained by grounds staff. The courts are free of charge and are used on a first come first serve basis. There is currently no floodlighting.

The tarmac surfacing of the courts is showing distinct signs of wear and tear with the top surface breaking up. Moss is prone on the tennis courts due to overhanging trees. The galvanised chain link fencing is starting to break and it will require further repair and replacement in the future.

The court surfaces are kept clean, with litter and/or leaves swept regularly. The hard surfaces are maintained in a weed free state with spot treatment weed spraying undertaken annually.

Weymouth Tennis Club lease 0.58 acres of land from the Town Council and provide a practice wall and 4 macadam tennis courts, which were resurfaced in 2013. There is also a small clubhouse where regular social events take place.

The Tennis Club is responsible for all maintenance and upkeep of the courts within the demised area of their lease agreement.

5.7 Play Area

The play facilities at the park and gardens are subject to a weekly inspection by play area maintenance staff. There are four categories of findings, which range from immediate to low risk.

The play area maintenance team carry tools and spare parts within their vehicle so that they can undertake minor repairs, e.g. replacement of a chain linkage on a swing. If the equipment is deemed to represent a medium or high risk it will be repaired but, if necessary, taken out of use until the repairs are completed.

A monthly site inspection of all play area equipment is carried out to ROSPA standards. The condition of each item is noted and where applicable repairs (or replacements) are requested. There are 3 officers within the Parks & Open Spaces team who are trained and qualified ROSPA inspectors and can sign off any repair to play equipment.

An annual detailed inspection is also carried out by an independent specialist play inspector to ensure the long-term safety of the site, equipment and ancillary items and that the site continues to comply with the requirements of EN1176 the European Playground Standard.

5.8 Car Parks

The small car park by the gardens has marked bays providing parking for 21 vehicles.

The car park by the play area was extended when a tennis court was taken out of action and the chain-link fencing removed. The condition of the surfacing is very poor, periodic repairs are made to infill holes in the surfacing using 3inch down crushed Portland stone. There are no line marked parking bays.

Both car parks are free to use with a maximum stay of 72 hours. No buses, lorries, trailers, caravans or overnight sleeping is permitted.

5.9 Police Community Support Officers

PCSO's have been appointed and are active in the central Weymouth area, including Radipole Park and Gardens. The officer who covers the area has attended the "Friends of" meetings to obtain information and listen to users' concerns. The PCSO patrols within the gardens as part of a patch approach, the frequency and timing being based on information received about specific nuisances or incidents.

5.10 Graffiti and Fly Posting

Although the gardens suffer little from graffiti, it is recognised that graffiti presents an image of neglect and raises fear of anti-social behaviour. The formal character of the gardens does not allow for the tolerance of 'low level' inoffensive graffiti.

Financial and practical working constraints do have to be considered to produce a policy that meets the overall aims of 'Graffiti Free' whilst ensuring it is deliverable. To that end, the basis of the policy is that:

- The site is checked for graffiti on a daily basis through the summer and through the working week in the winter.

- Graffiti that is obscene, racist or contains swear words or sexual content will be removed on that day, wherever possible.
- Lower level graffiti will be removed within a few days.

All graffiti of an obscene or offensive nature is removed within 24 hours of being reported. The Parks team aims to remove all other graffiti within three working days.

Unauthorised flyers advertising commercial and community events and services regularly appear tied to railings. This practice is unsightly and contributes to a sense of clutter and untidiness in the open space. Unofficial notices will be removed immediately by ground staff.

5.11 Environmental Management

Changes to a number of environmental management practices, operational procedures and procurement processes have been introduced to reduce the impact of the service provision upon the environment.

As a new authority, Weymouth Town Council is currently reviewing all its plans and policies. In June 2019, the Council resolved to declare a climate change and ecological emergency. The following actions were agreed:

- Develop, as soon as possible, a report to go across the whole of the Council's activities which provides quantitative measures of the climate impact of those activities, an overall aggregate measure of the total impact of the Council's activities, to consider climate mitigation measures, and to provide reports of these measures in subsequent corporate documents to Services committee, Finance and Governance committee and then Full Council.
- Strive to Make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030 or earlier if possible.
- Set, as soon as possible, annual targets for these quantitative measures of climate impact on all the Council's activities for the next 10 years which in aggregate amount to net zero carbon by 2030.
- Ensure that all planning comments to Dorset Council are consistent with a shift to net-zero carbon by 2030.
- Make decisions that discourage fossil fuel car use, withdraw all forms of subsidy to such usage, redirect resources into electric vehicles, walking, cycling provision and improved rail and bus services, and supports projects that help ensure that all citizens can travel to work and education, and access services in an environmentally friendly way.
- Ensure that all policy papers submitted to the Council and its Committees include a Climate Change Impact Assessment.
- Engage with all relevant local agencies and partners, including Low Carbon Dorset, to help deliver these goals through all relevant strategies, plans and shared resources and send representatives to attend any meetings, events and partner workshops.
- Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and lobby local MPs to do likewise.

In addition to the above the Council has committed to being single use plastic free wherever possible. It is also working to shift procurement of energy to renewable supplies.

The Council has signed up to the county wide Health and Nature Charter. This has been developed by Dorset Local Nature Partnership. The Partnership, formed in 2013, has worked with LNPs across the South West, and colleagues from both the environment and health sectors to develop the Charter with the aim of gaining endorsement from Local Nature Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Boards and individual stakeholder organisations. The Health and Nature Charter commits to joint action on improving health and wellbeing through natural capital assets in Dorset.

Weymouth Town Council is the first town council to endorse the charter and supports the increasing evidence demonstrating the benefits of nature and greenspaces, such as parks and gardens, on people's physical and mental health and wellbeing.

In the management of maintenance of its facilities, the Parks and Open Spaces Section of Weymouth Town Council has also adopted a number of practices that are of direct relevance to Radipole Park and Gardens:

- Nectar rich permanent planting has been introduced into the park. The aim is to increase this provision to encourage the number and variety of insects in the park.
- Pesticide use has been reduced year on year and no residual herbicides are used in soft landscape applications. Path edge applications are limited to one application per year using the least harmful chemical available having carried out a COSHH assessment. Herbicide application to shrub beds has been discontinued. The use of glyphosate use is under review.
- The park and gardens use of water is minimal. Much of the formal seasonal bedding in the gardens has been replaced with more drought resistant varieties of herbaceous perennials. Irrigation is also kept to the very minimum, with all standpipes and other associated water pipes regularly inspected for leakage. All standpipes are capped over the winter to prevent damage by extreme cold weather conditions.
- Drought tolerant species have been planted to reduce water consumption and increase plant species range. Climate change will be a consideration in the future design of beds and selection of all new plants.
- The majority of beds incorporate shrubs and perennial planting, which reduces the number of bedding plants used and, in turn, results in a drop in water consumption.
- Water collection will be introduced from the café building to provide a basic supply to the sensory garden.
- Bedding plants are sourced from the Authority's own nursery within Weymouth, as much as possible, to reduce carbon emissions due to transport. All bedding plants are grown in Peat free compost.
- Onsite composting will be explored in the sensory garden but the composting of all green waste may not be possible. However, all green waste from parks is taken to the Authority's composting facility at Lodmoor approximately 1 mile away.
- Recycling bins enable the streaming of recyclables into paper, glass, plastic bottle and cans/tins, which are then collected and recycled in line with domestic recycling already carried out by the Authority. Any metals from the site are recycled. There will be a requirement to recycle built into the agreement for the café operation.
- Artificial fertilizers are not used in the gardens. Where artificial fertilizers are used in bed preparation (if it is required but not as routine) organic fertilisers will be used.

6 Analysis and Risk

6.1 Research

The development of this plan has been informed by specially commissioned reports which offer a detailed insight into the current condition of the park and the potential for improvement in the future:

- Conservation Plan: this includes a detailed site condition report (Appendix C) as well as identification of a number of issues and opportunities.
- KMC Audit report: Attached as Appendix 11 this report surveys the park with a view to current issues and required improvements in order to meet Green Flag standards.

Further research and recommendations are given in the Dorset Wildlife Trust reports which are examined in Environmental Management, Section 4.5 below.

6.2 Conservation Plan

The Conservation Plan splits the park into three areas i) the formal gardens, ii) the sports facilities, including two areas of car parking and the play area, and iii) amenity grassland including community orchard. The issues in each area are summarised below:

Area	Summary of issues
Formal Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of a safe and coherent fenced east boundary; • The need for a strategy for enhancing and augmenting the west boundary hedge, to close gaps and to provide a more resilient planted edge to the gardens. The hedge should be able to benefit from regular cutting and to withstand areas of shade and dryness; • The lack of a uniform, well repaired path surface with a coherent edging strategy; • The general overcrowding of planting within the gardens; • The lack of succession of key planted features; • Health and longevity of specific specimens, such as the Tree of Heaven, in respect of its planting context; • The need for a strategy to rejuvenate and refine the shrubberies and herbaceous planting; • Plant health issues, and, • The lack of a coherent strategy for site furniture and memorials to enhance appearance and coherence of the formal gardens and the wider site.
Sports facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition and safety of east fence; • The apparent lack of use of the east path; • Design and condition of north car park; • Design, condition and future use of play area and skate park; • General lower maintenance standards of public sports facilities; • Use, public access to and future of the pavilion; • Augmentation and lack of succession of key planted features; • Refinement of tree planting and prevalence of invasive self-sets; • Lack of public seating as part of a coherent strategy for site furniture and memorials to enhance appearance and coherence of Radipole Park and Gardens.
Amenity grass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition, safety and clear definition of east boundary; • Lack of coherent and visually sympathetic boundary to northeast; • Condition and use of main grass area, with its particular drainage

	issues; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of ornamental/specimen trees along east boundary of area to help continue design intent of overall site, and, • Lack of seating in area.
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6.3 KMC Audit

The KMC audit uses a different means of categorising improvements in line with the requirements of the Green Flag scheme.

Area	Summary of findings
Signage, interpretation and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst signage at the Jubilee Retail Park entrance was 'welcoming' there is little signage to direct people to the park from further away. There needs to be better signposting to carparks along Radipole Park Drive • There is scope for more and better interpretation of the site - Information regarding what can be found on the site to be available at all entrances. Opportunity for interpretation of interesting features throughout the site. • There is also scope for more 'park artistry' e.g. cut tree trunks being left on site as features • There should be better promotion of Friends and ways for contacting them
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paving and path surfacing is in need to renovation • There is a need to improve the safety of entrances to the site from the busy road. • Entrances could be made more attractive, especially from the railway bridge. • Repair to fencing and court facilities required. Signs of neglect to back area of courts with growth of plants through fencing. there is a need to clear the tennis / basketball court fencing of vegetation before it becomes too expensive to do so. The management regime for the large grass area at the top of the park also requires some consideration.
Play and recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although well used and maintained, the play area is outdated and limited in terms of its play value. It does contain a swing for those unable to use a standard swing, but the remainder of the equipment is only accessible to those with full mobility. The Council needs to think about its policies on access for all and equal access, especially in redesign of play areas. • The skatepark is also well used, but its size and value are limited. It was also covered in graffiti, and it was hard to distinguish whether it was an art form or offensive. • The Council could consider an alternative form of play provision to the traditional style that currently exists. Many authorities are adopting the far less formal approach and allowing children to play in a much more exciting and less restricted environment • In any redesign of the large open space it may be worth considering the provision of areas for older children as this is an area that is lacking at present. • The open field area lacks purpose of design; it is not set out for sports, it has a small conservation area by the orchard, but primarily it is just a large open space, with poor grassland, without a clear purpose. It is

	<p>this area above all that requires further attention prior to applying for any Award.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most important aspect is having a proper strategy and design plan for the area, which in the author's view is large enough to accommodate some sports and dog walking areas, as well as this greater expanse of conservation style planting. If the Council is considering applying for an Award then it will need to consider the design and planning of the large open space to the north of the site.
Natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is scope for more tree planting • The Authority has clearly demonstrated its ability to create beautiful wildlife habitat areas at the north of the park, it is highly recommended that this type of landscape is extended much further into the open space. • The site is relatively well designed, although it would be easy not to realise that there are two/three parts to the site. The horticultural design within the more formal part of the site is good, as is the location of the skateboard area in the more recreational section of the park. Good use is made of a long thin belt of land. However, , if the Council is considering applying for an Award then it will need to consider the design and planning of the large open space to the north of the site.

The immediate recommendations of the KMC audit report are less in depth than the Conservation Plan but reflect the same issues:

- That the design, use and maintenance of the large grass area is reviewed
- That the Council considers the use of alternative styles of play equipment as well as the necessity to constantly fence children in
- That the repairs to the court's fence line are undertaken
- That a Management Plan is created for the whole site which has the capacity to meet all of the Green Flag Award targets, and which includes a full marketing plan for the site

From both of the reports above there are clear improvements to be made. The suite of documents being produced to support the Parks for People application will address many of these concerns, notably the need for a more strategic, holistic and coherent approach to the design and management of the Park.

6.4 Consultation

In addition to commissioning professional and specialist reports, consultation has been key to informing the approach to the project. During the stage one process, extensive consultation was carried out involving over 2000 residents who provided valuable feedback on the future vision of the park and gardens.

Throughout the Development Phase, consultation momentum has continued with the aim of expanding on feedback and ideas gained during initial stage one planning. This has been crucial in learning about our current audiences, detecting potential new users, identifying needs and opportunities, promoting awareness of the project and shaping it to fit the requirements of the local community.

Further details of consultation and findings are given in the Activity Plan.

6.5 Green Flag Award

Weymouth Town Council already owns and manages two Green Flag Parks, Greenhill and Sandsfoot Gardens. Individual management plans are produced for each space, along with an overarching document detailing the management of Green Flag gardens in Weymouth (attached as Appendix 16). The overall aim is to maintain and improve, where required, the quality of the gardens in terms of both physical features and the psychological benefits people gain from them.

Weymouth Town Council has chosen to focus on the Green Flag Award as a means of raising and maintaining the standards of green spaces within the borough. The structure of this document follows Green Flag criteria.

The shared aspects of garden management aims are:

- To promote the application of Green Flag standards across the borough thereby raising standards overall.
- To streamline the Green Flag Award application process in order to maximise resources available for consultation and the implementation of garden improvements.
- To enable, as a result, an increase in the number of green spaces that Weymouth Town Council can put forward for a Green Flag Award.

Once the project is completed, Weymouth Town Council will make an application for the Green Flag Award for Radipole Park and Gardens. With this in mind an initial assessment of required improvements has been made¹⁵. These recommendations have been included in the action plan for Management and Maintenance.

6.6 Proposed Management and Maintenance

Weymouth Town Council will adhere to the overarching management principles outlined in the Conservation Plan:

- Radipole Park and Gardens will remain in use as a public greenspace composed of formal gardens, sports facilities and amenity grassland. This continued use will directly inform the future management of the site and hold weight when considering the benefit or harm of proposals to sustain this use. Management decisions will consider all users in a holistic manner so not to segregate the site unnecessarily.
- The site will be managed holistically to sustain its special interest as a historic designed landscape composed of three different but interconnected areas.
- The intended purpose of each area will be respected, and opportunities will be sought to enhance significance to benefit the whole site.

6.7 Weymouth Town Council Staffing

The Park will be managed in accordance with local and national planning policy and guidance including the application of appropriate British Standards etc. as required.

Following completion of the project the core management structure will remain the same. The Park currently has a ground worker on site most days with specific responsibility for the day to day maintenance of the park. This post is supported by the wider team who work across all parks and open spaces in Weymouth to ensure regular maintenance tasks are completed (e.g. grass cutting, hedge trimming, litter collection). The team also includes an arborist who offers specialist advice and services.

¹⁵ KMC Audit, August 2019 – Attached as Appendix 11

Less regular maintenance tasks or ad hoc tasks are dealt with by the wider team, as and when required. As the project is primarily about upgrading and improving the park it is not anticipated that the maintenance requirements will significantly increase. There will of course be more visitors to the park as a result of the project but the Parks and Open Spaces team is confident that it has the capacity to deal with the increased requirements in areas such as litter collection and general wear and tear. A full-time horticultural apprentice will be appointed to the team as part of the Project. Their role will bring additional resources to support the dedicated Radipole ground staff going forwards. A brief for the apprenticeship is attached as Appendix 17.

The exceptions to this are in the areas relating to the Activity Plan and operation of the café, both of which will require additional resources. The management and maintenance requirements for these areas are detailed in the relevant sections below.

Weymouth Town Council have no plans to reduce parks and open spaces support in the foreseeable future, with staffing and financial resources remaining constant (see letter confirming this in Supporting Documents). Securing a Green Flag Award would raise the profile of Radipole Park and Gardens and therefore increase its status and priority within the Council, this will further safeguard the allocation of resources by Weymouth Town Council to maintain the Park in the future.

The Action Plan in Section 5 and accompanying income and expenditure forecast takes into consideration the maintenance and lifespan of all aspects of the park following project completion and identifies the additional resources that will be required to maintain the site.

6.8 Managing the Project

During the Delivery Phase the project will be overseen by a Project Group led by Weymouth Town Council (WTC) Parks and Open Spaces team. The Project Group will meet monthly and receive regular updates from the Project Design Team to ensure delivery of the agreed objectives within the proposed timescale. The group will have delegated responsibility from Weymouth Town Council for the project but will provide regular reports to Councillors through the committee meeting infrastructure.

Membership of the Project Group will include:

- Weymouth Town Clerk (WTC)
- Parks and Open Spaces Manager (WTC)
- Project Manager (freelance)
- Chair of Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens
- Activity Officer (WTC Secondment)
- Secretary of Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens

The Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer was appointed at the beginning of the development phase and whilst their role covers the whole parks service, they will effectively be seconded as Activity Officer to the project for 22.5 hours a week over 3 years. The Activity Officer will take responsibilities for the delivery of the Activity Plan, supported by the Project Manager and working closely with the Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens. A brief for the role is included as Appendix 7 of the Activity Plan. On project completion the Activity Officer will return to their substantive role as Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer, providing continuity and ensuring the ongoing delivery of the project objectives.

A Project Manager will be appointed on a freelance basis to oversee the delivery of the capital works, project delivery and reporting to NLHF and other stakeholders. They will ensure that all elements of the project, capital and activity, are integrated and coordinated. The brief for this role is attached as Appendix 5.

CAPITAL WORK

Capital work delivery will be coordinated through the design team. The Project Manager will manage and act as liaison between the Design Team and Project Group. The Design Team will comprise:

- Project Manager
- Landscape Architect
- Architect
- Principal Designer
- Quantity Surveyor
- Structural Engineer
- Main contractor(s) representative

All Design Team roles will be appointed at the start of the delivery phase. Briefs for each of these role (with the exception of the Main Contractor(s)) are attached as Appendices 6 - 10. The Activity Officer will attend Design Team meetings as required and other consultants and experts may also attend if required.

Due to the specialist nature of the work, the capital work will be delivered through two main contracts: 1. Master plan 2. Café. The Project Manager, Quantity Surveyor, and Principal Designer will act across both contracts.

The Project Manager will be responsible for the overall coordination of the project, ensuring that all elements are coordinated and undertaking all reporting to funders and Weymouth Town Council.

The Landscape Architect will oversee the project management and delivery of the Master Plan. The Architect will manage the construction of the café. These two roles will work closely together and with the overarching Design Team to ensure that all works between the café and main Park redevelopment are coordinated.

The Quantity Surveyor will span both contracts, oversee procurement, contract management and valuations.

The Principal Designer will span both contracts as well as undertaking client duties.

A full project management structure is given below.

Additional specialist support will be given by Weymouth Town Council staff working in finance, commercial and leases, events and community liaison. All marketing and publicity will also be developed in partnership with WTC communications staff.

ACTIVITY PLAN

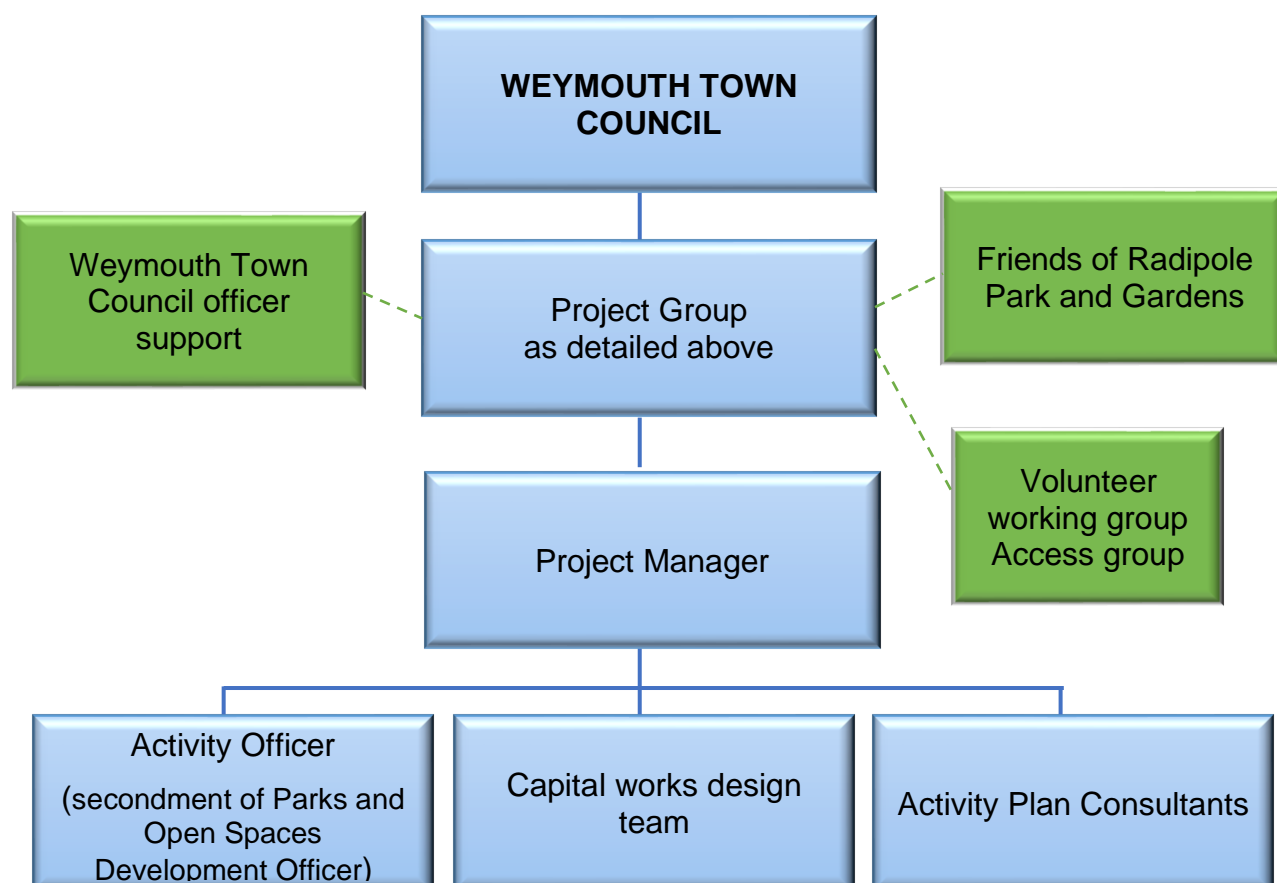
As detailed above the Activity Plan will be delivered by the Activity Officer with management support from the Project Manager.

A volunteer working group (VWG) will be formed and will ensure that the views and wishes of the public for the future of Radipole Park and Gardens link with any decisions taken by the Project Group. The VWG will be formed from some of the committee members of the Friends committee and some of the residents who volunteered to sit on focus groups for Radipole Park and Gardens. In addition, an access group will be convened to check plans and ensure they meet the needs of

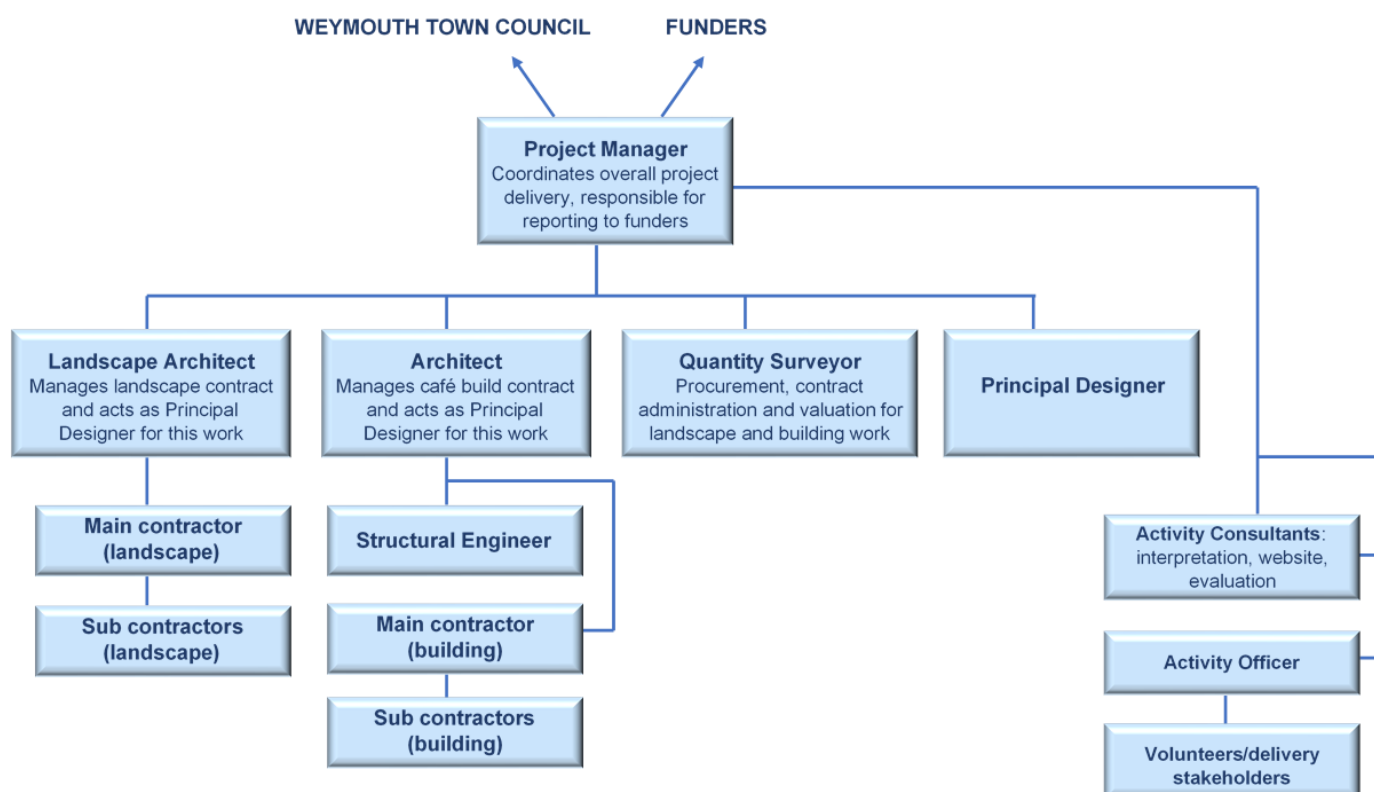
disabled users – Westfield Specialist School and Weymouth and Portland Access Group have already agreed to participate in this. The Activity Officer will coordinate the VWG.

Many of the activities described in the Activity Plan will be delivered in collaboration with partners, the Activity Officer will be responsible for managing these relationships and overseeing delivery of all activities. More details on all activities are given in the Activity Plan.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



CAPITAL WORKS DELIVERY STRUCTURE



6.9 Procurement

Procurement of all consultants and contractors will be undertaken in accordance with Section 11 of Weymouth Town Council Financial Regulations and Internal Financial Controls (see Appendix 18). Procurement will be overseen by the Council's Contracts and Facilities Officer. At least one representatives of the Friends will sit on all selection/interview panels for appointments relating to the project.

In line with NLHF requirements the following will be applied to procurement:

- All procedures to recruit consultants and contractors will be fair and open and keep to the relevant equality legislation.
- All goods, work and services up to £10,000 will be secured on the basis of best value.
- For all goods, work and services worth £10,000 or more (excluding VAT) at least three competitive tenders or quotes will be obtained.
- For all goods, works and services worth more than £50,000 (excluding VAT), competitive tendering procedures will be implemented. A report on the tenders received will be produced, together with the decision on which to accept. If the lowest tender is not selected reasons for this will be supplied.
- It is not anticipated that any work will be above the threshold covered by European Union (EU) procurement rules.
- All new staff posts will be advertised with manageable and fair deadlines. Assessment of all candidates will be fair and applications will be judged according to an agreed set of criteria.

6.10 Volunteer Involvement

Through the Friends, a group of volunteers currently manage the community orchard with minor seasonal pruning. The new sensory garden will be an additional focus to attract more voluntary engagement in the management and maintenance of the Park. Led by Kingston Maurward College, the development of the sensory garden will offer people the opportunity to learn new skills in dry stone walling, willow weaving and the principles of landscape design. Teams of volunteers will be coordinated to support the planting and ongoing maintenance of the garden. There will be additional opportunities for groups with specialist needs to participate. To support this work, a new secure storage shed has been built into the project to house small tools as well as Friends equipment to support events and other activities.

Volunteer engagement will be properly structured through the development of a volunteer plan, induction process and full programme of training. More details of volunteer engagement are given in the Activity Plan.

6.11 Environmental Management

Weymouth Town Council already operate according to a number of environmental management practices as outlined in section 2 above. These will continue to be implemented and reviewed regularly to ensure that all work adheres to and achieves the best possible results in terms of environmental practice and sustainability.

The plans and Business Plan for the café include details on how environmental management has been considered within the design of the building and its ongoing operation.

The commitment to maintain Green Flag status for the park in the future will also ensure that management and maintenance is regularly reviewed to work in accordance with the field assessment criteria and general best practice.

6.12 Ecology and Biodiversity

The reports from Dorset Wildlife Trust identify a number of important features in the park. Notably, the proximity of Radipole Park and Gardens to important biodiversity sites¹⁶ and therefore its potential to become an important 'stepping-stone site' in the corridors for key species; the presence of five Dorset notable species¹⁷; evidence of seven species of bat using the site. The reports make the following suggestions for enhancement:

Report		Suggestions for Enhancement
Baseline Survey	Ecological	<p>Increasing plant diversity will increase the wildlife value and can be aided by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to control grass growth through cutting so reducing competition with the herbs but reducing the frequency of cutting to allow the herbs to flower, set seed and spread Ensuring the cut material is always removed in both meadow area and in the amenity grassland. A return of nutrients to the soil would favour

¹⁶ 'Radipole Park and Gardens has a great deal to offer the wildlife assemblage of the Weymouth and Portland area. The site neighbours the RSPB Swannery Nature Reserve and is within a few miles of RSPB Lodmoor and DWT Lorton Meadows to name but a few of the important SSSI, SAC, RAMSAR and SNCIs within the wider Weymouth and Portland area.'

¹⁷ Bird's-foot-trefoil, Common Knapweed, Ox-eye Daisy and Fleabane, Strawberry Clover

	<p>the more competitive species over the notable ones and lower the diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refraining from any further additions of fertilisers or pesticides. • Less frequent mowing or raising the blades to allow small plants to flower. This would prove valuable to pollinators and enhance the wildlife value and appearance of the grassland whilst still maintaining a shortish tidy looking sward. <p>Wildflower meadow Increase the size of this to provide invertebrate habitat – could be achieved by extending into the orchard and in a band along the roadside hedge, so outside the area where people walk or play and where it would provide good supporting habitat to the hedge. Mowing paths through larger areas can look attractive and encourage continuing access. Leave a long margin.</p> <p>Grassland The wet grassland increases plant diversity on the site, is a natural community and potentially provides good habitat for insects and wintering birds therefore, if possible, should not be drained. Ideally it should be managed as a wet meadow with a cut at the end of summer while it is dry with a follow-up cut, if possible, to control the re-growth and bring the sward back into condition before the winter.</p> <p>Hedges - planting up the gaps and aiming for thicker, denser, taller hedges that provide wildlife cover, hibernation sites and winter shelter for insects and small mammals and nesting opportunities for birds. Ideal size is over 1.2m wide at the top and over 1.4m tall – trimmed every third year in late winter to avoid bird nesting season. Ideally coppice the hedge and retain any deadwood. Consider a hedge as a boundary to the industrial estate rather than a railing.</p> <p>Piles of logs, brush piles, or rocks/bricks to provide humid cool hiding places for invertebrates and amphibians or bug hotels.</p>
Biodiversity Improvement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional bat and bee habitats - nest boxes • Log piles and slow decomposing habitat – retaining deadwood, creating bug hotels and new habitats • Additional fruit trees to expand community orchard • Additional wildflower space • Increase long grass habitat
Bat Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install bat boxes on trees around exterior of the gardens • Consider further planting of trees/hedges alongside adjacent road at northern end of site next to playing field • Leave edges of grass areas, where they meet boundary trees and shrubs, uncut. • Use a variety of plant which will attract insects.

The new elements that are recommended are included in the masterplan design for the park and in the sensory garden planning. The management elements are included in the Action Plan in section 4 below and realising the benefits simply requires a slight change of approach in how the site is maintained in the future.

6.13 Commercial Activity

Weymouth Tennis Club already lease a site within Radipole Park and Gardens.

The project enables the creation of a new café facility in the park which will bring significant benefits. Consultation shows that a café and toilet facilities are the most requested improvements to the site. By providing this facility more people will be attracted to the site and will stay longer. The café has also been designed to incorporate orientation information and interpretation for the site. More details of this are given in the Interpretation Plan and Activity Plan.

The café will operate as a concession in line with other similar operations in other parks. A full business plan for the café has been written and attached to the Parks for People application. The café will be let on a full repairing and maintenance contract. The exception is the area of visitor information and interpretation, the maintenance requirements for this are included in the Action Plan (section 4).

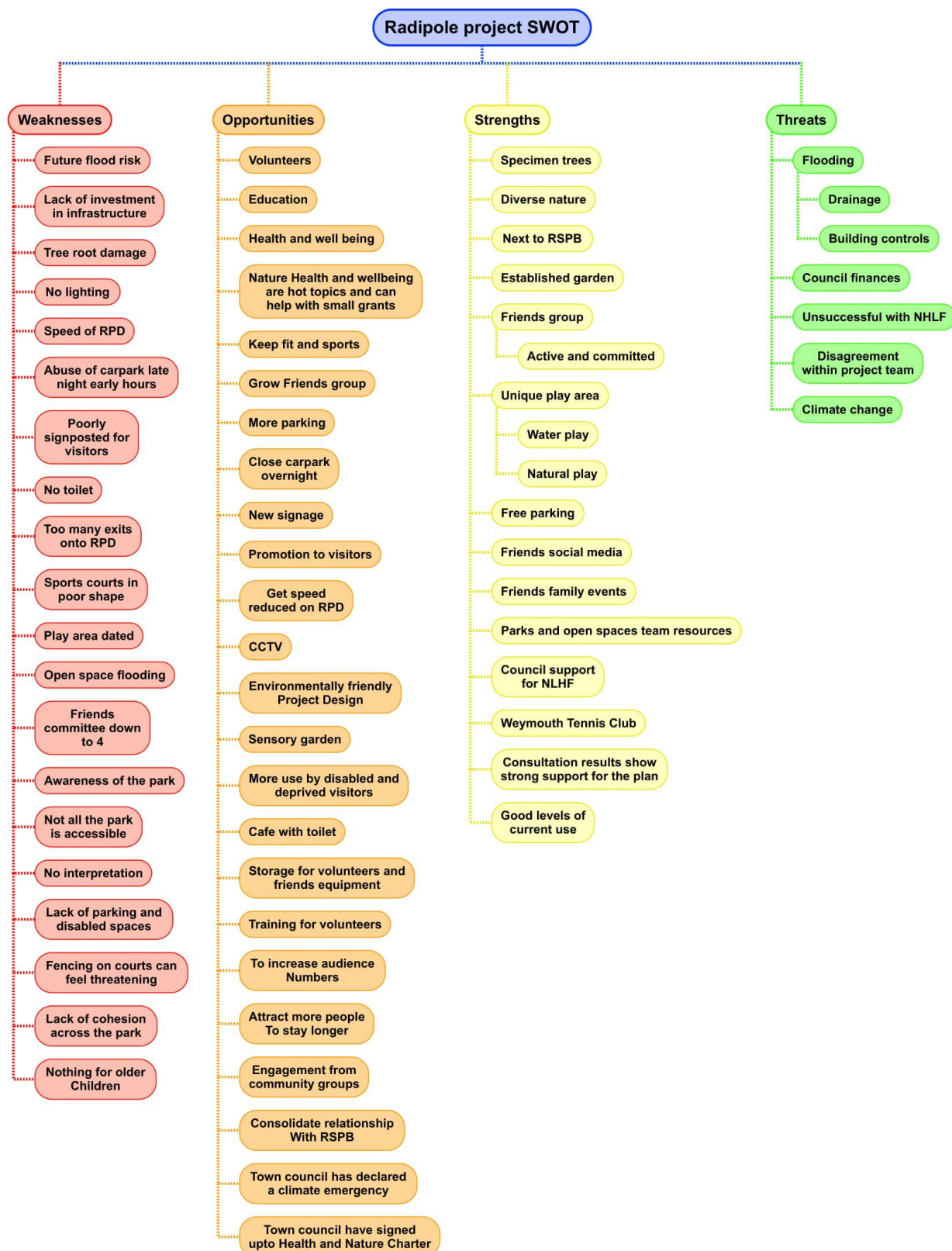
Income from the café lease will be ringfenced and used to support any additional maintenance costs resulting from the project. More details on this are given in Section 4. A full Business Plan for the café is included with the Round 2 application.

6.14 Risk

A risk table for the project is included as Appendix 4. It will be treated as a dynamic document which will be used to monitor and assess risk throughout project delivery and operation. The project team will review risk at monthly meetings. An early warning system will also be put in place with the landscape architect and architect flagging up potential risks to the project manager as and when they arise.

On completion of the capital work the risk table will be comprehensively reviewed with the project team to inform the risk for the operational phase and beyond.

The Project has been informed by the risks identified in the Conservation Plan and the findings of the KMC and Dorset Wildlife Trust reports. Project development has responded to a SWOT analysis undertaken by the Project team:



7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The main improvements to Radipole Park and Gardens come from capital investment in upgrading and improving facilities rather than a requirement for additional maintenance input. The Park already has a full-time gardener and maintenance schedule (see Appendix 1) which will continue to remain relevant and applicable to the ongoing care of the Park following project completion. There will be some augmentation of work with the expansion of some areas (e.g. new paths, planting etc) but in the main the maintenance requirements will not significantly increase and any increase will be primarily addressed through the appointment of a horticultural apprentice and additional volunteer involvement (sensory garden and orchard). Any increased costs have been detailed in the Income and Expenditure forecast in Section 5.1, together with information on how these will be met.

The Management and Maintenance Plan retains focus on the overarching aims of the project and seeks to address them through the following objectives:

AIM	OBJECTIVE
To ensure that Radipole Park and Gardens delivers as a high quality, inclusive recreational facility for the general public, encouraging greater community engagement and reducing anti-social behaviour	<p>Redesign and development of the car park to design out anti-social behaviour and incorporate provision for disabled parking and minibus drop off</p> <p>Improve appearance and welcome at key pedestrian and vehicular accesses to the Park</p> <p>Redeveloped play area to offer high quality accessible, creative, natural play opportunities.</p> <p>Redesign of sports provision to upgrade facilities and meet identified community need</p> <p>Introduction of path through recreation area joining northern entrance with rest of the park so making the whole park accessible.</p> <p>Provision of toilet and refreshment facilities to meet the needs of diverse users including those whose access to the park is currently restricted by lack of facilities.</p> <p>Introduction of interpretation and participatory activities to encourage greater engagement.</p> <p>Better marketing and promotion of the park, events, volunteering opportunities and Friends opportunities.</p> <p>Overall improvements to the appearance and condition of the park thereby raising perceived value, civic pride and reducing risk of anti-social behaviour</p>
To enable diverse audiences to learn more about the park as a natural resource through the provision of both formal and informal learning opportunities	<p>Introduction of new interpretation and structured activities programme – see Activity Plan for details</p> <p>Consolidate relationships with local schools, including specialist schools, to support greater</p>

	engagement with the park
To provide opportunities for people to engage with the natural environment and to enable varied health and wellbeing benefits	<p>Increase volunteering opportunities and implement volunteer plan</p> <p>Work with sector specialist partners to increase opportunities for benefits within nature, health and well being</p> <p>Incorporate nature, health and wellbeing and themes informing the events and activities programme</p> <p>Provide staff and volunteers with training to support engagement opportunities</p> <p>Better promote engagement opportunities both generally and within targeted sectors relating to nature, health and wellbeing</p>
To conserve and enhance the biodiversity and landscape value of Radipole Park and Gardens	<p>Introduce new mowing and hedge trimming practices to enhance biodiversity in line with the recommendations of the Dorset Wildlife Trust reports</p> <p>Introduce additional bat/bird boxes, bug hotels and habitats to encourage wildlife</p> <p>Fill gaps and improve all boundary and hedge planting</p> <p>Selective removal of self-set trees and rejuvenation of shrub and tree planting</p> <p>Increase ornamental shrubs in line with the historic planting rationale identified in the Conservation Plan</p> <p>Ensure that all new planting uses species which are sympathetic to the designed landscape, resilient to future climatic conditions and low intensity in terms of natural resources.</p> <p>Augment the wildflower planting and encourage self-seeding through maintenance practices</p> <p>Increase planting in recreational area</p> <p>Sensitive redesign of northern end of the park to improve landscape value</p> <p>Better monitor and record biodiversity to evaluate success and review practices to enhance constant improvement</p>
To promote and conserve the historical and	Support ongoing research and collate findings to

cultural heritage associated with Radipole Park and Gardens	<p>make them accessible to the public through online research and partnership working with Weymouth Museum and Dorset History Centre</p> <p>Deliver a range of interpretation and associated events which share the historical and cultural heritage of the Park and promoted a better understanding of its significance</p>
To offer opportunities for people and organisations to get involved in the operation of Radipole Park and Gardens	<p>Implement the volunteer plan to clearly articulate the volunteering opportunities and ensure fit for purpose management and support</p> <p>Continuously review volunteering to create a range of opportunities which meet the needs of different interest groups and the availability of volunteers</p> <p>Provide structured training and support and ongoing evaluation of volunteering to ensure best practice</p> <p>Activity encourage participation by liaising with local interest and community groups, including the Friends</p>
To improve accessibility and offer inclusive opportunities to currently underrepresented groups, including those who suffer from mental and physical disabilities	<p>Provision of toilet and refreshment facilities to meet the needs of diverse users including those whose access to the park is currently restricted by lack of facilities.</p> <p>Redesign and development of the car park to design out anti-social behaviour and incorporate provision for disabled parking and minibus drop off</p> <p>Ensure the park is accessible to all and that design of any new elements is inclusive</p> <p>Engage local community groups to help inform design decisions and offer feedback on the accessibility of all aspects of the park</p> <p>Improve the marketing and promotion of the park to underrepresented groups</p> <p>Ensure the programme of events and activities is inclusive and offers opportunities to engage with underrepresented groups</p> <p>Consult with key groups to ensure that interpretation is accessible</p> <p>Provide training for all staff and volunteers to enable them to support engagement with all audiences</p> <p>Ensure volunteering opportunities are inclusive and the needs of all user groups are considered</p>

To ensure financial and environmental sustainability and meet all legal and other obligations	<p>Ensure that the project is well rooted within Weymouth Town Council and subject to expert financial, environmental and legal scrutiny and support</p> <p>Implement an active review and evaluation process to ensure the project delivers against its aims and that the Park and team responsible for it continually seeks to improve and enhance their activities</p> <p>Regularly monitor income and expenditure to ensure financial sustainability</p> <p>Keep abreast of environmental developments and ensure that all decisions include an environmental impact assessment</p> <p>Submit annual application to the Green Flag scheme to achieve Green Flag status</p> <p>Review Management and Maintenance Plan on an annual basis</p>

a. Changes to current management and maintenance

On the whole, as the facilities within the park are not being significantly increased, the current maintenance schedule will remain relevant as detailed in Appendix 1. There will be some restructure of sports courts with the removal of some tennis provision and the addition of table tennis but these should not substantially increase the workload for the current grounds staff. There will be a drive to increase the level of maintenance in the park in order to maintain the highest standard to meet Green Flag requirements but the additional resources required for this will be met through the appointment of a full time apprentice to support the current full time gardener working in Radipole Park and Gardens. This additional resource will also help counter additional maintenance requirements due to increased numbers of people using the Park.

The sensory garden is a new facility within the park but the maintenance of this will be primarily undertaken by the Friends through teams of volunteers. They will have ad hoc access to support from the Radipole gardener as and when required. These volunteer teams will be managed and trained in line with the Volunteer programme of the Activities Plan. Initial introductory training will be provided by garden designer Michelle Brown. The volunteer programme will be implemented by the Activity Officer, it will be relatively well established by the end of the project and will continue to be coordinated by the Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer on an ongoing basis.

The café is also a new facility but, in line with Weymouth Town Council policy, it will be leased on a full repairing lease. Maintenance of the interpretation within the café comes within the responsibility of the Activity Officer, reverting to the Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer, as detailed below.

The play area will be upgraded and new equipment introduced, however the maintenance and safety checking of this will be comparable to the current maintenance schedule. The main difference will be the introduction of water play and the requirements for this are detailed in the table

below. A selection of relatively low-tech water play equipment has been selected with maintenance in mind.

The significant change in management of the park will be the increased involvement of volunteers and the implementation of a new structured programme of interpretation, activities and events. Details of this are given in the Activity Plan as will be managed by the Activity Officer as above.

Details of changes to the future management and maintenance of the park are given below:

Item funded by NLHF	Action	When	Whom
Recreation field	Once capital works completed maintenance of the field should revert to current practice with the exception of recommendations for the maintenance of the wetter northern section of the field to support biodiversity and ecology outcomes as detailed in DWT reports. Review of waterlogging of field	Annual	Grounds staff Grounds staff, Parks and Open Spaces Manager Ground staff
All entrances	Check to ensure remain clear and in good state of repair to welcome visitors and provide safe entry/exit to park	Monthly with regular informal monitoring as part of routine park maintenance	Grounds staff
Water play	Recommissioning of system following shut down over winter months Check all outlets and equipment	Annual Weekly	Specialist contractor/ grounds staff Grounds staff
Hedge around play area	Routine summer trim More significant hedge trim back to agreed level	Fortnightly or as required Annual	Grounds staff Grounds staff
Boundary and other hedges	Review maintenance schedule in line with DWT biodiversity and ecology recommendations including maintaining longer grass in proximity to hedges and building up identified hedges	As detailed in maintenance schedule – review scope of individual task	Grounds staff
Wildflower meadow	Follow recommendations of DWT reports as above for maintenance of area	As above	Grounds staff
Table tennis	Check condition, clean as required	Check fortnightly Clean annually	Grounds staff

Item funded by NLHF	Action	When	Whom
Car parks	Assessment of condition and repair as required	Monthly	Grounds staff
	Weed removal on surface	4 per year	Grounds staff
	Top up wearing course (no compaction required)	Annually	Grounds staff/contractor
New path to north of park	Fallen leaves and debris to be removed and paths swept in line with maintenance schedule	Daily	Grounds staff
	Weed removal on path surface	4 per year	Grounds staff
	Top up wearing course, roll and compact	Localised repairs as required Full maintenance annually	Grounds staff/contractor
Sensory garden	Volunteer teams to maintain beds and planting	Fortnightly	Volunteers/Friends/Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
	Structures and hard landscaping to be checked for damage and repaired as required	Fortnightly	Volunteers/Friends – support from Grounds staff/specialist contractors as required
	Deep clean all structure, repaint/treat where required	Annual	Volunteers/Friends – support from Grounds staff/specialist contractors as required
Interpretation boards and signage	Check condition and make minor repairs as required	Fortnightly	Grounds staff
	Clean with brush, detergent and warm water	Two per year	Grounds staff
	Minor content refresh	Annually	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
	Major content refresh	After five years	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
Café interpretation and discovery table	Check condition and make minor repairs, restock as required	Weekly	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer (in liaison with café operator to ensure always well presented)
	Clean all surfaces with damp cloth and tidy	Fortnightly	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer as above

Item funded by NLHF	Action	When	Whom
	Minor content refresh	Annually with bigger refresh after 3 years	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
	Major content refresh	Year six	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
Heritage Trail	Check condition and make minor repairs as required Clean with brush, detergent and warm water	Fortnightly Two per year	Grounds staff Grounds staff
	Major content review	Year six	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
Orienteering	Check condition and make minor repairs as required Clean with brush, detergent and warm water	Fortnightly Two per year	Grounds staff Grounds staff
	Major content review	Year six	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
Scavenger hunt	Reprint and restock	Weekly	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
	Review content, usage and redesign as required	Annually	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
Sensory story and box	Check condition of box, repair/replace as required	Two per year	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer
Volunteer recruitment , induction and management	Regular meetings to discuss progress and agree next steps Induction rolled out as required	Every two months	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer, Friends, volunteer team leaders
Volunteer training	Roll out as required Review training provision, content and uptake to inform design of next phase	Annually	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer, Friends, volunteer team leaders
Event programming and delivery	Regular meetings to coordinate programme	Every two months	Parks and Open Spaces Development Officer, Friends, partners as appropriate
	Review of all activities and planning for next phase Roll out as required	Annually	As above

5.2 Income and expenditure – 10 YEARS AFTER COMPLETION

The table below gives a 10-year forecast for the changes to income and expenditure over the current Weymouth Town Council Parks and Open Spaces budget. Year 1 is assumed to be the first year after completion of capital works and therefore activity costs will still be covered by the Parks for People project budget. The forecast is calculated on the basis that an additional £1000 is allocated annually to Radipole Park and Gardens from the Parks and Open Spaces Budget. With the exception of event income, café income and upgrades to interpretation content all figures show a standard 3% annual inflationary increase.

INCOME	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
In kind support from full time gardener										
In kind support from full time horticultural apprentice										
In kind support from Friends and volunteers in the maintenance of the orchard and sensory garden										
Ad hoc support from WTC grounds maintenance team										
Income from partner to support events	500	500	550	550	600	600	650	650	700	700
Uplift in WTC budget specifically allocated to Radipole	1000	1030	1061	1093	1126	1159	1194	1230	1267	1305
Café income	8000	8000	10000	10300	10609	10927	11255	11593	11941	12299
TOTAL	9500	9530	11611	11943	12335	12687	13099	13473	13907	14304
EXPENDITURE	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
General maintenance of all areas as identified in Appendix 1 is covered by the in kind support as above										
Additional hedge trimming around play area to be covered by in kind support as above										
Car park surface maintenance - top up wearing course annually	0	1000	1030	1061	1093	1126	1159	1194	1230	1267
Car park surface maintenance - weeding 4 times per year	1000	1030	1061	1093	1126	1159	1194	1230	1267	1305
Maintenance of new path to include top up wearing course and rolling as required	0	1000	1030	1061	1093	1126	1159	1194	1230	1267
Maintenance of new path - weeding and localised repairs	1000	1030	1061	1093	1126	1159	1194	1230	1267	1305

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Maintenance of table tennis facility covered by in kind support as above - although this is a new facility it replaced previous tennis courts and so will require comparably levels of maintenance										
Water charges for new play equipment based on an initial cost of £40 per week over 30 weeks per year	1200	1236	1273	1311	1351	1391	1433	1476	1520	1566
Annual recommissioning charge for water play	250	258	265	273	281	290	299	307	317	326
Removal of graffiti on new equipment - allowance for annual purchase of product and application as required	50	52	53	55	56	58	60	61	63	65
Sensory garden maintenance - allowance for replacement/repair of hand tools and other equipment	0	500	515	530	546	563	580	597	615	633
Sensory garden planting - allowance for occasional replacement of plants, seeds, compost etc	0	500	515	530	546	563	580	597	615	633
Activities - printing, promotion	0	300	309	318	328	338	348	358	369	380
Activities - event budget as detailed in Activity Plan	0	2500	2575	2652	2732	2814	2898	2985	3075	3167
Volunteer training and development	0	500	515	530	546	563	580	597	615	633
Maintenance of new interpretation - general cleaning and minor repair/maintenance	0	100	103	106	109	113	116	119	123	127
Upgrade to interpretation content	0	0	1000	0	0	5000	0	0	1000	0
Maintenance and replacement of worn elements of discovery table	0	50	52	53	55	56	58	60	61	63
Maintenance and replacement of worn elements of sensory story, photobook and other small-scale activities	0	50	52	53	55	56	58	60	61	63
TOTAL	3500	10105	11408	10720	11042	16373	11714	12066	13428	12801
Profit	6000	-575	203	1222	1293	-3687	1385	1407	479	1503
Balance	6000	5425	5628	6850	8143	4456	5841	7247	7727	9229

8 Monitoring and evaluation

The Management and Maintenance Plan (MMP) will be adopted by Weymouth Town Council as part of the suite of documents comprising the National Lottery Heritage Fund Parks for People Round 2 application.

The MMP will be implemented and reviewed annually. A more extensive review and revision of the MMP will take place every five years.