

## Wirral Council

### Community Services Department Parks and Countryside Service

# Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve

## Management Plan

2023 - 2028



<b>Management Plan written by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Carl Davies	24/01/2023
<b>Management Plan updated &amp; authorised by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Carl Davies	16/01/2024

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## Introduction

The plan is intended to provide a framework for the development and improvement of Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR. If you wish to find out further information about this document or submit any suggestions, please contact the **Parks and Countryside Service** at Wirral Council on telephone number **0151 606 2004** or report the problem on the website [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk) or write to:

**Wirral Council,  
Neighbourhood Services  
Parks & Countryside Service,  
Wirral Council  
Wallasey Town Hall  
Brighton Street  
Wallasey  
CH44 8ED**

### 1.1 purpose and scope of the plan

The prime purpose of this *Management Plan* is to ensure that the future upkeep and management of the park will sustain, and continue to improve on, the quality of the park and the facilities it offers.

This *Plan* covers the period from 2023-2028 and will be reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.

The *Plan* is prepared for all those who use, manage or who might have an interest in the park, either now or in the future., it will continue to be subject to discussion and review with key stakeholders, including park users.

Email: [carldavies@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:carldavies@wirral.gov.uk) or [stephensmith1@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:stephensmith1@wirral.gov.uk)

## The Wider Policy Context

Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside Service are based within the Neighbour Services Department of Wirral Council.

The content and structure of the Management Plan has been informed by the following guidelines:

A Guide to Producing Park and Green Space Management Plans (CABE Space, 2004)

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20110118095356/http://www.cabe.org.uk/files/parks-and-green-space-management-plans.pdf>

Raising the Standard: The Green Flag Awards Guidance Manual (Keep Britain Tidy, 2016) [www.greenflagaward.org/media/1019/green-flag-award-guidelines.pdf](http://www.greenflagaward.org/media/1019/green-flag-award-guidelines.pdf)

## 1.1. Corporate Objectives

The Council's Vision is that Wirral will be a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, where employers want to invest and local businesses thrive, and where good health and an excellent quality of life is within the reach of everyone who lives here.

The Wirral Plan agreed by cabinet in September 2021 sets out a series of pledges which the Council and its partners will work to achieve by 2026 focussing on 5 key themes:

- Inclusive Economy
- Safe and Pleasant Communities
- Sustainable Environment
- Brighter futures
- Active and healthy lives

The Wirral 2021-26 plan is available to download online:

<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50080601/Appendix%201%20Wirral%20Plan%202021-26.pdf>

## 1.2. Parks and Countryside Service Objectives

The department's role is to protect the environmental quality of key locations across the borough for all local people, communities, and visitors to enjoy and to influence investors to operate their businesses and encourage new investors. Parks and countryside site maintenance and land uses will be re-aligned where appropriate to achieve resource and economic efficiencies whilst promoting health, social and environmental benefits to our communities.

The Parks and Countryside Service have produced a 10-year Parks and Open Spaces Strategy that will inform and direct the next 10 years for the service (running from 2014-2024). It is available online at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Leisure%20parks%20and%20events/parks%20and%20open%20spaces/Wirral%20Parks%20and%20Open%20Spaces%20Strategy%202014-2024.pdf>

The Strategy sets out how Wirral Parks and Countryside Service will aim to provide attractive and well managed parks and open spaces, whilst being accessible; and providing positive and healthy activities for all local people, communities, and visitors to enjoy and to attract and retain investment in the borough. The service also intends to contribute to the environmental sustainability and biodiversity of Wirral to achieve a good balance by protecting habitats while supporting economic growth.

## 1. Environmental Initiatives

Wirral Council is committed to carrying out its work in an environmentally responsible manner.

Wirral Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency at Council in July 2019 and through this committed to action to address the ecological and climate crisis that we face.

The commitment to action aims to:

- cut climate damaging pollution locally in line with global targets, whilst developing resilience to more extreme weather patterns and rising sea levels that impact Wirral
- protect and enhance biodiversity

As a local authority, we can have a positive influence through:

- how we organise our operations and services
- the regulations and policies we set
- the goods and services we buy
- the investments we make
- the example we set to others.

Tackling the ecological and climate crisis presents major opportunities locally to improve quality of life, health, wellbeing and the economy.

More information on the Climate Emergency Declaration maybe found at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability>

To deliver against these aims Wirral Has developed 'Cool Wirral'. The Cool Wirral campaign is aimed at encouraging local climate-related action in support of the delivery of the 'Cool 2 Climate Change Strategy for Wirral: -

[View Wirral Council's Cool 2 climate strategy and progress reports](#)

The Cool Wirral Partnership (formerly the Wirral Climate Change Group) co-ordinates local action on climate change. The partnership is supported by Wirral Council and a variety of partnership.

More information on the Cool Wirral Partnership maybe found at:

[https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/cool-wirral#:~:text=The%20Cool%20Wirral%20Partnership%20\(formerly,Wirral%20Partnership%20NHS%20Foundation%20Trust](https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/cool-wirral#:~:text=The%20Cool%20Wirral%20Partnership%20(formerly,Wirral%20Partnership%20NHS%20Foundation%20Trust)

Some key initiatives include: -

### **Designating Pollinators and wildflower sites**

A large proportion of pollinators are flies, including more than 250 species of hoverfly. Bees make up about a quarter of the pollinating insects and in the UK alone there are approximately 250 species of bee, 24 species of bumblebee, 225 species of solitary bee and just one species of honeybee. Butterflies and moths are also pollinators as well as bugs and beetles.

In line with the council's Climate Emergency Response, steps are being taken to prioritise pollinators. Dependant on the location of a verge, pollinators are prioritised in various ways, these methods can include:

- planting pollinator friendly plants
- not mowing grass verges when wildflowers of significance are in season
- reduced weed removal around pollinator sights

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/environmental-problems/street-care-and-cleaning/pollinators-and-wildflower-sites>

### **No Mow May**

Throughout the month of May, the council takes part in the [No Mow May campaign](#), which is about stopping mowing in general grass areas in parks to help bees, butterflies and wildlife.

### **Trees, hedgerows and woodland**

The council have been working with partners and stakeholders to develop a 10-year strategy to consider how we manage and respond to the borough's current trees and the future provision of trees. In the ten-year span of this strategy over 210,000 trees will be planted, at least 21,000 per year. In doing so we will replace many times over the number of trees unavoidably lost. The trees that are planted will see Wirral's tree canopy cover doubled by the time they are fully grown.

We will adopt the principle of 'the right tree for the right place' to ensure the most resilient tree population possible. We will establish a clear picture of Wirral's tree stock and its benefits. We will work constructively with individuals and groups to deliver this vision.

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/trees-hedgerows-and-woodland>



## Site information

**Name:** Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR

**Primary Classification:** Major Park and nature reserve

**Primary purpose:**

Intensively managed semi-natural park of greater than local significance, providing accessible, high-quality opportunities for formal and informal recreation, children's play including community events. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

**Grid Reference:** SJ 340 823

**Address:** Ranger's Office, Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR, Woodslee Cottages, Spital Road, Bromborough, Wirral, CH62 2BJ

<https://what3words.com/eager.fruit.polite>

**Ward:** Bromborough, Clatterbridge

**Size:** 54.8 ha

**Green Flag award scheme winner:** 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

**Location plan:**



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## **4.2 Site overview:**

Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR is an area of semi-natural countryside along the valley of the river Dibbin. It is a popular area for informal recreation, providing a calm and characterful retreat for the surrounding urban conurbations of Spital and Bromborough.

The reserve acts as a gateway to the wider countryside of mid-Wirral, with popular footpaths leading through the site to the rural villages of Raby Mere, Thornton Hough and Brimstage.

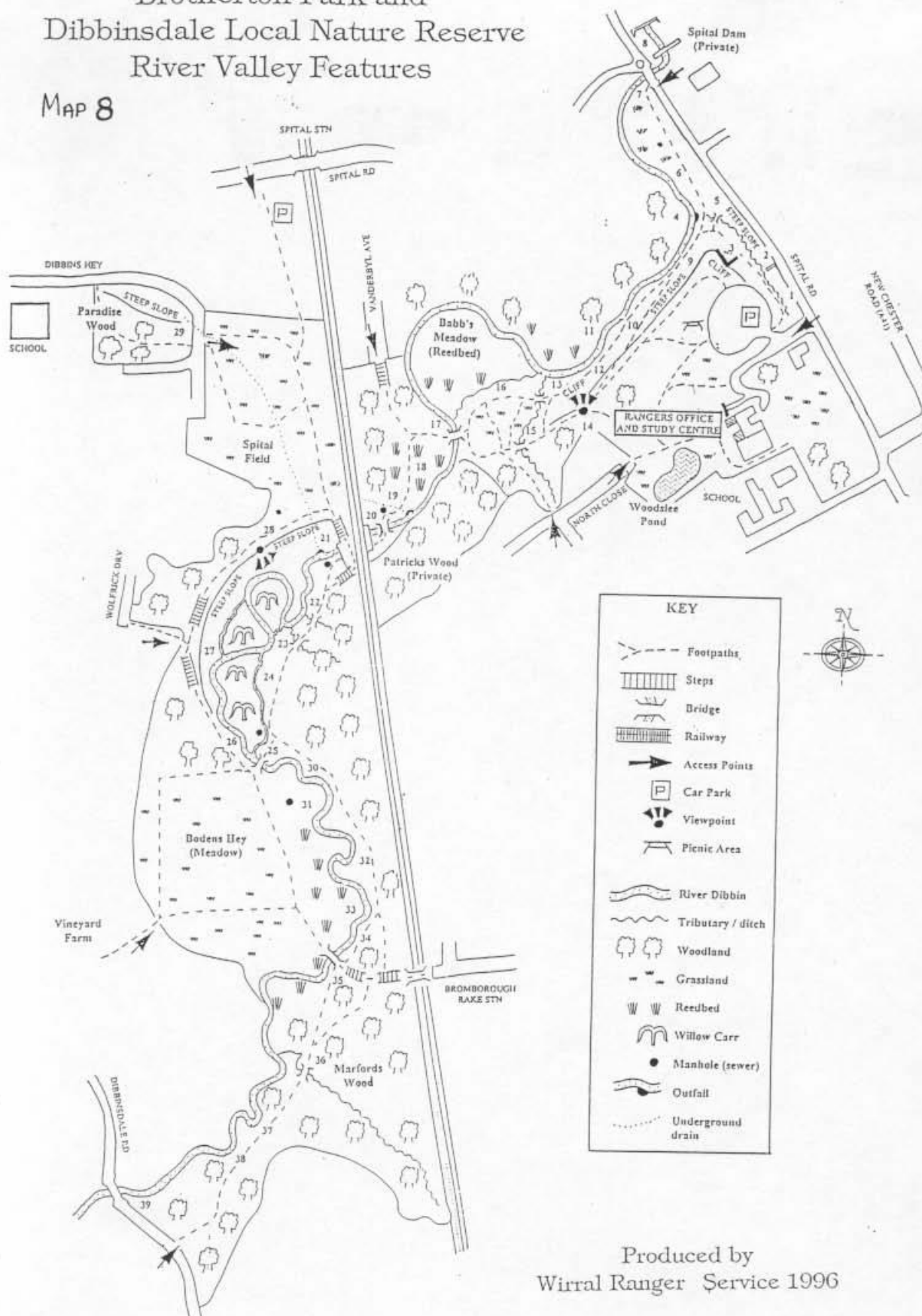
The valley woodland is the largest and one of the finest examples of ancient woodland on Merseyside. The site also boasts that it has one of the Queens Jubilee green canopies which is one of only 70 created in the country.

The Ranger's Office and Brotherton Nature Centre are situated around a pleasant courtyard at Woodslee Cottages, with public toilets available when the Ranger is on site. There is a walled garden with a nursery for trees and wildflowers, an organic garden, composting demonstration area and an outdoor classroom. There are interpretive displays about the history and wildlife of the area.

The nature reserve provides an attractive and stimulating environment for educational visits.

# Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve River Valley Features

MAP 8



#### **4.3 Facilities and features:**

- Picturesque river valley
- Former grounds of Brotherton Park includes ornamental tree-planting
- Significant area of flora and fauna-rich semi-natural woodland including SSSI ancient wood
- Habitat diversity
- Fishing pond
- Ranger's office, volunteer base
- Visitor centre with public toilet
- Walled garden with organic vegetable garden and composting facility and an outdoor classroom.

#### **4.4 Tenure and concession agreements:**

The park is owned and managed by the Parks and Countryside Service of Wirral Council's Community Services Department with the following exceptions:

Otter's tunnel is the property of Railtrack and is licensed to Wirral Council, with permissive access through the tunnel. All the remaining land on the site is the freehold property of the Council. There are 7 Rights of Way through the site.

Numbers 1-5 Woodslee Cottages and the Lodge at the entrance from Spital Road are in private ownership. The remaining buildings at Woodslee Cottages, comprising the Rangers office, information centre, tool store and mess room are the freehold property of Wirral Council.

#### **Access:**

Several of the main paths through the site are designated Rights of Way (Footpaths 29, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56 and 58).

The path through Otter Bridge tunnel is by licence from Railtrack.

All other paths through the site are across land which is the freehold property of Wirral Council. Within the valley, access is limited by terrain and by the width of paths and bridges to small off-road vehicles.

The main visitor access points are at:

- Spital Road (Main car park at Woodslee)
- Spital Station
- Bromborough Rake Station
- Vanderbyll Avenue
- Dibbins Hey

Minor visitor access points are situated at:

- Croft Avenue/Spital Road
- North Close
- Wolfrick Drive
- Spital Fields
- Vineyard Farm
- Central Avenue

Vehicle access points (works vehicles only):

- Spital Road
- Spital Dam
- Spital field
- Wolfrick Drive
- Central Avenue

#### **Public transport:**

The main Liverpool to Chester railway line runs through the site and there is access from Bromborough Rake Station and Spital Station directly into the reserve.

Regular bus services operate near to all main access entrances.

See [www.merseytravel.gov.uk](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk) for bus times and routes.

#### **Summary of the known challenges:**

The site is on the urban fringe and attracts associated problems of misuse.

The site is in a steep-sided river valley which constrains access for visitors and maintenance vehicles.

It is a river floodplain with limited space for flood storage. Flooding can affect the longevity of footpaths, bridges and revetments

In the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) the nature interest of the site must be balanced with public amenity.

## **Summary of main uses**

#### **Main activities**

- Ranger led school visits/ education resource centre
- Forest School delivery
- Walled garden community engagement centre
- Walking
- Bird watching
- Dog walking
- Events & guided walks
- Volunteer opportunities
- A quiet area for informal recreation
- Fishing

## History

In the 1840's, a high steep embankment was constructed across the valley to carry the Birkenhead to Chester railway. The Otter Bridge tunnel was built to carry the path and river beneath the railway.

Prior to 1866, most of the land to the East of the railway was either natural or in agricultural use. In 1866, much of this land was purchased by Mr R Rankin of Bromborough, who created the Woodslee estate and converted the land into gardens and parkland. The estate was sold in 1919 to Sir Edward Allen Brotherton of Wakefield, for use as a chemical research laboratory.

The laboratory was never built and instead, he converted the buildings into flats and cottages for his key staff and the grounds into a sports club.

One resident of the house was a Mr J H Wilson who was the Chief Chemist at the Brotherton Works. His son, Harold Wilson was one of the first sixth form pupils at Wirral Grammar School and went on to become Prime Minister.

In 1928, Bebington Corporation purchased land adjacent to the river from Spital Park Estates for a proposed sewerage scheme which never materialised. In 1930, Sir Edward Allen Brotherton donated part of his estate to the Corporation for use as a public park. This land and the area purchased in 1928 became known as Brotherton park. In 1950 the remainder of the Woodslee estate was sold to the Corporation and incorporated into the park. Woodslee House was demolished but the staff cottages and their tenants remained. The land was managed as an urban park until 1981 when the Parks Service made the decision to manage it as a site for nature conservation.

In 1930, a large area of land West of the railway was also purchased, from Mr G A Lancelyn-Green, to extend the area of the public park. A licence agreement was drawn up with the owners of the railway, for access through Otter Bridge tunnel. This land consisted mostly of natural woodland and wetland, with areas of meadow grassland and has been kept in this form.

In 1963, Bebington corporation acquired a wooded tributary valley of the Dibbin, West of the railway, between Dibbins Hey and Otter Bridge tunnel. The valley was used as a municipal rubbish tip, with further land being acquired for this purpose in 1972. When tipping ended in the late 1970s, the area was landscaped and managed as a recreation area with a football pitch and a 'trim trail' and renamed Spital field. During the late 1970s and early 1980's, thousands of trees were planted for landscaping and to re-create the woodland corridor which had been lost. A small copse of mature trees and some individual mature trees are all that remain of the original woodland.

The head of the tributary valley remains however, cut off by Dibbins Hey Road and a steep embankment.

St. Patrick's Well is a natural spring line from the sandstone outcrop, beneath which an artificial well has been cut. It is likely to have been one of several springs used by the local population until the middle of the 19th century. The well is reputed to have been blessed by St. Patrick in 432 AD. Patrick's Wood, a Cheshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve adjacent to the site, also bears his name. There is a separate management plan for this site.

It is possible that the woodland on steeper slopes has survived intact since 'ancient' times due to its inaccessibility, although there is likely to have been some small-scale woodland management. Shallower slopes are thought to have been cleared at an early date for arable farming, grazing or hay production. The absence of tree cover on Boden's Hey indicates that it has been used for grazing or hay production in recent history, prior to its first hay cut under Wirral Council management in 1986. There is documented and photographic evidence that the reedbeds were used as grazing meadows until the early 1900s.

### **Past management**

Prior to the introduction of 2 full time Rangers in 1981, when plans were drawn up for the improvement of access and introduction of habitat management, the various parts of the site were mostly maintained in the form in which they were acquired, although many ornamental trees had been planted throughout the site. Brotherton Park was formally laid out as parkland, with lawns, shrubberies and ornamental trees. After 1981, some of the mown areas of grassland were encouraged to develop into meadows and the gradual removal of sycamores and rhododendron began.

On Spital field, thousands of trees were planted for landscaping, particularly adjacent to the new housing and to re-create the woodland corridor. Clearance of rubbish from the face of the tip continued throughout the 1980s.

Control of sycamores in the ancient woodland areas was carried out on a small scale and rotational cutting of Babbs Meadow reedbed was introduced.

In 1986, meadow management was reintroduced on Boden's Hey. Throughout the site, access improvements were carried out, including the construction of raised walkways through Otter Bridge tunnel and the wetland areas.

Access around Woodslee Pond was upgraded, and new fishing platforms and wildfowl nesting islands constructed. Work also began on renovating the walled garden at Woodslee.



## Natural heritage

### Designations:

- Dibbinsdale SSSI
- Local Nature reserve

### Environmental Stewardship:

The reedbeds and meadows and Woodland are the subject of a Countryside Stewardship agreement. These parts of the site are managed under the terms of the agreement in consultation with Natural England. This agreement was renewed in 2014 and will run for ten years with a 5-year review option. Agreement No: AG00594553

### General information:

There are three main categories of habitat on site.

- 1) Wetland, including river channel, reedbeds, fen pasture, willow/alder carr and Woodsee pond.
- 2) Woodland, including ancient semi-natural woodland, ornamental parkland, plantation woodland and scrub.
- 3) Grassland, including semi-improved meadow and amenity grassland.

The following habitats at the park are Section 41 NERC Act 'Habitats of Principal Importance in England'

Reedbeds

Ancient woodland

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

Wet woodland

Unimproved grassland

Rivers

Hedgerows

**Refer to appendix I) Conservation management plan**

## Resources available

- Parks, Countryside & Allotments General Manager
- Site Based Ranger (part time)
- Vehicles: one small all-terrain vehicle
- Occasional use of a van and trailer or van
- A range of hand and mechanical maintenance tools
- Visiting grounds maintenance staff and equipment
- Visiting arboriculture team
- Annual operating revenue budget
- Volunteers and community groups
- Friends Group
- Footpaths officer has a limited amount of funding for Rights of Way through the site
- Grants and donations



## Green Flag criteria and assessment

The intention is for the park to continue to meet the required standards as defined by the **Green Flag Award Scheme**; further details concerning the scheme can be found at <https://greenflagaward.org/>

The following Green Flag assessment criteria will be used as a focus for the development of the park.

- 1) A welcoming place
- 2) Healthy, safe and secure
- 3) Well maintained and clean
- 4) Environmental management
- 5) Biodiversity, landscape and heritage
- 6) Community involvement
- 7) Marketing and communication
- 8) Management

The recommendations made by the Green Flag Judges have been incorporated into the plan's Actions (Appendix d)

### 1. A welcoming place

Our aim is to make Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR a pleasant, safe and well managed place which sustains an ecologically diverse mosaic of habitats, where people can enjoy and contribute to the enhancement of nature and learn through their experiences without detracting from the wildlife interest of the site.

The reserve lies in Bromborough in a natural valley following the river Dibbin. There are several entrances offering access from all sides of the reserve. The park is serviced by surfaced footpaths, rustic steps, board walks bridges and causeways which extend throughout the reserve.

#### Public transport

Bus services operate to all the entrances of the reserve. The Chester to Liverpool railway line splits the reserve in two and offers easy access from two railway stations.

See [www.merseytravel.gov.uk](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk) and <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables> for timetables and routes for bus and train travel respectively.

Welcoming signs greet visitors at the main entrance points and there are picnic areas around the area near to the carpark and visitor centre with disabled access.

**Main entrances:  
Spital Road/Woodslee**

This is the main access for private residents and visitors. It is the only dedicated car park. The main drive is a shared access for both cars and pedestrians, so this has been mitigated by signage and a footpath which takes visitors by a safer route from the car park to the visitor centre.

There are 6 parking spaces adjacent to Woodslee Cottages – these are for staff and people with limited mobility.

There are 20 parking spaces in the main car park at Woodslee Cottages.

There is an information board in the car park and one outside the visitor centre that are kept up to date with information for visitors including details of forthcoming events and improvements to the park.

There are brown Signs on Spital Road directing visitors to the reserve.

**Visitor Centre and Walled Garden**

The main visitor facilities on the site are situated in the single storey buildings to the rear of Woodslee Cottages, close to the main entrance from Spital Road. The public buildings consist of a Rangers office, a visitor centre, mess room and storerooms. All of these are based around a public courtyard.

The visitor centre and walled garden is currently open to the public when there is a Ranger on duty and is used by school groups for short talks or during wet weather or for organised public talks and activities. The visitor centre has interpretative displays, information and toilet facilities. The Walled Garden is used for fund raising events and is on offer for private functions.

Events programmes and leaflets are available in the centre advertising the numerous walks and talks available, along with several displays and photographs charting the history, wildlife, geology and management of the area. Leaflets and other information are also available online at the Friends website at <https://www.dibbinsdale.co.uk/>

## **Spital Station**

There is access to the site via a footpath from Merseyrail's Spital Station carpark. There is a welcoming sign at the entrance to the pathway.

Entrance point at Spital Station



## **Bromborough Rake Station**

There is access directly into the reserve from the station platform at this point.

## **Vanderbyl Avenue**

Vanderbyl Avenue is close to Spital station and offers access to the reserve via a steep surfaced pathway leading to the reed beds and Babbs Meadow. There is an interpretation board near the entrance with a map of the reserve.

## Dibbins Hey

This entrance is off the main route through the Dibbins Hey housing estate.





## **2. Healthy, safe and secure**

### **Dog fouling**

The Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR is covered under the Fouling of Land Act 1996; this act makes it an offence not to clean up in a public area if a dog under your control does foul.

Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR has a free dog poo bag scheme which is sponsored by local businesses, there is a board/dispenser at the main carpark with an information panel.

Signs are provided at entrance points indicating the park is a 'clean it up' area at the entrances. Dog walkers are advised to wrap the droppings and place in a litterbin. Dog fouling is classified in law as litter for street cleaning purposes and can be disposed of correctly wrapped in Council litterbins consequently dedicated 'dog waste only' bins are not provided by the Council. Many dog walkers do use the park's litterbins for the disposal of removed faeces.

The whole of the Wirral Council area is designated under Dog Control Orders that implement section 55 and 56 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

For further information regarding dogs, visit:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/environmental-problems/street-care-and-cleaning/dog-fouling>

### **Anti-social behaviour**

Wirral Council's Community Patrol is established to provide a 24-hour response to any concerns notified to them regarding anti-social behaviour occurring within Council owned land. The Patrol provides a reactive response to calls from the public and Council staff, and they do undertake routine patrolling. Problems of a persistent or on-going nature however can be raised with the team. The Patrol can be contacted on telephone number 0151 666 5265.

Incident reports compiled by Wirral Council's Community Patrol are made available to the Parks and Countryside Service and are provided to the Area Parks Manager.

The gardens are covered by Byelaws, made under Section 164 of the Public Health Act, 1875.

Central Birkenhead including Hamilton Square has been designated an Alcohol-Free Zone.



## **Staff and Volunteer Health and Safety procedures**

The health and safety of staff and volunteers on site is covered by the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy. The policy is available for viewing on the Human Resources section of the Council intranet.

Risk assessments are carried out as needed and copies are kept at the Rangers office.

Health and Safety Committee meetings are held every three months by the Principal Officer (Parks Management). The meetings involve the Area Parks Management Team for each area, a Area Managers and Trades Union Health and Safety Representatives. Any issues arising can be dealt with at this meeting.

## **Maintenance of Buildings, equipment and landscape**

Pest management is delivered under contract with that service within the Department of Regeneration and complies with the required regulations.

Buildings are inspected as part of the site ranger's weekly checks and any issues are raised with the asset management department. The All-Terrain Vehicle and all powered equipment is maintained by the parks departments workshop. Hand tools are maintained by the site ranger. Paths fences and park furniture is inspected by the site ranger and removed, repaired or replaced as necessary.

## **Tree Inspections**

Potentially hazardous trees are identified by the Ranger as part of daily patrols and reported to the Area Manager, whereupon urgent safety work is carried out directly as needed by council staff or outside contractors.

Conservation and amenity tree work is carried out where resources allow, either by the site Ranger, volunteers under Ranger supervision, or by the operations teams as part of the winter works programme.

For details on council owned trees, please refer to the council's policy (Appendix n)

### **3. Well maintained and clean**

#### **Litter, cleanliness and vandalism**

Litterbins are sited at the main entrance and carpark and around the visitor centre and pond area. There is a litter bin at one other main entrance. To maintain the natural appeal of the reserve there is only one litter bin in the SSSI area of the reserve situated at a main junction. These bins are emptied weekly by the site ranger during the winter and more often in summer as visitor numbers increase. Some areas of the park suffer from continual littering that is difficult to contend with. To deal with the problem the Ranger has developed contacts with numerous individuals and members of the Friends group who have been issued with their own litter pickers and protective gloves. These volunteers are a good resource, helping to keep the site free from litter.

Site based Rangers undertake regular patrols and make good any minor maintenance issues as they arise. The Senior Area Ranger prepares a programme of 'winter-works' to be undertaken each year by the ground's maintenance team.

The Rangers carry out regular inspections to identify defects within the park that present a safety problem for users, staff and adjacent residents. The following items are appraised:

1. Paths, steps, ramps
2. Walls, fences, gates
3. Buildings
4. Furniture – signs, litterbins etc.
5. Soft landscape – grass, planted areas, water features etc.

Any damage resulting from vandalism on the site is identified and dealt with by these inspections. The reserve does not suffer from much damage caused by vandalism.

#### **Surfacing**

Most of the footpaths and associated revetments in the park were constructed in the 1980s in a scheme supported by Merseyside County Council and the Manpower Services Commission. The footpaths are now ageing and many need maintenance work or replacement. At time of writing, the repair of these paths is under review of the authorities' footpaths officer pending quotes and funding.

Surfacing and revetment of footpaths is an ongoing problem due to regular flooding in the valley. The flooding causes erosion and silting. Ongoing repairs mean that there is a mixture of styles and variation in quality around the site. An interpretation board in the reedbed area states that the paths are liable to seasonal flooding.

## **Trees**

Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside grounds maintenance team undertakes a programme of seasonal tree work related to tree safety and responds to emergencies.

Tree work related to woodland management and habitat management including thinning, removal of non-natives and coppicing is carried out by the site ranger with the help of volunteers and horticultural students.

Individual property owners who neighbour the site make occasional demands for tree pruning.

## **Signage**

The Council's rights of way officer who is employed in the Environment and Regulation Service provides signage for public rights of way.

There are information boards interpreting the major features of the site and helping with site navigation.

There is a self-guided trail around the site with numbered posts to aid navigation. A map is available from the Ranger's office and in noticeboards.

## **Graffiti and fly-tipping**

Offensive or racist graffiti is addressed as a priority, within 24 hours.

Fly-tipping shall be defined as any single quantity of tipped material that cannot be lifted by two members of staff and removed from the site. If tipped material can be lifted by two members of staff, it is deemed to be covered by the litter control clauses of this service requirement.

All instances of fly-tipping shall be reported to the Service Manager.

Some householders occasionally dispose of garden refuse over the boundary of the park. This problem is dealt with by the Site Ranger who corresponds with residents when incidents occur.

Occasional fly tipping in the carpark is promptly dealt with by ranger. The South District parks depot at Warren Farm lends support when there are large items to be removed.

#### **4. Environmental management**

Wirral parks and countryside team put sustainability at the heart of decision making and service delivery. Our key commitments are:

- Improve our sustainable performance
- Comply with environmental legislation
- Purchase sustainably
- Use natural resources sustainably
- Travel sustainably
- Minimise waste
- Manage land sustainability
- Raise Awareness
- Work in partnership

These key commitments are adhered to in all of Wirral Council's parks, including Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR.

For full details of the sustainability aims see Appendix o.

#### **Chemical use**

Herbicide usage is restricted to non-residual herbicide for the control of weed growth only when deemed necessary. Applications are only used to remove Japanese knotweed.

Chemical storage and usage comply with requirements as defined in the current herbicide handling legislation. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment records of all chemicals are retained at Warren Farm Depot.

#### **Waste Minimisation**

Waste handling within the Parks and Countryside Service is collected and deposited in designated skips and removed by Biffa.

Any waste timber or metals recovered are also separated for reuse/recycling at the Warren Farm depot.

Peat is not used in any capacity at the site.

#### **Energy Usage**

Water and energy consumption are monitored to minimise wastage and achieve economies in usage.

All-Terrain Vehicles, mowing equipment and power tools are regularly checked for emission levels and comply with the appropriate legislation.

## **Invasive Species Management**

There is a continued programme of management for the control of Himalayan balsam. Work is carried out yearly using contractors funded by stewardship payments and regular volunteers. This programme consists of cutting, strimming, pulling and in some areas flailing and does not use chemicals.

A small area of Japanese Knotweed has been identified in the reserve. They are treated by stem injection of herbicide by a fully qualified parks staff member with a NPTC PA61NJ licence, meaning that only the Knotweed is affected and doesn't affect surrounding plant life.

For the Wirral Councils policy on dealing with Japanese Knotweed see here:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/environmental-problems/street-care-and-cleaning/grass-cutting-and-ground-maintenance/wirral-council>

## **Climate Change Adaption**

Wirral Borough Council has a climate change adaption strategy, which has two main goals:

- to cut climate pollution associated with Wirral
- to adapt Wirral to unavoidable climate change

The strategy and yearly progress reports are available here:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability>

Water and energy consumption at the park is monitored and where necessary modification is made to minimise wastage, thereby achieving economies in usage in line with the Council's Environmental Policy and Carbon Reduction Programme.

Public transport is promoted in all site leaflets and on the Council's website.

There are numerous examples of good practice for sustainability on the site.

No peat is used at the park.

Green waste generated at the Walled Garden is composted. No green waste leaves the site. This minimises transport of waste and reduces the need to purchase materials elsewhere.

Coppicing takes place in the park as part of the woodland habitat management plan and some of this sustainable timber source is seasoned and used to heat the site office buildings. Coppiced timber is also used in Forest Schools sessions and traditional woodland craft demonstrations and courses.

## **5. Biodiversity, landscape and heritage**

### **Environmental Stewardship**

The reedbeds and meadows are the subject of a Countryside Stewardship agreement. These parts of the site are managed under the terms of the agreement in consultation with Natural England. This agreement was renewed in 2014 and will run for ten years with a 5-year review option. Agreement No: AG00594553

### **Designations**

Dibbinsdale SSSI

Part of the site is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. At the date of latest assessment by Natural England (March 2010), the condition of compartments 4 and 6 considered to be 'Unfavourable Recovering.' An action plan has been put in place to restore the condition of these compartments to Favourable condition.

Nature conservation and habitat management is carried out on site by the ranger and volunteers to a plan agreed and consented by Natural England. Please see the Nature Conservation Management Plan for the site (appendix e).

All the buildings at Woodslee Cottages both private and council owned are maintained in keeping with their original style. The area around Woodslee Cottages which lies outside the designated SSSI and forms the grounds of the former Woodslee House, and driveway are managed to balance the architectural heritage and natural heritage of the site.



## **6. Community involvement**

### **The role of community stakeholders**

Friends and community stakeholders are an integral part of the way the Council will take forward the Parks and Countryside Service.

In 2013 a new 'Parks and Countryside Partnership and Performance Board' was launched, with membership from a range of stakeholders. The Board meets on a quarterly cycle. Members receive, assess and provide feedback on reports about the performance of Wirral Parks and Countryside Service, measured against agreed performance standards and indicators from the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. The Board provides expert stakeholder input and advice to support the service and will participate in performance monitoring.

A Wirral Green and Open Space Strategy Key Stakeholder Workshop was held in 2013 to discuss the following topics: the ten-year vision; the future role of Council, Friends Groups, volunteers and other partners; and the health,

Education, environmental sustainability, biodiversity and economic benefits of Green and open spaces.

In September 2015 the Mayor of Wirral held a Civic Reception at the Town Hall in recognition of the efforts and contribution made by the friends and community groups on behalf of the Borough's Green Flag parks.

Wirral's Parks Friends groups are invited to attend a Park's Forum, which is held twice a year. This presents an opportunity for the various groups to network and share their experiences. Collectively the Friends of Wirral Parks produce a biannual newsletter with contributions from all friends' groups.

### **Local community stakeholders and partner organisations**

- Friends of Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale (registered charity)
- Wirral Tree Wardens
- Regular Thursday and Friday volunteer groups
- Wirral Countryside Volunteers
- Eastham Conservation Trust (registered charity)
- Cheshire Wildlife Trust
- Cheshire and Wirral Ornithological Society (CAWOS)
- RSPB
- Unilever
- Environment Agency
- United Utilities
- Reaseheath College via W.B.C Apprentice Scheme
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Network Rail
- Schools within and outside Wirral

Company task days are organised by the Rangers with Unilever and Network Rail, both major local employers. Company task days have proved to be a good way to involve adults in conservation work and have identified people with

specific skills and interests. Adults involved in the scheme have become 'regulars' and now bring their families to the site.

The Ranger works with local youth groups, including scouts, guides, civic award and Duke of Edinburgh volunteers, on tasks or activities related to award schemes or badge work.

Eastham day Centre run by Wirral Evolutions provides training for adults with special needs. This group are responsible for the walled garden project at Woodslee Cottages, where they attend approximately 4 days per week.

The Eastham Conservation Trust is a registered charity made up of clients, carers and friends of the Eastham day centre and members of the public.

The Eastham Day Centre, Eastham Conservation Trust are involved in the management and development of the walled garden. It is used as kitchen garden and is run entirely with the principles of sustainability in mind. There is a composting and organic gardening demonstration area for the public which promotes small-scale recycling, natural gardening and sustainability to the public.



Service users from Eastham day Centre tree planting in the walled garden.

The Friends of Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR are an active friends' group. They have their own website and publish a quarterly newsletter. Their website can be located via links on the council website. They work closely with the site ranger and support all aspects of the parks management.

<https://www.dibbinsdale.co.uk/>

Cheshire Wildlife Trust, CAWOS and other local wildlife groups provide support and information to assist with the management of the wildlife interest at the site. They also contribute to leaflets and events.

Woodslee Pond which is managed as a fishery is well used by local anglers.

Volunteer opportunities are provided on Fridays and Saturdays when the Ranger works on practical tasks. See appendix k for detailed list of volunteer opportunities and achievements.



Fishing pegs installed 2012 by volunteers with grant funding from EA

### **Forest schools:**

The site ranger is a qualified Forest Schools practitioner. A limited number of Forest Schools sessions are delivered from the site to local schools in accordance with the sites sustainability objectives when requested.



Outdoor classroom in the walled garden at Woodslee Cottages

This year the walled garden is going to be used to host a 60<sup>th</sup> birthday party. It is hoped that more private events like this can be offered to the local community.

## **7. Marketing and communication**

To support or join **The Friends of Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR** contact: The Ranger at Woodslee Cottages.

Email – [stephensmith1@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:stephensmith1@wirral.gov.uk)

Or email the Friends– [friends@dibbinsdale.co.uk](mailto:friends@dibbinsdale.co.uk)

Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR is promoted through Wirral Council's web site at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces/brotherton-park-and-dibbinsdale-local-nature-reserve>

Green Flag Award website: Gives a great overview of the site, alongside park facilities and contact details. Allows people to see online that the park has achieved this prestigious award.

**Wirral Parks Survey** This was undertaken in 2012 to find out what visitors think about their parks, beaches and countryside, and to inform management of Wirral's Parks.

The survey showed that Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR attracts visitors from the local area and beyond Wirral into Cheshire. During the survey, the minimum distance travelled was 0.4 miles, the maximum 7.7 miles, with an average of 1.9 miles travelled.

Important general information was learned from the survey including the following:

Peak times for use are afternoons, followed by mornings and evenings. Evening use is greater on weekdays than at weekends. The majority of visits are from half an hour to two hours. Around one in five people visit for more than two hours.

One sixth of Wirral people visit parks, beaches and open spaces for events. A quarter said more events would encourage them to use these places more.

Less dog fouling and more and better toilet provision stand out as the top two things that people say would encourage them to use parks, open spaces and beaches more, with 53.7% and 46.5% of responses respectively.

Almost three quarters of people rate Wirral's parks, beaches and open spaces as having a very good or good standard of cleanliness and being maintained in a very good or good condition.

### **Visitor and tourism information**

The Wirral Council web site <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/> carries information about the park. The Parks and Countryside Service's home page includes links to information about Wirral's **Green Flag** parks.

There is a walking guide including the site on Wirral's tourism website 'Visit Wirral' at <https://www.visitwirral.com/things-to-do/activities/walking>

The Friends of Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale have their own website at <https://www.dibbinsdale.co.uk/> where they publish a quarterly newsletter 'Letter from Dibbinsdale'. This newsletter is displayed in the parks notice boards and in the Visitor Centre.

New for 2013, the friends have made it possible to become a 'Facebook Friend' by logging into Facebook.

The leaflet 'Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve Heritage Trail' is available in the visitor centre and local libraries. It is also available at Eastham Country Park and Wirral Country Park visitor centre.

The 'Tree Trail' leaflet was produced by the Friends group and the 'Wildflower Trail' was produced by Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

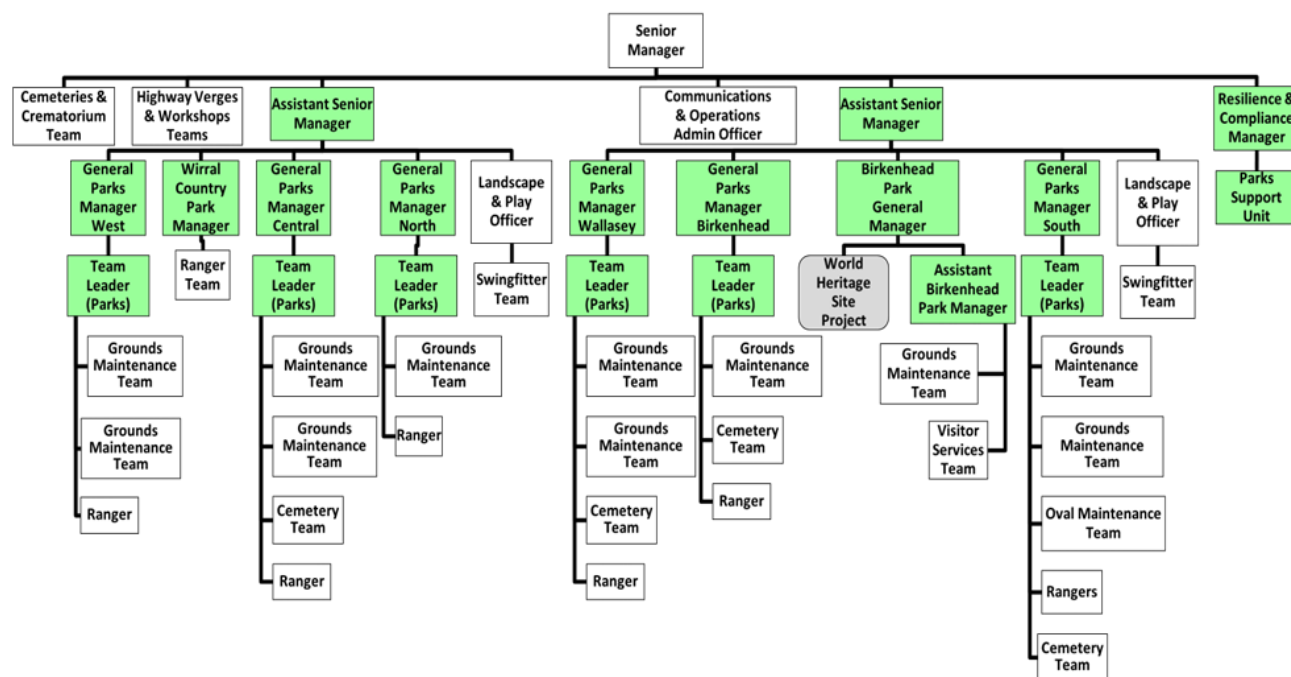
Wirral's countryside facilities are promoted at local fairs and events in the Rangers' Mobile Information Unit.

Around the site there are several educational interpretation boards showing a site map and information on the history and management of the site.



## 8. Management

### Current Wirral Parks and Countryside Service Organisational Chart



General Management of Brotherton and Dibbinsdale LNR is the responsibility of the General Parks Manager and Team Leader whose key role is to be responsible for the management, maintenance, development, and promotion of Brotherton and Dibbinsdale LNR.

There is further input from other technical divisions within Wirral Council such as:

- Asset Management for building repairs and alterations.
- Financial Services for accountancy

The districts work maintenance depot is located at Victoria Park. Enquiries regarding the management and maintenance of the park can be made to the Team Leader on telephone number 0151 645 8299.

Enquiries about the management of the park should be directed to the General Parks Manager for South Carl Davies on **0151 606 2158**

or

Email: [carldavies@wirral.co.uk](mailto:carldavies@wirral.co.uk) or site Ranger [stephensmith1@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:stephensmith1@wirral.gov.uk)

# Appendices

## Appendix a) Site plan






Appendix b) Aerial photograph



<b>Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve Aerial Photograph</b>	drawn	drawing number
	Mike Cucksey	
	scale	date
	1:8,000	27/01/2009

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Parks & Countryside, Westminster House, Hamilton Street, Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 5FN 0151 666 4711

  
N



## **Appendix c) Site of Special Scientific Interest citation**

### **Dibbinsdale SSSI Citation**

File ref: SJ 38/2

**County:** Merseyside **Site Name:** Dibbinsdale

**District:** Wirral

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** SJ 338815 **Area:** 53.2 (ha) 131.5 (ac)

**What 3 Words location -** <https://what3words.com/speaks.closes.tuck>

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 108 **1:10,000:** SJ 38 SW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1979 **Date of Last Revision:** ₤

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1983 **Date of Last Revision:** 1989

#### **Other Information:**

1. Site boundary changed at this revision with the addition of Foxes Wood.
2. Parts of the site are managed as a reserve by the Cheshire Conservation Trust.
3. Other parts of the site are managed as a Local Nature Reserve by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.

#### **Description and Reasons for Notification:**

Dibbinsdale is 8 km south-west of Birkenhead adjacent to Bromborough.

Most of the site lies along Dibbinsdale Brook with a small area by Clatter Brook. The underlying rocks are Triassic Sandstones of the Sherwood Sandstone Group with dry acidic brown earth soils on the upper slopes and wetter base-rich alluvial soils at the base of the slope. The main habitats included are semi-natural broad-leaved woodland, which covers most of the site, reed swamp, fen pasture and neutral grassland.

This is the largest block of semi-natural woodland of its type in Merseyside and it contains typical examples of ash-wych elm and valley alder woodland, each of which supports a rich flora and fauna. Woodland in the valley of Dibbinsdale and Clatter Brook has been recorded since 1818, although some parts of the wood are likely older. Ash-wych elm woodland covers most of this site and is characterized by a lot of ash, pedunculate oak and sycamore. Wych elm, holly and beech are also frequently found with birch and rowan occurring on the more acidic soils.

Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and horse chestnut were planted in certain parts of the wood, and some regeneration of these species has occurred. Hazel,

hawthorn and elder are the predominant shrub species in the understory with guelder rose *Viburnum opulus* present on the more base-rich soils. The ground flora contains abundant ivy and bramble with bracken, creeping soft grass, foxglove and bluebell characteristic of the more acidic soils and dog's mercury, giant fescue, false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, enchanters-nightshade, primrose, sanicle and wood avens on the more base-rich soils. More local species include common field cow-wheat *Melampyrum pratense* and early purple orchid *Orchis mascula*. The ash-wych elm woodland grades into alder woodland along the valley floor. Alder, grey willow, crack willow and osier are the main species in this community. White willow *Salix alba* and Italian black poplar *Populus nigra* var. *italica* have been planted in places.

The understory is composed of red currant, black currant and gooseberry. Indian balsam *Impatiens grandulifera*, meadowsweet, opposite-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, common nettle and reed canary-grass are the principal components of the ground flora. Other species include yellow iris, Cyprus sedge, remote sedge, marsh marigold and water forget-me not *Myosotis scorpioides*.

The reed swamp, which is now an uncommon habitat in Merseyside, is quite extensive in places along the stream and dominated by common reed. Other species include reed canarygrass, great horsetail *Equisetum telmateia*, yellow iris, waterpepper *Polygonum hydropiper* and celery-leaved buttercup *Ranunculus sceleratus*. The fen pasture is characterized by wood small-reed *Calamagrostis epigejos*, floating sweetgrass, creeping bent, common nettle, meadowsweet, soft rush and Indian balsam. Other species include yellow loosestrife *Lysimachia vulgaris*, marsh pennywort and wavy bitter cress *Cardamine flexuosa*.

The remainder of this site supports neutral grassland which is dominated by false oat-grass, common bent, Yorkshire fog and sweet vernal-grass. This grassland community contains ladies' mantle *Alchemilla vulgaris* which is characteristic of old pasture. Dibbinsdale is important for birds with 61 species breeding regularly including tawny owl, kingfisher, green woodpecker, great spotted woodpecker, nuthatch, tree creeper, willow tit and grasshopper warbler. Dibbinsdale contains a rich invertebrate fauna, especially molluscs which are associated with the calcareous springs.

## Appendix d) Action plan

	Action	Responsibility	When	Resources	Complete
<b>1. A welcoming place</b>					
1.1	Update some photographs to reflect the changes/developments on site.	Site Ranger	Ongoing	Ranger and Friends images	Ongoing
1.2	Improve access point at Vanderbyl Avenue	Site Ranger	Dec 2023	Additional funding required	
<b>2. Healthy, safe and secure</b>					
2.1	Continue to monitor incident reports from Community Safety	Area Parks Manager	On-going	Within existing resources	✓ 2021 ✓ 2022
2.2	Open sightlines across the park from the visitor centre to improve feeling of safety	Site Ranger	On-going	Rangers, volunteers	✓ 2020 ✓ 2022
<b>3. Well maintained and clean</b>					
3.1	Continue seeking additional funding to continue programme of repair to footpaths and revetments	Ranger	On-going		✓ 2019 ✓ 2020
3.2	Rebuild Lady Bridge	Ranger/landscape architect	Dec 2022	Pre-planned maintenance budget and Friends group funds	Completed 2021
3.3	Install boardwalk In wetland area below the 39 steps to improve access and protect habitat	Ranger, rights of way officer.	2019	Rights of way budget	✓ 2019
3.4	Install steps on fox's hill to encourage use of PROW and reduce footfall on Bowden's Hey Meadow	Ranger, rights of way officer.	Phase one and Two 2019 & 2020	Rights of way budget	✓ 2019 ✓ 2020
3.4	Repair/renew steps at Vanderbyl Ave	Ranger, rights of way officer.	2021	Rights of way budget	

3.5	Repair/renew site bridges	rights of way officer.	2021	Rights of way budget	2021
<b>4. Environmental management</b>					
4.1	Enhance promotion of public transport to the site by providing signage to the site from Merseyrail stations	Ranger	July 2023	Requires additional funding – consult with Merseyrail/ tourism department	
<b>5. Biodiversity, Landscape and heritage</b>					
5.1	Complete & update Nature Conservation Plan	Ranger/Senior Ranger	On-going		✓ 2019 ✓ 2020
5.2	Implement Nature Conservation Action Plan (appendix e)			Requires some additional funding/ stewardship	✓ 2019 ✓ 2020
5.5	Make provision for balsam clearance when Woodland Grant Scheme funding expires	Ranger/parks development officer	July yearly	SSSI reserve funds  Stewardship	✓ 2019 ✓ 2020
5.6	Monitor woodland for ash die back	Ranger Volunteer Woodland Trust	yearly	Within existing resources	✓ 2019 ✓ 2020

<b>6. Community involvement</b>					
6.1	Continue to engage with Friends Group	Ranger	Ongoing	Within existing resources	✓ 2021 ✓ 2022
6.2	Continue to organise task days with a variety of volunteers and user-groups	Ranger	Feb 2013	Within existing resources	✓ 2021 ✓ 2022
6.3	Identify the social media and newsletters produced by the friends' group as an effective communication channel.	Ranger	2021	Within existing resources. Survey to be taken at events when resumed	

<b>7. Marketing and Communication</b>					
7.1	Continue to monitor and update Facebook	Friends	On-going	Within existing resources	✓ 2021 ✓ 2022
7.2	Continue to update site information	Rangers	On-going	Rangers/ volunteers	✓ 2021 ✓ 2022
<b>8. Management</b>					
8.1	Annual meeting to discuss management plan achievements and update as part of Green Flag reapplication process	All	Annual	Within existing resources	✓ 2021 ✓ 2022 2023
8.2	Management reviews Health and safety and vibration data training records and machinery checks. To be reviewed under new management structure	To be reviewed under new management structure	2021		Ongoing – Data stored centrally and machines/ tags are periodically checked and repaired

## Appendix e)

The site was judged in 2022.

The following is the report for 2022 including the General Managers responses and actions planned.

### Green Flag Judge's feedback



## FEEDBACK REPORT: 2023-24

<b>Name of Site</b>	Brotherton Park & Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve
<b>Managing Organisation</b>	Wirral Council
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2023

<b>OVERALL RESULT</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Fail</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### NOTES ABOUT THIS REPORT

Strengths and recommendations are provided for each criteria. Photographs are included, where appropriate, to support the feedback from the judge(s) in relation to both strengths and recommendations. Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual [here](#) for further information on the criteria.

## DESK ASSESSMENT

(Management plan and supporting documentation)

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
<b>Presentation</b>	A very simple yet effective management plan and has been regularly updated by the management team with updates clear and obvious and set out in a manner which makes it usable and transferable.	Tidy up some of the text if possible and changes in fonts and the odd typo. Just makes it look more professional. Minor points

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
<b>Health, Safety &amp; Security</b>	As per the last feedback report, all risk assessment, health and safety emergency procedures are in place, satisfactory and suitable to the site. Links and procedures are all current and well set out.	Possibly include an example of a risk assessment and be more specific where risk assessment are kept and how often updated.
<b>Maintenance of Equipment, Buildings &amp; Landscape</b>	Well covered within the plan.	A bit more detail on who is responsible for what and where inspection records are kept too? The footpaths are an issue and are in very poor condition along the value. Despite this being a country park and the flooding that ensues, it would be good to have some detail on the long term plans here.
<b>Litter, Cleanliness, Vandalism</b>	As previously noted, 'litter is picked on a daily basis and litterbins are emptied when needed. Building and structure cleaning schedule is good. There are good procedures in place to deal with graffiti, vandalism and ASB.' This was still the case in 2023. The site was very clean and it is good to see that there are good resources to manage this. Vandalism is an issue but from the site visits, none were apparent.	None to mention.
<b>Environmental Management</b>	Excellent and reference to No Mow May. The management plan reflected what was being delivered on site	None to mention.
<b>Biodiversity, Landscape &amp; Heritage</b>	The previous feedback was 'Identification of history and organisation is adequate. The original landscape and views are intact and remain a great feature and have enhanced with thought and care	However, this section should be strengthened further with how the relationship works with Natural England re the SSSI, but also how the opportunities and plans for the walled garden

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	throughout the site'. This remains adequate.	and buildings are to be delivered. There is no detail on this and this is an important aspect of the long term vision of the site.
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Well documented in the plan and a real strength.	None to mention.
<b>Marketing &amp; Communication</b>	This is well documented and covered.	The parks survey of 2012 is referred to and is very out of date. How are recent views captured?
<b>Overall Management</b>	Overall an excellent management plan and captures what it needs to.	A few additions needed to bring it up to date, re buildings especially and the management of heritage.



# FIELD ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
<b>A Welcoming Place</b>	Easy to find from the road into a well located car park that was obvious. You clearly felt you were coming and arriving to somewhere that was special. Arriving at the lodge and ranger office, it was clear there as a real sense of arrival.	We did find the route to the ranger's lodge a bit vague and did not locate immediately but was probably more to do with the wet weather than anything else.
<b>Healthy, Safe &amp; Secure</b>	Despite the nature of the site and the woodland, wetland, valley site, it was a site that you could see was a safe place to be. There were some people about despite the weather. No signs of vandalism, dumping, ASB at all.	We had a minor concern re if you got lost or needed to find the quickest way back to the car park or ranger's office. Signage throughout the site was quite sporadic. Some finger posts were evident but at junctions of paths, in many cases there was no signage.
<b>Well Maintained &amp; Clean</b>	The site was spotless, and we imagined on a dry day would be very busy, but we did not see any signs of litter or dumping.	Nothing to comment on.
<b>Environmental Management</b>	Despite the very limited staff resource and he was excellent by the way – this site is well managed with regards to the wider environment – from recycling, energy management, waste disposal, horticultural works etc.	Perhaps some form of raising awareness of the excellent env management here? Its not always obvious to users.
<b>Biodiversity Landscape &amp; Heritage</b>	This too was excellent and the use of volunteers covered and evident from the site. The site is huge with a wide range of habitats benefitting users and wildlife.	In some places, pathways were very rough. Even though this is a country park and LNR, perhaps there should be some warning of the footpath condition somewhere on site.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Community Involvement</b>	This was clearly and visibly excellent and well documented. The site relies heavily on volunteers and this is well managed by the site ranger. The range of works undertaken is considerable. The Friends website is excellent and indicates how much they do.	Is there anywhere on site that showcases what volunteers do or where those interested can get involved?
<b>Marketing and Communication</b>	This site has some amazing landscapes and habitats throughout, well managed and with lots of opportunities. Social media use is excellent and online material very good.	There was little on site telling the story of the park and nature reserve. Getting the balance right is obvious but it just felt there could be a little bit more. St Patricks well – we would never have known this if we hadn't been told.
<b>Management</b>	Excellent overall and the staff passion has to be applauded and the site is clearly being well managed with its management plan updated and sufficiently detailed.	It would be good to highlight what discussions and plans there are with Natural England and the site.

**Summary and additional comments:**

(Highlighting the result, and the main areas of strength and recommendation)

A clear and obvious pass and a site that has retained its status for many years. A fantastic site and the team on site should be applauded for their passion, work and enterprise. A really good visit.

## **Appendix f)**

### **Parks and Countryside General Service Requirement**

#### **Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection**

Collect and remove litter and refuse from all the sites included within the service requirement. In the case of adopted highway verges this responsibility is limited to the occasions immediately prior to grass cutting activities. Government guidance and Regulations for the disposal of noxious or hazardous waste, for example empty chemical containers or 'sharps' shall be followed.

Inspect and empty all litter bins, and dispose of the rubbish, clear all litter from around each bin.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 does not specify frequencies, and this requires the requisite standards to be maintained by:

- ensuring familiarity with site plans and locations
- programming works effectively
- applying resources appropriately

Litter control shall conform to the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006).

The park shall be maintained to Grade B standard in accordance with the Code of Practice Part 1: litter and refuse

- Predominately free of litter and refuse apart from some small items

The maximum response time to restore to Grade A standard (no litter or refuse) if it falls below Grade B shall be 1 day; this means by 6pm the following day.

Ensure that all staff uses their reasonable endeavours to collect and minimise the effects of litter on the sites, whenever it is encountered in the pursuance of their duties, whether or not those duties are primarily litter control.

#### **Sweeping and cleansing**

This requirement is applicable to all surfaces other than grass within all sites. The entire surfaces of all tarmac, concrete or paved areas, rubberised surfaces and tiles, including play facilities and safety surfaces and other surface areas including loose surfaces such as bark and shale shall be kept clear in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006) to Grade B standard.

Sweeping, including gutters and drainage channels within the surface areas, shall be carried out by appropriate methods that do not damage or disrupt the surface.

Surfaces shall be washed down whenever necessary in order to maintain a clean and useable area.

All paths and hard surfaces shall be swept at even intervals and be kept cleared of grass cuttings following mowing operations.

All slippery surfaces caused by whatsoever nature, shall be made safe by the removal and / or treatment of the hazard.

All hard surfaces shall be maintained in a substantially weed free condition including moss and algae growth.

### **Fallen leaves**

Fallen leaves shall be regularly cleared from areas of:

- main entrances and key pedestrian routes and paths
- visitors' centres and attractions
- ornamental grass areas
- soft horticultural features such as bedding and herbaceous borders
- surfaces within play areas
- grass sports pitches and facilities
- all weather sports pitches and facilities

Leaf clearance shall take place so that the features remain:

- in good horticultural condition
- and / or useable for sports play
- and / or with a safe, well drained hard surface

Any leaves that have accumulated into drifts or are unsightly or damaging to plants and bulbs shall be removed as a priority.

The operation shall be carried out frequently throughout the autumn in order to facilitate shrubbery and rose bed cultivation, and to prevent leaves from spreading back onto lawns, paths, hard surfaces, sports and horticultural features. Where necessary, after leaf clearance, beds shall be lightly pricked through to remove footmarks.

The final clearance of all autumn leaves shall be completed by the end of December in each year of the contract period.

### **Graffiti and fly-tipping**

Offensive or racist graffiti shall be reported as a priority. This shall be reported to the Service Manager within one hour of identification, to enable this to be removed by the Employer's specialist operator within 24 hours.

All instances of fly-tipping shall be reported to the Service Manager for the purpose of recording.

## **Grass maintenance**

The use of growth regulators will not be permitted.

All grass cutting machinery used across the entire range of standards shall be appropriate and fit for the purpose of achieving the specified standard.

On each occasion that grass cutting takes place the following shall be achieved:

- an even, uniform sward to the requisite height across 100% of the surface area, including all obstacles, grass margins, weed growth, seed and flower spikes and bents.
- Litter on areas to be mown shall be removed immediately prior to mowing.
- any litter subsequently shredded as a result of the mowing operation, shall be collected and removed

Should grass exceed the maximum permissible height, the grass shall be brought back into conformance by frequent repeat mowing.

The use of herbicides around obstacles and margins shall not be permitted on ornamental and associated grass areas. The use of appropriate herbicides to kill growth around obstacles and margins in other areas shall be permitted unless otherwise stipulated in the relevant site management plan or by instruction from the Service Manager. In such areas, the maximum bandwidth of kill shall not exceed 50mm.

The edges of turf adjacent to hard surfaces, cutbacks, planted borders, beds, channels and kerbs shall be kept maintained to a neat even line. On each occasion of re-cutting all finished bed edges shall be sharp, neat and vertical.

In the case of ornamental lawns all cuttings, clippings or other mowing arisings, no matter where they fall, shall be removed for recycling or reuse immediately on completion of the operation.

All cuttings, clippings or other mowing arisings across the complete spectrum of grass mowing operations which land on hard surfaces, shrub borders or flower beds shall be cleaned up and removed immediately on completion of mowing.

Arisings that fall on general grass/amenity grass, highway urban verges and rural verges shall not normally require removal, unless excessive growth has occurred, in which case arisings shall be collected and removed for recycling or reuse.

Unless otherwise stipulated in the relevant site management plan, grass areas over naturalised Narcissus, Galanthus and Crocus bulbs etc, shall remain uncut from the commencement of the grass cutting season to the third week in May, unless the bulb leaves have died down sooner, at which time the grass and bulb tops shall be cut and removed, and the areas brought into conformance with the surrounding areas. Subsequently these areas are to be maintained to the same standard as the rest of the area.

In drought conditions, subject to the approval of the Service Manager, the height of cut shall be adjusted so as not to cause added stress and damage to the sward. If grass growth is at a standstill an obligation remains to control grass and weed flower spikes by cutting.

On resumption of mowing operations after adverse weather conditions have caused them to cease, ensure that a return to the appropriate standard is achieved by increasing the frequency of mowing.

### **General/amenity grass**

All general/amenity grass areas shall be maintained within the specified height range:

- Minimum height 25 mm
- Maximum height 60 mm

**Hard landscape infrastructure: hard surfaces – roadways, pathways, car parks; parks and green spaces site infrastructure – benches, lighting, fencing, walls (see also Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection)**

Undertake a rolling programme of condition surveys of the hard landscape infrastructure of parks, open spaces and other sites.

### **Hard surfaces weed control**

Undertake a programme of effective weed control on all hard surfaces including roads; footpaths, car parks, steps, ramps and bridges Including the bases of all walls and fences where adjoining hard surfaces, along kerbstones and around landscape and park furniture. The use of residual herbicides shall not be permitted.

### **Hard surfaces gritting, salting and snow clearance**

Hard surface gritting, salting and snow clearance is required to ensure that, where reasonably practicable, safe passage along a road or footpath is not endangered by snow ice.

Although there is no requirement to treat all roads and footpaths there are locations where this is required. The sites and areas to be treated are limited to those where essential only access is required which includes to cemetery chapels, access for planned burials, visitor and community centres and known problem locations and hazardous gradients.

Treatment shall include pre-treating to prevent ice from forming and post treating when ice has formed, or snow has accumulated.

### **Benches and seating**

All benches and seating, including picnic benches & tables, shall be kept clean at all times, and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining surfaces according to type of material.

## **Fences, railings, walls, gates, handrails, stiles, boardwalks, revetments and bollards**

Any minor repairs such as loose bolts, protruding nails and sanding of sharp edges shall be undertaken. All other repairs must be reported to the Service Manager.

Defects which represent a hazard that cannot be repaired immediately must be made safe until an effective repair can be undertaken.

Regularly maintain gates, locks and mechanisms to ensure good working condition.

## **Notice boards and signs**

Keep all signs, signposts and notice boards clean at all times and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining surfaces according to type of material of construction.

## **Hedges – ornamental and non-ornamental**

Maintain all ornamental and non-ornamental hedges to their previously cut height, width and shape, ensuring that the top and sides of each hedge are cut neatly so that all growth is removed to the point of the previous cut on the old wood. Maintain hedges to ensure the safe and free flow of motor traffic along adopted highways and other vehicle routes, and to ensure the safe and free flow of pedestrians and cyclists along adopted highway footpaths and all other access routes across sites.

All trimmings shall be removed for recycling or reuse.

## **Public toilets**

Be responsible as key-holder for opening, closing and securing the buildings.

Maintain public toilets to a sufficiently high level of cleanliness to protect public health and maintain good appearance.

Toilets shall be kept free from unacceptable odours. All sanitary wares shall be kept free from all, stains; dirt and any build-up of lime scale or dry germ. A streak and smear free finish shall be achieved.

Replace where necessary all consumables such as toilet rolls.

Use best endeavours to conserve supplied utilities including electricity and water and arrange access for the reading of meters by the utility suppliers.

Store all equipment and materials in a safe condition and provide and display the necessary warning signs/barriers to ensure public safety during cleaning operations.

Remove any graffiti as part of the cleaning operation.

Comply with all the responsibilities and requirements on waste collection and disposal.

Inspect the premises after each cleaning operation and notify the Service Manager immediately of any fitting or part of the building requiring repair or replacement.

### **Trees and woodland**

Also refer to Appendix n: Parks & Countryside Tree Policy.

All tree work shall be undertaken in accordance with BS 3998: 2010 'Recommendations for tree work'. Be responsible for making all necessary checks to determine if there are any laws and regulations, including Tree Preservation Orders that would affect any work proposed, and to ensure that all permissions and licences are gained prior to proceeding with work.

All persons employed to undertake tree work, shall be suitably trained and qualified and shall be in possession of appropriate certification.

Consider all paths, grassed areas, pavements, kerbs, approach roads, manhole covers, fences, walls, overhead cabling etc that are either adjacent to or on the work area. These are to be preserved in good condition and make all necessary arrangements to make good any damage to the entire satisfaction of the Service Manager.

Include for stump removal and subsequent surface reinstatement following tree felling in highways locations. Stumps intended for permanent retention should be cut at a specified height and left free from snags.

On completion of all tree work ensure that the work area is thoroughly cleaned and is left in a condition appropriate for its intended use.

All timber and brushwood resulting from tree work shall be disposed of. The only exceptions to this shall be at woodland locations where the Service Manager may instruct timber and brushwood to be retained on site. The Service Manager may on occasion instruct delivery of brushwood chippings to sites within the Borough where these materials are required for composting, mulching, or creating footpaths or bridleways.

### **All trees and woodland – emergency and out of hours call out service**

Provide a 24 hour, 365 days a year, emergency and out of hours call out response service for trees or limbs that have collapsed or are in a dangerous condition. A response unit consisting of a minimum of two suitably trained staff with appropriate vehicle and equipment shall be provided within one hour's notice following notification of an event by the Service Manager or emergency services authority. Incidents of this nature are often associated with high winds, collision damage, root severance and acts of vandalism.

Provide sufficient labour, vehicles and equipment required for emergency tree work operations. Heavy lifting equipment and cranes will need to be obtained as soon as reasonably practicable for special operations.



## **Trees in parks**

Parks staff has a duty of care to ensure that users of parks, green spaces, cemeteries, churchyards and golf courses and all adjacent land and neighbouring properties are not at unreasonable risk from possible failure of trees. As part of the regular site health and safety inspections assess and act on any tree related risks.

### **Individual trees in parks and green spaces – arboriculturally management**

Undertake reactive management of selected trees in parks, green spaces, golf courses, cemeteries and churchyards in response to hazard risk identification, through an agreed programme of work. This may be supplemented by requests/complaints received from members of the public and others.

### **Individual trees in parks and green spaces – replacement and renewal**

Undertake occasional requests for commemorative and other tree planting within cemeteries, parks and green spaces.

### **Vandalism and third-party damage (see also Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection)**

Work with community stakeholders and partner organisations to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour in sites covered by the service.

## **Soft landscape**

Rectify minor incidents of vandalism or third-party damage to soft landscape features including trees, planted and grassed areas within 24 hours, inclusive within his routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor incidents of damage caused by any other source.

## **Hard landscape infrastructure**

Rectify minor damage to fencing, gates, walling, furniture, signage, notice boards, lighting and surfacing and other hard landscape infrastructure resulting from any act of vandalism or third-party damage within 24 hours, inclusive within his routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor damage caused by any other source. Minor damage shall be defined as requiring no more than 1 hour of labour per occasion to rectify with a minimal requirement for materials.

For more significant incidents of vandalism or third-party damage make safe immediately.

## Appendix g) Example of friend's newsletter

 <p><b>Friends of Dibbinsdale</b> Supporting Brotherton Park &amp; Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve Email <a href="mailto:peter.miller40@ntlworld.com">peter.miller40@ntlworld.com</a> <a href="http://www.dibbinsdale.co.uk">www.dibbinsdale.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Check out our website <a href="http://www.dibbinsdale.co.uk">www.dibbinsdale.co.uk</a> and our Facebook page <a href="https://www.facebook.com/dibbinsdale.com">www.facebook.com/dibbinsdale.com</a></p>
	<p>If you would like to join the Friends of Dibbinsdale, contact Pete at the email opposite or log on to our website above. Membership is free. If you would like to make a donation or join our successful team, please let us know.</p>
<h1>Letter from Dibbinsdale</h1> <h2>Winter 2016</h2>	
	<p><b>Winter Warmer Success</b> A big thank you to all those people who attended and helped out at our Winter Warmer event before Christmas. Over £800 was raised on the day and this will be spent in 2017 on a range of events, activities and conservation tasks. ( <i>See inside for the planning consultation exercise we are setting out for members to be involved in having their say</i>)</p>
	<p><b>Seasons Greetings to all our park users. Help us look</b></p>
<div><p><b>Merry Christmas</b></p><p><i>after this wonderful jewel for years to come</i></p></div>	



## More from the Winter Warmer



Terry from 'Moonshine' talks about his eagle owl



Russ works wooden crafted decorations



Helen Louise from Asda helps run the tombola



Alex face paints little Arthur

## What might you like to see this coming year?

The Friends of Dibbinsdale will be holding informal discussion with Alan the ranger to plan what events and activities might take place in the reserve this coming year. These will be hosted by Alan on behalf of the Council and the Friends will be supporting this. The Council's insurance will cover public liability.

The Friends focus of spending in 2016 was the refurbishment of the Visitors Centre. A range of public events were held including wildflower walk, history walk, music concert and the winter warmer.

For 2017 we would like to make possible a range of events and activities and make spendings that would enhance the value of the site for people and wildlife. Obviously our budget is limited so prioritising what is important is necessary.

Suggestions that the members of the Friends may have are important to us, so if you feel that you have any ideas please let us know. (*email address on the front cover*) These might range from events and activities you might like to see through the year, to ways of fund raising and local community involvement. If you were able to help in the development of any of these ideas we would also like to hear from you

### Wheelchair access

Following the success of the wheelchair access improvements around Woodslee Pond, one of the avenues for funding we have been chasing this year is a grant to help improve some of the paths that lead from the main car park. This would be to encourage disabled access and wheelchair users in particular. Mike Thorpe, our new secretary, has successfully won funding from the **Bruce Wake Charitable Trust** for the upgrading of the path to the Visitors Centre. This will take place early in the new year. How we will achieve this is being planned now and will involve the contribution of existing funds from the Friends.

We will keep you informed on how that proceeds. A big thank you to Mike for his work on this. We are always looking for funding opportunities!

### Nationwide donation

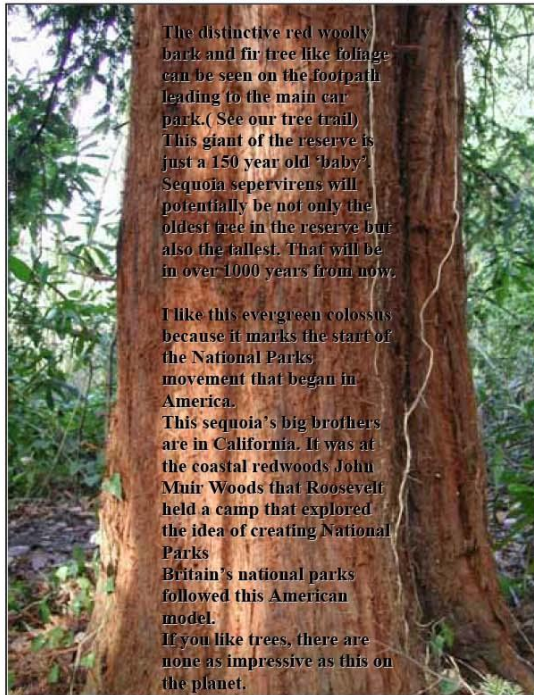
In November we had a lovely surprise donation from the Nationwide Building Society for £100. We had entered into their 'nominations' scheme for local community organizations to take part (voting in branch for good causes in the area) That was early in the year...and we won! Thank you Nationwide.

### Brotherton Trust donation

The years big donations was completed by the Brotherton Trust who continued their regular support for our reserve. They have donated £500 for projects and spending related to education in the reserve. Thank you to them too.



## Tree of the season-The Coast Redwood

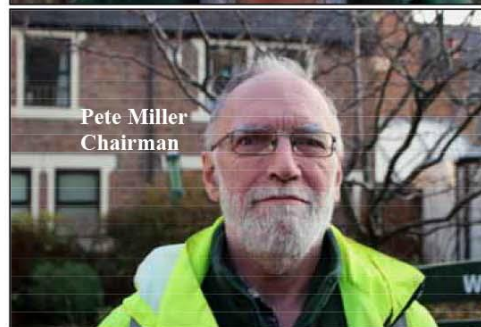
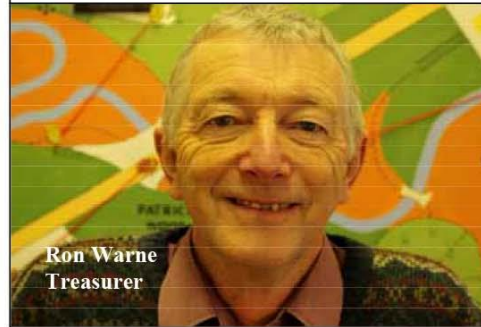


## Trial Dog Waste Scheme

Over the last 18 months there has been a marked increase in the amount of dog waste left on the footpaths around all areas of the reserve particularly in the area near to the main car park off Spital Road. I feel that offering waste bags on a trial period may be of some use in reducing waste left on paths in the reserve. I think that the graphic and text "Put your dog muck in the bin" will also help to drive the message home.

Alan Smail

## New Faces of the Friends Committee



## Friends AGM. December 7<sup>th</sup>

Duly elected for the coming year were the three main officers of the Friends of Dibbinsdale registered charity, Ron Warne (Treasurer) Mike Thorpe (secretary) and Peter Miller (chairman)

## Tribute to Don Davies

In recognition for Don's contribution over many years as the Friends treasurer, the AGM decided that a new post of Honorary Treasurer would be created. Don, as standing down treasurer, was elected to this post.

Don has served the Friends from its creation in the 1970's. Don and his wife Ann live close to the park on Spital Fields and continue to be daily park users. We all hope that he continues his involvement with the Friends and walks in the park long into the future. Thank you Don.



### In the reserve

This past year in Brotherton Park & Dibbinsdale LNR has been a busy and productive year for The Friends and regular volunteers. Along with the usual ongoing site maintenance and habitat management that has taken place in the reserve, the volunteers have been busy working on the upgrading and renovation of the Visitor Centre. This has been funded utilising a Biffa Awards grant applied for and won by the Friends of Dibbinsdale and other moneys raised throughout the year at a number of successful events, some new and some more established.

Other work has been carried out throughout the year by contractors. This has included our regular work removing invasive non-native species like himalayan balsam and japanese knotweed and a project aimed at rewetting areas of the reed beds at Babbs Meadow which were beginning to dry out. This work included the installation of shuttering where the water flows out of the reed beds to maintain a higher water level in dry spells. Also, three leaky timber dams intended to push the water out into the reed beds from its natural path have been installed. The final part of this work consisted of fabricating a system of regulating the flow out of the reed beds and downstream. This means that we can maintain an optimum water level and help protect this locally rare habitat.



#### In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'

By [Thomas Hardy](#)

Only a man harrowing clods  
In a slow silent walk  
With an old horse that stumbles and nods  
Half asleep as they stalk.

Only thin smoke without flame  
From the heaps of couch-grass;  
Yet this will go onward the same  
Though Dynasties pass.

Yonder a maid and her wight  
Come whispering by:  
War's annals will cloud into night  
Ere their story die.

*This was written in January 1916 when the  
enthusiasm for the First World war was waning.  
When I hear the poem I think of this old  
photograph of Dibbinsdale. Ed*



This project was funded by Natural England as part of the reserves Higher Level Stewardship capital works payments for 2016 and planned with help from The Environment Agency and Natural England.

As another good year draws to a close in the reserve I would like to thank everyone who has helped in any way to make Brotherton Park & Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve the friendly, welcoming and safe place for all its visitors and resident wildlife and wish you all a happy Christmas and all the best for 2017.  
I will see you in the reserve.

Alan Smail Ranger: South Wirral Team

#### Forthcoming events for your diary

##### Bats in Brotherton Park

Thursday 4th May, 8.45pm - 10.45pm Booking Essential

Contact: 0151 334 9851 Email: [alansmail@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:alansmail@wirral.gov.uk)

##### History Walk

Friday 5th May, 10.00 – 12.30 Cost: FREE

Email: [alansmail@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:alansmail@wirral.gov.uk) Meet at: The Rangers Office, Dibbinsdale LNR

**Bluebell walk** Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2pm – 4pm

Cost free Meet at Bromborough rake Station

##### Butterflies & Moths at Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve

Monday 29th May, 12.30pm - 2.30pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: 0151 334 9851

Email: [alansmail@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:alansmail@wirral.gov.uk)

Meet at: The Rangers Office,

## Appendix h) Favourable management advice 2005



### Cheshire to Lancashire Team

Promoting Nature Conservation in Cheshire, Lancashire, Greater Manchester & Merseyside  
Pier House Wallgate Wigan Lancashire WN3 4AL  
Tel +44(0)1942 820342 Fax +44(0)1942 820364  
www.english-nature.org.uk  
Direct Dial 01942 614024

*for information Peter*

Mr P Miller  
Metropolitan Borough of Wirral  
Rangers Office  
Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve  
Woodslee Cottages  
Spital Road  
Bromborough  
Wirral L62 2BJ

Your Ref:  
Our Ref: SJ 38/2 SM

Date: 10 January 2005

Dear Peter

### Dibbinsdale SSSI Favourable Management Advice

Following our discussions relating to the current assessment of unfavourable condition of Dibbinsdale SSSI, I outline below the management required to bring the woodland into favourable management.

As I know you are aware, under the amendments made by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 to the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) as amended, local authorities (as Section 28G authorities) have a statutory duty to take reasonable steps consistent, with the proper exercise of their statutory functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the special features on an SSSI. You will be aware that the features for which Dibbinsdale is notified a SSSI are the different woodland communities including lowland mixed deciduous woodland and wet woodland.

Following English Nature's condition monitoring assessments of the site, we believe that management of the following issues needs to be undertaken to bring those areas of the SSSI that you manage into favourable management:

1. **Control of undesirable species.** The following species are considered to be undesirable at Dibbinsdale:
  - Rhododendron
  - Beech
  - Japanese Knotweed (this needs to be carried out following good practice guidance as it is an offence to cause the spread of this plant)
  - Himalayan Balsam
  - Garden escapes eg: Variegated yellow archangel, Spanish bluebell, daffodil, montbretia.
  - Non-native trees and shrub species eg: Cherry laurel, horse chestnut, conifers.

1 of 3



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- Sycamore is considered as an acceptable naturalised species on this site where:
  - Mature trees have grown up and are important elements to the canopy, and
  - Where the ground in which it occurs shows little disturbance (except where disturbance is due to natural processes eg: flushes, natural land slippage).

However, efforts should be made to balance the species composition in the understorey so that sycamore does not become the most dominant tree species. The target we have set in our conservation objectives is that regeneration of sycamore should be no more than 50% of stand area in any one unit.

Management to control undesirable species needs to be undertaken at the least sensitive time of year to avoid disturbance to the woodland or its ground flora during its peak growing season.

Where woody species are being eradicated stump treatment will also be necessary so as to avoid the risk of coppicing the tree/shrub, thereby causing thicker regrowth after cutting.

Careful consideration as to the amount of disturbance likely in undertaking any conservation management to species rich, stable ground flora needs to be balanced against the overall gain for the woodland in the long term. Disturbance should be minimised wherever possible as this can lead to the persistence of undesirable species and a reduction in the quality of the ground flora.

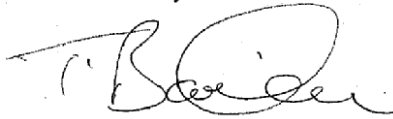
2. **Trampling.** It would be beneficial to the conservation of the woodland if the impacts of trampling are minimised or controlled. Where trampling is evident within the woodland units this has led to localised loss of woodland ground flora and can also impact on the woodland structure.
3. **Impacts from surrounding land.** It would also be beneficial to tackle encroachment and tipping of garden waste from neighbouring properties. This has led to garden escapes becoming established within the woodland and has a detrimental impact on the woodland.
4. If there are any opportunities to increase the extent of the woodland through natural regeneration this would also make a significant contribution to the long term conservation of the woodland.

As you are aware, Cheshire Wildlife Trust are in the process of producing a management plan for the areas of Dibbinsdale SSSI that they manage. I believe similar issues to those listed above have been highlighted for the areas that they manage. It may be useful for you to contact Jacki Hulse who is their Head of Estates and Land Management and their volunteer Reserves Manager, Paul Loughnane, to discuss the overall management of Dibbinsdale SSSI.

The woodland in general is in good condition and requires fairly minimal management. In fact some areas of the SSSI have benefited from not receiving excessive management in the past. We feel that if the above issues are addressed the woodland is likely to achieve favourable conservation status over time.

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tabatha Boniface', written in a cursive style.

Tabatha Boniface  
Conservation Officer  
Cheshire to Lancashire



## **Appendix i): Nature conservation plan**

### **Nature conservation plan**

### **Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR: 5-year Conservation Management Plan October 2019-2024**

Alan Smail 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019

This plan has been produced using the Forestry Commission Woodland Management Plan template available at:

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/we-are-evolving>

The plan compliments the Higher-Level Stewardship agreement for the site

#### **Contents**

- 1. Vision**
- 2. Compartment maps**
- 3. Compartment descriptions**
- 4. Conservation objectives**
- 5. Action plan**
- 6. Monitoring and Review**
- 7. Stakeholder engagement**

#### **1. Vision**

Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale will be a pleasant, safe and well managed place which sustains an ecologically diverse mosaic of habitats, where people can enjoy and contribute to the enhancement of nature and learn through their experiences without detracting from the wildlife interest of the site.

#### **2. Compartment maps**

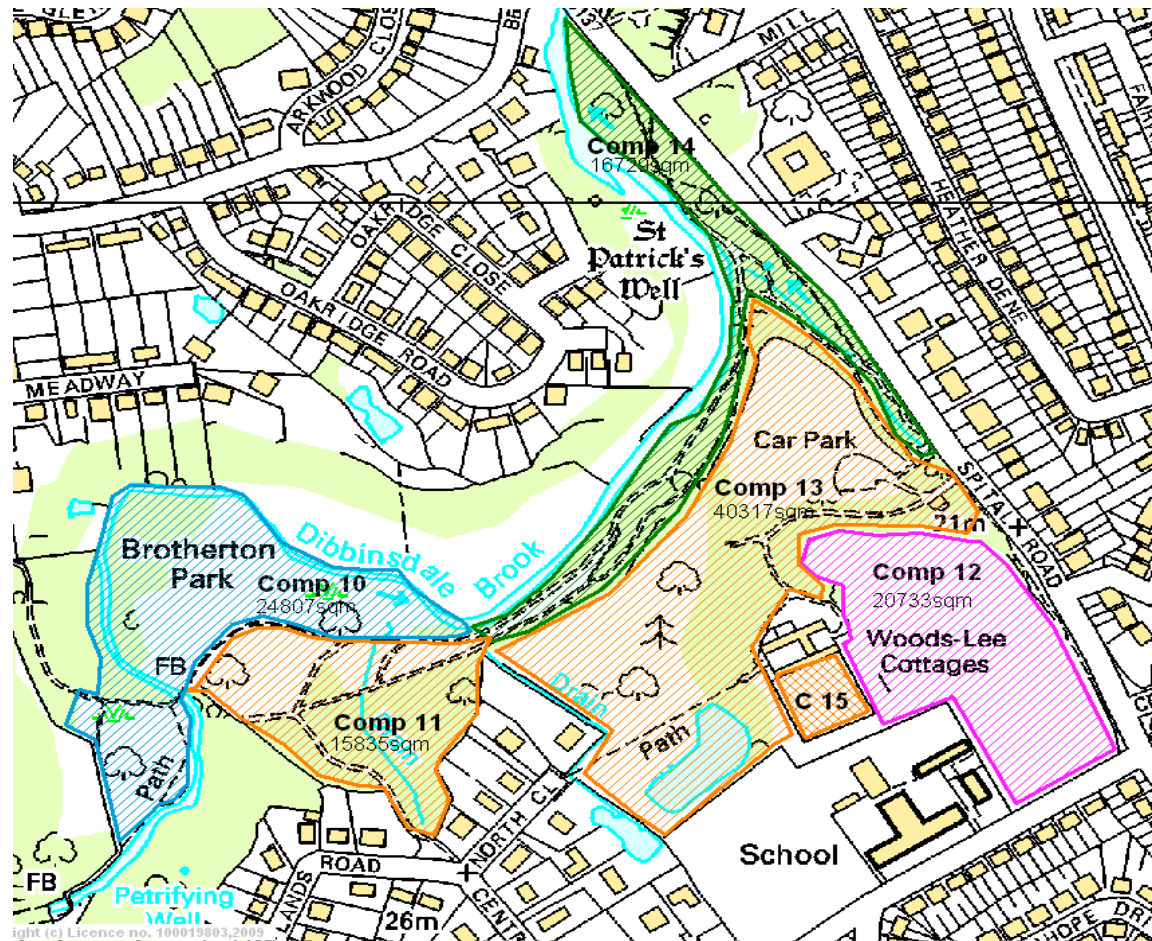
The reserve has been divided into 15 compartments for the purpose of this plan. Some of these compartments fall within the area of the park that is designated SSSI. These are compartments (1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10).

The compartments include areas of the following habitats:

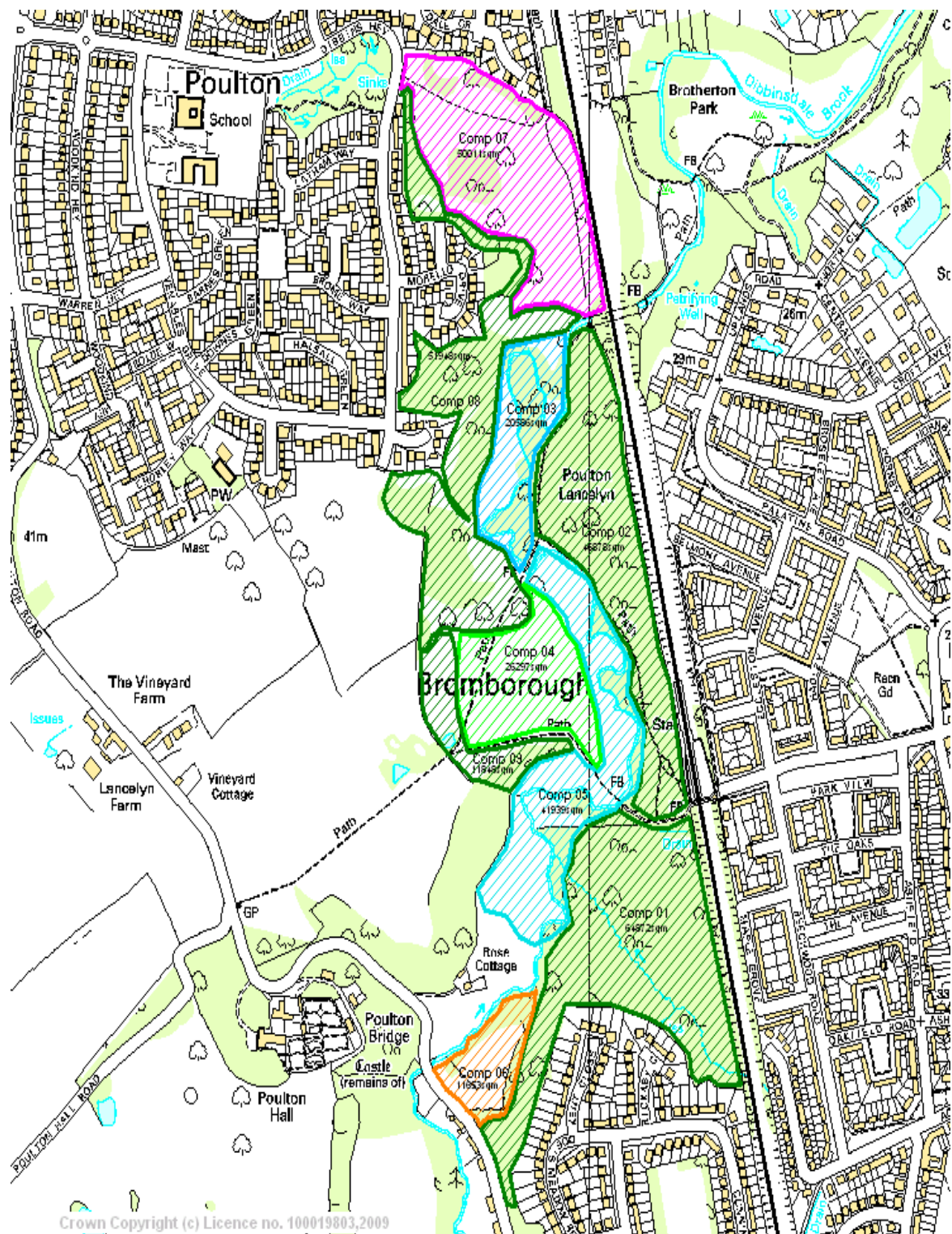
- Mixed deciduous lowland woodland
- Wet woodland
- Scrub
- Reedbed
- Semi-improved wildflower meadow
- Amenity Grassland
- Mixed areas containing a variety of habitat

- Open water
- River

Map 1



Map 2



### **3. Compartment descriptions**

#### **Compartment 1**

##### Marfords Wood

This area within Dibbinsdale SSSI is no longer managed by Wirral Council.

Management was transferred back to the landowner's estate managers (Fisher German) in February 2015

The compartment will be left in the plan in case this status changes

#### **Compartment 2**

##### Bromborough Wood

This band of woodland bordering the main Liverpool to Chester railway line consists of oak, ash, beech and hornbeam with some sycamore. A large part of this woodland is dominated by hornbeam with hazel present throughout. The field layer is carpeted with wood anemone and native bluebells. This area should be managed to minimize damage to ground flora from trampling. The area dominated by hornbeam would benefit from thinning of mature trees which could be left to coppice and some planting of locally sourced oak.

#### **Compartment 3**

##### The Willow Carr

This is a wet woodland area of 2.06ha. The area is relatively inaccessible and consists mainly of crack willow and poplar. Himalayan balsam is a problem and requires ongoing control. Otter Holts have been built in this area as part of our stewardship agreement. It is regularly flooded and the water course in the woodland changes course due to fallen willow. There is a sewer pipe running through with access caps which are monitored for damage and leakage.

#### **Compartment 4**

##### Bowden's Hey Meadow

This is a large area of grassland on an east facing slope running down to the river Dibbin. The area has been managed as a wildflower meadow and is cut and removed annually in late summer under a Stewardship Agreement (2003-2013). The meadow is bordered by woodland on two sides and excess scrub encroachment is removed at the woodland edges each year to increase the meadow area. Care is taken not to eliminate marginal habitat. A spring runs down the slope to the north end of the meadow which creates a wet grassland area.

#### **Compartment 5**

##### Lady Bridge wetland

This compartment covers the river Dibbin in the southern half of the reserve and its associated wetland areas, flood plains, banks and pools. Much of this area was excavated in the 1990s to restore and improve the wetland for wildlife. Pools were created along the water course; these are now havens for wildlife. Himalayan balsam and knotweed have been historically a problem here and removal work should continue in addition to balsam removal along the whole water course. Crack willow along the riverbanks that falls in the water and wetland areas should be removed to prevent succession and improve access for balsam removal.



## **Compartment 6**

### Dibbinsdale Road Camp

This area within Dibbinsdale SSSI is no longer managed by Wirral Council. Management was transferred back to the landowner's estate managers (Fisher German) in February 2015

The compartment will be left in the plan in case this status changes.

## **Compartment 7**

### Spital Fields

Spital Fields covers the site of an old council land fill site which was capped off in the late 1970s. A major part of this area is amenity grassland and plantation woodland. There are some mature trees along the river embankment and at the west end of the plantation wood. The grass is mown regularly by district staff during the summer. Some thinning is needed to the plantation as this consists of trees of a single age which have had little management over the past 30 years. This will be carried out as resources allow. Work has been carried out on the boundaries of this wood to create planting opportunities for shrubs and marginal plants. The river embankment at this point is very steep and inaccessible due to bramble and scrub coverage. Himalayan balsam in the area of the embankment is being managed. There are elm and which elm around plantation margins. Lesser hairstreak butterflies present.

## **Compartment 8**

### Spital Woodland

This is an area of secondary woodland with some mature oaks. Compartment 08 borders a 1970s housing development and Vinyard Farm. There are some problems along these borders with contamination from garden waste and garden escapes. There is prolific regeneration of ash in the area near Vinyard Farm. There is good standing deadwood and generally a good, varied structure to the woodland in the area of the embankment.

## **Compartment 9**

### Bowden's Hey Woodland

This woodland area covers a steep south facing slope and has a good woodland structure with typical composition. There are no footpaths through this area, and it is only accessible from one side. Suggested management for this compartment is minimal intervention.

## **Compartment 10**

### Reedbeds wetland

This compartment contains areas of open water and extensive coverage of common reed. The compartment is subject to regular flooding and water is retained as the flood waters fall. Crack willow is spreading throughout the flood plain and is managed by cutting and removing or winching out of larger trees. This creates smaller pools. The reed is cut on a three-year rotation in an attempt to arrest succession. Bunds and banks have been created to hold water in the reed beds. Heavy rain falls during 2012 and 2013 brought a large amount of silt down the valley which was deposited in this area.

Environmental stewardship funding for 2013 – 2014 will pay to dig out areas where the reed beds are drying up. Plans for this work (The Babbs Meadow wetland restoration project) are attached (appendix I).

### **Compartment 11**

#### **Babbs Meadow**

Area containing varied habitat, there are a number of paths in this area and the area suffers from heavy foot fall. Managed in the past as part of the Victorian gardens in the past, Babbs meadow contains open grass land with rhododendron coverage. There are a number of mature cherry trees around the edges and some oak and sycamore. In the early 1970s, oak was planted at the south end. This has been thinned from 2000 and hazel has been under-planted.

### **Compartment 12**

#### **Woodslee Field**

Amenity grassland close to Spital Road. This area has been used as a football pitch up until recently, the field is mown regularly over the summer. The field is bordered by oak, birch, sweet chestnut, hawthorn, Scots pine, rowan.

### **Compartment 13**

#### **Woodslee gardens**

Manage as intensively used area with semi-formal arboretum, interpretive wildflower meadow and wildlife garden, there are a number of specimen trees, a willow tunnel, a bird feeding station and numerous bird and bat boxes. There is a small lake or pond that is managed as a fishery and licenced by a local fishing club 'The Association of Wirral Angling Clubs' (AWAC). The pond has eight disabled access fishing pegs. This area is also used for forest school's sessions.

### **Compartment 14**

#### **Woodslee Riverside**

Steep north facing escarpment and sandstone cliffs. Populated by oak, ash, hazel, holly and rhododendron. Rhododendron management began in 2012, it has been cut and left to grow as small bushes while other species move in. This is to maintain the stability of the escarpment before the rhododendron is stump treated or removed.

### **Compartment 15**

#### **The Walled Garden**

Manage for community involvement. Grow vegetable and fruit crops. Create examples of best practice, i.e., composting of site waste, water collection, wildlife friendly gardening and sustainable arts and crafts.

## 4. Conservation Objectives

### General objectives:

1. Invasive species controlled or eradicated, prioritising areas where they are causing significant ongoing habitat to change or loss of species diversity.
2. Preserve continuity of woodland structure.  
Due to concerns regarding tree disease at time of writing, after taking advice from Natural England and The Tree Council no tree species is to be favoured, because removal of trees could prove a threat to the continuity of woodland canopy and structure. However, some thinning may be necessary to ensure variation in age structure and diversity of ground flora. In the short term, any tree works to be undertaken under the plan will be limited to thinning of sycamore and hornbeam, safety work and coppicing of hazel. Tree removal will not exceed quarterly limits imposed by FC and will only be undertaken when and where resources allow. Parts of the reserve are covered by a blanket tree preservation order (see appendix m). Where this applies, permission will be sought before tree work takes place.  
Ash dieback was identified in the reserve in 2019. The spread will be monitored, and subsequent management will depend upon recommendations which may change as time goes on.
3. Monitor and react to the spread of ash dieback as required.

### Compartment-specific objectives:

1. Maintain appropriate woodland structure to promote diversity of woodland flora by coppicing hazel, and thinning sycamore, beech and hornbeam when resources allow. **WBC active management ended in Feb 2016**
2. Improve woodland structure by reducing dominance of hornbeam and coppicing hazel.
3. Maintain existing condition - minimum intervention.
4. Continue annual cut and removal of semi-improved grassland meadow.
5. Maintain open water habitat.
6. Control vegetation succession to maintain open pasture. **WBC active management ended in Feb 2016**
7. Maintain recreation grassland and enhance plantation woodland by thinning where resources allow, control Himalayan balsam.
8. Control vegetation succession in open area and manage woodland to maximise diversity of tree species.
9. Maintain existing condition - minimum intervention.
10. Control succession to retain reedbed habitat and maintain shallow pools with standing water.
11. Manage for woodland, wetland and scrub mosaic, thin sycamore and oak as required.
12. Manage recreation grassland and woodland edge.
13. Manage as intensively used area with semi-formal arboretum, interpretive wildflower meadow and wildlife garden.
14. Manage for biodiversity with consideration for stability of cliff face.
15. Walled garden.



## 5. Conservation Action Plan

	Action	Lead	When	Resource	Complete
<b>Compartment 1: Marfords Wood</b>					
1:1	Rotational hazel coppicing No longer under WBC management				
1:2	Thin out mature sycamore No longer under WBC management				
1:3	Remove sycamore regeneration No longer under WBC management				
1:4	Maintain some open glades No longer under WBC management				
<b>Compartment 2: Embankment Woodland</b>					
2:1	Recommence rotational hazel coppicing	Site Ranger	yearly	Within existing resources  Ranger, volunteers	2020 2021 2022
2:2	Thin hornbeam 10%	Site Ranger	2018	Within existing resources  Ranger, volunteers	2020 2021 2022
2:3	Monitor bluebells	Site Ranger	Yearly	Within existing resources  Ranger, volunteers	2020 2021 2022
2:4	Monitor woodland	Ranger & Volunteers  Wirral Wildlife Rapid assessment	Yearly		2020 2021 2022
<b>Compartment 3: The Willow Carr</b>					
3:1	Monitor water levels and drying out	Site ranger	Yearly	Within existing resources	2020 2021 2022
3:2	Remove some fallen trees to enable access for balsam work	Site Ranger	Yearly	Within existing resources	2021 2022
<b>Compartment 4: Bowden's Hey Meadow</b>					
4:1	Cut and bail grass	Site Ranger	July/August each year	Stewardship £970 approx.	2020 2021 2022

4:2	Manage marginal scrub	Site Ranger	yearly		2020 2021 2022
4:3	Harrow meadow	Site Ranger	August	Friends	
4:4	Small Mammal Survey	Ranger  Wirral wildlife	When possible	Friends Group	2021 2022
4:4	Monitor Grassland	Ranger & Volunteers	Yearly		2020 2021 2022
<b>Compartment 5: Lady Bridge wetland</b>					
5:1	Maintain/manage areas of open water	Site Ranger	2 yearly	Within existing resources	2020 2022
5:2	Remove fallen crack willow	Site ranger	winter	Stewardship	2021 2022
<b>Compartment 6: Dibbinsdale Road Camp</b>					
6:1	Control succession and maintain the open pasture. No longer under WBC management				
6:2	Monitor the spread of bracken. No longer under WBC management				
6:3	Thin regenerating trees No longer under WBC management				
<b>Compartment 7: Spital Fields</b>					
7:1	Regular mowing	District team	Spring and Summer	Within existing resources	2020 2021 2022
7.2	Thin trees in plantation	Site Ranger	Winter	Within existing resources	2020 2021 2022
7:3	Remove dead elm  DISCONTINUED	Site Ranger	When applicable	Within existing resources	COMPLETED
7:4	Under plant woodland	Site Ranger	When applicable	Within existing resources	2017 2020
7:5	Improve woodland margins	Site Ranger	ongoing	Within existing resources	2021 2022
<b>Compartment 8: Spital Woodland</b>					
8:1	Remove ash regeneration from wet meadow area and cut back bramble. (Halt succession) Leave ash until further notice NE	Ranger, volunteers and task day teams	When applicable	Within existing resources	

8:2	Remove sycamore 30 % Leave sycamore until further notice NE	Site Ranger and volunteers	Winter	Within existing resources	
8:3	Re-route pathway along the edge of wet woodland.	Site Ranger And volunteers	When possible	Within existing resources	2017 2021
8:4	Coppice hazel	Site Ranger	Rotation 2 x 3 year	?	2018 2021
8:5	Monitor woodland	Site Ranger And volunteers	yearly		2020 2021 2022
<b>Compartment 9: Bowden's Hey Woodland</b>					
9:1					
<b>Compartment 10: Reedbed and Babbs meadow wetland</b>					
10:1	Where resources allow. Cut and remove reeds 33% on rotation	Ranger	2013	Within existing resources	2018 2020
10:2	Remove willow regeneration piecemeal	Ranger	2013	Within existing resources	2017 2020
10:3	Maintain open water where possible	Ranger	Ongoing	Within existing resources	2019 2020
10:4	Create large open water area and upgrade bund around Babs's meadow reed bed following discussion with NE	Ranger/development team	Dec 2014  Completed 2016	Stewardship	
<b>Compartment 11: Babbs Meadow</b>					
11:1	Remove Rhododendron 33% per year	Site Ranger	Winter 2019-21	Within existing resources	2019 2021
11:2	Thin trees on meadow	Site Ranger	2019	Within existing resources	2019
11:3	Transplant reeds in SUDS pools	Site Ranger	2021	Within existing resources	
<b>Compartment 12: Woodslee Field</b>					
12:1	Regular mowing	District team	Spring and summer	Within existing resources	2020 2021 2022
12:2	Manage marginal woodland habitat	Site Ranger	When applicable	Within existing resources	2020 2021 2022
<b>Compartment 13: Woodslee gardens</b>					
13:1	Scrub management	Site Ranger	Yearly when appropriate	Within existing resources	2020 2021 2022
13:2	Development of the new wildflower meadow	Site Ranger & Friends	yearly	Funded by friends' group	2020 2022

13:4	Monitor and renew bird boxes	Site Ranger	Jan- Feb yearly	Within existing resources  Ranger, volunteers	<b>2020</b>
13:5	Manage blue green algae in pond	Site ranger	Year round	Within existing resources	<b>2020 2021 2022</b>
Compartment 14: Woodslee Riverside					
14:1	Cut and clear rhododendron 20% each year	Site Ranger	When possible	Possible assistance	<b>2018 2020</b>
14:2	Monitor water from land drain  Waters survey	Site Ranger Volunteers	yearly	Within existing resources  Ranger, volunteers	<b>2018 2019</b>
14:3	Thin sycamore and remove sycamore regeneration <b>Leave sycamore until further notice NE</b>	Site Ranger	When possible	Within existing resources  Ranger, volunteers	<b>2017 2018</b>
Compartment 15: The Walled Garden					
15:1	Continue to develop sustainable garden And outdoor classroom	Site Ranger	Yearly	Eastham conservati on trust / Friends of Dibby & Donations	<b>2020 2021</b>
All Compartments					
All:1	Removal of Himalayan balsam	Site Ranger	May – September yearly	Forestry Commission grant  Ranger, volunteers, contractors	<b>2020 2021 2022</b>
All:2	Treatment of Japanese knotweed	Site Ranger	October yearly	Forestry Commission grant  Ranger	<b>2020 2021 2022</b>
All:3	Remove fallen willow from the river course with care to maintain slow flow of river through wetlands	Site Ranger	Winter yearly	Stewardship  Ranger, volunteers, contractors	<b>2020 2022</b>

## **6. Monitoring and Review – Achievements**

6.1 This conservation plan will be updated on a yearly basis, in November/December to coincide with the Green Flag application process. Actions will be updated accordingly. The plan will be reviewed after 5 years.

6.2 Monitoring is undertaken by volunteers and the site ranger as resources allow.

6.3 Natural England advise the on-site ranger regularly and monitor the site on a 6-yearly cycle. Their reports are available for view on the internet site 'Nature on the Map'.

Link:

[http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/special/sssi/unitlist.cfm?sssi\\_id=1002884](http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/special/sssi/unitlist.cfm?sssi_id=1002884)

6.4 Rapid assessment monitoring; using methodology based on the Rapid Assessment developed by Natural England was undertaken for the first time by volunteers for the woodland at Bromborough Wood and Bowden's Hey meadow in June 2014 with supervision from Hilary Ash (Wirral Branch, Cheshire Wildlife Trust). The intention is to undertake monitoring each year, to provide year on year comparison of floristic diversity. The results are held by the site Ranger.

6.5 Water quality monitoring is currently being undertaken every few months by Tim Ganicliffe (Wirral Branch, Cheshire Wildlife Trust). The results are available as a PowerPoint from the site Ranger. This information is fed back to The Environment Agency.

## **7. Stakeholder Engagement**

The Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale Conservation Management Plan is embedded in the Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale site management plan. Copies are available to all at the Ranger's office for reference and comment.

Friends of Dibbinsdale quarterly newsletter has a wide circulation and is used to advertise the availability of the plan for reference and comment.

Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale is a Green Flag award winner – the Friends group and volunteers are involved in the application process each year.

The Friends group and volunteers are involved in monitoring through the on-site ranger.

The Wirral Branch of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust are regularly in contact with the on-site ranger and contribute advice which is used in the management decision making process.

Other consultants include Danielle Lea-Smith from The Forestry Commission, Emily Bryan from Natural England and Erik Bowman, Wirral Tree Preservation Officer.

**Additional documents:** (held by the on-site Ranger)

Water quality monitoring  
Rapid assessment monitoring records  
Tree Preservation Order areas  
Site of Special Scientific Interest map  
Local Nature Reserve map

## **6. Monitoring and review – achievements**

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Other consultants include Danielle Lea-Smith from The Forestry Commission and Erik Bowman, Wirral Tree Preservation Officer.

### **Additional documents:** (held by the on-site Ranger)

Babbs meadow restoration project outline (2014)  
Water quality monitoring (2013-2014)  
Rapid assessment monitoring records (2014)  
Tree Preservation Order areas  
Site of Special Scientific Interest map  
Local Nature Reserve map

## **Appendix j): Volunteer records**

### **Volunteer Opportunities at Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR**

#### **Planned Volunteer task days for 2021 -23**

These extra open volunteer days have been put on hold pending replacement staff.

#### **Ongoing volunteer opportunities in the reserve**

- Thursday and Friday volunteers  
Regular task day working on park maintenance and management. (Access can be difficult due to local geography).
- Saturday morning, D of E award volunteers 10 – 12  
Young people wishing to gain volunteer hours for an award or college prerequisite or just to help in the park.



- Work placement opportunities  
College students looking for an extended work placement or holiday time challenge.
- Work experience opportunities  
Year 10 and 11 students considering a career in conservation.

The minimum age for volunteers at Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale is 14 years. Places are limited but we can advise of other opportunities within The Wirral. All applicants must have an informal interview.  
Brotherton Park and Dibbinsdale LNR covers a large area within a river valley, this may create access difficulties for some volunteers.

#### Group Volunteer Opportunities

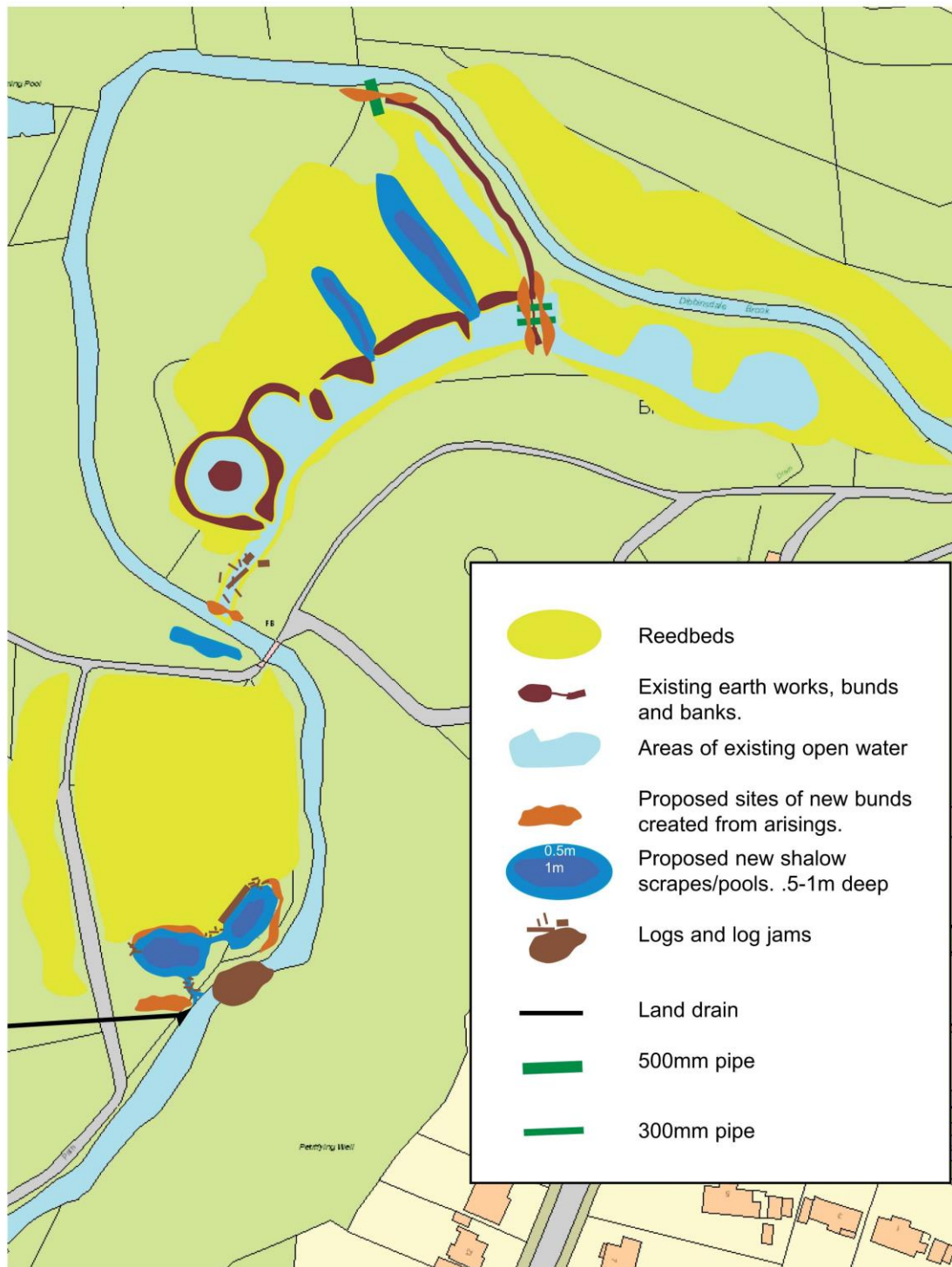
- By arrangement.

## Appendix k: Project bank

PROJECT BANK		
On site signage	Cost and source of funding to be confirmed	Signage in the reserve is limited. New signage would help guide visitors around the park. <b>ONGOING</b>
Visitor Centre Decoration and refurbishment	Cost and source of funding to be confirmed. The Friends are trying to source grant funding	The decoration is poor as a result of the leaking roof and resulting damp conditions. This work could only be carried out if the roof is replaced.  <b>ONGOING – CAPITAL REFURBISHMENT PENDING</b>
Renew onsite benches or new benches (Materials only)	Friends group to fund the new benches	On benches are in poor condition and fabricated from scrap wood. Benches now bought and will be installed by 2022/3
Path under cliffs (resurface)	Cost and source of funding to be confirmed. (Rights of way officer, Wirral Footpath Society)	This path is made from concrete which is breaking up causing trip hazards, <b>THIS IS AN ONGOING REPAIR WE UNDERTAKE WHEN REQUIRED</b>

## Appendix I: Babbs Meadow: Reed bed restoration project 2014. Complete.

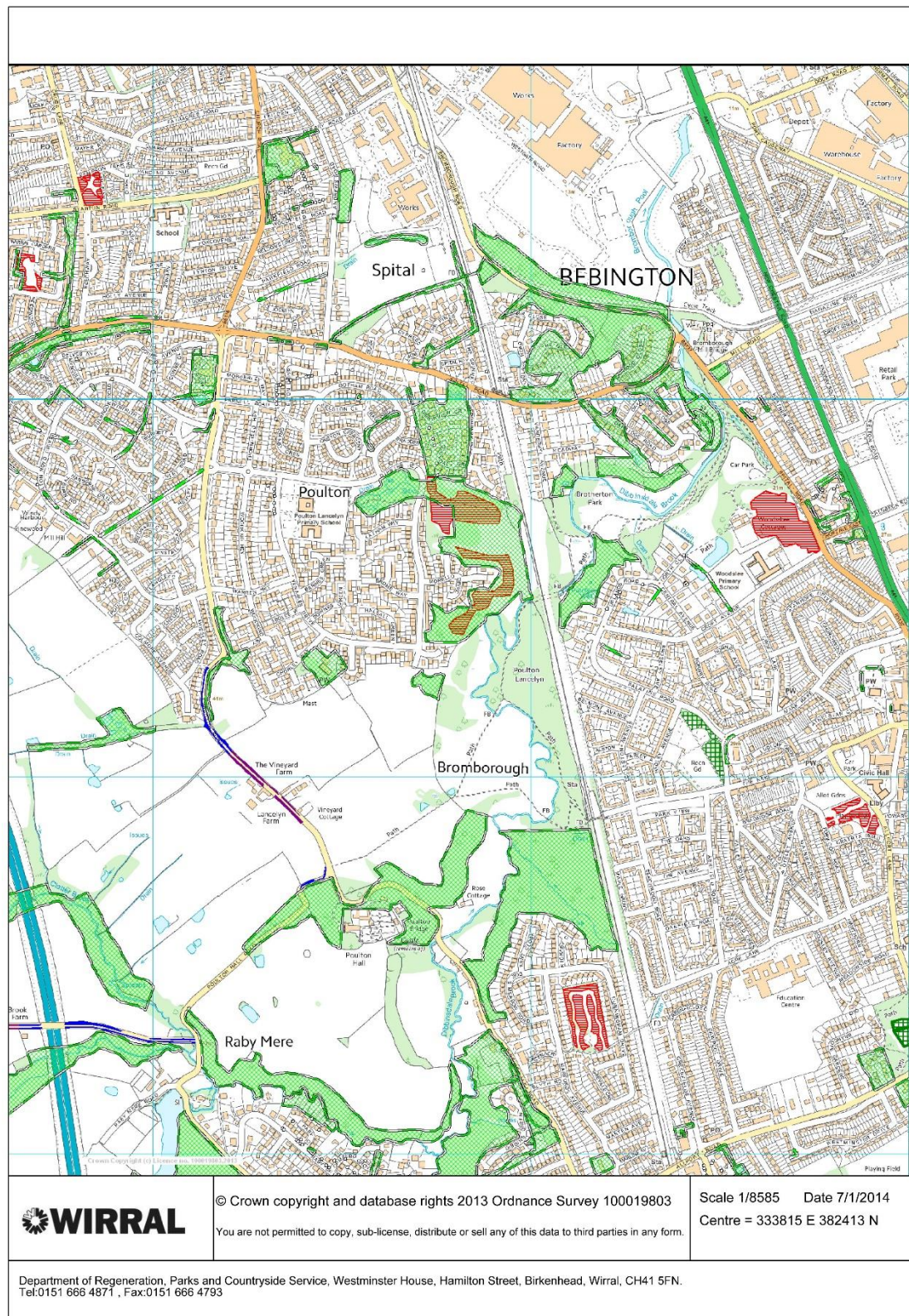
Map showing the extent of the reed beds, existing pools created in 2002 and proposed upgrades.



## Appendix m:



## Areas of the reserve and surrounding area covered by a Tree Preservation Order.



Areas marked in red show suggested areas for reduced mowing in future.

## Appendix n: Parks & Countryside Tree Policy



<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/trees-hedgerows-and-woodland/tree-hedgerow-and>

## Appendix o: Wirral Parks and Countryside Service – Sustainability

**WIRRAL PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE TEAM**


**WIRRAL PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE — SUSTAINABILITY**

**Aim :** Wirral Parks & Countryside teams putting sustainability at the heart of decision making and service delivery.

**Key Commitments:**

In all our activities, We will :

- **Improve our sustainable performance** review, annually report, and continually improve our sustainability performance , including progressing on carbon reduction.
- **Comply with environmental legislation**, regulations and relevant codes of practise.
- **Purchase sustainability.** Select and promote goods and services , using purchasing criteria which balance economic, social and environmental factors, requiring our suppliers to address similar issues.
- **Use Natural resources sustainably.** Implement an efficiency programme to reduce energy and water demand and promote and install low carbon technologies in our buildings/ other constructions where possible, requiring contractors to address similar issues e.g. supplier miles, procurement, local labour etc.
- **Travel sustainably .** Encourage sustainable travel by staff, service users, contractors, residents and visitors.
- **Minimise waste.** Reduce, re-use and recycle resources, as far as is practicable, and ensure responsible disposal of all its residual waste.
- **Manage land sustainability.** Protect , conserve and enhance our natural and built environment, safeguarding heritage , enhancing habitats and biodiversity and the amenity value of the parks and countryside.
- **Raise awareness** of this policy and related sustainability issues amongst employees , contractors, service users, residents and visitors.
- **Work In partnership** with other organisations to promote wider responsibility towards sustainability, highlight best practice, share information and encourage joint working.

**WIRRAL**