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MANAGEMENT PLAN

Executive Summary

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INTRODUCTION



BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This is an executive summary of the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields. It summarises the key issues and opportunities required over a 10 year time frame to allow Abbey Fields to adapt to current needs and future demands.

Abbey Fields is an important green space within Kenilworth, steeped in history, bursting with wildlife, and well loved by many in Kenilworth and beyond. Following Covid-19 and the rise in people working from home, Abbey Fields has seen a marked increase in the number of users enjoying Abbey Fields.

The overall vision for Abbey Fields is:

“Abbey Fields is a green space rich in wildlife and steeped in history that protects, conserves and sensitively adapts to the needs of the changing climate and increasing population, whilst providing a high quality welcome and inclusive experience for all users to enjoy the benefits that Abbey Fields has to offer, now and in the future.”

In order to adapt, but also safeguard Abbey Fields to the current and future pressures of our modern living and climate change, Warwick District Council instructed Idverde to prepare a Management and Maintenance Plan (Management Plan) for Abbey Fields.



The aim of the Management Plan is to outline how Warwick District Council will develop, maintain and manage Abbey Fields over the next 10 years. This will be undertaken in collaboration with all key stakeholders and the local population to create a green space that is truly embedded into the local community.

The Management Plan has followed the Heritage Lottery Fund Management and Maintenance Plan guidance (2012) and also the format and content provided in “Raising the Standard”, The Green Flag Award guidance manual (updated in 2016) with a view to achieving Green Flag Award Status for Abbey Fields, as well as complementing a future Phase One National Lottery Heritage Fund grant.

The Management Plan will be reviewed annually and updated in Year 5. However, it is intended to be a working document that can be flexible to changing demands, policies and climate requirements. As such it may be subject to change as required.



THE SITE AND ITS HERITAGE



UNDERSTANDING THE SITE AND ITS HERITAGE

This section provides a summary of Abbey Fields, its location, the physical characteristics of the Fields, as well as the ecological and historical information which influence the current management and conservation of the site.

Full details of the site and its heritage can be found in the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

STUDY AREA

Abbey Fields is located close to the centre of the town of Kenilworth in the County of Warwickshire, Midlands. Kenilworth falls within the District of Warwick, within Warwickshire County Council.

Abbey Fields spans an area of 27 hectares/ 68 acres and is the largest green space in Kenilworth. A location plan is provided in Figure 1, which also shows the boundary of Abbey Fields.



Fig. 1 Boundary of Abbey Fields, Kenilworth

The whole of Abbey Fields is classified as a Scheduled Monument. There are several listed buildings within Abbey Fields which are detailed in the Historic England Scheduling within the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields. Abbey Fields is located within Kenilworth Conservation Area.

Abbey Fields and the adjoining St. Nicholas Churchyard are designated as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and Eco-site, respectively.

There are six distinct character zones identified within Abbey Fields which have been used to assist with landscape analysis. The zones are shown in Figure 2.

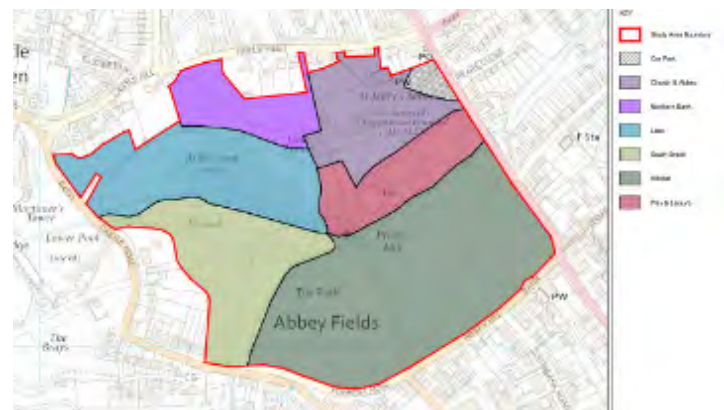
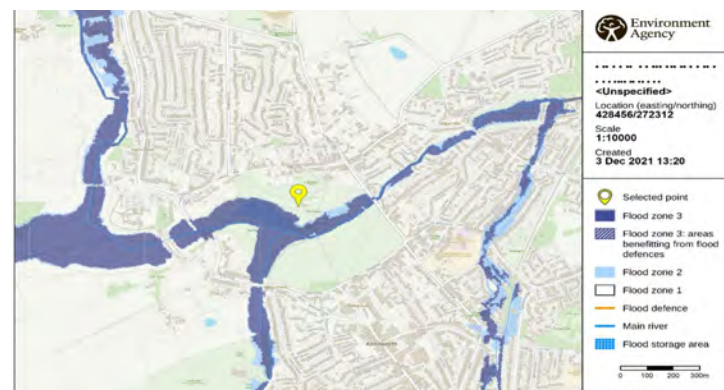


Fig. 2 Character areas

The local topography creates a valley in which Abbey Fields sits. It slopes steeply from the North and South towards Finham Brook with a range of between approximately 48 to 96 metres above sea level. The underlying geology is of Sandstone to the north and west with Mudstone to the south.

Two brooks, Finham Brook and Luzley Brook, run through the Fields, the former feeding into Abbey Fields Lake. Abbey Fields Lake which is roughly 3.6 acres was created on the site of the original Abbey Fishpond. Finham Brook is categorised by the Environment Agency as a Zone 3 Flood Risk Area as shown below.



PLANNING CONTEXT



PLANNING POLICY AND SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS

This section of the Management Plan identifies the relevant strategies and policy statements that potentially impact on Abbey Fields Management Plan. Further information on policies and constraints can be found within the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

The following documents and policies were analysed as part of the full management plan. The documents and policies would need to be reviewed as national policy and local plans are amended.

NATIONAL POLICIES

Key heritage legislation that underpins the conservation of the designated heritage assets includes the following:

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The scheduled monument is protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46/contents>).

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>) sets out provisions for listed buildings and conservations areas.

NPPF 2021

NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how to apply them.

- Chapter 2 Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 3 Plan-making
- Chapter 8 Promoting Healthy and safe communities
- Chapter 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Chapter 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Chapter 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The Climate Change Act 2008

- Chapter 6: Natural Environment
- Chapter 8: Local Government

Flood and Water Management Act 2010

Localism Act 2011

Sport England Active Design Guide

The Environment Bill

25 Year Environment Plan

Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

REGIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES

Warwickshire Habitat Biodiversity Audit

Warwickshire Biodiversity Strategy

Rights of Way and Recreational Highway Strategy –
2011-2026 by Warwickshire County Council

Warwick District Local Plan – 2011-2029

Kenilworth Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2029

Green Infrastructure Study 2012

Green Space Strategy 2012-2026

Abbey Fields Conservation Area

Tree and Woodland Strategy (to be reviewed)

Final Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report,
June 2019

Fit for the Future Strategy

Warwick District Council Climate Emergency
Declaration

Warwick District Council Emerging Biodiversity
Action Plan

South Warwickshire Climate Change Action
Programme (CCAP)

Kenilworth Town Council Climate Emergency

Kenilworth Town Council Climate Emergency
Actions – a Roadmap – February 2020

Kenilworth Town Council Cycling Strategy
December 2019

The Church of England – Eco Church scheme.

MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS



This section summarises the management and maintenance of Abbey Fields, the roles and responsibilities of the management teams, the contractual relationships and the stakeholders who also have an interest within Abbey Fields.

Full details of management and responsibility can be found within the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

Overall responsibility

Abbey Fields is owned and managed by Warwick District Council. The Green Space Team within Safer Communities, Leisure and Environment Division are responsible for the management of Abbey Fields.

Arboriculture Service Level Agreement

Trees within Abbey Fields are managed by Warwick District Council through a Service Level Agreement with Warwickshire County Council Forestry Team (Appendix 3) and is managed by the Green Space Development Officer.

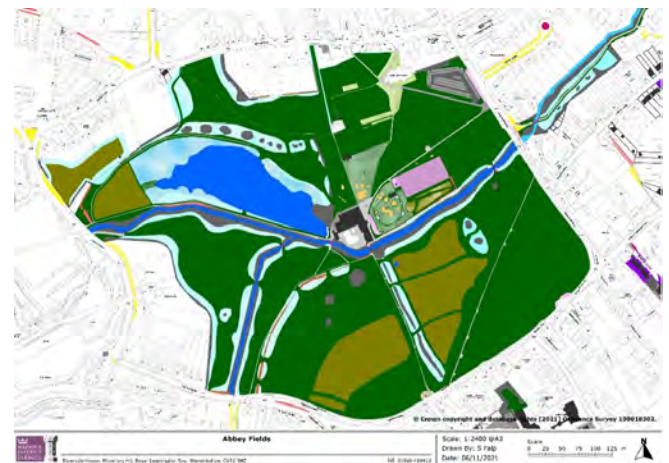


Fig. 3 Extract from the Tree survey within Abbey Fields

Grounds Maintenance Contract

Grounds maintenance within Abbey Fields is managed by Warwick District Council through a 10 year contract called 'Provision of Grounds Maintenance Contract 2021-2029) with external providers, Idverde UK (as of the date of this Management Plan).

For Abbey Fields, the maintenance provision is shown in the Abbey Fields Maintenance Plan below.



- Grounds Maintenance - Polygon Data
- Access Grass 1m Strip
- Hard Surface Ball Court
- Herbaceous / Tenderneckle Flowering
- Water Bodies
- Areas of no maintenance
- Wood Shell / Pitt stone shed
- Amend Courts
- Play Areas
- Footpath (Dress)
- Amend Paths & Toppings
- Shrubline
- Herbaceous Courts
- Highway 10 Cut
- Highway Grass 2 Cut
- Highway Grass 10 Cut
- Highway Grass Tractor Cut (1 cut)
- Commercial Grass (2) cut and 3, wide collect
- Shrub
- Grass (Coppice and lay)
- Highway Grass 10 Cut
- Highway 3 Cut
- Highway 10 Cut
- Amend Grass 3 Cut
- Amend Grass 10 Cut
- Grass Paths (10 Cut)
- Ornamental Grass (20 cut and 3 walk P.V.)
- Perennial Grass (12 Cut)
- Tall Herb to Waterline Area
- Tall Herb (12 or 1000)
- Tall Herb (12 Cut)
- Grass Hedge
- Grass Bedding
- Grass Paths (5 Cut)
- Grass Bed (12 Cut)
- Heather Grass Pedestrian Path (12 Cut)

Maintenance of shared use paths, roads and park infrastructure as well as all buildings, bridges, structures and heritage buildings are the responsibility of Warwick District Council Asset Management Team. Heritage buildings are managed under consent with Historic England as a Scheduled Monument (Schedule 1021079) and/or their individual listing.

Maintenance and repair of playground equipment, including minor repairs to safety surfaces are managed by the contractor (currently Idverde) and all tasks undertaken are inspected by the Green Space Development Officers in accordance with the specification.

Performance and Quality Monitoring

Performance is regularly evaluated throughout the contractual period.

Abbey Fields operational meetings are held bi-monthly on site at Abbey Fields. They are attended by Warwick District Council Green Space Development Officer, Warwick District Council Rangers Service and the Contract Manager and Supervisors for the contractor (currently Idverde).

The Idverde/Warwick District Council Quarterly Partnership meeting is held four times per year and is attended by the Warwick District Contract Services Manager, senior parks staff and representatives from the contractor (currently Idverde), that include the Regional Operations Director and the Contracts Manager.

Historic England

Historic England is an important stakeholder in the management of the Field's. The Field's scheduled monument designation means that all works require scheduled monument consent from the Secretary of State before they can be undertaken.

Historic England's Inspector of Ancient Monuments advises the Secretary of State on the granting of scheduled monument consent to ensure that the significance of the monument is maintained.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Abbey Fields covers a wide range of interests and social needs for the community, including sports provision, play facilities and informal recreation. Sports provision includes the Leisure Centre, completed in 2024, 5 hard surfaced tennis courts and a trim trail. Play provision includes a fenced toddler and junior play area with an unfenced junior and teenager play area, both very well used. Abbey Fields is very well used for informal recreation of all forms. The website for Abbey Fields www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20316/abbey-fields provides further guidance on activities available within Abbey Fields.

POLICING ABBEY FIELDS

Warwick District Council have a Ranger Service who provide a safe, friendly and welcoming experience for people visiting the parks and open spaces within Warwick District. The rangers are transient and are not permanently located within one green space. Full details of their roles and responsibilities can be found within the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.



TREES IN ABBEY FIELDS

5.

TREES IN ABBEY FIELDS

As Abbey Fields has a large number of trees, many of which are veteran, the requirements to ensure that these stay within the best of condition, replaced nearing the end of their lives or are monitored for their safety is really important to maintain a green, healthy and safe Abbey Fields. In 2010 the Friends of Abbey Fields surveyed the trees in the Abbey Fields and produced a leaflet listing 64 different varieties of trees.

Tree History

Historically trees were planted in an adhoc basis and although Abbey Fields is classed as a designed landscape within Landscape Character terms, the planting of trees was undertaken randomly since it began its journey into the public domain from 1883. Abbey Fields historically appeared to be quite an open landscape, and once it became a publicly accessible space, trees were introduced. Trees within Abbey Fields range from young replacement stock to veteran trees providing a rich tapestry of variety, age and structure.

Conservation Area

Abbey Fields lies within the Abbey Fields Conservation Area discussed in more detail in Section 2. It references the importance and significance of the trees within the Fields. As works to trees are carried out within a Conservation Area, a Section 211 notice may be required and permissions gained from the relevant planning department.

TREE SURVEY

A tree survey has been undertaken for Abbey Fields as part of the service level agreement, which requires regular inspection and updating for the appropriate management of the trees. Full details can be found within the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

TREE PLANTING

Due to the Schedule Monument status tree planting is restricted on site and only on a like for like basis or under permission from Historic England.

TREE AND WOODLAND STRATEGY

Warwick District Council Tree and Woodland Strategy was adopted in 1999 and is due to be reviewed, it covers several policies that are relevant to Abbey Fields. These include policies 21, 22 and 23 full details of which can be found within the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.



ECOLOGY BASELINE REVIEW



ECOLOGY BASELINE REVIEW

Abbey Fields and the adjoining St. Nicholas Churchyard are designated as a Local Wildlife Site and Ecosite, respectively.

An initial review of ecological information was provided by Middlemarch Environmental, using the following information:

- **Warwickshire Biological Records Centre (November 4th, 2020)**
- **Natural England - MAGIC system for conservation sites**
- **National Site Network (European statutory nature conservation sites (UK) within a 5km radius (10km for bat species)**
- **UK Statutory Sites (within a 2km radius)**
- **Non-statutory sites and protected/notable species (within 2km radius)**
- **Phase 1 habitat survey (October 27th 2020 & July 1st & 13th 2021)**
- **Phase 2 habitat survey**
- **Designated sites**

The Local Wildlife Site designation is based on a mosaic of habitats, including priority habitats which are identified below:

- **Semi-natural broadleaved woodland**
- **Mature and veteran trees (as parkland or avenue trees)**
- **Acid grassland**
- **Neutral grassland (amenity grassland)**
- **Ponds and wetlands**
- **Built environment (buildings/walls)**

- **Introduced scrub & natural scrub**
- **Plantation woodland**
- **Reed-swamp**
- **Running water**
- **Scattered trees**
- **Species rich hedgerow**
- **Standing water**
- **Tall ruderals**

SPECIES

A number of protected and/or notable species have been recorded on the site and within the surrounding area. These include:

- **Bats: daubenton's, natterer's bat, noctule, pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle. leisler's bat**
- **Amphibians: common toad, common frog, great crested newt, smooth newt**
- **Reptiles: slow worm, grass snake, common lizard**
- **Invertebrates: stag beetle**
- **Birds: kingfisher, barn owl, fieldfare, redwing, red kite, greylag goose, whooper swan**
- **Birds of Principal Importance: lapwing, reed bunting, marsh tit and dunnock**
- **Birds on RSPB Amber List: tawny owl, kestrel and mute swan**

Species of Principle Importance for Nature Conservation, the Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority species and notable habitats, will have potential implications on the management of Abbey Fields.

HYDROLOGY



HYDROLOGY

The hydrology of Abbey Fields has been considered as part of the Management Plan. This has identified the key hydrological features their constraints and opportunities which are summarised below.

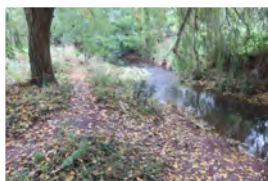
It should also be noted that engagement with Historic England at an early stage will be required to ensure that any suggested interventions can be supported.

Finham Brook and Luzley Brook

Abbey Fields centres around two brooks, Finham Brook and Luzley Brook. Finham Brook runs from west to east and Luzley Brook south to north. Luzley Brook merges with Finham Brook to the centre of the Fields just west of the Leisure Centre.

Finham Brook is set within a deep, wide channel that towards the Leisure Centre has steep walled embankments associated with the two bridges and what appears to be the infrastructure of an historic mill.

Luzley Brook is a heavily vegetated and silty brook. It is deep in places with fine willow roots slowing the flow and creating interesting eddies. It has shallower sides compared to Finham Brook with a large number of weeping willows along its length as well as wide areas of vegetation limiting access. Its connection with Finham Brook is wide and uninterrupted.



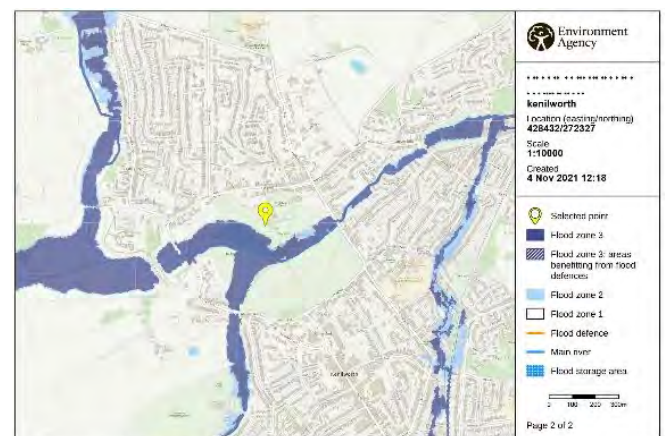
Abbey Fields Lake

Abbey Fields Lake is located to the north of Finham Brook, and west of the Leisure Centre. A more recent 20th Century addition, this covers a large area of land midway up to Castle Road. It is a man-made lake and is controlled by a managed intake and outlet, with any movement of water into and out of the lake agreed with the Environment Agency. Originally the land was managed as a flood water meadow, with dams and a sluice network used to control the water.



Flooding

Both Finham and Luzley Brook flood and the lower reaches of the Fields including the lake are identified as being within flood zone 3. The connection that this has with the wider area can be seen in the map below.



There are issues and opportunities for hot spot areas for water throughout the lower reaches of the Fields as well as issues along Finham and Luzley Brooks and the Lake.

The following have been identified as areas that would benefit from improvements and management:

- Finham Brook
- The Lake, including the beach areas to the north and south
- Primary Entrance off Castle Road/Meadow
- Hillside Wetland & Pond
- Finham Brook margins
- South Brook - Luzley Brook and Castle Road
- South Brook – Drainage Ditches
- Primary Entrance off Castle Road
- Areas around the timber bridges
- Play areas including the informal path
- Tennis Courts
- Bridge Street underpass
- Car Park & Main Drive

Further details about the Hydrology of Abbey Fields can be found in the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.



VISITOR ACCESSIBILITY

8.

ACCESS AUDIT

The Access Audit assesses the quality of access within and to the Fields in terms of its visibility, legibility and accessibility for both able bodied and less abled bodied users and is supported by the Access and Circulation Plan. The audit has looked at the following:

PRIMARY ACCESS

The Primary Access Points are where most people enter the Fields:

- Car Park
- High Street – north east entrance
- High Street – north west entrance
- Castle Road West entrances
- Borrowell Lane/Forrest Road south entrance
- War Memorial and Holmes Avenue/with Bridge Street entrances
- Holmes Avenue Entrances at Abbey Hill and Bridge Street
- Proposed Primary access at Abbey Hill shelter



SECONDARY ACCESS

The Secondary Access Points are where there is a level of informality to the entrances and they are less well used:

- Car park steps
- Entrances on High Street
- Church entrance
- Vehicle/pedestrian entrance on High Street
- Borrowell Lane south west
- Forrest Road
- Lower Forrest Road
- Mid Forrest Road
- War memorial informal opening

FORMAL VEHICLE ACCESS

Formal vehicle access is via the car park entrance off Bridge Street.

MAINTENANCE ACCESS

There are multiple field gates that are located around Abbey Fields that provide maintenance access to the Fields.

MAIN FIELDS ACCESS PATHS

There are multiple paths both surfaced and unsurfaced that are located around Abbey Fields.



ACCESS FROM THE WIDER AREA

Access to Abbey Fields can be by bus, road and train.

A set of recommendations have been provided for each zone that have then been fed into the Actions of Abbey Fields.

Some of the key issues identified include:

- Safe pedestrian routes.
- Accessible entrances and surfacing.
- Access to the car park would benefit the provision of a separate pedestrian footway.
- Managing eroded areas on a rotational basis to encourage grass regrowth.
- Formalising path connections to the lakeside to reduce bank erosion between the bank and the lake.
- Set all benches within a tarmac and surfaced base that ties into the formal path surfaces.
- Redesign the layout of the parking and vehicle arrangement at the entrance to the new Leisure Centre to reduce potential conflict.

Further details about the accessibility and recommendations for improvements to Abbey Fields can be found in the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields



INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT

9.

ABBEY FIELDS INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT 2021

The infrastructure audit focuses attention on all the existing infrastructure i.e. furniture and shelters etc within Abbey Fields, looking at their condition, their legibility, their function and their consistency. Further to the audit, a series of recommendations identify improvements that can be made over time to the infrastructure within Abbey Fields.

Details of the audit and recommendations can be found in the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

CAR PARK

The car park has many different identities as it is the main vehicular and pedestrian access to Abbey Fields, the Leisure Centre and St Nicholas Church. Unfortunately, there is a confusing approach to the welcome of this space. This is mainly attributed to signage and a mix of styles that create an untidy appearance to the entrances space. This is mainly attributed to signage and a mix of styles that create an untidy appearance to the entrances .



Key Recommendations for the Car Park include:

1. Tidy up the main vehicle entrance to improve the overall appearance of the car park entrance.
2. Change the welcome sign to the Fields and have a double fronted bold sign to face both directions of Bridge Street.
3. News and events board to contain only information pertinent to news and events and not on rules and regulations of the Fields.
4. The parking signage needs to be more concise and less cluttered.
5. Have Welcome signs to the main pedestrian Fields entrances that provide a Fields map.
6. Bollards and bins to be all of one style throughout the Fields.
7. Fingerposts to be located in visible pedestrian locations.



CHURCH & ABBEY

St Nicholas Church colours are mauve and set the church apart from Abbey Fields. There is an inconsistency with seating and signage due to the varying styles, materials, colours and condition that can detract from the feel and importance of this location.



Key Recommendations for Church & Abbey:

1. Consistency of the church signage.
2. Benches should be changed to traditional timber benches.
3. Bins to be cleaned and located next to footways to reduce erosion. Ensure consistency of bin styles throughout the Fields, confirmed in the design code.
4. Historical information signage to be cleaned and made more accessible/visible.
5. Refix the dated plaque to the Gatehouse ruin.
6. Ensure all signage within the cemetery is not loose and is located appropriately.

7. Improve legibility of the Abbey Ruins particularly around the church.
8. The long distance Centenary Way footpath traverses the church yard. Small waymarkers appropriately located would be of benefit to direct through the churchyard.
9. Fingerposts to be located in visible pedestrian locations.
10. Access 'A' frame gate to Church Walk to be replaced with more appropriate, less visually intrusive gates, although with some reflective capacity.
11. Determine whether the safety roadside barrier on High Street would be required following works to hedges.
12. Remove/grind out all metal studs on church/abbey wall and make safe.

NORTHERN BANK

Access to northern bank is via two entrances off the High Street. One entrance is a secondary historic entrance, with a double leaf gate. The other entrance, a primary entrance, is open to pedestrians restricting vehicle access.

Seating varies with a number of styles throughout and within proximity to this area. Benches in popular locations have substantial erosion and wear to their base.

There is only one bin within this zone of the Fields located at the primary entrance off High Street.

Fencing in this location is post and two rail as seen above. It is in good condition along its length and provides visual permeability into the Fields.



Key Recommendations for Northern Bank:

1. Replace metal benches with timber benches in line with the Fields's design code. Ensure all existing timber benches are refurbished.
2. Clean and maintain existing bin and locate within hard surfacing to reduce erosion. Ensure bin style is consistent with the Fields's design code.
3. Widen the primary entrance off High Street.
4. Introduce Fields welcome sign to primary entrance.
5. Introduce way markers for the Centenary Way long distance route.

LAKE

The entrance to the lake is cluttered with mismatching benches, and three entrance signs.



The welcome sign to Abbey Fields is too small, soiled and showing signs of wear. The sign holds too much information and there is no map of the Fields. Its location as an information welcome sign is outside of the Fields boundary and its context is lost. Two other signs located at this primary entrance compete for attention and clutter the main entrance. They are both soiled and damaged with rusty legs. The information provided could be combined into one sign.

The main entrance to the lake is through a hooped chicane barrier that needs to be replaced to allow easier access for wheelchair users.

Seating around the lake is of varying styles of both wooden plank style benches and green metal benches. A perch bench is located at the Leisure Centre.

Bins are only located at the main entrance on Castle Road. Both bins are heavily soiled, but well used as there is much erosion to their base.

A section of trim trail lies inside the main entrance to the lake which appears well used.

There are a number of different types of fencing used within the vicinity of the lake including timber palisade hit and miss fence, post and 2 rail fence, bow top fence, estate type fence as well as railings to the main entrance off Castle Street.

Recommendations for Lake:

1. Change the welcome sign to the Fields and have a large sign to face Castle Road.
2. Update the historical information lectern in line with the Fields's design code and locate it inside the Fields entrance.
3. Have a welcome sign inside the Fields entrance that provides a Fields map.
4. Widen the entrance and replace the hooped chicane with an accessible entrance.
5. Ensure all benches around the lake are metal framed benches in line with the Fields's design code. Ensure all benches are set within a permanent base, approved by Historic England. All timber benches to be relocated to South Brook or Northern Bank within the Fields. Refurbish existing benches where required.
6. Provide a wildlife interpretation panel along the northern lake edge.



7. Regularly clean and maintain existing bins and locate within tarmac to reduce erosion. Replace bins and ensure the bin style is consistent with the Field's design code.
8. Consistency of fencing throughout the Field is of importance. Replace bow top fencing with estate style fencing. This should be painted a recessive black. Ensure any new fencing incorporated within the Leisure Facility is in accordance with the Field's design code.
9. Introduce estate railing with stock proof mesh fencing along Finham Brook providing two locations for pedestrian/dog access.

SOUTH BROOK

The entrances to south brook include a kissing gate off Castle Road, and a hooped barrier off Borrowell Lane. The kissing gate is in good order but provides a pinch point to the Fields with extensive erosion. The hooped barrier is in a poor state of repair with flaking paint and is a pedestrian unfriendly access. Adjoining it is a maintenance access field gate with posts showing signs of deterioration.



Two timber bridges form important connections across Luzley Brook. They both appear to be in good condition, although would require regular inspection by a structural engineer to look for signs of deterioration.



Seating in this part of the Fields is mostly timber benches. There is substantial erosion around the timber benches set within earth. The benches are showing signs of wear.



One soiled dog bin is located near to the entrance to the Fields. There are no other bins along this route.

Recommendations for South Brook:

1. Provide a pedestrian welcome sign at the primary entrance off Castle Road and at Borrowell Lane consistent with other primary entrances. At Castle Road this should be located inside of the entrance and not to conflict with the main welcome sign that will be visible at the lake entrance.
2. Replace the kissing gate with a bollard entrance, ensuring all bollards used are in line with the Field's design code.
3. Replace the secondary entrance at Borrowell Lane with a double leaf field gate with trombone latch.
4. Regularly inspect the bridges to ensure they remain safe and serviceable.

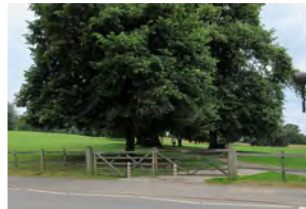
5. Refurbish or replace existing timber benches in line with the Field's design code. Refurbish metal bench in line with design code.

6. Site all benches in hard standing, subject to Historic England approval and connect to the main path network to reduce erosion.

7. Remove all dog bins and introduce litter bins to all primary entrances.

HILLSIDE

Pedestrian entrances to Hillside include timber bollards, although of varying styles, size and condition. Maintenance vehicles access Hillside via a number of field gates with lockable removable bollards.



The signage relating to the Abbey is located under trees and is heavily soiled by birds. It is showing signs of damage and deterioration and is unpleasant to read. A dated finger post at the main entrance only includes directions to historic or town centre locations and does not include any user information relating to the Fields.

There is a variety of bench styles in Hillside, most are in need of repainting, with some requiring repair and cleaning. The bases of the benches vary with some in hard standing and others in grassed areas where the surface has eroded.

There are a number of bins located within and to the immediate outskirts of this zone. Each bin is different and there is no consistency throughout this area.

A timber constructed bridge traverses Finham Brook into the Play and Leisure zone. It is a narrow bridge but appears in good condition. It takes a large volume of footfall as the erosion is extensive on the approaches either side.

There are two bus shelters located within/adjacent to this zone. Both shelters have timber roof tiles and are well constructed. However, they are in need of repair and refurbishment. These are very well used structures and need some attention.



Recommendations for Hillside:

1. Provide a vehicle welcome sign to the Fields at the War memorial entrance. Pedestrian sign to provide a field map.
2. Update the historical information lectern in line with the Field's design code and locate it near to a main path.
3. Bollards and bins to be replaced and to be all of one style throughout the Fields. Replace all dog bins with litter bins.
4. Fingerposts to be located in visible pedestrian locations and to be of a modern style but not stainless or brushed steel.
5. All benches to be traditional metal style. These should all be painted a uniform consistent dark colour. Orange colours to be phased out.
6. Potential to widen the bridge over Finham Brook.
7. Regularly inspect the bridge to ensure it remains safe and serviceable.
8. Repair and paint the bus shelters.

PLAY & LEISURE

There are a number of signs located around the Play and Leisure area. A sign detailing the history of the site is located at the entrance to the Main Drive. However there is a distinct lack of consistency in signage, with many different styles, messages and condition presenting a non-cohesive Fields identity.

There are two notice boards located on the Leisure Centre building one is showing signs of significant weather damage and wear. The Friends of Abbey Fields noticeboard is in better condition.

The butterfly garden has a framed picture of butterflies. The frame is showing signs of wear and the information is tired and dated.



The trim trail is positioned near to the tennis courts. Its sign is modern and bright of relatively new condition. It provides clear information for the locations of the trim trail and is set on timber posts.

Smaller informative signs are located on lampposts around this zone. Their information varies and create masses of confusing clutter that are generally missed and not read.

Seating in the play and leisure zone varies substantially. There are a number of picnic benches located within the grassed areas. These are well used but showing signs of substantial wear and deterioration. There are no accessible picnic benches for disabled users. All bases to picnic benches set within grass have substantial erosion.

Bins vary in style and condition. There are a number of open topped bins located in the area. They are dated, soiled and often rusty. There is much erosion to their base. The recycling bin is tucked under the eaves of the Leisure Centre near to the outdoor kiosk. It is heavily soiled and unpleasant to use.

There are no bins within the fenced play area and litter is notably increased in this area.

There are a number of fences around the Play and Leisure zone. The post and 3 rail fence around the play facility also incorporates a mesh fence. They are in relatively good condition. A post and 2 rail fence provides a protection around the rain garden.

The tennis courts fencing is a chain link fence and is showing signs of age and wear. It is a dated form of enclosure for tennis courts and posts are bending and beginning to fail.

Barriers at Bridge street are used to direct the street movement of pedestrians. Barriers are also located at the historic iron bridge over Finham Brook which is narrow and a severe pinch point at the Leisure Centre.



The access gates for the fenced play appear in good condition but need to be monitored to ensure they self-close due to the proximity of the Main Drive.

Lighting is present within this location. Much of it is located as downlights on the sides of the Leisure Centre. Along Main Drive there are a number of lighting columns with new LED lighting heads. These appear in reasonable condition. Most of the Fields is not lit, except for the busier pedestrian routes required for use outside of daylight hours, such as the Church access and Main Drive.

There are a number of timber bollards located along Main Drive to limit access and to protect fencing. These are of similar style and in reasonable condition. Bollards will need to be consistent with the rest of the Fields.

There are a number of posts under Bridge Street. They are gnarly and old, but add character to this location. They may need to be replaced.

Cycle parking at the Leisure Centre is located underneath the overhang of the roof. Some of the cycle hoops are bent and damaged. Replacement cycle provision is likely to be included in the Leisure Centre development.



The pavilion within the fenced play area is boarded up and showing substantial signs of deterioration particular to the support posts. It is a barrier within the play area and creates a focal point for antisocial behaviour due its lack of positive use.

Access along Main Drive is through a utilitarian style barrier, with additional lockable 'A' frame gate. The barrier jars with the style of the Fields and provides an unattractive focal point.

Recommendations for Play & Leisure:

1. Have Welcome signs to the Fields entrances that provide a Fields map.
2. News and events board to contain only information pertinent to news and events and not on rules and regulations of the Fields. The information needs to be much bolder and clearer to read.
3. Reduce sign clutter on lamp posts.
4. Undertake a lighting review to ensure lighting of Main Drive and the church is adequate and sustainable.
5. All signage within the Fields to be updated and consistent with the Field's design code.
6. Bollards and bins to be all of one style throughout the Fields.
7. Fingerposts to be located in visible pedestrian locations and be of a modern style but not stainless or brushed steel.
8. All benches to be metal except for within the fenced play where benches can be a mix of timber and metal.
9. Replace all picnic benches and ensure they are on erosion mats (allowing for establishment time) to reduce surface wear. Provide a number of accessible picnic benches for wheelchair users adjacent to existing paths.
10. Refurbish/refresh all benches within this zone in accordance with the Field's design code.
11. Regularly inspect the bridges to ensure they remain safe and serviceable.
12. Refurbish the tennis courts and replace all fencing.
13. Repair or replace broken or rotten play equipment (including 'mole' within the meadow') to encourage positive engagement with the play space. Broken and damaged play equipment may encourage antisocial behaviour.
14. Provide interpretation of the meadow flowers and likely insects.
15. Potential to relocate the trim trail to Northern bank or the Lake to encourage more active use in these locations.
16. Refurbish and repurpose the play area pavilion as a potential 'snack shack', and/or Seasonal wildlife/educational/art exhibitions.
17. Provide interpretation of the rain garden, using signage in accordance with the design code
18. Consider alternative vehicle access to Main Drive to replace the barrier to improve pedestrian permeability.

BUILT STRUCTURES

10.

SITE FEATURES AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Abbey Fields is a Scheduled Monument (ref:1021079), steeped in history and archaeological interest. As Abbey Fields has become more publicly accessible the importance of the historic landscape has become highly valued being awarded Scheduled Monument status in 2003, and various structures being individually listed.

In response to the Scheduled Monument Status, Kenilworth Abbey Advisory Committee produced a Conservation Plan detailing all of the built features of archaeological merit within Abbey Fields.

This section of the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields details the historic features within Abbey Fields alongside their significance and their current structural issues. These are summarised below.

Abbey Gatehouse *(part of the Abbey Ruins Listed Building Grade I, 1035328)*

A medieval structure with Victorian buttresses and 20th Century concrete and pitch roof capping. Entrance was formed of two vaulted bays divided by a wall with separate entrances for carriages and pedestrians.

Risk: It lacks a pitched roof and guttering with damp stonework inside and outside. Climbing causes inevitable damage despite signage.



Abbey Chapter House *(part of the Abbey Ruins Listed Building Grade I, 1035328)*

A medieval structure with only the south wall remaining above ground. Excavation showed it to be 15m long and 8.5m wide. Similar to Bristol Cathedral Chapter House.

Risk: Stonework is unimpressive and liable to collapse. Warning signs are unsightly although the fencing has deterred climbers.



The Barn Museum *(part of the Abbey Ruins Listed Building Grade I, 1035328)*

A medieval structure built from sandstone ashlar and aligned east-west. An external stairway led to a doorway, now blocked. External walls are peppered with shot marks potentially from a Civil War skirmish.

Risk: Spoil from the 1920s excavation resulted in ground level outside of the building causing dampness to the north side. Restricted electricity supply limits public opening hours.



The Abbey Church of St Mary *(part of the Abbey Ruins Listed Building Grade I, 1035328)*

Medieval ruins with Victorian modifications. The nave is currently used as a memorial garden with an early 20th century retaining wall in front of the original north wall. South wall survives in part with a soil capping to reduce degradation.

Risk: The original walls are in poor condition and subject to climbing despite unsightly warning signs.



The Priory Aqueduct and Access Shaft *(part of the Abbey Fields Scheduled Monument 1021079)*

Buried medieval construction that is not currently used. The Access shaft is 4m deep with an arched culvert 1.4m high and 1m wide.

Risk: Low risk as none of the stonework is above ground and the access shaft is capped. There may be additional culverts, sluice gates and collecting tank near the Queen and Castle car park.

The Lake *(part of the Abbey Fields Scheduled Monument 1021079)*

The lake as it is today, was formed in the late twentieth century, partly on what is believed to be the former lake of medieval times, which was much larger in size. It is currently an important wildlife habitat and provides lakeside walks.

Risk: Vulnerable to pressures of diversifying its use, as well as erosion from water movement and public/animal interaction.



Kenilworth War Memorial *(Grade II Listing, 1435150)*

The Kenilworth War Memorial is located on Forrest Road at the entrance to Abbey Fields at Abbey Hill. It is a tall and imposing obelisk in a Classical style.



St Nicholas Church *(Grade I Listed Building, 1300415)*

St Nicholas Church is a Grade I Listed Building and is an important feature within Abbey Fields dating back to the late 13th Century. Of particular importance are the decorated arcades, perpendicular clerestory, and 14th Century west tower with ornate Norman entrance. St. Nicholas Church is managed by the Vicar, Church Wardens and volunteers. The churchyard is maintained by Warwick District Council.

Drinking Fountain

Constructed in 1934, this originally provided drinking water for Abbey Fields. There is no signage to identify its historic use.

Air Raid Shelters

A number of air raid shelters were built around Abbey Fields during WWII. These are important historic assets and are of educational value for their significance in WWII. None of them are open to the public and only one is identified with a sign.



Play Pavilion

The play pavilion is not included within the scheduled monument status, nor is it listed. It was constructed in 1925-1926 and was originally a thatched building. The condition of the structure is in need of repair, particularly the overhang struts which are showing signs of deterioration.



Bus Shelter Abbey Hill

There are two bus shelters, one at Abbey Hill and the other at Rosemary Hill. Both were constructed in 1950. Both are in need of some repair to the roofs and the timber frames.



Procedures for Repair and Upkeep of Structures in Warwick District Council Ownership

Periodic conditions surveys are undertaken of the historic and non-historic structures within Abbey Fields. Historic England are informed of any planned works to the Listed Buildings or works to the Scheduled Monument through Listed Building Consent as and when it is required.

In relation to any structures that are reported to have a fault (public or from Kenilworth Abbey Advisory Committee), an inspection is undertaken by the Warwick District Council Building Surveyor and the Green Spaces Development Officer following a series of procedures.

Impacts on the Management and Maintenance Plan

As Abbey Fields is an important historic asset with Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monument and Conservation Area status, there are a number of actions that need to be addressed to better manage the heritage assets and also the non-historic structures.

The creation of a formal procedure for the Preventative Planned Maintenance of the historic and non-historic structures will identify when inspections are required and by whom. Inspection reports should be accessible. This may or may not involve Historic England, dependent on each structure.

The creation of a formal procedure for reporting of faults on structures within Abbey Fields should be considered. This would include who to report to, and the internal procedures required to deal with any issues.

Consider improving signage of more recent assets in particular to provide historical context of the formation of Abbey Fields as it is seen today.

For full Information on the Conservation Plan, Built Structures and their Historical Context please refer to the full Management Plan For Abbey Fields.

LAND USE

This Section looks at the way Abbey Fields is used in terms of visitor requirements, demands for use of Abbey Fields and any conflicts that may arise including access and safety.

Consultation summary relating to Land use

Public consultation was undertaken in 2019, called 'Fields for the Future'. The full details are summarised in Section 12 and provided within Appendix 4 of the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

The consultation found that most people visited Abbey Fields once or twice a week, and that a large percentage of people spent between half an hour and 2 hours in Abbey Fields, with only a small percentage staying longer than 2 hours.

The most popular reason for visiting Abbey Fields was primarily walking, enjoying nature, enjoying the peace and quiet and use of play facilities. A large percentage of people walk through Abbey Fields to get to an alternative destination.

The majority of respondents were in favour of more Management for Conservation and Biodiversity, with a large percentage of respondents in favour of the provision of more sports facilities.

Many respondents would like to see more access to the buildings within Abbey Fields, particularly the heritage structures and the use of the play pavillion as a pop up cafe.

In relation to the safety and protection of the Brook, a large percentage agreed that it should be protected with fencing with safe access for dogs and people and the ability for the annual duck race to continue.

A large percentage of respondents were interested in volunteering but the overwhelming response was that volunteer opportunities were poorly advertised and access to information on volunteer groups and opportunities was unclear.

Impacts on the Management and Maintenance Plan

- There is a requirement for more interpretation of the wildlife enhancement of Abbey Fields.
- Sports provision in Abbey Fields is low key with tennis courts and a small trim trail. Consideration should be given to improving the basketball facilities in the tennis courts, and to expanding the trim trail or, introducing an outdoor gym.
- Improving the visibility of volunteering opportunities within Abbey Fields to encourage more community interaction and more use of the historic buildings through improvements to Notice Boards and the use of Social Media.
- The safety and protection of the Brook should be a priority to safeguard the Brook embankments but still allow safe access.
- Refurbish and repurpose the play area pavilion as a potential 'snack shack', and/or seasonal wildlife/educational/art exhibitions.

CONSULTATION



RESIDENT SURVEY

The “Fields for the Future” survey conducted in 2019 was to provide feedback on how people use, enjoy and envisage the future of Abbey Fields to help shape the Management Plan. In 2021, an additional heritage consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders. The consultation summary can be found in Appendix 4 of the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

A number of drop-in sessions took place at Abbey Fields Swimming Pool, Castle Farm Recreation Centre, the Kenilworth Centre and the Holiday Inn with representation from the Warwick District Council Green Space Team and representatives from the contract team (Idverde).

KEY FINDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION

Visitors

- Nearly 50% of consultees walk to Abbey Fields
- Over 22% cycle to Abbey Fields
- Over 27% of consultees drive to the Fields.

Features

- Consultees were generally happy with the Abbey Fields landscape and historical features as well as its general cleanliness.
- Facilities such as tennis courts, toilets, café, parking and signage were less favoured or received very mixed reviews.

Accessibility

- Access to and within Abbey Fields had a mixed response.

- Access to the café and toilets were of greatest concern.
- Accessibility and content of signage and noticeboards.
- Issues associated with paths around the Lake

Safety

- Safety within Abbey Fields was highly rated.
- A small percentage raised concerns with regards to safety in evenings.
- Concerns about safety of crossing roads into Abbey Fields.

Cycling

- In relation to cycling, over 80% of respondents were in favour of cycling provision within Abbey Fields.
- Just under 19% were against cycling within Abbey Fields raising concerns over safety and loss of peaceful attributes of Abbey Fields.

The consultation raised issues and opportunities that have been addressed within the action section of the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

13.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Drawing on the preceding evaluation and analysis, this section summarises the key issues and opportunities that may affect the site as a whole, its component character areas and/or individual features.

Where issues and opportunities have been raised in preceding sections these are generally only referenced once to avoid repetition. However, issues and opportunities are often relevant between each section and are therefore included in each section.

Planning policy context

The issues relate to ensuring Abbey Fields stays relevant to changing policies and that out of date strategies, such as the Play Area and Tree & Woodland Strategies may affect how Abbey Fields adapts to future demands. The scheduled monument status affects what can be undertaken within Abbey Fields. Further issues relate to environmental implications for Abbey Fields such as water quality, increased footfall, waste management, sustainable travel etc.

The opportunities are varied some of which are summarised below.

Ensure that the fields are climate ready. This may include greater education through signage and school participation, more involvement of the community, forging better relations with voluntary groups, opportunities to improve water catchment on site, improvements to waste management, consideration of sustainable travel routes and including the Fields within the wider District's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Abbey Fields has the opportunity to be a Tourist Destination with consideration of digital technology as an educational tool for the Fields history and developing a relationship with English Heritage at Kenilworth Castle.



Management and Maintenance Arrangements

The issues relate to the lack of permanence and visibility of Rangers at the Fields, and the roles and responsibilities for Abbey Fields. Concerns about the large number of statutory and non-statutory stakeholder groups that slow decisions for the Fields.

The opportunities relate to improving relations with stakeholders for a cohesive approach and to ensure points of contact are clearly defined.

Trees in Abbey Fields

The Scheduled Monument status restricts new tree planting, Conservation Area status restricts works to trees, yet there are a number of veteran trees that need successional planting. Concern over the threat of tree diseases and the consequences of this.

Opportunities are limited due to the restrictions, but include a full tree survey to prioritise planting, and to manage individual veteran trees, as well as enhancing existing woodland. Opportunity to develop the Friends of Abbey Fields leaflet into a self-guided tour of the different trees on the Fields.

Ecology

The issues and opportunities relate to specific habitats that include:

Semi-natural broadleaved woodland

The issues include encroachment by bramble reducing floral diversity, the stability & health issues of trees caused by bank erosion and overcrowding and tree cover in the brooks causing shading. There are opportunities to open canopies and manage trees to create standing deadwood.

Mature adult, veteran and trees of local significance

The issues include the health of the tree and the root system from compaction, erosion and ivy stress, with concerns for the stability and safety of

the trees. Inappropriate management causing fungal attack and ultimately limb failure. Opportunities are to create individual management objectives specific to each veteran tree.

Acid & Neutral Grassland

There are issues in relation to recreational pressure & inappropriate management leading to an increase in natural succession or unwanted species, plus incorrect locations for planting of memorial trees. Opportunities include educational signage and altering the management practices for biodiversity.

Lake & Reed Swamp

Issues relate to water quality, dogs introducing invasive seed stock and the silting up of the open water. Further opportunities include enhancements for Kingfishers.

Plantation Woodland

Issues include waste dumped from adjoining houses, overcrowding of trees, and dead shrubs within plantations. Opportunity to manage the woodland appropriately for structural integrity & biodiversity.

Scrub & Ruderals

The issues relate to their unsightly appearance. Opportunity to educate on their value.

Running Water

Concerns over invasive species spreading downstream into the Fields. Sporadic flow leads to waterlogging & erosion. This can be enhanced by restricting public access with further opportunity for kingfishers.

Scattered Trees & Hedgerows

Trees are exposed to recreational pressure and not being replanted causing long-term loss of parkland landscape and wildlife connectivity. Removal of limbs for Health and Safety reasons is detrimental to long term health of the tree. Hedgerows are overgrown and losing biodiversity. Opportunities include hedge laying and introducing new hedges.

Hydrology

Issues associated with the brooks include root encroachment, bank erosion and grey water pollution. The lake is silting up, undercutting is occurring along embankments, beaches are degrading. There are rain water collection hot spots throughout the Fields causing avoidance erosion and flooding issues.

Opportunities for the brooks are to manage roots, create designed access areas to the Finham Brook, and fence the remaining affected areas. Improvements to the lake feeding station and beach would reduce erosion. A number of opportunities to manage rain water via SuDS interventions, drainage, footpath reorientation and creation of wetland areas.

Visitor Accessibility

Issues include pedestrian and vehicle conflict around the car park and Leisure Centre, poor visitor welcome experience with poorly located/no signage/no cycling. Accessibility issues of primary and secondary entrances. Safety concerns for pedestrians crossing roads at specific locations into Abbey Fields. Erosion hotspots and desire lines, plus paths generally narrow restricting use. Play area and benches well used, and in need of repair/

replacement/management of vegetation. Location of information signage is poor.

Opportunities to improve visitor experience and safety when entering Abbey Fields, with a more welcoming experience, and removal of pedestrian/vehicle conflict. Provide access for all. Improve play/sports facilities/youth activities. Improve legibility of Abbey Fields.

Infrastructure Audit

Issues associated with signage locations, inconsistent designs, and general clutter of street furniture. Signage is poorly located and inaccessible, with no welcome signage. Fly posters detract from available information. Bus shelters showing signs of degradation.

Opportunities to create consistency of design styles, refresh all signage, and replace, refurbish and repair site furniture. Repurpose the play pavilion. Improve interpretation of key features and ensure signage is accessible and legible.

Built Structures

Issues relate to the statutory listings of the structures within Abbey Fields that makes undertaking of works time consuming, with many built structures having ongoing issues and limited funding.

Opportunities to prepare procedures for reporting of faults, a detailed repair procedure and the formation of a Heritage Partnership Board.

Land use

Issues relate to volunteer opportunities that are poorly advertised and access to information was unclear. Opportunities to improve the visibility of volunteering opportunities. Further opportunities to introduce more biodiversity, and interpretation/ education on the wildlife of Abbey Fields. Further consideration for youths and older generations in sports provision.

Public Consultation

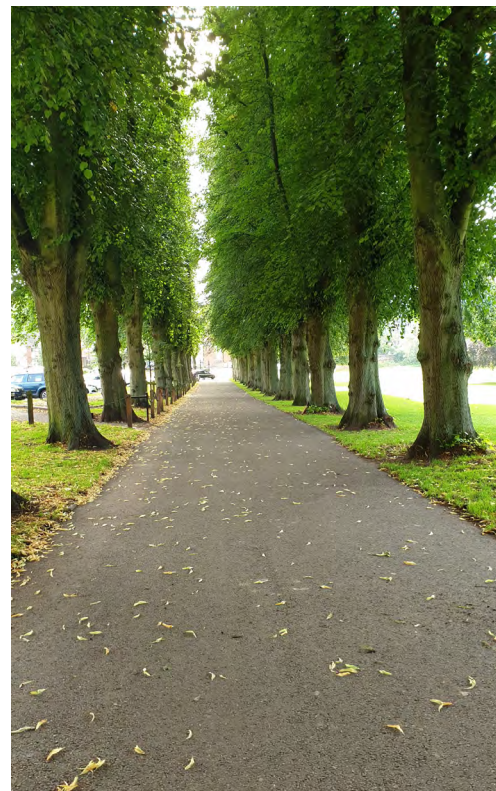
The issues raised in consultation related to no cycle friendly routes through Abbey Fields, parking concerns, improvements to infrastructure and access to facilities, condition of paths around the Fields, as well as safety concerns accessing the Leisure Centre during the evenings.

Opportunities to consult with Sustrans & Warwickshire County Council in relation to cycle provision, to create a more sustainable Fields and involve schools to learn about wildlife and management.

Heritage Consultation

The issues included lack of point of contact to report faults, limited electricity supply to the museum with no electricity to the Gatehouse or pavilion. Concerns over availability of volunteers to open the museum, with reduction in management surveys/planned services due to Warwick District Council staffing capacity.

Opportunities to create digital interpretation of heritage assets, update of the Conservation Plan, increase biodiversity in less sensitive heritage locations, conduct regular conditions surveys and create links with Kenilworth Castle.



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

14.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This section provides a brief summary of Warwick District Council's main objectives in relation to the future management and direction for all those involved in Abbey Fields over the next 10 years. A full description of the Aims and Objectives can be found in the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

The overall vision for Abbey Fields is:

“Abbey Fields is a green space rich in wildlife and steeped in history that protects, conserves and sensitively adapts to the needs of the changing climate and increasing population, whilst providing a high quality welcome and inclusive experience for all users to enjoy the benefits that Abbey Fields has to offer, now and in the future.”

As Abbey Fields has increased in size over many years, its management has changed to create a highly respected green space for people, heritage and wildlife. Over the next 10 years Abbey Fields needs to adapt to climate change, and the increasing demand from an expanding population, whilst protecting, conserving and adapting its habitats and heritage. Warwick District Council recognises the need to work together with the voluntary organisations within Abbey Fields, by having a set of aims and objectives to achieve the overall Vision for Abbey Fields.



The aims for Abbey Fields are:

- **To create a Fields that is positive, welcoming and inclusive, balancing the sensitivities of Abbey Fields, promoting health and well-being, increasing the quality of lives of the local community.**
- **To provide a clean and well-maintained Abbey Fields.**
- **To protect, conserve and sensitively adapt the historic fabric, environment, archaeological remains and veteran trees of Abbey Fields to provide an important historic and natural resource.**
- **To manage, enhance and increase the wildlife habitats within Abbey Fields to ensure the Fields adapts to the changing climate and maintains an important resource.**
- **To encourage sustainable practices and technologies in the management and operation of Abbey Fields along with sustainable walkable and cyclable routes to Abbey Fields.**
- **To create and implement a cohesive masterplan that unites the character zones of Abbey Fields.**
- **To use digital technologies to bring the Fields into the 21st Century and a resource for positive communication and education.**
- **Engender local pride, providing opportunities to increase community use and involvement through volunteer groups, partnerships and events, education and interpretation.**

The objectives will help to deliver these aims and are defined by each topic area listed below:

P = Planning Policy Context

M = Management and Maintenance Arrangements

T = Trees in Abbey Fields

E = Ecology Baseline Review

H = Hydrology

VA = Visitor Accessibility

IA = Infrastructure Audit

B = Built Structures

L = Land Use

The objectives by criteria are outlined below:

P1

Apply planning policies, strategies and designations to protect, conserve and adapt the historic and natural aspects of Abbey Fields, considering the needs of the community.

M1

Management and Maintenance needs to balance the needs of the historic, wildlife and amenity value of Abbey Fields.

T1

Conserve, enhance and reinstate where possible historic trees with consideration of ecological benefits and statutory permissions. Create specific management objectives for veteran trees and promote their value within Abbey Fields.

E1

Conserve, manage, enhance and increase the habitats within Abbey Fields with consideration of ecological surveys, Local Biodiversity Action Plans and statutory permissions. Increase wildlife interpretation and promote positive engagement with ecological resources.

H1 Conserve existing hydrological features of the Brooks, Lake, ditches and rain garden ensuring they function as they are intended and create new hydrological features such as ponds, swales and rain gardens to resolve water related issues on site.

VA1 Improving the accessibility of users as they enter the Fields whilst improving path networks throughout Abbey Fields for the inclusion of all abilities to enjoy and participate in what the Fields has to offer.

IA1 To ensure Abbey Fields has a unique sense of identity with cohesive furniture that connects each character zone of Abbey Fields. Providing clear cohesive welcome signage to every entrance.

B1 To enable the historic and non historic built structures of Abbey Fields to adapt to the needs of the community and preserving its character for generations to come. Building on existing relations with volunteer groups, setting up a Partnership Group to carry this work forward.

L1 Maintain the right for everyone to enjoy and use Abbey Fields, ensuring a wide variety of public uses, whilst maintaining its natural and historic character and balancing the needs of the community with the requirements to maintain and protect sensitive habitats, and important heritage.



ACTION PLAN

15.

ACTION PLAN

This section of the executive summary has provided a condensed version of the actions required for Abbey Fields, identifying information to provide an overview of the tasks required, but not for the purpose of implementation. It includes the action number, the character areas for which it applies, the objectives, and a summary of the implementation/task to be undertaken. It does not include timescales, links to issues and opportunities, responsibilities or the resources, which are found within the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.

The actions have been related to the guidance used by the Green Flag Award organisation as the principles on which they judge entrants, and each action is related to the key character areas of the site identified.

- **Car Park**
- **Area 1 Church & Abbey**
- **Area 2 Northern Bank**
- **Area 3 Lake**
- **Area 4 South Brook**
- **Area 5 Hillside**
- **Area 6 Play & Leisure**

For full comprehensive details of the Actions for the purpose of implementation that include timescales, resources and responsibilities, refer to Section 15 of the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields.



A Welcoming Place

Aim: Positively welcome people into the Fields, in terms of both physical and social access whilst balancing the need to provide a sanctuary for wildlife in their natural habitats and site's heritage (Scheduled Ancient Monument)

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
1	Areas 1-6	Rationalise signage	Ensure that existing signage is clean and new signage is cohesive and welcoming on all entrances in line with the Design Code. Consolidate notice boards, keep them relevant with QR links to byelaws. Apply for Brown Signage. Seek consent & agreement from HE for new signs.
2	Areas 1-6	Ensuring that the Fields and built structures are compliant with the Equality Act and Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment	Maintain surfaces for good access, widening paths for wheelchair accessible routes. Provide easier access at entrances and identify safe wheelchair accessible routes. Improve pedestrian permeability into the main drive. Provide wheelchair accessible picnic benches and undertake erosion control/repair measures to all benches. Consider changing the gate at Church Walk. Ensure steps are DDA compliant to rear of bus shelter on Abbey Hill
3	Car Park	Provide safe and accessible parking.	Improve the setting of existing car park with removal of non-essential clutter and ensuring parking signage is recessive to Abbey Fields signage. Improve pedestrian permeability by replacing chains with bollards and instigate study of car park entrance to improve car/pedestrian interface. Ensure all furniture is in accordance with Fields Design Guide.
4	Areas 1-6	Work effectively with access related partners.	Undertake an annual review of footpaths and accessibility and a 5 year review of the Fields path infrastructure
5	Area 6	Improve toilet provision.	Provide improved toilet facilities as part of the Leisure Centre development.
6	Areas 1-6	To improve pedestrian safety to and from Abbey Fields	Undertake a Traffic Management Review to consider and implement traffic safety measures to key tourist attractions.
7	Areas 1-6	Further opportunity to reconsider cycling to and through the Fields	Consult with Sustrans & WCCTP to consider potential cycle routes through and/or around Abbey Fields with possible mitigation to restrict cycling to proposed Sustrans.
8	Areas 3-6	To reduce erosion of the brook embankments and lakeside caused by dogs, pedestrians and water movement.	Provide signage to dog owners about bank erosion, wildlife & the law. Create interactive areas for dogs and pedestrians along Finham Brook and fence remaining identified locations. Continue to fence sensitive locations around the lake, repair/maintain existing fences & encourage use of beach locations with signage. GST to survey undercutting to path from Castle Road to the Leisure Centre and replace feeding station with permanent solution to remove undercutting in consult with EA.
9	Areas 1&6	Assess the lighting adequacy of the pedestrian entrance to Leisure Centre	Undertake an ecologically sensitive lighting review of key locations within Abbey Fields with a separate consultation to key stakeholders. Prepare an implementation strategy, if required, for the additional lighting requirements. Lighting columns to be complementary to the Design Code.
10	Areas 1-6	Enhance all footways to improve their ease of access, for a consistent appearance, to improve stability and to remove current significant erosion.	Widen paths where erosion has occurred. Resurface paths throughout Abbey Fields with potential decorative surfaces to Church & Abbey zone. Introduce new paths along desire lines around the Lake and the Barn Museum & consider surfacing desire lines through more sensitive areas. Consider use of tree root protection cell pathways or tarmac footpaths, directional fencing, management of vegetation and improved drainage to control erosion creep in key locations, with

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
			geocell matting, rotational erosion repair/control measures for all other erosion hotspots. Where appropriate consider use of tarmac.
11	Areas 1 and 6	Improve natural light into the Church and Abbey ruins through tree management	Annually, in summer check natural light levels & access around mature trees within Church & Abbey zone. Remove epicormic growth. During winter, consider crown lifting & managing identified trees.
12	Areas 1-6	Provide attractive, educational and well way-marked routes for pedestrians.	Create a series of circulation routes for visitors of all abilities to experience points of interest within the Fields, ensure they are clearly identified, with leaflets & possible use of QR codes. Waymark Centenary Way through the Fields. Ensure all finger posts are clear, concise and relevant to the Fields.
13	Areas 1-6	To provide sustainable links to the wider green	Work with KTC alongside their Wayfinding Strategy to ensure key locations are included and to implement new routes to/from Abbey Fields. Manage and improve existing vegetation to maintain wildlife corridors between sites.

Healthy Safe and Secure

Aim: To ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for Fields users

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
14	Areas 1-6	Ensure health and safety policies and risk assessments are in place, in practice and reviewed.	Carry out health and safety risk assessments of all features within Abbey Fields undertaking repairs or replacements. Deliver recommendations on ROSPA reports for the lake/brook. Carry out & record tree safety inspections. Ensure tree works are undertaken in order of severity with permissions.
15	Area 6	Ensure play facilities and associated equipment/infrastructure are safe to use.	Undertake daily or weekly recorded checks with annual independent inspection. Ensure damaged or defective play equipment/features are repaired/replaced swiftly. Deliver recommendations on completed ROSPA reports for play. Consider providing notices of likely date for impending repairs.
16	Area 6	Ensure young visitor's aspirations for play experience are catered for.	Undertake a review of the play facilities in the Fields. Consider children/youth consultation to determine future aspirations. Potential to upgrade/improve the children's play areas & explore opportunities for use of the Pavilion. Consider a trial of informal, removable goal posts.
17	Areas 1-6	Ensure all visitor's aspirations for healthy activities and wellness experiences are catered for	Upgrade tennis courts & fencing in alignment with the Final Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report June 2019. Consider an outdoor gym or extend the trim trail to include more activities. Provision of cycle parking to encourage sustainable travel. Consider creation of health and wellness trails, ensuring that these routes are clearly waymarked with provision of leaflets & use of QR codes.
18	N/A	Ensure all plant equipment and maintenance machinery is safe	Regular servicing of equipment checks on machinery with appropriate staff training
19	Areas 1-6	Have emergency procedures in place for events	Ensure qualified first aider is on site and that the person is known to be so.
20	Areas 1-6	To encourage positive dog owner responsibility within the Fields	Use of positive signage to encourage owners to keep dogs in close contact & manage waste. All exits to have bins for disposal of waste. Bylaws to be QR coded.

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
21	Area 3	Manage the feeding of birds to reduce rat infestation	Clearer educational signage at the feeding station to encourage feeding of wildfowl only if birds are hungry, and explanation of the risks to wildlife if food is left uneaten, with arrival of unwanted pests.
22	Areas 1-6	Increase the sense of safety and security in the Fields	Ensure signage provides advice on who to contact in event of emergency. Grounds staff provided with training in public liaison, first aid & security measures & have a recognised uniform/vehicle.
23	Areas 1-6	Liaise with local police to address crime issues and problems at the local level	WDC to work closely with police, PCSOs and WDC Rangers & maintain the visibility of WDC Rangers in the Fields. Advertise the presence of police patrols on notice boards or social media. Consider implementing a PCSO or WDC Rangers 'surgery' at regular intervals on site.
24	Areas 3-6	Additional management of Lake and Brook Margins to enhance public safety	Consider closing paths with posts & chains in high flood risk. Install water safety notices for no swimming, fenced marginal areas & contact details + flood closure of paths. Notices to encourage the positive engagement with the lake for dog & pedestrian access & location for duck feeding.

Well maintained and clean

Aim: To provide a well maintained and clean Fields

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
25	Areas 1-6	Ensure that the Fields is kept clean and litter free.	Target response times, incorporate recycling, & adhere to specification for emptying bins. Clean outside of bins & replace liners when required. 'Community payback' schemes could undertake this task twice per year. Replace bins consistent with the design code. Replace dog bins with waste bins. Review & rationalise number of bins within the Fields.
26	Areas 1-6	Procedures for vandalism and graffiti.	Respond to acts of vandalism/graffiti
27	Areas 1-6	Grounds maintenance to be delivered to the highest standard	Carry out maintenance in accordance with the maintenance schedule, with regular standards inspections. Ensure that all staff at Abbey Fields are aware of the content of the MMP.
28	Areas 1-6	Ensure structures are maintained to a high standard.	Carry out all maintenance in accordance with the Preventative Planned Maintenance (PPM) schedule. Undertake repair and refurbishment of the play area pavilion and the bus shelters on Abbey Hill and Rosemary Hill/Bridge Street. Regular inspections required for graffiti and vandalism.
29	Areas 1-6	Ensure paths are clear of leaf litter and debris	Carry out regular path cleaning in hot spots under tree canopies, to remove debris and leaf litter. Particular locations are around Abbey/Church and Hillside zones.
30	Area 6	Maintain Tennis Courts at Abbey Fields (5 Court System)	Monthly maintenance of Tennis Courts to remove leaf litter, moss & lichen. Repair damage to fencing
31	N/A	Ensure staff involved in Abbey Fields are provided with site specific training	Staff appraisal, staff CPD & training development plan. Training of GST to ensure continuity of knowledge/expertise of wildlife and ecology.

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
32	Areas 1-6	Maintain consistency in site furniture and equipment design to create a cohesive and legible Fields.	Refer to the Design Guide for the Fields that responds to the 'Natural Character' of the Fields. This would be especially aimed at infrastructure other than buildings including replacement, repair and painting of site furniture, consistent fencing and signage.
33	Area 3	Actively manage Abbey Fields Lake	Relocation of mature fish annually (with EA licenced electrofishing) and working with local angling clubs to rehome the fish. Continue to manage tree seedlings, reed beds & regrowth to lake margins & inlet. Desilt the lake to allow it to continue as a water body.
34	Area 3	Actively manage Finham Brook and Luzley Brook	Manage vegetation in accordance with the Grounds Maintenance plan Control successional vegetation, dense and low tree canopies along the Brook, and Himalayan Balsam.
35	Areas 3-6	Alleviate flooding issues near Castle Road. Reduce avoidance erosion caused by wet spots	More detailed hydrology survey required for the Fields that considers opportunities for SuDS. Manage localised wet spots with swales or drainage on the Fields particularly around busy entrances. Consider the requirements in relation to potential archaeology.
36	Areas 1-6	Strive to attain and maintain a Green Flag Award for quality.	Complete Green Flag Award application January 2023

Environmental Management (Sustainability)

Aim: To improve the environmental quality and sustainability of practices carried out in the Fields

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
37	Areas 1-6	Continue Abbey Fields reduced pesticide and fertilizer policy on the fields	Maintain reduced pesticide and fertilizer use on the Fields. Review policy for maintaining reportable weeds on the Fields (including Japanese Knotweed / Himalayan Balsam) wherever possible maintain using cultural means. Reduce herbicide use where possible. Look at alternative options. Continue to support FOAF with the Balsam Bash of Finham and Luzley Brook. Increase levels of communication with surrounding landowners to reduce seed transmission.
38	Areas 1-6	Encourage waste recycling	Review potential locations for green waste recycling / capability within Abbey Fields. Include recycling requirement within operating specification. Consider separate bins at key locations for recycling and general waste.
39	Areas 1-6	Employ and develop management and maintenance practices to promote biodiversity	Develop programme of active management for the key habitats. Opportunity for staff training & working with charities to improve the quality of the meadows on the Fields. Continue to engage FOAF & St Nicholas EcoChurch in conservation management activities.
40	Areas 1-6	Ensure sustainability in management	All capital works should be assessed for sustainability impacts to reuse or recycle of existing materials where possible. Consider replacement of annual plants with permanent high nectar planting. Explore further opportunities for high nectar value perennial planting within the Fields & car park. Extend 'Crocus Walk' from Abbey Hill to continue around Rosemary Hill

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
41	Areas 1-6	Keep pollution to a minimum and be energy and water efficient.	Adhere to WDC Climate Emergency statement in operations. Under terms of new GM Contract, ensure contract becomes carbon neutral by 2025.

Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

Aim: Maintain and increase the diverse mosaic of habitats within the Fields. Maintain the historic built and landscape character whilst increasing awareness and understanding of the sites rich heritage.

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
General			
42	Areas 1-6	Use existing statutory legislation to protect the site and its historic and ecological status	Be aware of legislation which is applicable to the site and its elements, including its heritage, landscape and ecological significance
43	Areas 1-6	Ensure appropriate management of natural features, wildlife & flora, landscape features & structures.	Ensure all maintenance is carried out according to the maintenance schedules. Potential to introduce educational days/events for the use of traditional skills. Monitor and manage bramble in accordance with 1 in 5 year rotational maintenance
44	Areas 1-6	Maintain key views within the site	Management of the Spinney by the Leisure Centre to maintain key views of the Lake.
45	Areas 1-6	Protect the fabric and historical integrity of the Fields	Undertake surveys as identified within Built Structure Section and undertake process for maintenance of the PPM with due regard for Scheduled Monument and Listed Building Status.
46	Areas 1-6	Ensure that visitors gain awareness of the Fields landscape & heritage	Develop an Abbey Fields Heritage Project Activity Plan with key Statutory and Community stakeholders to feed into possible future funding.
Ecology			
47	Areas 1-6	Provide ecological & biodiversity information for visitors.	Update and provide seasonal ecological interpretation. Provide wildlife interpretation panels around the Fields.
48	Areas 1-6	To conserve and enhance the nature conservation values	Management should seek to contribute towards Local and Regional (BAP) Objective and Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) The Wildlife Trust.
49	Area 4	Maintain and extend acid grassland extents	Continue to manage acid grassland. Make reference to the baseline conditions and recommendations within the Abbey Fields Walk Over and Phase 2 Ecology Survey
50	Areas 4-5 & Area 2	Areas for neutral grassland enhancement.	Areas of neutral grassland in South Brook to be enhanced. Additional areas could include Northern Bank.
51	Areas 1-6	Provide an Ecological Monitoring Strategy within the Fields	Develop an Ecological Monitoring Strategy with voluntary groups to ensure collection of data which can inform management activities & provide opportunities for community engagement & education.
52	Area 3	Re-naturalise the Lake Margin	Continue with the re-naturalising enhancements to the Lake and its management.
53	Areas 3-6	Manage the hydrology within the Fields.	Manage the Fields brook channels including Finham and Luzley Brook to ensure no blockage or slowing of water flow including the removal of root ingress from mature trees, as per contract.

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
54	Areas 1-6	Encourage dead wood habitat within the Fields	Continue to retain standing dead wood, dead wood piles and leave felled tree trunks, where it is not in conflict with users.
55	Areas 1-6	Control and reduce non-native and invasive vegetation species	Sensitively manage and control the spread of invasive species
56	Areas 1-6	Manage and protect veteran trees and continue historic management practices	Develop a Veteran Tree Strategy to include active management and protection of veteran trees. This could include the identification and survey of all veteran trees and consider the creation of individual management objectives for these trees within Abbey Fields for their proactive management
57	Areas 1-6	Plan future tree planting in reference to conservation research, aims and policies	Prepare a tree planting programme for the next 10 years, to replace failed trees, achieve planned succession & re-establish historic tree avenues. With Historic England approval
58	Area 4-5	Protect acid grassland from heavy trampling	Investigate appropriate protection methods to detract visitors from the sensitive acid grassland. Suggest wildlife educational panels encouraging people to look but not trample.
59	Areas 4-5	Maintain ecologically diverse grasslands	Sensitive grassland areas should receive specified treatment according to specialist ecological advice. Refer to Phase 1 and Phase 2 Habitat Surveys and Eco Grass maintenance schedule
60	Areas 1-6	Carry out regular biodiversity monitoring	G&T to investigate partnership opportunity with GM contractor, RSPB Ecology & local Wildlife Trust to conduct regular monitoring of habitats and flora and fauna in line with LBAP. FOAF to be encouraged and supported in their ongoing entomology surveys.
61	Areas 1-6	Assess and address deficiencies in pollen and nectar sources.	Develop a long-term program to address deficiencies of pollen and nectar sources at the Fields. Manage ivy to retain nectar value. Continue overseeding every 1 in 5 years to meadow areas.
	Area 3	Continue to develop Lake Margin habitat restoration	Continue with the coir raft margins used to protect further bank erosion between Abbey Fields Lake
Heritage			
62	Areas 1-6 Focus Area 1	Legislation considered & full impact assessment undertaken before any work is carried out on the site	Ensure that changes to the site or its components include a detailed survey of the site, including archaeology (Ground Penetrating Radar), surveys of ditches and walls, all heritage structures and an assessment of the impact of the change on the site and its significance.
63	Areas 1-6 Focus Area 1	Provide further heritage protection and understanding of the historic landscape	As a Scheduled Monument ensure the current GM Schedule is appropriate to the maintenance of the heritage features considered as part of the Conservation Plan update.
64	Areas 1-6	Ensure smaller historic features are kept clear and accessible.	Conserve, enhance and reveal historic boundary markers and signage through vegetation clearance.
65	Areas 1-6	Monitor and review the Conservation Plan (CP) to help ensure that the policies and actions reflect current knowledge of the site and its users	Consider update of the current Conservation Plan (2005) to include a Character Area based Assessment, GPR surveys, Earthwork mapping, and relevant maintenance prescriptions for heritage structures. Use new information and insights in reviews of the CP to ensure that the CP and the management policies therein reflect the latest available information

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
66	Areas 1-6	Increase the archaeological baseline knowledge	Forming part of the Conservation Plan review prepare an archaeological research agenda that could include mapping of archaeological sites, geophysics, building recording and archival research.
67	Area 6	Restore the drinking fountain	Following further research restore or find alternative use for the drinking fountain located opposite the tennis courts. Consider interpretation of this historic feature.
68	Areas 1-6	Maintain sightlines to historic buildings and architectural eye catchers	Continue formal grounds maintenance surrounding historic structures and vegetation control around architectural eye catchers including The Barn Museum, Gatehouse, and visible remains.
69	Car park & Area 6	Seek opportunity to move or screen visually intrusive structures.	Screen unsympathetic late C20 building and structure accretions with native shrub plantings including substation and amenity buildings within the car park & future substations in the Fields.
70	Area 1	Review building adaption procedures to achieve quality and function Provision of electricity to heritage buildings	Review adaptation of existing heritage buildings. Existing heritage buildings should be considered in context and should strive for high sustainability and relate to the current and future functional needs. Consider electricity installation to the Barn Museum, Gatehouse and Play pavilion from the new substation being installed for the Leisure Centre Development.
71	Area 1	All listed features and historic structures should be conserved, enhanced, presented and promoted.	Maintain all listed buildings and historic structures, allowing them to be visible and, where appropriate, physically accessible. Link site interpretation to the Coffin of Geoffrey de Clinton project, which will eventually go into Kenilworth Castle.
72	Area 1	Improve and monitor biodiversity of heritage assets	Continue to increase biodiversity in areas where the heritage is less sensitive including the Churchyard. Consider how the balance of heritage, biodiversity and amenity is managed.
73	N/A	Create a partnership with stakeholders and Historic England	Consider and develop a Partnership Board between WDC, KAAC, KHAS with monthly meetings and an agreed vision. With the formulation of the Partnership Board, develop a Heritage Agreement with Historic England setting out what can be undertaken without Scheduled Monument Consent
74	Areas 1-6	Improve procedures and points of contact between WDC and stakeholders	Development of a formal procedure for the PPM of the historic and non-historic structures. Consider creation of a formal procedure for reporting of faults on structures within Abbey Fields.
75	Areas 1-6	Provide a cyclical programme for the built environment.	Develop a 20 year planned preventative maintenance program for Abbey Fields for maintaining the Fields buildings and infrastructure.
76	Area 1	Seek additional resources and funds for conservation and heritage enhancements	Investigate other potential funding sources to support environmental and heritage enhancements including National Heritage Lottery Funding Feasibility Study, HS2 and CIL funding. Record WDC spend at Abbey Fields on repairs with the potential to match fund.
77	Areas 1-6	Interpretation of Heritage to modern day	Consider improving interpretation of more recent heritage assets to provide historical context of the formation of Abbey Fields as it is seen today.

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
78	Areas 1-6	Raise awareness of all aspects of the heritage value of the Fields	Develop cohesive, clean, accessible and readable information panels to interpret the heritage value of the Fields. Restore building plaques. Improve physical and times of access to key historic buildings on site. Consider virtual tours.
79	Areas 1-6	Provide interactive information on Abbey Fields	Explore technical vehicles for delivering site interpretation to provide visitors with a greater understanding of the site's history and importance. Use of QR code technology
80	N/A	Improve heritage links with similar sites	Strengthen the wider links with the heritage 'community' around the Fields

Community Involvement

Aim: Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly through events, education, interpretation and building partnerships.

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
81	Areas 1-6	Increase the involvement of the site in the school curriculum	Increase the educational opportunities of the site particularly in relation to curriculum requirements of local historical knowledge. Explore classroom capability on site.
82	Areas 1-6	Promote the role that Abbey Fields plays in improving the quality of life of local residents	Share events between Church & Fields noticeboards to improve community cohesion. Develop an Annual Volunteer Task List of work that can be undertaken by a Volunteer Taskforce with Community Engagement Officer. WDC to create more unified approach with key stakeholders to encourage community engagement to manage the volunteer task list.
83	Areas 1-6	Encourage community and volunteer support.	Expand the scale and operations of the community and volunteer groups through recruitment and training programmes
84	Areas 1-6	Provide events but avoid detrimental impacts upon the historic and ecological diverse landscape	Manage events and fairs to attract visitors but ensure that there is no long-term damage to the landscape fabric of the Fields and minimisation of disruption to local communities. Delivery will be according to the Events Policy. Pre-event and post-event condition surveys are suggested to assess damage and allow appropriate remedial works
85	N/A	Produce and implement the Activity Plan	Implement the Activity Plan. It will set out aims and objectives to encourage existing and new audiences to visit the Fields for heritage learning and participation activities which can be offered at the site.
86	N/A	Maintain visitor feedback.	Establish a visitor survey every 5 years.
87	Areas 1-6	Community focal point	Create a focal point for community activities – potential refurbishment of the Play Pavilion.
88	Area 1	Increase local community involvement and awareness in archaeological research	Involve visitors and local community in archaeological investigations to reveal more of the early history of the Fields and Kenilworth Abbey Consider involvement with local educational establishments linking in with curriculum and relevant courses.
89	Areas 1-6	Provide an Ecological Monitoring Strategy within the Fields with volunteer support	Develop an Ecological Monitoring Strategy in consultation with local community and volunteer groups. Develop on information gathered during Phase 1 and Phase 2 Habitat Surveys. Collect information from FOAF in relation to local insects (entomology records) for WDC and public records.

Marketing

Aim: Develop the Fields as a local amenity, a source of pride, which realises the full potential of its historic and natural attributes and ensures effective promotion of the Fields as a true community resource

Action No	Character Area	Objectives	Implementation / Task
90	N/A	Increase online information regarding The Fields	Increase the amount of information provided about Abbey Fields on WDC's website. QR codes can be used to provide access to this information. Increase awareness of the digitisation of Abbey Fields.
91	N/A	Compile researched information on Abbey Fields for public use.	Production of an ecological, historical and archaeological guidebook.
92	N/A	Further promote the Fields and provide stronger links with surrounding	Raise awareness of the site and what it has to offer. Create a package of visitor opportunities. Improve relations with English Heritage Kenilworth Castle & forge opportunities to link experiences. Ensure Abbey Fields' presence is within Tourist Information, in Shakespeare Country Information. Consider a Tourism Strategy for Abbey Fields and how to encourage and manage visitors.
93	N/A	Provide regular updates on the Fields through various social media outlets	Improve the way the Fields is promoted through a new website and newsletter. Consider Facebook business page for Abbey Fields promoting positive news stories, events, information etc. Encourage community participation for positive posts.

Management

Aim: Ensure all those involved in the management and maintenance of Abbey Fields effectively use the Management and Maintenance Plan as a working document.

Action No	Objectives	Implementation / Task
94	Implement the MMP & make available to staff & by different common user groups	Copies available in staff office. Consider undertaking an awareness and formulate it as part of a training plan to all staff operating or managing the Fields. Copies available online to stakeholders
95	Ensure effective monitoring of the MMP	Implement monitoring process by meetings between WDC/ Contractor / Community Stakeholders Thereby continually reviewing and updating the Management Plan
96	Ensure management is financially sound. Council to commit to provide necessary funding and staffing to maintain to necessary standard	Follow Best Value for procurement to provide excellent quality of service and relevance to local people.
97	Implementation of the Actions	Prepare a costed masterplan to undertake all actions to Abbey Fields, identifying opportunities for CIL funding and the feasibility of an HLF application for additional works.

DESIGN GUIDE

Signage for Abbey Fields

It is important that the signage at Abbey Fields is consistent. Welcome signage should be bold and clear to road users and pedestrians that this is the entrance to Abbey Fields. Use of timber for signage throughout will create a very natural feel to Abbey Fields and will complement all aspects of the Fields. Preference of material to be Oak, sourced sustainably and treated to remain light in colour. Signage should be located away from the understorey of trees to avoid staining and additional maintenance requirements.

Kenilworth Town Council's Wayfinding Strategy indicates selection of finger posts for proposed way finding. Collaboration between WDC and KTC is essential to ensure consistency with design.

Principal Entrances

Principal entrances are generally located at Abbey Fields car park, Castle Road, and Abbey Hill. These are major entrances to Abbey Fields and as such require a bolder approach to welcome visitors. Signage needs to be eye catching, clear, consistent and provide a very limited amount of information. Examples of entrance signage below.



Landmark - Entrance Signs

Primary Entrances

Signage for Primary Entrances is mainly for pedestrian use, once people are within the Fields setting. Consistency of material is important, should be of timber, and in style with the principal entrance signs.

It needs to provide more information than the principal signage. The content of these entrance signs is invaluable and should contain a map of the site, key information, the do's and the do not's. It is the first impression of the Fields from a pedestrian perspective and needs to be welcoming, attractive and clear, without overloading the user.



Fitpatrick Woolmer – Interpretation sign

An example of the content and the type of map is seen below. Clear and consistent maps throughout will provide a thorough understanding of the Fields and the location of important features, routes and a location guide.



Redmason Signs - examples detail of signage content and maps

Secondary Entrances

Secondary Entrances are a guide into the Fields. Secondary entrances should be recessive to the principal and primary entrances but consistent with material palette of timber and style of other signs.



Landmark – County Monoliths

Historic and Wildlife Interpretative Signage

Main signs

Lecterns are currently used throughout the Fields for the main historical information. These need updating, modernising and inkeeping with the design style. Ideally these would be framed in timber, with timber posts. Each historical board would contain different information, a location map, but would be consistent throughout the Fields. There would be no need for more than one in any particular location.

Lecterns may also be required for other information, such as key wildlife information. Consistency of material palette is important.



Fitzpatrick Woolmer – Wood Lectern

Plaque & interpretative signs

Plaques are used on the Abbey Fields ruins to provide a more detailed location of 'where you are' within the Abbey ruins. Updating these would provide greater legibility of the ruins. Choice of material is important, although existing plaques could be reused but inset within timber structures.

Interpretative bollards and monoliths can be used elsewhere within the Fields for example the butterfly garden, meadow areas and rain garden.



Landmark – Braemar monoliths and interpretative bollards.

Notice Boards

Noticeboards to be in timber and located near to, or combined with, the primary entrance signage. These need to be freestanding at the principal entrances, but located within the Fields. Noticeboards to be large enough to include all Fields' events and activities.



Fitzpatrick Woolmer – Freestanding notice board

Finger Posts

Finger posts to be consistent in style with the Fields but also to be consistent with information relevant to the Kenilworth Town Council's waymarking strategy.

Examples of timber finger posts:



Landmark – County Fingerpost



Fitzpatrick Woolmer – Grenadier finger post

Car Park

Signage for car park to be less cluttered, clear, concise and recessive to Abbey Fields signage. Example of this form of signage below, although all car park signage framework should be inkeeping with park signage for consistency.



Use of bollards in a more consistent way to prevent vehicle accessibility but allow permeability.



ZONE CHARACTERISTICS

Church – items specific to church

Church signage to be upgraded and inkeeping with the Fields. Timber in character with the material palette of the Fields. Design style similar to below, preferably in Oak.



Welcome sign to St Nicholas Church to be timber framed similar to image below, with church colours to the background. This will provide consistency within the Fields.



Seating

Within the churchyard all metal benches to be relocated within the Fields and replaced with timber benches. This will provide a less 'park' related environment. Existing timber benches to be refurbished where possible. Replacement benches to be made of timber as per the image shown.



Consider replacement of mesh bins in the church yard. Should these be replaced, ensure they are consistent with the Design Guide of the Fields.

Church & Abbey; Northern Bank; Lake and South Brook

Plaque & interpretative signs

Plaques are used on the Abbey ruins to provide a more detailed location of 'where you are' within the Abbey ruins. Updating these would provide greater legibility of the ruins. Choice of material is important, although existing plaques could be reused but inset within timber structures. This would make them more accessible and visible to visitors, particularly in locations where they are more discretely placed.



*Fitzpatrick Woolmer
Heritage Trail post*

Gates

Access gates that need replacing to be of a quality similar to those used on High Street, to be 5 or 6 bar field gates, consistent in style and quality.



*Ingestre Woodworks
5 bar field gate (oak)*

Replace A-frame gates to entrances with timber A-frame gates in keeping with the style of the Fields.

Pedestrian Guardrail

Pedestrian Guard rail on High Street to be replaced with a style more inkeeping with the character of the location. For the short stretch of guardrail on High Street, it would benefit a bespoke design that respects the history of the area. All metal elements of the proposed guardrail to be RAL 9005 black or RAL 9011 Graphite Black. However, choice of colour must be consistent throughout inclusive of street furniture and fencing.



Street Furnishings Bespoke Guardrail

Seating

Seating within these locations to be timber benches. A mix of styles is acceptable as long as no more than 2-3 bench styles are used.



Chris Nangle – back bench



Broxap – Hatton Rustic



Broxap – Victoria Seat

Bins

Replace all bins with a uniform size and style of bin. Consider use of recycling bins as a separate bin.

All dog bins to be replaced with standard bins. All metal elements of proposed bins and posts, to be RAL 9005 black or RAL 9011 Graphite Black.

Bollards

All bollards to be timber in nature and consistent in style throughout. Ensure all bollards tie into those used within the car park and other zones throughout the Fields where access is restricted for pedestrian use only. Bollards/posts to have dual purpose and can be used as information sources.



Broxap – pointed bollard

Trim trail

Include more trim trail opportunities throughout the Fields to create a more active route. Upgrade of the current trim trail signage would be required.

Fencing

Fencing to bridge parapets, post and rail fencing to be retained and replaced/repared when required. Fencing within the Fields and proposed fencing to the brook to be consistent in style and colour. All metal fencing, existing or proposed to be RAL 9005 black or RAL 9011 Graphite Black. Choice of colour must be consistent throughout inclusive of street furniture and bins.



Estate fencing

Play and Leisure

Seating

Ensure metal benches are located around the Barn and Museum, with timber benches within the play area.

A mix of timber styles is acceptable as long as no more than 2-3 bench styles are used.

Picnic benches to be replaced with timber picnic benches. Uniformity of style is essential with only one design style to be used throughout. The design choice must be adaptable for wheelchair accessibility such that a minimum number of 2 benches can provide easy access for wheelchair users.



*Broxap – Springfield Picnic Bench
(wheelchair accessible)*

Bins and Bollards

All litter and dog bins to be replaced in line with the design code as stated previously.

Gates

A-frame gate to be replaced in line with the design code as stated previously within the Church location.

Lake

Lake zone to retain and refurbish existing metal benches. Timber benches are to be replaced with metal benches.

South Brook

South Brook zone to replace and repair timber benches in line with the design code.

REVIEW



REVIEW

The Management and Maintenance Plan will be continually reviewed, revised and re-written. The cycle for the Management and Maintenance Plan is to:

- **Write and adopt the Management and Maintenance Plan**
- **Operate according to the aims and objectives held within the plan**
- **Monitor the operation of the Management and Maintenance Plan**
- **Review the working of the Management and Maintenance Plan**
- **Revise and improve the Management and Maintenance Plan where necessary to reflect ongoing developments such as visitor survey feedback, revised financial projections, changes in policy.**

Warwick District Council will be responsible for carrying out monitoring to ensure that maintenance work has been carried out satisfactorily. The Green Space Development Officers will be responsible for the day to day implementation of the Management and Maintenance Plan and will monitor maintenance standards within Abbey Fields. They will also ensure that all other relevant Warwick District Council Officers are involved in monitoring and review of management and maintenance work and the plan itself as necessary.

The following methods of monitoring and review will be implemented:

- **Site user surveys will be undertaken after 5 years to monitor the success of the Management Plan.**
- **The Green Flag Award annual feedback will be used to guide review of the Management Plan if an application for the award is implemented.**

- **An annual report will be presented to the Stakeholders who will feed into the monitoring and review of the plan and general standards of management/maintenance.**

The Management Maintenance Plan covers a period of 10 years. It will be subject to continual review as it is used and Warwick District Council will prioritise and update the Action Plan annually, if required. A formal review and update of the balance of the plan will be undertaken every 10 years.

The following appendices that are referenced in this document can be found in the full Management Plan for Abbey Fields or they can be obtained separately.

Appendix 1 - Historic England Scheduling

Appendix 2 - Conservation Plan

Appendix 3 - Arboriculture Service Level Agreement

Appendix 4 - Fields for the Future Consultation

Appendix 5 - Extended Consultation

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