

Report title	Management and maintenance of the Green
Report author	Helen Clark
Department	Environmental Services
Exempt?	No
Exemption type	Not applicable
Reasons for exemption	Not applicable

Purpose of report:

- **For information**

Synopsis of report:

To update the Committee on grounds maintenance activities on Englefield Green.

To advise the Committee on the way income from events and filming activities held on the Green are managed.

1. Context and background of report

1.1 This report seeks to provide information to the committee regarding the progress of the Management Plan of the Green as well as an update of works undertaken, since the last committee meeting.

2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended.

Since April 2024, the following activities have taken place.

Completion of works on the Green.

2.1 The Grass treatment and reseedling programme was carried out as planned. Due to staff sickness the removal of scarified moss was not completed by the contractor as anticipated. This work will be facilitated by alternative means as quickly as possible once a new Parks and Green Spaces Manager is appointed.

2.2 As of 4th June, the grass grid matting/ matrix paving had been ordered and delivered. Green Spaces are waiting for a delivery of soil to back fill the dip under the bench. The Corporate Head of Environmental Services has contracted the Crown Estates and requested permission to install the matrix paving. The paving will be installed if

permission is granted.

- 2.3 Green Spaces Officers met with a second prospective bench donor for the second memory bench that the Englefield Green Committee had approved. This was to replace an existing dilapidated bench. The potential donor was initially abroad but met with the Green Spaces Officer in May. Unfortunately, the second donor changed their mind. A site meeting will be arranged in June with the third prospective donor.
- 2.4 At the Committee meeting held on 9 April 2024 Officers were asked to go back to the Crown Estate to advise them there were already a large number of composite posts insitu on the Green and composite posts had previously been procured by the Council and were held in readiness for installation. Officers contacted the Crown Estate who responded as follows: -

“In view of the existing stock, these can be used, however we would ask that the committee revert to timber thereafter. We are concerned that the wider use of composite posts would be akin to managing a municipal park, rather than a traditional village green such as Englefield Green. We do not use composite posts across the Great Park, only timber.”

- 2.5 At the 9 April 2024 Committee meeting Officers were asked to seek advice on whether local residents could source their own 3rd party contractors to undertake work on the Green (i.e. contractors sourced by Committee Members but whose appointment was subject to the approval of Council Officers and would be supervised by the Committee Members). The Committee are advised that this is not permitted. Committee Members are appointed to a decision-making body only, and do not have standing either as Committee Members or Councillors to source contractors or enter into contracts on behalf of the Council. The Council is the corporate body that must enter into legal relations, and it will not indemnify members of any committee for undertaking functions of the Council and its officers.

Staff Vacancies

- 2.6 The Committee are asked to note that the post of Green Spaces Manager and Deputy Green Spaces Manager are both vacant. The Corporate Head of Environmental Services has advertised the position of Green Spaces Manager with interviews scheduled for June 2024.

Income from Events

- 2.7 Further to discussions at previous meetings Officers were asked to clarify how income generated by events and other chargeable activities on Englefield Green including filming was used.
- 2.8 The Committee are advised that income generated by activities on Englefield Green including events and filming is credited to the Parks revenue budget. Income from all events and the income generated from letting of sports facilities across the borough is used to offset the cost of managing Runnymede’s open spaces. Income is not retained within individual open space budgets; budgets being balanced off at the end of each financial year. Damage caused by events would be repaired using general revenue fund budgets and not the Englefield Green earmarked reserves.

- 2.9 The earmarked reserve budget is not a revenue budget. This budget is solely used to fund additional works including enhanced maintenance when requested by the Englefield Green Committee.

Requests for items to be added to the October agenda.

- 2.10 Officers understand that members of the Committee may identify maintenance works that would enhance the Green between committee cycles. Officers request that any additional maintenance items that members would like added to the agenda for the October meeting be communicated to Officers via the Chair by the 1st September. This will give Officers time for research and where necessary to seek quotations.

3. Policy framework implications

- 3.1 Climate Change – We aim to reduce our impact on Climate Change by employing sustainable management practices.
- 3.2 Empowering our Communities - We will present the best possible arguments to external stakeholders to preserve, protect and enhance local quality of life.
- 3.3 Health and Wellbeing - Access to Sport, leisure and recreation improves health and wellbeing.

4. Resource implications/Value for Money

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 None

6. Equality implications

- 6.1 **None**

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 7.1 Maintenance and management of the Englefield Green will be in line with the Runnymede Borough Council sustainable planting policy and climate change strategy.

8. Risk Implications

- 8.1 None

9. Other implications

- 9.1 None

10. Timetable for Implementation

- 10.1 Not applicable

11. Conclusions

11.1 Not applicable

12. Background papers

12.1 None

13. Appendices

13.1 None