

Southampton Common Plan 2019-30








OUR VISION: A PEOPLE'S COMMON FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Common will be an inspirational example of an attractive, green urban space dedicated to the benefit of Southampton's people of all ages, backgrounds and interests.

A place where residents and visitors come together for recreation and education; enjoy its natural beauty, sustain and appreciate its plants, wildlife and cultural heritage.


Communities, public and private organisations will be united in their care of it for present and future generations.

WHAT OUTCOMES DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

Outcome	Why is this important?
 Increase people's usage and enjoyment of The Common	This will improve the benefits of The Common as a shared amenity space for all the citizens of Southampton and their visitors.
 Improve the facilities for recreation and education	This is in keeping with the primary purpose of The Common as recreation for the citizens of Southampton enshrined in the 1865 Southampton Marsh & Markets Act.
 Increase the proportion of usable and accessible space	This will expand the space available for recreation, improve visibility and create a wider range of habitats.
 Increase biodiversity whilst safeguarding species deemed nationally to be in need of special protection	This will safeguard the flora and fauna of The Common, enhancing the SSSI and protecting its natural character.
 Improve paths, access and safety	This will make The Common more accessible for all of Southampton's people.


KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

Largest user group of The Common is families with children




The Common supports greener travel

2nd most popular activity after walking for pleasure is commuting on foot or by bike




At 365 acres

Southampton Common is larger than Hyde Park




The Common has existed for over a millennium




61%

of The Common was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1987 in recognition of its national nature conservation importance




1,000+

people run on The Common each Saturday. The second largest parkrun in the UK




121

species of birds have been observed on The Common in the last 30 years



Attracts 10,000's of people each year to enjoy a range of events including pop concerts, fairs and races that together generate significant revenue for the City



WHAT DO OUR RESIDENTS SAY ABOUT THE COMMON?



They appreciate The Common as a natural green space in the heart of the City, which they use for a wide variety of activities important to their physical and mental well-being.

They want better:

- Children's play facilities
- Provision of public toilets
- Litter and waste management
- Lighting and personal safety
- Quality of the footpaths
- Maintenance and resources
- Condition of the lakes and Hawthorns Urban Wildlife Centre
- Management of biodiversity
- Management of organised events
- Eating and drinking facilities



They want measures to reduce conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and dog walkers.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

Outcome	Priorities	How will we measure success?
 <p>Increase peoples' usage and enjoyment of The Common Delivered by a Community Engagement Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number and diversity of users of The Common compatible with sustaining its natural character. • Increase the variety of activities enjoyed by users, including family and community events. • Ensure visitors enjoy a quality experience. • Increase the awareness of the benefits and amenities of The Common. • Increase the involvement of Southampton citizens in the governance of The Common. • Increase voluntary non-financial contributions by Southampton citizens, community groups, organisations and businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic surveys of Southampton citizens about their use and experience of The Common. • Periodic visitor surveys. • Estimates of number and home location of users. • Number and nature of voluntary contributions (e.g. total hours) per annum, including the number of volunteer days.
 <p>Improve the facilities for recreation and education Delivered by a Recreation and Education Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the play facilities for children and their families. • Establish The Hawthorns as an attractive modern hub for education and information about The Common and the natural environment. • Increase the opportunities across The Common for learning about its historical features and the natural environment. • Improve the facilities for eating and drinking. • Improve the facilities for exercise, well-being and quiet contemplation. • Improve the benefits and reduce the detriments of organised events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic surveys of Southampton citizens about their use and experience of The Common. • Periodic assessment of the nature and quality of facilities. • Periodic survey of number of students (of all ages) using The Common for recreation and/or education.
 <p>Increase the proportion of usable and accessible space Delivered by a Landscape and Heritage Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the amount of accessible space to expand the proportion available for recreation, and create vistas across and beyond The Common. • Create a greater range of natural spaces including woodland glades and wildflower meadows. • Conserve woodland through protecting high quality trees, managing the understorey and controlling the encroachment of saplings and scrub on open space and paths. • Enhance the landscape contribution of the main bodies of water and the natural streams and ditch system. • Identify and secure the health and longevity of specimen trees and plants that have the potential to make a significant landscape contribution. • Ensure the effective recording and conservation of heritage artefacts, including the medieval boundaries, Victorian features and wartime relics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic assessments of trees and plants. • Periodic assessments of heritage and cultural artefacts. • Periodic surveys of Southampton citizens about their use and experience of The Common. • Proportion of The Common that is high quality woodland. • Proportion of The Common that is accessible for recreation.
 <p>Increase biodiversity whilst safeguarding species deemed nationally to be in need of special protection Delivered by a Biodiversity Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the benefits of The Common's SSSI status for both the flora and fauna and users. • Increase the diversity of habitats and species on The Common. • Work with partners who have an interest and expertise in biodiversity on The Common, e.g., Natural England. • Increase awareness and engagement in the importance of biodiversity to The Common. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic habitats and species surveys • Natural England SSSI condition assessments
 <p>Improve paths, access and safety Delivered by an Amenity Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the safety of users of The Common, especially after dark, through increasing both the natural light and lighting along the main paths. • Make the entrances more welcoming, open and accessible and improve and secure The Common's boundaries against encroachment. • Improve accessibility across The Common for disadvantaged users. • Improve transport links to make it more accessible to people from across the City. • Improve signage and information, including a Code of Conduct for users to improve the amenity of The Common for everyone. • Improve the facilities for green travel and reduce conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and dog walkers. • Improve waste management on The Common. • Increase the toilet facilities on The Common. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic surveys of Southampton citizens about their use and experience of The Common. • Estimate of users involved in green travel. • Periodic statements of the nature and quality of facilities.