



# Chelmsford City Council Parks and Green Spaces Bereavement Services

# What's provided?

- Parks and Green Spaces
- Grounds Maintenance
- Equipped Play Areas
- Hylands Park and Estate
- Chelmsford Crematorium and Cemetery (incl. closed church yards)
- Allotment Gardens
- Contributions to the Love Your Chelmsford Programme of activities



# Do parks and green spaces matter?

- High quality, well maintained, safe and easily accessible parks and green spaces widely recognised as a key community asset...
- Value of green space, for many different reasons, cannot be over-estimated...
- Green spaces and parks provide the infrastructure to the local community to engage in wide ranges of activities, many which directly contribute to one's health and wellbeing...
- Especially so as seen in the last couple of years during and post the pandemic...



# At a glance ...

- 692 hectares of parks and green spaces managed and maintained, including 490ha of parks, gardens and amenity areas, 93ha of sports and playing fields, 78ha of natural space
- 3m+ people recorded using the main parks ... 94% of residents surveyed have used parks and green spaces
- In excess of 400,000 outdoor sports participations each year
- 7,000 outdoor sports fixtures each year
- 70+ community events each year
- 103 Equipped Play Areas
- 17 Green Flag Locations, 1 Community Award and 3 Heritage Award Locations
- 1135 Allotment Plots
- Park volunteers over 1800 participants (100/150 regular weekly volunteers, 42 weeks/year) delivering over 1420 different volunteer activities with total volunteer hours of 4595 equating to a value of £55,140.

# At a glance ...

- Bedding Plants produced by our in-house Nursery; 77000 Spring/Summer, 112 tubs for parkway Spring and 112 tubs for parkway Summer
- Mass tree and woodland planting; 180 standard trees planted, 16,500 whips
- Planted 10000 spring bulbs
- Maintained 540 ha of grass including species rich grass and meadow-land.
- Maintained 94ha of shrubs
- 110ha of hedges
- 9,500 trees inspected and maintained.

# Well managed and maintained?

- Green Flag award scheme used proactively to achieve independent quality accreditation to ensure that everybody has access to quality green space and that they are appropriately managed and maintained
- Chelmsford currently has 17 parks and green spaces accredited under the Green Flag scheme – the most in the east of England
- The City Council's Parks Service has been Green Flag Service Accredited in February 2023
- Policy based approach to managing parks and open spaces

# Value for money and use of APSE Performance Networks?

- Use of APSE Performance Networks indicators to reference value for money for example Chelmsford key cost indicators indicate cost around average or slightly below average for service/group set against quality value indicators such as we currently have 17 parks and green spaces that are accredited under the Green Flag Service Accredited scheme – the most in the east of England
- Service staff effectiveness and efficiency measured through Key and Secondary Performance Indicators such as staff absence, HR indicators, Quality assurance indicators. Staff development and use of apprenticeships.
- Use of Environmental practices and participation in wider APSE events ensuring appropriate considerations is given to local Climate and Ecological Emergency Declarations/policies.



# Policy for creating and managing species-rich grassland

- On 16 July 2019, the Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency
- The Declaration is accompanied by a Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan, one of the key priorities of which is to implement measures to improve the green infrastructure of Chelmsford, in particular protecting and expanding natural habitats, promoting greater biodiversity.
- A policy for creating and managing species-rich grassland was introduced in 2021.
- The approach is multi-layered, embracing options ranging from dedicating whole areas to be managed as nature reserves, the creation of hay meadows, through to locally adjusting the mowing regime of specific areas of grassland in order to accommodate the presence of unusual or rare wildflower species or particular fauna.

# Managing species-rich grassland

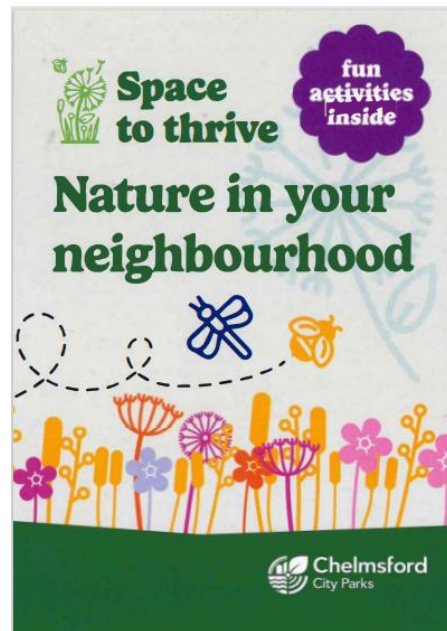
The key the principles of the policy are as follows:

- Maintenance regimes need to be fit for purpose according to the functionality and use of grassland
- Management and maintenance regimes need to be consistent and meaningful, i.e. avoiding ad-hoc and apparently random designations
- In certain areas frequent maintenance of grassland will be imperative on safety grounds [for example preserving sight lines on road junctions]
- The existing and potential biodiversity value of specific areas of grassland need to be assessed to determine the most appropriate management and maintenance regimes
- Regular maintenance [not necessarily frequent cutting though] is essential to create the conditions in which species-rich grassland can thrive and to control competitive or invasive species – the timing of maintenance activities is important, but will vary according to seasonal conditions
- Creating ‘structural diversity’ [that is different vegetation heights] benefits both flora and fauna
- Wherever possible green corridors should be continuous and interconnected
- Negative public perceptions [for example about areas being untidy or neglected] need to be addressed through informative communications and promotion.

# Space to Thrive Campaign

Chelmsford City Parks look after green spaces across the district, creating wildlife-friendly areas within urban surroundings to give nature space to thrive.

By leaving areas of grassland to grow taller, wildflower meadows can bloom. This attracts pollinators which in turn provide food for mammals and birds in the food chain. In turn this has contributed to an increase in sightings of bats within city centre neighbourhoods.



# Questions?

