JUBILEE PARK, KIRKBY STEPHEN

MANAGEMENT PLAN

FINAL DRAFT

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for

Kirkby Stephen Town Council
Local Links
Kirkby Stephen
Cumbria, CA17 4QX

by

Luczak Associates
Landscape Management and Heritage

Images on the title page from the left
1 Main entrance
2 Boating pond and view south
3 Pavilion from the main path

CONTENTS

Page

1. Introduction **4**
- 1.1 Scope and participants
- 1.2 Methodology and contents
- 1.3 Images copyright

2. Where we are now **5**
- 2.1 Size, location and legal matters
- 2.2 Historic development
- 2.3 Physical elements
- 2.4 Local context
- 2.5 Management and maintenance
- 2.6 Current use
- 2.7 Summary of cultural and natural heritage

3. Where we want to get to **18**
- 3.1 Vision for the park
- 3.2 Risks and challenges
- 3.2 Opportunities

4. Zoning and proposals **20**
- 4.1 Zoning
- 4.2 Proposals
- 4.3 Proposals plan
- 4.4 Ideas: habitats and plants
- 4.5 Ideas: play, seats and panels

5. Action plan **27**

Appendices **29**

A1. References
A2. Planting lists
A3. Proposed maintenance regimes

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Jubilee Park is a public park on the southern edge of Kirkby Stephen in Cumbria, adjacent to the main A685 road through the town (grid reference NY769073). It was around 1887 that the area was laid out as a park to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

It is understood to be owned by Kirkby Stephen Town Council in the form of the independent Jubilee Park Trust. Kirkby Stephen Town Council (KSTC) acts as Sole Trustee.

This Management Plan has been funded by the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership (WDLP). It has been produced over the last two months by Maria Luczak of Luczak Associates in collaboration with KSTC and others. Maria is a Chartered Landscape Architect specialising in land management, especially of naturalistic and historic landscapes.

1.1 Scope and participants

The Trust/KSTC has been approached by a number of stakeholders with a view to making more of the park and increasing its use. It is generally felt that the park warrants more direction and attention.

Given the condition of the park and the upheaval of the pandemic, the Council decided that a Management Plan should be produced to assess the park as a whole rather than reacting to individual suggestions, since this might lead to both a piecemeal approach and appearance.

The Management Plan will inform and guide future work in the park and should enable the Trust and residents to re-engage with the park in planning for its future. The Plan process develops a new vision for the park based on its now more natural character, and enables it to be better understood, valued and used. The Plan outlines physical improvement works, community use and volunteering which should enable the residents of Kirkby Stephen to be proud of their park again.

The Plan would not have been possible without substantial input from the client KSTC, both the Councillors and Clerk, and consultation with them and other stakeholders.

1.2 Methodology and contents

The Plan combines aspects of both the Green Flag and National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) guidance on Management Plans. Green Flag is the national quality award for public parks; achieving and retaining it for a number of years is often a condition of NLHF grant aid.

Section 2 ‘Where we are now’ is the Green Flag equivalent of the NHLF’s ‘Understanding the heritage’ and ‘Significance’. Section 3 ‘Where do we want to get to’ includes a vision for the park, outlines risks, challenges and opportunities, and Section 4 contains zoning of uses and proposals; these aspects are common to both sets of guidance.

KSTC did not want the Plan to be entirely predicated on the often lengthy process of gaining grants, but to also identify early activities that could be undertaken by the community. Section 5 ‘Action plan’ therefore includes the proposed improvements with a range of responsibilities and where additional resources are likely to be required.

Appendices include references, proposed planting lists and maintenance regimes.

1.3 Images copyright

Where appropriate, sources are credited with the image. Uncredited images are by the author.

It has not been possible to research the ownership, copyright and permissions associated with the images not by the author; the Management Plan document itself cannot therefore be used for public consultation.

The images in question were provided to the author by KSTC. If KSTC can establish that there are no restrictions on using these images for other purposes then KSTC may, at their risk, extend use of the document.

2.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

2.1 Size, location and legal matters

The 0.7 hectare park is located on a steep, north-facing slope on the southern edge of the town of Kirkby Stephen. The river Eden runs roughly south-north a field away to the east, and beyond it is the chain of the North Pennines. The park is open to the public at all times.

The park is understood to be owned by KSTC in the form of the independent Jubilee Park Trust and KSTC are in the process of verifying title. Two tenanted paddocks immediately to the south are also in the ownership. The park is just within the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP). It and associated land was registered in 1969 as a Village Green (VG39) under the Commons Registration Act 1965 by the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society.

2.2 Historic development

The author is grateful to KSTC and Peter Lewis for sharing his article on the park written for the Upper Eden History Group, which is summarised in this section.

An area of common land known as 'The Toaves' was enclosed in an Enclosure Award dated 24 September 1855. About half of the four acres was an area exploited for turf and soil by the local inhabitants and it had become a bare, stony and neglected spot. Its sloping, rugged character did not lend itself to enclosure for agriculture. It was decided to set aside this area for 'the recreation and exercise of the inhabitants of Kirkby Stephen and the neighbourhood', and it was awarded to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor. Due to the nature of the land, recreation probably meant walking and picnicking, not organised sports.

The other half of the land on the west side of the track to Wharton Hall was designated in the award as gardens (allotments) for the labouring poor, which were laid out fairly soon after the award. However it was not until 1887 that the other half began to be laid out as a park. The article describes in detail, the twists and turns in deciding on an appropriate commemoration for the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. With only three months to go, a town sub-committee was formed on 31 March 1887, which deliberated a number of options.

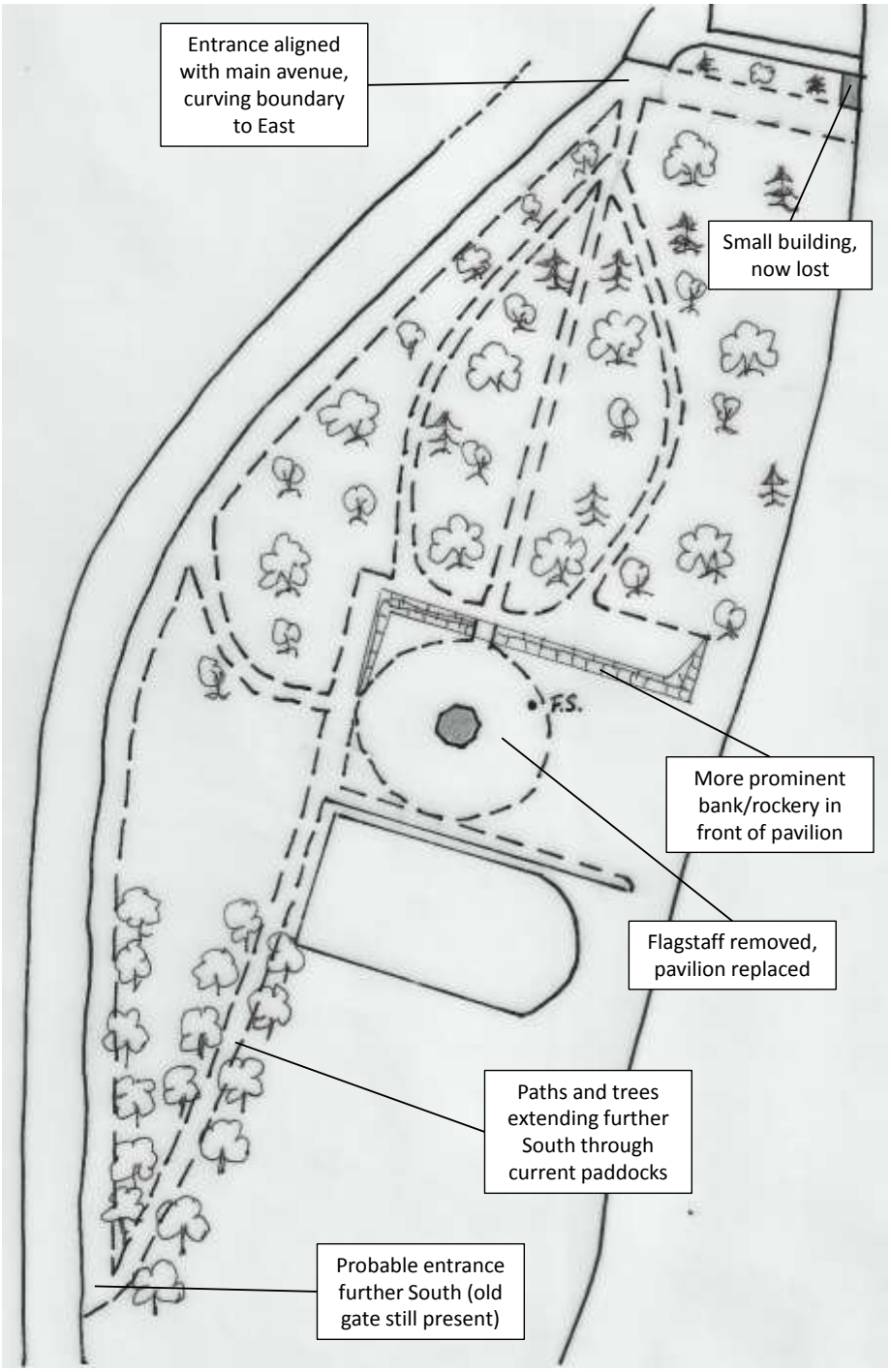
Probably early 1900s, view of the main, north entrance looking up the main path to the pavilion

Courtesy of Kirkby Stephen Town Council

Funding was a concern about setting up the park, and two approaches were pursued, subscriptions from the guesthouses and dividing the town into donation collection districts. Costs included 'a good substantial wall, and gateway, combination wall, and iron railings', which were erected, as confirmed by the image above.

There is nothing in the records to suggest that the park was completed for the actual date and the celebration took other forms; it may have been opened or dedicated, but two months after the Jubilee, a sub-committee was formed with the express purpose of considering the park scheme. Contracts awarded included for the railings, steel gateway, stonework for the pavilion and trees and Rhododendrons from Flakebridge of Appleby.

Andrew Mackereth, the Master of the workhouse, did not formally put in appearance until five months after the Jubilee, in November 1887. He was asked 'to undertake the carrying out of the plan he has drawn (for the development of the Park)'. Later entries indicate that he was involved in the selection, layout and planting of trees and shrubs, erection of a stile and construction of a drain, as well as the more major design and building of the pavilion and laying out of a boating lake. The latter was lined with puddled clay and the edges formed with stone slabs.



Some 20 years after the Jubilee, the 1916 Ordnance Survey map sketched above, recorded the completed park. The pavilion was at the top of the main path and formed an axis with and focal point for the main gate. There was a flagstaff (FS) north east of the pavilion. These features can also be seen clearly in the image above, the map and photograph both corroborating the history. On the map, the linear terraced feature north of the pavilion indicated a rockery above a flat area and the boating lake with a rounded east end was on the level ground, south of the pavilion. North and south entrances were different as shown above. The southern entrance and a few trees of the avenue to it, remain in the adjacent paddocks, see photo above.

Development of the park continued until at least 1894, partly funded by boat trips on the 'high bay' of the river Eden, probably between the weirs at High and Low Mills. Andrew Mackereth ran the park for the committee until 1901, when he retired as Master of the workhouse and returned to his birthplace of Kendal. The Clerk was instructed to write to him, thanking him for his long and gratuitous service as Park Keeper.

The park was adjacent to the lower railway station, the auction mart and the Croglin Castle Hotel. As such it was located at the southern hub of the town, and was well used and maintained for many years after Mr Mackereth's departure. However the closure of the station and hotel probably marked the beginning of decreased use which was exacerbated by reducing maintenance budgets. Over time the ornamental planting became overgrown, trees seeded themselves and the park developed a more natural, woodland character.

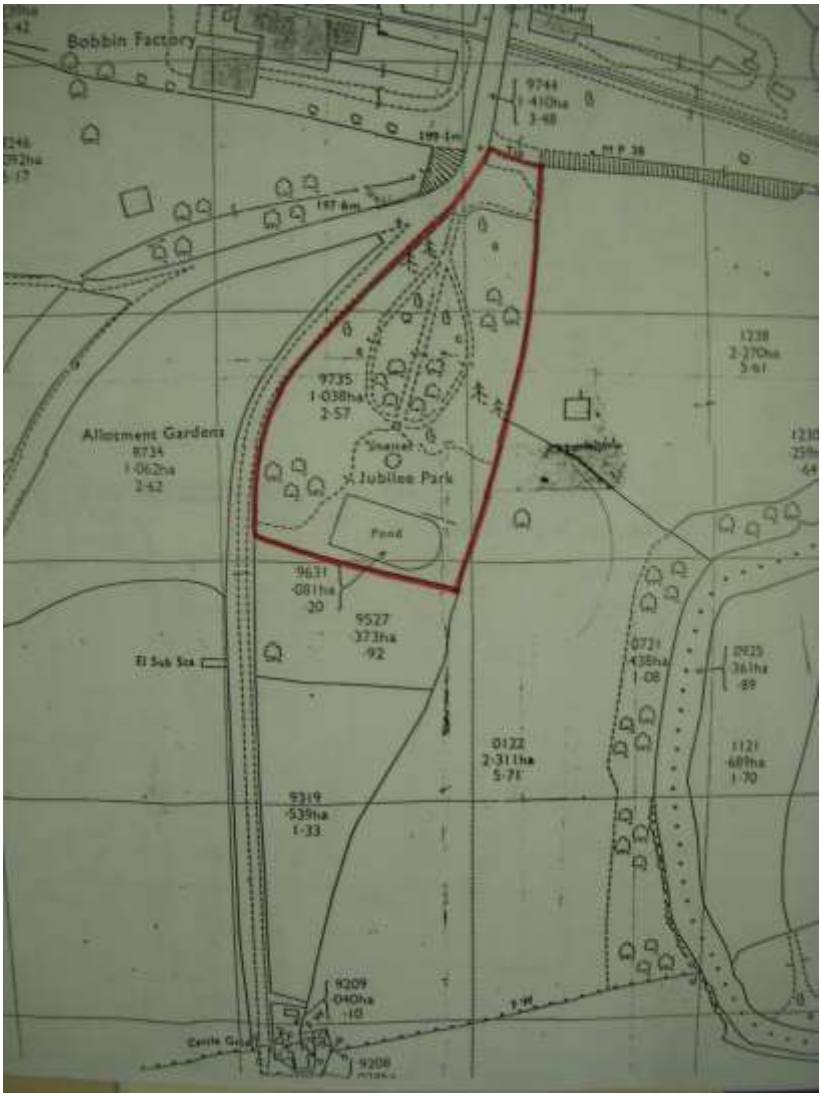
The Ordnance Survey map below from the early 1900s, shows the large, forest trees concentrated along the boundaries with ornamental planting, shown by the smaller, bush-like symbol, in the central areas.

Courtesy of Kirkby Stephen Town Council

The 1950s Ordnance Survey map below and the current one are very similar; they show that the present layout of the park has not changed significantly from the original. The rectangular terrace north of the pavilion and linear path to the southern entrance have become more informal, presumably as the edge of vegetation has grown over them. The current map also shows the re-designed south entrance, set back from the road.

There are further details about the recent evolution of the park in the following section.

1950s Ordnance Survey



Courtesy of Kirkby Stephen Town Council.
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2.2.1 Origin of the name 'Toaves'

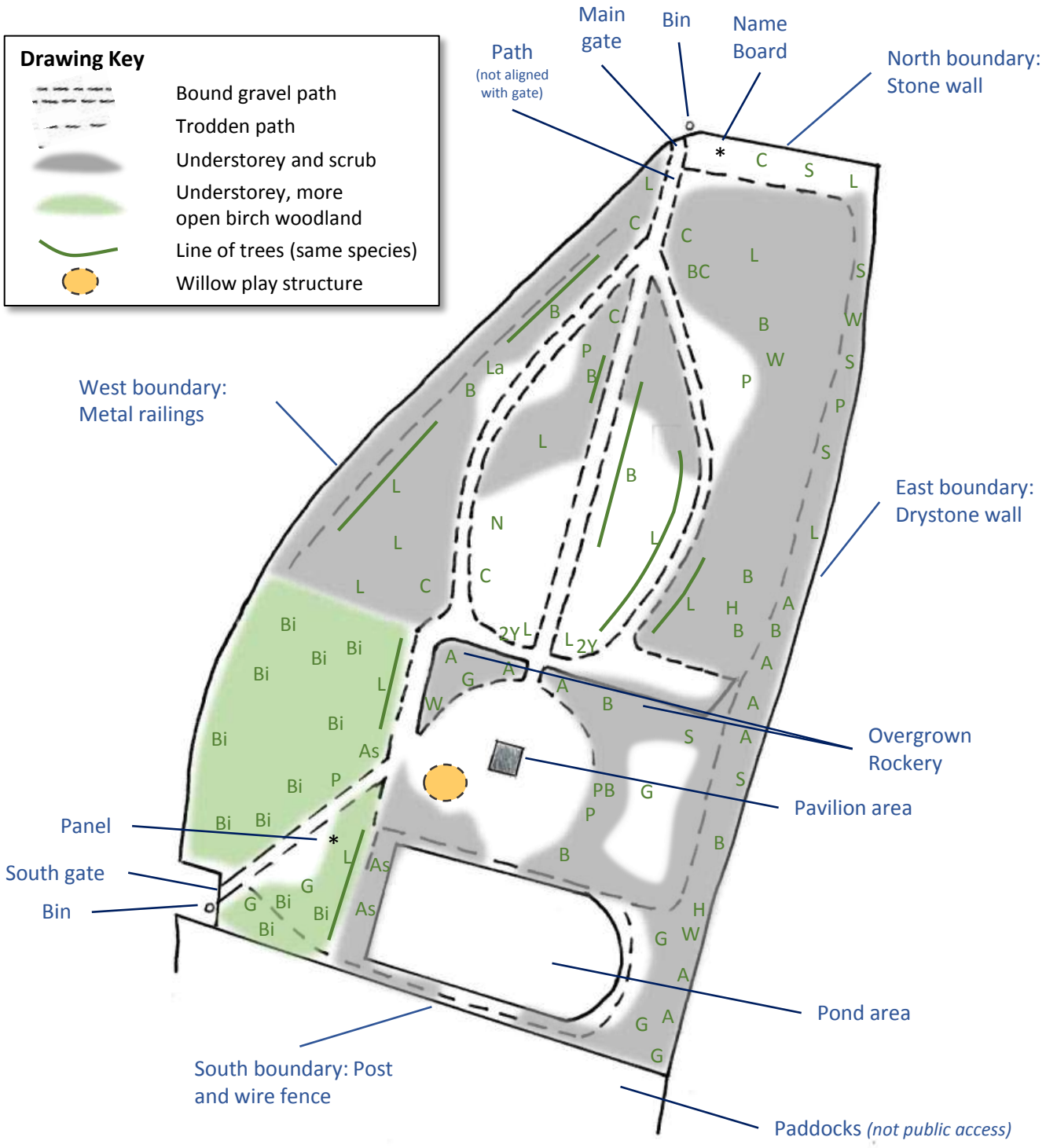
The author consulted John Considine, Professor of English, who has kindly provided the following thoughts.

> "I can only see two possible explanations in the sources I've consulted. (1) From the Old Norse personal name *Tófi*. This is suggested by the English Place-Name Society's volumes for Westmorland (i. 173 and ii. 146) as the etymon of *Outrun* (*Tovetarne* in 16th-century records, and *Towtron* in the 19th century; *at Towtron* becomes *at Owtron*) and *Towcett*. (2) From *tove* "a tuft," reported as a north Lancashire dialect word by the 19th-century antiquary Charles Dymond, and entered on his authority and his alone in Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary*; the only place-name which the online Survey of English Place-Names seems to associate with this word is *High Tove*, the name of a hill in the Lake District, and that looks a bit desperate to me, since *tove* = "tuft" is evidently very rare, and a hill is not really a tuft."

Peter Lewis quoted historical sources noting the area of the park was stripped for turf and soil. So it appears that the place name Toaves does indeed refer to 'tuft' and is rare.

2.3 Physical elements

The author visited the park a number of times during May and June 2021 and recorded the physical elements of the park, which are shown on the survey sketch below and described in the rest of this section.



Principal Trees, Species Key

A	Ash	Bi	Birch	La	Larch	S	Sycamore
As	Aspen	C	Horse Chestnut	L	Lime	W	Whitebeam
B	Beech	G	Goat Willow	P	Scots Pine	2Y	Fastigiate Yew and English Yew
BC	Copper Beech	H	Hawthorn	PB	Black Pine		

2.3.1 Mature trees

The large or 'forest' trees that formed the structure and strong design of the original layout generally remain. The structure comprises mainly Lime and Beech which are planted on both sides of the paths in avenues, with other species apparently planted as highlights. For example the central path from the main/north entrance to the pavilion starts with a Horse Chestnut on either side, is lined with Beech (some are missing), and is terminated by a large Lime on either side of the steps up to the pavilion platform. These two Lime can be identified on the 1916 OS map. There is an avenue of Lime along the eastern path and a row of them from the pavilion towards the former south entrance.

From the pavilion north along Beech avenue

South to the pavilion flanked by two Lime

This structure of Lime and Beech is enlivened by groups and individuals of other species; for example a cluster of Horse Chestnut and a Copper Beech just south of the main entrance would have made a big visual impact as early visitors came through the gates. There are also Sycamore, Scots Pine, Larch and an impressive specimen of Black Pine near the pavilion which has had the space to develop its natural crown. Ash are mainly along the eastern boundary, although there are a few immediately north of the pavilion. Most of the Ash are showing signs of Ash dieback disease caused by the fungal pathogen Hymenoscyphus fraxineus.

Pine which could frame the view of the pavilion

Lime avenue along eastern path, coming into leaf

The majority of the large trees were planted very densely for their ultimate sizes and were not thinned sufficiently, so that they are tall and thin, 'drawn'; many were prevented from developing their naturally-shaped full, wider crowns. This means the trees are less structurally stable and more prone to wind-blow. They are also more difficult to see and appreciate because the smaller crowns are further away.

Many of the trees are covered in Ivy which increases the size of their sail. When Ivy extends over 10-20% of the leaf cover in mature trees, it suppresses the tree sufficiently to impact on its health and longevity, and it

should therefore be controlled. Removal of Ivy also increases the visibility of any tree defects and thereby helps to improve safety (YDNPA).

There are also smaller mature trees such as Birch, Whitebeam and the occasional Cherry. Birch predominates in the flatter, south west of the park and because of this, the character of the woodland is different here. The sloping ground is generally darker due to the dense shade cast especially by the Beech, and also the Lime, whereas the wooded areas at the top of the park feel lighter and more airy due to the Birch.

An arboricultural survey of individual tree condition and risk is not part of this Plan. An allowance should be made initially and then routinely for this and the arising tree work to be carried out, not least to deal with and replace the dying Ash. This offers opportunities to increase species diversity, improving resilience for the future. The YDNPA has recommended species to replace the Ash and plant in gaps elsewhere, see the Appendices; not all are natives, reflecting its heritage as a public park.

2.3.2 Understorey and scrub

Pair of Yew on right, flanking the steps to the pavilion

Self-sets immediately inside the main entrance

Beneath the larger trees is the understorey, with a few shade-tolerant species such as Holly and Hazel, and those more suited to the woodland edge, like Rowan and Hawthorn. There is also the occasional ornamental Laburnum. The majority of these trees and shrubs are young; whilst they may have originally been planted, they have self-set in their current locations. However there are two pairs of Yew flanking the central steps that are of an age and size to be in their original locations. The inner two are Fastigiate or Irish Yew, which have better retained their shape; and the outer two are English Yew. Probably all four were originally clipped; unfortunately they are just out of sight in the historic photograph in 'Views'.

There are large, dense stands of young Ash seedlings which are particularly prominent near the entrance and along the main axis path; they have Ash dieback with dead, brown sections in the top of most plants. The photograph on the left below shows an area of them near the main entrance. They occur in other less prominent areas along with a more mixed understorey with Hawthorn, Lime, Beech and Sycamore regeneration. Recommended good practice is to leave some areas of young Ash to see if any develop resistance in the future to the dieback.

There is also a lot of scrub encroaching on areas of the park that were not originally treed, particularly the hard surfaces and grassed areas at the top of the park around the pavilion and boating pond, where it is blocking the views, see below. As well as the above species, it contains Aspen, Goat Willow and Rose which require more light.

The photograph on the right below shows an area north of the rockery which could be a useful, flat space but is being colonised by young trees. The same is happening on another flat area towards the southern gate. Scrub is also colonising between a row of Box and the pavilion, and the rockery shown in 1916 most of which remains in-situ. It is also growing through the western boundary railings.

Dense young Ash between the two main paths

Young trees on one of the few flat hard surfaces

The increase in dense understorey and scrub is changing how the park feels to people and how much it is used. This unmanaged vegetation sends subconscious signals that further reduce use, and usage takes a downwards spiral. Managing the understorey and scrub in some areas will improve safety by removing branches at eye-level, and it will increase the perception of safety by improving visibility and opening up sightlines. This will improve user-friendliness overall because many adults find dense and over-hanging vegetation subconsciously intimidating; people tend to gravitate to sunlit, open areas.

Most of this survey has been conducted when the trees are not fully in leaf and light levels in the park are not as low as they are in summer; nevertheless it is still dark. Also once in the park, people literally 'cannot see the wood for the trees'; in many places it is difficult to stand back and see the impressive mature trees due to the amount of lower level vegetation.

The understorey should be managed; conserved and enhanced by identifying good specimens of the desirable understorey and edge species e.g. Holly, Hazel, Rowan and Hawthorn which have a long-term future, and thinning the other seedlings from around them. This would be beneficial for biodiversity, both for species diversity and the structural diversity of the woodland. Currently the woodland does not have a healthy, sustainable layer of large understorey shrubs such as Hazel and Holly. The former could be coppiced rotationally in the future generating greenwood poles, firewood and timber for forest school activities.

2.3.3 Ground layer

Less light reaches the woodland floor in the central area and so large areas are sparsely vegetated. In terms of typical woodland flora, a few Celandine and Primrose were observed in spring and later there are larger areas of Bramble, Dog's Mercury, Wood Avens and Water Avens towards the boundaries. There are also relict ornamental species including white Martagon Lilies(?) and Spanish Bluebells near the main entrance; London Pride and Lily of the Valley around the rockery; and Montbretia on the western edge. Where light levels are higher around the edges, the vegetation is more vigorous and includes Ground Elder and Nettles near the entrance, with Ivy along the western and eastern sides.

Improving species and structural diversity may be possible in areas of shade. Wildflower planting of typical woodland, shade-tolerant species such as English Bluebells, Primroses, Red Campion, Ragged Robin, Wood and Water Avens could take place as an activity suitable for volunteers. Areas of flower and colour would not only be attractive to people but to invertebrates and especially pollinators. When established, ground-flora can be dynamic, changing and providing interest throughout much of the year.

Martagon Lilies? near the main entrance

Lily of the Valley on the rockery

2.3.4 Woodland biodiversity

The current woodland is unmanaged and overgrown. Healthy woodland has three long-term layers, with age, species and structural diversity. Open, sunny areas such as glades, and water bodies, add further diversity. There is therefore considerable potential to improve the biodiversity of the park with woodland management and planting (YDNPA).

An habitat survey was not part of this Plan but the woodland is likely to have nature conservation value for nesting birds (not least the rookery), invertebrates, foraging and potentially roosting bats. Rabbits have also been observed. Trees requiring work or removal should therefore be checked for bats by a suitably experienced ecologist. Where possible tree works should take place outside the bird nesting season, generally March to August inclusive, unless for example in an emergency.

2.3.5 Views

Courtesy of KSTC and Peter Lewis

Much of the attraction of the park originally must have been the views; both the pavilion and the level area it sits on, are essentially viewing platforms. For its creators, the view north over the town (see above) was as prominent as the view south to south east including Mallerstang Edge. The park was probably one of the few elevated places in or near town where there was a 360^{O} view.

Same view as above from the pavilion in 2021

View from pond looking south

The view north is now completely filled with trees, see left above. Whilst it is not desirable or realistic from biodiversity and cost perspectives to re-open the view to such an extent, some sensitive crown-lifting of individual branches would make a big difference in visually re-connecting the main entrance with the pavilion.

The view which remains somewhat clearer is from the pavilion and boating pond south, although this is also being encroached by scrub, see right above.

2.3.6 Entrances, paths and boundaries

The main entrance is at the north end of the park, nearest town. It leads off an area of informal parking on an unbound surface, over which the neighbouring landowner has vehicle access.

Originally this entrance was much wider, grander and more open with railings, as shown in the first historic photograph. The railings have been replaced with a wall and the wide double gates with a single pedestrian gate which has been relocated slightly westwards, so that it now no longer aligns with the main path and pavilion.

The main, north entrance

North entrance, gate now misaligned with path

The three main paths which branch off from the main entrance are bound gravel and in reasonable condition. Despite the slope, there are no steps, except for three leading up from the central path onto the platform of the pavilion; and in terms of accessibility, these can be by-passed by using the adjacent paths. The steps appear to have the original stone sides but the rest is probably a fairly recent replacement, contemporary with the pavilion. The main path levels off around the pavilion platform and continues to the southern exit. The paths around the pavilion and pond are also bound gravel in reasonable condition, but overgrown.

The southern entrance is a metal gate in the western boundary fence. This is vertical galvanised railings, which appear to be in good condition, having been replaced fairly recently. The eastern drystone boundary wall is in poor condition, as is the southern post and wire netting fence on the boundary with the adjoining paddock.

The other original paths are not surfaced but can largely still be followed; one leading from the main entrance east (where stone edging is occasionally visible), and the other following the west boundary. There is also a trodden route which roughly follows the eastern boundary.

2.3.7 Pavilion and other features

Lewis notes that the original pavilion was demolished and replaced with the present structure. The award-winning design comprises green oak, stone and slate with a Bockram (local stone) plinth. It was designed around eight compass points and the central roof finial acts as a sundial. It was designed by Elaine Rigby Architects (now Elaine Blackett-Ord Architects) and built by G Middleton, both of Appleby-in-Westmorland. It was opened in 2005 (Taylor).

The pavilion is in reasonable condition but requires routine maintenance such as regular sweeping of the stone and wooden steps; clearing out the two feature gullies; and cleaning off the surrounding bound gravel surface. Replacement of a timber from one of the seats and the timber handrail is also required.

The pavilion erected in 2005

The boating pond holds water temporarily

A woven, live willow play sculpture was installed in 2021 by Kirkby Stephen Community Arts between the pavilion and the pond. It was funded by the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership. There are also some felled logs nearby and a Victorian, cast-iron pump base which was brought from Primrose Hill (Lewis). There is a bin outside each entrance and an empty interpretation panel between the south entrance and the pavilion.

2.3.8 Boating pond area

It has been observed that the pond only holds water after rain; otherwise the water is very shallow or it is dry. There is believed to be a spring in the adjacent, very wet paddock, which was probably piped into the pond. The pipe is believed to have silted up, as they do over time, and/or was breached when a new sewer was installed in 2007 (Gowing). The self-set Grey Willow roots have probably grown through the puddled clay lining. The pond was dug out and the clay re-puddled by the cubs/scouts some 30-35 years ago (Richardson). The pond is believed to contain Newts but it is not known whether these are Smooth or the more protected Great Crested.

A botanical survey of the pond area, commissioned privately, was carried out in 2017 by Haycock and Jay. They found that the pond contained mire plant communities (National Vegetation Classification M9 and M10) and wet woodland (W3) and the grassland was herb-rich MG5b with Common Spotted Orchids; all were considered to be of high nature conservation value in the report. From a botanical perspective, their recommendations included not changing the existing water levels of the pond and coppicing the Grey Willow in it; ensuring that scrub did not encroach further on the grassland; and cutting the grassland annually, removing the cuttings to reduce fertility.

On the southern boundary of the park a small bank rises up to the paddock which has a very diverse sward, full of wildflowers, as does the paddock.

View of the boating lake and pavilion looking north in early 1900s?, courtesy of Frank Jackson, Peter Lewis and KSTC

View of the boating lake and pavilion looking north in 2021, no water and conifers matured

2.4 Local context

The park is located on the southern edge of town away from most of the houses. It is on the main road which is busy and has narrow pavements, which is regarded as a barrier to walking to the park. There is currently no other pedestrian route from town. The park is on a bend by the bridge over the ex-railway, with an informal car park, which also functions as a lay-by. The main entrance and environs are therefore noisy and not somewhere to relax. This unwelcoming feeling is exacerbated by the lack of maintenance around the entrance. The top of the park is much quieter and also sufficiently away from street lights to see dark skies.

As explained in the history, the park used to be located in the southern hub of town, which declined after the closure of the railway, auction mart and hotel. However after many years in abeyance the area is being enlivened again by new ventures. The Pennine View caravan site is a short distance across the adjacent field, together with its new bar, The Engine Shed (which it was), and food offering. The Stainmore steam railway is on the opposite side of the road and The Croglin Castle holiday apartments have recently opened a little further north.

2.5 Management and maintenance

The park is understood to be owned by Kirkby Stephen Town Council in the form of the independent Jubilee Park Trust; KSTC acts as Sole Trustee. The park is currently funded by an annual grant from KSTC which is limited and in the region of £1,500. The grant covers an insurance premium and a basic tree inspection by a local contractor plus any work recommended by them. The litter bins at each of the two entrances are emptied by Cumbria County Council Highways. Any other maintenance or other work is undertaken on an occasional basis, either by the Council's contractors or volunteers.

2.6 Current use

The woodland is valued in principle, but there is also a consensus that its current condition feels neglected and under-used. Casual observation while producing this Plan has shown that it is mainly used for dog walking. The majority of users appear to arrive by car.

Kirkby Stephen Community Arts noted that comments made in informal consultation to them during activities indicate a perception amongst some that there is nothing to do in the park. KSCA have been prompted to install the Willow play sculpture, and together with Stomping Ground, have run a small number of forest school classes in school holidays. These activities take place on the flat areas at the top of the park, (KSCA).

Anecdotally most users tend to gravitate to the sunnier, more open areas at the top. This is also still the elevated place in town for a good view of the Pennines looking south.

2.7 Summary of cultural and natural heritage

On the basis of the information in the preceding sections, this one summarises what is special or 'significant' about the park, so that this can inform and guide aspirations for the future.

2.7.1 Historic and aesthetic significance

The park was created in a single, short period and has had few deliberate changes since. The original park layout of the principal trees, paths, pavilion, boating lake and boundaries remains. Limited modern interventions include the utilitarian boundary wall, gates and railings, and the pavilion, which is a contemporary, robust structure in high quality, vernacular materials on the footprint of the original pavilion.

The Victorian founders undoubtedly intended there to be mature trees in the park but probably not so many. This original structure is overlain by numerous woody seedlings and scrub; features such as open areas of grass, paths and the rockery are being overgrown. The park has almost completely lost its Victorian aesthetic, both in terms of the style of planting and the panoramic view; a few exotic tree species and the view south remain, but it is restricted. However the story of the park's creation remains, which seems mainly due to the efforts of one prominent local man, who volunteered his spare time and skills over many years. The park can therefore be regarded as of moderate local historic significance but this could be enhanced by being better managed, interpreted and understood.

2.7.2 Archaeological significance

Cumbria County Council's online mapping of the Historic Environment Record shows no records for the park. The nearest records are for the railway and Stenkrith bridge. The area was Common, agricultural land, prior to enclosure. It is recorded that at least the surface layers were excavated for turf and soil by the local residents, and the area was denuded and rocky prior to the park. It therefore seems that the park is unlikely to be of high archaeological significance, but an archaeological assessment has not been carried out.

2.7.3 Ecological significance

The boating lake and adjacent grassland have been surveyed, which was a botanical assessment four years ago; there has been no recent survey for amphibians nor the ecology of the whole park. Accessible woodland seems locally scarce, however that in the park lacks structural diversity and could be considerably improved (YDNPA). Nevertheless it will support invertebrates, nesting birds and probably roosting bats. The park can probably therefore be regarded as of moderate local ecological significance which could be enhanced.

2.7.4 Cultural significance

The park is now basically an area of woodland, albeit of lower ecological and aesthetic value than it could have, and is valued by some as such. This is particularly in the context of the relative scarcity of trees and woodland around Kirkby Stephen, where they tend to be concentrated in the more sheltered locations, such as river valleys.

A fundamental concept of the Victorian design remains: the park is the only elevated area of town, from which one can still, just, enjoy the view south of the Pennines. Anecdotally, those visiting for other than dog-walking, tend to gravitate to the open areas at the top of the park.

The park therefore has some cultural significance for the town in its current condition, though it could have much more.

Could the park even be regarded as embodying aspects of Kirkby Stephen? Intervention of government in the Enclosure Acts was carried forward in a positive way for the community by the dedication of local people, not least by Andrew Mackereth's volunteering. It is understood that this cycle has repeated itself every few decades or so, when local interest in the park has been rekindled, and the 'vicious circle' of decline has been turned round into a 'virtuous spiral' of restoration.

Will history repeat itself again soon?

3.0 WHERE WE WANT TO GET TO

The ideas, risks and opportunities below were discussed at a workshop in the park, the first meeting of a Working Group convened by KSTC on 28 May 2021.

3.1 Vision

A wooded park with open views and calm, sunny areas for relaxing and sitting, places for natural play and nature, that develops into a series of spaces which appeals to all sections of the community and visitors.

3.2 Risks and challenges

There is currently a very limited maintenance budget. The Council are reluctant to increase the Town's precept (levied with the Council Tax).

More management and regular maintenance is required:

The mature trees should be regularly and proactively inspected and managed, to reduce risks to users such as those due to disease e.g. Ash dieback and structural instability.

The pavilion requires repairs and regular maintenance such as sweeping the steps and gutter clearance to reduce further deterioration.

The entrances and paths are unwelcoming, the undergrowth and scrub is intimidating, there is little sunlight: this deters use by many adults.

There is a lack of differentiation in different parts of the park; there is a pervasive lack of maintenance and prevalence of scrub.

Some people have commented that the park has 'nothing to do'; lack of use is probably also due to it not being perceived as an attractive place.

Any features added to the park will increase the requirement for and cost of maintenance; the current requirement/cost of maintenance could not be lower.

Grants or fund-raising are usually one-offs for initial/capital works; they do not often fund ongoing maintenance costs.

The few items in the park are fairly robust; anything added should be similarly robust to keep maintenance costs as low as possible.

There are perceived physical barriers to walking to the park; it is out of town and can only be accessed by narrow pavements on a busy road.

Being on the edge of town and not very overlooked, the park is vulnerable to vandalism and fly tipping.

Rather than being attractive to all the community, the park is or could become dominated by one type of use, such as dog walking or play structures.

The mire plant communities recorded in the intermittently-wet pond in 2017, have been suggested to have high nature conservation value which potentially conflicts with it holding water permanently and being used again as a pond.

Publicly accessible waterbodies can be regarded as high risk. However in Kirkby Stephen a boating pond is seen by the community in the context of the nearby river Eden at Stenkrith bridge, a well-used, local 'beauty spot', which is probably considerably more dangerous, with deeply fissured rocks and faster flowing water.

There would probably be a requirement for regular maintenance and cost in terms of regular water quality testing (for example, once per week in the warmer months) of a re-filled pond, since it would be a relatively static body of water specifically for recreational use (see Water Treatment Services etc).

3.3 Opportunities

Repair, conservation and enhancement of the park infrastructure and its biodiversity would enhance its natural and cultural heritage.

Restoration would enable residents and visitors to engage with the natural and cultural heritage of the park, enjoy, care for and better understand it.

With the adjacent landowner, creating a footpath linking the Pennine View Caravan Park with the park and the river Eden/Stenkrith bridge footpath would make the park more accessible from Pennine View, town and the destination of a circular walk.

Differentiate areas of the park to appeal to different users with levels and type of maintenance appropriate to each area.

Enhance the desire to walk up into the park with reasons to do so and information: a pleasant place to be and spend time ('dwell'); somewhere to relax; somewhere to do things; the view from the top.

More pleasant, sunny and open places for adults to sit and things for children to do.

A more natural pond could be restored rather than a more formal boating lake.

Children enjoy denser undergrowth more than adults (KSCA). The current movement for natural play would fit very well with the character of parts of the park and the limited maintenance budget.

Natural or 'low impact' play would probably avoid the requirement for a planning application (subject to pre-application advice from the YDNPA).

Many of the maintenance activities are suitable for volunteers and there is enthusiasm in some parts of the community for practical work volunteering in the park.

Support regular volunteering with the development of a 'Friends of' group.

Potential venue for

- meetings of local groups
- regular activities such as forest schools, star gazing, bat and bird watching
- events such as bird and bat box making, demonstrations of wood turning and chainsaw carving
- socials, picnics and small performances.

Potential for an arrangement with local providers such as Kirkby Stephen Community Arts and Stomping Ground to deliver some of the above as a programme of events and activities each year.

Opportunities to work with the YDNPA and Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership linking to other Dales initiatives which celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of the area e.g. Dark Skies Festival.

Potential for 'concessionaires' of mobile food offerings at the entrances to the park on summer weekends and for events.

4.0 ZONING AND PROPOSALS

4.1 Zoning

Whilst not large, the park has distinctly different areas and is big enough to accommodate a variety of uses in their own different spaces. This is known as zoning.

The proposed zoning is based firmly on current character and vegetation, which in turn influence use, and are themselves determined by the original Victorian features, layout and choice of trees.

Welcome and Orientation. In the Green Flag park quality award, the first criteria is 'A Welcoming Place'; the entrance area in particular therefore needs to be defined by looking cared for.

Woodland Garden. The impressive trees, steep slope, formal paths and deeper shade of the central area feel the oldest part and encourage walking through and observation.

Activity Woodland. This zone needs to be located near the pavilion (for informal parental supervision) but it is also proposed for the lighter, airier Birch woodland with a pleasanter understorey in which to spend time, and in arboricultural terms is also safer (compared to for example areas of Beech).

Tranquil Habitat. The fewer paths, denser areas of regeneration and increased light levels around the sides of the park favour greater species diversity and habitat conservation.

Reflection and Views. The view remains the surprise and delight at the top, which along with the pond was the original intention (in its current condition, the pond disappoints).

The zones are given below with words that capture their potential character or 'spirit of place'. A sketch map showing their locations is on the following page.

Welcome and Orientation

Inviting – Safe and Reassuring – Immediate interest - What's here? – How do I find it? – Why linger? – Information – Paths leading off – Show, don't tell

Woodland Garden

Impressive – Widely spaced, mature trees – Light and shade – Adult-scale – Interest at each level (ground/middle/sky) – Cared for – Hint of the Victorian Park – Views through – Pavilion – Space – Symmetry – Formal paths – Sense of age – Seasonal plant interest so people return

Activity Woodland

For exploring – Learning – Exciting, inspiring, not feeling too 'safe' – Child-scale – Natural play in a framework of trees – Undergrowth – Young excited voices – Not for grown-ups – A Secret Garden – A Separate Entrance

Tranquil Habitat

To be discovered – Quiet – Private, but not isolated – Not too tidy – Decay and regrowth – For Nature, not people – Informal paths, hidden corners

Reflection and Views

Water – Light – Stillness – Reflections (spiritual and literal) – Views out – Calm and contemplative – Sit and Stare – Unexpected – The Surprise at the Top

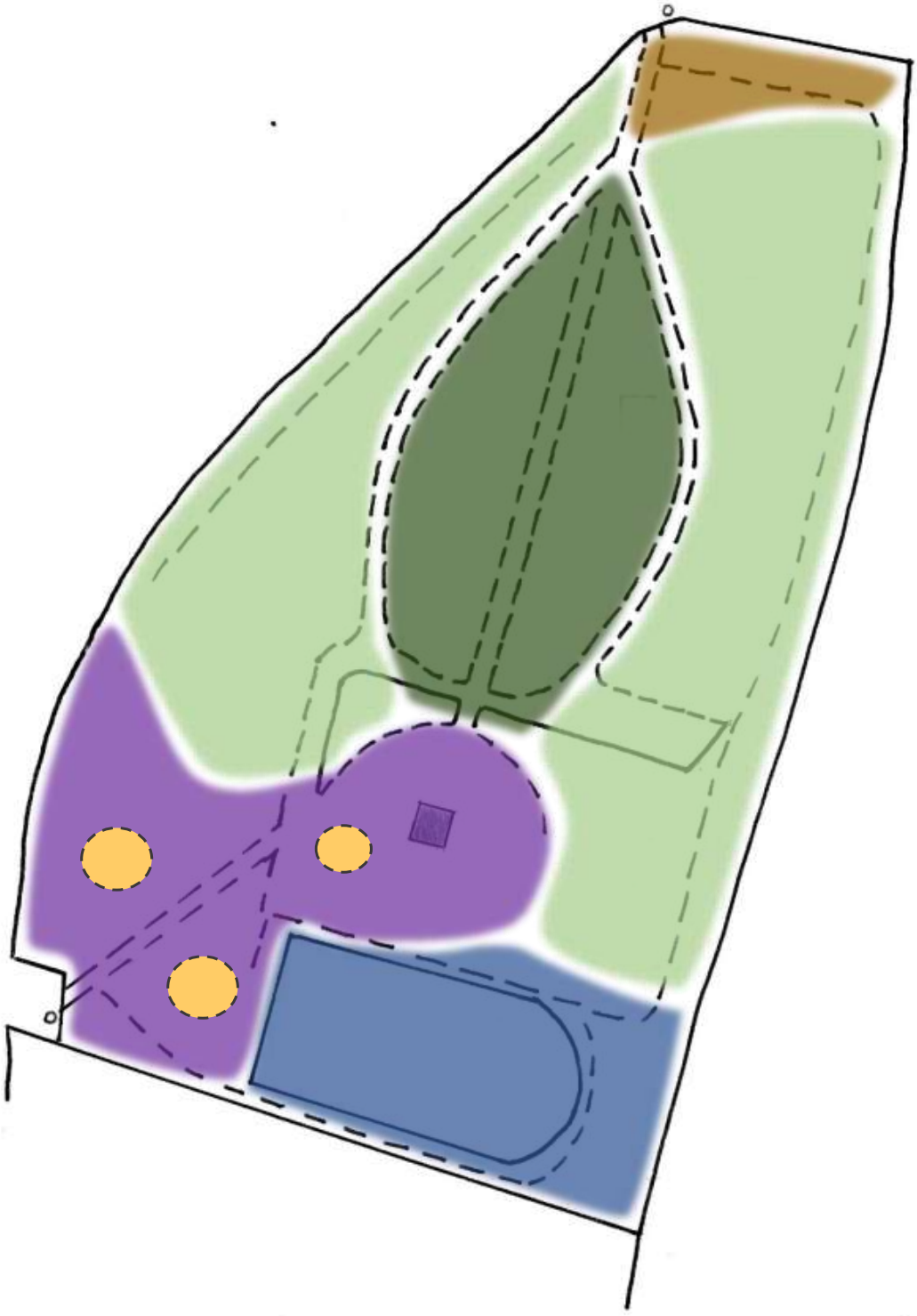
Welcome and Orientation

Tranquil Habitat

Woodland Garden

Reflection and Views

Activity Woodland



4.2 Proposals

The proposals are developed from the zoning with actions aimed at addressing key issues relevant to that use in that area and to developing the character of that zone in line with the 'spirit of place' above. Their locations are identified by numbers on the sketch map in section 4.3.

There are also a number of items which apply across the park; these are at the end of the table.

The outline descriptions of the proposals by zone and number are also given in the action plan in section 5.

No.	Zone and Action
	Welcome and Orientation
1	New permissive path and gate; tidy car park
2	Move gate so re-aligned on main path, repair wall
3	Remove prominent areas of Ash seedlings and Elm suckers
4	Crown lift branches on selected trees for view up
5**	New park name board
6**	1 noticeboard with map and contact info
7	Strim vegetation, remove Ivy, clean bin
8	Plant 50 wildflower plugs outside wall
	Woodland Garden
9	Remove prominent areas of Ash seedlings
10	Hard prune 4 Yew and shape suckers on 2 Limes into 'tunnel view' of pavilion
11	Cut 1m gap in Ivy on 4 mature trees 10-20% covered
12	Plant 15 shrubs + guards and 300 wildflower plugs
13	Plant 10 trees + guards in gaps in avenues
14**	2 metal seats
15**	1 interpretation panel or tree ident plaques
	Activity Woodland
16**	Natural play sculpture: 1 large and 1 small 'nest'
17**	Natural play, stone: stepping stones and boulders
18**	Natural play, wood: from tree works on-site, circle of timber rounds for story-telling, logs for seats/play
19	Focus and materials for activities e.g. bird and bat boxes; bug hotels; telescope for hire from library
20**	1 interpretation panel or notice board/map
21	Pavilion catch-up maintenance: replace boardwalk steps and other repairs as needed, clear scrub from around pavilion
22	Construct fire pit and circle of stone 'seats'
23	Plant 30 shrubs with edible fruit
	Tranquil Habitat
24	Cut Orchid meadow in autumn, remove cuttings
25	Clear scrub from Orchid meadow and rockery

26*	Remove trees with Ash dieback; remove some entirely, leave others as high habitat poles
27	Selective thinning of understorey to allow desirable species to develop + remove where growing through railings
28	Plant 50 understorey shrubs with guards
29	Re-build drystone wall along eastern boundary
	Reflection and Views
30	Clear scrub from the views south and east
31*	Investigate if feasible to re-instate pond with new inlet pipe only, or if new lining and further works required
32**	2 metal seats
33	Post, wire and sheep netting fence, south boundary
34**	Constellations panel for dark skies
	Throughout the park/general
35	Research and regularise the title for the park
36	Tree condition and risk survey by arboricultural consultant
37*	Tree works recommended by the above
38	Cut 1m gap in Ivy on 4 mature trees 10-20% covered
39	Rabbit control if much damage to new planting
40	Establish Friends Group and relationship to KSTC; volunteer equipment and training

* Before starting on site, works marked with an asterisk will require advice from an ecologist, and depending on the outcome of that, possibly further survey and permissions under wildlife legislation due to the potential presence of protected species such as newts and bats. It is likely that initial advice would be available from the YDNPA Ecologist. As well as checking for bats, tree works should take place outside the bird nesting season (unless in an emergency). For younger understorey and scrub, work by volunteers can be programmed outside the bird nesting season; and a visual check before starting work should be made, which should be feasible from the ground since the plants are lower.

**** Before starting on site, the items marked with two asterisks, and potentially others, should be put in for pre-application planning advice from the YDNPA.

4.2.1 Organisation

These proposals will almost certainly require more coordination and time commitment over the long term than the Council, as Sole Trustee, and the Trust can realistically deliver on their own.

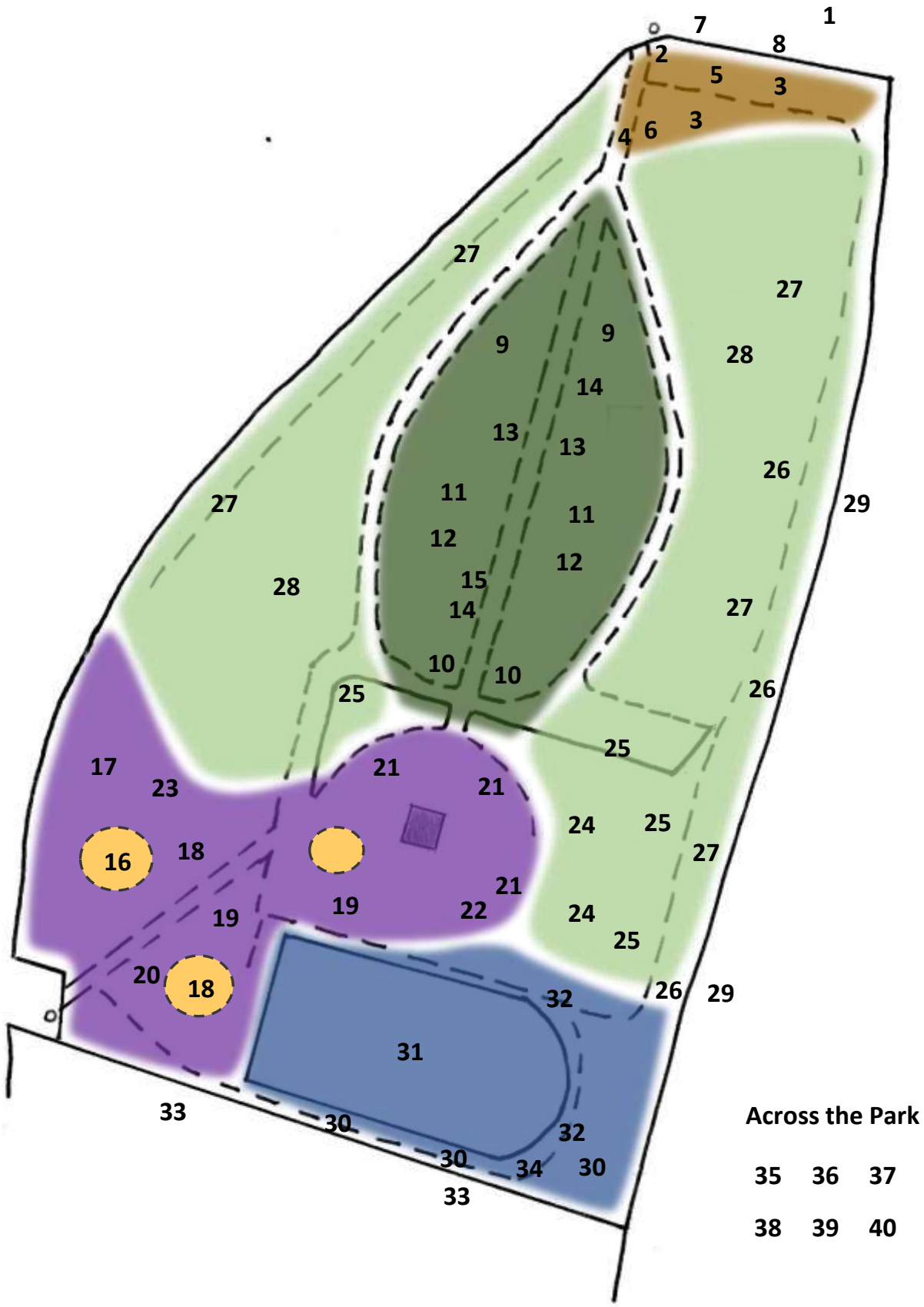
To make the proposals happen and to sustain the park over the long term, a range of community members need to champion the park and be actively engaged in delivering the plan. This applies especially to the tasks appropriate for volunteers, which will require management, co-ordination and a far greater degree of involvement than the Trust has recently sustained.

It is for these reasons that the establishment of a 'Friends of Jubilee Park' group is proposed. This should be led by the community, and represent a balance of different stakeholders and users of the different zones; experience in similar situation shows clearly that if it becomes dominated by any one perspective it will fail to engage sufficient members of the community to generate the required level of volunteer effort, park usage or support for fund-raising.

Its constituent members, relationship with KSTC and the Trust, role/responsibilities and level of delegated authority will all need to be agreed with KSTC and the Trust in the early stage of implementing the plan.

4.3 Proposals plan

Most of the proposals apply to specific zones, and in many cases to particular places within a zone, as indicated below. The numbers refer to the table in 4.2 above.



4.4 Ideas: habitats and plants

3, 8, 28

8, 27

12

12, 27

9

21, 30

12, 27

Numbers on the plan and next to the images refer to the proposals in section 4.2.

4.5 Ideas: play, seats and panels

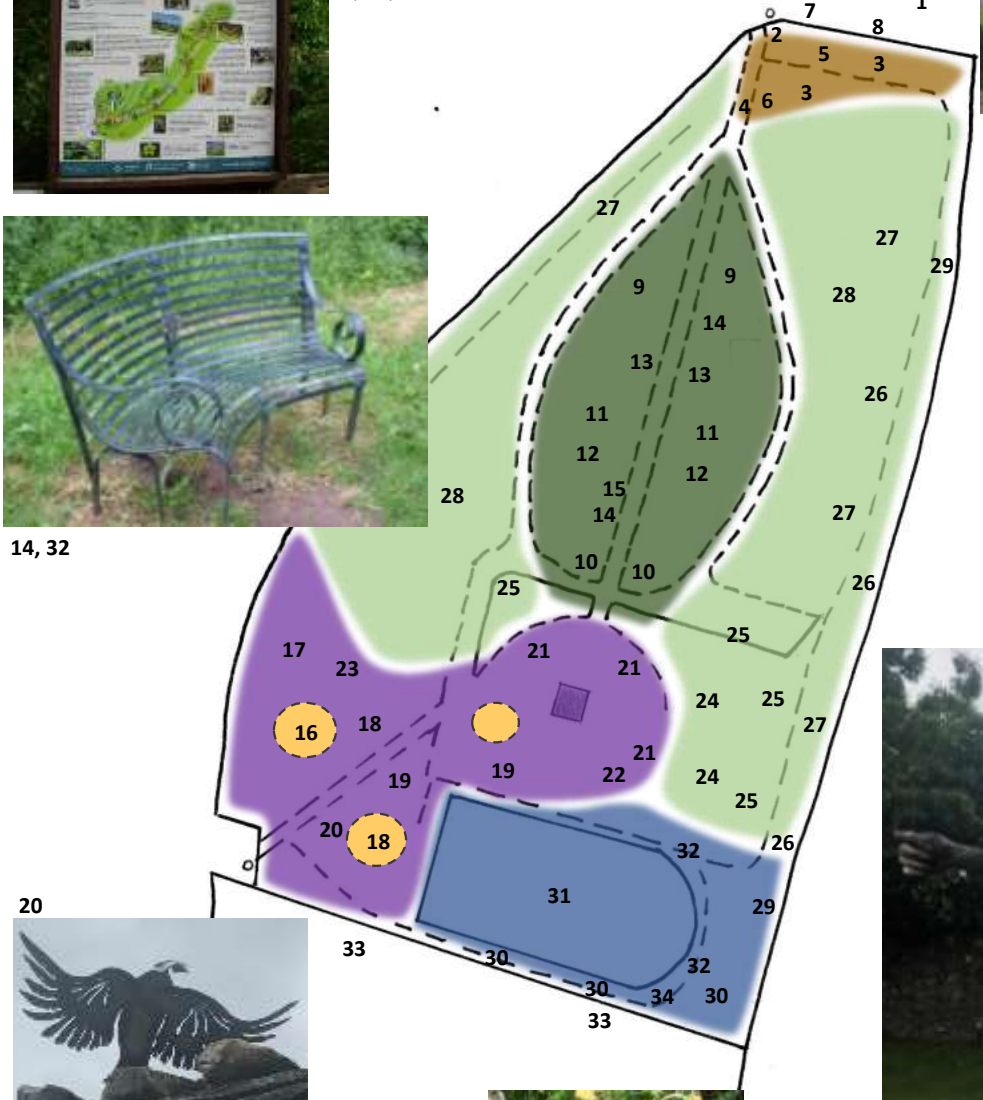
6, 15, 20

18

1

19

14, 32



28

20

33

18

18

Numbers on the plan and next to the images refer to the proposals in section 4.2.

5.0 ACTION PLAN

For each proposal in Section 4, this section shows who would be likely to carry out the work, an indicative cost and suggested year(s) when the work would be carried out during 2021-25.

No.	Zone and Action	By whom	£	'21	'22	'23	'24	'25
	Welcome and Orientation							
1	New permissive path and gate; tidy car park	Neighbour + KSTC	0					
2	Move gate and lower section of path so re-aligned back on main path, repair wall	Neighbour or C	0 or 1,000					
3	Remove Ash seedlings + Elm suckers	V	0					
4	Crown lift branches on selected trees for view up	C	Included in 37					
5**	New park name board	C	500					
6**	1 noticeboard with map and contact info	C	1,000					
7	Strim vegetation, remove Ivy, clean bin	V	0					
8	Plant 50 wildflower plugs outside wall	V	100					
	Woodland Garden							
9	Remove prominent areas of Ash seedlings	V	0					
10	Hard prune 4 Yew and shape suckers on 2 Limes into 'tunnel view' of pavilion	V	0					
11	Cut 1m gap in Ivy on 4 mature trees 10-20% covered	V or C	0 or inc 37					
12	Plant 15 shrubs and 300 wildflower plugs	V	750					
13	Plant 10 trees + guards in gaps in avenues	V	300					
14**	2 metal seats	C	(KSTC) ?					
15**	1 interpretation panel	C	1,000					
	Activity Woodland							
16**	Natural play sculpture: 1 large and 1 small 'nest'	C	(KSCA) 5,000?					
17**	Natural play, stone: stepping stones and boulders	V/N'bour or C	0 500					
18**	Natural play, wood: from tree works on-site, circle of timber rounds for story-telling, logs for seats/play	V and C	0 Inc in 37					
19	Focus and materials for activities e.g. making bird and bat boxes, bug hotels; telescope to hire from library	C	(KSCA) 150?					
20**	1 interpretation panel or notice board/map	C	1,000					
21	Pavilion catch-up maintenance: replace boardwalk steps and other repairs as needed, clear scrub from around pavilion	C and V	1,500					

No.	Zone and Action	By whom	£	'21	'22	'23	'24	'25
22	Construct fire pit and circle of stone 'seats'	V or C	0 or 500					
23	Plant 30 shrubs with edible fruit	V or C	0 or 200					
	Tranquil Habitat							
24	Cut Orchid meadow in autumn, remove cuttings	V or C	0 200					
25	Clear scrub from meadow and rockery	V	0					
26*	Remove trees with Ash dieback; remove some entirely, leave others as high habitat poles	C	Included in 37					
27	Selective thinning of understorey to allow desirable shrub species to develop + remove where growing through railings	V	0					
28	Plant 50 understorey shrubs with guards	V	350					
29	Re-build drystone wall along eastern boundary, 155m @ £40/m	V (FoLD?) or C	? or 6,200					
	Reflection and Views							
30	Clear scrub from the views south and east	V	0					
31*	Investigate, if feasible re-instate pond with new inlet pipe only. If new lining and further works, 40m x 19m	V or C	500 50,000					
32**	2 metal seats	C	(KSTC) ?					
33	Post, wire and sheep netting fence, south boundary, 85m @ £10/m	C	850					
34**	Constellations panel for dark skies	C	(KSCA) ?					
	Throughout the park (not one location)							
35	Research and regularise the title for the park; registration and solicitor's fees	KSTC + Charities	(KSTC) ?					
36	Tree condition and risk survey by arboricultural consultant	C	1,000					
37*	Tree works recommended by the above, inc. priority trees e.g. Ash with dieback; remove some, leave rest as high habitat poles. Arisings e.g. via WSP for kiln drying?	C V	1st year 5,000-10,000 0					
38	Cut 1m gap in Ivy on 4 mature trees 10-20% covered	V or C	0 or 150					
39	Rabbit control if much damage to new planting	V or C	0 or (KSTC) ?					
40	Establish Friends Group and relationship to KSTC; volunteer equipment and training	KSTC	500					

KSTC = Kirkby Stephen Town Council V = Volunteers C = Contractor KSCA = Kirkby Stephen Community Arts FoLD = Friends of the Lake District ( ) ? = more accurate figures can be provided by these organisations

* and ** items may require permissions, see 4.2

APPENDICES

A1. References

Cumbria County Council. (2021). Historic Environment Record. Accessed 9/6/21. https://maps.cumbria.gov.uk/eggp/eggp.aspx?dept=Environment&scriptname=1%20Historic%20Environment

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YDNPA. (2021). Jubilee Park – Personal communication with the Tree & Woodland Officer, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority on 26/5 and 21/6/21.

A2. Planting lists

The species below for new and re-placement planting would be appropriate to enhance both habitat and interest. Those marked with an asterisk are non-native, more ornamental species, but they are not considered invasive, and would in limited numbers, be highlights and echoes of what was once a formal park.

Forest/high canopy trees throughout the park

Tree planting under existing gaps in the canopy should be viable and under new ones e.g. to replace diseased Ash. The YDNPA 'Making a Planning Application with Trees' has a list of native tree species; of these, the Oak and Lime below are good replacements for Ash in terms of their similar size and the number of species they support. However since it is a park and still has some exotic/ornamental species, more diversity would be appropriate, such as the two more ornamental types of Beech, both found in Victorian parks.

Common name	Latin name
Copper Beech*	Fagus sylvatica purpurea
Cut-leaf or Fern-leaf Beech*	Fagus sylvatica 'Aspleniifolia'
Sessile Oak	Quercus petraea
Small Leaved Lime	Tilia cordata

Small tree and shrubs for 'Woodland Garden' zone

Common name	Latin name
Crab Apple	Malus sylvestris
Hazel	Corylus avellana
Holly	Ilex aquifolium
Mespilus*	Amelanchier lamarckii or canadensis
Privet	Ligustrum vulgare
Smooth-leaved Holly*	Ilex altaclarensis or hodginsii
Pink Hawthorn*	Crataegus monogyna var rubra

Native wildflowers and other herbaceous plants for 'Woodland Garden' zone

Common name	Latin name
Cyclamen*	Cyclamen hederifolium
Dog Violet	Viola riviniana
English Bluebells	Endymion non-scriptus
Hellebore*	Helleborus niger or corsicus
Primrose	Primula vulgaris
Ragged Robin	Lychnis flos-cuculi
Red Campion	Silene dioica
Water Avens	Geum rivale
Wood Avens	Geum urbanum
Wood Anemone	Anemone nemorosa

Edible species for 'Activity Woodland' zone

Common name	Latin name
Blackberry	Rubus fruticosus
Raspberry	Rubus idaeus
Wild strawberry	Fragaria vesca

Woodland edge species for 'Tranquil Habitat' zone

There is plenty of self-set Hawthorn already present so it does not need to be planted.

Common name	Latin name
Blackthorn	Prunus spinosa
Dog Rose	Rosa canina
Guelder Rose	Viburnum opulus
Hazel	Corylus avellana
Mountain Ash	Sorbus aucuparia
Whitebeam	Sorbus aria

A3. Proposed maintenance regimes from October 2021

Sections 4 and 5 propose initial, catch-up and restoration work. This section outlines ongoing annual maintenance to ensure improvements are sustained. Some maintenance will be phased in as the actions in Section 5 are completed. Numbers in the table refer to the number of times this operation is carried out in the month.

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT & OPERATIONS	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Throughout park (V)												
• Inspect for safety issues, report and address	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5
• Remove litter, any tipping and vandalism	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5
• Repair paths as required												
Pavilion												
• Sweep steps, clear gullies (V)	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5
• Clear gutters (C)		1				1						
• Repairs as required (C)												
Boating pond (V)												
• Check inlet and outlet, monitor water levels.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
• Take sample for water quality test (if required)	5						4	5	4	5	4	5
Mature trees												
• Cut 1m band in Ivy stems on a few selected mature trees where 10-20% of their canopy is covered by Ivy (V)	1											
• Arboricultural inspection and report, recommend works required (C)		1										
• Fell/remove in sections, dead wood, remove limbs or other works as recommended (C)			1									
Grass and herbaceous layer at and around entrance (V)												
• Cut to 50mm and disperse cuttings	1						1	1	1	1	1	1
Orchid meadow, grass around seats and activity areas (V)												
• Cut to 50mm and collect cuttings, after wildflower seed dispersed	1											
Herbaceous layer in woodland (V)												
• Handweed or translocated herbicide as a spot treatment to any noxious weeds								1				
New planting (V)												
• Check and adjust ties and guards						1						
• Handweed								1	1	1		
Woodland understorey and scrub (V)												
• Prune vegetation at eye-level from paths									1			
• Thin understorey to improve species diversity and favour long-term specimens	-	-	-	-	→							←
• Remove scrub from grass, paths and pond	-	-	-	-	→							←

C = contractor V = suitable for volunteers with appropriate training and equipment