

Clarence Park
Greenspace Action Plan
2015 - 2019



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1. SITE SUMMARY

Name	Clarence Park
Address	Clarence Road St Albans AL1 4NF
Grid ref	TL157074
Size	10 ha
Owner	St Albans City & District Council
Designations	Conservation Area

Vision

Our vision for Clarence Park is for:

“To maintain and enhance the heritage for the park, whilst meeting modern day requirements”

CLARENCE PARK

Site Location



Scale 1:50,000 @ A4



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CLARENCE PARK

Site Description Map



- KEY**
- Art Work
 - Basketball Post
 - Bench
 - Bench with Memorial
 - Dog Bin
 - Litter Bin
 - Notice Board
 - Sign
 - Amenity grass
 - Boardwalk
 - Building
 - Car park
 - Grass path
 - Hard surfaced path
 - Hedgerow
 - Historic remains
 - Ornamental beds
 - Play area
 - Road
 - Scrub
 - Sports facility
 - Sports pitch
 - Spring meadow
 - Summer meadow
 - Woodland
 - Shrub bed




N
Scale 1:2000 @ A3

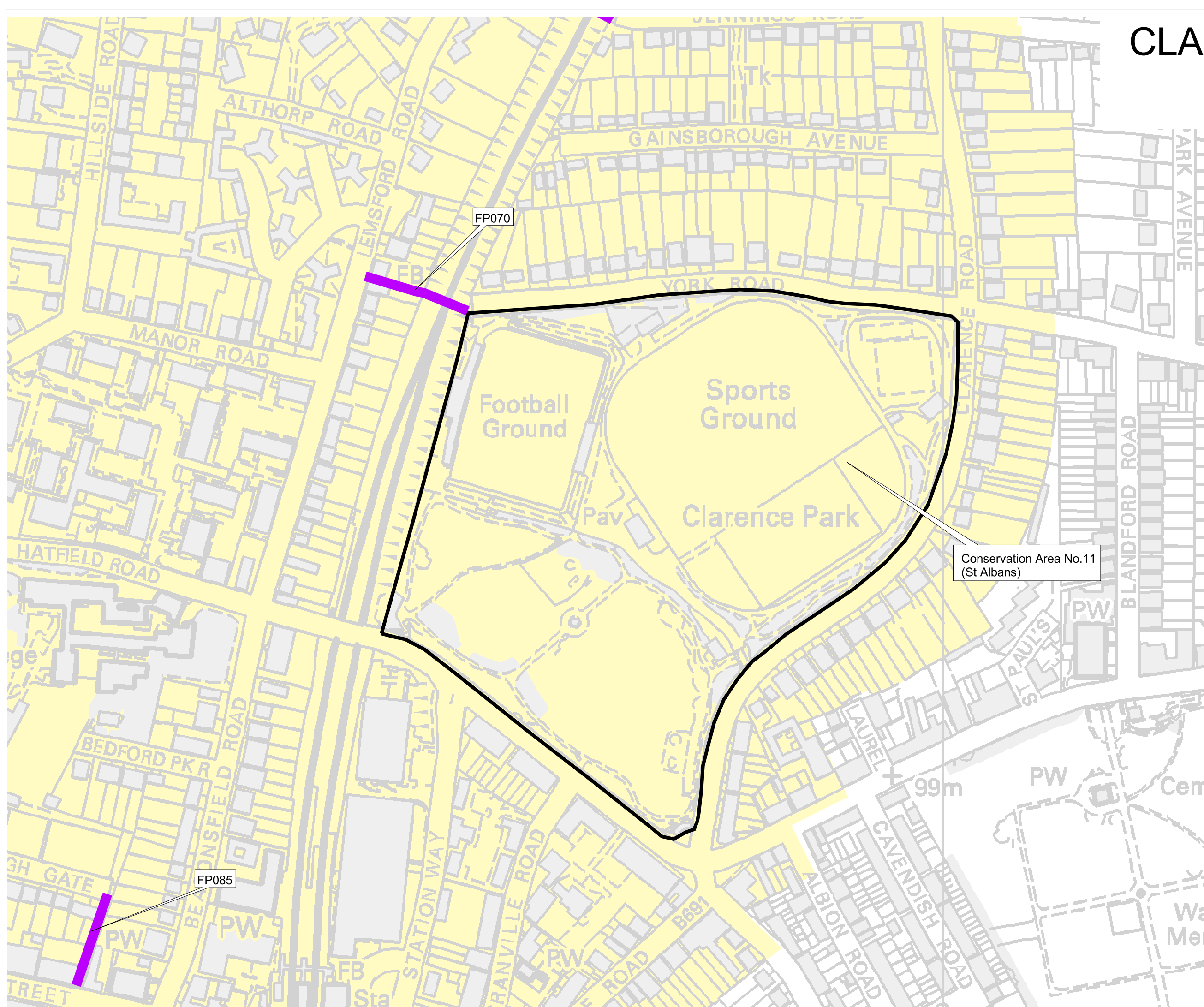


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CLARENCE PARK

Site Constraints

-  Public Footpath
-  Conservation Area
-  Site Boundary



1:2500 @ A3



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2.4 INTRODUCTION

Clarence Park is owned by St Albans City and District Council, and is located in the heart of the city of St Albans on land situated between the mainline railway and Hatfield Road. The park is a short walk from the city's historic centre in a mature suburban setting, close to the railway station, the city's business district and a number of local schools.

Clarence Park occupies an area of approximately 10 hectares (25 acres) and is divided into two distinct compartments – the formal park and the recreation ground.

The formal park covers an area of approximately 3.6 hectares (9 acres), and includes a wide range of features that still exist from the original park. These include rose and flower beds, extensive tree and shrub planting, the Aberdeen granite drinking fountain and the park-keeper's lodge. Only the wood and heather thatched bandstand has been lost from the original park.

Over the years a number of additions have also been made to the formal park. These have included a children's play area, fitness equipment and the conversion of a former toilet block to a restaurant.

The recreation ground, which covers an area of approximately 6.4 hectares (16 acres), is still in extensive use and provides a number of sports facilities.

2.5 GEOGRAPHY & LANDSCAPE

2.5.1 LANDSCAPE

Clarence Park is a typical formal Victorian park, deliberately laid out to encourage the promotion and participation of sports, and the use of public open space for the improvement of public health. Photographs taken in the early years of the park's existence show a flat landscape, devoid of much planting. The character of the park today is determined by its mature trees and the retention of much of its original features and buildings, including the central and impressive Cricket Pavilion.

The boundary fence is reinforced by evergreen laurel shrubs and wide shrub borders contribute to the peaceful ambience which encourages many visitors to stroll or sit and enjoy a quiet oasis close to the city centre. The formal rose beds and annual seeding beds add a splash of colour which does not seem out of place in the park setting.

The sports pitches, which include football, cricket, hockey, tennis, croquet and bowls, are an integral part of the park's design, and their frequent and constant use adds much to the vibrant atmosphere of the park.

2.5.2 CONSERVATION DESIGNATIONS

Clarence Park is situated in a Conservation Area with a number of its buildings being locally listed. As such the park is subject to extra restrictions to permitted development.

Since the northern part of Clarence Park was a gift to the people of St Albans, its use is governed by the rules of the Charity Commission which requires amongst other things that the St Albans City Football Club's pitch remains open to the general public, apart from when it is in use for matches.

2.6 HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

2.6.1 CONTEXT

Clarence Park was given to the city by a wealthy local businessman, Sir John Blundell-Maple, who at that time was the MP for Dulwich. The park was opened in 1894. There were public open spaces in the city before then, but no public park, and no areas specifically intended for recreation. The reason for the gift was that the St Albans Cricket Club wanted a permanent ground. They played their matches on Bernard's Heath, on the northern edge of the city, and felt that they had no security of tenure or facilities such as a pavilion. With no possibility of affording their own ground, they approached Sir John, a successful businessman who had a large estate at Childwickbury, just north of St Albans, and he agreed to provide a ground for them. The initial scheme expanded into a combination of sports facilities of about 16 acres and a public park of nine acres.

Part of the land, with its southern boundary on Hatfield Road, was purchased by Blundell-Maple from Earl Spencer, who had large landholdings in the district, and part from Frederick Sander, the orchid nurseryman, whose nursery was on Camp Road, on the other side of Hatfield Road. As part of his agreement to the sale of the land, Spencer stipulated that a road be built along the eastern border of the park for housing development, now called Clarence Road. The park was to be given to the people of St Albans, and the local Council was to be responsible for its upkeep.

Sir John was the son of John Maple, who founded the famous London furniture store. Blundell-Maple joined the family firm in 1861, after graduating from Kings College, London. He was made a partner in 1870, and became an equal partner in 1879. Sir John became a wealthy man as the firm expanded, and he was knighted in 1892. In 1887, at the second attempt he became the MP for Dulwich, believing that he could do more for working people as a politician.

Sir John purchased the large estate of Childwickbury, near St Albans, where he built up a stud farm into the largest horse-breeding establishment in Britain. He was a familiar figure in St Albans, driving his own coach from Childwickbury to the railway station for the train to London. He also put some of his money into philanthropic schemes. In 1883 he chartered special trains to take 1,800 St Pancras schoolchildren on a summer excursion to Childwickbury Manor, where they were entertained with 'steam merry go rounds, swings and coconut shies, and a sumptuous tea'. He did the same the following summer for Marylebone children.

Sir John was known for his philanthropy, love of sport, and assistance to his local community. It is therefore not surprising that the cricket club members approached him for help. The Council were also appreciative of his intention to give land and money for not only a sports ground but also a public park and recreation ground, something the city lacked. The benefactor would obviously have had strong views on how the land that he paid for was to be used. In a letter to the City Council in 1892, setting out his proposals, Sir John wrote, 'As regards the cricket ground, I consider cricket and athletics sports as great factors in the development of the English race' and 'One of my great objects is to develop cricket in the county as I quite agree with the saying that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the Eton Playing Fields'.

The cricket field was surrounded by a running track and cycle track, both banked. Here Sir John was adamant that the cycle track surface was to be of cinders, not wood (a faster surface), as it was for ordinary folk to use, not just a few elite members of a cycling club. There was also a football pitch, tennis courts and bowls. Overlooking the cricket ground he built a pavilion which could accommodate 300-400 spectators, unusually large for one in a public park; but he hoped that this would become the home of the county cricket club.



OPENING OF THE NEW PARK, ST. ALBANS
From a photograph by Fredk. Downer, Watford

Cricket Pavilion Circa 1900

The park was laid out in quite a simple way on flat ground, although there was a steep bank alongside Hatfield Road where it rose up to the bridge over the railway. There was a bandstand (Victorian curly cast-iron with a heather-thatched roof), and Sir John's wife donated a polished granite drinking fountain. By the entrance gates between the park and the recreation ground a Gothic-style lodge was built for the superintendent. Both the pavilion and the lodge were designed by the district surveyor and built by the local firm of Miskin's.

William Paul's nursery at Waltham Cross supplied 11,000 trees, shrubs and bedding plants for the beds near the lodge. The trees included a variety of conifers, hollies, limes, chestnuts, Ailanthus and others, many of which remain today. The formal bedding was restricted because Sir John did not

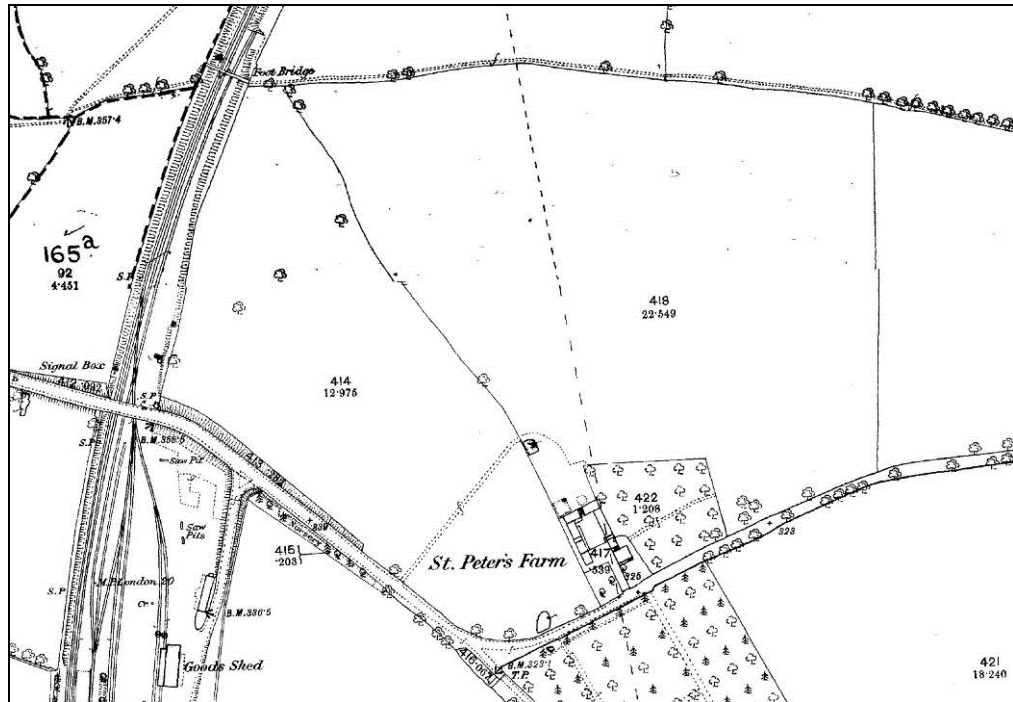
want the continuing upkeep to be a burden on the ratepayers. The recreation ground and the park were laid out by Mr Ford, the district surveyor. A superintendent, selected from ninety-five applicants, was appointed by the newly formed Park Committee at thirty shillings a week, with residence (in the park lodge) and water free.

The formal opening was carried out by the Duke of Cambridge: some sources claim that the park was named to commemorate the Duke of Clarence, who had died in 1892, but it is more likely that the name came from Blundell-Maple's London house, as did his firm's sports and music clubs. The usual speeches were made (unfortunately in the rain) and in the evening there was a great firework display. A dinner was held at the Town Hall, and the local newspaper published a special supplement, which was so popular it had to be reprinted.

The new Park Committee felt that the park would be 'absolutely self-supporting' and had reasonable grounds for anticipating 'that it will bring in a revenue which should go far to meet if not exceed the costs of maintenance of the unenclosed portion of the ground'. However, contrary to earlier hopes, expenditure soon proved higher than receipts, by £20 in 1897-8, and for the year ending March 1899 the figures were £400 for the park and recreation ground against an income of £130.

By 1927 lettings of sporting facilities in Clarence Park included: St Albans City FC; St Albans Gents' Hockey Club; Mid Herts Ladies' Lacrosse Club; Miss Sheehan's School; Clare House School and Central School for Girls for hockey and St Albans City Athletics Club. The park and recreation ground were obviously successful and well used; however, it was not until the late 1920s that public toilets were built at the corner of Clarence Road and Hatfield Road, with entrances from the park and the road.

When Clarence Park was first opened it was really on the eastern edge of the city, with only the cemetery and a few houses to the east along Hatfield Road; one comment at the time was that it was too far from the centre of town. The road that Earl Spencer demanded was soon occupied by substantial detached and semi-detached Victorian and Edwardian villas, many with front balconies overlooking the park. The development of Clarence Park and its adjacent housing was clearly one factor in the expansion of St Albans.



© LandMark Information Group
Figure 1: Former agricultural land that formed Clarence Park (1880)

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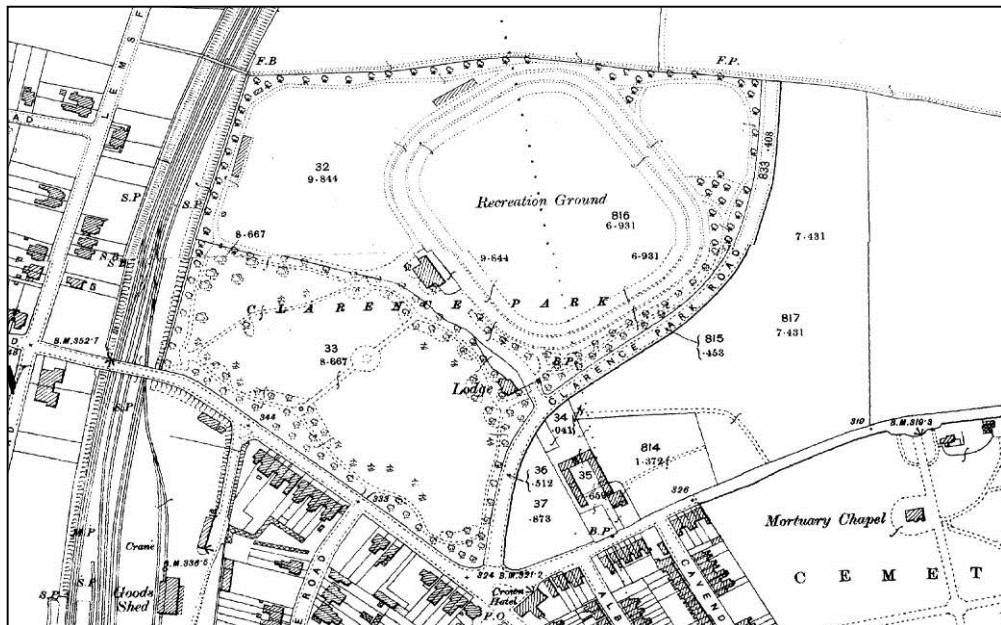


Figure 2: Map of Clarence Park (1900)



Figure 3: Early picture of Clarence Park (c1900)

2.6.2 CONVEYANCE

There are two separate deeds of conveyance that relate to Clarence Park. Both were signed on 23 July 1894 between Sir John and the Mayor Alderman and citizens of the City of St Albans.

The first conveyance relates to the Recreation Ground and states that the Ground should be held for the purposes of the Recreation Grounds Act 1859 (since superseded by the Charities Act 2011, Chapter 25) subject to a number of other reservations, restrictions and conditions set out in the conveyance. The Council is the corporate Trust and the City Neighbourhood Committee act as the Trustees. Over time the Trust deeds have become out dated with 21st Century park activities and what is expected. So there may be a need to update these Deeds to allow for the Trust to be able to help support the running of the Park in the future.

The second conveyance relates to the Public Park and Pleasure Ground and states that it should be used for the benefit of the community of St Albans subject to a number of other reservations, restrictions and conditions set out in the conveyance. This part of the park is not covered by the Trust and is under the sole ownership of the Council.

2.7 HABITATS & WILDLIFE

From an ecological point of view Clarence Park is a green island, with the adjoining railway land serving as a linking wildlife corridor, although this benefit is diminished by the Railway's practice of widespread tree felling. However, the adjoining housing areas have sizeable gardens with plenty of mature tree planting.

Although Clarence Park is situated in a fairly densely populated area of St Albans and is managed largely for its recreation and amenity value, it is still

possible for it to provide ecological benefits. These benefits include providing habitats for insects, and a hunting ground for predators of insects such as birds. On-going practical conservation measures include:-

- Installing bird boxes and bat boxes
- Placing small piles of logs at the back of shrub borders and under tree screens, to provide habitats for small mammals and insects
- New shrub planting to include species attractive to birds and insects.
- Reduction in the use of pesticides.
- Sowing nectar rich plants through the annual seeding programme
- Identifying areas where grass can be left longer

In 2010 the Herts Biological Records Centre undertook a baseline study on the park (see 6.8.1). They found that due to the nature of the formal planting and closely mown grass, the park is very limited in natural habitats. They have also given a number of actions to highlight potential improvements that could be carried out in the park.

2.7.1 GRASSLAND

The grassland is largely close mown, amenity grassland with areas of species poor semi-improved grassland. Some is managed specifically for sports activity and other areas for informal recreation. Limited areas have been left to grow long and / or planted with nectar-rich flowering plants to provide more ecological and visual interest.

2.7.2 TREES

The park contains a wide variety of trees, with many unusual but not rare species. They are extensively planted around the park boundaries, and along paths and roads, leaving the open spaces and sports areas free for use. The Council has adopted a policy of taking every opportunity to increase the range of unusual tree species.

There is a healthy interest in the donation of memorial trees, which the Council is happy to accommodate. The Council carries out tree condition surveys every three years and uses this information to develop a planned planting and maintenance regime and budget accordingly. This identifies locations and species for future memorial trees.

2.7.3 SHRUBS

The park contains a number of wide boundary shrub borders, especially in the recreation ground. A replacement planting programme has started and will continue, as many of the borders have empty spaces and older woody species that are past their best. Further planting phases need to be built into the annual plans. Due to the lack of light due to the Holly trees, the steep bank along Hatfield Road doesn't support any other vegetation and is prone to erosion. Work such as selective thinning of the hollies and replanting will be investigated as a solution to stabilise the bank.

As part of the grounds maintenance contract the contractor is required to mulch all shrub borders yearly.

2.7.4 ROSES

The park is one of the few areas where the Council is able to maintain old fashioned rose beds, including climbing roses. Together with the annual seeding this planting provides a colourful ornamental corner in the park. The climbing roses are supported on a framework that runs along the edge of one of the paths. Some of the rose beds are in need of further planting. We may look at external sponsorship opportunities to fund these planting improvements

2.7.5 ANNUAL SEEDING

In the autumn of 2011 the bank along one side of the Sensory Garden site was sown with annual seeding, with a mixture of flowering plants including wild flowers.

In 2012 the Council agreed on a more sustainable approach to its floral displays. Instead of bedding, the Council planted annual seeding. Although it took a while to establish the results were better than expected. The public commented on how wonderful it was to see all the different flowers and how many insects they could see. It is planned to extend wildflower planting onto some of the grassed areas to provide a meadow effect.

2.8 ACCESS, FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

2.8.1 ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

The pedestrian access points and the car park link up with a network of internal park paths that serve the whole park. The path layout takes the form of two interlocking circular routes around the park, and their condition allows good access for all users. A yearly maintenance programme has been developed to concentrate limited resources to the areas of path that need to be relayed.

The paths and car parks in the park are surfaced with tarmac with concrete edges. The paths are generally wide – at least two metres in width - and for the most part in good condition. This is due to an annual footpath repair programme which has been likened to the painting of the Forth Bridge - likely to be continuous in nature. However, the little but often approach to footpath repairs does mean that some areas have a patched appearance. In 2010 a hard surface audit was carried out on the parks footpaths.

The Grounds Maintenance Contract includes for a 6 monthly inspection of path surfaces which is fed into the asset and property team to undertake repairs.

2.8.2 SITE ENTRANCES

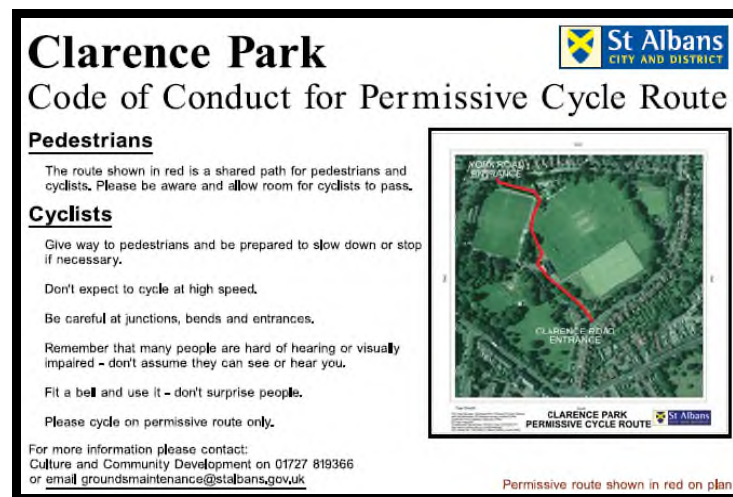
There are five pedestrian entry points, giving access from three sides of the park. The fourth side is bounded by the railway line. All pedestrian entrances give good level safe access, following the construction of the accessramp off

Hatfield Road, where the park's ground level is significantly lower than the road level. However due to its wooden construction, more and more of the ramp has to be renewed. There will need to be a separate project and associated user consultation to look at the possible options for refurbishment. (such as design location and materials used) this project has progressed and the design and consultation stage have been completed. The tender for supply and installation will go out in early 2016 for completion in summer 2016

Opening and closing times, currently dawn and dusk, apply to entrances

2.8.3 CYCLE ROUTES

The Council has adopted a policy of encouraging off-road routes for cyclists, and this includes a permissive cycle route across the park, which for safety reasons has been identified with site signage as shown below:



At present the cycle route across the park does not link up with designated cycle paths on the adjoining roads, but does provide cyclists with a safer way of avoiding a busy road junction in Hatfield Road. The Alban Way railway trail, which forms route 61 of the national cycle network, passes near to the park and is going to be part of the City wide Green Ring Project.

2.8.4 CAR PARKS

The infrastructure of roads and paths around Clarence Park provide good vehicle and pedestrian access to the park. There is one public vehicle entrance, serving a public car park, and further restricted access points for maintenance traffic and some sports clubs that use the park. There is a charge for the car park, Monday to Friday, in an effort to address the reduction of car park capacity caused by non-users seeking free alternatives to paying on-street or station parking charges. The first 3 hours of parking in the park are free, and then graduated charges are applied.

2.8.5 RAIL LINKS

Rail links to the park are very good and close, with St Albans main railway station within 5 minutes' walk. This gives good links to London to the south,

and Harpenden and Luton to the north. The park is only 20 minutes by train from St Pancras Station in London. Rail users use the park as a cut through to the station.

2.8.6 ATTRACTIONS

Play Area

The children's play area is a new development to the original design, but something that is now expected in a public park. With good access and regular supervision from site staff, the play area has developed its range of equipment, including items specifically catering for the disabled, and is one of the most popular and heavily used of its type in the district. Due to this high usage a number of the pieces of equipment are in need of a renovation or replacement. A specific project and user consultation process will be carried out within the timeframe of this management plan, to understand what the user's would like to see in the play area.

Fitness Equipment

The Council has installed fitness based equipment aimed at teenagers. An unfenced grass area was selected away from the existing children's play area. The fitness based equipment provides an element of challenge and competition, and a higher level of risk. It has proved popular, not only with teenagers but also with other park users who use the park to exercise. Once again most of the equipment will need to be replaced within this management plan and will form part of the consultation of the play area project.

Due to the popularity of the basketball area and extensive use, hard surfaces and safety surfaces were introduced in 2009, which reduce wear and tear on the grass, and improve the quality of play.

Sensory Garden

This project was developed from the on-going commitment by the Council to enhance and manage the park through the involvement of the local community and working with local partners and through the creative consultation work lead by the Green Heart Partnership.

St Albans District Council commissioned an organisation called Groundwork Hertfordshire to develop a project proposal that sought to address the following hopes and issues that had been raised by the community and local authority officers:

- development of areas for environmental and cultural education
- development of opportunities for involvement and use by the local Asian community
- creation of a sensory themed area
- enhanced areas for wildlife
- creative and practical links with local schools
- development of currently underused areas for community / wildlife benefit
- opportunities for awareness activities to address issues of disability
- opportunities for development of community art and other creative involvement

Groundwork worked closely and consulted with the St Albans Disability and Access Group, local schools and the Asian Community Group to come up with an approved design which was constructed on site during April/May 2008. After the hard landscaping was completed, Groundwork organised a community planting day on 10th June 2008, in the presence of the Mayor. The same people who had worked with Groundwork on the design were invited back to carry out the planting.

The project has since been awarded second place in the East of England Equalities Award for 2008. The judges commented that the whole project and process was “An inspirational approach to community involvement with benefits that encompass the range of diversity”. In 2009 the garden and the whole process starting with the Green Heart consultation was entered under the diversity section of the annual Municipal Journal awards, and was short listed in the final four places.



2.8.7 SPORTS FACILITIES

Clarence Park has the following sports facilities:

- Artificial Turf Pitch, catering for hockey and tennis
- Bowls Green and Clubhouse
- Cricket Pavilion and Cricket Square and all weather nets facility
- Croquet Lawn
- Football pitch (St Albans City Football Club)

Artificial turf pitch

Originally constructed in 1988 the artificial turf pitch situated on the eastern side of the park is currently licensed to St Albans Hockey Club. The agreement gives the club exclusive use of the pitch at certain times. At other times the pitch is regularly used by members of the local community, local sports clubs and schools, and laid out for tennis in the summer.

In 2004 the Council replaced the existing artificial turf pitch with a new sand-filled surface, laid onto the existing fully engineered base.

The pitch is enclosed by weld mesh fencing and has floodlighting, owned by the Hockey Club for evening use. Planning restrictions prevent the use of the lights for football training. In 2012/13 the Hockey Club acquired pitches at a new site just outside the city due to the need for more playing pitches. However, the club still use the astro-turf pitch for weekend games/ training and the pavilion as a social hub. The Council will be investigating whether the artificial pitch can be used in the winter for other activities such as 5-a-side football under floodlights.

Bowls Green and Clubhouse

Situated in the north-east corner of the park St Albans Bowling Club has a licence for the land on which their clubhouse is built. The club also has a separate lease allowing them match day car parking on the grass area adjacent to their clubhouse. The club have an exclusive vehicle access to the park via Clarence Road.

During the winter period 2012/13 the Council assisted the bowls club in laying a grass protective matting to allow for more parking.

Cricket Pavilion, Square and Nets

Cricket was very close to the heart of Clarence Park's founder, Sir John Blundell-Maple. As such the centre piece of the original park was an impressive cricket pavilion and square. Over the years the facility has been the venue for many high profile matches and is still considered to be of county standard.

The cricket facility is now home to St Albans Cricket Club who share the pavilion with the hockey club. The maintenance of the square is carried out by the Council's grounds maintenance contractor.

In 2010 the Cricket Club approached the Council with a plan to change the putting area into a 4 lane all weather cricket net facility. The nets were be funded by the English Cricket Board. Although the nets will be primarily used by the St Albans Cricket Club, the club will be undertaking an open invitation for members of the public to undertake taster sessions or allow one of the four lanes to be used by the public when the nets are open.

In 2014 the Cricket Club funded the refurbishment of the cricket square so that it meets the standard for County cricket.

Croquet Lawn

Developed in response to local demand in the 1980's, the croquet lawn is largely used by St Albans Croquet Club but is also available for public use. The lawn's surface has suffered during previous years from misuse by young people, who are using it for football practice. It is surrounded on two sides by fencing, and this fact and the flat surface makes it attractive to people for this purpose. Warning signs have been ignored, and so new measures have been introduced to protect the lawn. The most successful measure has been to utilise one third of the artificial surface, previously used for tennis during the summer, as a new free area for football training.

During 2007 the Council funded the provision of new equipment shed for the Croquet Club, which has been positioned next to the croquet lawn, at the side

of the public toilets. The shed is provided with electricity, and water can be obtained next door at the toilets. This new shed has allowed the club to move its equipment out of the entrance kiosk by the park's front gate, and this building is now being developed into an information centre.

Football Pitch and Club house

Football has been played in Clarence Park since its opening in 1894 and St Albans City Football Club have played there since 1908. The football ground includes changing rooms, public spectator stands and a clubhouse. It is now licensed to the football club until 2015. As previously mentioned within the plan, the football club is open to the public during non-match times and the pitch and changing facilities can be booked out (charges apply) by the public on request to the football club.

2.8.8 FENCING

The park is provided with two metre high oak palisade type fencing on all sides except on its railway boundary. The gates are also of a wooden construction, and both the fence and the gates still closely match the original fence provided when the park was laid out in 1894. The main entrance gates were replaced in September 2006, using green oak, but still remaining true to the original design. Repairs to the fencing and gates are carried out using the same traditional materials.

The football ground is licensed to St Albans City Football Club, a semi-professional club. The club's ambition to progress to a higher league has led to the erection of a secure tall metal fence around parts of the ground. Shrub planting is being used to lessen the visual impact of this fence.

Rail track have replaced their previous wooden boundary fencing with a new, taller metal palisade fence at the end of 2007.

Around the perimeter of the cricket pitch Heritage Lottery funding has allowed the Council to restore the metal bollards linked with metal chains, which was an original feature of the park

2.8.9 PARK FURNITURE

Benches

The Council has standardised the type of bench used in the Parks. This allows for a uniform look throughout the park but also allows for quick replacement of damaged sections. Occasionally the Council installs memorial benches, when suitable benches are donated to the Council. The long term maintenance and refurbishment of the benches, including annual staining / painting, is included within the grounds maintenance contract.

On an area of park outside the privately run restaurant called Verdi's, the Council has licensed the restaurant to provide a number of picnic style benches for public and customer use. These are set on a specially designed hard surface area, with some nearby wooden animals to occupy children whilst their parents take refreshments.

Bins

The parks is provided with both litter and dog refuse bins, which are kept clean and regularly emptied by the contract maintenance staff. The positioning of the dog bins was determined with the help and advice of the dog walkers themselves. However, since a change in the law deemed that dog waste is no longer classified as clinical waste, it can be disposed of in ordinary waste bins. The Council therefore has a non-replacement strategy for dog refuse only bins.

The Council introduced a new recycling bin in early 2008, placing it by the picnic tables outside Verdi's restaurant. There has been a mixed response by the public, in the way that they have used it, with many people using the bin as a general rubbish bin. The Council plans to increase the number of recycling bins in the park and is changing to dual use bins, with containers for both recycling and general waste, over the next few years. This needs to be accompanied by a public education programme.

2.8.10 SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION

Five park notice boards offer opportunities to pass information on to the public and park users. In particular they allow the display of the annual action plan map. One of the notice boards is located at the busy entrance by the Verdi's restaurant. It is hoped that this initiative will attract the notice of large numbers of people who pass by the park, but who don't necessarily appreciate what is happening within the park.

There is also a leaflet for the site, providing information on the history and facilities as well as a tree trail.

2.8.11 CATERING FACILITIES

Verdi's restaurant, which is situated at the corner of the park where Hatfield Road joins Clarence Road, is an Italian restaurant which provides food and drinks to local residents and users of the park, although it is managed privately and is independent from the park. Its open aspect into the park offers additional security in the evenings.

There is occasional interest from mobile caterers such as ice cream vans, who visit the park illegally when weather conditions make it worthwhile. The Council has therefore included Clarence Park in an ice cream / catering concession, which includes Verulamium Park, Rothamsted Park and Nomansland Common. This concession is up for renewal in 2015.

2.8.12 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

There are two sets of public toilets situated in the park. One near the children's play area, and one near the Bowling Green.

The public toilets have provision for the disabled, and are opened and inspected through the grounds maintenance contract and any damage reported to the Council for action. Our waste management contractor is responsible for the cleaning.

Further toilet facilities are available for spectators at the football ground, within the Cricket Pavilion, the Contractors Depot and the Bowls clubhouse.
In spring 2016 the bowling green toilets were refurbished

2.8.13 BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

There are a number of buildings situated in Clarence Park. Some of these buildings are managed directly by the Community Services Department, and others are leased to individuals or organisations.

Name	Location	Occupancy/Use	Maint / Repairs responsibilities
Bowls Clubhouse	North-east corner of the park	St Albans Bowling Club	Bowls Club
Bandstand	Centre of formal park area	Used for public performances	SADC
Cricket Pavilion	Adjacent to the main public car park	St Albans Cricket and Hockey Association	External - SADC Internal - Clubs
Croquet Club shed	Adjacent to public toilets.	St Albans Croquet Club	SADC
Football Stadium	North-west area of park	St Albans City Football Club	St Albans City Football Club
Grounds Maintenance Depot	North area of the park adjacent to York Road	John O'Conner Ltd	John O'Conner
Park Keeper's Lodge	Adjacent to the main entrance of the park	Let as a private dwelling	SADC
Toilet Blocks (Two)	1 near the children's play area and 1 adjacent to the bowls green.	Public use	SADC
Entrance Kiosks (Three)	Two form part of the Football Ground, the third is situated at Clarence Road park entrance	Two utilised by the Football Club as turnstile entrances. The third being developed into new Information Building.	Football club and SADC
Verdi's Restaurant	Southern entrance to the park	Licensed to an individual for use as a restaurant	Restaurant Owner

2.8.14 LEASES & ARRANGEMENTS

The management and development of Clarence Park needs to take into account a number of lease agreements between the Council and various stakeholder groups. These include:

- Artificial Turf Pitch

The Artificial Turf Pitch is currently licensed to St Albans Hockey Club for use during the following times:

- Monday and Wednesday: 6.00 pm to 8.45 pm
- Tuesday and Thursday: 6.45 pm to 8.45 pm
- Saturday: 10.30 am to 6.00 pm
- Sunday: 9.00 am to 4.00 pm

- Bowls Green and Club House

St Albans Bowling Club have an agreement covering the bowls green, and a licence allowing them to have their clubhouse on park land next to the green. In addition, under a separate arrangement club members are allowed to park on the grass area adjacent to the clubhouse. The bowls club continue to seek funding to provide a new club house.

- Clarence Park Lodge

Pre-2014 the Lodge was occupied by the grounds maintenance contractor under a lease agreement which was connected to the grounds maintenance contract. The re-tendering of the contract has allowed the Council to remove this link. The building has been renovated and is being let as a private residential dwelling, thereby increasing income generation and helping to maintain the fabric of the building for future years.

- Clarence Park Depot

The use of the depot is linked to the operation of the grounds maintenance contract with John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd, Under the terms of the contract the depot is leased to John O'Conner under a full repairing Licence agreement. A condition survey was carried out in 2013 and where applicable works form part of the licence agreement to be carried out in the first 3 years of the Grounds Maintenance Contract.

- Football Ground and Stand

The football ground and stand are licensed to St Albans City Football Club. The licensee is responsible for all maintenance related to the ground and stand. The Licence agreement will be reviewed in 2015 to ensure the current arrangements are working. The licensee is responsible for all management and maintenance related to the ground and buildings. These responsibilities have been laid out in the licence and the agreed programme of works must be completed by the end of the initial licence period. Such works include refurbishment of the entrance kiosks.

- Cricket Pavilion

The Pavilion is licensed to St Albans Cricket and Hockey Association (SACHA). The licensee is responsible for keeping the interior of the premises in good repair and decorative order. The Council is responsible for maintaining the exterior of the pavilion. There is concern about the fabric of the building with signs of dry rot present. The Council's estates department is currently in negotiations with SACHA to produce a new licence. Under the current License there is very little use by the

community. It is envisaged that the new license will allow the Council to apply for external funding for improvements, full renovation of the pavilion, improved disabled access , which will in turn allow a more varied use of the pavilion which will bring an income in for on-going repairs and maintenance. This project would be combined with infrastructure improvements would be the major project of this management plan and would require significant external funding and as well as match funding. Recent inspections have uncover significant dry rot. The Council is working with the Cricket and Hockey Club to rectify these problems.



Picture of Cricket pavilion in 1894

- Verdi's Restaurant

The Restaurant is situated on land almost entirely outside the boundary of the park. However it does have a licence allowing the provision of picnic tables within the park, and park users are allowed to use this facility without having to be a customer of the restaurant. The Parks team and Council's Property team liaise with the restaurant owner regarding the general upkeep of the property. Previous comments from external parties regarding the appearance of the restaurant and its effect on the park as a welcoming park have been noted and we are working with the owner to make the restaurant more inviting.



Picture of side entrance to Verdi's Restaurant

2.9 COMMUNITY, MANAGEMENT & EVENTS

2.9.1 CLARENCE PARK CONSULTATIVE FORUM

While the direct management responsibility for the park rests with the Council, the Council encourages community involvement and the park's other stakeholders in its management.

The Consultative Park Forum was created in 1993 to encourage stakeholder and community involvement in the management and development of the Park. The terms of reference were to:

- Meet at least twice a year to discuss the issues that affect Clarence Park.
- Provide an active line of communication for local groups, organisations and sports clubs with an interest in the well-being and future enhancement of the park.
- Encourage and channel active support from the community and park users, through discussion of issues and dissemination of information.
- Deal with issues of mutual interest to all users and not with specific issues between individuals or parties.
- Act as a discussion group only with the views of the Forum being put forward to Committees as specific relevant issues arise.

The Forum continues to have a significant input into the development of the park and now has a membership that includes Council Officers, Ward Councillors and representatives from:

St Albans Bowling Club,
St Albans City and District Council members,
St Albans City Football Club,
St Albans Civic Society,
St Albans Cricket Club,

St Albans Croquet Club,
St Albans Hockey Club,
St Albans Police Community Team,
Clarence Park Residents Association,
Local User Groups
Dog walkers
Young people
John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd

The Forum is now administered directly through Corporate Services, and chaired by the local Ward Member. Minutes and agendas are action based, and monitor and evaluate the progress of the management plan.

Previous minutes and agendas can be found on the Council's website using the link:

<http://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?XXR=0&Year=2014&Clid=144&MD=ielistmeetings&>

2.9.2 SITE MANAGEMENT

The basic requirements of the grounds maintenance contract, for Clarence Park, are summarised in the table shown in 6.8.2. The specification is primarily performance based, which means that the contractor is required to maintain to a specified standard, rather than to carry out a predetermined number of operations.

2.9.3 EVENTS

Being a small park, with over half the site allocated to sports, there are limited opportunities for public events. However the Council is very open to encouraging such opportunities, and has identified marketing and income generating events an area to develop. These events could include open air cinema during summer evenings and if Pavilion is renovated using it private meeting rooms and possible a wedding location.

Following the rebuilding of the bandstand, as part of the Heritage Lottery works, the Council has sponsored the annual Summer Sounds concert, featuring the bandstand. Local bands and musicians are invited to take part, and the event is free to all spectators who turn up in large numbers to enjoy. The Council and its Partners will also look into other music events and consult with a local group <http://www.folkstockartsfoundation.com/>

2.9.4 ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Council, through partnership working with contractors and community partners, has designed and developed activity programmes including Play in the Parks. The aim is to engage children and young people in quality and inclusive play opportunities; with each programme being based on an assessment of local needs, and designed to address gaps in local provision. Two of these programmes have included Clarence Park on the list of sites for delivery.

2.9.5 HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDING

Support from the Heritage Lottery Fund Urban Parks Programme in 1997 enabled significant improvement and restoration work to be undertaken. Projects included:

- Extension to toddlers playground
- Footpath resurfacing
- Paving to the picnic table area and the addition of play equipment
- Planting
- Provision of a new bandstand of similar size to the original
- Refurbishment of the perimeter fence
- Renewal of park furniture
- Renewal of Hatfield Road access making the entrance accessible for people with disabilities
- Replacement of bollards and chains around the cricket area
- Restoration of Aberdeen granite drinking fountain
- Restoration and repair of the kiosks
- Work to access road and parking



Picture of Bandstand

A number of the features of the park now need renovating again. Applying for external grants to improve the infrastructure and fabric of the park will be a key action in the management of the park in the coming years.

3 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

3.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

3.1.1 SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION

Feedback from Green Flag and users has highlighted a need to improve on interpretative signs at some of the park's important historical features the Council also plans to reprint the site leaflet. This will be addressed in the annual action plans and funding sought.

3.1.2 TODDLER'S PLAY AREA

At Clarence Park, the Council is developing a wider range of equipment that can also cater for the disabled, taking advantage of good access and nearby parking. It is also the only District Council playground to provide sand play, which is by far the most popular feature of the playground.

Although the playground is well used, and frequently packed to capacity, its design and choice of equipment has grown in a disorganised manner. All equipment is nearing the end of its use, and this presents an opportunity to take a fresh look at the design and layout.

A specific consultation and an updated design for the play area will be prepared as part of the Action Plan. The working group has now been set up

3.2 HEALTHY, SAFE & SECURE

3.2.1 OPENING TIMES

The park entrances are currently opened at dawn and closed at dusk. This has caused confusion for the public and so the Council is looking at the introduction of set opening times. The Council now has opening times on each of the entrances

3.2.2 PARK RANGER

The Grounds Maintenance contractor is required to provide a Park Ranger service during daylight hours seven days per week. The Park Ranger is clearly identifiable, and available to address customer enquiries and deter anti-social behaviour.
(See *section 3.2 Grounds Maintenance in main plan*)

3.2.3 LIGHTING

Clarence Park has no internal path lighting, principally because the park is locked at dusk.

3.2.4 PATHS, ROAD AND CYCLE PATHS

The six-monthly hard surface audit on the park's footpaths has highlighted that a number sections of the paths will need replacement in the coming years but also brought to our attention whether certain paths (for example the lower path) need to be re-tarmaced or whether another type of surface would be better suited.

Part of the Heritage Lottery Fund works saw an introduction of an experimental section of gravel path, replacing existing tarmac for about 50 linear metres. The idea was to see if this change of surface could be better suited to paths running close to mature tree roots, and also stand up to modern day wear and tear, whilst being more sympathetic and closer to the original park environment. The result, after several years of use, has been a success in many ways, but has not been popular with the public for aesthetic and practical reasons, and so has not been expanded. In 2013 the Council tarmaced over this section to improve the surface for a range of users and ages.

3.3 CLEAN & WELL MAINTAINED

3.3.1 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

The play area is enclosed by a fence and the site maintenance is included within the grounds maintenance contract. The contract specification requires the contractor to carry out weekly recorded inspections, six-monthly servicing and minor repairs. More major repairs and improvements are carried out by the Council.

In addition to the contractor's weekly inspection, the whole site is inspected annually in December, by an independent company. The company's detailed annual report is used by the Council to guide its annual playground repairs and improvements programme, with the work carried out during the following April to October period.

3.3.2 GENERAL PATH SWEEPING

The Grounds Maintenance Contractor is required to regularly sweep all paths and report any defects to the Council. Through a 6 monthly hard surface audit

3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

The park is managed in line with the Council's policies on recycling, pesticide use, etc. as described in Chapter 2 of the Main Open Space Management Plan. Additional opportunities to make use of materials generated from site activities such as tree management and conservation activities should be investigated as opportunities arise.

3.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

Several of the park buildings are of historic interest and some, including the Cricket Pavilion, are in need of significant maintenance and / or restoration. External funding will be required to support this work and an application to, for example, Heritage Lottery Fund, should be made to help with the costs involved.

3.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In addition to the park forum and various schemes promoted by the sports clubs, new initiatives need to be found and developed to encourage further community involvement in the Park. For example guide walks in the park,

Ranger volunteer working party days and sports clubs involved in maintenance.

3.7 PROMOTION

In order to ensure that we engage with a wide range of people, The Council needs to communicate information through varied forms of media. This should include the internet, social media, local notices and press releases.

4. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

A WELCOMING PLACE

To make Clarence Park a welcoming site with inviting entrances and a high standard of features and facilities within that will encourage long stays and repeat visits.

- A1 Improve all site entrances to form welcoming, appealing gateways to the Park
- A2 Ensure that visitors are able to successfully navigate to, from, and around the Park
- A3 Improve and upgrade existing recreational facilities as required; provide new facilities where a need and/or opportunity has been identified

B HEALTHY, SAFE & SECURE

To ensure that visitors to Clarence Park feel safe and able to explore and enjoy the whole site at all times.

- B1 Ensure that visitors feel safe and secure in all areas of the Park
- B2 Maintain a suitable network of accessible paths and transport routes throughout the Park
- B3 Maintain a regular staff presence within Clarence Park
- B4 Continue to carry out regular surveys and inspections of the trees and structures within the Park to ensure their integrity

C CLEAN & WELL MAINTAINED

To maintain Clarence Park to the highest of standards so that it is in peak condition for every visitor.

- C1 Carry out in conjunction with licensees a programme of regular monitoring and reactionary maintenance to ensure that all fixtures, fittings and buildings are maintained in a serviceable, safe and attractive condition.
- C2 Remove redundant structures and furniture in poor condition; replace with uniform design of furniture
- C3 Ensure the upkeep of all buildings in a safe and serviceable condition, and used to their full potential and carry out repair and maintenance work in a timely fashion so as to limit the deterioration of the fabric of the buildings.

D SUSTAINABILITY

To ensure compliance with the council's environmental policies and seek sustainable activities and solutions relevant to the special nature of the site

- D1 Make the most of any opportunities to reuse generated by-products arising from the site
- D2 Continuation of annual seeding schemes

D3 Using sustainable products within the park

E CONSERVATION & HERITAGE

To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage features of Clarence Park

E1 Maintaining the traditional built environment and infrastructure

E2 Develop shrub beds in line with the original layout

E3 Manage grassland throughout the Park to reflect the needs of recreation and biodiversity

E4 Improve the ecology and biodiversity value within the Park

F COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

To provide opportunities for the local community to engage with Clarence Park and to get actively involved with management of the site.

F1 Develop an annual programme of events with partners and key stakeholders and community

F2 Produce an interpretive scheme that will help foster a better understanding of Clarence Park

G MARKETING

To develop new and innovative ways to attract a wider variety of visitors to the Park, and to fully realise its value as a site of open space

G1 Develop and keep up to date Councils website and notice boards

G2 To use QR codes on notices within the park to expand information provided

G3 Update Councils leaflets to reflect changes in the Park

G4 To develop an identifiable style across all of the Council owned green spaces.

5. ACTION PLAN

YEAR 1-5 ACTION PLAN 2015-19

Projects classified with Priorities based on stakeholders input – JAN 2018

Action	When	Priority	Status
Develop entrance kiosk as an interpretation building with electricity for future use	Spring	2	Complete no interpretation in place yet
Repair steps and ramp to Hatfield Road	winter	1	Complete / phase 2 of planting winter 2017- Complete
Design draft byelaws and consult with stakeholders and public	Summer 2017	2	Delayed until open space byelaw review 2019
Investigate funding opportunities for the renewal of the park's fencing and hard surfaces renovation of buildings	Sept 2018	2	Delayed should be considered as part of a HLF bid. Match funding would need to be sort – integrated into CMS work programme 2018 to investigate potential HLF funding with possibility of undertaking a pre application. 2019 update awaiting new HLF application details and will form part of new plan. Audit completed and health and safety work completed
Increase annual seeding areas and introduce meadow areas	Spring	3	complete
Ice Cream Concession Tender renewal	Spring 18	1	No suitable company found at present
Replant rose beds around park, especially around trellis structure	Autumn 16	2	Complete
Investigate costs and constraints of using the artificial pitch for activities other than hockey in the winter months	Summer 18	2	Need to apply for change of planning, cost associated with changing- decide whether this is a viable option being discussed at jan 2019 forum
Investigate funding opportunities to improve the park buildings to include disabled access to the Cricket Pavilion to allow all year round use by community groups. Initial Project development and stakeholder consultation.	Sept 18	1	Part of larger project HLF / social enterprise project See above

Work in close partnership with leaseholders of Verdi's to bring the restaurant up to a standard that enhances peoples experience and perception of the park	Spring 18	2	Ongoing –, officer in discussion regarding outdoor seating area and unauthorised bin store
Improve the park's page on the Council's website and create a parks wide Facebook page	Summer 16	1	complete, park site updates and Clarence park Herts parks app website
Create new park leaflet in the style of other SADC open spaces	Summer 17	3	Delayed, Part of larger parks update on leaflets and signage and HLF project – CMS work programme
To engage local volunteers and groups to carry out wildlife surveys to identify what habitats need to be improved / provided	Spring – autumn 18	2	Delayed – JOC to investigate in 2018 possible work with groups on social enterprise
Explore set times on opening and closing park	Spring 17	1	complete
Planting bulbs under trees	autumn	2	complete
Develop and introduce new tree identification labels on notable trees	Summer 18	3	Delayed till new plan part of interpretation project
To design and plant an annual shrub border replacement programme, to reflect original planting schemes, and to encourage wildlife.	Winter 17/18	2	Winter 2018/19 replanted – perennial mix in borders
Carry out 3-year tree survey and plan works as required	Autumn 17	1	Oct 2017 completed- non Health and safety works to be carried out in new financial year
Historic investigation of air raid shelter	Summer	3	Delayed Part of HLF bid
Install speed humps	Winter 2018	1	complete
Undertake phase 1 of Hatfield Road bank works	Winter 18	2	Delayed due to lack of budgets. tree survey has identified work for budget
To prepare a redesigned internal layout of the children's play area for public consultation, pending the need to replace all equipment in the near future. also Replace fitness equipment	summer 2016	1	New play area working group set up (currently funding of £150k has been secured) Fitness equipment replacement complete
Design and consult on vegetation management and native species replanting along the bank at Hatfield road boundary	Summer 18	2	Delayed until trees thinned

NEW MATTERS ARISING	when	priority	Status
Rose trellis repair	Winter 17	2	Complete
Cricket pavilion was in disrepair and window sills were crumbling	Winter 17	1	Sections of window will be replaced, faux door near changing rooms to be replaced – completed
Astro dividing net replacement due to vandalism	Spring Summer 18	1	JOC to replace after hockey season- complete
Fence panels need replacing	Autumn 17	1	Sections of fence panels have been replaced. Local contractor has 10 slats in storage
Cutting vegetation of fencing	Winter 17	2	JOC have started cutting back laurel etc off fence line where applicable
Replace broken floodlight bulbs	Nov 17		completed
Investigate introducing hibernacula for animals	Dec 2019	1	Working with local 6 th form collage
Footpath audit and repairs	August 2018	1	Audit completed and first tranche of works completed

6. APPENDIX

6.1 CLARENCE PARK WILDLIFE SURVEYS

Baseline species survey carried out by Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre

Clarence Park, St Albans
Habitat Survey
8th September 2010
M Hicks, HBRC

This survey excludes details of specimen trees within the park for which other detailed information already exists. The wooded belts are shown as plantation on the map to reflect their planted origin.

Trees / hedgerow (Area1 on map).

Mature trees include *Acer platanoides*, *Prunus avium*, *Fraxinus excelsior*. Shrubs dominated by *Ilex aquifolium*, with *Crataegus monogyna*, with ornamental *Cotoneaster* sp and *Prunus laurocerasus*.

Ornamental tree belt (Area 2)

Belt of conifer spp and shrubs, including *Cornus sanguinea*, *Prunus laurocerasus*, *Cotoneaster* sp. Other trees include *Acer* sp., *Betulus pendula*. Ground flora absent other than *Hedera helix*. Feature managed as amenity shelter belt.

Amenity Grassland (Area 3).

Small area of mown amenity grassland otherwise underused. There is potential for this to be managed as a wildflower area although it lies within one of the more formal areas within the Park. Currently it supports *Poa* spp., *Achillea millefolium*, *Hypochoeris radicata*, *Taraxacum officinale*, *Trifolium* spp.

Shrub planting area to encourage wildlife

Currently consists of ornamental shrubs including *Cornus* sp., *Symphoricarpos rivularis*, *Prunus laurocerasus* hedge with bark mulch. No ground flora. This has a limited ecological value given the species used, although as with similar areas of shrubs, they do provide cover for wildlife.

Boundary along York Road

Mature *Quercus robur* on park edge – original / remnant field edge boundary. Also mature *Prunus avium*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Acer pseudoplatanus* Adjacent *Prunus laurocerasus* shrubs, with *Ilex aquifolium*, *Cornus sanguinea*

Sensory garden very formal with several herbs. Small open ground areas with mulch. Adjacent mature *Acer campestre*, *A pseudoplatanus* and *Quercus robur* along old boundary. *Prunus avium* adjacent to sports ground.

Area 4

Wooded area S of football ground. Includes *Tilia platyphyllos*, *Acer pseudoplatanus* and *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Sorbus* sp., *Cedrus* sp, *Pinus nigra* along edge with *Ilex* shrubs. Otherwise, beneath the heavy shade there is no ground flora, only leaf litter.

There are now two gaps within the canopy which are not shaded and support open grassland. Species here include *Lolium perenne*, *Poa* sp., *Trifolium* sp., *Plantago major*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Taraxacum officinale*, *Prunella vulgaris* There is some potential for wildflower grassland to be developed in these open areas as this is perhaps the most semi-natural - or least formal - part of the site in character.

Adjacent open areas include playground facilities and regularly managed amenity grasslands, bordered by ornamental mature trees.

Area 5

Large open area of regularly mown amenity grassland. Given the bandstand, café and specimen trees, this part of the park is unlikely to support any areas of 'meadow' length grassland without detracting from the existing amenity and formal character of this part of the park. The grassland includes largely *Poa* sp., *Achillea millefolium*, *Matricaria matricarioides*, *Taraxacum officinale*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Hypochoeris radicata*, *Bellis perennis*. Bordered by shrub belt dominated by *Ilex aquifolium*, with *Acer campestre* and *Prunus spinosa*.

Site Summary

Clarence Park is formal parkland within an urban area of St Albans. It is relatively small and has an enclosed character, as well as many built structures, stands, car parks, metalled roads and paths and playing pitches which provide a very formal character to the site. The wildlife value of the site as an urban green space is reflected in the variety of habitats present – open grassland, shrubs and trees – although this interest is only likely to be local in status given its largely intensively managed nature. Its formal character will inevitably limit any significant ecological potential unless there is a considerable change to the character of the site, which given its function and location is unlikely.

However, there is some potential for enhancing some existing features as well as developing additional interest in a few places where it may be considered appropriate to do so. Opportunities for this include the following:

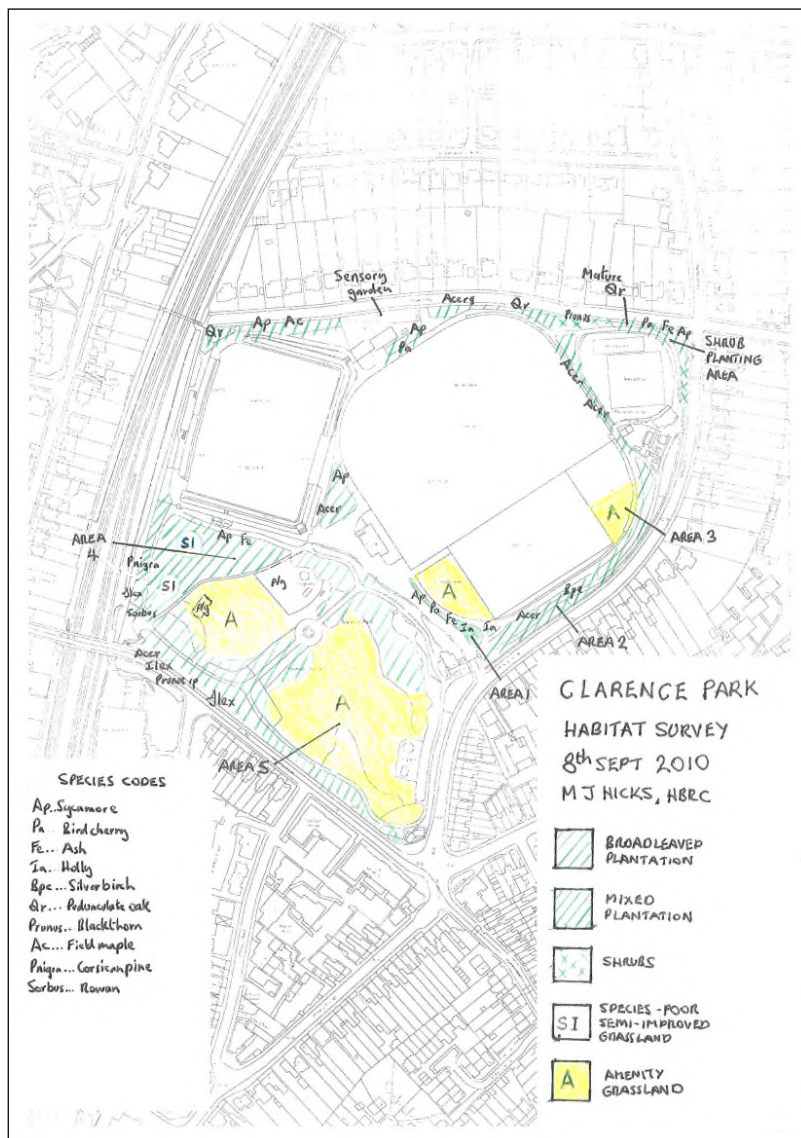
1. Where there is shrub planting to encourage wildlife, these areas should be planted with shrubs that do encourage wildlife, namely a suite of common, locally native species that will provide cover, breeding and feeding opportunities. These include hawthorn, blackthorn, elder, hazel, field maple, holly etc., some of which are already present scattered across the site. The area should be managed to retain a low shrub habit from both a visual amenity perspective but also to encourage a dense growth habit for wildlife cover. The current mix of ornamental species does not adequately provide the habitat resource that is intended.

2. Wildflower grassland potential.

i). A small area adjacent to the croquet lawn could be developed as a meadow area if the character of this part of the site could support a change in management and grassland height. It would contrast with the formal management of the surrounding areas, and consequently may add visual interest to this part of the park.

ii). Perhaps the best area to develop wildflower grassland is within the open glades within the former canopy area adjacent to the football ground in the south-west corner of the site. This is possibly the most 'wild' or 'natural' part of the whole park at least in terms of physical character and is not so intensively used or managed. Consequently it should be able to accommodate small meadow areas which will add considerably to the habitat diversity in this area and contribute towards another visual diversity within this area. We consider that this should be pursued as the most appropriate area of the Park to develop an additional and locally distinctive wildlife interest.

M Hicks HBRC 17/1/11



6.2 CLARENCE PARK GM SPECIFICATION

Operation	Standard required
Amenity grass cutting	Applies to all general grass areas, with grass heights being kept within the range of 20-35 mm. Cuttings not collected
Annual bedding	Replanted twice per year, in June and October. Supply and plant to designs supplied by the Council. Maintain as weed free, and incorporate manure into all beds before autumn planting takes place.
Shrub borders	All shrub borders are to be mulched, and the mulch topped up as required. Weeds removed and shrubs pruned as per the requirements of the species, to develop strong, healthy and stable plants where growth is not allowed to obstruct adjacent paths, buildings or grass areas.
Rose borders	Rose beds are to be kept weed free, lightly forked over in Feb/March and mulched with well rotted manure. Rose bushes are to be kept pruned according to good horticultural practice, and treated to prevent pests and disease. Climbing and rambling plants are to be kept tied back to their support structures.
Hedges	All hedges are to be cut 4 times per year, in May, July, Sept and November. The hedges are to be cut back to the start of the seasons growth, and all cuttings collected and taken to a green waste site. Certain species of hedge may not be vigorous enough to require all 4 cuts. Rogue species, growing in the hedges, are to be removed during the cutting operation.
Football ground	The Football Ground and pitch is maintained directly by the Football Club.
Cricket pitch	The cricket square is maintained to provide good quality wickets for St Albans Cricket Club, and requires specialist green keeping skills. Individual wickets are prepared and marked out before each game.
Croquet green	The croquet green requires a maintenance programme aimed at providing a fine turf surface, to include box mowing, feeding and weed control, and top dressing.
Bowls green	The bowls green is also maintained as fine turf, but has a computer controlled watering system, that allows watering to take place overnight to avoid disrupting the play during the day.
Artificial pitch	Maintenance is fairly simple, and is aimed at brushing over the sand filled surface, to stop build up of sand in certain areas. Marked out lines have to be remarked from time to time, and general litter and detritus has to be removed from the pitch surface.
Children's play area	The children's play area is inspected on a daily basis, for health and safety reasons. The contractor deals immediately with any minor repairs, and reports any major problems to the Council for action. There are quarterly and six monthly

	<p>maintenance programmes, aimed at equipment maintenance such as greasing chains and moving parts. The site also has an autumn independent engineers inspection, to check that it fully meets all current legislation requirements, and to give the Council early warning of equipment that will need replacing in a few years time.</p>
Park's furniture	<p>All seats are to be kept clean and repaired, and any graffiti removed immediately. Every seat has to be refurbished once every year, and more often if required. This involves repainting and varnishing all surfaces.</p> <p>Other parks furniture, such as bins and signs are to be kept clean and painted as required. Where damage is beyond reasonable repair, then they will be replaced.</p>
Hard surfaces	<p>Hard surfaces includes paths and roadways. They have to be swept and kept litter and debris free. Weeds and moss are to be removed, and leaves removed in the autumn. Pot holes will be repaired when they occur, and an annual repairs programme is aimed at resurfacing sections of path where the surface is starting to break up.</p>
Litter bins and dog bins	<p>To be emptied to ensure that no bin is more than three quarters full, and certainly not overflowing.</p>
General litter	<p>There is a general requirement to remove all litter when it occurs, including dog faeces, and removing leaves when they build up in the autumn.</p>
Public toilets	<p>The two sets of public toilets are opened and closed by the grounds maintenance contractor, Waste Mngt Contractor to Clean</p>
Gates and Fencing	<p>Clarence Park is locked at night, at dusk, and the contractor is responsible for locking and opening all gates every day.</p>

6.3 CONTACTS

Organisation	Role	Contact Details	Phone/email
St Albans City & District Council	Owner, Trustee (CNC) & site manager, Secretariat of the Committee, 3 Council Members on Consultative Forum	Jon Green	01727 819366 Nick.sherriff@stalbans.gov.uk
John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	Ground maintenance contractor countryside ranger	Customer care	01727 844638