

Green Estates Development Strategy & Plan 2013-2023

Appendix 1



1. Forward

I am delighted to introduce the Green Estate Development Strategy and Plan for Nottinghamshire County Council that will provide a strategic framework for all our work on the green space sites during the next 10 years.

The Green Estate Service is, arguably, one of the Council's hidden gems of a service - managing, servicing, developing, and maintaining several thousand of acres of public open spaces, multi-user routes, woodlands, lakes and waterways across the County.

Such sites are of significant environmental, social, economic and heritage benefit and being as many are situated on the edge of main towns and villages are increasingly popular for recreational use by local people. However, it is fair to say that during recent years there has not been the visibility of the range, breadth and quality of the service and what it offers as a positive benefit to our communities. This Strategy and Plan therefore aims to redress this imbalance.

Though we are living in challenging economic times, our public and residents still want to go out and enjoy themselves and if we can help them to spend their time in and around Nottinghamshire on green estate sites, then so much the better. Nottinghamshire has a fantastic history and heritage which is often understated and underplayed. For years the Green Estate sites have operated in the shadow of the Council's main country parks of Rufford, Sherwood, Bestwood and more recently Cotgrave. But in many ways, the combined Green Estate sites are the Council's Fifth Country Park and now need to be promoted in such a way that our communities have a better awareness and understanding of what recreational and other opportunities are within very close proximity to where they live and which they can access free of charge!

The Green Estate Development Strategy and Plan represents all that is positive and good about Nottinghamshire and sets out in broad terms what the County Council, in conjunction with its partners, can do to make improvements to its asset base.

It is also important to stress that our Green Estate services have a critical role to play in other activities and functions that the County Council provides. So, in the Green Estate Development Strategy and Plan, there are references to its beneficial impact upon the health, well-being and quality of life of children and young people, adults and elderly people in care, community safety and our work to develop local communities.

In conclusion, there are a fantastic range of opportunities on the Council's Green Estate - our Fifth Country Park - and I encourage all of you to enjoy them to the full.

Councillor John Knight
Chairman
Nottinghamshire County Council's Culture Committee



2. Background

Nottinghamshire County Council's Green Estate totals 1888 hectares of informal green space, the majority of which is open for the public to visit and enjoy. Many of these sites are brown-field sites such as colliery tips and old railway lines that have been restored over the last 30 years and are positively managed for their recreation and biodiversity interest.

Nottinghamshire's rich industrial heritage, and the decline of the coal mining industry within the past thirty years, placed the county council in a key strategic role in terms of capitalising on central government funding to deliver large scale brown-field restoration schemes, turning colliery and other post industrial wasteland into green space.

During the 1970s and 1980s, many colliery spoil heaps were decontaminated and restored under the Derelict Land Grant Programme by the county council. Land that had development potential was sold off, but the restored colliery tips had little value other than their intrinsic amenity value for local communities. As this land holding accumulated, a small team was established within the authority to manage these informal green-spaces for a variety of uses including agriculture, amenity woodland, conservation grassland and informal public access.

Originating from Spadework, formed in the 1980s to encourage local people to volunteer in conservation management, the present Green Estate team has evolved significantly to include land management specialists to manage the estate on behalf of the authority.

Redefining The Green Estate

In these challenging times, and in light of recent changes and re-structuring within the authority, there is now a need to review and redefine the role of the Green Estate. There is also a need to publicise and better promote the work that is done and the benefits provided by the service.

This document therefore defines a new development strategy and plan for the Green Estate service. It will set out its aims and objectives, and provide a framework within which a first rate service to improve and protect green-spaces for the benefit of local communities and biodiversity can be delivered.

Summary details of the range and extent of the Green Estate are set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

The Importance and Value of Public Open Space

"90% of adults say green spaces important for good places"

A recent Ipsos MORI survey (October 2012) commissioned by the environmental charity Groundwork has found that nine out of 10 adults identify parks, playgrounds and green spaces as important in making somewhere a good place to live or work. More than three quarters want to see investment in them maintained by their local council but a significant number think business and private organisations should also contribute towards their upkeep.

The Green Estate team plays a key role in delivering this aspiration on behalf of the county council across Nottinghamshire. The Green Estate provides local communities with access to informal green space on their doorstep.

There is a need to do more to promote the Green Estate as "Nottinghamshire's Other Country Park".

Links to Health and Wellbeing

The county council produced 'Our Strategy for Health and Wellbeing in Nottinghamshire 2012-2013 in which section 8.3 makes reference to healthy environments in which to live, work and play. Access to open green space and play areas all impact upon physical and mental wellbeing.



Cotgrave Country Park

A key goal of the strategy is to create sustainable communities and environments that promote and enable healthy living and lifestyles, to reduce our consumption of non-renewable energy and to reduce the impact upon the environment. An example of a



potential outcome measure is the utilisation of green space for exercise/health reasons.

There are some very clear linkages between the outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and those of the Green Estate with the opportunity for joint initiatives and actions.

3. Strategic Overview

The Green Estate contributes to the overall aims and ambitions of the county council:

‘Nottinghamshire - a place where people enjoy life, are healthy, safe and prosperous; and where business is able to thrive. We are proud of our past and ambitious for our future’.

The Strategic Plan of the county council has, as one of its key priorities:

- **To promote the economic prosperity of Nottinghamshire and safeguard our environment.**

The Green Estate team is committed to managing our estate for the benefit of local communities, providing opportunities for recreation in high quality environments that are also managed for conservation and biodiversity.

The Cultural Strategy of the county council has four key themes, all of which are particularly relevant to our Green Estate:

- **Theme 1** - Creating opportunities for everyone to learn new skills, enjoy and participate in culture and have fun

Volunteering on the Green Estate provides a fantastic opportunity for people to acquire knowledge about their local environment, and develop or learn new skills.



Volunteers at Kimberley Nature Area

The Green Estate is rich in biodiversity and supports many locally and regionally rare species. Working with volunteers, the Green Estate team undertake a varied programme of management work to manage, enhance and create habitats for these important species.

By volunteering people can learn traditional woodland crafts and skills such as hedge laying or coppicing, while developing an understanding of why this work is important for wildlife and the wider environment.

- **Theme 2** - Improving the social fabric and participation in community life

Local, well managed informal green spaces significantly contribute to the quality of life for local communities. We encourage community participation in developing and engaging friends groups for our more popular Green Estate sites.



Volunteers pulling invasive Himalayan Balsam Removal along the River Leen

The Green Estate provides local opportunities across the county for individuals and groups to get out and explore, contributing significantly to the health and well being of local communities.

We run a programme of events and activities with local community groups and aim to promote and develop the Green Estate further for the benefit of the people of Nottinghamshire.

- **Theme 3** - Conserving and providing access to our history and heritage and supporting environmental sustainability.

The Green Estate team manage areas rich in industrial heritage, from old mineral lines that have been restored, to former colliery and ordnance sites. The Green Estate team recognises the importance to local communities of our shared heritage and aim to promote this to visitors using the Green Estate.





Volunteers with a restored signal on the Great Northern Railway Path

We actively seek to manage our landholding in a sustainable manner, using, for example, recycled materials and colliery waste to surface our network of trails, and to further develop our agricultural estate for biomass production.

- **Theme 4** - Supporting the economic prosperity of the County.

We aim to further develop and manage our estate to maximise income to ensure that the Green Estate is sustainable for the long term.



Harvesting Eucalyptus at Daneshill Energy Forest

By capitalising on external funding for energy crops for example, we can generate income from otherwise unproductive former brownfield land.

It is of fundamental importance that in delivering these four themes we continue to ensure that we develop and enhance our estate for the benefit of biodiversity and the important wildlife species and landscape character types it supports.

Case Study 1: The Moor Pond Wood Project

The Green Estate team work and support the Friends of Moor Pond Woods (FoMPW) and the local parish council in managing and promoting this important heritage site. The site is based around the remains of a pioneering 18thC cotton milling industry on the River Leen at Papplewick.

Volunteers have been crucial to the development and successes of this project and undertake a variety of work including site patrols and wardening, monitoring, litter collection and practical maintenance tasks.

The group has successfully secured external grant aid through the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme, and this has led to the development and implementation of the site's archaeological conservation plan. Working with Green Estate team and the county archaeologist, research into the industrial archaeology of the site, has resulted in archaeological digs and the construction of a scale topographical model showing the watercourses and infrastructure of this important site.



Volunteers working at a Moor Pond Wood archaeological event

The group are continuing to develop the project, and are keen to publicise their work and findings to a wider audience by providing on site interpretation, and organizing talks, outings, guided walks and educational and social events.



5. The Green Estate Profile

Land Holdings

The Green Estate comprises 97 sites spread predominantly across the western half of the county. Many of the sites are former colliery tips, or mineral lines that have been restored to informal green space. A full list and individual site maps/plans can be found in Appendix 1.



Ollerton Pit Wood

Many of the sites are located on the urban fringe of major towns or on the doorstep of former mining communities. They are well used by local people, and support a wide range of habitats and species. These sites are important because of the threatened nature of some of the habitat types (eg; lowland heathland and calcareous grassland) and the biodiversity associated with these areas.

The Green Estate Team

The Green Estate team is located within the Country Parks and Green Estate service. The team comprises three land management specialists who manage and promote the Green Estate for the benefit of the people of Nottinghamshire, aiming to improve the quality of the environment through sustainable management practices to enhance biodiversity and protect our cultural heritage for future generations. See Appendix 3 for management roles.

Outputs

During 2012, the Green Estates team worked with more than 100 individual volunteers including many regular individuals and members of friends groups, as well as those attending volunteering event days. This generated well over 900 person-days of activity across communities associated with Green Estate sites.

User Views

"I enjoy working at Tippings Wood with my wife & pals. Our average age is 72 but this does not stop us strimming paths, thinning trees & stoning footpaths. It keeps us fit & we enjoy the banter & have a laugh"

Bob Clifford, Friends of Tippings Wood.

"I first got involved in volunteering with NCC some twenty years ago as I wanted to improve the public rights of way network. I now offer my services across what you call your Green Estate. I like to feel that we have contributed to making Nottinghamshire a more accessible place, particularly in areas with an industrial past improving it for both wildlife & people."

Reg Simpson, Leen Valley Conservation Volunteer

"I have both worked & walked at Dob Park, Hucknall, which has a network of paths through various areas of woodland & open spaces providing an excellent area in which to take a leisurely walk, with or without a dog."

Dave Baker, Chairperson, Erewash Countryside Volunteers

"I come to Cotgrave Country Park in the winter to enjoy the flocks of finches, tits & love to listen to the abundant birdsong along the hedgerows & in the reed beds & if I'm really lucky, purring turtle dove & kingfishers in the pool, magic!"

Lynne Demaine, Friends of Cotgrave Country Park

How We Measure Success?

We use a variety of criteria to measure our success and achievements:

- Number of volunteers/volunteer groups supported
- Funding/income secured
- Condition of site infrastructure
- Condition of habitats/contribution to LBAP habitat and species targets
- Condition of designated sites (e.g. SSSIs, SINCs, LNRs)
- Usage data from cycle counters on linear trails

Key Risks and Challenges

The Green Estate by the very nature of its location on the urban fringe, and adjacent in many cases to former industrial communities, suffers from inherent problems. Responding to and dealing with these issues is a significant drain on limited resources both financially and in terms of officer time.



Some the key challenges are:

Dog Fouling: encouraging dog owners to be responsible is a challenge, and we receive frequent complaints about dog fouling on the Green Estate. We work closely with the district councils to provide appropriate bins and publicity to educate dog owners.

Fly Tipping: Some areas of the Green Estate attract significant volumes of fly tipped waste (in addition to general litter). It is often expensive to remove and includes controlled waste such as asbestos, tyres and sharps etc. We aim to respond quickly and efficiently to remove fly tipping, to ensure the health and safety of the public and prevent it attracting other tipping. Again, this becomes an unwanted drain on our resources.

Off Road Motor-cycles: present a danger to the public using our sites, and cause damage by degrading paths and conservation areas. It is difficult to prevent access by motorbikes and at the same time encourage access for those on cycle, horse or with pushchairs and for those with disabilities.



Recently, we find we are having to respond more and more to issues generated by extreme weather events:

Flooding: it is becoming apparent that site infrastructure is increasingly unable to cope with some of the deluges we have experienced in recent times, causing damage to paths and ditches (washouts), and flooding adjacent land and property. We will need to review our site infrastructure and ensure that resources are provided for regular maintenance.

Wind, Drought & Cold: we regularly monitor our trees to ensure that footpaths are safe for people to use. However, this task is likely to become more difficult if the current trend towards severe storm events, and periods of prolonged drought, cold or heavy snowfall continues. All of these natural phenomena cause additional stress and damage to trees which puts public health and safety at risk. The prospect of significantly increased numbers of diseased trees (through Ash Die Back, Sudden Oak Death, Bleeding Canker etc.) is also a significant cause for concern and will impact heavily on our service.

Economic Pressures: we are critically aware of the pressures facing local government and the demands on limited financial resources. The Green Estate delivers a front line service and manages a significant county resource for the people of Nottinghamshire.

This requires core funding to enable us to effectively manage these risks through planned maintenance of our site infrastructure, which should limit our liability and ensure the safety of the public.

Legislative Framework

The Green Estate is subject to a significant body of statutory legislation. Key statutes include the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, The Environment Act 1990, the Environmental Protection Act 1991 and the Equality Act 2010.

Case Study 2: The Friends of Tippings Wood

The Friends of Tippings Wood were founded in 1996 following the restoration of this former tip of Blidworth Colliery. Currently the Friends consist of 10 members who regularly undertake voluntary work on the site. Typically this work involves routine management, for example, clearing vegetation from paths, maintaining site furniture and managing the variety of habitats found within the wood. The Friends are supported by the Green Estates team, are specially trained and supplied with equipment such as brushcutters to maximise the benefit of their efforts.

Empowering local people to actively and practically manage the site in this way fosters a sense of stronger community ownership and maintains the site to a high standard, which would not otherwise be possible.



The Friends meet at least once a week throughout the year. During the summer months they regularly cut back vegetation to keep the network of paths open for public use. During the winter months, conservation works are more typical, for example hedge laying and woodland thinning. During the last year these activities totalled almost 600 hours of time spent on site.



Woodland thinned by the Friends of Tippings Wood in October 2011

6. A Green Estate for the Future 2013-2023

Vision Statement:

‘To manage and promote the Green Estate for the benefit of the people of Nottinghamshire, aiming to improve the quality of the environment through sustainable management practices which enhance biodiversity and protect our cultural heritage for future generations’.

To achieve this we will:

- **Provide** access to high quality informal green space on the doorstep of our local communities
- **Protect** enhance and expand habitats associated with the landscape characters of the county for the benefit of the biodiversity they support
- **Develop** examples of best practice in sustainable land and forestry management
- **Encourage** groups and individuals to get involved in managing their local green space
- **Educate** communities through practical conservation tasks

- **Manage** our land holdings so as to obtain optimum value from our investment
- **Explore** new operating models to provide the best possible sustainable and biodiversity outcomes for Nottinghamshire.

Looking forward, the strategic vision for the Green Estate can be summarised by the following ten point plan of service priorities:

GE1 - To promote the Green Estate as Nottinghamshire's Other Country Park. To improve the health, safety and quality of life of local communities by providing opportunities for recreation and leisure, and to develop a wider appreciation and enjoyment of the environment.

The Green Estate provides valuable public open space to a large number of communities across Nottinghamshire. Local people, many of whom do not have access to the larger parks; rely on these informal recreation sites on a daily basis. We believe that access to the countryside is key to improving quality of life, and a sense of wellbeing.

It is our aim to ensure that the sites are managed to a high standard and that they are promoted externally to the wider public, and also to elected Members to ensure their importance is recognised in terms of public access and biodiversity. We will encourage initiatives such as 'Health Walks' to regularly use the Green Estate, by working more closely with the district councils and health care providers. We will work closely with colleagues in health.

We need to ensure that the experience is of the highest quality and that our facilities, such as footpaths and furniture, are well maintained. The team deals with many anti-social behaviour issues like fly-tipping and dog fouling.

The Green Estate team works with the Probation Service and youth offending teams to provide sites and tasks to help deliver reparations at the local level.

- Assisting *Remedi* deliver reparation works for convicted young offenders on sites within their own local community, including referrals at Firbeck, Southwell Trail, Ollerton and along the Teversal Trails Network.



- Providing Community Payback teams with longer term project work at Cotgrave Country Park, Daneshill Energy Forest and Manton Pit Wood.

Safe public access is also a priority, and we will aim to respond quickly and efficiently when incidents are reported.

GE2 - To involve people directly in the management of 'their' local green space.

Enabling volunteer working, directly and through friends groups, will continue to be key aspect of our work on the Green Estate. It engages communities, develops a sense of community ownership and facilitates many aspects of site maintenance.



Friends of The Woodlands, Shireoaks

In a local context, directly involving people generates a sense of place and indicates the value of green space for local communities, contributing to community cohesion and improving health and wellbeing.

We also offer skills acquisition and training which improves peoples' employability and social skills. This is especially important to the unemployed and special needs sectors of the community that we are also able to support through volunteering enabling them to gain valuable experience, life skills and much needed confidence.

- Working with angling clubs to establish and maintain fisheries at Daneshill Lakes LNR, Shirebrook Pit Wood and Cotgrave Country Park.

- Working with the Friends of Cotgrave Country Park to provide facilities in response to requests from dog walkers, and establish a new orienteering course.
- Working with the Friends of Tippings Wood, Southwell Trail, Cotgrave Country Park and The Woodlands at Shireoaks providing support, training and leading practical conservation tasks on site.

GE3 - To provide a Green Estate rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage.

The Green Estate team is dedicated to improving the biodiversity, archaeological and cultural heritage of Nottinghamshire through conservation management.

We will actively manage the Green Estate in accordance with the national and local Biodiversity Action Plans.

We will continue our work to eradicate invasive non-native species across the Green Estate.

We will continue to work closely with partners and landowners on landscape scale projects, and develop important wildlife corridors linking the Green Estate to the surrounding countryside.

The Green Estate team will work with partners to ensure that our archaeological and cultural heritage is preserved and promoted.

GE4 - To increase income generated by the Green Estate including that from energy crops.

The Green Estate team will also develop and trial alternative energy crops across our landholdings, where appropriate. This will promote sustainable land use on restored brown-field land for the production of renewable resources. It will also generate income that can be used for further research and to fund habitat and management works across the wider Green Estate.

By capitalising on external funding for energy crops for example, we can generate income from otherwise unproductive former brownfield land, as we have demonstrated at the former landfill site at Fiskerton now planted with Miscanthus Elephant Grass), and the Eucalyptus plantation at Daneshill



Energy Forest. These crops will be harvested and used as a renewable energy source to generate heat and power. The plantation at Daneshill will also, through site based research, inform and influence policy and best practice at the national level.

It is our longer term aspiration to supply Nottinghamshire schools and other council buildings with locally produced green energy, thus making a contribution to improving the quality of life for all in the county.

We will review all of the income generation opportunities within the Green Estate including the potential for coal recovery on some of the older restoration schemes where this is deemed appropriate and cost effective.



Daneshill Energy Forest

GE5 - To increase external funding for Green Estate management and improvement.

Our current income from energy crops and agricultural rents is insufficient to cover our annual revenue costs. We will seek to increase income from external funding for capital improvement projects and ongoing maintenance to achieve the policy aims.

These projects will improve the quality of the Green Estate, and contribute significantly to improving the quality of the Nottinghamshire countryside.

GE6 - Safeguarding the Public

The Green Estate team strives to provide a resource that is safe for the public to use and enjoy. Regular facility checks are undertaken across the landholding, and the team also respond to issues brought to our attention by members of the public.

In line with legislation, best practice guidance and the Corporate Health and Safety Policy we aim to ensure that the public remain safe when work is being carried out on our land, ensuring that all work is undertaken by proficient and capable contractors, that risk is properly assessed and that specifications are produced to the highest standards.

GE7 - To provide advice and expertise to teams within the authority and to external partners.

The Green Estate team provides in-house advice and expertise to the Landscape and Reclamation, Waste Management and Property teams regarding practical land management issues. We also advise external partners and friends groups on practical site management.

Previous county council capital projects have proved that Green Estate's involvement at all stages of a scheme - from the initial development through to the project management - is vital. This ensures that these projects not only realise their maximum potential for access and biodiversity, but also that future management liabilities are minimised by influencing specifications based on our knowledge and experience of hands on site management.

- Advising Landscape and Reclamation team during the acquisition of a number of former mineral lines, and assisting with the preparation of a restoration scheme prior to submission of a planning application for the creation of a new multi-user route.
- Working closely with Landscape and Reclamation team on major brown-field restoration projects including the £14m British Coal Deal, the Ashfield Trails Project, The Lower Linear Route and Cotgrave Green Infrastructure Project.

The Green Estate team works on a wide range of projects at both the strategic and local level with external organisations including the Forestry Commission, Natural England, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency and the district, town and parish councils.

- **Sherwood Forest Trust** - supporting initiatives within their project area and providing sites for habitat creation, work training programmes and wider landscape character projects.



- **Ashfield District Council** - undertaking habitat management work to improve and increase the area of calcareous grassland habitat on the Teveral Trails Network.
- **Sherwood Forest Community Rangers** - providing opportunities for volunteers to undertake practical management tasks and learn new skills on Green Estate sites.

GE8 - To encourage the use of green spaces for public events and activities.

The Green Estate team will encourage local community and other organisations to use their local green spaces for events and activities. We will develop a quick and easy approval process to ensure that community groups have the appropriate level of approval and support with minimum bureaucracy.



The Stick Man, Linby Ranges

Green Estate sites have been used to provide a canvas for public art to celebrate Nottinghamshire life. We will continue to explore opportunities to install and display public art across the Green Estate, where funding and conditions permit.

GE9 - To develop our network of strategic greenways to link the Green Estate and other public green spaces

The Green Estate team recognises the strategic importance of linking sites to provide both a fantastic public resource and help to facilitate a coherent management strategy for wildlife across wide areas.

The county council has recently acquired a number of former mineral lines that will link parts of our landholding, particularly on east-west routes. Where appropriate and where external funding permits we will seek to acquire new sites to link our existing landholding, for the benefit of public access, wildlife and conservation.

Such greenways are critical for the greater public enjoyment of the outdoors - for walkers, ramblers, cyclists, equestrian users.

GE10 - To explore new models of site management, acquisition and disposal.

The Green Estate team is currently completing a review of all the sites we manage, in an effort to target our limited resources more effectively. Some of these have minimal public recreational value and could be more appropriately managed by other agencies, organisations or adjacent landowners, e.g.: highway verges and landscaping schemes on industrial parks.

Some of our sites do not meet the council's standards or criteria while on occasions, there have been requests made by other parties to acquire such public open space.

At the same time, there may well be sites that the council would wish to acquire as these fit with our strategic planning, e.g.: former mineral lines.

There are other countywide and regional agencies that may be better placed to manage our sites and facilities, especially where these sites are adjacent or very close-by. We will take a positive approach to site management to ensure that we are obtaining good value for money.

As part of the review, we will examine the most appropriate form of site management which may involve the disposal of the lowest ranking sites which exert an unwanted pressure on our resources. This will enable us to direct our time and efforts to improve and develop those sites most important for public recreation and enjoyment and the biodiversity they support.



Case Study 3

Cotgrave Country Park

Cotgrave Country Park was created in 2000, following the acquisition and subsequent restoration of the Cotgrave Colliery by the county council. Since its restoration, the park has flourished and now provides a fantastic resource for public recreation, with a network of tracks and trails and a large fishing lake. It also provides extensive and varied habitats for wildlife.

A vibrant friends group has been established and works closely with the Green Estate team to manage and develop the site. The Friends meet regularly to discuss site issues with the Green Estate site officer, and to discuss and develop ideas relating to the management of the park.



Bird Box Making at Cotgrave

The group have been 'hands on' in their approach to maintenance of the site, undertaking regular patrols, litter picking and practical conservation tasks, including hedge-laying and scrub management, wildlife monitoring and recording, and installing new seating. They have created a nature trail around the site, and have also established an orienteering course.

The group is comprised of representatives of various interest and user groups and the meetings provide a lively forum for debate and discussion as to how the park should be managed. The meetings bring together these groups and representatives from the town and district councils and this enables problems and conflicts between users to be aired and resolved.



School group and new nature trail

A successful fishing club, based around the former Miners Welfare has been established, providing sport and recreation for local residents. The club have also developed strong links to Ashlea school and now provide weekly supervised fishing events for disabled children, giving them the opportunity to get down to the waters' edge and experience fishing for themselves.

In addition, the group have been instrumental in developing a strategy to improve recreation and sport provision of the country park. They have organised annual charity fun-runs, mountain-biking and orienteering events, and run regular health walks around the park in partnership with the district council.



7. The Green Estate Action Plan 2013-2033

Key Actions

Green Estate Policy	Green Estate Action	Green Estate Tasks	Partners	Resources Required	Timescale for Completion
GE1 GE2 GE3 GE10	To complete the Green Estate site review process to ensure effective targeting of our resources.	- Undertake site by site review. - Undertake consultation with partners and stakeholders. - Report findings of review and consultation to relevant NCC committees. - To implement member decisions and recommendations.	Parish Councils/ Friends Groups	Officer time	Mar 2014 Jun 2014 Jul 2014 Jul 2015
GE1 GE2 GE3 GE5 GE6 GE10	To review all current management plans across the Green Estate.	- To commission and complete new management plans for the six Local Nature Reserve (LNR) sites. - To commission and implement new management plans for the key sites identified in 1 (above). - To ensure that existing management plans for Green Estate sites are kept up to date and reviewed when required. - To establish a realistic baseline budget for the maintenance of our estate. - To secure the necessary resources for the management of the green estate sites through the 10 year capital programme.	Newark & Sherwood DC, Friends Groups Friends Groups; Parish Councils Friends Groups; Parish Councils Local Elected Members, Friends Groups, Parish Councils	Volunteer input from student placement £3k per key site identified. Annual revenue budget to implement site management work £30K	Mar 2013 - Mar 2014 Mar 2013 - Mar 2014 Mar 2015 Ongoing Mar 2015
GE2 GE3 GE5 GE6	To improve the biodiversity and conservation value of the Green Estate.	- To bring the 47 SINCs and 3 SSSIs into Favourable Condition. - To implement a framework maintenance contract to ensure maintenance is targeted, effective and efficient. - To secure external funding to deliver habitat improvements over and above routine annual maintenance.	Local Elected Members, Friends Groups, Parish Councils	Revenue £15k per annum for 10 years Revenue budget £65k per annum Officer time. Potentially match funding of 11% for each total project cost	2023 Mar 2013 Ongoing annually



Green Estate Policy	Green Estate Action	Green Estate Tasks	Partners	Resources Required	Timescale for Completion
GE3 GE5	To expand the area of valuable habitats within the Green Estate, focussing on the key LBAP habitats of lowland heathland, oak birch woodland, calcareous grassland and wetland.	- To identify key sites for wildlife habitat and access external funding through appropriate environmental schemes (e.g.: HLS). - To work with external partners to submit and help deliver new landscape schemes where appropriate. - To secure external funding to deliver habitat creation and restoration schemes targeting LBAP habitats.	Natural England Greenwood. Parish Councils, Sherwood Forest Trust, RSPB, NWT, Friends Groups As above	Officer time Officer time Officer time	March 2014 Ongoing annually to 2023 Ongoing annually to 2023
GE1 GE5 GE9	To develop a countywide Strategic Greenways Network for Nottinghamshire.	- To ensure our existing linear trails are properly surfaced and maintained to a high standard, e.g.: Bilsthorpe, Calverton, Cotgrave MURs. - To develop the Greenways Network through future acquisition as opportunities are presented. - To work with local landowners to negotiate access and management agreements that will benefit the Green Estate, and provide additional linkages between our sites. - To collaborate with user groups in the design, management and maintenance of the network, e.g.: Sustrans, Friends Groups, Parish Councils.	NCC Landscape & Reclamation Team Sustrans, Network Rail, UK Coal Landowners, Parish Councils, NCC Property/ Legal As stated	£20k annual maintenance Capital cost required as and when sites identified. Capital to cover legal & surveyors fees Annual revenue budget	Ongoing annually to 2023 March 2014 Ongoing annually to 2023 Ongoing annually to 2023
GE1 GE4 GE10	To increase income generated on the Green Estate, capitalising on current Energy Crops Scheme.	- To undertake a review of all agricultural and other land within the Estate that has limited recreational or biodiversity value. - To assess suitability of key sites identified during the review for the suitability to provide an alternative income through the production of biomass through the Energy Crops Scheme. - To investigate the potential for coal recovery on some restored colliery tips where appropriate.	NCC Landscape & Reclamation, Legal /Property. UK Coal	Officer time Officer time Officer time. Capital budget for exploratory ground-works £5k per site	Sep 2013 March 2014 March 2015



GE1 GE2 GE10	1. To ensure good public health and safety.	- To remediate quickly instances of fly-tipping, vandalism, abuse of the Green Estate sites. - To have contingency plans in place to manage drought, flooding, snow. - To work with friends groups, partners and other agencies to improve the security of sites.	Friends Groups, Parish Councils, Groundwork, Sherwood Forest Community Rangers	Officer time. Revenue budget £5k per annum Officer time Officer time Revenue budget	Ongoing annually to 2023 Ongoing annually to 2023 Ongoing annually to 2023
GE1 GE2 GE8	2. To increase the number of Friends Groups and Volunteers on the Green Estate.	- To develop the role of volunteers across the landholding including 'buying in' additional capacity from external volunteer and social enterprise groups. - To exploit new opportunities for engaging with local communities, through volunteer tasks and events. - To explore new ways of working with other NCC teams, e.g.: Greenwood, Community Liaison Officer, and external partners, e.g.: Forestry Commission/BTCV/ Groundwork/Wild Sherwood, to develop events, task days and activities. - To develop new community groups where feasible, e.g.: at Manton Pit Wood.	Greenwood, Groundwork, Sherwood Forest Community Rangers, BTCV Support from local Elected Member	Officer time. Funding to buy in external services. c.£ 350 / day Officer time. Revenue budget for materials etc.. Officer time Support from NCC Community Liaison Officer	Ongoing annually to 2023 Ongoing annually to 2023 Initially March 2014 and reviewed annually thereafter Ongoing annually to 2023
GE1 GE2 GE3 GE5 GE6 GE8 GE9	3. To develop the Cotgrave Country Park and adjacent land.	- To prepare a discrete 10 year management plan for the park. - To maximise opportunities presented through the planning process for the development of the adjacent colliery yard to benefit of the country park. - To ensure early involvement with the developer to achieve the best outcomes for the country park, critically the future management of the new development/country park interface, car parking provision and control of access points between the housing development and the country park.	Friends of Cotgrave CP, Rushcliffe BC Rushcliffe BC, Barratt Homes, HCA, Friends Cotgrave CP Rushcliffe BC, Barratt Homes, HCA	Officer time. Capital Cost c £5k Officer time Officer time	March 2014 2013 - March 2015 or for the life of the development phase 2013 - March 2015 or for the life of the development phase



		- To improve site interpretation, provision of public art and informal play and sports facilities. - To improve links to the surrounding rights of way network and the new multi user route to Radcliffe on Trent, and include improved provision for equestrian users. - To improve facilities for dog walkers and aim to resolve conflict with other site users. - To seek funding for the provision for a visitor centre and dedicated ranger/warden service with ancillary facilities including public toilets and site compound.	Friends of Cotgrave CP NCC Landscape and Reclamation/ Rights of Way Teams Friends of Cotgrave CP Rushcliffe BC, Barratt Homes, HCA, Friends Cotgrave CP	Officer time External Capital Funding External Capital Funding Revenue Budget £1.5k pa External capital funding	2013 - March 2015 or for the life of the development phase March 2015 Sep 2013 March 2015
GE1 GE2 GE3 GE6 GE8 GE9	To ensure greater public visibility, awareness, access and use of the green estate.	- To promote the value and importance of the Green Estate more effectively to a wider public. - To develop new links with the health authorities and agenda to promote healthy living and well-being. - To prepare new promotional materials using new social media. - To encourage more visitors to the Green Estate sites. - To increase the number of sites with public art and create a sculpture trail based around the former pit tips of Nottinghamshire. - To ensure as far as possible access for all.	Local Elected Members, Friends Groups, District Councils District Councils Friends Groups Friends Groups, Greenwood, District Councils, Local Elected Members	Officer time Officer time Officer time. Revenue budget £5k for core Green Estate Sites/. LNR's Officer time External Capital funding c. £150k Officer time External Capital Funding c. £75k Revenue budget to manage & maintain thereafter £7k pa	Ongoing March 2014 March 2014 March 2017 Ongoing





Heron Lake, Cotgrave Country Park

8. Conclusions

The Green Estate is an outstanding resource for the people of Nottinghamshire to use and enjoy. It is Nottinghamshire's Other Country Park.

The Green Estate provides opportunities for local people to engage with the environment on their doorstep, and take advantage of opportunities for health and wellbeing through informal recreation, learning about our shared cultural heritage through 'hands on' education and getting involved with practical conservation.

Although there are significant challenges ahead, both in economic terms in ensuring that resources are available to manage the estate and provide a first rate front line service, and from those natural forces over which we have little or no control - we consider the Green Estate to be of key importance to the county council in contributing to a high quality environment for the people of Nottinghamshire and as a heritage and conservation resource for future generations to enjoy.



Appendix 1

Summary Audit of the Green Estate

There are 97 sites located principally across the western half of Nottinghamshire which comprise 1888 hectares (4665 acres) of informal green space with public access, agricultural land, amenity woodland and commercial forest.

Green Space

More than 850 hectares (2100 acres) of land managed for public access and recreation, with conservation and biodiversity as key management objectives. The sites include a significant number of restored colliery tips and mineral railway lines that now provide a strategic network of off road trails across the County.

The key sites include:

- Cotgrave Country Park (Rushcliffe) 70 hectares
- Papplewick Dams and Moor Pond Woods (Gedling)
- Linby Ranges and Linby Trail (Broxtowe/Ashfield)
- The Woodlands, Shireoaks (Bassetlaw)
- The Southwell Trail (Newark and Sherwood) - 7.5 miles

6 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs):

Name	Area (ha)	Electoral Division
Daneshill Lakes	53.3	Misterton (3)
Teversal & Pleasley Railway Network	Part of 21.0	Sutton-in-Ashfield North (56)
Southwell Trail	26.8	Southwell & Caunton (15) Farnsfield & Lowdham (14) Rufford (66)
Tippings Wood	29.9	Blidworth (57)
Rainworth Water	18.0	Blidworth (57)
Cockglobe & Rotary Woods	14.8	Rufford (66)

Protected Land

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

Part of the Teversal Trails (north of Norwood Lane to the Derbyshire border) is covered by the Teversal - Pleasley Railway SSSI.

A small section of Cockglobe and Rotary Woods LNR is covered by part of the Birklands West and Ollerton Corner SSSI.

Ollerton Assarts is covered by part of Birklands and Bilhaugh SSSI.

Sites Important for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

Forty seven sites

Amenity Woodland

Approximately 600 hectares of amenity woodland managed for its recreational, biodiversity interest and habitat value.

Commercial Forestry

15.3 hectares land under managed exclusively as commercial forestry plantations (principally Corsican pine).

29.6 hectares short rotation forestry managed to produce biomass to supply local markets with woodchip providing a renewable source of energy.

Agricultural Land

110.84 hectares let on Farm Business Tenancies to farm tenants for pasture and arable production.

36.4 hectares energy crops managed to produce biomass to supply the electricity generation industry with a renewable and sustainable energy crop.

Water Bodies

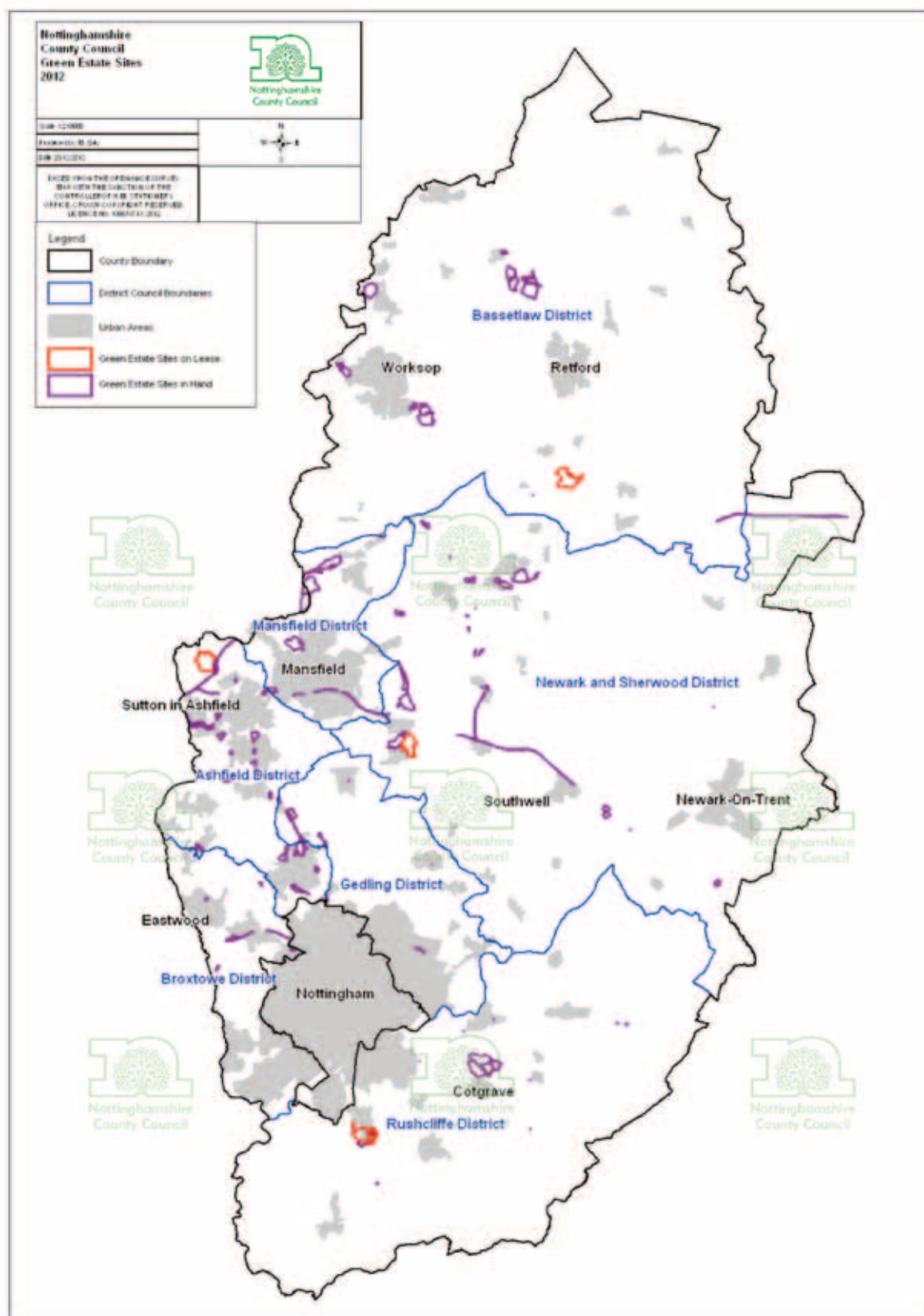
18 sites have significant stretches of water. There are 32 water bodies comprising 37 ha of open water and 16 water courses measuring a total of 6km.

Tracks & Trails

43km of multi-user routes and a further 9 km of surfaced rights of way and cycle trails with another 20 km in preparation.



The Green Estate Site Location and Listing



Green Estate Sites (12/2012)

Site Name	Site Description	Current Core Site	Area (Hectares)	Public Access
Bestwood Sustrans Link	Multi-user route	✓	3.37	Yes
Birch Wood (White Mole Wood), Ranskill	Amenity woodland, informal paths	✓	5.73	Yes
Cockglode and Rotary Woods LNR	SSSI, LNR, woodland, heathland informal paths	✓	14.88	Yes
Cossall Pocket Park	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths	✓	2.32	Yes
Cotgrave Country Park	Amenity woodland, surfaced paths, agricultural let land	✓	162.06	Part
Daneshill Lakes	LNR, woodland, wetland, surfaced paths	✓	67.22	Yes
Dob Park	Commercial & amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths	✓	20.38	Yes
Fanny's Grove	Amenity woodland, heathland	✓	9.71	Yes
Farleys Lane (Hucknall No.1)	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths	✓	18.56	Yes
Firbeck Colliery	Amenity woodland, agricultural let land, informal paths	✓	58.11	Part
Fiskerton Landfill Site	Energy Crop (Miscanthus)	✓	24.02	No
Freckland Wood	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths, public art	✓	20.08	Yes
Goresthorne Landfill Site	Amenity woodland, agricultural let land		10.31	No
Great Northern Railway Path (1.7km)	Multi-user route	✓	6.97	Yes
Harby-High Marnham Sustrans route	Multi-user route	✓	5.00	Yes
Kimberley Green	Amenity woodland, informal paths	✓	7.24	Yes
Langton Colliery	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths		4.47	No
Linby Trail (2km)	Multi-user route	✓	4.60	Yes
Manton North	Commercial & amenity woodland, heathland, surfaced paths	✓	27.68	Yes
Manton Old Black & White	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths	✓	10.82	Yes
Manton South (Windmill Lane)	Commercial & amenity woodland, heathland, surfaced paths	✓	56.83	Yes
Moor Pond Wood	Amenity woodland, wetland, archaeology, informal paths	✓	9.17	Yes
Newstead Old Coal Stocking Yard	Post industrial conservation interest	✓	7.77	Yes
Nuthall Cutting MUR	Multi-user route	✓	5.00	Yes
Ollerton Assarts	SSSI, heathland	✓	0.69	Yes
Ollerton Colliery (East)	Commercial & amenity woodland, heathland, surfaced paths	✓	58.17	Yes
Ranskill No.1	Commercial woodland, agricultural let land	✓	26.16	No
Ranskill No.2 (DEF)	Commercial & amenity woodland, Energy Crop (Eucalyptus)	✓	73.67	No
Rookery Park (ex Sutton Landfill aka New Hucknall)	Amenity woodland, grassland, surfaced paths	✓	25.28	Yes
Rufford No.1 (Rainworth Water)	Commercial & amenity woodland, agricultural let land	✓	60.54	No
Selston Mathew Holland, Underwood	Amenity woodland, surfaced paths		2.18	Yes
Shirebrook Colliery North	Commercial & amenity woodland, wetland, grassland, surfaced paths	✓	79.12	Yes
Shirebrook Colliery South	Commercial & amenity woodland, grassland, surfaced paths	✓	55.96	Yes
Shireoaks & Coachgap Green	Amenity woodland, surfaced paths	✓	29.62	Yes
Southwell Trail (11.5km incl Bilsthorpe arm)	Multi-user route	✓	27.55	Yes



Site Name	Site Description	Current Core Site	Area (Hectares)	Public Access
Sutton Meadows	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths	✓	12.47	Yes
Teversal & Silverhill Trails (8km w. Brierley link)	Multi-user route	✓	11.38	Yes
The Ranges (Linby Colliery/Tip)	Amenity woodland, surfaced paths, public art	✓	33.68	Yes
Tippings Wood	Commercial & amenity woodland, surfaced paths, agricultural let land	✓	51.19	Part
Warsop Colliery	Commercial & amenity woodland, wetland, grassland agricultural let land, multi-user route	✓	73.86	Part
Doles Lane	Agricultural let land		2.43	No
Sherwood Energy Village, Ollerton (West)	Commercial & amenity woodland, heathland, surfaced paths		8.17	Yes
Boughton Camp Spine Road Landscaping & Wood	Amenity woodland		1.67	No
Cotham Landfill Site	Amenity woodland		9.04	Yes
Grantham Canal, Cotgrave Bridge	Car parking/amenity site		0.12	Yes
Grantham Canal, Cropwell Bridge	Car parking/amenity site		0.06	Yes
Grantham Canal, Kinoulton Bridge	Car parking/amenity site		0.11	Yes
Grantham Canal, Tollerton Road	Car parking/amenity site		0.07	Yes
Hucknall Gateway	Amenity Woodland, grassland		0.31	Yes
Linby Spine Road C	Informal paths		0.54	Yes
Linby Spine Road D (Robey Close f.p.)	Informal paths		0.48	Yes
Linby Spine Road Landscaping A	Informal paths		1.01	No
Linby Spine Road Landscaping B	Informal paths		1.19	No
Mansfield Way (5.4km excl road sections)	Multi-user route		16.42	Yes
Mere Way, Ruddington	Landscaping scheme		3.14	n/a
Nunn Brook park, Huthwaite	Amenity woodland, wetland, informal paths		8.86	Part
Ruddington Peripheral Road	Farm access road		4.45	Yes
Stony Field Lane, Bilsthorpe	Surfaced Path		2.54	Yes
Annesley Village EIA	Amenity woodland		5.12	Yes
Cutts Wood East	Commercial & amenity woodland		2.13	Yes
Cutts Wood West	Amenity woodland		1.09	No
Dalestorth Meadows	Agricultural let land		22.47	No
Fiskerton Picnic Site	Picnic site		0.16	Yes
Gedling Colliery Railway Vale	Informal paths		3.03	No
Kirkby Grives Greenway (1.5km with Lindley's Lane)	Multi-user route		1.12	Yes
Linby Paddock	Agricultural let land		0.63	No



Site Name	Site Description	Current Core Site	Area (Hectares)	Public Access
Lindley's Lane Walkway	Amenity woodland		1.58	Yes
Manton No.2	Amenity Woodland, Multi-user route		4.08	Yes
North Muskham Amenity Land	Amenity grassland		0.22	Yes
Annesley East Tip	Amenity woodland		3.93	No
Babbington Colliery Wood	Amenity woodland		2.19	No
Bentinck South Colliery Tip	Amenity woodland, agricultural let land		13.15	No
Bunny Wood	Amenity woodland		1.00	No
Center Parcs Wood	Amenity woodland		0.67	Yes
Kirkby North	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal access		18.08	No
Kirkby South	Amenity woodland, grassland		3.53	No
Ollerton Colliery (West)	Amenity woodland		22.17	Yes
Parsons Quarry, Skegby	Amenity woodland, grassland, informal paths		1.83	Yes
Ridgewood Grove	Amenity woodland		0.16	Yes
Selston Pye Hill, Underwood	Amenity woodland, agricultural let land, surfaced paths		8.40	Yes
Shooters Brake	Amenity woodland		1.09	No
The Canyon's, Eastwood	Amenity woodland, wetland, informal paths		1.25	Yes
Watnall Colliery	Amenity woodland		1.88	No
Welbeck Colliery No.1 Tip	Amenity woodland		0.96	No
Wigwam Lane	Amenity woodland		5.82	Yes
sub total			1372.00	

Let Reclamation Sites

Bentinck Banks, Kirkby	Amenity woodland		2.00	Yes
Bervercotes Wood (Colliery Tip)	Commercial & amenity woodland, grassland, surfaced paths	✓	114.6	Yes
Boundary Wood (Blidworth Colliery tip)	Commercial & amenity woodland, grassland, surfaced paths	✓	85.00	Yes
Clipstone Triangle	Commercial woodland	✓	29.32	No
Daneshill Lakes pt. LNR	LNR, Commercial & amenity woodland, wetland, informal paths	✓	3.00	Yes
Linby Meadow	Heathland / acid grassland		0.17	Ltd
Oxclose Wood (Sherwood Colliery tip)	Commercial & amenity woodland, grassland, surfaced paths	✓	58.54	Yes
Ruddington CP	Amenity woodland, wetland, surfaced paths	✓	88.00	Yes
Silverhill Wood (Colliery Tip)	Commercial & amenity woodland, grassland, surfaced paths	✓	112.9	Yes
Sutton Golf Course	Golf Course		12.00	Timed
Trowell Moor	Amenity woodland & grassland		6.00	Yes
Wakeringham Landfill	Amenity woodland		3.00	Ltd
sub total			515.00	
grand total			1887.00	



Site Name	Site Description	Current Core Site	Area (Hectares)	Public Access
Waste Sites on Licence to WRG				
Barnstone				
Bilsthorpe				
Daneshill				
Sutton (part) adj. Rookery Park				
Other Sites				
Clipstone sliver			1.00	
			1888.00	

Core Site	Currently the sites that score highest for the benefits they provide and thus form the 'Core' of the estate.
Commercial Woodland	Woodland, (mostly Corsican Pine) managed on a rotation to provide an Income.
Amenity Woodland	Woodland, usually native species managed for its conservation value and landscape character.
Heathland	A declining habitat within Nottinghamshire, lowland heathland is characterised by acidic, free drainingsandy soils and fine grasses and heather.
Grassland	Usually neutral or calcareous (limestone) grassland, managed for conservation and the biodiversity it supports.
Energy Crop	A commercial crop managed in rotation to produce biomass, that is then harvested and burnt to produce heat.
Agricultural Let Land	Land let to a farming tenant for the purposes of agriculture.
Multi-user route	Linear routes for public access on foot cycle and (where appropriate) horseback. Permissive paths (ie not definitive rights of way) and predominantly along restored mineral railway lines.
Informal paths	Undefined paths that are un-surfaced and permissive (ie not a public right of way).
Surfaced Paths	Defined, surfaced and maintained tracks and trails that for the most part are permissive (ie not a public right of way).



Appendix 3

The Green Estate Management Roles

The Green Estate Team is a front line service reporting to the Team Manager Countryside, within the Children Families and Cultural Services Department.

Countryside Officer

- Manage the Green Estate sites for conservation, biodiversity and public recreation.
- Set up and supervise site management contracts using external contractors and Nottinghamshire County Council's Operations Team.
- Work with, and offer guidance to groups and individuals with regard to practical site based conservation tasks.
- Work with Landscape and Reclamation to advise and deliver new capital projects on Green Estate and other County Council owned land.
- Identify and bid for sources of external funding and bring in funds for suitable projects.
- Promote a wider knowledge and understanding of the Green Estate and its management.
- Lead on health and safety issues within the Team.
- Provide technical support to team members in relation to GIS.

Countryside Officer

- Manage the Green Estate sites for conservation, biodiversity and public recreation.
- Work closely with Volunteer groups to deliver practical conservation Projects across the Green Estate.
- Coordinate the involvement of volunteers and other community groups in site development and management in conjunction with the Community Liaison Officer.
- Research and develop innovative solutions to site management and identify opportunities for partnership working and external funding.

- Develop links with local councils and community groups to expand the local focus of site management.
- Liaise with Rights of Way specialists on developing the network of greenways for multi-user access to the countryside.
- Prepare and supervise contracts and ensure all work is carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

Land Management Officer

- Manage the Green Estate sites for conservation, biodiversity and public recreation.
- Work to deliver the £14m 'British Coal' Colliery Restoration Programme, in partnership with the Forestry Commission.
- Work with Landscape and Reclamation to advise and deliver new capital projects on Green Estate and other County Council owned land.
- Work with and provide advice to Property Team with regard to the Authority's wider landholding.
- Assist with the delivery of the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme at Sherwood Forest NNR.
- Develop and manage energy crop production on the Green Estate.
- Manage Farm Tenants on let land on the Green Estate.
- Contract Management.



Appendix 4

Glossary of Terms

LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan. A Statutory document detailing threatened habitats and species on a County by County basis. Administered at County Level by the Biodiversity Action Group. The LBAP is linked to the National Biodiversity Action Plan.
MUR	Multi User Route. A Permissive Right of Way open for users on foot, cycle and horseback.
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Designated by the local Planning Authority.
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest. Statutory designation of sites important for their nature conservation (or geological) interest managed and enforced by Natural England.
NNR	National Nature Reserve. 224 of England and Wales' finest sites for nature and geology are designated as NNR's. The land is protected and consent is required from Natural England before undertaking any works on NNR's.
HLS	Higher Level Stewardship Scheme. An environment grant scheme for landowners and successor to the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Administered by Natural England and funded by Defra through the European Regional Development Programme.





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