



# VENTNOR PARK STRATEGY

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 31/21

12 APRIL 2021

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The purpose of this Report is to agree the Town Council's Strategy for the future development of Ventnor Park following its acceptance of a 30-lease for it from the Isle of Wight Council.

## No. DETAILS

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### 1) BACKGROUND

- a) The Town Council agreed to accept the lease of Ventnor Park offered by the Isle of Wight Council by Minute 5/21 of its meeting of 11 January 2021;
  - b) In Minute 15/21 of its meeting of 8 February 2021 it agreed 'to hold an informal virtual meeting for all interested Members and appropriate staff at 6pm on Monday 15 February and to invite Matt Chatfield to join it.'
  - c) The meeting took place as planned and provided a clear consensus about the future strategy to be applied to the Park during the Town Council's period of responsibility for it; the Clerk's Notes of the meeting were circulated to its attenders and are available [here](#).
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### 2) DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

- d) Following a discussion of the outcomes from the informal meeting at the Assets and Services Group's meeting of 16 February Nick Cox accepted its request to develop a draft for a strategic level document for the Park.
  - a) Prior to the Group's next meeting on 2 March Nick Cox circulated a first draft of the document, stressing that it was presented as a basis for discussion, not approval, and that much more work needed to be done.
  - b) The draft document was the subject of a core Staff Meeting on 15 March bringing a range of suggestions for additions and amendments with further comments being invited directly to Nick Cox from individual Staff with the majority being incorporated into a further two drafts with the latter of the two being circulated to Assets and Services Group members for discussion at its meeting of 16 March.
  - c) After a further discussion of the next draft at its meeting of 30 March it was agreed to be ready for inclusion on the Town Council's meeting of 12 April.
  - d) The document was also available to and discussed by the Community Development Working Group meeting of 25 March that agreed Members would send comments directly to Nick Cox by email.
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### 3) RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended to adopt the Strategy, subject to any amendments it may agree.

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# Ventnor Town Council

## Isle of Wight. UK

### Ventnor Park Strategy

March 2021



**READ:** This document is reaching its final stage. Please report any typos, errors or mistakes to either the author or Town Clerk. In addition, any **constructive** amendments to help improve the document content. Be aware that this is simply a high-level strategic document and not a tactical or operational document.



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# Executive Summary



## Welcome

Moving through the document then, the **'Introduction'** provides a potted history of Ventnor Park and its many merits over the years as an award winning park on the Isle of Wight; and then summarising four key principles which help support the Town Council's strategy for Ventnor Park.

The **'Overview'**, places Ventnor Park in its strategic context, incorporating aspects from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for developing parks and open green spaces for public use in terms of economic, social and environmental aspirations, in order to achieve future sustainability and successful management of the park for people to use and enjoy.

This is followed by a pictorial demonstration of why Ventnor Park has been over the years an **'Award Winning'** park; and pictorial suggestions of its **'Potential'** in terms of its development and inspirational use in the future.

The **'Benefits'**, focuses on the economic, health and community aspects of the park. The attractiveness and use of the park, possibly through regularly held events, has the potential to improve some nearby businesses, both retail and hospitality, but is too far from the town centre to make a major impact.

In terms of personal health, all age groups can benefit in some form; and in terms of community benefits, again for all age groups, social gatherings of family and friends or simply a person needing the tranquillity of the park, can provide personal experiences, fond memories and positive social interaction. inspirational use in the future.

From here, the starting of the strategy begins with the **'Aspirations'** followed by the **'Challenges'**. The aspirations for Ventnor Park focus on its role and purpose, the type of future the park could expect, who could help to meet the challenges ahead, the Town Council's role and statutory duties, and allowing the park to 'organically' develop.

**"The challenges outlined, are simply those obstacles and concerns that need to be addressed and overcome in order for the park to be a successful and an attractive destination for local people and visitors, event operators and management by Ventnor Town Council."**

This is an important task which must be undertaken in order to help the process of achieving the required short and long-term goals for Ventnor Park.

# Executive Summary



The **‘Park Strategy’** section outlines the proposed vision for Ventnor Park, followed by four important and fully-qualified defined strategies:

- 1). Being close to nature;
- 2). Safe place to play;
- 3). Community ownership; and,
- 4). Working with ecology.

Each individual strategy has a set of defined goals which collectively fulfil that strategic direction and the accomplishment of that strategy.

The final section **‘Next Steps’**, outlines what needs to be done next in terms of achieving the defined goals for Ventnor Park. As this is a high-level strategic document and not an operational document, the necessary plans, tasks and projects needed to achieve the goals, would be the next phase of this adventure. As such, no recommendations or conclusions have been developed at this stage, and discussions will continue on how best to proceed.

Ventnor Park at this point in time is still a natural and beautiful open canvas, and the opportunity to do something amazing with it over the next few years is both feasible and achievable, and would be very beneficial for the community and tourism.

It is expected that Ventnor Town Council will approve this collective strategy and that the transference of the lease for the park, and all that it involves – management, maintenance, ecology, horticulture, events and community involvement – from the Isle of Wight Council to Ventnor Town Council will be very beneficial in many ways and provide a promising future for Ventnor Park.





# Methodology



## A Simple Approach

This document outlines the vision, strategies and goals for Ventnor Park for the next five to ten years. It is a high-level strategy document for Ventnor Town Council, and does not explore the operational, financial or management requirements necessary to run the park on a day-to-day basis. These latter stages will inevitably follow after this strategy document has reviewed, amended, finalised, and finally approved by Council members.

It would be normal to design a tangible vision, develop the associated goals and strategies, and then define related objectives and projects to achieve the desired outcomes. In this case, the strategic management for the park has been simplified to simply: vision, strategies and goals, which are outlined in this document. Intentionally leaving the agreed goals for the park to open interpretation, flexibility and the relevant expertise necessary to make them happen.

It is a:

***“We know what we want to achieve. But how we get there is up to us.”***

approach.

In effect, substituting the ‘development of objectives’, for the ‘development of plans’ which can be easily understood, managed, resourced, communicated and achieved more easily in this situation – thereby providing a more ‘organic approach’ to the Ventnor Park strategy.

While objectives are usually fully-qualified concrete deliverables that make the goals come to life, linking the goals directly to related plans (and therefore operational activities and projects), the goals focus and link back to the overall agreed vision for the park.

This is far more exciting and motivating compared to having to focus on individual, achievable outcomes (objectives), which often tend to lose sight of the vision and its core purpose; and invariably are never fully achieved in practice. The world of strategy is full of good intentions but fraught with unachieved objectives. This is not what we want for Ventnor Park.

***“This is a strategic management decision in order to make planning easier, more flexible in its approach, and better for achieving the required goals for the park.”***

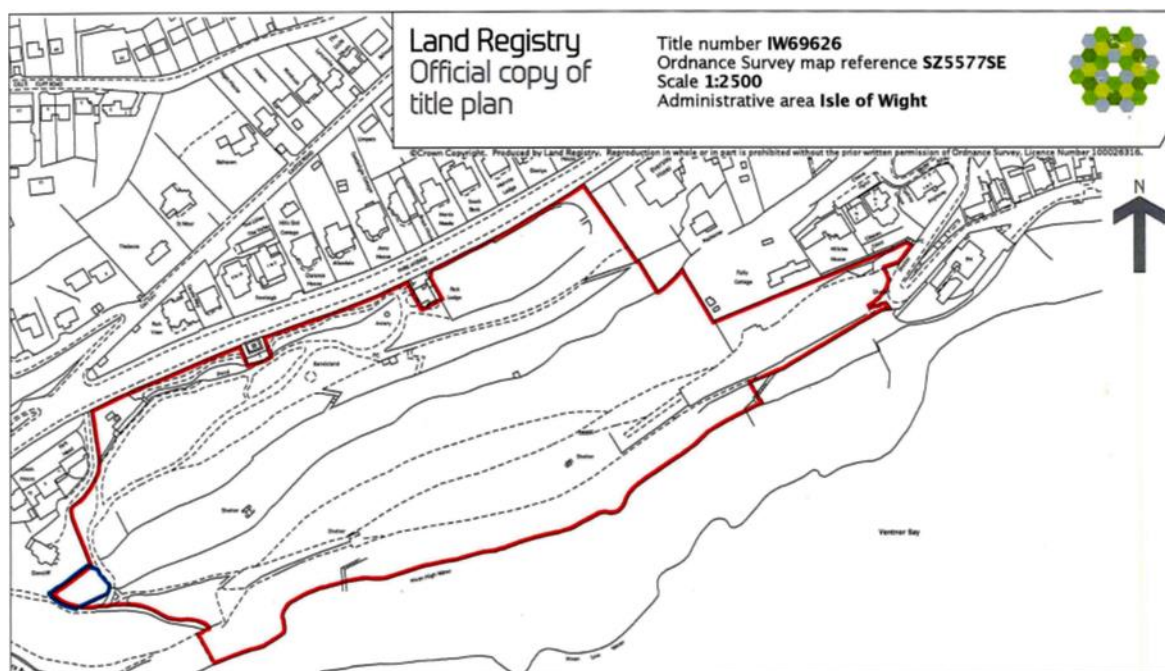
The **‘Overview’**, places Ventnor Park in its strategic context, incorporating aspects from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for developing parks and open green spaces for public use in terms of economic, social and environmental aspirations, in order to achieve future sustainability and successful management of the park for people to use and enjoy.

# Introduction



## Ventnor Park

At its meeting of the 11th January 2021, Ventnor Town Council resolved to take over the management of Ventnor Park from the Isle of Wight Council and to agree a lease for the site. The area covered extends from the edge of La Valaise car park in the east to the field to the west of Flowers Brook. The boundary to the north is Park Avenue and to the south the cliffs. (Please see the enclosed plan). The area was gifted to the Town in 1898 by the Steephill Castle Estate and has been a public park since that date. The area is part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is on the Coastal Path. This section on the path is much used by walkers and visitors and is the main pedestrian link between The Esplanade and Steephill Cove. The Park is criss-crossed by several well used Public Footpaths.



Ventnor Park has won many awards over the years – including five successive Gold Medals from Britain in Bloom and has been rated as one of England's best public parks. It is highly valued by our community – at a consultation meeting in January 2018 attended by 120 residents there was overwhelming support for the Town Council taking on the costs of grounds maintenance for Ventnor Park in its budget. The reasons for taking on the management of the park included the desire by the Town Council to continue to maintain high standard of grounds maintenance and planting in the Park. The Isle of Wight Council had indicated that they would only undertake grass cutting and arrange for the bins to be emptied and not maintain the Park to the required 'Award-winning' high standard.

# Introduction continued



Ventnor Park includes a variety of area with differing landscapes – from the formal gardens and putting green adjacent to Park Avenue to wooded and grassed areas that are a haven for Ventnor’s unique wildlife and flora. Local volunteers from Ventnor Enhancement Fund play an important role in enhancing the Park and their support will be invaluable in the future. The Park presents great opportunities for our community – as an educational resource for local schools, a meeting point for groups and a venue for outdoor recreation. The Outdoor Gym and Putting Green are much used and there is an opportunity to increase use of areas of the Park for sport and recreation.

The Park hosts events throughout the year – including The Fringe Festival, Carnival Week and the Christmas Carol Concert. There is also music at the bandstand on Sunday afternoons in the Summer. There is an opportunity for the Town Council to work with our local community groups and organisations to increase the number of events taking place in the Park -but it is essential that these events are predominantly ‘community focused and not commercial events and that the public access to the park is maintained.

## **Four key principles underline the Town Council’s strategy for Ventnor Park**

**Firstly:** To continue with the very standards of planting and grounds maintenance to ensure that Ventnor Park remains ‘award winning’ – and that it remains a high quality, accessible natural space and more people are encouraged to spend time there to benefit their health and well-being.

**Secondly:** That there is always free access to the Park and, that if events take place in Ventnor Park that principle of free access is retained. Increased use of the Park by the community should be actively encouraged and supported.

**Thirdly:** The Park should be a safe and welcoming place for all members of our community - of all ages and backgrounds and that the interests of each group of Park users are carefully balanced.

**Fourthly:** That Ventnor Park be maintained and enhanced as an important and a unique habitat for our Town’s unique wildlife and flora – to promote biodiversity and sustainability and to improve the visitor experience.



# Overview



## The Strategic Context

The following document section outlines the strategic elements for Ventnor Park. This project is being undertaken as a collaborative by Ventnor Town Council in order to achieve the future sustainability, maintenance and management of the park for local residents and visitors to use and enjoy.

The strategic context incorporates a National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) perspective similar to other strategic documents relating to park design, development and purpose within urban environments occurring throughout the UK. Essentially, simple comments relating to the three primary facets of the NPPF: economic, social and environmental. This is followed by the strategic aspirations and challenges of this particular open green space, prior to developing an overall vision and set of basic strategies for the park accessible by the general public.

Primarily the future direction of the park comes down to four main strategies with their associated goals. The purpose of the strategies and goals cover virtually every aspect of the park in terms of its horticulture, natural environment and ecosystems, social purpose and use - whatever the age, the potential for marketing, stakeholder engagement and community ownership, and the potential development of regular activities held in the park and events.

How one achieves those strategic goals through defined plans and associated scheduled actions has not been currently envisaged. As the Ventnor Park Strategy is a collective contribution, further discussion will be necessary to in order to define, prioritise and approve the required set of plans that aim to achieve both the short-term and long-term goals for Ventnor Park. This is a simple strategy to achieve a rational and managed future for Ventnor Park by Ventnor Town Council under lease from the Isle of Wight Council. It does not have to be complex in its approach. Nature will survive quite happily without human intervention.

Importantly, in order to provide access and usage, aesthetic beauty and pleasure for people visiting the park areas and making it a worthwhile destination for young children, families and adults, the park does need to be economically, socially and environmentally managed and operated according to statutory legislation, with strict adherence to safeguarding and accessibility needs, including formal and regular risk assessment in accordance with national health and safety standards for park areas and associated facilities.

# Award Winning

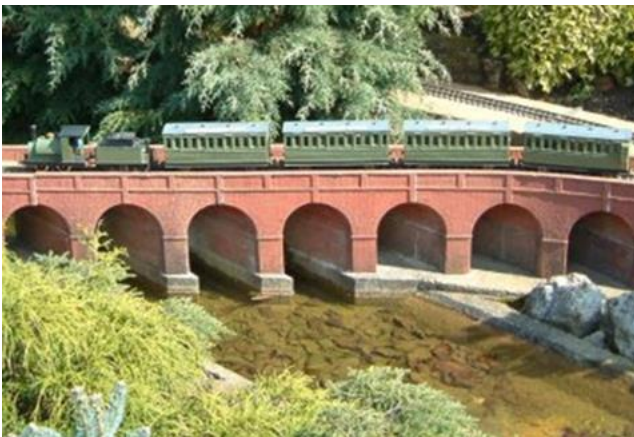


## Ventnor Park





# Potential





# Potential continued



# Benefits



## Economic benefits

A high-quality public space such as Ventnor Park can have a significant impact on surrounding local businesses – primarily the ‘T in the Park’, hospitality business at Steephill Cove, The Botanical Gardens, and nearby hotels such as The Royal and the Eversley. It can be an essential part of local economic regeneration strategy if the park is kept to a high standard, managed correctly and is a venue for hosting events and activities.

As towns and villages across the Isle of Wight increasingly compete with one another to attract investment, the presence of good parks, green spaces and well-kept scenic attractions becomes a vital business and marketing tool: both visitors, especially in terms of tourism, are attracted to locations that offer well-designed, well-managed public places and these in turn attract customers, employees and services.

A good public landscape or managed green space also offers very clear benefits to the local community. Whether it for personal space and quietness, dog walking or social gathering. In turn, any businesses operating during, or part of, an event or attraction in the park will attract local residents and visitors which invariably generates a green space economy.

A good-quality public space can improve trading by attracting more people into the area. It has been suggested for example, that well-planned improvements to public spaces close to town centres can boost commercial trading by up to 40 per cent and generate significant private sector investment if engaged – in effect, good for local businesses<sup>2</sup>.

**2** DoE and The Association of Town Centre Management (1997) *Managing Urban Spaces in Town Centres – Good Practice Guide*. London, HMSO

## Health benefits

The increase in nation-wide obesity has been linked to ever more sedentary lifestyles and a reduction in outdoor activity. Evidence shows that adult patterns of exercise are set early on in life<sup>3</sup>. Inactivity can lead to health problems, so a lack of exercise when young, can in turn lead to problems in adulthood such as diabetes, heart disease and respiratory conditions.

And it is not just physical health that is at risk: there are concerns too about people’s mental well-being, given the stressful lives that many now lead. This is particularly supported by the number of lost working days annually due to stress-related problems. Access to good-quality, well-maintained public spaces can help to improve physical and mental health by encouraging walking more in a serene and calm environment, to play sport, or simply to enjoy a green and natural environment.



## Benefits continued



In other words, Ventnor Park and with its walkways and natural beauty can help in overcoming obesity to some degree, reduce apathy to maintain a level of personal fitness and ill-health. Safe, clean spaces encourage people to walk more and therefore offer significant health benefits. This may include walking, just sitting and relaxing, meeting family and friends, or using an outdoor gym, or golf, bowls and cycling.

For the young, this may also include using the available play facilities and a variety of grass games. The importance of nature and 'green exercise' in the urban environment is good for both physical and mental health. All of these activities help to keep a general level of fitness by protecting the cardiovascular system and preventing the onset of other health problems. Natural views, of elements such as trees and lakes, promote a drop in blood pressure and have been shown to reduce feelings of stress.

Many people would agree that the park is a good place to get away from the stresses of life and just let those forces dissolve away for a while. Likewise, children have the right to play, recreation and culture. Play is crucial for many aspects of a child's development: from the learning of social skills, inclusion, experimentation and the confrontation and resolution of emotional crises. In addition, moral understanding, cognitive and communication skills such as language and comprehension, and physical skills<sup>3</sup>.

**3** Kuh, D. J. L. & Cooper, C. (1992) 'Physical activity at 36 years: patterns and childhood predictors in a longitudinal study'. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, Vol. 46, pp114-19.

## Community Benefits

Ventnor Park is open to all, regardless of ethnic origin, age or gender. It has over the years brought communities together, provided a meeting place, and developed social ties between families and friends.

This green space has shaped the cultural identity of Ventnor residents over the years. Its unique and well-groomed appearance has provided a 'sense of place and fond memories'. In this regard, its potential as a venue for social events, continues to have a very positive effect on the local community of Ventnor whatever the age, and must be made more available in the future. The park is a natural auditorium of nature for people to enjoy.

# Aspirations



## Our Aspirations for the Park

1. To understand the role that Ventnor Park, as an open accessible green space plays in the immediate and wider community areas that make up Ventnor.
2. To provide a clear and exciting picture of what the local residents of Ventnor would like the park to be now, and over the next five years.
3. To set out a contributor's strategic framework for each specific area of the park and develop a park site management plan.
4. To fully understand the town council's strategic direction for the park over the next five years in terms of enhancing this natural green space, park maintenance and running local events. Inevitably, some form of scheduled review process will be needed.
5. To provide a sense of direction and purpose to all contributors involved with the park, so that they understand their roles as motivators and contributors on behalf of the local community.
6. To enable the town council to optimise and focus its resources – money, time and human resources, and contractual work – so that the town council and contributors – voluntary, private sector and contractual, can meet the challenges of the park over the next five years.
7. To secure and manage an ongoing portfolio of capital investment through normal town council means, commercial and public sector contributions, and donations.
8. To understand, deliver and assist the town council's statutory duties relating to public open spaces, safeguarding, public protection, health and safety, climate change and the conservation of biodiversity.
9. To develop a 'drive to achieve, whatever the challenges' attitude amongst all park contributors in order to achieve the five-year plan to maintain and improve the park for the community, for local visitors, families and tourism, local and wider afield events groups, schools and community groups. The economics will inevitably follow.
10. To take a leaf out of nature's book and be organic about the development and future of the park for people to use and enjoy; and as nature in the park is 'on the surface, serenely and calmly balanced and networked', so too formal and informal contributors and stakeholders need to work towards a common goal within a calm and professional framework to take forward the park, promote its value and benefits, and uniqueness.

# Challenges



## The Expected Challenges

1. Being smart about the purpose, development and financial management of the park, within reasonable boundaries and statutory requirements will be a challenge. However, there is the potential to invite private, public, government, charities and voluntary organisations to invest in the future of the park.
2. Being able to manage, maintain and sustain the park, and making sure it continues to have a long, interesting, beautiful, and much loved life over the next 100 years as part of the continuing development of communities around Ventnor.
3. Consideration must be given to the density of the resident and visitor populations. A high number of residents in Central Ventnor have no access to a garden and live in high-density housing – making access to outdoor space more important to their well-being. Note: There is a correlation between deprivation and poor access to open spaces.
4. To provide a diverse and varied set of leisure activities, therefore attracting more people to the park while retaining the park's quiet, open green space for reflection and personal enjoyment. Carefully balancing the needs of many groups (especially those who are vulnerable), and avoiding conflicts and damage caused by overuse.
5. The Town Council's role must be to manage community expectations and the development of future facilities and events in the park; and be clear on the availability, purpose and usage of each available green space within the park.
6. Inevitably, delivering the necessary statutory responsibilities in relation to climate change and biodiversity; and resisting major commercialisation in the park, and balancing those with financial benefits that may come with some commercial activity.
7. Managing the expectations of event promoters of the park, either local or Island-wide, as a desirable and attractive destination for both local residents and visitors.
8. Understanding the benefits of staging events that have a positive effect on local retail and hospitality economies that bring together the local community together; and the positive financial, social and environmental benefits for Ventnor.
9. Finally, the Town Council should consider the use technology to promote the benefits of the park to residents and visitors; and use technology to improve its attractiveness – coloured water fountains, film screening, holographic displays, music, plays and entertainment, to name but a few options.

# Park Strategy



## The Proposed Vision

That every person who lives and works locally, or that visits Ventnor, has easy access to the park and its facilities, for the purpose of relaxation, leisure, observation, quiet reflection, education, exercise and play, in a green space that is safe, pleasant and protected for them to use and enjoy. Where the available public facilities in the Park are managed and maintained to a high standard, and as required supervised. And that there is a commitment by the Town Council to consult with existing and future contributors to the park – whether local residents, private and public services, local or Island-wide organisations, and visitors – to enhance, maintain and develop the future of this award winning park.

## Four essential strategies required

### Strategy 1: Being close to nature.

**Definition:** Opportunities for people to have that feeling of being close to ‘nature’, with the associated positive impact that this can bring in terms of physical and mental health with the simple pleasure of experiencing trees, birds, squirrels, ladybirds, butterflies and other wildlife, and where the improved air quality and lack of pollution is always evident.

#### Goals for this strategy:

**Goal 1.1:** Park design and layout focuses on creating a biophilic and balanced atmosphere. The biophilic design promoting stress reduction, enhancing creativity and clarity of thought, improving personal well-being and expediting health.

**Goal 1.2:** The horticulture components of the park are fully maintained and consistent with the purpose and design of the park for people to use, visit and enjoy.

**Goal 1.3:** Wildlife habitats are the natural environment of a plant or animal and are considered to be a natural feature of the park environment. To work with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to maintain and encourage the natural and designed wildlife habitats, making them more visible to people using the park.

**Goal 1.4:** Creating a natural balance between park design, wildlife development (plants and animal species), and people of all ages. The park being aesthetically pleasing and having a calming atmospheric feeling about it. A sense of oneness with nature for people to experience.

# Park Strategy continued



## Strategy 2: Safe place to play.

**Definition:** Green spaces are a safe environment for children to play and develop their physical, social interaction and interpersonal skills with their families and friends. Major factors that can aid in the development of children, and social bonding between families and friends; and significantly raise the levels of creative play both in a child and between children. Additionally, working with nurseries, schools, youth clubs and families.

### Goals for this strategy:

**Goal 2.1:** Park grass areas are well maintained, clear of any fouling or contaminants or litter. Allowing children to play freely in those areas in a protective environment, whether open or enclosed areas, for safety and safeguarding purposes.

**Goal 2.2:** The provision, design and development of park playground equipment that is well maintained, managed in certain situations, risk assessed and perfectly safe for both children and families to use and enjoy.

**Goal 2.3:** The potential for regular organised activities and/or clubs to be held in the park for children to enhance their physical, creative and cognitive skills, under managed supervision. This would be dependent on the time of the year and weather conditions these would be outside events.

**Goal 2.4:** The potential for organised local school activities to be held in the park, especially during the summer season, for both children and parents to spend time together, play together, and perform some activity together.

**Goal 2.5:** Planned educational activities at scheduled times for children to experience and participate in horticultural, biodiversity, ecological and conservational activities.

**Goal 2.6:** Planned educational activities relating to sports (volley ball, outdoor table tennis, boules, basketball, soft tennis, rounders, cricket, walking, jogging, badminton, frisbee, soft football, etc.), and other similar physical activities.

**Goal 2.7:** Planned and supervised wildlife, horticultural and nature trails, developing art through nature (sketching, painting, collages, etc.), landscape and map making, exploring connected walkways, and collective projects to inspire teamwork, collaborative working, interpersonal skills, and producing something worthwhile and memorable.



# Park Strategy continued



## Strategy 3: Community ownership.

**Definition:** People within local communities that regularly use their local public green spaces naturally gain a sense of pride and ownership; and tend to be more satisfied with them if these include well-maintained natural elements that bring tranquillity, pleasantness, cleanness, visually and aesthetically satisfying, and peacefulness. Consequently gaining a sense of pride and private ownership.

### Goals for this strategy:

**Goal 3.1:** For individuals and groups to feel that they have a sense of ownership of the park, they have to be able to access and experience it for themselves first – the diversity and facilities of the park. This comes from making people, residents and visitors, aware of the park and its location by additional park signage, well publicised events, and improved advertising of local events being run in the park through social media channels.

**Goal 3.2:** Park design and future development must enhance the natural elements of the existing horticultural features and facilities that enable a sense of tranquillity and peacefulness, inspires appreciation by park users and is visually satisfying throughout each season.

**Goal 3.3:** As the park develops in natural and horticultural character, and as more features created within the park, and seasonal events laid on, local and Island-wide stakeholders will become more involved. The potential community of contributors (public, voluntary and even private), are an invaluable guide for the future success of the park and what it provides for the local community.

**Goal 3.4:** It is imperative that the County Council and Town Council are united and committed in maintaining the park and its future development, as a beneficial asset within and for the local community. This would involve efficient and considered operational management, solid and responsible financial management, underpinned by transparent governance and adherence to statutory responsibilities.

**Goal 3.5:** Expanding the awareness of the benefits, attractions and activities available at the park in order to encourage a wider audience to use, participate in, and contribute to, the current and the future development of the park; and who may potentially become contributors to the park – for example, 'Friends of Ventnor Park'.

**Goal 3.6:** Easy access to the park in terms of physical car parking and 'accessibility' for vulnerable people with disabilities, impairments and mobility needs, must be address.

# Park Strategy continued



## Strategy 4: Working alongside ecology.

**Definition:** Ventnor Park is home to a wide range of plant and animal species in specific and unique habitats. These open spaces inevitably house all manner of biodiversity and horticultural elements, ecological habitats and wildlife. This all needs to be maintained, encouraged and protected throughout the seasons to a high standard. It is also necessary to promote and use, where possible, aspects of biophilic design within the park that encourage and enhance physical and mental health, and the well-being of the people that use and visit the park.

### Goals for this strategy.

**Goal 4.1:** To look at, and develop, the relationship between nature and people within the open and green spaces to improve physical, mental and spiritual health and wellbeing. Particularly those who may feel disconnected due to loss, illness, social, injury, disorder or psychological constraint. Thereby helping in connecting with others while walking, sitting in the park or engaging in some form of activity, preventing social exclusion, improving individual focus and experiencing a sense of personal calmness and tranquillity.

**Goal 4.2:** To develop an ecological focus by understanding the nature of environmental influences on individual organisms and the interactions of living organisms within the diverse open green spaces. Their populations, communities and distribution of living things in the physical environment; and using 'ecoscaping' to integrate the disciplines of landscape architecture and spatial planning with environmental and ultimately at the level of the biosphere.

**Goal 4.3:** To develop an understanding of the biodiversity that occurs within the open green spaces and the variety of life evident (plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms); and to encourage and protect those life forms and their habitats. Thereby protecting a diverse range of natural ecosystems that maintain and sustain the natural environment. Essentially, a park is not just about grass, flowers and trees. But is more complex, encompassing an abundance of wildlife, insects and many biological species, which are vital for the overall health of the park's natural environment, growth and sustainability.

**Goal 4.4:** To understand and promote conservation within the open green spaces through planned management of the natural environment to preserve the natural resources and wildlife, and prevent the loss and destruction of its ecosystems, species, wildlife populations and natural habitats.

# Next Steps



## Future Plans for the Park

At this point, a proposed vision for Ventnor Park has been defined. Along with that vision, four central strategies and associated goals to pursue and achieve over the next few years. It must be stressed that this is a high-level strategic document, not a tactical or operational document, for Ventnor Park; and for approval by Ventnor Town Council.

It does not include the necessary management and financial criteria, processes or policies for actually running the park on a day-to-day or even annual basis. These important aspects are already to some degree in operation and further actions will follow.

However, the goals for the four primary strategies have been developed and will need to be achieved over time. The 'next steps' aspect is about creating those individual plans in order to attain those desired goals for Ventnor Park.

It has been commented that Strategy 1 and Strategy 4 appear similar in their outlooks, and could be merged. In their defence, Strategy 1 is more about 'people experiencing the beauty and tranquillity of the park; whereas Strategy 4 is much more concerned with the expertise – which maybe through groups directly involved with horticulture and ecology, in order to achieve those aspects of beauty, sustainability, sense of nature, and ecological conservation and preservation.

The 'next steps' phase is about bringing the people, organisations, groups, contributors, and event planners together to discuss and plan the necessary activities, projects, resources, expertise and community involvement necessary to secure the future of Ventnor Park. The focus is on achieving the defined goals outlined in this document. This is currently outside of the remit for this strategic document, but does need to be actioned and set in motion.

# Ventnor Park



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