

Report for: ACTION



Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO - Part I
Title	Pocket Parks
Responsible Officer(s)	Kevin Mist, Head of Communities and Economic Development
Contact officer, job title and phone number	Michael Llewelyn, Cabinet Policy Assistant, 01628 682953
Member reporting	Cllr Jack Rankin, Deputy Lead Member for Customer Service Performance
For Consideration By	Policy Committee
Date to be Considered	18 April 2016
Affected Wards	All

REPORT SUMMARY

1. This report discusses pocket parks; small areas of inviting public space where people can enjoy relief from the hustle and bustle of town centre streets.
2. The Policy Committee is being asked to approve in principle the establishment of a pocket park scheme in the Royal Borough. If approved, officers will investigate appropriate funding for the scheme to be implemented during 2016-17.
3. The report lists 10 example sites owned by the Council that meet the size and usage criteria to become pocket parks. If the scheme is approved in principle, Members will be invited to suggest further sites.
4. With appropriate funding and support from local community groups, the selected sites could be improved and made more welcoming. Pocket parks could also be featured within future town centre regeneration.

If recommendations are adopted, how will residents benefit?

Benefits to residents and reasons why they will benefit	Dates by which residents can expect to notice a difference
Residents will be provided with better quality open spaces; increasing opportunities for getting together, healthy living, relaxation, play, food growing and contact with nature.	1 April 2017.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION: That the Policy Committee:

- i. Approves in principle the establishment of a pocket park scheme in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
- ii. Requests officers to investigate appropriate funding for a pocket park scheme to be implemented during 2016-17.
- iii. Invites further suggestions for pocket park sites from Members.

2. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 In its manifesto for the 2015 General Election, Government committed to delivering “an ambitious programme of pocket parks - small areas of inviting public space where people can enjoy relief from the hustle and bustle of city streets”.
- 2.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has defined pocket parks as pieces of land of up to 0.4 hectares which may already be under grass but remain unused, undeveloped or derelict.
- 2.3 Ownership of the land may rest with the community, local authority or other public sector body, or a private sector body or trust including a housing association.
- 2.4 In November 2015, the DCLG launched a campaign inviting community groups to submit potential sites that could become pocket parks. A £1.5m fund was set aside to develop up to 100 pocket parks across deprived urban areas in England.
- 2.5 The DCLG prioritised applications from urban areas with significantly deprived wards according to the 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings. London was excluded from applying as it recently completed its own pocket park programme.
- 2.6 In February 2016, it was announced that 87 sites had been successful. Each will receive £15k grant funding from the DCLG to enable the site to be improved and made more welcoming. The Royal Borough did not submit an application.
- 2.7 The successful community groups will work alongside their relevant local authority to decide how their £15k fund should be allocated.
- 2.8 A similar scheme could be launched in the Royal Borough. Below are 10 example sites owned by the Council which meet the size and usage criteria defined by the DCLG to become pocket parks (maps included in Appendix A):

Table 1 - Example Sites

Example Site	Size	Ward
1 Brill Green	0.4ha	Cox Green
2 Castle Farm Spinney	0.3ha	Clewer South
3 Clarence Road	0.3ha	Clewer East
4 Church Street	0.1ha	Castle Without
5 Dorchester Close	0.3ha	Furze Platt
6 Nell Gwynne	0.2ha	Sunninghill & South Ascot
7 Reitlinger	0.2ha	Oldfield
8 Thurlby Way	0.4ha	Cox Green
9 Trinity	0.2ha	Castle Without
10 Wood Close	0.3ha	Park
11 <i>Chariots Place*</i>	<i>0.1ha</i>	<i>Castle Without</i>

*The Chariots Place site is owned by the Christ Church United Reformed Church and permission to improve the space would need to be sought from their trustees.

- 2.9 If the scheme is approved in principle, and appropriate funding is secured, local community groups will be approached to assist in the improvement and management of each pocket park site.
- 2.10 Site improvements could include additional furniture, water fountains, trees, vegetation, improved access points and more wildlife habitat opportunities. Signage could also be enhanced to promote awareness of the pocket parks.
- 2.11 There are already various volunteer community groups assisting with the maintenance of parks and open spaces in the Royal Borough. The proposed scheme would aim to supplement this support, rather than replace it.
- 2.12 Within the current administration's manifesto there are commitments to:
- Continue planting trees.
 - Maintain and improve our parks and open spaces, including public art.
 - Further enhance our parks and open spaces through drinking fountains and other fountains/water features.
 - Continue to support the regeneration of our towns.
- 2.13 Pocket parks could also feature within future town centre plans; sites could be identified in advance and incorporated into regeneration.

Table 2 - Options

Option	Comments
Approve in principle the establishment of a local pocket park scheme.	This is recommended. Government are promoting pocket parks as they provide residents with better quality open spaces.
Do not approve in principle the establishment of a local pocket park scheme.	This option is not recommended. The Council is committed to improving the Royal Borough's parks and open spaces.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Defined Outcomes	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date they should be delivered by
Royal Borough pocket park scheme implemented by	After 1 April 2017	1 April 2017	1 March 2017	1 February 2017	1 April 2017
Number of sites selected to become pocket parks	Below 10	10-12	13-15	Above 15	1 April 2017

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS

- 4.1 Funding will be investigated if the scheme is approved in principle.
- 4.2 A £20k capital budget (CV24) for enhancements to Chariots Place has already been approved within the 2016-17 Budget.

5. LINKS TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Residents First

- Encourage Healthy People and Lifestyles
- Improve the Environment, Economy and Transport

Delivering Together

- Strengthen Partnerships

6. APPENDICES

- Appendix A - Example Site Locations.

7. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- [Pocket Parks - Department for Communities and Local Government](#)

8. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held and Department	Date sent	Date received	See comments in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Burbage	Leader of the Council	05/04/16	07/04/16	
Cllr Bathurst	Principal Member for Policy	05/04/16	07/04/16	
Cllr Stretton	Lead Member for Culture and Communities	05/04/16	05/04/16	
Cllr Rankin	Deputy Lead Member for Customer Service Performance	05/04/16	05/04/16	
Alison Alexander	Managing Director and Strategic Director of Adult, Children and Health Services	07/04/16		
Simon Fletcher	Strategic Director of Operations and Customer Services	07/04/16		
Russell O'Keefe	Strategic Director of Corporate and Community Services	07/04/16		
David Scott	Head of Governance,	05/04/16	06/04/16	

Name of consultee	Post held and Department	Date sent	Date received	See comments in paragraph:
	Partnerships, Performance and Policy			
Christopher Targowski	Cabinet Policy Manager	05/04/16	05/04/16	

REPORT HISTORY

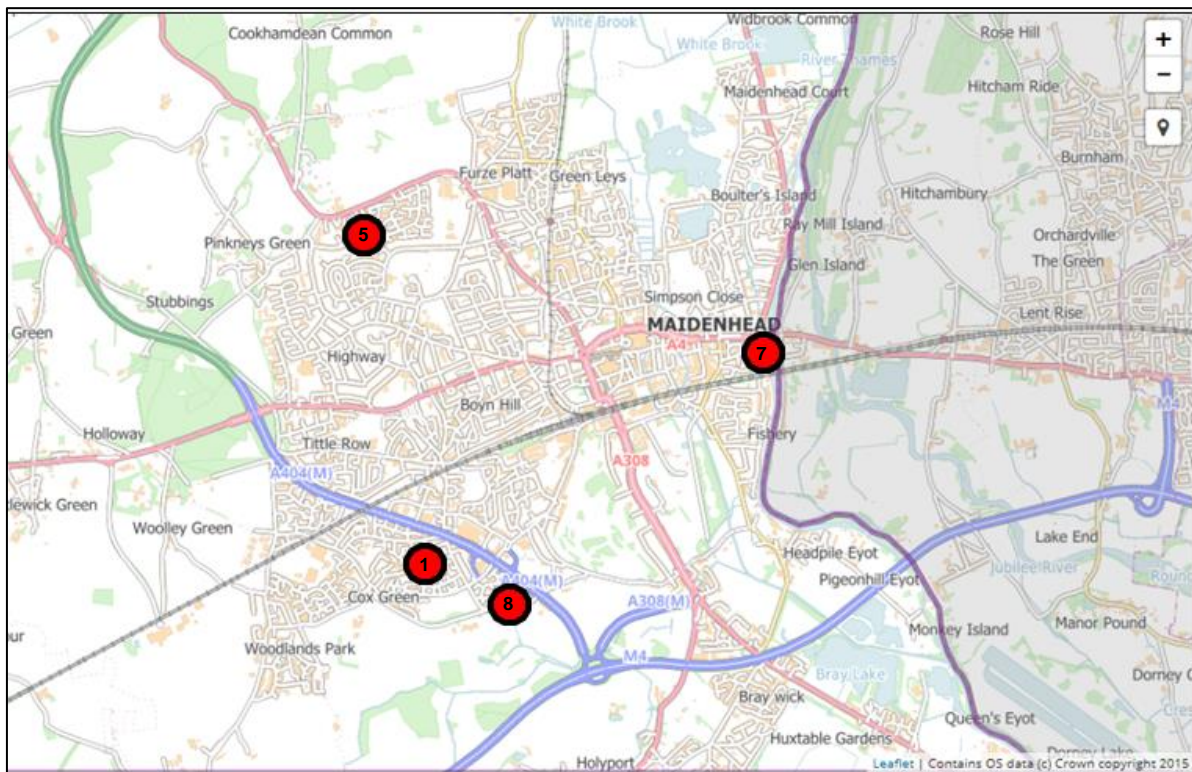
Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key decision	No

Full name of report author	Job title	Full contact no:
Michael Llewelyn	Cabinet Policy Assistant	01628 682953

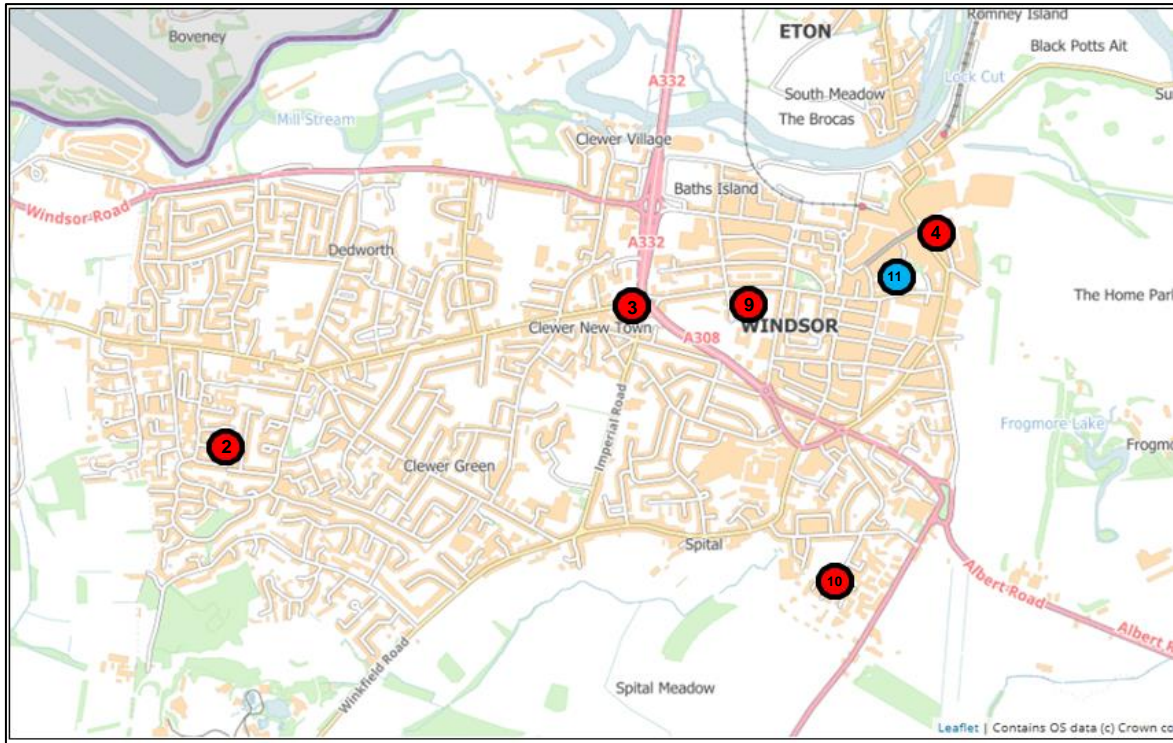
Appendix A - Example Site Locations

Example Site	Size	Ward
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Map 1 - Maidenhead



Map 2 - Windsor (Chariots Place shaded in blue)



Map 3 - Ascot and the Sunnings

