

Long Preston Parish Council

Management of Open Spaces Policy (includes Licences for Use of Land and use of Metal Detectors)

Adopted August 2012

1. Introduction

Open spaces are a vital part of the village environment. The spaces owned by the Parish Council have a significant impact on village life. In this document the term 'Open Spaces' refers to any space owned by the Parish Council, whether formally registered as a Village Green or not. It also includes Playing Fields and Allotments currently owned / managed by the Parish Council or which become owned or managed by the Parish Council during the life of this Policy.

The quality of open spaces affects everyone in the community. The purpose of this document is to identify the relevant areas and their uses; set out a development plan for improvement where necessary and to put in place a comprehensive maintenance plan. The maintenance plan must take account of the need to keep the areas fit for purpose; to maintain an attractive appearance and to achieve best value.

- Reinforce local identity and pride in the village;
- Enhance the physical character of an area, shaping future and existing development;
- Improve physical and social inclusion;
- Protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological habits;
- Provide for children and young people's play and recreation;
- Provide social, cultural, recreational, sporting and community facilities;
- Protect and promote understanding of the historical, cultural and archaeological value of places;
- Contribute to the creation of healthy places, including quiet areas;
- Provide outdoor educational facilities;
- Improve opportunities to enjoy contact with the natural world.

2. Management Framework

The day-to-day management of the open spaces is within the responsibility of the Parish Council. The aim of this policy is to provide a structured approach to managing the open spaces and a basis for decision making and planning. In particular this document:

- Sets out works and plans in relation to open spaces (globally and individually, where appropriate) on a rolling 12 month basis;
- Identifies the impact of works and plans;
- Is a 'public' document made available through the Council's website to residents of Long Preston and others with an interest in the management of the open spaces in order that they can understand what is planned in terms of managing the open spaces and the reasons for any decisions, and, where appropriate express their views.

There will often be a range of views on how open spaces should be managed. The Parish Council will seek to develop approaches, which (in its view) strike the best overall balance and take account of the range of considerations and views.

3. Recreational Open Spaces

Aim	Provision of village greens for the benefit of the inhabitants of Long Preston
Description	12 designated spaces in the village. The spaces are marked on the map at Appendix A. Aims are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Keeping the area tidy and attractive • Discouraging undesirable uses • Encouraging wildlife where appropriate • Controlling maintenance costs
Maintenance	Grass cutting and maintenance (including strimming) Tree maintenance (including annual inspection) Planting bulbs where appropriate; Seeding in Spring where necessary; Removal of suckers from trees; Removal of fallen branches; Provision and maintenance of benches; Boundary monitoring and use of barriers (stumps and stones) to prevent damage from parked cars; Regular inspection, repair and maintenance of Maypole.
Timing	Dependent on growing conditions, up to fortnightly grass cutting.
Cost	Parish Council via grass-cutting, lengthman and other ad hoc contracts.

4. Sports and Play Areas

Aim	Provide facilities for a range of outdoor sports and play activities
Description	The Parish Council purchased 2.4 hectares of land in 1995 for the purpose of providing a playing field and play area for Long Preston. The land is leased to the Long Preston Playing Fields Association who manage all aspects of this land. This lease ends in 2016. The Field has specific areas set aside for outdoor sports and play activities There is a Pavilion which serves the tarmac surfaced tennis courts The play areas have a range of fixed equipment and are safety surfaced where appropriate.
Maintenance	The Parish Council will provide grass-cutting services for the Playing Fields Association for the 2012/13 season, after which the Playing Fields will resume responsibility for this. The PFA is responsible for regular (weekly) inspections of the equipment together with recorded risk assessments which will be made available to the PC on request. Play equipment must also be subject to an annual RoSPA inspection Repair or replacement of play equipment is the responsibility of the PFA
Timing	Grass-cutting: March/April – Sept/October dependent upon growing season RoSPA inspection Monthly recorded risk assessments of Play Areas Quarterly inspections by Parish Council
Cost	All costs to be borne by the Charity except: Separate insurance to be taken out and paid for by the PFA from 9/7/12 Grass-cutting contract until end of 2012/13 growing season.
Future development	Apply for the Playing Field to be designated a Fields in Trust Queen Elizabeth II Playing

Adopted Date: 1st August 2012

Minute: 12.106

Chairman's Signature: NT

	Field. Offer support to the LPPFA in future projects to develop the Field further (dependant upon the needs of the community)
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5. Habitat and Conservation

Aim	The Parish Council seeks to preserve the habitat and where feasible, enhance it, subject to its other responsibilities and aims in managing the open spaces.
Description	There are around 40 substantial trees growing on the open spaces within the village. These require regular monitoring and maintenance work, particularly in light of disease and die-back.
Maintenance	The trees will be inspected annually by a qualified arboriculturalist and a three year maintenance plan drawn up. Other relevant bodies will be consulted regarding habitat as necessary.
Timing	Maintenance will be carried out with regard to sensitive periods for wildlife.

6. Global

Aim	The Parish Council seeks to preserve the extent and aspect of open spaces.
Description	Open Spaces will be monitored for undesirable use. Undesirable uses include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog exercising and fouling • Substance abuse • Littering • Vandalism
Future development	The Council will review this policy annually and consider the future development of any and all open spaces as part of that review.

7. Licences for Casual use of Land

Anyone wishing to hold an event on an open space owned by the Parish Council will be required to:

- Seek Council permission (in writing) from the Clerk for such an event, **at least** one calendar month before the event is due to take place;
- Be responsible for the clearance of any debris resulting from the event
- Be responsible for safety of people attending such an event (the Council has a general risk assessment and method statement (RAMS) for each open space, but event organizers should ensure that they have produced any RAMS appropriate for the event)
- Assume responsibility, either personally or by payment, for any damage which needs to be rectified.

8. Metal detecting

Anyone wishing to use a metal detector on Council owned land (including the Playing Field) must apply to the Clerk for permission to do so. Detecting without permission will result in the Council viewing the removal of objects of cultural or financial value from its land as theft and will report to the Police accordingly. Permission will only be granted on the applicant agreeing to the National Council for Metal Detecting Model Search Agreement, but will otherwise not be unreasonably withheld.