MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015 - 2020

BUNKERS PARK, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD



Welcome to the Bunkers Park Green Flag Management Plan

Prior to the land that now makes up Bunkers Park being obtained by Dacorum Borough Council for the local community, it was agricultural land with evidence that some of the hedgerows had been established for over 400 years.

The new woodland areas were planted over 18 years ago by local families and children from the nearby schools. In the last 6 years we have developed The Friends of Bunkers Park (FoBP), now a thriving friends group whose volunteers help maintain the area.

The original planting has been so successful that we now have areas of emerging woodland and a significant area of Hazel. Over the last few years FoBP volunteers have worked toward developing the woodland areas and coppicing the hazel. FoBP and the Borough are working together to find sustainable uses for the wood produced. We work with the Chiltern Conservation Volunteers who use hazel for hedge laying and are linking up with other groups to find uses such as kindling wood. Our aim is to convert all our wood into useable products thereby maintaining the old tradition of Hazel coppices.

15 to 25 volunteers work in all weathers and there is a great sense of local teamwork. This was recognised in 2014 as the group won the coveted Dacorum Community Champions Award for their ceaseless efforts to maintain the environment for wildlife, the community at large and to provide a sustainable future for the Park. The group want to help develop this management plan to improve the Park for the benefit of the local community – two legged, four legged, feathered and non-feathered.

Geoff Doole, Friends of Bunkers Park Coordinator, January 2015

The area of Bunkers Park is gradually evolving into one of Dacorum's gems. The varieties of habitats, from mature woodland to wild flower meadows provide a rich experience for local people and visitors.

The developing habitats are a testament to the planning of Bunkers Park and all the local residents who took part in the original planting.

Ongoing stewardship of the site is shared between a partnership of Dacorum Council, Nash Mills Parish Council and The Friends of Bunkers Park. The Friends group, who are recent winners of the Dacorum Community Champions Award undertake many practical tasks and embody the principle of 'a feeling of ownership'

This Green Flag Plan takes the site on to its next stage of development and I hope to many Green Flag awards into the future.

Councillor Julie Laws – Portfolio Holder, Environmental Services and Sustainability - February 2015

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Amendment Sheet

Alteration Date	Section Updated	Notes	Initials
December 2016	Whole plan reviewed	In consultation with Nash Mills, Leverstock Green Parish Councils and Friends of Bunkers Park	CC

Judges Comments 2014 – Action Taken



Green Flag Award 2015/2016

Name of Site – Bunkers Park Managing Organisation – Dacorum Borough Council

Bandscores

Desk	0-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-30			
Assessment								
Field	20-29	30-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-70
Assessment								
Overall	30-44	45-54	55-59	60-65	66-69	70-74	75-79	80+
score								

Status – PASS Overall band score 66-69

Desk Assessment Feedback (Management Plan and supporting documentation)

Band score - 20-24

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Action Taken
Presentation	The plan is a well- written and well- structured document, with clear sections and good use of site plans. It provides a great understanding of the park prior to visiting.	photographs would help. The contents may be	inserted into the 2017

	1		
Health, Safety & Security	Dacorum Borough Council have a corporate Health and Safety Policy coupled with appropriate Risk Assessments	Review all Health and Safety aspects on an annual basis.	Risk assessments both generic and job specific are reviewed
Maintenance of equipment, buildings & landscape	Very detailed maintenance programme included within the Management Plan covering all aspects of best practice.	Dacorum Borough Council has an well- equipped depot supported by excellent community involvement.	We continue to support our volunteers with high quality equipment
Litter, cleanliness, vandalism	The Management Plan refers to litter and dog waste bins emptied weekly	Enter the timescales of removal of detritus.	Frequencies are entered 15.3
Environmental Sustainability	Timber harvested from the site have been used to make benches, hibernacula's and the recent works on sustainability is well documented throughout the management plan.	Herbicide is minimised but not excluded. Perhaps this could be reviewed.	We have continued to use 'home grown ' timber for bench installation. Herbicide would only be used where no effective alternative exists such as multiple tree stumps in meadow land
Conservation of heritage & nature	The management plan provides a descriptive history and heritage of the park. Excellent section on biodiversity gives an insight into the flora and fauna to be found within the grounds. There is a good corporate Environmental strategy.	No Recommendations	
Community Involvement	The involvement of the local community on a number of projects shows an active community involved in the decision making process.	The plan should identify the results of any consultation process.	A meeting was held on November 14th 2016 between representatives from Friends of Bunkers Park,

			Leverstock Green and Nash Mills Parish Council and Dacorum to consider changes / additions to the management Plan. These have now been encompassed within the plan.
Marketing Strategy	There are several examples of corporate marketing literature, which includes Bunkers Park.	Review marketing strategy and how the park is promoted.	Features about Bunkers Park to be found on the web sites of Dacorum Borough, Leverstock and Nash Mills Parish websites. This plan is to be found on Parish and Borough web sites
Overall management	The management plan indicates that the park is a much loved and well maintained site.	Hidden Gem!	

Field Assessment Feedback Band score – 45-49

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Action Taken
A Welcoming Place	The overall impression of the park is welcoming and is inviting to visitors from most of the entrances to the park.	Almost all of the hedging and shrubs are encroaching on the paths and in some cases more than 50% of the footpaths have been lost.	Unclear of how this conclusion was reached – none of the path network has been lost, none are impeded by vegetation
Healthy, Safe and Secure	The overall impression of the park is very good and is inviting to visitors.	The Park should be announced with improved road signage in the area surrounding the Park. Assisting people trying to find it.	Signage has been placed at the main entrance to assist visitors coming by car

Clean and Well Maintained	The Park clearly acts as a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use.	The suite of additional supporting documents needs to be reviewed more carefully and it is recommend to have a specific folder linked the management of the Park. Some of the documents require updating.	This will all be included within the existing Action Plan that addresses all of the Green Flag Plan sections
Sustainability	Up to 50 volunteers are actively involved in the maintenance of the area in order to provide a sustainable resource of maintenance.	However, it would be beneficial to ensure that the staff on the ground that undertake the day to day duties and the representatives from the contractors are available to meet judges	This option will be put prior to the judge coming to Bunkers Park in 2017
Conservation and Heritage	The Park is being maintained using modern methods and techniques in accordance with best practice.	Continue with excellent environmental initiatives.	
Community Involvement	Management authority clearly interacts with a wide number of community groups in its management of the common and actively purses the involvement of members of the community.	It would be beneficial to ensure that community groups and users are available to meet judges.	We will ask the 2017 judge who he wants present during his/her visit.
Marketing	The marketing material should be included within the supporting documents folder.	A review and more up to date information would be useful.	Management plans are displayed on Borough and Parish web sites
Management	Colin's, tour of the Park was very informative.	The management plan should be a document which once produced is regularly used.	All that we do is strictly related to the plan and the plan reviewed before annual submission

Additional Comments

Bunkers Park is genuinely a hidden gem with lots of character and is a much appreciated facility within the local area.

1.0 Bunkers Park Management Plan Summary

1.1 Introduction

Bunkers Park is situated at the SE corner of Hemel Hempstead between the two Borough wards of Nash Mills and Leverstock Green. Dacorum Borough Council acquired the site from the New Towns Commission in 1995 with the aim of developing it as an open space to be enjoyed by local residents as well as potential for wildlife.

The Council commissioned the Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust to prepare a report on how the area could be transformed from farmland into an informal area for recreation and wildlife. The draft plan was completed in 1997 and proposed a mixture of short amenity grass, wildflower meadows, new hedgerows, woodlands and a large area of hazel. Consultation took place during Spring 1997 and following great public support the final plan was published in Autumn 1997.

Some of the main objectives and achievements were as follows:

- to create a park in the south east of Hemel Hempstead to complement Gadebridge Park.
- to provide a large area of country parkland with access for walkers, horse riders and cyclists.
- to provide an area of informal play space that could be used as sports pitches if required.
- around the existing infrastructure of hedges and mature woodland (The Firs) to create a variety of new wildlife habitats.
- to provide an opportunity for environmental improvement and community involvement.
- In April 1996 the areas intended for traditional meadows were sown with a mixture of grass and wildflowers (see appendix 1), all apart from Pond Field which was allowed to develop naturally.
- In the Winter of 1997/98 the community woodland was planted in the former Rumballs and Home Field. Local people took part in tree planting during organised community planting days.
- In February 1998 school children and other local people were involved in planting a large area of hazel. Also in 1998, a wet area was developed into a pond.

• In 1998/99 the car park was constructed, hedges planted and gates installed however the planned picnic area, sports pitches and children playground were not pursued.

1.2 Intent / Concept

The vision for Bunkers Park was established in the adopted plan conceived by the Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust in 1997. The Trust have provided advice from time to time and the original concepts have been embodied in this management plan.

The decision to enter the site for the Green Flag Award in 2015 necessitated the production of an integrated management plan to satisfy the requirements of the scheme. It is hoped that this style of management plan will help to ensure that Bunkers Park will continue to meet the needs of local residents and visitors for many years to come whilst setting out a vision for its future.

1.3 Audiences

This comprehensive plan aims to satisfy the requirements and needs of a wide ranging and diverse group of internal and external organisations, partners and users. These include the following:

- Green Flag Award Scheme
- Borough Council
- Nash Mills & Leverstock Green Parish Councils
- Local Residents
- Local Environmental Groups, including The Friends of Bunkers Park
- General Public

1.4 Process

Partners with the strongest influence on the process on all matters connected with Bunkers Park are Nash Mills and Leverstock Green Parish Councils and The Friends of Bunkers Park. Both have been involved in the preparation of this plan to ensure that any proposed developments fully meet the high expectations of local residents.

1.5 Style

The format of this management plan is based on the CABE Space recommended style.

1.6 Key Issues

The process of producing this management plan identified and highlighted several issues that have been fully addressed in this plan. These include the following:

- The need to, where necessary, revise and update several key areas of management within the park.
- The need to consult on issues affecting the site, as Bunkers Park is already popular with local residents and visitors who may not welcome changes to the area.
- The need to improve the existing facilities.
- The need to achieve a balance between the number of visitors to the site and its nature conservation value. Although the site has the capacity to absorb a much greater number of visitors, this may have a detrimental effect on the tranquillity of the site, disturb local wildlife and cause erosion.
- The need to maintain Bunkers Park as a country not an urban park.

Bunkers Park 2015 – 2020

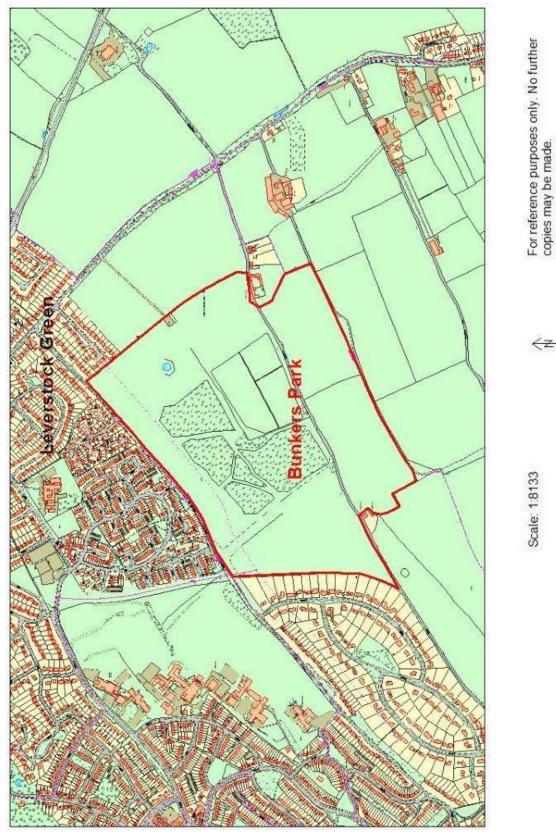
A – Where Are We Now?



2.0 Site Description

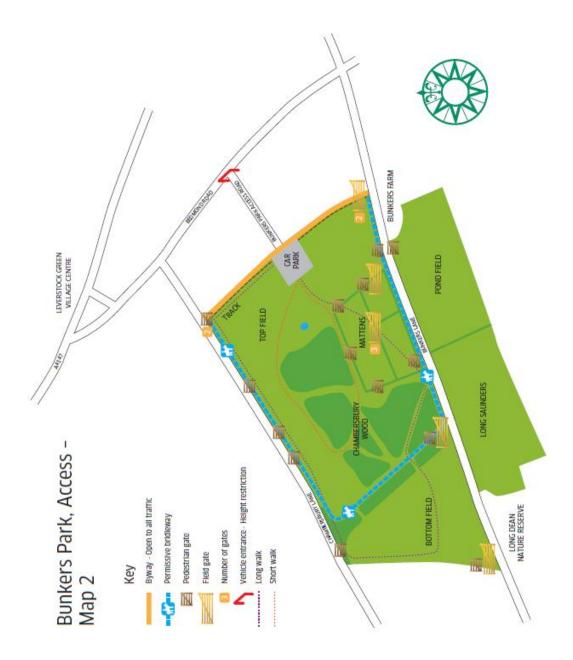
2.1 Location

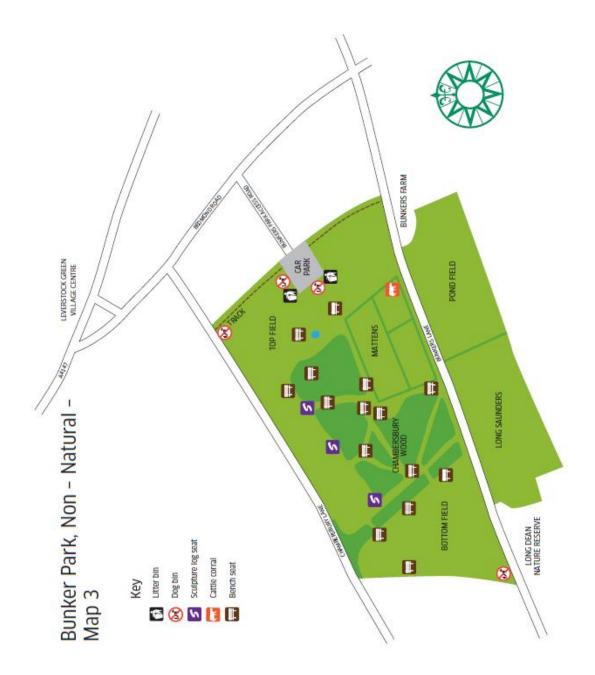
Bunkers Park is situated in the south east corner of Hemel Hempstead and north of the village of Kings Langley. Most of the site lies between Chambersbury Lane and Bunkers Lane. The distinct sections of Bunkers Park comprise 94 acres (38 hectares) have Long Deans Nature Reserve and the boundary with Three Rivers District council close by. Views from the site often belie its close proximity to urban centres such as Watford, Hemel Hempstead and the M25. (see location map 1). National Grid Reference TL 084 062.

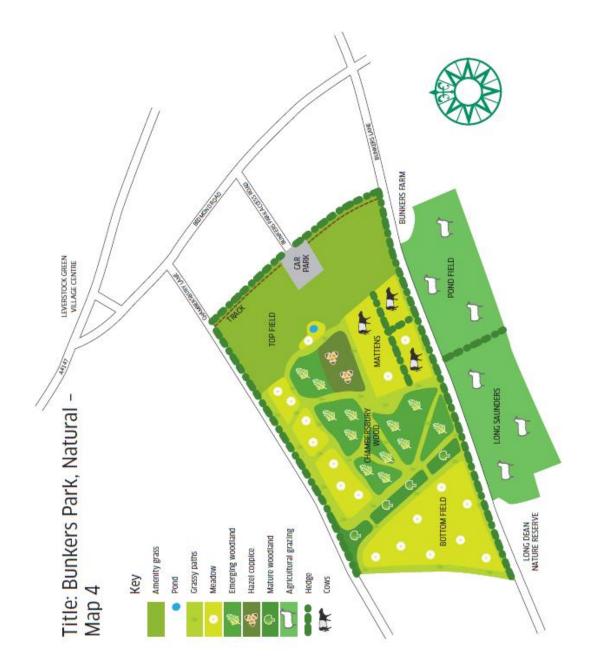




Scale: 1:8133







2.2 Access (Map 2)

A number of paths and one (Public) Right of Way provide easy access within the site. There are a number of pedestrian entrances from Chambersbury and Bunkers Lane all leading to the network of internal paths. The byway at the northern end of the site is the only statutory Right of Way runs between Chambersbury and Bunkers Lane.

During 2017 two waymarked paths were introduced, one short walk with a number of benches on route, the other one, longer.

The external boundary of Bunkers Park marks the position of the permissive bridleway. This waymarked trail links to surrounding areas and provides a pleasant environment for the horse riders using Bunkers Park

There is only one car park in Bunkers Park with room for approximately 15 cars, it is accessed from Bedmond Road, along a roadway which is not owned or managed by the Borough.

2.3 Non Natural Features (Map 3)

There are numerous litter and dog bins distributed throughout the site.

The external and internal fencing around 'Mattens' fields was designed to enclose and manage cattle. When needed, the area may be closed to provide secure areas for ground nesting birds however skylarks have not been heard in this area in recent years. There is a cattle corral at one end of Mattens.

A very large oak was felled near an entrance to the park on Chambersbury Lane and from the timber three wood sculpture seats were made. They can be found on the edge of new woodland areas.

There are fifteen informal bench seats throughout the site.

There are no buildings within Bunkers Park.

2.4 Natural Features (Map 4)

Bunkers Park is the largest public open space in the locality, it attracts many local residents both by foot and car. Many local residents can remember when the area now known as Bunkers Park was farmland, records show the area has been farmed for over 2000 years and within the last 100 formed part of Bunkers and Chambersbury Farms within the Manor of Abbots Langley.

Prior to the formation of Bunkers Park there were a number of existing features that have been retained and incorporated within the park.

• Old hedgerows running along Bunkers .and Chambersbury Lane

- A strip of woodland running between Bunkers and Chambersbury Lane (The Firs)
- An old marl (chalk) pit in the centre of the site
- Old lanes some of which are now bridleways or rights of way

The former open farmland has now given way to some restricted views across the site because of the emerging woodland in the central part of the site. The new woodlands contain oak, beech, ash, native cherry, hornbeam, field maple, rowan and have a network of grassy paths running through them.

Adjacent to the areas of emerging woodland there is an area of hazel coppice of nearly 1 hectare (2.4 acres) making it one of the largest areas of pure hazel coppice in the County.

Between Chambersbury and Bunkers Lane is a wooded strip which runs east/west across the site. At 1.25 hectares (3 acres) it is the only mature woodland in Bunkers Park. Known as The Firs, it contains Beech, Scots Pine, Ash and Whitebeam. There are three paths leading from the main part of the site through the wood and to Bottom Field that contains of Ox-eye daisies, wild thyme and more recently Pyramidal Orchid.

Top field, near to the car park and stretching between Bunkers and Chamberbury Lane is close mown grassland and the largest clear area of amenity grass in the Borough.

Mattens comprise of three fields, all with fencing and new hedges of field maple, hawthorn, hazel, guelder rose, dog rose and blackthorn. There is a water supply to each field for cattle grazing.

The remainder of the site has meadow areas and ride edges containing many wild flowers including yellow rattle, scabious, birds foot trefoil, knapweed and pyramidal orchid.

2.5 Signage

During 2017 the permissive bridleway, short and long walks were waymarked. Interpretive signs were placed at three main entrances and a sign specific to Hazel was positioned adjacent to the Hazel Coppice.

2.6 Ownership

Bunkers Park is in the Freehold ownership of Dacorum Borough Council. The site boundary is marked on Map 1.

2.7 Conveyances

Bunkers Park was acquired by Dacorum Borough Council in 1995 as

replacement open space for that which was lost when Jarman Park was developed. The former farmland had been originally acquired by English Partnerships (formally the Commission of New Towns".

2.8 Site Surveys and Assessments

Currently there is no formal survey work on habitats or species.

2.9 Archaeological Context

Within Bunkers Park there is a marl pit where chalk was once excavated. The pit has been retained within the Park

2.10 Policy Context

Many Council strategies and policy statements have a direct impact on this management plan. These include the following:

- Trees and Woodlands Policy
- Green Space Strategy
- Habitat Survey for Dacorum Borough Council: A Nature Conservation Reference Guide
- Dacorum Cycling Strategy
- Anti Social Behaviour Strategy
- Community Safety Partnership Strategy
- Corporate Sustainability Policy
- Right of Way Policy
- Dacorum Borough Nature Conservation Strategy, a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

3.0 Current Management and Maintenance Arrangements

Bunkers Park is managed by Dacorum Borough Council and maintained using mainly external woodland contractors. Dacorum's 'Clean, Safe, & Green teams undertake the routine grass and meadow cutting. Well Farm currently lease Pond Field and Long Saunders. The Friends of Bunkers Park assist with the management of the site by undertaking 6 / 8 project days usually spent coppicing hazel, hedge laying or thinning out new woodland and in summer controlling ragwort.

3.1 Staffing Arrangements

The Council's Trees and Woodlands Officer is directly responsible for the management of the site.

3.2 Inspection Regime

The site is inspected regularly by the Council's Trees & Woodlands Officer. The local community are also vigilant and often report issues of concern such

as stray horses or overnight camping. Starting in 2016, the local Cow Watch group, on behalf of Box Moor Trust, undertake regular inspections of the belted Galloway cattle in Mattens fields.

3.3 Footpaths

There is one statutory right of way and a network of general paths running throughout the site. See Map 2, Access.

3.4 Bridleways

There is a permissive bridleway, shown on Map 2, for the use of horse riders. The bridleway is situated on the perimeter of Bunkers Park.

3.5 Litter and Dog Bins

The Borough Council empties litter and dog waste bins once a week. Some walkers carry a litter pick thereby reducing the need for an organised in depth litter pick of the whole site, normally undertaken by Friends of Bunkers Park.

3.6 Community Context

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) manages the site in partnership with Nash Mills and Leverstock Green Parish Councils, The Friends of Bunkers Park.

3.7 Community Involvement

Nash Mills Parish Council provides the main link between the local community and Dacorum Borough Council. The Parish Clerk undertakes all the administration for the Friends of Bunkers Park.

The 'Friends of Bunkers Park' was formed in June 2009 and meets mainly during winter on a regular basis under the guidance of the DBC Woodlands Officer.

Since its formation in 2009, The Friends of Bunkers Park have met regularly to undertake a range of projects within Bunkers Park. The Friends of Bunkers Park and The Woodlands Officer annually produce a programme of dates generally from October to April.

Bunkers Park 2015 – 2020

B – Where Do We Want To Get To?







Friends of Bunkers Park 2002 & 2016

4.0 Vision and Aims

Our vision is to retain the existing natural features of Bunkers Park and to manage the varied demands of visitors with the nature conservation interest. Our aims are:

- To retain the existing natural and historic features of Bunkers Park and develop the emerging woodland and meadow areas as a country park
- To sensitively manage Bunkers Park to increase its bio-diversity and nature conservation value
- To encourage and enable local community involvement in the management and care of Bunkers Park to maintain civic pride and a feeling of ownership in the site
- To ensure Bunkers Park is a well-used community asset which provides opportunities for passive recreation

5.0 Analysis and Evaluation

The site has been evaluated using the relevant Green Flag criteria. The prestigious and nationally recognised Green Flag Award Scheme is a critical element of the Government's aim to drive up the standards in our parks and green spaces. The purpose of the award is to encourage the provision of good quality public parks and green spaces that the community can be proud of, and to provide a framework for raising the standard of management and maintenance.

At a local level, the importance of parks and open spaces to the well being of the community has been recognised within Dacorum Borough Council's Vision to promote civic pride and an active community and to create clean, tidy and a safe environment.

This management plan submitted originally in 2015 for Bunkers Park is part of the process towards achieving a Green Flag Award and adding to the existing three that the Borough holds for Tring Memorial Gardens, Chipperfield Common and Canal Fields, Berkhamsted.

6.0 A Welcoming Place

6.1 Signage and Access

There are no interpretive signs currently at Bunkers Park. Within the first two years of this plan two interpretive signs are planned i) a general map and

information about the whole site ii) a sign that describes the importance of Hazel in the British landscape. Two circular walks will also be designed and supported with informal benches, these are scheduled for 2017.

6.2 Car Parks

The single car park will be kept in a serviceable and attractive condition

6.3 External Access

Bunkers Park is accessible on foot from many directions. The entrances will be kept clear of vegetation and where they become wet / muddy will be topped up with aggregate.

6.4 Access for All

There are no stiles or similar obstructions to access on Bunkers Park. The main footpaths are accessible in most seasons however Bunkers Park is a natural environment and footpaths can become muddy especially during the winter months.

6.5 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) for Bunkers Park

The fairly level terrain and development of one of the two circular walks aims to provide the opportunity of access for all without detracting from the natural appearance of the site. The short route is supported by benches where rest can be taken.

6.6 Public Transport

Buses serve the site of Bunkers Park from outlying areas. Details of the public transport routes can be found on the appropriate web sites.

6.7 Recommendations

- 1. That Dacorum Borough, Friends of Bunkers Park and Nash Mills and Leverstock Green Parish Councils continue to work together to achieve the Vision and Aims as stated at 4.0
- 2. Develop two interpretive signs for the site.
- 3. Develop two circular walks, one especially to favour access for all.
- 4. Sign the permissive bridleway.
- 5. Inspect the car park on annual basis in autumn and undertake such repairs as needed to keep the car park in good condition.
- 6. Ensure pedestrian entrances are kept clear of vegetation and topped up with aggregate as needed

7.0 Healthy Safe and Secure

7.1 Internal Access

Access within the site is excellent thanks to its mainly level terrain and network of grassy paths. The site is inspected regularly by the Trees & Woodlands Officer.



Vegetation management to be undertaken as needed to ensure good access.

7.2 Inspection of Equipment and Facilities

The safety of site visitors is a high priority for Borough and Parish Councils. To ensure a safe visit by users, regular inspections are undertaken by the Trees & Woodlands Officer of facilities such as paths, benches and fencing.

7.3 Tree Inspection

Trees adjacent to paths are inspected for safety by the Woodlands Officer along with a general visual inspection of trees throughout the site. Any defective tree that is considered a risk to the safety of visitors is either made safe or removed as soon as possible.

7.4 Risk Assessment

Bunkers Park is a relatively safe environment for recreational activities. It is however maintained as a natural environment and barriers and safety notices are minimal. A detailed Risk Assessment has been carried out and is available upon request. The Risk Assessment is reviewed annually. Tree work contractors working on the site are the Council's term contractor. As such they are required to have a Health and Safety Policy and to undertake their own Risk Assessment.

7.5 Security

There is no formalised security at Bunkers Park.

Anti-social behaviour at Bunkers Park is sporadic and appears to be associated with the more favourable weather conditions in summer.

There are excellent sight lines in most parts of Bunkers Park however if vegetation is left unchecked it can become overgrown, management of rides and edges will continue to provide an open and secure environment for walkers and riders in Bunkers Park.

7.6 Dog Control and Fouling

Dog waste poses a potential health hazard for visitors, particularly children and cyclists. There are currently 4 dog waste bins within the site, the Borough Council empties dog waste bins. At present, there is evidence of dog fouling within the site and the situation needs to be kept under review.

7.7 Recommendations

- 1. Undertake regular inspections, maintain footpaths and undertake surface improvements as required.
- 2. Undertake regular inspection of trees and main infrastructure items along main footpaths, make safe any hazardous trees identified and undertake other such repairs as necessary
- 3. Maintain open edge along the main paths as part of a safer environment and the glades and rides network.
- 4. Annually review and update Health and Safety Risk Assessments.
- 5. Keep responsible dog ownership/behaviour under review

8.0 Clean and Well Maintained

8.1 Litter and Waste Management

The Borough Council undertakes litter and dog waste collection from bins on a weekly basis. The provision and collection of litter is something that can be kept under review.

Fly tipping is generally not a problem at Bunkers Park. It is important that any fly tipping is dealt with promptly to deter further incidents.

8.2 Site Management

Bunkers Park is managed by Dacorum Borough Council in accordance with the best management practices. The Council employs a Trees &Woodlands Officer who is responsible for managing woodlands and nature conservation sites in Dacorum including Bunkers Park. Details of management operations are described in Section C, 'How Will We Get There'.

8.3 Recommendations

- 1. In co-operation with the Parish Councils keep the provision of bins and collections under review.
- 2. Ensure any fly tipping is removed promptly.
- 3. Undertake the woodland management operations identified in Section C.

9.0 Environmental Sustainability

9.1 Environmental Management System

The Council first adopted its Corporate Environmental Policy in 2002. This Policy was refreshed in January 2011 and states the Council's aim to ensure that it identifies the environmental impacts of its operations and services and continually improves its environmental performance to promote environmental protection. In particular, the policy makes commitments to reduce pollution and waste from the Council's activities and to manage its use of natural resources.

In November 2012, the Council received accreditation to the standard 'ISO 14001' for the environmental management of its operational activities taking place at its operational sites. This demonstrates the Council's systematic approach to understanding its environmental impacts and commitment to continually improve.

To deliver ongoing improvement the Council annually sets environmental objectives and targets relating to its most significant environmental impacts and develops programmes to meet them. Priorities currently include reductions in the Council's use of fuel, energy and water and its production of waste.

All contractors who undertake work at Bunkers Park must have their own environmental policies and work to those of the Council.

9.2 Climate Change

Dacorum Borough Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in February 2007 and is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the terms of this declaration. It is required to report its greenhouse gas emissions from its operations to the Government annually and as part of the environmental management system is working to reduce these emissions.

9.3 Pesticide and Peat Use

The use of pesticides or herbicides at Bunkers Park is only to be undertaken when all other control methods have been considered and rejected. Usage strictly in accordance with the Council's Pesticide Policy and the most up to date requirements of the appropriate Government agencies.

The importation and use of peat is not permitted at Bunkers Park.

9.4 Materials and Woodland Produce

Wherever possible, materials and products used during the management of Bunkers Park should come from sustainable and ecologically viable sources. All wood products must come from Forestry Stewardship Council registered suppliers or derived from Bunkers Park itself.

There is a general presumption against transporting branch wood, wood chips or timber arising from management works, away from Bunkers Park.

Material from Hazel coppicing is already being used locally, other markets for coppice material to be explored.



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9.5 Recommendations

- 1. Work to the spirit and letter of the Council's Environmental Policy and all that is inferred in the receipt of its ISO 14001 award
- 2. Continue to implement a stringent pesticide policy at Bunkers Park. Review the Council's Pesticide Policy
- 3. Source sustainable and ecologically viable materials and products for use at Bunkers Park.
- 4. Accommodate timber materials and products arising from tree works on site or locally.
- 5. Work to find markets for coppice material

10.0 Conservation and Heritage

10.1 UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)

UK BAP supports the implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) on behalf of the UK Biodiversity Partnership and the UK Government.

Biological diversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

The UK Biodiversity Partnership replaced the UK Biodiversity Group in 2002 following the Governments response to the Millennium Biodiversity Report, with the aim of bringing together all the partners involved in or with an interest in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and in policy on biodiversity, and to co-ordinate action that should be taken forward at a UK level.

The UKBAP comprises three main elements

- Species Action Plans
- Habitat Action Plans
- Local Action Plans

For more information about UKBAP, see www.ukbap.org.uk

10.2 Dacorum Borough Nature Conservation Strategy – A Local Bio Diversity Action Plan

Each Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) works on the basis of partnership to identify local priorities and to determine the contribution they can make to

the delivery of the national Species and Habitat Action Plan targets. Often, but not always, LBAPs conform to county boundaries

The Dacorum Borough Nature Conservation Strategy (2001) was jointly produced by Dacorum Borough Council, Dacorum Environmental Forum and Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

The plan details species and habitats for which action plans have been prepared.

Species listed that may be found in or close to Bunkers Park include, Great Crested Newt, Tree Sparrow, Bullfinch, Song Thrush, Barn Owl, Pipistrelle & Natterers Bat and Dormouse.

10.3 Protected Species and Habitat Regulation

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 remains the most important piece of legislation for the protection of wildlife. Subject to a few exceptions, the Act covers a wide range of measures including the protection of birds, mammals, plants, and their habitats and species introductions.

Since passing of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in 1981 there have been various amendments to the text of the Act, most significantly through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (England and Wales).

The Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and the Council Directive 79/409/EEC provide wider protection for species such as Bats.

All management works and activities at Bunkers Park will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, subsequent amendments and EEC regulations.

10.4 Site Management

Bunkers Park is not a static environment. It is a constantly changing and dynamic mosaic of different habitats that support a diversity of plant and animal life.

Due to external pressures on the site, it is necessary to actively manage these habitats in order to maximise their amenity and conservation value, as well as to ensure the perpetuity of the area itself. In order to translate the broader management objectives into a prescriptive proposal of works, the management actions for the site have been divided into the following categories.

- Mature woodland management
- Emerging woodland management
- Management of hazel coppice
- Meadow management
- Bunkers Park 2017

- Amenity grass management
- Ride / edge management
- Pond management
- Boundary management
- Agricultural grazing

10.5 Ecological Data

No coordinated data exists for Bunkers Park. Ecological surveys and data collection are required that build upon such survey work that is in existence. Further work is required in order to measure the effectiveness of management work to create a baseline on which to judge the effect of future management work.

10.6 Recommendations

- 1. Undertake works as described in the Action Plan that will contribute towards the delivery of the Dacorum Borough Nature Conservation Strategy A Local Bio-Diversity Action Plan.
- 2. Implement the management prescriptions for each area as described in Section C, Site Management.
- 3. Commission Phase 1 Habitat survey





11.0 Community Involvement

A formal partnership between the Parishes, Friends Group and Borough Council is desirable in order to continue the evolution of Bunkers Park

The 'Friends of Bunkers Park' (F of BP) to continue meeting regularly under the guidance of the Trees & Woodlands Officer.

Engage with other community groups and support one off projects, team building days and other programmes designs to involve the wider community.

11.1 Recommendations

- 1. Formalise a relationship between Parishes, Friends Group and Borough Council in respect of Bunkers Park Management to result in at least one meeting a year to review the management plan prior to Green Flag submission.
- 2. Trees & Woodlands Officer to support an annual programme of events for Friends of Bunkers Park and as the need arises, develop the Friends group in accordance with member's wishes.
- 3. Engage with other community groups

12.0 Marketing

The surrounding population is increasing as a result of new developments such as the SAPPI site at the south end of Bunkers Lane, however the car park will for the foreseeable future, remain the same and so the pressure on Bunkers Park remain relatively low. It is not currently considered that marketing beyond the Dacorum, Nash Mills and Leverstock Green web pages is necessary.

12.1 Media Releases

Nash Mills and Leverstock Green both have publications, and so any events or news worthy activities can be submitted along with the Dacorum Digest.

12.2 Signs

Two interpretive signs are planned for implementation within the first two years of this plan.

12.3 Web

This management plan will be published on the Borough Council's web pages.

12.4 Visitor Consultation

Visitors tell us what they think of Bunkers Park via the Dacorum web site

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12.5 Recommendations

- 1. Report any newsworthy events to Nash Mills the local newspaper and or the Dacorum Digest
- 2. Develop two new interpretive signs for Bunkers Park.
- 3. Develop a Bunkers Park page on Dacorum Borough Council's website.
- 4. Undertake consultation with site visitors, local residents and partners.

13.0 Management

13.1 Management Team

Bunkers Park is managed by the Trees and Woodland section of the Clean, Safe & Green team of the Council. Clean, Safe & Green is a division of Environmental Services.

The management plan actively seeks to form a partnership with other stakeholders to benefit the development of the site. These partnerships may influence the management decisions for the site.

13.2 Financial Management

Dacorum Borough Council provides and funds the management expertise.

13.3 Recommendations

1. Implement the Site Action Plan as detailed at 15.0.

Bunkers Park 2015 – 2020

C – How Will We Get There?





C - How Will We Get There?

14.0 Specific Site Management

In order to deliver the objectives and recommendations set out in the previous chapter' 'Where Do We Want To Get To' an Action Plan has been developed. The principal focus is on management that will enhance the nature conservation interest of the site as well as providing an informal Country Park for local people to enjoy.

14.1 Amenity Grassland

To the west and east of the car park is a large expanse which is kept as short amenity grass, it is one of the largest areas of its kind in the Borough. The overall aim is to maintain this part of Bunkers Park as a wide open landscape for walking and informal games. Occasionally the area is used for sail boarding and model aircraft flying.

14.2 Meadows

There are three areas of meadow at Bunkers Park:

Mattens comprises three fields all surrounded by stock fencing and with a water supply. Our partner organisation, Box Moor Trust, is willing to graze a number of Belted Galloway cattle, instead of a hay crop being taken.

On the Chambersbury Lane side of the park there are three meadow areas divided by grassy paths. Yellow rattle was established here and now flourishes alongside birds foot trefoil, knapweed and scabious.

Bottom Field in the far SW of the site contains mainly Ox-Eye daisies, in recent years Pyramidal Orchid has started to appear among the daisies. There are small areas of Thyme and the area is managed for the butterfly interest.

Over wintering Common Blue eggs laid as a second brood in late summer are retained in Bottom Field by leaving strips of unmown grass. The strips run up the hill in even years and across in odd years. The mown strips should be 10 metres wide with unmown of 3 metres.



14.3 Mature Woodland

The single strip of woodland that crosses the sites between Chambersbury and Bunkers Lane consists of Scots Pine, Beech, Oak and Whitebeam. There is no room or no need for glades because there are two long edges. In the main there is no intervention and the woodland is left to evolve naturally.

14.4 Emerging Woodland

There are substantial areas of new woodland, planted in the late nineties and with great survival rates. The six areas contain a mixture of oak, beech, ash, hornbeam, field maple, native cherry, rowan and willow. At three metre spacing, many crowns are now touching and during the lifetime of this plan, all areas need a 'first thinning' prior to determining the final spacing.

14.5 Hazel

The large hazel area is one of the largest hazel coppice areas in the County and again the survival rate from the original plantings was almost 100%.

During the life of this plan, all the hazel will have been coppiced and some areas re-coppiced for a second time. Continued efforts are required to build on the success of finding markets for coppice products.





14.6 Ride / Edge Management

Woodland edge habitat is particularly rich in species diversity thanks to the range of habitats present. It is therefore important that edges and rides are managed appropriately and sympathetically. This can be achieved through a programme of rotational mowing. This will ideally produce a graded edge running from regularly mown short grass, to longer grass and herbs cut once a year in late summer, to tussock grass, herbs and woody perennials cut every 2-3 years in autumn. The next tier would be shrubs coppiced on a 10 year cycle and finally the high forest.

There is a good network of grassy paths, rides and woodland edge surrounding the areas of emerging woodland. A number of scallops have been created in the woodland edge and the number will be doubled during the life of this plan.

14.7 Pond Management

There is one pond at Bunkers Park, situated between the amenity grass and hazel area, it is occasional rather than seasonal. In the winter of 2013/14 after prolonged rainfall the pond filled up, however it does spend most of the time dry.

There is no obvious way of creating a permanent pond however during the life of this plan it will be determined either to try and restore the pond or to accept the area as seasonal wetland

Review retention of the fence

14.8 Boundary Management

On the NE side of the mature woodland there is an old wood bank and on the Chambersbury and Bunkers Lane edge are thick old hedges. Neither feature requires any action during the life of this plan.

14.9 New Hedges

On the NE side of the right of way and surrounding Mattens, new hedges of thorn, hazel, viburnum, field maple and apple exist. During the lifetime of this plan the remaining lengths of hedge will be managed.

14.10 Marl Pit

During the life of this plan consider whether any enhancement work would be suitable for this area



15.0 Site Action Plan

At all stages of both development and implementation of action items at Bunkers Park there will be consultation and exchange of information between the Borough, Nash Mill & Leverstock Green Parish Councils and friends of Bunkers Park.

15.1 A Welcoming Place					
Objective	Action	Responsible Body / Person(s)	Year	Comments	
Closer working between Parishes, Friends of and Borough Council	ween Parishes, working Friends of and relationship by		2015 - 2020	A group has now been constituted and met for the first time in November 2016	
Inform visitors about the natural features found at Bunkers Park	Design and install interpretive signs. General information by the car park and information about coppice by the hazel area.	DBC / NMPC/	2015 & 16	Installed Summer 2017	
Provide some guidance for visitors who want to walk round the site	Develop two circular walks, one longer another to favour access for all	DBC / FOBP	2016	Waymarked January 2017	

Provide guidance for horse riders	Sign permissive ride	DBC / FOBP	2016	Waymarked January 2017
Provide a serviceable car park	Ensure that the car park is kept in good condition	DBC/TWTL	Ongoing	Checked 2016 and OK

15.2 Healthy Safe and Secure					
Objective	Action Responsible Body / Person(s)		Year	Comments	
Maintain safe public access	Annual inspection of footpaths and undertake surface improvements as required.	nnual inspection DBCTWTL Ongoing of footpaths and ndertake surface mprovements as		Entrances topped up with type 2, 2015	
Ensure reasonable levels of public safety	Undertake annual inspection (October) of trees adjacent to main access paths	inspection ctober) of trees djacent to main		3 dead beech felled	
Ensure all operations on site are in accordance with current H & S policies	Annually review & update Health & Safety Risk Assessments	pdate Health & TO Safety Risk (to take		Ongoing	
Maintain visibility and openness on main access paths	visibility Undertake and DBC / 1 ness on maintain ride ccess management as		Ongoing	2016, rides all sufficiently open	
Improve site cleanliness	Consider discrete signage encouraging responsible dog ownership	NMPC / DBC	Ongoing	2016, not considered necessary	

15.3 Clean & Well Maintained				
Objective	Action	Responsible Body / Person(s)	Year	Comments
That storage and removal of litter is adequate to meet the needs of the site	Keep litter bins and collection frequencies under review.	DBC / NMPC/TWTL	Ongoing	2016, bin and emptying (weekly) frequencies are sufficient
Ensure that fly	Arrange prompt	DBC /NMPC /	Ongoing	As and when

tips are removed without delay	removal of fly tipping by working closely with the Parishes	TWTL		
Manage Bunkers Park to benefit people and wildlife	Undertake woodland management in accordance with operations identified in Section C.	DBC / NMPC/FOBP	Ongoing	2015, 2016, 2017

15.4 Environmental Responsibility

Objective	Action	Responsible Body / Person(s)	Year	Comments
Contribute towards delivering Dacorum's Corporate Environmental Policy	In working towards this goal, the Council will ensure that it considers the environmental impacts of its operations and service delivery and that it continually works towards improving its environmental performance and promoting environmental protection.	DBC / CPC / All Officers	Ongoing	2015, 2016 2017
To minimise the use of pesticides	Continue to implement a stringent pesticide policy at Bunkers Park.	DBC / All Officers	Ongoing	2015, 2016, 2017
Practice sustainability in all operations at Bunkers Park	ability in all products used in Officers at the management of		Ongoing	2015, 2016, 2017
Use of woodland produce	Wherever possible, materials arising from woodland operations will be accommodated / used locally	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	2015, 2016, 2017. All 8 new benches made from Chipperfield oak.

15.5 Conservation & Heritage				
Objective	Action	Responsible Body / Person(s)	Year	Comments
Contribute towards delivering the Dacorum Borough Nature Conservation Strategy and Local Bio- Diversity Action Plan.	Ensure operations are designed to deliver the Local Bio-Diversity Action Plan and the Dacorum Borough Nature Conservation Strategy	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	As per the Management Plan, 2015, 2016, 2017
Increase the nature conservation interest and bio – diversity of the site.	Implement management prescriptions for Bunkers Park as described at 15.0,	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	2015, 2016, 2017
Monitor the effectiveness of management work	Build upon any existing survey data and commission a Phase 1 survey to act as a baseline on which to judge the effectiveness of management work	DBC / TWTL	2015	Spring 2017.

15.6 Community Involvement					
Objective	Action	Responsible Body / Person(s)	Year	Comments	
Closer working between Parish and Borough Councils	Foster a closer working relationship by instigating a twice yearly meeting	DBC / NMPC	Ongoing	DBC/MN & LG PC - Nov 2016	
Support The Friends of Bunkers Park	Devise a programme of activities, support the project days. As the need arises, develop the Friends group in accordance with members wishes.	DBC / NMPC / TWTL / FOBP	Ongoing	2015, 2016, 2017	
Increase local interest in matters	Involve other local interest groups	DBC / NMPC/ TWTL	Ongoing	2015,2016FriendsofBunkersPark,	

related to	2016 Cow
management	Watch Group.
of Bunkers	Groundwork
Park	Trust, Chiltern
	Society
	Conservation
	Volunteers

15.7 Marketing				
Objective	Action	Responsible Body / Person(s)	Year	Comments
To promote Bunkers Park	Undertake marketing commensurate with the nature of the site and target	DBC / NMPC	Ongoing	DBC & NM & LG PC web pages and publications

15.8 Wood Managem					
Objective	Action	Responsible Body / Person(s)	Year	Area	Comments
Maintain amenity grassland	Monthly mowing during summer	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	Amenity grasslan d	Maintained – 2015, 2016, 2017
Reduce fertility and encourage wild flowers	Take annual hay crop. Work towards cattle grazing	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing & 2016	Meadow	Cut and collect 2015, 2016. Cattle grazing 2016
Maintain existing mature woodland	Inspect regularly, undertake work only to ensure public safety	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	Mature woodlan d	2015, 2016
Develop new woodland	Undertake first thinning	DBC / TWTL / FOBP	Ongoing	Emergin g woodlan d	2015, 2016, 2017
Establish rotational coppice	Coppice and re- coppice as needed. Identify coppice markets	DBC / TWTL / FOBP	Ongoing	Hazel	Some cutting, some markets found
Create graded edges along rides	Annual mowing along paths and edge zones	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	Grassy rides	2015, 2016, 2017
Consider whether to try and establish the pond	Monitor	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	Pond	.Pond continues to be occasional – 2015, 2016, 2017
Form and manage	Finish laying hedges round	DBC / TWTL/ FOBP	Ongoing	New hedges	No further laying – 2015,

new hedges	Mattens and adj to the trackway				2016
Public safety	Fell hazardous trees	DBC / TWTL	Ongoing	Firs Wood	None – 2015, 2016. 3 dead beech 2017

Key

- **NMPC -** Nash Mills Parish Council
- LGPC Leverstock Green Parish Council
- **FoBP -** Friends of Bunkers Park
- **DBC -** Dacorum Borough Council
- CAO Countryside Access Officer
- **TO -** Tree Officer
- **TWTL -** Trees and Woodlands Team Lead

Bunkers Park 2015 - 2020

D – How Will We Know When We Have Arrived?





D – How Will We Know When We Have Arrived?

16.0 Measures of Success

The process of Green Flag Award makes measurable targets possible. The success of the management and this management plan can be measured against the following criteria. The renewal of the Green Flag Award will be an indication of a successful management approach.

- A Welcoming Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- Clean and Well Maintained
- Environmental Sustainability
- Conservation and Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing and Promotion
- Overall Management

17.0 Monitoring and Review

This management plan will be reviewed annually with monitoring of progress against targets. The Action Plan will also be monitored quarterly and amended when necessary. The Green Flag Criteria and the judge's comments will be used as the best indicators for measuring the achievements against this management plan.

17.1 Green Flag Award

2015, 2016

18.0 Finance

Within the Council's 'Clean, Safe and Green budget, provision has been made for maintenance of informal open spaces and nature conservation work.

The current funding levels will enable all works described in this management plan to take place between 2015 and 2020.

Appendices

1. Friends of Bunkers Park Project Days 2015 / 16

Appendix 1 - Friends of Bunkers Park Project Days 2015 / 16

Friends of Bunkers Park, Activity Days 2016/17										
Day	Date	Month	Year	Place	Time	Activity	Meeting Place			
Saturday	29	October	2016	Hazel coppice	9.15	Coppicing	Bunkers Park Car Park			
Saturday	26	November	2016	Cattsdell Bottom (Chambersbury Lane)	9.15	Clear entrance, make more inviting, create view into and across Bottom Field	Bunkers Park Car Park			
Saturday	17	December	2016	Apostles Pond, Chipperfield Common	9.15	Joint Project day with Friends of Chipperfield Common. Clear weed from Apostles Pond and restore timber edging	Cricket Ground Car Park, Chipperfield			
Saturday	28	January	2017	Bottom Field / Bunkers Lane entrance & path network.	9.15	Improve appearance of entrance. Create more scallops along woodland paths	Bunkers Park Car Park			
Saturday	25	February	2017	Apostles Pond, Chipperfield Common	9.15	Joint Project day with Friends of Chipperfield Common. Clear weed from Apostles Pond.	Cricket Ground Car Park, Chipperfield			
Saturday	25	March	2017	New woodland area	9.15	Joint Project day with Friends of Chipperfield Common. Continue with woodland thinning.	Bunkers Park Car Park			
Saturday	29	April	2017	Rides and Scallops	9.15	Learn how to cut rides with mower and clear some scallops	Bunkers Park Car Park			
Saturday	27	May	2017	Cut Rides	9.15	Cut rides	Bunkers Park Car Park			
Saturday	17	June	2017	Rides and Ragwort and BBQ	9.15	Cut rides pull Ragwort	Bunkers Park Car Park			
For further details contact Linda on or vanessa.johnson@dacorum.gov.uk										