

# Brough Park

## Management Plan

### 2024 – 2034



## **1. Foreword**

This management plan seeks to recognise the importance of this park and how improvements here could be developed for the benefit of the residents, considering opportunities for environmental and biodiversity improvements, while sympathetically maintaining the parks historical heritage.

We have a commitment to care for the site, for the benefit of all users, by working with communities in identifying priorities and using available resources wisely. This management plan will recognise all the valuable work that has been done to date and focus on the future management and maintenance of the site. Considering sustainability, it will ensure that any developments or refurbishments are completed in a manner, which are sensitive to local community needs and the nature of the site in terms of its historic, ecological, and environmental value.

## **2. Introduction**

Brough Park is a large formal park which sits to the north of Leek Town Centre, and has undergone significant development over the past century, evolving to serve both the local community and the many visitors it attracts. It offers a variety of amenities, including a local leisure centre, currently undergoing refurbishment with completion anticipated by early 2026. The park features a large children's playground that was installed in 2021, incorporating a multi-user games area. Additionally, there is a floodlit skatepark, two tennis courts, two bowling greens with pavilions, a bandstand, and an ornamental pond.

These facilities are set within beautifully landscaped grounds, featuring formal flower displays, specimen trees, and a network of paths that wind through the park. These pathways provide connections to the town and lead out toward open countryside, creating a welcoming green space that is both widely enjoyed and frequently used.

This plan will define the current and future management and maintenance of Brough Park for a 10-year period from 2024 to 2034 with a review annually. In compiling the plan, we acknowledge the essential and valuable contribution from all key stakeholders, partners, councillors and community groups. Without their contribution this plan would be severely limited.

## **3. The Purpose of the Management Plan**

It is imperative that this management plan provides clear direction for the future management and maintenance of the green space, ensuring that the area is conserved and enhanced in its entirety whilst balancing the needs of visitors and residents alike.

This management plan seeks to: -

- Take a holistic approach to the future management of the green space, play development and supporting opportunities to be active by assessing professional and community needs and desires.
- To establish a shared vision and objectives for the green space.
- Ensure community involvement within the development and management of the space.
- Establish standards that are effective and accountable to ensure clear management and maintenance objectives are identified and implemented.

- Benchmark the green space and analyse the management regimes and policies against best practice.
- Prioritise resources and action to ensure effective management of the space and the success of any future developments.

#### **4. Responsibility for the Plan**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is responsible for the overall management of all our parks and open spaces.

The Service Commissioning section of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council working in partnership with all stakeholders and the community has compiled this plan. Implementation of the plan will also be led by the Service Commissioning section with specific project leads as shown in the Action Plan.

Likewise, the monitoring and review of the plan will be led by the Service Commissioning section. It is recognised that regular effective monitoring and review of the plan will ensure that the document evolves to meet changing priorities.

However, all key stakeholders and users of the park together with the wider local community will be engaged to ensure that future revisions reflect a combination of views, needs and aspirations.

#### **5. Strategic Context of the Management Plan**

The Green Spaces Strategy is the overarching document that sets out the strategic context which informs the management of all our parks and green spaces. For this strategy to focus on the future effectively, it is important to recognise the key influencing documents and evidence base which frame the provision and development of the green spaces. It is also equally important for people to understand the current context in which green spaces are managed and maintained as this will play a part in decision making and delivery of future projects which aim to maintain and enhance these areas.

The purpose of our Green Spaces Strategy is to bring these key issues into focus and by doing so:-

- 1) Set the overarching context and direction for the management and development of our green spaces.
- 2) Outline the approach for managing, protecting and developing green spaces, which gives consideration the council's resources, management and maintenance responsibilities, and the contributions from community and interest groups.
- 3) Highlight a set of principles which will guide future maintenance, investment, community engagement decisions and actions regarding our green spaces.
- 4) Agree a set of priorities which focus effort, resources and decision making, ensuring that our green spaces remain high quality spaces for everyone to enjoy.
- 5) Help secure additional investment and external funding towards enhancing infrastructure, facilities and opportunities for the benefit of the community.

## **6. Site Details**

### **6.1 Site Address and Access**

The site is a formal park situated to the north of Leek Town Centre, housing both formal and informal recreation areas as previously described in the introduction to this plan.

**The Parks address is as follows:**

Brough Park, Vicarage Road, Leek ST13 6AS.

**It should be noted however that postal correspondence relating to this space should be directed to:**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, C/O Service Commissioning, Moorlands House, Leek, Staffordshire. ST13 6HQ.

There are several entrances as shown in the site plan below, with the main entrances being Vicarage Road clearly identified by the stone gate pillars and iron railing in keeping with the original layout of this public park. There is a secondary entrance from Ball Haye Road / Fowlchurch Road (via the MyActive Leek car park). There are a number of other entrances which are situated around the site meaning access is good for all locations.

Car parking at the park is available at the Leisure centre or in the pay and display car park on Vicarage Road. There is also the option to park in the Town Centre and access the Park from the bottom end through the car park at Moorlands House, off Stockwell Street ST13 6HQ.

**A plan of the site is shown below:**



## Brough Park



## **6.2 Ownership and Designations**

The site sits within the Leek north ward of the Staffordshire Moorlands and is owned and managed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and is designated and protected as a locally important formal park. The town of Leek lies within the Staffordshire Moorlands area of Staffordshire with a resident population of approximately 19,385 (2021).

There are three rights of way running through the site: public footpath Nos. 8, 12 and 14 as shown on the Staffordshire County Council Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way. There are designated tree preservation orders along some perimeters to protect the park from external development pressure.

The Park also borders onto the open meadows and woodlands of Brough Park Fields Local Nature Reserve (size c6 hectares), a site which is managed by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust on behalf of SMDC. The meadows are currently maintained by cattle grazing from July to October. The site consists of meadows and young woodland although not the subject of this management plan, there are links between the two sites, and we are keen to develop these links from the park and promote the use of this neighbouring site.

There are several paths that run through the park and out in various directions which improves the accessibility and active travel opportunities through this natural environment, while encouraging physical activity.

## **7. Physical Assets**

It is essential to fully understand the physical assets of the park including both natural and manmade features. This will assist in determining the strengths and weaknesses in the information base for the park. This in turn will provide a better understanding of the context of the park and inform how we might develop and effectively manage the park for the future.

This information also provides a comprehensive overview of Brough Park's physical assets, their historical and current features, and its role in promoting health and wellbeing in the community and its ability to continue to attract regular users from Leek and the surrounding area along with visitors from further afield. Below is a breakdown of the key elements:

### **7.1 Overview of Park Assets**

#### **Historic Elements**

- Bandstand and vistas: heritage features that link the park to its origins as part of a formal landscaped garden. The Challinor Fountain and Lion which were situated in the park are now found at the front of Moorlands House.
- Ornamental gardens and pond: remnants of the park's historical character.

#### **Play and Recreation Areas**

- Children's play area: newly developed in 2021, featuring equipment for toddlers and juniors. Includes multi-use games area.
- Skate park: developed in 2019, these facilities cater to older children and young adults, offering floodlit areas for extended use.
- Tennis courts: two free-to-use courts, complementing opportunities at the nearby Leek Tennis Club.

#### Natural Features and Landscaping

- Formal landscaping: includes a lake, floral bedding, specimen trees, herbaceous borders, and shrubberies.
- Semi-natural woodland: provides ecological and aesthetic value to the park.

#### Bowling Greens

- Two bowling greens with accompanying pavilions.

#### Community Spaces

- John Hall Gardens: currently lease to Rethink mental health charity. Dedicated spaces for community groups and the mental health work, utilising the park's former kitchen garden.

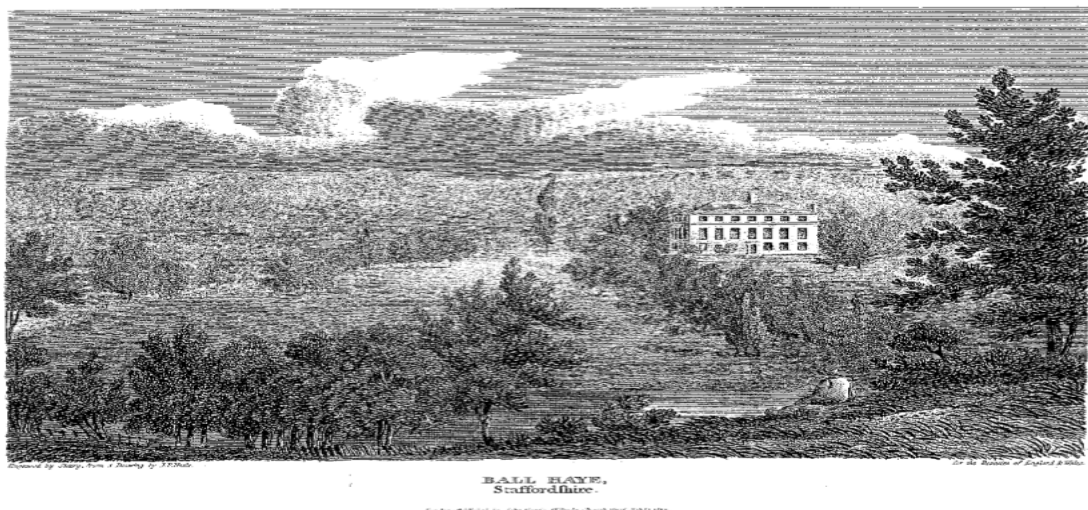
#### Leisure Centre

- Large refurbishment with new swimming pool in 2025/26. Also offers supporting amenities (car park, toilets, refreshments) and additional opportunities for activity.

### 8. Historical Heritage

The silk industry was known in Leek as early as 1672 but manufacture and dyeing became the dominant industry of the town in the nineteenth century. John Brough was first recorded as a silk manufacturer in Leek in 1812. His grandson was William Spooner Brough who, in 1869, was a founding partner of the company that became Brough, Nicholson and Hall, one of the town's leading firms in textiles well into the twentieth century. The company created some of the largest of the mills which still characterise the town.

Brough Park was first created when William Spooner Brough gave part of the Ball Haye estate to Leek town for use as a public park in 1913. The onset of World War I delayed development works so the official opening was not until 1924, seven years after W. S. Brough's death and by which time additional land had also been acquired.



Engraving of Ball Haye Hall published in 1813 after a drawing by J. P. Neale



Ball Haye Hall 1885: W. E. Mackaness etching.

Ball Haye Hall was a stone mansion built around 1790, though a house called Ball Haye had existed since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. When sold in 1817, some gates were purchased for use at the Alton Towers estate. In 1852 a dispute over inheritance led the Court of Chancery to appoint two new trustees, one of whom was Isambard Kingdom Brunel; then, in 1853, Joshua Brough and his brother bought the hall for £5,150. Later, John Hall resided there for 45 years; he opened the gardens to local residents during summer Sunday afternoons and allowed skating on the pond when conditions were suitable. In the 1930's, the hall was earmarked for use as the new Leek Hospital but during World War II it was used as a military base for American officers then a Polish Club for several years from 1946. Eventually it was leased to the Council and converted into flats but fell into disrepair and was finally demolished in 1972.





Ball Haye Hall in 1972 shortly before demolition. Photo: Bud Abbott



Extract from *Leek Times* in the 1930's. Caption reads:

"This delightful Park continues to grow more popular and is used by an increasing number of residents year by year. This summer has been outstanding, the glorious weather has attracted greater numbers to the park and gardens, not to mention the activities at the Bowling Greens and Tennis Courts. The Park has a most delightful setting and contains many beautiful trees of rare size, and it will be pleasing to Leek people to learn that it is described by Arthur Mee in his book of Staffordshire as one of the finest enclosures in England."

## 8.1 William Spooner Brough

On 6<sup>th</sup> November 1917, the *Staffordshire Sentinel* published an obituary entitled “Mr. W. S. Brough, Distinguished Staffordshire Public Man”, excerpts as below:

*“By the death of Mr. William Spooner Brough which took place at his home in Buxton Road, Leek, on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1917, the county has lost one who ... was amongst the best-known men in Staffordshire... His genial and hearty manner, his inexhaustible fund of good spirits, his large-hearted generosity, and his catholic culture made many proud to claim his friendship. His public work alone deserves fullest recognition, but beyond that he was an art collector of rare insight and knowledge, an artist of considerable ability, a bibliophile and an omnivorous reader, a botanist and archaeologist. His passing, though in the fullness of years, will be widely regretted.*

*“Born in 1840... he came of an old Staffordshire family... Leaving school at the age of sixteen, he was bound apprentice to the firm of Messrs. T. & T. Brough & Co., silk manufacturers, of Leek. In 1868 he became a partner in the business, and continued there until 1880...*

*“Subsequently, he went to London and became intimately associated with art and artists. The late Sir Thomas Wardle and he were for a time partners in an art collector’s shop in Bond Street, London, and it was at this period that he made the acquaintance of William Morris, Burne-Jones, Whistler and other leaders of the art movements of the time, with some of whom he became very intimate, particularly with William Morris, who in books issued from the Kelmscott Press speaks of “My friend Will Brough”.*



MR. W. S. BROUGH, J.P.

*From a drawing by Geo. Knoll*

*“Those who had the pleasure of Mr. Brough’s personal acquaintance, and a knowledge of the treasures contained in his modest home – beautifully situated on the Buxton Road and near the Ball Haye Park which he laid out for the recreation of the people of Leek – know how wide and discriminating was his taste as an art collector... “*

Mr Brough was also generous enough to lay out and plant the Waste on the north-east side of Leek which he gave to the town in 1898 for public use.

William Spooner Brough 1899 (courtesy of Mike Birch)

## 8.2 Opening of Brough Park

The following is an excerpt from the Leek Post dated June 28<sup>th</sup> 1924 and describes the park's appearance at that time.

*"A pleasing addition has been made to the attractiveness of Leek by the opening of Brough Park. Although still far from complete, it is generally agreed that, when finished, the Park will be one of the best in the county, and one which Leek people will have occasion to feel proud, for its natural state and situation are ideal and lend to its general attractiveness. It is within easy reach of the town, too, yet the whole surroundings are rural, and there are delightful views around. Leek has become possessed of the park through the generosity of the late Mr. William Spooner Brough, J. P., who gave 11 acres of land on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1923, and of Mr. J. Tatton, who gave 8½ acres in 1921. The Surveyor (Mr. W. E. Beacham) and those associated with him are to be complimented on the lay-out of the paths and plots, playing greens, etc. Iron railings along the drive, opposite Ball Haye Hall, from Ball Haye Road to Park Road, and handsome entrance gates have been erected. The bowling green and tennis courts were... opened last year.*

*"The bandstand, which was designed by Mr. Beacham... is circular in shape. The roof is supported by 16 pitch pine columns and covered with Staffordshire tiles, the ceiling being of pitch pine. The spaces between the columns is filled in with ironwork, and there is a handrail and balustrading. The bandstand is built upon a stone foundation of Kentish ragstone. Outside is a planted border, beyond which is a "crazy" footpath. The enclosure contains seating accommodation for 1,000 people with ornamental wrought-iron railings, with the usual entrance and exits. The bandstand is nicely situated and forms a particularly interesting feature of the park... The fountain, which was presented to the town by the late Mr. William Challinor in 1876 and has stood in the Market Place ever since, has now been removed to the park. It is provided with sprays and spouts, and there is a pond around for children to sail their yachts in. The lion, which was presented by Mr. Councillor G. H. Wilson, standing near the main entrance, forms an attractive feature. It bears the following inscription: "Purchased at Alton Towers Sale, February 1924, and presented to the town by Mr. Councillor G. H. Wilson". The main entrance gate, opposite Ball Haye Hall, comprises four built-up pilasters with a 14-foot pair of gates and stile giving access from Park Road. Further on, opposite the Vicarage, is the first entrance to the park. At the extreme end is an access from the Abbey Green Road. Mr. H. Grace is at present engaged upon the work of fencing up the Park at the roadside by means of wrought iron railings, supported by a dwarf wall of stone.*

*"The ceremony attending the opening on Saturday was witnessed by a large crowd of people...*

*"The speeches at the opening were made from the erection just outside the entrance gates. The weather was beautifully fine.*

*"Mr. W. E. Beacham... said his first note that afternoon was one of regret that the Chairman was not asked to open a completed park. Before that could be done, said Mr. Beacham, much time, thought, and money would be necessary. The donors, the late Mr. Brough and Mr. Tatton kindly presented to the town 20 acres of land, and the Council had in their discretion determined that it should be properly laid out. Twelve months ago, the bowling green and tennis courts were thrown open to the public. Since then, they had endeavoured to proceed with the enclosing of the park. When that was done, the Council would... proceed to formulate proper regulations for its conduct and keeping. There was no part of municipal work, he ventured to say, in which the Council could be interested that was likely to have more helpful results than that of laying out public places. They seemed to touch the inhabitants at every point. Those who had seen the plans that had been prepared would have noticed that it was proposed to lay out a portion exclusively for the children. Therefore, the inhabitants were touched at a very early age. Provision had been made in the tennis courts for the adults of the town, and when*

*the young people got older, they would be able to enjoy themselves at the Bowling Green. When this was not possible, there would be the band, where they could go and listen to the sweet music. Thus, there was no part of municipal work likely to touch the inhabitants of any town like that of laying-out of public parks. He then asked the Chairman to accept a silver key with which to open the gates of the park, and so admit to its use and enjoyment the inhabitants of Leek.*

*"Mr. James Rhead, J. P. (Chairman of the Urban District Council), in accepting the key, said he was proud of having the privilege and honour of opening the Park. For many years they had been looking forward to a park. Now they had one, and he did not hesitate to say that it was one of the best and most natural parks there was for many shires around Leek. He was glad to see so many people present, which showed that it was appreciated... Mr. Rhead stated that several seats had already been given by members of the Council. There were nine on order, and if anyone would like to perpetuate their memory by presenting a seat, their offers would be welcome. The price of a seat was £2, and they would be glad to receive offers...*

*Mr. Rhead then walked to the main gate of the park, which he unlocked, and entered followed by the Councillors and the public....*

*"After the opening, the public assembled round the new bandstand and listened to selections of music by the Band of the 2<sup>nd</sup> North Staffs. Regiment... A long programme had been arranged, but unfortunately rain came on, and marred the subsequent proceedings."*



Photo by]

THE FOUNTAIN, LEEK PARK

Leek Official Guide 1920's

[G. Hill & Sons

The Challinor fountain designed by  
Joseph Durham in 1876

### 8.3 Brough Park developments to the present

Brough Park has seen many changes as further pieces of land were acquired and particularly in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

- 1923: square bowling green and lower tennis courts constructed, paths and railings installed.
- 1924: bandstand built, and park officially opened with donated lion and fountain installed.

- 1925-1937: bowling green created in formal garden.
- 1937-1999: -
  - Ladies bowling green created.
  - Bowling green in formal garden changed to rose garden.
  - Additional tennis courts constructed.
  - Original railings removed during World War II.
  - Slum clearance orders resulted in demolition of terraces known as Petty France in the early 1960's and the area incorporated into the southern end of the park.
  - Ball Haye Brook culverted in 1967-8, lower pond drained and paths across slopes turfed over.
  - Brough Park swimming baths and bowling pavilions built 1979.
  - Land leased for squash courts in 1977. Lease relinquished in 1986 and courts sold to SMDC.
  - Challinor fountain vandalised so water supply cut off 1975 and relocated to Moorlands House 1988.
  - Councillor Wilson's lion moved to Moorlands House.
  - Original play area constructed 1995 and skate ramp installed.
  - New access path to Hencroft 1997.
  - Feeder pond connected to mains water.
  - Fowlchurch Road, beyond Depot entrance (public highway to that point) conveyed to Staffordshire County Council as part of Waste Transfer Station land holding 1998.



Postcard from 1950's-1960's (courtesy of Bud Abbott).

- 1999 to present:
  - Walled garden and gardener's cottage leased to mental health charity Rethink



in 2000 for use as market garden, shop, offices and mess room.

- Leisure Centre facilities improved and extended 2001-2 and then again in 2024/25, currently undergoing a full reconstruction and refurbishment due for completion in 2026.
- Play area extended 2002, play area completely reconstructed and moved to current location in 2021.
- Skate Park rebuilt 2004 and redeveloped with addition of floodlighting in 2018/19.
- Access path to Badgers Rise 2005.
- Rose garden replanted with day lilies 2006.
- Major renovation works to bandstand 2007.
- Permanent orienteering course installed 2007.
- New disabled access path connecting car park, park and John Hall Garden installed 2007-9, and the addition of a new path providing better access from John Hall Gardens to Brough Park 2023.
- Conversion of tennis court into multi-use games area 2012. This was converted back to tennis court when the multi-use games area was redeveloped as part of the new play area in 2021.
- New benches and bins installed 2012.

## **9. Value Assessments**

### **9.1 Educational Value**

Expanding the educational potential of Brough Park can create significant benefits for local schools, youth organisations, and the broader community. Below are the key elements and opportunities for increasing its value as an educational resource:

#### **Current Use of the Park for Education**

- Ad hoc school visits: several primary schools and nurseries in the area utilise the park for educational activities, but this is not structured or regular.
- Youth organisation engagement: groups such as Brownies, Beavers, Scouts, Cubs and Cadets already engage with the park for outdoor learning experiences.

#### **Potential for Development**

Further opportunities to encourage regular use of the park could be explored. There is great potential to develop the educational value of the park through the production of interpretation boards about the site and its important features. This may include the promotion and interpretation of natural features such as the development of a nature trail and production of an identification kit to spot birds, mammals, mini-beasts, plants and trees. Working with schools to provide more structured educational programmes, increased community involvement in events such as bulb planting, use of digital and interactive tools and development of more online resources related to the history and ecology of the site.

The potential of Brough Park as an educational resource can be fully realised through strategic planning and collaboration, fostering lifelong learning and community connection.

### **9.2 Recreational, Amenity and Economic Value**

Brough Park serves as a vital green space in the town of Leek, centrally located and easily accessible to the town's 19,000+ residents. With its wide variety of facilities, heritage, natural beauty, and

cultural significance, the park enhances quality of life, promotes health and well-being, and contributes to the town's economic vibrancy.

### 9.2.1 Recreational Value

Brough Park provides a range of diverse activities catering to all ages and interests, making it a hub for leisure and recreation. Key features include:

- Bowling Greens.
- Tennis Courts.
- Large Play Area.
- Multi-Games Area.
- Skate Park.
- Bandstand.

Additionally, MyActive Leek leisure centre adds value to the park. The refurbished centre is scheduled to open early in 2026 and will offer:

- Swimming facilities (six lane 25m pool and a separate trainer pool).
- Exercise, sports, play and health & wellbeing opportunities.
- Refreshments and social spaces for community engagement.

The park's open spaces, scenic views, and pathways allow for walking and relaxation, offering a tranquil retreat from urban life. Its layout could easily be integrated into walking routes that extend through the town and beyond.

### 9.2.2 Amenity Value

Spanning approximately 7.7 hectares, Brough Park is not only a recreational hub but also a key part of Leek's heritage and visual identity. It serves as a "breathing space" amid the urban landscape, enhancing biodiversity and promoting sustainability.

Key benefits include:

- **Health and wellbeing:** access to green spaces is proven to reduce the risk of physical inactivity, contributing to better health and mental well-being for residents and visitors.
- **Heritage and visual amenity:** the park's beauty and historic features add cultural value, fostering a sense of pride and belonging among the community.

### 9.2.3 Economic Impact

The park plays a role in driving local tourism and supporting economic activity. Visitor surveys reveal that Brough Park attracts people from neighbouring areas, boosting footfall for local businesses and creating economic opportunities for the town.

Brough Park is more than a recreational area, it is a crucial resource for the community, blending leisure, nature, and heritage. Its impact on health, well-being, and the local economy underscores the importance of maintaining and enhancing this cherished green space for future generations.

## 9.3 Ecological Value

Having green spaces helps to contribute to a wide range of ecosystem services that improve urban space and enhance the lives of the residents, particularly their health and wellbeing. In addition to the benefits of climate change mitigation, green spaces can improve air quality, with trees in particular serving as natural air filters and helping to reduce the risk of respiratory problems. Providing an opportunity to reconnect with the natural environment can help to reduce stress, lower

blood pressure and improve overall mood. Natural environments have also been proven to stimulate the mind and promote relaxation, reducing stress and fatigue.

Good quality and biodiverse green spaces can help act as stepping stones for species moving between habitats and help contribute to nature's recovery. With the current nature crisis including many species threatened with extinction, it has never been more important to improve biodiversity in our local green spaces and help contribute towards 'bigger, better, more, and joined-up' habitats so that wildlife can flourish. Implementing changes in management and maintenance for green spaces will support the recovery of nature across the Staffordshire Moorlands in line with the aims and ambitions of the Council's Plan for Nature.

Due to its location with boundaries to both open countryside and the urban environment. Brough Park assists in the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of plant and animal species. Previous ecological studies have identified the habitats within the park which support a range of flora and fauna. As mentioned earlier in the plan the site shares a boundary with Brough Park Fields, which is currently managed by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT). We will work with SWT to ensure that the strategic position of both sites is managed as mutually beneficial and providing wildlife and biodiversity connectivity for both.

The Plan for Nature makes suggestions to increase carbon sequestration at the site through urban meadow creation and tree planting. Wider Nature Recovery Network mapping indicates that the location of site is strategic in relation to connecting woodland habitats and may also be an important stepping stone for grassland and wetland habitats.

Future development, management and maintenance of the park will aim to prevent fragmentation or disturbance of these areas and recognise the importance of the park in the protection of identified habitats and species.

The layout of the park is primarily formal in nature; however, opportunities have been identified to establish informal areas with stretches of longer grass. These areas are mostly at the fringes of the park, so not to affect the character and amenity function of the main sloped grassed area parallel to the bandstand. Improving grassland habitat at these areas can be achieved through changes to mowing regimes (and/or sowing of wildflower seeds later), which will provide greater benefits to invertebrates including pollinators. Annual cut and collect mowing in identified areas will lower nutrient levels in the soil and encourage grass and flower diversity. After 3 – 5 years, the soil may be tested to determine whether additional seeding of wildflowers would provide further benefits to biodiversity.

In some areas (such as near the playground), potential has been identified for a 'nature trail' or similar which incorporates areas of longer grass, with mown paths through. The purpose of this would be to connect visitors with the natural world and engage them more with nature. The Council would like to work with local arts groups on this concept.

The trees, hedges and shrubbery in the park offer roosting and nesting sites for birds as well as sources of food. Diversity in the height and species of trees has been shown to be important in providing a variety of niches for bird species and invertebrates. Bats could use the mature trees for summer roosts and insects associated with water features provide a source of food. In addition to sensitive tree management, boxes for both bats and birds could be erected where suitable sites exist. Deadwood in trees and on the ground is important for invertebrates, fungi and recycling of nutrients. Emphasis is given to the additional planting of native tree species such as beech, oak, lime, rowan, birch and alder, where appropriate, around the body of the park. Tree planting locations will be well thought out and in keeping with the original landscape, for example extending current tree lines or wooded areas. The bases of any whips should be well protected (and/or fenced off), given the high footfall for this park.

Small copse, informal shrub beds and the ponds provide additional habitats and food sources for birds, moths, amphibians and small mammals. In the more formal ornamental areas of the park, exotic trees, shrubs and herbaceous species are present – these do support wildlife and invertebrates as well as providing colour and interest for visitors. Notwithstanding this, any additional tree or shrub planting is proposed to comprise native species in keeping with the Council’s Plan for Nature. In the longer term, replacement of non-native and invasive species such as some rhododendrons may be explored – good public communication and engagement would be key to ensure success.

Any improvements to the ecological value of the site will be carefully considered in the context of the amenity value of the site including maintaining access via footpaths. Framing strips or similar will be cut next to footpaths where these border with areas of longer grass.



Wildflowers in Brough Park

## **10. Management Responsibilities**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council will be responsible for the overall management of the green space. Working with partners, community, and other interest groups to develop and deliver projects that improve the green space.

Alliance Environmental Services (AES) are the Councils delivery partner and as such would be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the site, and they also have the budgetary responsibility, regarding maintenance. A schedule for the associated standards of maintenance is defined by the contract with AES, and the site has a specific maintenance schedule.

Community and interest groups are a vital and valued support network and play an important role in assisting with maintenance and development projects. These groups also can provide additional capacity, undertake selected maintenance tasks, and could attract additional funding to improve the site.

## **11. Health and Safety**

Health and safety is of primary concern for the Council. AES will be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and management of the site, and this includes keeping the area safe for the public to use. Regular site inspections, six monthly in-depth surveys and regular tree inspections are all part of the suite of checks and procedures, which are in place. These will ensure that all issues, repairs, and replacements are identified quickly and scheduled into the work programmes as necessary.

The park has a site-specific risk assessment which is reviewed and updated annually by the Operations Service Lead (AES). All AES staff are given specific training to ensure they are always operating in a safe manner. Any work on our parks and open spaces, which are carried out by external contractors, partners, community groups/volunteers are governed by the Council's health and safety policies, which they must abide and follow.

## **12. Involving Communities**

It is well recognised that for any park or public open space to be successfully managed it must respond to the needs of the local community and users. Actively engaging and encouraging community participation and involvement is essential in the continued development of the site.

The site is represented by the Friends of Brough Park, a long-established community group which has helped to achieve the following:

- Provide a community focus for the site
- Take practical action to improve the area
- Raise the profile of the space
- Help to raise funds to improve the site
- Sustain and enhance the flora and fauna of the green space and their habitats.
- Preserve public access into and throughout the space in perpetuity.

We are also pleased to be working with Moorlands Climate Action (MCA) who have taken responsibility for the orchard trees which were planted in 2021. MCA regularly visit the site and ensure the trees are kept in good condition, including pruning.

We also have a partnership with Rethink Mental Health Charity (John Hall Wellness Garden) who lease the Walled Garden from SMDC. This site within Brough Park, and we are looking at an agreement between both organisations for some shared land management near to the site.

We are committed to continuing to work with the Friends of Brough Park, MCA and continuing to sustain and improve the park over the life of this plan.

## **13. Marketing and Communications**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is responsible for managing Brough Park and has a variety of communication mechanisms that can be utilised to give feedback on the performance and continued relevance of this Management Plan. As the Council is committed to reducing the need for paperwork there is an increased reliance on the use of the relevant sections of the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council website and social media platforms.

The Council has both a Facebook page and X account

- Facebook - <https://m.facebook.com/staffsMoorlands>



- X (Formally Twitter) - <https://x.com/StaffMoorlandDC>

For anything specific to Glebe Road the link below gives several options for how you might get in touch

- <https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/812/Brough-Park-Leek>

The Council can also be contacted by writing to:

**Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, c/o Service Commissioning, Moorlands House, Stockwell Street, Leek. ST13 6HQ.**

#### **14. Action Plan**

The Green Spaces Strategy provides the guiding principles and headline priorities for the management and development of our green spaces and following on from this, we can develop specific site action plans. These plans identify our priorities, linked to the Strategy, and ensure they are appropriate, relevant, resourced and provide a flexible and realistic approach to realising the aims of the Management Plan.

#### **Green Spaces Strategy Objectives**

We will:

1. review maintenance regimes to ensure that our green spaces are maintained to a high standard, in an affordable and sustainable way, and make improvements to increase and enhance biodiversity. (Addresses priorities 1,2,3,4 & 5)
2. ensure that infrastructure and heritage features are protected and well maintained, in accordance with the resources available to the council. (Addresses priorities 1 & 2)
3. encourage and enable positive physical and mental well-being by developing strong partnerships with community groups, sports clubs and other stakeholder groups. Ensuring that our green spaces fulfil their potential for enabling healthy lifestyles for all ages, encouraging all residents to move more. (Addresses priorities 1, 2, 4 & 5)
4. plant more trees within our green spaces to help combat climate change (carbon storage) and increase canopy cover, providing future new habitats for wildlife and additional shade for our communities in periods of extreme heat. (Addresses priorities 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)
5. ensure our green spaces are safe, welcoming, and accessible places for all of our communities and that the highest possible standards of health and safety are maintained by our service providers, event organisers and when engaging the community in projects. (Addresses priorities 2, 4 & 5)
6. actively encourage community engagement and involvement in the protection, maintenance, development and positive environmental impacts of our green spaces. (Addresses priorities 1,2,3,4 and 5)

7. effectively manage internal budgets and attract external funding wherever possible towards the ongoing maintenance and the future development of our green spaces. (Addresses priorities 1,2,3,4 and 5)
8. review management plans and their associated action plans annually to ensure these objectives are being delivered effectively. (Addresses priorities 1,2,3,4 and 5)
9. create a green spaces development fund to make improvements to our green spaces. (Addresses priorities 1,2,3,4, and 5)

## Action Plan 2024/25 & 2025/26

**Objective 1: To protect and enhance biodiversity, address the effects of climate change and ensure the park is sustained for the future.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Identify opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity of the site.	Summer 2024	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget / External Funds	SMDC / AES / Staffordshire Wildlife Trust  Other industry recognised professional bodies	Signage on site / PR / social media	Complete
Explore opportunities for creating naturalised areas across the site.	Summer 2024	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget / External funds	SMDC / AES / Staffordshire Wildlife Trust / community groups	Signage on site / PR / social media	In – progress
Review current maintenance regimes to identify best practice that reflects emerging principles which address climate change.	Summer 2024 (ongoing)	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget / External funds	SMDC / AES / Staffordshire Wildlife Trust  Recognised industry professionals in this field	Signage on site / PR / social media	In - progress
Implement mowing regime changes.	April 2025	Unknown	SMDC / AES	Existing budget (whole project may require extra capital funding)	SMDC / AES	Signage on site / PR / social media	In - progress

**Objective 2: Ensure that infrastructure and heritage features are protected and well maintained.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Ensure that any heritage significance of the park is protected and conserved for the future.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC	Existing	SMDC / AES	PR / social media if appropriate	Ongoing
Ensure the infrastructure of the site is maintained. All infrastructure to be monitored on regular site checks.	Ongoing	Individual repair and maintenance issues covered by AES	AES	Existing	SMDC / AES	PR / social media if appropriate	Ongoing
Survey pond for silt data	Winter 2024/25	£2,000	SMDC	Existing	SMDC/AES	N/A	In-progress
Maintain the pond health (de-silting)	Autumn 2025	Yet to be established	SMDC	Existing	SMDC/ Contractors	PR / social media if appropriate	Ongoing
Review the condition and usage of the pavilion buildings.	Spring 2025	Unknown	SMDC / MyActive	Existing	SMDC / MyActive / User groups / Stakeholders		Not started
Develop project to improve spaces around boundary of JHG.	Spring / Summer 2025	Unknown at present	SMDC / Rethink	Existing / External & Partner funding	Rethink @ JHG	Signage on site / PR / social media if appropriate	On-going

**Objective 3: Ensuring that our green spaces fulfil their potential for enabling healthy lifestyles for all ages, encouraging all residents to move more.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Continue to promote and maximise the opportunities for physical activity within the park.	Ongoing	Unknown	SMDC	SMDC / Together Active/ Public Health	Public Health / Together Active / Move More Partnership / MyActive	Signage on site / PR / social media	Ongoing
Review the existing outdoor area adjacent to the leisure centre to create further social and exercise opportunities.	Winter 2024	N/A	SMDC	External funding / Move More Staffs Moorlands	AES / Friends of Brough Park / Leek Town Council / Community groups	PR / Social media	Development and design phase commenced

**Objective 4: Plant more trees within our green spaces to help combat climate change (carbon storage) and increase canopy cover, providing future new habitats for wildlife and additional shade for our communities.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Plant trees in identified areas.	Winter 2024/25	£500	SMDC / AES	Existing budget	AES / Community groups	Signage on site / PR / social media	Not started
Create a tree planting strategy for the park.	Summer 2025	N/A	SMDC	N/A	AES / Friends of Brough Park	PR / social media	Not started
Manage current tree stock effectively and safely	On-going	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget	Arboricultural Officer (SMDC)	Signage on site / PR / Social media	This is an on-going action



**Objective 5: To ensure our parks are safe, welcoming and accessible for the communities they serve.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Review entrance points for barriers to accessibility.	Summer 2025	N/A	SMDC	N/A	AES		Not started
New entrance signage to include 'welcoming' message and important contact details. (Active Trails)	Winter 2025/26	Unknown	SMDC	Existing budget	AES / Move More	PR / social media	Not started
Work with the community to ensure the site is used for events and activities	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget	Friends of Brough Park / Leek Town Council / other community and external groups	PR / social media	Ongoing

**Objective 6: Actively encourage community engagement and involvement.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Invest time to ensure strong community links and work with Friends of the Park.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC	Unknown	Friends of Brough Park / AES / Leek Town Council / other organisations	PR / social media	Ongoing
Continue to engage with key stakeholders in the park.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC	Unknown	Friends of Brough Park / AES / Leek Town Council / MyActive / Bowling club / other organisations		Ongoing
Explore opportunities to increase educational activities in the park.	Ongoing	Unknown	SMDC/Move More Partners/SSP	Unknown	Local schools / children and youth services		Not started

**Objective 7: To ensure effective financial management of resources.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Ensure that the existing budgets are used to gain best value and maximise opportunities.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC / AES		AES		Ongoing
Review and investigate opportunities to apply for external funding, where appropriate.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC		Friends of Brough Park / Community groups / Leek Town Council		Ongoing
Working in partnership with both internal and external colleagues to expand the impact of relevant projects.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC		AES / Staffordshire Wildlife Trust / Public Health / Move More Partners / Leek Town Council / Community groups		Ongoing

**Objective 8: Review and Monitoring.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Annual condition review of park infrastructure including seating, bins, paths and built structures.	Annual (April)	N/A	SMDC / AES	SMDC / AES	AES		Ongoing
Annual review of action plan for the park.	Annual (January)	N/A	SMDC	Existing	AES / Community groups / Leek Town Council / wider community		Ongoing
Ensure that all health & safety aspects are annually reviewed.	Annual (April)	N/A	SMDC / AES	Existing	AES		Ongoing

**Objective 9: Green Spaces Development Fund.**

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Continue to look at opportunities where the GSDF could be used to improve the site.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC	SMDC	All stakeholders		Ongoing