

Folkestone and Hythe District Council  
Radnor Park Management Plan  
2023 – 2027



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# 1 Introduction

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Radnor Park has seen major investment by Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Radnor Park Community Group, The Roger De Haan Charitable Trust, Folkestone Town Council and East Kent College since 2016. This Management Plan has been developed to provide a standard that the park will be maintained to. It will help to ensure that the park fulfils the key objectives below:

- Redevelop and renovate the old Park Lodge into a modern tea room
- Renovate the Victorian Fountain to include a new statue
- Develop a new play area and integrated landscaping scheme, pulling all project elements together
- Involve the local community as much as possible developing a good practice model for future community engagement
- Make use where possible of sustainable and natural resources

This management plan helps in achieving our strategic objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and the department Service Plan which are available to view online.

The six key principles are:

- Locally Distinctive
- Sustainable Recovery
- Greener Folkestone and Hythe
- Transparent, Stable, Accountable
- Continuous Improvement
- Working Effectively with Partners

The four service ambitions are:

- A Thriving Economy
- Homes and Infrastructure
- Excellent Community Services
- Quality Environment

## 2 Site Details

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### 2.1 Population Distribution

Folkestone and Hythe District Council covers a total area of 36,525 hectares and encompasses the towns of Folkestone, Hythe, New Romney and Lydd. The population of Folkestone & Hythe is 108,700 (2011 Census). The key breakdown of the District's population is shown below.

### 2.2 Diverse Countryside

Kent has a varied and diverse countryside including the largest area of ancient semi-natural woodland of any county in Great Britain. The pattern of agriculture, including fruit, hops and general produce, has earned Kent the title of "Garden of England".

The coastline of Kent stretches for 350 miles from the industrialised Thames-side to the great shingle expanse of Dungeness. Along the Medway and Swale estuaries are the mudflats and salt marshes known as the North Kent Marshes. The White Cliffs, around Dover and Folkestone are internationally renowned and have been designated a Heritage Coast by Natural England. There are also numerous attractive towns and villages throughout the region, many of which are relatively quiet and unspoiled. The landscape, attractive settlements and coast represent the major assets of the region.

### 2.3 Transport links

#### Road

The Folkestone / Hythe area is well served by an excellent transportation network. The A259 serves the length of the South East coast from Folkestone to Havant. Junctions 10, 12 and 13 of the M20 motorway link Hythe and Folkestone to the M25 and London and east to Dover. Regular buses, 100, 101, 102 travel on the A259, stopping at Folkestone Bus Station. National Express coaches provide a service from Folkestone to London with at least 4 departures each day.

#### Rail

The Channel Tunnel Rail Link has increased passenger activity throughout the district, the shuttle operates between Folkestone and Calais, with a 35 minute journey time.

Folkestone Central and West stations provide regular services to the rest of the South East and London. The new high speed rail service is available from Folkestone West Station arriving at London St Pancras in just under 1 hour.

#### Sea

The Port of Dover is within easy travelling distance from Folkestone. This is a principal passenger service port for the South East providing regular services to France and the wider continent.

## 2.4 Directions to Radnor Park

### By Car

Leave the M20 at junction 13 and follow A20 (Cherry Garden Lane) to the second set of traffic lights. Turn left into Cheriton Road (A2034) and continue to the roundabout. Radnor Park is located to your left hand-side.

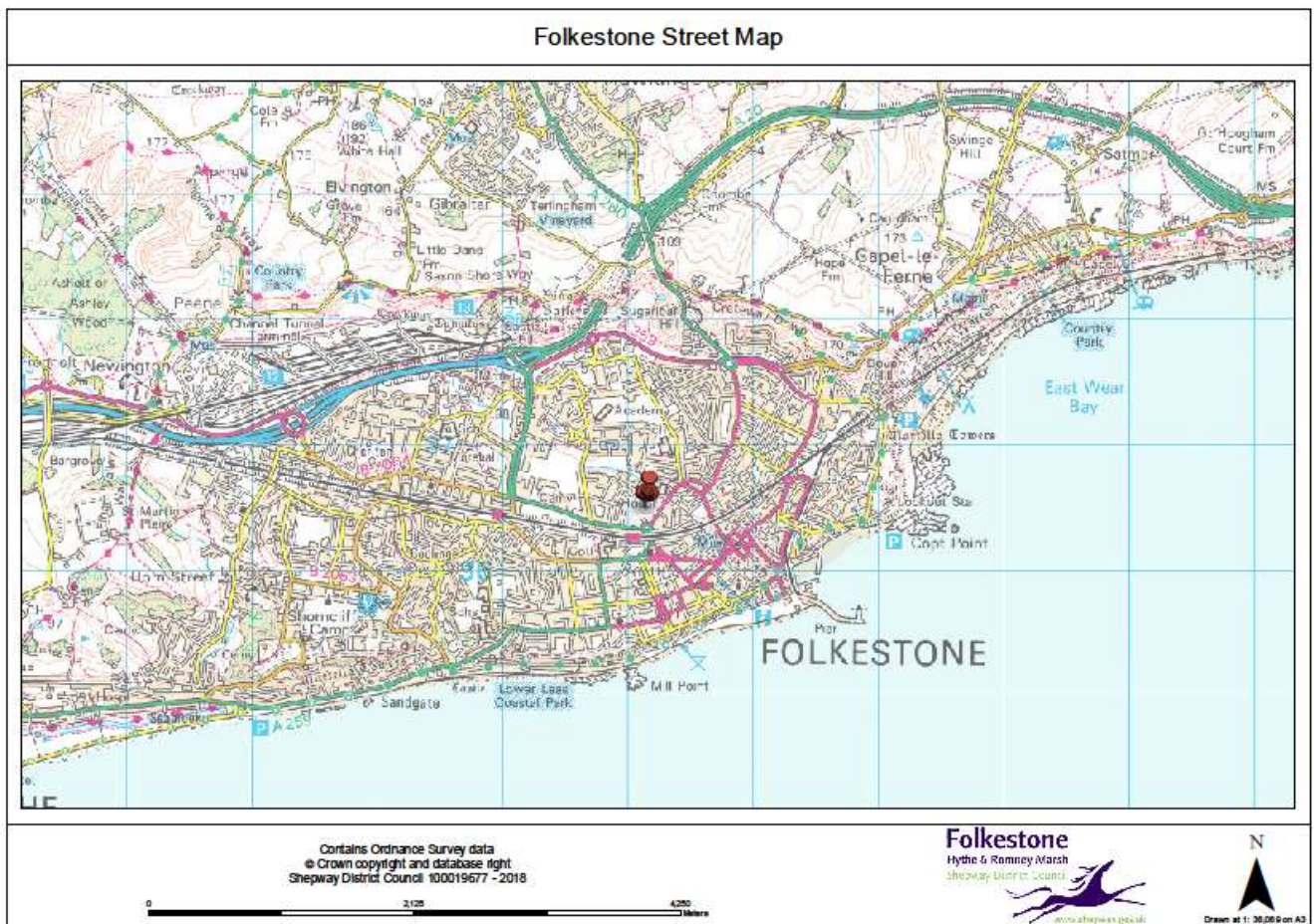
### By Train

Leave the train at Folkestone Central Station and turn left, Radnor Park is directly in front of you.

### By Bus

From Folkestone Bus Station walk away from the town centre along Cheriton Gardens until you reach Central Station, Radnor Park is directly in front of you.

## 2.5 Folkestone Street Map



## 2.6 Site Description

Radnor Park is an 8.5 hectare open space in the heart of Folkestone. The land was donated to Folkestone by the Earl of Radnor in 1886 as part of the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds. It included open parkland, a mock Tudor lodge and a large pond. Today the park is split into upper and lower

sections. The upper part retains the open parkland setting with a large modern play area, avenues of trees, fishing lake, seasonal bedding displays and a bowls club. It remains popular with families and hosts large events such as the Donkey Derby, funfairs and circus visits. The lower section has a boating lake, small modern play area and is managed more sensitively for wildlife. The Pent Stream runs through the lower park providing a picturesque walk and wildlife corridor.

## 2.7 Aerial Photograph



## 3 Site History

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### 3.1 History of Radnor Park

Radnor Park was donated to the people of the town by the Earl of Radnor in 1886. It featured avenues of trees, lakes and a park keeper's lodge.

Two years later on 22 September 1888, a fountain and a statue of the Patron Saint of Folkestone, St Eanswythe - that had been built by public subscription - was unveiled by Sir Edward Watkin MP.

In 1944 the statue was destroyed by enemy action and a later statue, erected in 1955, was allegedly destroyed by a drunk soldier 11 years later.

The statue and fountain were restored as part of a major refurbishment of the park's children's play area in 2017.

As well as the new play area and restored fountain, the Radnor Park improvement project saw the restoration of a former park keeper's lodge into a community tearoom run by East Kent College.

The park is one of a number of areas of land in Folkestone and Sandgate managed by the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity. The charity was established by Folkestone and Hythe District Council (FHDC) following the 1974 Local Government re-organisation, when FHDC succeeded the Borough of Folkestone as trustee of the lands.

### 3.2 Historical Photographs



Upper Radnor Park



Boating Pond, Lower Radnor Park



Woodland Walk, Lower Radnor Park



Radnor Park Lodge

## 4 Maintenance Plan

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The Horticultural Manager has managerial control over staff who maintain the park. Gardening staff are assisted by park keepers who are responsible for cleansing of the park and toilets. The main open grassed areas are cut by the tractor fortnightly and backed up by ride on mowers, pedestrian mowers and strimmers. There are seasonal bedding displays, hedgerows and herbaceous borders around the upper and lower park. Trees are maintained by the Arboricultural Manager with tree surveys taking place at least every other year.

The budget for Radnor Park forms part of the wider Grounds Maintenance service budget. In addition to this, there is a small charity budget available to fund new equipment, materials and repairs. Reports are sent to the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity annually giving details of expenditure. The latest report is available to view on request.

The play area and toilet block are maintained by staff from the Council's Property and Engineering teams.

The Horticultural Manager allocates work in accordance with the maintenance schedules, agreed service standards, risk assessments and best horticultural practice. The service standards and risk assessments are available to view on request as are all other documents relating to Health and Safety (COSHH, Safety Data Sheets etc). The gardening staff are responsible for ensuring all day to day duties within the park are completed in a timely fashion and to a high standard.

The Manager makes regular inspections to ensure works are carried out to the correct standard and frequency. The Manager also selects planting required for gapping up and newly cleared areas including trees and hedging.

Park Keepers manage the cleansing of the major parks in Folkestone including Radnor Park. They are trained to enforce breaches of dog fouling and littering bylaws by issuing fixed penalty notices. The 2 teams of 3, work on a 4 on 4 off system during the summer, reduced down to 2 teams of 1 person during the quieter winter months.

## 4.1 Maintenance Map



## 4.2 Grounds Maintenance

The table below details the main maintenance operations carried out by the gardeners and should be read alongside the maps above for activity locations. There is a real sense of ownership and pride in the site from the staff which is entrenched by constant feedback from park users.

Area	Operation	Frequency
Grass Cutting	Large amenity areas close mown for recreation. Tractor gang mower and triple mower used, backed up by strimming. Small pedestrian mowers used around drinking fountain area.	Fortnightly
Conservation Cut	Wild areas managed for wildlife conservation. Brush cutters or hand tools are used depending on area and slope angle	Annually or as instructed by the Manager
Herbaceous Border	Hand weeding, edging, dead heading and pruning to maintain plant health. Cutting back old growth and removing debris	Monthly dependant on season
Naturalised Bulbs	Daffodils, crocus and snowdrops allowed to naturalise. Grass cutting and strimming regimes are adjusted to allow die back and bulb regeneration.	Allow 6 - 8 weeks after flowering before maintenance operations resume
Shrubs	Pruning to ensure good plant health and maintain safe access. Replanting as required.	Annual or as required
Trees	Ensure good plant health and layer vegetation under the canopy. Replace dead, diseased or dying specimens with suitable species. Leave dead wood on site where practical to create wildlife habitats.	As and when required. Tree survey carried out at least every 2 years by Arboriculture Manager

Seasonal Bedding	Seasonal displays (Spring and Summer), plant out twice per year. Remove all existing plant material, rotovate soil, add compost as required, clip grass edges and plant out as per design. Weed at least monthly.	Biannually planting Monthly weeding
Play Areas	Inspect weekly and quarterly (Operational Inspection) by RoSPA trained personnel. Repair or replace parts as necessary. Litter picking and bin emptying in play area and wider park daily	Weekly and quarterly Daily litter picking / bin emptying
Hedge Cutting	Maintain all hedges on site at least once per year outside of bird nesting season. Remove all clippings from site.	Annually, or outside of nesting season
Ponds, Fountain and Stream	<u>Top Fishing Pond</u> – remove all litter as required, organise skip annually for volunteers to clear pond weed. Maintain extraction pump. <u>Lower Boating Pond</u> – remove all litter as required, de-silt on 10 year cycle <u>Pent Stream</u> – remove all litter as necessary, maintain riparian buffer including trees <u>Drinking Fountain</u> – monthly bacterial testing, annual disinfection of internal parts and weekly cleansing / unblocking of outlets	Annually for skip Biannually for pump or as required. Shepway Angling Society 10 year de-silt cycle, Property Department  As required, Environment Agency  As specified Property Department
Toilet / Café	Toilet Block – open and close daily, cleanse and re-stock on at least 2 occasions per day. Maintenance to building undertaken by property department. Café – Maintenance and running of café is the responsibility of existing leaseholder (currently vacant, awaiting review of lease arrangements)	Cleansing daily, maintenance as required

Bee Kind areas	Naturalised areas with high biodiversity Cut and collect once or twice a year. Cut one meter strip around the area to indicate purposeful management	Cut and collect in October or in July & October depending on target species
Green Waste	All green waste not left on site as wildlife refuge to be taken to Hawkinge Cemetery for in house composting.	Daily or as required
Dog Run	Cut grass fortnightly, strim fence line as necessary. Report any issues with the fence and gates to property department	Fortnightly
Bowls Club	Bowls club are responsible for all rink maintenance, cutting of the inside of hedges, internal and external decoration of building. All other maintenance is the responsibility of Folkestone and Hythe District Council	As specified in terms of lease

The gardening staff are also required to

- Inspect vehicle and trailer daily, complete inspection sheet and arrange any repairs with the FHDC Mechanics
- Ensure completed relevant paperwork is returned to manager
- Liaise with the Park Keepers on issues regarding cleanliness /graffiti
- Ensure all works on site are carried out safely
- Ensure all tools are safe and properly maintained
- Liaise with Police, public and other site users as necessary

### 4.3 Park Keepers

The Park Keepers are a mobile crew who tend to the major parks in Folkestone including Radnor Park. During the summer all duties listed below are undertaken by members of this team, ensuring that the park is clean and safe while providing a point of contact for the public.

### Daily

- Visual inspection of play equipment. Report any issues to Property Team
- Remove litter, leaves and detritus from play area.
- Empty all litter bins as necessary, replace sacks and remove bagged waste to tip
- Thoroughly litter pick all areas, paths and steps as necessary
- Sweep paths and steps as necessary including beneath benches
- Remove broken glass immediately
- Remove fallen leaves (autumn)
- Inspect street furniture, inform Property Team of any issues
- Remove graffiti immediately or request Community Safety Officer to assist as required
- Liaise with Police, other partner agencies and CCTV, as requested or required
- Enforce relevant dog fouling and littering bylaws and issue fixed penalty notices as appropriate
- Assist park visitors as required and ensure park equipment is used appropriately
- Unlock and lock toilet block as appropriate
- Remove and report any sharps finds
- Clean toilet block thoroughly twice daily during the summer and daily during the winter, more often as required during busy periods

### Weekly

- Ensure all paths/routes are walked and inspected at least weekly, clean instances of graffiti, litter picking and noting down defects to be reported
- Clean all signs
- Clean bird droppings from seating
- Report all instances of fly tipping to office for clearance by contractor

## **4.4 Engineering and Buildings**

- Maintain roadway and footpath surfaces
- Arrange maintenance on Wallgate hand wash in toilet block
- Liaise with Kent College, The Bowls Club and Folkestone Angling Society on maintenance and legal matters
- Enforce contractual obligation of the same
- Maintain play areas
- Ensure a weekly and quarterly checks are carried out by RoSPA trained staff and any issues raised are addressed appropriately
- Action all issues raised by annual insurance inspections
- Maintain drinking fountain and ponds

## 4.5 Cleansing Contractor

- Supply rubbish sacks
- Remove all reported fly tipping
- Remove large instances of graffiti
- Empty and dispose of recycled waste from all dedicated recycling bins

## 4.6 Management Plan Summary Table

2023 - 2027 Management Plan Summary						
Headline Indicator	Timescale					Comments
Maintenance Plan	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Maintain park as required to provide a usable space for private recreation, informal ball games and a range of events	X	X	X	X	X	Ongoing. Working with local volunteering groups
Ensure all facilities are clean, well maintained and useable	X	X	X	X	X	Ongoing
De-silt boating pond	X	X	X	X	X	Investigate and apply chalk treatment which is effective, less invasive and costly than mechanical de-silting
Health and Safety	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Comments
Risk assessment, COSHH, safety data sheets - monitor and update	X	X	X	X	X	Ongoing good practise
Staff Health Surveillance	X	X	X	X	X	Ongoing good practice.
Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome surveillance	X	X	X	X	X	Specialist HAVS wares purchased to monitor daily exposure (completed 2018)
Follow industry trend on batter powered or low vibration equipment	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice

Ensure play equipment meets relevant guidelines EN1176 & EN1177	X	X	X	X	X	Ongoing good practise
Install CCTV to toilet block and play area and monitor the same						Folkestone Town Council Completed in 2019
Footpath inspections annually	X	X	X	X	X	Property Department
Building inspections (lodge, toilet block and bowls club)	X			X		Property Department
Tree Inspections	X		X		X	Inspections occur at least biennially
<b>Facilities</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Inspect all play equipment	X	X	X	X	X	Regular
Litter bin survey. Installation of smart Big Belly compactor bins	X	X	X	X	X	Replace damaged bins in line with agreed style
Junior Park Run in the park		X	X	X	X	Work with Park Run Community Group. Started early 2024
Install and maintain wheel chair swing	X					Councillor's ward budget – completed in 2022
Assess need for additional furniture	X	X	X	X	X	Purchase as required within budget
Toilet block exterior refurbishment	X		X		X	Property Department to arrange on cyclical maintenance programme
Changing Places, provision of changing facilities for adults		X				Completed

Introduce free sporting facilities such as Rounders game and a running track with distance markers	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice
Review lease for Tea Room	X					Property Department
Review lease for Fishing Pond				X		Property Department/ Trustees of Shepway Angling Club
Review lease for small storage shelter next to the fishing pond			X			Property Department/ Trustees of Shepway Angling Club
Review lease for Bowls Club					X	New lease due in 2027

<b>Conservation and Heritage</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Investigate possibility of using volunteers for wildlife monitoring	X	X	X	X	X	Potentially through Universities (DICE at Kent Uni) or National Trust
Maintenance to upper pond island wildlife refuge		X		X		Folkestone Angling Society, Environment Agency and Mid-Kent Water
Sustainable planting (including trees and shrubs)	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice
Planting of bumble bee/ moth friendly plants	X	X	X	X	X	Engage with Bumblebee Conservation Trust and Butterfly Conservation Trust/ Natural England
Prune trees and stack dead wood where appropriate	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice

Native spring bulbs 'in the green'(grown in the UK)	X	X	X	X	X	Local' Go Folkestone group' to fund and plant. Engage with nearby primary school
Review grass cutting regimes in view to increase park's biodiversity	X	X	X	X	X	Create wildflower areas around trees. Wildflower management

<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Continue in-house composting operation	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice
Maintain existing facilities – low flush urinals, motion activated lighting	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice
Recycle all green waste from site, re-use compost on site where appropriate	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice
Minimise powered tool use in favour of mechanical gardening methods and battery technology	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice
Minimise vehicle movement where possible by utilising tracker technology	X	X	X	X	X	Good practice

<b>Marketing</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Increase Radnor Park presence on FHDC website	X	X				Communication Team
Welcome signs	X	X	X			Grounds Maintenance & Communication Teams
Interpretation panels		X	X	X	X	Ongoing - depending funding

Radnor Park notice boards		X		X		Grounds Maintenance & Communication Teams (Installed)
Monitor all signs / sign posts etc	X	X	X	X	X	Replace as required
Ensure Radnor Park continues to have a social media presence	X	X	X	X	X	Radnor Park Community Group, Communities Team & Communication Team

<b>Community Involvement</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Continue to support the RPCG to keep the park and community invigorated	X	X	X	X	X	Communities Team Area Officers
Continue to encourage use of the park by community groups for events	X	X	X	X	X	Promote on council Event App and website
Continue to support Kent College and Goldwyn School to deliver life skills project which helps those less able	X	X	X	X	X	Communities Team
Investigate the possibility of using the park's settings for Forest Schools project. Engage with local primary school to develop a link	X	X	X	X	X	Communities Team Area Officers
Engage with and support local Petanque group with fund raising for and completion of a new pétanque square	X	X	X			Folkestone Town Council grant, councillors ward grant Completed
Investigate the possibility of volunteers undertaking wildlife monitoring	X	X	X	X	X	Potentially through Universities (DICE at Kent Uni) or National Trust

# 5 Health and Safety

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## 5.1 Introduction

Folkestone and Hythe District Council is required by law to state its policy for managing health, safety and welfare. Good health and safety at work is a task shared by Members, Corporate Management Team, employees and contractors alike. All employees are required, as a condition of their service, to comply with Folkestone and Hythe District Council policies and procedures.

It is essential that the relevant risk assessments (RA's) and Safe Systems of Work (SSW's) are read and understood by every employee. These are reviewed annually or when necessary to take account of any new circumstances that might affect validity.

The GM team have a suite of task specific RA's that will, where necessary, be supported by service and corporate policy statements and/or codes of practice. These are set out in the SSW or other specific requirements relating to current Health and Safety at Work legislation. Where there is a reliance on SSW, in house training will be provided.

All managers have undertaken a 4 day H&S Managing Safely course provided by IOSH. This equips managers with the ability to assess risk in their own individual areas for tasks which their staff undertake. All seasonal employees are provided with an H&S briefing where all the pertinent RA's and SSW are read through. All employees are encouraged to contribute to the documents, ensuring that these dynamic documents remain relevant and practical.

RA's are held electronically and hard copies are held at each depot. Some tasks particularly those relating to chemical use and tree works require onsite RA's, all staff are trained to complete these forms. All these documents are available to view on request at the Civic Centre.

Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome monitoring is undertaken alongside annual health monitoring (hearing and vision tests, whole body vibration testing, health screening questionnaire) for all staff. Gardening staff use HAVS monitors that digitally measure their daily exposure. Data is collected daily and notifications sent to individual managers for assessment. Daily vibration exposure log books are available should there be technical issues with the HAVS ware. These monitors are dynamic in their application and have been recently used to maintain social distancing of staff, ensuring smooth service provision through the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 5.2 Security

Facilities are in place to ensure Radnor Park and its visitors are safe and secure. Folkestone Town Council monitor and maintain all CCTV cameras in

Folkestone. Cameras have been installed to oversee the toilet block, Tea Room and play area.

In addition to Police response and patrols, Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) patrol the park during the day and into the late evening to discourage anti-social behaviour and disperse any individuals or groups who may be abusing the equipment or facilities. They are a friendly and approachable presence who can help the public with any problems or queries regarding local issues.

Folkestone and Hythe District Council employs Environmental Enforcement Officers (EEO's) to investigate and enforce environmental incidents and crimes. They are able to deal with dog fouling, graffiti, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles and a wide range of other community issues. They patrol the park regularly at times when dog fouling is likely to occur (e.g. early mornings) which has proven very effective at reducing incidences of this age old problem. The park keeping staff can deal with most incidences of graffiti but the EEO's can help in cases where the area covered is very large or particularly stubborn.

Area Officers (AO's) are also employed to provide a point of contact for residents and visitors. They are allocated specific areas within the district and build up extensive knowledge of their own particular patch. They organise and lead work parties, remove graffiti, recruit volunteers and unite the local community through effective liaison and conflict resolution.

### 5.3 Equipment and Facilities

All staff are provided with uniforms so they are easily identified by visitors. They wear practical high-viz clothing. The inspections carried out by the staff mean that defects are quickly noticed and rectified. Should a defect prove to be beyond the capability of the on-site staff, the Engineering and Buildings team is allocated the job to complete. A team of six Maintenance Officers with a wide skills base are able to attend site and repair or replace most street furniture and equipment. A range of electrical and mechanical engineering contractors are also available.

The Engineering and Buildings team play a pivotal role in ensuring the equipment and in particular the play area is safe for use. With such a well-used and substantial facility it is essential that all aspects are checked and found to be safe on a very regular basis. The programme of inspection is as follows

**Daily** – visual inspection on arrival to ensure equipment has not been damaged overnight (Park Keepers)

**Weekly** –RoSPA trained staff carry out a complete inspection to current RoSPA standards (Maintenance Officers)

**Biannually** – Allianz Engineering inspection for insurance purposes (Zurich Insurance)

All reports are received by the Property Team and any defects quickly rectified.

#### **5.4 Chemicals**

Chemical use is kept to a minimum in the park although it is unavoidable in some circumstances. The gardeners are trained in pesticide storage and spraying (City and Guilds NPTC PA1 and PA6). Although this is a qualification for life, staff undergo refresher training every 5 years. Before any spraying operation the relevant paper work is completed and held on file for future reference.

The Horticultural Supervisor monitors all chemical use and keeps records of all spraying operations and chemicals kept at depots. Safety data and COSHH sheets are kept for each chemical and the Horticultural Supervisor ensures chemicals are not kept beyond their using up period. Each depot has chemical and fuel stores clearly marked with relevant safety warning signs. There is also a flambank for storing fuel. A secure flambank is kept inside the truck for transporting fuel around the site. All documents relating to chemical and fuel use are available to view on request.

#### **5.5 Vehicles and Machinery**

The Parks Team have a Ford Ranger, a large trailer which was replaced in 2017 and a Toro cylinder ride on mower. Each morning before starting the vehicle the staff complete daily checks and sign them off on the back of a time sheet. This system ensures that the vehicles remain in good condition and any faults can be quickly rectified by the FHDC mechanics.

All machinery is serviced annually and the manager ensures this is carried out. Small electric tools and equipment are subject to Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) every 12 months.

#### **5.6 Personal Protective Equipment and Signage**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is issued to all staff to be worn at all times or when appropriate. The uniform has been developed through discussions with the staff, managers and health and safety officer. The basic kit consists of

- Steel toe capped and mid soled boots
- Brush cutter trousers with high-viz strips
- Polo shirt with F&HDC logo
- Body warmer with embroidered F&HDC logo
- Sweater with F&HDC logo
- High-viz coat with F&HDC logo
- Waterproof jacket and trousers

- Baseball cap with F&HDC logo
- Sun protection cream
- Gloves – different types are available depending on personal preference or task in hand
- Forestry helmets with ear and face protection
- Chemical spray suit including wellington boots, chemical resistant gloves and face shield
- Leptospirosis awareness card. This provides staff with advice on how to reduce the risk of contracting Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease). The card also serves to inform medical services that the card holder is at risk.

Certain members of staff require a more extensive or different kit such as the Arborists who must wear clothing to protect them from chainsaw injury.

All vehicles and depots are equipped with a fully stocked first aid kit. These are checked annually or as used to ensure all salient items are included and that they are not past the best before date. All staff complete an annual day long first aid course and there are a number of staff in each area who undertake the longer 3 day course certification. All teams are provided with mobile telephones but where Lone Working is unavoidable staff are made aware of the policy, risk assessments, emergency procedures and must check in with their manager or another team member at regular intervals.

Signage is used on site to warn the public of maintenance operations occurring. Grass cutting and hedge cutting signs are commonly used especially on narrow pathways, car parking areas or secluded spots. Staff are encouraged to use common sense when carrying out operations e.g. strimming in the play area would cease should a school party arrive. Maintenance and major works to play equipment is programmed to take place outside school holidays where ever possible. In the case of injury or damage to a visitor or their property staff fill in the relevant paperwork and hand the visitor a letter from the insurance officer detailing how claims are dealt with and providing contact details.

Situated in the play area is a sign detailing emergency procedures and telephone numbers. The address and number of the nearest hospital and the Civic Centre are also on this information panel.

## 6 Facilities

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Radnor Park offers a variety of facilities for its users as detailed below.

### 6.1 Play Areas

The main draw of the park for families is without doubt the extensive upper play area which was completely overhauled in 2017. The equipment is suitable for all children between 4 and 16 years of age and parents are well catered for in terms of seating. There is a fenced area with equipment suitable for younger visitors or those who are less able. A train dominates this area which is inclusive by design, encouraging children to play together regardless of ability. The train is complimented by a ticket office, tunnel, low level activity panels, springies and swings. Railway style signs and track themed safety surface encourage imaginative play and ensure that the area is accessible to buggies and wheel chairs all year round.

A more natural play space follows on from the fenced area with slopes, steps and stepping stones leading up to a large turreted play unit with low level activity panels, climbing walls, a bank slide and amphitheatre style seating.

The adventure play section is aimed at older children although those less able can also join in with low level climbing opportunities, activity panels and a nest swing. Ever popular elements were high on the list of priorities for the children so a zip wire and flat seat swings were a must.

In addition to the above, 2019 should see an installation of a wheel chair swing.





In the lower park there is a smaller yet still popular play area with nest swing, slides, multiunit and cradle swings. As part of the Fairplay national project, the site was overhauled in 2010 with considerable help from the children of the Brook Education Centre, Mundella Primary School, Stella Maris Primary School and Folkestone Academy. Funding of just under £50,000 came from Folkestone and Hythe District Council , The Big Lottery, The Roger De Haan Charitable Trust and local Councillor budgets. The result has been an inclusive play area which is a popular stop off for many children before and after school.



## 6.2 Tea Rooms

The mock Tudor lodge was constructed to house the original park staff but had run into disrepair over time. Boarded up and out of bounds it attracted graffiti and anti-social behaviour and the once beautiful building was an eyesore. During 2016 Folkestone and Hythe District Council joined forces with East Kent College to completely renovate and refurbish the building. The construction students gained valuable hands on experience during the build.

Members of the community raised funds to have an historic finial repaired and replaced on the roof. Work was completed in the autumn of 2016 and the building was finally back in use!



The Tea Room was run by the catering students from East Kent College between 2016 and 2023. This gave the students an opportunity to gain experience in baking, retail, cleaning and confidence in life skills. FHDC are seeking offers from interested parties to take on a new lease (August 2024)

[Radnor Lodge Tea Room on offer | Folkestone & Hythe District Council](#)

## 6.3 Toilet facilities

### Toilet Block

The toilet block has ladies, gents and disabled facilities. A baby change table is provided in the disabled toilet which is accessible with a RADAR key after hours. Opening times vary with the season but they are always open between 8am and 4pm. The toilets are cleaned daily in the winter and at least twice daily in the summer. The site staff monitor the toilets during busy times and cleans as and when necessary, recording the times on a form. They are located near to the play area and Tea Room. The lighting system has been changed to be motion sensitive and water saving modifications have been made to the men's urinal. The flushers in the female toilets are also activated by motion sensors which are more hygienic and promote wise water usage.

### Changing places

The facility was opened in May 2024 and is situated in Upper Radnor Park, next to the old toilet block.

Changing Places toilets are designed to meet the needs of disabled children and adults with complex needs and who rely on carer support. They differ from standard disabled toilets designed for those who can use a toilet independently. Specialist equipment includes ceiling hoists and changing tables.

Its installation opened up opportunities for visitors reliant on enhanced disabled toilet facilities to visit the area where it may not have been easily possible for them to do so previously.

The project was funded by The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities who launched the Changing Places Fund in 2021 to increase the number available across the country.

## 6.4 Drinking Fountain

It is thought that the fountain was erected in 1888 to provide those using the park for physical recreation to drink from. The water flowed down into bowls at the bottom of the fountain so dogs could also have a drink. The statue on the top is of St Eanswythe and the new sculpture is the third to sit atop the fountain. St Eanswythe was the daughter of King Eadbald of Kent, a nun who lived and died in Folkestone and was said to have performed many miracles in her short life (614-640). It is believed that she made water run uphill from Holywell into the town. The first statue was destroyed in WWII and replaced with a second statue in 1955. This second statue was attacked and destroyed by a drunken soldier with an axe in 1966. The fountain became derelict until 2017 when it was renovated as part of the wider park renovation project.



1888



1955

2017



## 6.5 Bowls Club

Folkestone Park Bowls Club have a 21 year lease (from 2006) with FHDC to run the Bowls Centre. As part of this lease the club are responsible for all repairs, decorations and maintaining the bowling surfaces, hedges and pathways. The rent payable to the charity for the land is currently £3,800 per annum. The charitable status of the land recognises that the centre should be available for public recreation and as such the council currently awards a £5,000.00 per annum grant as a contribution to maintaining the rinks in a playable condition.

[https://www.facebook.com/Radnorparkbowls/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/Radnorparkbowls/?locale=en_GB)

## 6.6 Fishing Pond

Shepway Angling Society have an agreement with FHDC to manage fishing at the upper pond. The pond is stocked with perch, bream, carp (up to 12.8lb), roach, tench, goldfish, eel and a terrapin! There is an island refuge which is home to wildfowl such as ducks and coots. This is also an important area for fry to mature and amphibians to hibernate. The vegetation around the island provides aquatic insects such as damsel flies opportunities for egg laying. The Angling Society members clear weed from the pond and cut back the island

vegetation. This keeps the pond ecosystem healthy, allowing oxygenating plants to flourish and stopping the build-up of nitrates. The pond drains down into the lower pond and from there on to the Pent Stream. In order to replenish the water lost, pumps are in place to divert water from the stream up to the top pond. FHDC hold an extraction license with the EA to enable this operation.



## 6.7 Boating Pond

The pond on the lower park is dedicated for use by model boats and craft. The park keeping staff keep the pond clear of litter and FHDC de-silts the pond on a roughly 10 year cycle.





To improve water quality in the pond, small fountain was installed in the centre of the lake (May 2024). The benefits are both; environmental and visual.

## 6.8 Sports

Radnor Park offers a range of free sport facilities.

### Outdoor gym equipment

In 2019 the Radnor Park Community Group raised funds for the project and further funding was provided through Kent County Council. Cllr Dick Pascoe (KCC) and Cllr Ann Berry (F&HDC) were instrumental in the delivery of the project contributing significant funds through Environmental Improvement Grants and ward councillor grants.

The equipment include gym rings, high bars, plyometric step boxes, and easy fixing points for TRX strength bands as well as a skier, an inclusive handbike, and a sit-up bench.

It is aimed for adults and young people aged 14 and over.

### Radnor Junior ParkRun

Set up in early 2024 in conjunction with Folkestone Leas Parkrun.

This 2000m long event is held every Sunday at 9am and is aimed at children aged 4-14 years. It is entirely organised by volunteers

Radnor Junior ParkRun moto is to help with child's sense of personal achievement with focus on making improvement to their fitness, physical &

mental health and happiness whilst bringing the local community together. The maximum number of juniors which can attend is 40.

The event is promoted on ParkRun website, Junior ParkRun Facebook, through local school administration, local youth & sports clubs and existing parkruns.

[home | Radnor Park junior parkrun | Radnor Park junior parkrun course | Radnor Park junior parkrun](#)



### **Rounders Pitch**

A low-cost sports amenity funded and marked out by the grounds maintenance team. Played in England since Tudor times, currently extremely popular with families and local schools. It is a standard sized pitch as regulated in the UK by Rounders England.

<https://www.roundersengland.co.uk/rounders-pitch>

### **Grass Football pitch**

An informal 60 x 40yrd football pitch, including a set of 12ft goals, was installed in spring 2020. It is used by families, friends and small football groups on regular basis.

### **Grass Running track**

Installed at minimal cost to the authority in June 2020. The 400 m circular running track has proven very popular amongst local athletes of all ages.

The rounders pitch, the football pitch and the running track were funded from grounds maintenance budget. They were installed in what used to be an underutilised large grassed area in the upper park.

All three are maintained by in- house grounds maintenance staff.

# 7 Nature Conservation and Heritage

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## 7.1 Ecological Management

The upper section of the park is managed as open space and as such has little ecological value although ecological principles are embedded into work practises. A wide variety of trees exist on the perimeter of the park providing spring blossom and autumn berries. There are a number of mature deciduous trees on site supporting a wealth of invertebrate life. Seasonal bedding is selected using open single flowering varieties of plants which are often good early forage for pollinators. There are hedges on site which provide shelter for invertebrates and birds. The upper lake has a small island which is inaccessible to the public and provides a vital refuge for wild fowl, amphibians and small fish in the margins. The bank to the rear of the pond is cut once a year allowing the grasses and wild flowers to flourish. Spring bulbs have naturalised around the perimeter of the park again providing early forage for pollinators. The new herbaceous borders around the fountain area have been filled with sensory plants which also appeal to pollinators and have a lengthy flowering period.

The diseased privet hedge located on the western corner of Upper Radnor Park has been replaced with native hedging plants. These will provide better habitat to birds, mammals and invertebrates.



The lower park offers the most ecological interest and management techniques are centred around these principles. The stream and riparian strip provide a wildlife corridor along the north edge of the park. The water course itself is managed by the Environment Agency (EA) with assistance from FHDC. Typical tasks include litter picking, tree management and vegetation clearance. The silt trap in the north-west corner of the park is cleared

periodically by the EA to ensure free flow and decrease the risk of silting up of the culverted sections to the north east of the park.

The stream corridor provides habitat for a number of birds with little egrets visiting regularly. The riparian strip and surrounding area to the north-west are managed sensitively allowing wild flowers and grasses to complete their natural cycles with mowing only taking place twice a year. In some areas dead wood can be stacked to improve habitat and abundance of fungi and invertebrates.

A first ever population of Smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) was identified within the small water feature near the Pent stream. This is most likely a result of the introduction of less invasive water management.



Smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) April 2024

Bee Kind areas were introduced to the park in 2020 with the view to further increase the biodiversity in the park. In addition to this, over 60 000 spring flower native bulbs were planted in 2021 in these areas to expand the variety of plants.

## 7.2 Buildings, Footpaths and Structures

All maintenance of buildings, structures, play areas and infrastructure is undertaken by the property department.

Footpath inspections are undertaken annually and any defects noted. Small issues are repaired by the in house handymen teams and larger works may be completed by contractors if the resource or technical skill is not available in house. Most dilapidated paths in the Lower Radnor Park area were resurfaced in 2019 /2020. Large potholes and uneven paths in the Upper Radnor Park area were resurfaced in 2021/2022. Charity budget will fund further improvements in coming years.

The drinking fountain is maintained by the in-house team and undergoes a weekly service to unblock and clean the outlets, a monthly bacteria test and an annual disinfection of the interior parts.

The bowls club buildings and the tea room are maintained by the leasers as previously described.

# 8 Sustainability

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Folkestone & Hythe District Council declared a climate emergency along with many other councils in 2019 and a budget of £10m has been set aside for initiatives which will help the council hit its net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

A low carbon and sustainability specialist has been appointed to support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group which is in the process of producing a Carbon Action Plan.

In the short term the council has made the following moves towards the 2030 goal:

- Planting 900 trees across the district in 2019/20 including small, native and semi-mature trees
- Planting wildflower areas and managing land to promote biodiversity
- Reducing strimmer use and pesticide application around trees and obstacles where suitable.
- Purchasing battery operated grounds maintenance equipment where suitable to replace petrol powered equipment
- Introducing Bee Kind areas

Managing Radnor Park in a sustainable manner is accepted as essential for its longevity. In the wider Council it is common place to consider sustainability in all functions.

Many daily activities can be reduced or made “greener” such as turning lights and other electrical items off and reducing the amount of paper used in the office. On the ground, felco secateurs and other small bladed tools are purchased where possible as replacement blades are available rather than having to buy a new pair.

Office and washroom lighting is now motion activated.

### **8.1 Green Waste and Composting**

- 95% of in - house produced green waste is processed (mulched and composted) at Hawkinge depot.
- In place since 2010, this reduces the need to buy compost or mulch from external companies, reducing transport and waste costs.
- It reduces the need to water newly planted shrubs or bushes by providing a protective barrier.
- The use of mulch reduces the use of pesticides used to stop weeds competing with the new plants.
- In the last year localised composting units have been installed in key areas such as East Cliff. This reduces the need to move the green waste to Hawkinge to be composted.
- Other local options, such as New Romney Depot, Kingsnorth Gardens and the Coastal Park are being investigated.

### **8.2 Peat**

- The GM department never use raw peat for their own planting schemes or soil replenishment. When purchasing potted plants and other nursery, nurseries are asked to supply a certificate stating peat sustainability.
- Seasonal bedding and floral displays (baskets, troughs) are now 100% peat free.
- Tree stock purchased from our preferred supplier has been peat free since autumn 2012.  
Aim to be 100% peat free by 2025

### **8.3 Annual Bedding**

- All seasonal bedding is grown in reusable trays which are returned to the supplier for reuse.
- All perennial seasonal plants are replanted in various herbaceous borders across the district.
- All seasonal bedding is grown in reusable trays that are sent back to the supplier for reuse.

- Where appropriate, seasonal bedding is replaced by sustainable (perennial) planting

#### **8.4 Waste Management & Recycling**

- The main parks are popular spots for family picnics and gatherings.
- Visitors are encouraged to either take their recycling home and to put litter in the bins provided
- Small recycling bins are located by the toilet block and near the small play area in Lower Radnor. They are emptied by the street cleansing contractor. The bins allow visitors to separate paper / card, glass and plastic.
- 

#### **8.5 Tree Stock**

- F&HDC has 3,875 individual trees found within its parks and open spaces.
- There are a further 22,201 trees contained within groups and woodlands such as those on the Leas Escarpment and the Royal Military Canal.
- In 2022 GM planted in excess of 900 new trees.
- Future planting - it is intended to reduce the number of trees planted in parks and open spaces over the coming years in order to ensure their establishment.
- There is limited resource available for the watering and aftercare of newly planted trees and as a result young trees often fail due to drought.
- In order for tree planting to be more successful F&HDC will be planting between thirty to forty trees so that all of them receive appropriate aftercare providing net gain over the next ten years.

#### **8.6 Grass Cutting**

- GM maintains open spaces in-line with their use and to ensure the character of the area. The total cuts per year can be dependent on many factors.
- High profile areas such as the Leas, Radnor Park and the Coastal Park can be cut every two weeks, wild areas may be cut just twice per year. In the neighbouring Kingsnorth Gardens grass cutting can still be intensive but has been reduced by the introduction of biodiversity friendly meadows on some of the lawns.
- GM managers have been working on identifying areas where cutting regimes can be reduced to help increase biodiversity and reduce all environmental impacts.

## 8.7 Furniture and Equipment

GM has invested in electric equipment in teams where appropriate;

- 1 long reach hedge cutter
- 7 hedge cutters
- 4 drills
- 4 chainsaws
- 2 pole saws
- 4 back pack blowers
- 3 hand held blowers
- 1 hybrid remote controlled bank mower

The 10 year capital investment plan is due to for renewal in 2025, this will ensure environmentally friendly options are adequately investigated.

Hand tools with replacement parts such as blades are purchased where available rather than having to buy complete new items.

Any new equipment or furniture purchased must be sustainably sourced or use recycled materials and add to the initiatives detailed above as part of the council's ongoing commitment to protecting the environment and achieving net-zero-carbon emissions by 2030.

## 8.8 Chemical Use

Chemical use is kept to a minimum at the canal although it is unavoidable in some circumstances. All gardeners are trained in pesticide storage and spraying (City and Guilds NPTC PA1 and PA6). Although this is a qualification for life, staff under go refresher training every 5 years. Before any spraying operation the relevant paper work is completed and held on file for future reference.

The Technician monitors all chemical use and keeps records of all spraying operations and chemicals kept at depots. Safety data and COSHH sheets are kept for each chemical and the Technician ensures chemicals are not kept beyond their using up period. Twiss Depot has chemical and fuel stores clearly marked with relevant safety warning signs at. All documents relating to chemical and fuel use are available to view on request at the Civic Centre.

Limited chemical applications:

- Used in ponds to control blanket weed.
- Trees - Eco plugs are applied to tree stumps to inhibit regrowth where stumps are in locations where they cannot be removed through grinding.
- Wasps/Rats - Pests are treated with pesticides where public safety is impeded, there are currently no cost-effective alternatives.

- Use of glyphosate is minimal within Grounds Maintenance, with an average of just 14L (diluted) being used annually across the service in the last 3 years ( compared to 55L 5 years prior) .
- The council does not use any chemical treatments (herbicide or pesticide) in children’s play areas.

An exercise to assess current chemical use has shown that usage and staffing cost is low with most areas receiving 2 visits per year and an average of 14L (diluted) of glyphosate used per year. The council has agreed a motion to phase out the use of herbicide and pesticides where possible. Trials into alternative methods such as hot foam, water or burner treatments and mechanical removal methods are scheduled to take place during the timeframe of this management plan on council land. Once this trial has been conducted and evaluated, where new methods of weed control are found to be effective and financially viable they will be adopted and implemented into this management plan and the wider management of the council’s estate. It is understood that alternative methods for weed removal and treatment are being developed and officers will continue to monitor any significant developments.

## **8.9 Vehicles and Machinery (Fleet)**

Council vehicles are purchased rather than leased and re-newed on a roughly 8 year cycle. A procurement exercise looks in particular at economy, efficiency, localism, specification and servicing plans. New vehicles are purchased on a rolling programme in order to fit with available budget.

A fuel tank has also been purchased for Ross Depot which not only provides financial benefits but reduces non operational mileage and time.

The composting machine adds to the sustainability aspect of the parks management. After composting, green waste removed from the park is now re-used on site, eliminating the need to purchase compost. This addition of any composted material also reduces the need for watering and adds structure and nutrients to the soil.

Machinery is kept to a minimum with hand tools being used where ever possible. Using these more accurate methods of grounds maintenance encourages better plant health and also increases experience within the staff. The staff are also less susceptible to problems associated with excessive machinery use such as hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS). Noise pollution is also reduced within the park creating a quieter environment for visitors.

## 8.10 Horticulture

Where public safety is not impeded, dead wood is left in the lower park as wildlife habitat. Excess wood is chipped on site and used as mulch for new tree planting, flower beds or walkways.

Peat free or reduced peat material or alternatives such as in house produced compost and/ or woodchip are used whenever possible. Nursery suppliers using peat based growing media are asked to provide a Responsibly Produced Peat (RRP) certificate.

The composting machine based at the Hawkinge depot adds to the sustainability aspect of the parks management. After composting, green waste generated by the service is re-used on site, eliminating the need to purchase compost. Wood chip from tree felling operations is also used on mixed borders. Nearly 100% of all green waste produced by the department is recycled.

Following the summer season, hanging baskets are removed from throughout the district any suitable plants are re-used in the park, grasses and laurels are good examples of this. Grape hyacinths (*Muscari armeniacum*) have been used in the winter bedding and planted out in borders following the change in seasonal bedding.

Planting around the fountain area is a mix of seasonal bedding, trees and herbaceous borders. The plants chosen for the herbaceous borders give a sensory experience to visitors, they may be highly scented, brightly coloured or rustle in the breeze.

A large border which ran alongside the Bowls Club was overgrown and removed. This 1000m<sup>2</sup> space has been laid to lawn, interspersed with European Aspen (*Populus tremula 'Erecta'*) trees and a Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) hedge. The area looks neat and attractive and is much more sustainable in terms of maintenance. In the last two years, the grass cutting regime in this area has been decreased by 50 % allowing for wild flowers and pollinators to flourish.



2014



2017

2020

Horticultural methods commonly employed within the park and across the service include:

- Deeply cultivate the soil, digging in large quantities of organic matter from Hawkinge compost site, to improve soil structure, soil retention and water availability for plants. Mushroom compost is sometimes used throughout our sites as well as composted bark chippings i.e. mulches.

- Planting small specimens so the plant gets used to their growing environment gradually as they develop.
- Planting grey-green or silver leaved specimens as they reflect the sun's rays, helping to conserve moisture within the plant tissues.
- Planting less hardy, silver leaved and sun loving plants in April help to establish their roots well before the winter arrives.
- Thoroughly watering in new plants and keeping them watered for the first season after planting to ensure they establish well.
- Using water from the Royal Military Canal to irrigate plants and trees (EA extraction license in place) rather than water drawn from hydrant
- Most plastic pots used for growing herbaceous plants are sent back to the supplier for reuse.
- Seasonal bedding and other planting schemes are designed with pollinator friendly factor in mind, focusing on variety of pollen- rich single-petalled flowers for 'easy access', bright colours, different shapes and scent, prolonged flowering period.
- Where appropriate, seasonal bedding is replaced by sustainable.
- Use peat free alternative when purchasing plant and tree stock where available.
- Reduce grass cutting frequencies to increase park's biodiversity and to decrease noise, fumes and exposure to hand arm vibration.

### 8.11 Street Furniture

Park furniture consists of the usual donated memorial benches (Cavendish style) and steel litter, recycling and dog bins. New applications for donated memorial benches are administered through the property department. Two picnic units (seats and tables) were installed in spring 2021 in the underused area next to the Boating Pond in the Lower Radnor Park.

## 9 Marketing

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### 9.1 Web Advertising and Social Media

In terms of a digital presence, Radnor Park has a page on the Folkestone and Hythe District Council website giving details of facilities and a link to the management plan. The RPCG run a very successful Facebook page where they can share ideas and request assistance for new projects. There are also listings on web sites such as Google, Explore Kent and Trip Advisor.

<https://www.visitfolkestoneandhythe.co.uk/attractions/radnor-park-folkestone-42719/>

Now that Radnor Park is much improved as a green space, the council hope that rankings on these websites will improve accordingly. The council would

like to achieve 4.5 stars on TripAdvisor by 2021 (currently 4.0). This can be done by encouraging the public to rate the park using on site signage and social media.

Explore Kent has some old photos of the park so these need to be updated to reflect the changes on site and show people the great facilities on offer.

Google reviews seem to be working well with 4.4 stars and 113 reviews.

## 9.2 On Site Signage

A welcome sign near the play area gives a map of the entire site, general information about the facilities on offer and encourages responsible site use. It also encourages people to get involved with the site by becoming an active member of RPCG or giving reviews on TripAdvisor.

Three new signs have been added since 2018. Two signs are located near both the Fishing and the Boating pond and the third being located by the Stella Marris Primary school in the lower section of the park.

## 9.3 Play Strategy 2020-2030

In 2018 FHDC commissioned consultants to look at current play provision across the district, undertake an extensive visitor survey and write a play review and strategy. They have looked at all play areas within the district regardless of ownership or management.

From these pieces of work a network of play sites which are manageable and offer high quality play will be available to all children living within Folkestone & Hythe.

This document sets out a vision for the future of play provision in the district:  
*Play experiences are fundamental to the health and development of children and young people. Folkestone & Hythe District Council will therefore seek to ensure all residents are able to access a high quality and high value play area. We will work with town and parish councils, together with other providers, to create play spaces which offer challenging and exciting environments for children and young people of all ages and abilities.*

To ensure that the strategy is deliverable there are a number of objectives:

- Improve the location, quality, value and accessibility of play provision for all children and young people.
- Effectively utilise planning policy to benefit play provision.
- Raise awareness of play opportunities and the importance of play.
- Maximise funding opportunities for the maintenance and enhancement of play areas.
- Communicate and engage with key partners and stakeholders.
- Ensure appropriate and regular communication and review.

## Play Area Types identified in the Strategy:

- D: Destination play area

Play spaces which can attract visitors from a wider catchment, usually within larger parks they often have supporting facilities such as car parking, catering and toilets.

- Priority Play Area (PPA)

Objective: Continuing to maintain and seeking to enhance the Priority Play Areas (PPAs) as identified in this Strategy.

- Strategically Important Play Area (SIPA)

Objective: Supporting the provision of a network of Strategically Important Play Areas (SIPAs) to ensure the majority of the district's residents are within a 15 minute walk of a high quality and high value play space, which meets the needs of the community.

The document is published and is available to view online.

- Priority Play Areas (PPA's) will be flagship sites which attract a wide range of ages and abilities, offering a variety of natural and formal play spaces.
- Strategically Important Play Areas (SIPA's) will form a network of high quality and value play sites ensuring the majority of residents live within a 15 minute walking radius of at least 1 SIPA.
- Non-Strategic Play Areas (NSPA's) will make up the remainder of the lower quality and play value sites and will be offered to partners as asset transfers. Should no interested parties come forward, play equipment at these sites will be removed and the ground returned to open space.

Within this document the Radnor Park is ranked as a PPA meaning that investment from Section 106 monies and CIL funding made available within the area will be used on site to enhance the facilities.

# 10 Community Involvement

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## 10.1 Radnor Park Community Group

Community involvement has been crucial in all aspects of the renovations of the park. The council's Economic Development department set up the project to renovate the lodge house using skilled construction students from Kent College. Various individuals and groups raised funds and researched renovation of the roof finial and the fountain.

Arguably the largest community aspect of the project has been the renovation of the play area on the upper park. The council had secured around £274,000 in Section 106 monies to be spent on new equipment, the fountain renovations including a new statue.

In 2015 a group of 4 mothers approached the Roger De Haan Charitable Trust (RDHCT) to try to secure funding to improve play on the park. The Trust gave them advice around other funding bodies and setting up a constitution. They set up a Facebook page which now has over 540 members. They also approached other local community groups who had gone through the same process for guidance. The group was formalised as Radnor Park Community Group (RPCG), a constitution was written and chairperson, secretary and treasurer were nominated. They approached the council initially to enquire about statistical information about the population of the district for their constitution and were put in touch with the teams already working on the wider project. The RPCG became part of the project team attending working group meetings and being advised on various funding pots from Community Chest Grants to smaller ward councillor grants.

They applied for and received a £50,000 Community Chest grant and 8 smaller grants which secured the £55,000 RDHCT match funding which, coupled with the councils section 106 funding gave nearly £200,000 to be spent on play and some improvements to the hard landscaping.

RPCG held a huge play date inviting lots of local children to come up with ideas for what they wanted at the new park. In addition to this the council held a joint public consultation evening with the group to speak to parents and residents.

In January 2017 the council tendered for play area companies to come up with a design based around a brief drawn up by a local landscape architect. The tender process was completed in March 2017 with the RPCG being involved in the final decision. HAGS-SMP won the tender as the equipment they provided offered value for money and was the best fit with the design principles in the brief.

Ground works began on site in February 2017 with the old equipment and some hedges being removed. The works to the fountain and play area began in May 2017 and the park held its grand opening on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017.



Susie Illman, Chairperson – Radnor Park Community Group with her husband and daughter enjoying the new park on the Grand Opening Day



Shepway Youth Orchestra playing Disney tunes at the Grand Opening Day

## 10.2 Events Process

Many community organised events take place on Radnor Park. The Manager works closely with the Events Team and external partners. The council supports all events by providing officer time and expertise to ensure that all events were safe, well attended and enjoyed by all. Apply4 is now used by the

authority. It is a cloud based platform which streamlines the event application process. Event organisers apply and make payments online, enabling F&HDC to issue permits as soon as the application has been approved. Messaging and document management tools help stakeholders and the Council to manage queries and communicate with ease.

<https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/article/1068/Apply-to-organise-an-event->

Radnor Park events will always include one circus and 2 funfairs. The remainder of the days are allocated to community events with the Donkey Derby, One Sky One World Kite Flying and Folkestone Fun Day being the largest of these. The rest are allocated to boot fairs.

The EEO's hold community engagement days mainly in and around the dog run. These focus on responsible dog ownership and offer free micro-chipping for pets as well as doggie goodie bags. The emergency services are also on site to engage with the community, talk about fire and personal safety and discuss any issues raised.

In 2019 The Radnor Park community group raised funds for a new unit – a specialist swing that can safely carry a person and a wheelchair. Further funding was provided through Kent County Council. Cllrs Pascoe and Berry also helped free up cash from Environmental Improvement Grants and ward councillor grants.

The swing was installed in July 2019 by an in-house Property team.



An article in the local paper; <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/folkestone/news/kids-get-chance-to-use-swing-for-the-first-time-209008/>

### 10.3 Angling club

Shepway Angling Society have an agreement with FHDC to manage fishing at the upper pond. The society currently pay the council £250.00 per annum for the fishing rights and then charge members and non-members a fee to fish.

The Angling Society undertakes around 3,000 volunteer hours each year by sweeping the pond edges and litter clearance on a daily basis. Each year FHDC supply a large skip and the Society members clear weed from the pond and cut back the island vegetation. In 2017 over 5 tonnes of weed was removed from the pond.

#### **10.4. Volunteers**

Volunteering helps people connect with each other, with the wider community and perhaps most importantly the work of volunteers helps make our parks and open spaces even better.

Volunteers can support our work in many ways, from managing habitats and surveying wildlife to keeping our parks clean and safe. People have the chance to get involved with their local community, meet new people, develop your skills and learn more about the award winning Radnor Park.

FHDC is committed to making volunteering an enjoyable and safe experience. This will be reflected in the new Volunteer Charter and well-structured online volunteering events programme both of which should come live in spring 2021.

#### **10.5 Go Folkestone**

Go Folkestone group was adopted on the 24th day of November 2010.

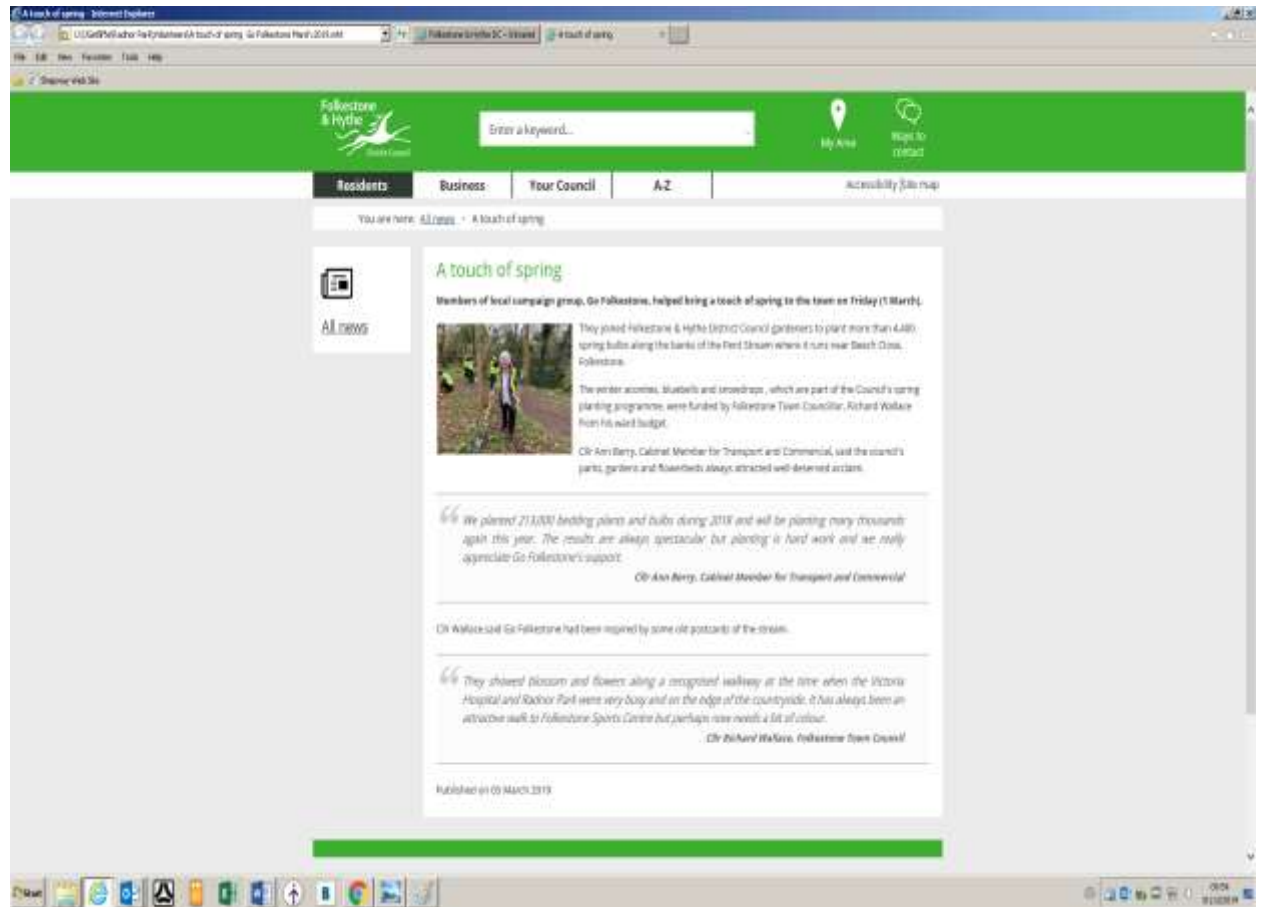
The Organisation's objects are:

- To actively encourage the people of Folkestone to regain confidence in their town by supporting practical proposals for regeneration that will result in an improved quality of life for all who live here.
- To create an atmosphere and environment in which the younger generation will look forward to living and working in Folkestone.
  - To seek the views of all residents of Folkestone interested in the town's future so as to determine a common approach to its role and status in the area, with consideration being given to all practical ideas leading to real achievement of these objectives.
- To work closely with the local authorities and all others involved in development of the town to ensure that there is a common will to achieve the maximum success in a reasonable period of time at a sustainable cost.
  - To promote Folkestone more widely in the "outside world" so as to encourage increased inward investment in improvements resulting in a greater influx of both new inhabitants and tourists.

In March 2019 a local group Go Folkestone helped to plant thousands of native spring flowering bulbs.

The organisation is strictly non – political.

In March 2019 Go Folkestone helped to plant thousands of native spring flowering bulbs. This event was promoted on both social media and the Council's website.





### 10.6. Radnor Park Petanque group (RPPG)

The group was formed in early summer 2021 after the founder contacted local Neighbourhood Watch group seeing if anyone was interested in playing the game. After a good response the group met up in June'21 for their first game. At the time there was no money in the FHDC budget to fund construction of a proper pitch, an agreement with FHDC was set up to mark the square weekly with a white liner.

In 2022 the RPPG decided to raise money to pay for 3 pitches. A Race Afternoon event was held in the garden owned by two RPPG members. The event was very well attended and raised £1500.

A Coronation Tea event was held in the same garden in 2023 and raised another good amount of money.

The Ward Councillor at the time was extremely supportive of the project and organised for the group to attend a meeting with Folkestone Town Council who contributed £3000. The RPPG were also awarded Ward Grants from several Councillors in 2023.

The group contacted Mr Paul Tory asking him for help regarding building contractors as his company had built a pitch on their new development in Hawkinge. In the end the Tory Family Foundation kindly donated £5000 which would take the group to the amount needed for 2 pitches (around £ 11,000).

The square was completed in late Autumn 2023.

Quote from RPPG:

*“The original group who started playing in 2021 are all still playing mainly on a Sunday but also on a Tuesday. Meeting up in the Park means getting us outside regularly (summer and winter) getting fresh air and exercise which is so important especially for retired people. We have great fun and have built up strong friendships since we started playing. We have got to know several “dog walkers” and it is lovely to see that corner of the park being used especially in the summer when families often have picnics there, away from the noise of the busy main road.”*

*Obviously, we are keen for other people to play pétanque in Radnor Park and in April there is another group who will start playing probably on Thursdays. To this end we think publicity/signage etc will help and definitely some seating!! Oh yes and, as well as people playing cricket on the pitch we have had a couple of girls playing hockey and it being used for remote controlled cars. Luckily the surface seems to be standing up ok! ”*

In addition to the above, installation of new benches and a small notice board is programmed for April 2024. Overall ongoing maintenance sits with FHDC.



Opening Day May 2024

# 11 List of Appendices

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Appendices have not been included in the plan to keep the size of the document to a minimum but all the documents in the list below are available to view.

- COSHH and Safety Data Sheets
- Corporate Plan (also available online)
- Service Plan
- Risk Assessments
- Safe Systems of Work
- Play Strategy (also available online)
- Volunteer Charter (draft form)
- Premise License – terms and conditions
- MyTrees Database
- Carbon Action Plan

## 12 Work in Progress – Photos



Bee Kind area, bulb planting and its results 2020



Temporary pétanque square 2021



New pétanque square, completed in November 2023



Tree planting & benches installation February 2024



Infrastructure improvements April 2024



100m racetrack, June 2025