

Agenda Item 5

For decision: Management & Improvement Plans for Mary Baily and Victoria Park
Author: Chris Stringer, Environment Manager



Summary

This report introduces the new Management & Improvement Plan for Mary Baily and the new plan for Victoria Park.

These plans will replace the previous plans, which were discussed and approved by the Council Matters committee in May 2018.

The plans for both spaces are scheduled to be reviewed in another year's time: autumn into winter 2020.

Because of how close the two spaces are – and some complementary and overlapping management – we will continue to review these plans together.

Background

We prepare and review plans for the management and improvement of all the parks and green spaces that we look after. These plans are discussed and then formally approved by the Council Matters committee. The plans are then reviewed every year or every other year (varying by space).

By design, the format of our plans is repeated across all the parks and green spaces that we look after. The plans include information like the main habitat typology and a management summary.

The management summary is particularly important to the plans since this shapes and influences much of our work. For example: because we manage Mary Baily for its play, recreation and amenity value, projects that add to this are likely to feature in the next steps for this space.

The plans aren't intended to be daunting or overly technical. Rather, we hope that our plans are straightforward and engaging - and that they encourage people to head outdoors to explore Frome's parks and green spaces.

Previously

The outgoing plans for Mary Baily and Victoria Park were discussed and approved by the Council Matters Committee in May 2018.

These reviews have been delayed slightly from May 2019 to better fit the overall review schedule (taking into account the review dates of the other spaces that we look after, particularly the larger spaces like Rodden Meadow and the Old Showfield).

Next steps

Our plans are often ambitious, and this means that we don't always manage to deliver all of the next steps within the review schedule of the plan. Some next steps will also naturally extend over more than one review of the plan.

As such, steps are sometimes carried over from the outgoing plans.

Mary Baily

Next steps carried over

- Tree planting
- Exploring ideas and finding for a new skatepark
- An evergreen hedge around the tennis courts
- New seats, including picnic benches

Next steps added

- Bulb planting and tree planting alongside the new hedge around the tennis courts
- A wildflower area in-between the sports court and the tennis courts
- Free to borrow – balls and sports equipment kept at the sports court

Victoria Park

Next steps carried over

- New planting in the park
- Planting around the bandstand
- Looking at opportunities for new play in the picnic & play space

Next steps added

- Looking at adapting the existing toilets building to provide improved public toilets in the park
- Winter TLC for the café building
- Drawing up landscape ideas and a planting scheme for the boundary nearest Mary Baily

The notable change in the plan for Victoria Park (and Mary Baily) is looking at the existing toilets building as a location and way of improving the public toilets in the park.

This approach will be detailed in a separate, dedicated report at an upcoming Council meeting when further progress has been made exploring the options that this presents.

More detail

There's more information relating to the new plans in the corresponding Appendices:

- [Appendix 5.1](#) – Management plans for Victoria Park
- [Appendix 5.2](#) – Victoria Park in a bit more detail
- [Appendix 5.3](#) – Management plans for Mary Baily
- [Appendix 5.4](#) – Mary Baily in a bit more detail

Site risk assessments

The Council Matters committee also discusses and approves site risk assessments at the same time as, and as part of, its reviewing management plans.

This reflects the Council's commitment to providing the town with information about how we look after the spaces that we're entrusted with.

By discussing and approving site risk assessments in this way, we are providing a clear and complete picture of what we do.

The proposed site risk assessments for Mary Baily and Victoria Park are at [Appendix 5.5](#).

Recommendations

1. Adopt the updated management plans for Mary Baily and Victoria Park
2. Adopt the various site risk assessments for Mary Baily and Victoria Park
3. Approve the scheduled review dates for the plans
4. Approve the scheduled annual review of the site risk assessments
5. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to deliver the plans
6. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to keep the site risk assessments up to date in-between approval and the (scheduled) annual reviews