



PARKS AND OPEN SPACES ASSETS POLICY

Introduction

This Policy sets out how assets in the parks and open spaces in the parish shall be assessed and maintained to ensure that they are safe for use and parks remain accessible to the public. The assessment regime will be used to ensure that criteria is met for insurance purposes and that works are carried out in a timely manner.

It should be noted that the policy may differ depending on ownership of the parks or open space in question.

Policy

1. Paths

Footpaths in the parks and open spaces have a variety of finishes – some have been created through use, and others are finished with hardcore or tarmac.

It is accepted that where the paths are in parks and open spaces residents should not expect there to be a hard surface. The parish council has agreed that a long-term plan will be developed to maintain the paths so that they provide a suitable and safe surface for all residents to use.

Footpaths in the parks and open spaces will be assessed on a quarterly basis by the parish council. Where it is identified that repair or reinstatement work is required in areas owned by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), the Clerk shall report this to WCN. Should WNC determine that work is not required, or that they do not have the funds available for the work, the Parks and Open Spaces Committee (POS) will consider the matter and may agree to seek their own quotes and appoint a contractor to carry out repair work as soon as possible.

Where it is identified that repair or reinstatement work is required in areas owned by the Parish Council, then this work shall be carried out as soon as feasibly possible. Quotes shall be obtained, and a contractor appointed to carry out the work as soon as possible.

2. Play and Outdoor Gym Equipment, MUGA, and play surfaces

Under the contract with Veolia, idVerde carry out regular risk assessments of play equipment installed in the parks and open spaces. The parish council do not receive copies of these assessments unless we specifically ask for them.

Where the play equipment or outdoor gym equipment is on parish council owned land, the parish council agree that any moderate or low risk issues identified shall be considered by the Parks and Open Spaces Committee and a decision made on whether work should be carried out to rectify such issues.

The parish council have appointed Reids Playground Maintenance to carry out quarterly inspections and provide reports for our own records. Play equipment and outdoor gym equipment is checked more frequently by parish councillors, with any issues being reported to the Clerk. Where immediate repair work is required, a suitable qualified contractor shall be appointed by the Clerk. The Clerk shall arrange for a yearly inspection to be carried out by a competent RPII accredited inspector, of any play equipment or outdoor gym equipment owned by the parish council.

Any play equipment or outdoor gym equipment that is beyond repair shall be replaced by the parish council with comparable replacement equipment.

3. Benches

Benches in the parks and open spaces will be checked quarterly by the parish council, and the Clerk notified of any issues.

If the issues identified present safety considerations, the Clerk shall arrange for the bench to be removed or repaired as soon as possible.

Where it is necessary to remove a bench the POS Committee shall agree to replace the bench with a suitable alternative in due course.

The parish council does not have a policy on memorial benches and therefore will not approve any request to install a memorial bench.

4. Litter and Dog Waste Bins

Litter and dog waste bins in the parks and open spaces are emptied by idVerde under the contract with WNC. Where dog waste bins have been installed by the parish council these are emptied by the parish council.

Litter and dog waste bins will be checked quarterly by the parish council and any issues will be notified to the Clerk.

The POS Committee may agree to replace a bin that has been removed from a park or open space owned by them. There is no policy to increase the number of bins in the parks and open spaces.

Where the dog waste bin is on land owned by WNC any issues shall be notified to them. WNC's policy is not to replace dog waste bins that are removed.

5. Fences and Gates

The parish council shall take action to repair or replace fences or gates which enclose the parks and open space where we are notified of damage. This is in order to minimise further damage and ensure that parks and open spaces are secure and can be used safely by all residents.

We will rely on notification by residents, Friends groups, or councillors to identify areas that need attention.

6. Bridges

Bridges in the parks and open spaces will be checked on a quarterly basis, and where it is identified that repair or reinstatement work is required in areas owned by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), the Clerk shall report this to WNC. Should WNC determine that work is not required, or that they do not have the funds available for the work, the POS Committee will consider the matter and may agree seek their own quotes and appoint a contractor to carry out repair work as soon as possible.

Where it is identified that repair or reinstatement work is required in areas owned by the Parish Council, then such work shall be carried out as soon as feasibly possible by a reputable contractor appointed by the Clerk.

This policy is not exhaustive and where an identified issue is not referred to above it can be brought to the Parks and Open Spaces Committee and a course of action agreed. Such decisions shall be reflected in future policy amendments.

Policies

This Policy should be read in conjunction with relevant policies agreed by the Parish Council:

Park Management Plans

Playground Inspection and Maintenance Policy