

## APPENDIX 1

### Progress Update – Review of Countryside Sites

	Recommendation	Link officer	Anticipated completion date / completion date	Evidence of Progress Presented to Committee December 2017	Assessment of progress Dec 2017 Categories 1 - 4	Evidence of Progress Presented to Committee June 2018	Assessment of progress June 2018 Categories 1 - 4
1	An overall strategic plan and updated site management plans for countryside sites should be prepared, reflecting the Council's broad strategic objectives and should aim to target capital and revenue resources effectively in light of revenue restrictions.	Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Draft strategic plan prepared by 31 July 2016 <i>(original date: 31 Dec 2015)</i>	Plan being drafted, informed by Open Space Assessment and analysis of key issues and opportunities. Partnership arrangements at all three parks have not yet been finalised, but will be reflected in final version of plan.	3	Draft plan prepared with final version to take account of Heritage Audit for Wynyard Woodland Park (completed by Tees Archaeology in June 2018) and final arrangements for use of former visitor centre at Billingham Beck Valley Country Park (see section 3 below).	1
		Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Initial site/habitat management plans prepared by 31 March 2016	<p><b>Grassland Management</b> as per previous report with all programmed grassland management work having been completed, including additional flailing of two species-rich roadside verges (designated Local Wildlife Sites) to prevent scrub encroachment.</p> <p><b>Woodland management</b> 2017/2018 includes thinning of beech / larch compartment at Thorpe Wood at Wynyard Woodland Park, understorey thinning at Honey Pot Wood / Thorntree Plantation in Thornaby and thinning / crown lifting at Faith Wood at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park.</p>	1	<p><b>Grassland Management</b> – various hay meadows cut / cattle grazed in partnership with local farmers including all three Country Parks, Honeypot Wood, Stillington Forest Park, The Holmes in Thornaby and the Six Fields at Hartburn. Verges flailed along the Castle Eden Walkway from Thorpe Thewles to the A689.</p> <p><b>Woodland Management</b> – several areas of woodland thinning with volunteers at Wynyard Woodland Park including Stoney Field and the section around the newt pond that could not be undertaken with large machines as part of the previous woodland restoration scheme.</p>	1

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				<b>Invasive Non-Native Species control</b> 2017 includes chemical control of Giant Hogweed at sites throughout the Borough, Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, Floating Pennywort and Crassula.		<b>Invasive Non-Native Species control</b> – works in 2018 include chemical control of Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, Floating Pennywort and Crassula at various sites throughout the Borough.	
2	<b>External funding for physical improvements to countryside sites should be sought where these are in line with the Council's strategic objectives and taking into account implications for future revenue funding.</b>	Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	On-going – March 2018	<p><b>Wynyard Woodland Park:</b>            Currently exploring opportunities to fund cycleway improvements through the Rural Development Programme for England (grants for tourism infrastructure). Also discussions with Heritage Lottery Fund regarding possible funding for conservation and interpretation of railway heritage.</p> <p><b>Six Fields:</b> detailed scheme developed including creation of 3 hectares of water-dependent habitat. Implementation in 2018.</p> <p><b>Stillington Forest Park:</b>            Works implemented under the 25-year Forest Park Improvement Plan, funded by Banks as part of the planning conditions for the Lambs Hill Wind Farm development. The plan includes:</p>	2 (on-going)	<p><b>Wynyard Woodland Park:</b>            £44,000 is available for the redevelopment of the area around the main car park and Station House. There will be a significant in-kind contribution through the work of DTV Probation Services.</p> <p>Funding is sought for creation of new cycle links to Thorpe Thewles and signage of existing access routes. Application for £88,000 submitted in May 2018 through Rural Development Programme for England (grants for tourism infrastructure).</p> <p><b>Six Fields:</b> £43,500 secured from Environment Agency for creation of water-dependent habitat. Works being implemented June 2018.</p>	1

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Woodland management works</li> <li>Grassland management works</li> <li>Installation of bird boxes</li> <li>Construction of 875m footpath (now complete).</li> </ul>		<p><b>Billingham Beck Valley Country Park:</b> Funding sought for fish by-pass channel for weir. Application for £30,000 submitted in May 2018 through Water Environment Grant Programme.</p> <p><b>Honey Pot Wood, Whitton:</b> New car park installed (winter 2017/19), part-funded through s106 agreement with Banks.</p> <p><b>Stillington Forest Park:</b> Footpath works completed and recharged to Banks for £72k; first phase of woodland management works recharged to Banks for £21k; Year 2 of the grassland management recharged to Banks for £1,200.</p> <p><b>Roundhill, Ingleby Barwick and Mount Leven, Yarm:</b> new publicly accessible countryside sites to be provided through the development process.</p>	
3	<b>The Council should continue to explore opportunities for external partners to carry out</b>	Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Partners to be finalised by 31 May 2016  <i>(original date:</i>	<b>Wynyard Woodland Park:</b> Arts collective 'Missing Piece' are now established at the former station house and have plans to develop it as a centre for	3	<b>Wynyard Woodland Park:</b> Arts collective 'Missing Piece' continue to run activities at the Station House.	

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	management functions and deliver associated services at countryside sites.		31 March 2016)	<p>community arts and to deliver a range of recreational and educational activities. Railway carriage currently being refurbished and approvals are also in place to convert it to a cinema, to be operated by Missing Piece.</p> <p><b>Billingham Beck Valley Country Park:</b> The Council continues to consider proposals from organisations with an interest in the former visitor centre.</p> <p><b>Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park:</b> Arrangements are being finalised by Land and Property before being passed to Legal for a lease agreement to be drawn up with Billingham Environmental Link Project</p> <p><b>Six Fields:</b> site has been cut and baled by a local farmer and an agricultural agreement will be implemented one habitat creation works are completed (see section 2 above).</p>		<p><b>Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park:</b> The former visitor centre is now leased to Billingham Environmental Link Project who will use the building and for a variety of community-based activities, including activities of the Friends of Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park.</p> <p><b>Billingham Beck Valley Country Park:</b> Discussions on-going regarding possible lease of the former visitor centre.</p> <p><b>Six Fields:</b> agricultural licence being drawn up for management of meadow areas.</p>	1

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		Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Projects / activities to commence on a pilot or permanent basis. On-going - March 2018	'Missing Piece' have commenced activities at Wynyard Woodland park, including launch events in September 2017.	2 (on-going)	Between Sept 2017 and Feb 2018 a total of 1046 people participated in Missing Piece events at Wynyard Woodland Park.	1
4	<b>Where resources allow, the Council and its partners should continue to encourage community and volunteer involvement in countryside sites, helping to support the positive management and development of these assets and benefiting the individuals involved.</b>	Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Continue and further develop volunteer programmes. On-going – March 2018	Quarterly volunteer attendance at countryside sites 2017: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jan to March - 289</li> <li>April to June - 408</li> <li>July to Sept - 457</li> </ul>	2 (on-going)	Quarterly volunteer attendance at countryside sites 2017-18: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April to June - 408</li> <li>July to Sept – 457</li> <li>Oct to Dec – 363</li> <li>Jan to March – 300</li> </ul>	1
		Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Identify opportunities for wider community participation. On-going - March 2018	'Licence to occupy' for Tinkers Yard now agreed, enabling the community group to undertake a range of events and activities under the Wild Green Places scheme. This provides a template that could be adapted for other groups / sites.  There were 15 events at the country parks, during 2016/17; mainly orienteering and running clubs. Attendance numbers ranged from 60 – 300.	2 (on-going)	Through the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust's Wild Green Places project groups and volunteers continue to get involved in projects and activities at sites in Norton and Roseworth.  Ranger staff for Preston Park recruited to encourage and support further volunteer involvement at that site.	1

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5	<b>All the council's countryside sites be promoted and, where possible, used to host a range of recreational, cultural and educational activities, maximising economic, social, health and environmental benefits.</b>	Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Develop a consistent approach to signage with draft concepts / designs by 30 Sept 2015	It is anticipated that some new 'welcome' and information signage at country parks will be installed under the Council's wider 'Ambitious, effective and proud to serve' campaign.	2	Draft designs prepared. Signs to be fabricated and installed summer 2018.	1
		Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Utilise a variety of media to promote, and provide information about, countryside sites. On-going – March 2018	On-going updates to web pages.  Leaflet to be published in March 2018.	2 (on-going)	Parks and Countryside web pages updated – spring 2018.  New 'Out & About' leaflet published and distributed (June 2018) detailing country parks, nature reserves and parks accessible via cycleways and footpaths.	1
		Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Further develop events/activity programmes. On-going – March 2018	Additional events and activities to be delivered linked to Recommendation 3	2 (on-going)	In 2017-18 there were 11 trail races and charity runs (5k and 10k) held at the Borough's three country parks (up to 300 participants at each event). Other events included: Scouts Duck Race (60 participants at Billingham Beck); Parachute Regiment BBQ (40 at Wynyard WP); Scouts BBQ (50 at Wynyard WP); and environmental group activities (Wynyard WP).	1

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6	Explore the possible use of modern technology to enhance visitor experience at, or about, the various countryside sites e.g. QR codes on information boards and signs that allow mobile devices (phones, tablets) to deliver additional information.	Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Identify potential opportunities and project proposals by 30 June 2016	Possible approaches being considered.	3	Funding application for digital interpretation/information project submitted to Nesta (March 2018) under the 'Rethinking Parks Programme'. Bid was unsuccessful but the Council will learn lessons from the projects being taken forward through this programme. Digital interpretation may also be developed for countryside sites in the Tees Heritage Park through the River Tees Rediscovered programme.	1
		Greenspace Strategy & Partnership Manager	Implement projects on a pilot or permanent basis. On-going-March 2018	No projects agreed at this stage.	2	Projects to be developed, informed by Nesta's 'Rethinking Parks Programme' (see above) and integrated into future plans for countryside sites (see 1 above).	1

#### Assessment of progress:

1	Achieved (Fully)
2	On Track but not yet due for completion
3	Slipped
4	Not Achieved