

Fryent Country Park Management Plan

Photo: Hay Harvest - Richards West



2020

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Registered Charity no. 1085476

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Each section of the Management Plan is available as a separate document.

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Introduction

The Park and its habitats

Fryent Country Park is located in the London Borough of Brent, in north-west London. The Park is about 1-2km north of Wembley Stadium. The Park lies about 15km north-west of central London. The Country Park retains the countryside that was typical of this area for centuries before the surrounding areas became urban. There are hay meadows, hedgerows and green lanes, woodland, scrub, orchards, ponds and a stream. Other grassland includes acid grassland, rough grassland and mown grassland paths.

Fryent Country Park extends to 108 hectares formerly in the parishes of Harrow and Kingsbury. The Park is surrounded by suburbia and bisected by Fryent Way (the A4140). From the top of Barn Hill there are views of Wembley Stadium. An outlier from the Park includes the landscaped woodland on the greens of Brampton Grove Open Space and Basing Hill Open Space. Barn Hill, the highest point, rises to 86m and is capped by Pebble Gravel, while Gotfords Hill (63m), Beane Hill (65m) and the remainder of the Park are on London Clay. The Gaderbrook flows through the northern edge of the Park.

There are many paths and the Park is open to visitors at all times. The Capital Ring, a round London recreational route, passes through Fryent Country Park. There are short mown areas for picnics and games. Horse grazing land and a stable on the east side of the Park are under license to a private club. There is a car park at Fryent Way Car Park and pedestrian access points from the surrounding suburban roads. An Events field is situated near to the car park. The road verges and roadside mounds have natural and naturalistic vegetation schemes that reflect the local area.

While this management plan does not detail the wildlife and ecology of the park, the habitats are described briefly in the sections of this management plan. Those sections describe also why and how the habitats and features are being restored and managed. There is a reference section at the end of each habitat description listing some sources of background and more detailed information.

Fryent Country Park: as a park, farm and woodland landscape

Fryent Country Park	Comment
Park	Fryent Country Park is a Brent Council park.
Public Open Space	Fryent Country Park is Public Open Space and includes Barn Hill Open Space.
Country Park	Brent Council renamed the constituent open spaces as Fryent Country Park in 1984.
Metropolitan Open Space	In Planning terms, Metropolitan Open Space is similar to the Green Belt around conurbations but is within urban areas. MOL is designated to only some of the larger, more open, green spaces.
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation	Often shortened to SINC. Fryent Country Park is graded as a 'Metropolitan' site meaning that it is one of the sites considered as important for nature conservation to London as a whole. The full reference should read as Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.
Local Nature Reserve	Fryent Country Park is a Local Nature Reserve or LNR, under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The park was declared a LNR by Brent Council in 1991. The Masons Field Local Nature Reserve was declared in about 2011.
Farm	Fryent Country Park was (and is) farmland, with in the past, small farms at Hill Farm, Bush Farm, Little Bush Farm, Uxendon (Hill?) Farm, and other farm owners and tenants. Farming has been continuous and the main crops are now hay, fruit and timber.
Woodland	Fryent Country Park has a variety of deciduous woodland, a late 18 th century landscape scheme, hedgerows, scrub, orchards, a woodland maze, and individual trees. There are examples of coppicing, hedgelaying and other woodland techniques.
Soil Association Organic Standard	Fryent Country Park is certified to the Soil Association Organic Standard. Management work at the Country Park follows the organic standards covering the range of organic principles. No pesticides or artificial fertilisers are used and all green-waste is recycled on site. Hay, fruit and timber from the park is certified as organic. The certification has been held, and annually certified,

	since 1998. The licence number is G2194.
Locally Important Geological Site	Brent Council and London-wide partners have designated an area near to the top of Barn Hill as a Locally Important Geological Site. This is on account of the interest of the gravels.
Public Rights Of Way	There are three Public Rights Of Way (PROW) providing statutory walker etc access between communities around the Country Park.
Capital Ring	A section of the round-London Capital Ring recreational walking route is within the Country Park.
Green lanes	There are two green lanes within the Country Park. They currently have no official designation, though one is partly on a Public Right Of Way. Hell Lane or Eldestrete is about one kilometre in length and was once part of a route in and out of London. Part of this green lane was also the parish boundary between Harrow (now Wembley) and Kingsbury. The other green lane was a more local route serving local fields and farms.
Site of Archaeological Interest	Brent Council has identified several sites within Fryent Country Park that have archaeological interest.
Restrictive Covenant	Part of the Country Park is covered by restrictive covenant
Farm Conservation Plan	This Management Plan also serves, alongside other documentation, as the Farm Conservation Plan for the Country Park.
Woodland Management Plan	This Management Plan, alongside other documentation, also serves as the 5-year and 20-year Woodland Management Plan, as required for the Soil Association Organic Certification. This is linked to the FSC woodmark SLIMF (Small and Low Intensity Managed Forests) Generic Standard and Checklist.
Countryside Stewardship	The Country Park is entered into the Countryside Stewardship scheme primarily for the conservation of the hay meadow grasslands. The Park also participates in the Basic Payment Scheme. As such there is a need to adhere to cross-compliance and to maintain the land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC). Checks and records are maintained for both of these systems and Brent Council needs to make annual (by 15 th May) and other returns during the year.

Basic Payment Scheme	See above.
Masons Field	<p>Masons Field was farmland until the early 2th century, then a London Underground staff sports ground. In the 1990s, London Underground ceased use for sports and sold approximately a third of the field for housing development. Under a section 106 agreement the remainder of the field was allocated for open space. Final transfer of land ownership, on a 125-year lease was completed in 2010; and a Heritage Lottery Fund award was made in 2011 (HLF award: YH-08-17264). There is a green lane that formerly serviced several fields to the west of Old Kenton Lane including Half Yarde Meade and Honey Slough.</p>

Fryent Country Park: organisation

Responsibility	Comments
Brent Council	Land owner / manager
Barn Hill Conservation Group	Activity includes habitat restoration, creation and management, wildlife species work, footpath, access and amenity improvements, wildlife surveys and monitoring. The Group's aims include the conservation of the Park, its habitats and wildlife; improving the sustainability of the park, Nature Reserve and farm; and sustainable visitor access.
Veolia PLC	Grounds maintenance contractor to Brent Council. There is a maintenance works schedule.
Hay contractors	Hay harvesting is usually undertaken by a farmer / contractor. The contract is arranged by Brent Council.
Management Plan	The Management Plan is linked to other documentation, the details of which are not duplicated in this document, but to which reference should be made: Brent Council also maintains appropriate management systems.
Brent Biodiversity Action Plan	A long-term Biodiversity Action Plan with links to other geographic, habitat and species Biodiversity Action Plans and associated systems.
Brent Council Planning	Refer to the current Local Plan, Local Plan map, and related policies and documents. See www.Brent.gov.uk and the Planning pages. These also link to the Planning (The London Plan), Environment, and Biodiversity Plans of the Mayor of London / Greater London Authority.

Barn Hill Conservation Group: programme

Organisation / activity	Comments
Management Plan	The Management Plan is presented as Habitat sections. These should be considered also by reference to the other sections.
Techniques and standards for habitat and species conservation work	Much of the practical work is based on the traditional habitat management techniques. Many of those are detailed in, for example, the handbooks of The Conservation Volunteers, The Freshwater Habitats Trust, and guides for the management of traditional orchards. Additionally, BHCG have innovated some techniques for local use.
Training and briefing	Training in the safe and correct use of tools is provided to all volunteers.
Roe Green Walled Garden	Roe Green Walled Garden, Kingsbury, is managed by Barn Hill Conservation Group as a wildlife garden open to the public. It is also the base for the BHCG projects to Fryent Country Park.
Health and Safety	Health and Safety guidance follows that of The Conservation Volunteers and of any other relevant requirements.
Risk Assessments	BHCG have generic Risk Assessments for work at Fryent Country Park (and for Roe Green Walled Garden). An assessment of the risks is undertaken for each project at Fryent Country Park. This need not be an elaborate document: the importance is in identifying, avoiding, reducing and mitigating the risks. The key points are communicated to the team during the Tools Talk / briefing at the start of each project. Note also that apart from a powered pedestrian mower the Group does not use power tools. All tree work is from the ground. Also, and as a matter of good conservation practice, the Group does not burn any green waste.
Insurance	The Group has public liability and personal accident insurance.
Environmental Education	The Group attempts to share knowledge about the Park and using a range of media. The Group projects are also a good way of learning about

	conservation of habitats.
Flood control	The value of greenspace and natural catchments in reducing the risks of flooding is inherent in much of the management work.
Carbon management	The value of habitat vegetation and soils in holding carbon as part of the carbon cycle, is inherent in much of the management work. The Park has a range of woodland habitats. Any new tree planting is carefully considered so that the right trees are planted in the right place; and to avoid the loss of existing habitat.
Wildlife monitoring	Refer to the box on Wildlife Monitoring.
Organic Standards	Ensure that activities confirm to the Organic Standards.
Bees	Bee hives are maintained by Bee Keepers at both Fryent Country Park and at Roe Green Walled Garden.

The four-monthly BHCG programme is prepared:

Management: Preparation of volunteer programme:	Drafted by:	Printed / emailed and online by:	Action
January - April	Early December	Mid December	BHCG
May - August	Early April	Late April	BHCG
September - December	Early August	Late August	BHCG

Conservation projects are held each Sunday morning (and occasionally at other times), providing teamwork, experience and training to members. Activities are open to everyone (albeit any age restrictions imposed by insurers on young children; the need for all children to be accompanied by a responsible adult; and the Health and Safety and practical limitations of some of the work undertaken). Support activities are undertaken at Roe Green Walled Garden on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings; with open days there approximately twice a year. A Hay Watch is organised at the time of the hay harvest, in July/August. The spring and summer projects focus on work that avoids the bird breeding season of 1 March to 31 August.

Be aware of Stadium event days that coincide with projects requiring a lay-by meeting point and restrictions of parking.

Publicity: An active programme is the best way of recruiting and retaining members. Publicity and recruitment materials emphasise the regular, active health, and local aspects of the programme. Public transport and the need for walkers to wear waterproof footwear / clothing in the winter should be mentioned.

Leaflets are available from Roe Green Walled Garden.

Website: <http://www.bhcg.btck.co.uk/>

Much information and interpretative information is available on the Barn Hill Conservation Group website.

Guided walks: Guided walks are usually organised by other organisations.

Tools: BHCG aims to maintain a stock of tools for annual needs and in sufficient numbers for task days. Tools should be maintained in good condition. Minor repairs can be undertaken at Roe Green:

Management: Tools	Action
Maintain tools stock	
Re-assemble tool set for Sunday project	
Tools rota for collection and return of tools	
Transport of tools	
Check in particular that blades and saw-blades are sharp	
Marking and identification of tools stock.	
Training and 'Tools Talks' on projects and to new volunteers	
First Aid training: First Aiders on the projects	

Wildlife Monitoring

Survey, monitoring and research on wildlife are undertaken at Fryent Country Park. These provide data, information and knowledge of species present, how previous restoration work has been effective and informs future decisions on restoration and management work. Monitoring involves repeating a survey at periodic intervals to provide comparable information on change in species and/or of species abundance. Data contributes to the Borough Biodiversity Action Plan, and to regional and national species monitoring projects. Data is also used for educational and interpretative uses. Training can be provided to new volunteers. The main monitoring schemes are:

- Frogspawn is monitored in the late winter / early spring. Records are made also of whether the ponds are holding water at the time of spawning and whether they hold water throughout the summer or dry out.
- Butterflies are monitored between April to September. Butterfly Monitoring: Commenced in 1986 and two butterfly transects are walked each week between April and September. The butterfly species present have a wide range of requirements and therefore make good indicators of habitat changes. Data is collated with that from other butterfly transects covering London; Hertfordshire and Middlesex; and the national United Kingdom Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS).
- Hay meadows, their flora and the percentage cover of thatch are monitored during the summer; and management records are kept for each meadow.
- Hedgerows and their trees are re-surveyed each decade (most recently in 2013).

Additional records of wildlife, surveys and records of park management are maintained. These include:

- Soil survey

For biological recording, most of the Park is within tetrad 18TQ86, about a third in 18TQ88, with some in 28TQ06 and 28TQ08.

Records

Records and interpretation	Action
Barn Hill Conservation Group programme: Copies are available via the BHCG website, email or as hard copies	
Barn Hill Conservation Group website: http://www.bhcg.btck.co.uk/	
Surveys and monitoring: records are maintained as for the requirements of each survey or monitoring programme	BHCG
Roe Green Walled Garden: Interpretative panel exhibits; display exhibits; and of wildlife gardening. Copies of the 'Parish Map' (a collage of the Country Park) can be purchased.	
Rainfall: Rainfall records are taken daily, or near daily, at the rain gauge station at Roe Green Walled Garden. Records are sent to the Environment Agency / Meteorological Office and form part of the national series. The Roe Green station has been maintained since c. 1977.	
Personal information: BHCG maintains contact and other appropriate information to enable communication with volunteers. BHCG has a Data Protection policy and records are maintained and used as per GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations).	
Volunteering records: BHCG does not have a formal membership or membership fee. Records are maintained of the names of volunteers who contributed their time to each project.	
Safeguarding: See the BHCG Safeguarding policy.	
Risk Assessments: There are generic Risk Assessments for work at Fryent Country Park and for Roe Green Walled Garden. Individual projects have individual risk assessments as appropriate.	
Accident Book: maintained at Roe Green Walled Garden.	
Charity records and financial records: BHCG maintains financial and other records to enable effective management of the charity (registered as a charity in 2000); and to make annual returns (1 st April to 31 st March) to the Charity Commission.	
BHCG was formally formed in 1984 (though the first projects were in 1983) and is an associated group of The Conservation Volunteers (TCV).	
Brent Council: records for the management of Fryent Country Park. Operational records for the contracted grounds maintenance are the responsibility of Veolia Ltd.	

Works organised by Brent Council and contractors

The following works are primarily undertaken by Brent Council; usually contracted to their main grounds maintenance sub-contractor, Veolia Ltd:

Main Grounds Maintenance operations: see Schedule for details	
<p>Mowing of amenity grassland and paths etc.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mown paths alongside field edges (keep close to the hedgerow edges to avoid Blackthorn suckers growing into fields) and across fields. • Amenity grassland at the Fishpond and on the southern and western edges of Barn Hill. (Much of this is acid grassland and if reviewed, there could be some readjusting so as to reduce the frequency of mowing to enable some flowering of plants; and introduction of occasional cutting where currently there is none, at some other areas). • Saltcroft glade (early autumn) • Roadside mounds • Fryent Way Car Park • Events fields (when required in preparation for events) 	
Litter picking (though much of the litter picking is done by BHCG), emptying of litter bins, litter collection and fly-tips.	
<p>Park entrances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush Farm entrance • Valley Drive (by number 111 Valley Drive) 	
Access path: maintenance of surface and edges of access path (between Bush Farm and St. Robert Southwell School).	
Public Rights Of Way	
Hedge trimming: along Fryent Way, and at Broadview.	
Tree surgery: This is usually arranged by Brent Council with other contractors.	
Provision and maintenance of gates, locks and bollards.	
Signage, noticeboards	
Parks security	

Legislation

Legislation

This Management Plan is not the place to list all the legislation that applies to Fryent Country Park and activities there.

Note that The Environmental Impact Assessment (Uncultivated Land and Semi-Natural Areas) (England) Regulations 2001 apply directly (or indirectly via the Organic Standards). The regulations require an environmental assessment for any proposed intensification of agriculture (e.g. re-seeding, fertilising, ploughing).

Other relevant legislation includes the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Local Government Act 2000 etc.

Legal cases:

Three High Court decisions have referred to the Country Park land:

- George Wimpey and Co., Ltd. and The Middlesex County Council. Special Case before the Divisional Court 5th and 6th April, 1938. Acquisition of Land (Assessment of Compensation) Act, 1919. Middlesex County Council Act, 1934. In The High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division. Before the Lord Chief Justice of England.
- Lory v. London Borough of Brent, 1972. (re. agricultural tenancies).
- R. v. Brent London Borough Council, ex parte McDonagh (1989) EGCS 28. (re. Caravan Sites Act 1968, s.6: duty of local authorities).

More information

(additional to those of the habitat sections)

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