

Stanfield Crescent Recreation Ground Management Plan 2024 – 2034



1. Foreword

This management plan seeks to recognise the importance of this park and how improvements at this site could be developed for the benefit of the residents, while considering opportunities for environmental and biodiversity improvements.

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 historical, ecological, and environmental value.

2. Introduction

Stanfield Crescent Recreation Ground sits south-east of Cheadle, behind Stanfield Crescent and off Tean Road, Cheadle. A welcoming green space enjoyed and widely used by the neighbouring communities.

This plan will define the current and future management and maintenance of Stanfield Crescent Recreation Ground 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 to 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 an informal recreation area with a sports pitch and a large area of open green space situated off Tean Road behind Stanfield Crescent, within the south-east ward of Cheadle.

The postal address is as follows:

Tean Road, Cheadle, Staffordshire, ST10 1LS.

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.

A plan of the site is shown below:

Stanfield Crescent



The main entrance is off Tean Road, there is no car park as this space is intended for use by residents to access from their homes.

6.2 Ownership and Designations

The site sits within the Cheadle south-east ward of the Staffordshire Moorlands and is owned and managed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. The town of Cheadle lies within the Staffordshire Moorlands area of Staffordshire with a resident population of approximately 11,406 (2021 Census).

There are no public rights of way across the site.

7. Physical Assets

It is essential to fully understand the assets of our green space, including natural and manmade features. This will assist in determining the strengths and weaknesses in the information base for the area. This in turn will provide a better understanding of the context of the land and inform how we develop and effectively manage the area.

The site is located at the rear of a housing estate. The natural environment of this green space brings benefits to the locality, not only for the residents of the housing estates around it but also in terms of ecological value. Priority species, including bees, have the potential to thrive within the area. We aim to work together with the local community and the Wildlife Trust to ensure that we can mitigate climate change with the help of our natural environments and increase biodiversity within this area.

The site houses a full-sized football pitch, used by local teams.

8. Value Assessments

8.1 Educational Value

The site provides a valuable educational resource for schools/nurseries and other community organisations, such as Brownies, Beavers and Cubs, to encourage outdoor activities and learning experiences.

8.2 Recreational and Amenity Value

The site is a valuable recreational and amenity resource. It is a well-placed green space on the outskirts of the town centre. Having a green space near to where we live improves our quality of life and is known to help reduce the risk of physical inactivity.

The site incorporates a football pitch which is used by local clubs, particularly youth football.

8.3 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 to 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.

The Plan for Nature makes suggestions to increase carbon sequestration at the site through maintaining newly planted trees and creating a grass verge/wildflower border near the edge of existing woodland (following scrub removal). Wider Nature Recovery Network mapping indicates the site is located in a strategic area for wetland creation and indicates that the location of site could provide an important 'stepping stone' for pasture and woodland habitat.

The site is bordered by Cheadlemill Brook which provides the site with an excellent natural resource for nature and wildlife. Just further north to the site on the same water course is Cecilly Brook Local Nature Reserve, which has recorded populations of water vole. The brook provides habitat for aquatic fauna and flora whilst also providing a food resource for other wildlife.

To the southwest of the site is an area of marshy ground, which has the potential for the creation of a more established wetland/marshland area. There are already species such as marsh marigold growing in this area, indicating suitability for this habitat type. Himalayan balsam is also present, which could be removed to prevent smothering of native biodiversity. Depending on further surveys, additional 'Natural Flood Management' techniques could be incorporated, such as linking with the adjacent river to provide overflow storage. Any proposals for pond creation would require health and safety considerations depending on depth. Additional planting would likely be limited, due to natural successional planting establishing over time, although there is potential for some wet woodland tree planting.

Notwithstanding this, the area described above lends itself nicely to the creation of an informal 'nature reserve'. There is opportunity for additional path creation depending on the desired functionality of the area and site in general. However, in spring/summer months, vegetation is dense and primarily comprises species such as thistle, nettle, bramble, hedge bindweed, blocking off visibility/accessibility to the wetland area. Therefore, it could be more appropriate to leave this area to naturally regenerate and become 'wilder'.

A hedgerow line was identified as appropriate to 'separate' off this wetland area from the adjacent playing fields and amenity space at the site, and also provide a habitat corridor between wooded areas either side of the site. The creation of a natural barrier like this would discourage access to the wetland area. Some scrub removal may be required to facilitate hedgerow planting.

Elsewhere around the site, there is the potential to 'bring out' some longer grass areas surrounding the site, which are mostly scrub vegetation at present. The scrub could either be left, with buffer strips of longer grass in front on meadow mowing regimes, or removed with larger meadow strips established.

There is an existing orchard plantation at the site which is establishing fairly successfully. Grassed areas here could lend themselves nicely to meadow creation, with staggered cut and collects over

the year (due to the large area and quantity of arisings likely to be generated) reducing nutrient levels over time. Mowed paths could be added in this area to facilitate a short walking route.

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.

9. Management Responsibilities

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

Alliance Environmental Services (AES) are the Council's delivery partner and, as such, would be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the site and also hold 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 can also provide additional capacity, undertake selected maintenance tasks, and could attract additional funding to improve the site.

10. Health and Safety

Health and safety is of primary concern to 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 is carried out by external contractors, partners or community groups/volunteers is governed by the Council's health and safety policies, which they must abide by and follow.

11. 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. There is a well established Friends of Cecilly Brook who might be interested in expanding their area of interest and we will look to work with them.

The establishment of a community group in this area would help 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 its habitats.

- Preserve public access into and throughout the space in perpetuity.

12. Marketing and Communications

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is responsible for managing Stanfield Crescent Recreation Ground 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 an X account:

- Facebook - <https://m.facebook.com/staffsMoorlands>
- X (Formally Twitter) - <https://x.com/StaffMoorlandDC>

For anything specific to Stanfield Crescent Recreation Ground, the link below gives several options for how you might get in touch.

- <https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/8216/Stanfield-Crescent-Recreational-Ground>

The Council can also be contacted by writing to:

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

13. 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 the 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	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
Investigate the potential of creating a wetland scrape	Summer 2025	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget	SMDC / Staffs Wildlife Trust / AES / Cheadle Town Council	Signage on site / PR / social media	Not started
Work with specialist groups / organisations to review Cheadlemill Brook	Summer 2025	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget	SMDC / Staffs Wildlife Trust / Cheadle Town Council	Social media / PR	Not started

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

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
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
Ensure that the football pitches are maintained to a high standard and improved as appropriate.	Ongoing	Unknown	SMDC / AES	Existing budget	AES / MyActive / Staffs FA	PR / social media if appropriate	Ongoing
Keep Pitch Power updated and regular checks to monitor the condition of the pitches.	Annually (September)	N/A	SMDC / AES	N/A	AES / Staffs FA	PR / social media if appropriate	Ongoing

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 space.	Ongoing	Unknown	SMDC	SMDC / Together Active/ Public Health	Public Health / Together Active / Move More Partnership / MyActive	Signage on site / PR / social media	Ongoing
Install (x 2) bench seats	Summer 2025	£1500 (est)	SMDC / AES	Existing budget	Cheadle Town Council / Community		Not started

Investigate the potential for a path around the site to encourage walking.	Summer 2025	N/A	SMDC	Existing budget / external funding	Cheadle Town Council / Community	Signage on site / PR / social media	Not started
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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 & 2025/26	£250	SMDC / AES	Existing budget	AES / Community groups	Signage on site / PR / social media	Not started
Plant new hedge	Winter 2024/25 & 2025/26	£500	SMDC/AES	Existing budget	AES / Community groups	Signage on site / PR / social media	Not started

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
Investigate the ownership of the access track with a view of improving the surface.	Spring / summer 2025	Unknown	SMDC	Existing	Assets	If required depending on results of investigation	Not started
New entrance signage to include 'welcoming' message and important contact details.	Spring 2025	Unknown	SMDC	Existing budget	AES	PR / social media	Not started

Objective 6: Actively encourage community engagement and involvement

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Invest time to encourage better community links and potential for a 'Friends of the Green Space' group to be established.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC	Unknown	AES / Cheadle Town Council / other organisations	PR / social media	Not started
Continue to engage with key stakeholders in the site.	Ongoing	N/A	SMDC	Unknown	AES / Cheadle Town Council / other organisations		Ongoing
Explore opportunities to increase educational activities in the site.	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		Community groups / Cheadle Town Council		Ongoing

Work 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 / Cheadle Town Council / Community groups		Ongoing
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Objective 8: Review and Monitoring

Action	When	Estimated Cost	Responsibility	Resources	Partners	Comms	Status
Annual condition review of site 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 site.	Annual (January)	N/A	SMDC	Existing	AES / Community groups / Cheadle 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

