

Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board

14:00	Friday, 23 January 2015	Discovery Centre Great Notley CP,
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Quorum: One Member from each Council

Membership

Councillor R Hirst (Chairman),	Essex County Council
Councillor S Walsh	Essex County Council
Councillor G Butland	Braintree District Council
Councillor W Schmitt	Braintree District Council

For information about the meeting please ask for:

Lisa Siggins, Committee Officer

Telephone: 033301 34594

Email: lisa.siggins@essex.gov.uk



Essex County Council

Essex County Council and Committees Information

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<http://www.essex.gov.uk/Your-Council/Local-Government-Essex/Pages/Visit-County-Hall.aspx>

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Please note that an audio recording may be made of the meeting – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

Part 1

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

		Pages
1	Apologies and Substitution Notices The Committee Officer to report receipt (if any)	
2	Appointment of Chairman for this municipal year To appoint a Chairman for the municipal year 2015/2016	
3	Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board held on 12 March 2014.	5 - 8
4	Declarations of Interest To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members.	
5	Site Operational Report, including a financial report by Steve Bunn, Head Ranger To receive report (GTP/01/15) by Steve Bunn Head Ranger Great Notley Country Park, presented by Tim Dixon Head of Country Parks, Essex County Council.	9 - 10
	Please note the Financial report is to follow	
6	Sports Update To receive report (GTP/02/15) and accompanying appendices from Nick Day, Parks and Open Spaces Manager, Braintree District Council updating the Board on progress and performance with the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Great Notley Park.	11 - 38
7	Joint report on: Developing Great Notley Country Park further as a 'Destination Park' To receive report (GTP/03/15) from Paul Partridge, Head of Operations Braintree District Council and Tim Dixon, Head of Country Parks Essex County Council.	39 - 48

8 Joint report on Joint Partnership and long-term vision 49 - 50
for Great Notley Country park

To receive report (GTP/04/15) from Paul Partridge, Head of Operations Braintree District Council and Tim Dixon, Head of Country Parks, Essex County Council.

9 Stakeholder Feedback

To receive the views and feedback of stakeholders on any of the issues raised.

10 Dates for Future Meetings

The following dates are proposed for future meetings of the Board in 2015:

Thursday 12 March

Thursday 18 June

Thursday 17 September

Thursday 10 December

All meetings to commence at 2.00pm.

11 Urgent Business

To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

12 Urgent Exempt Business

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK
JOINT VENTURE BOARD HELD AT THE DISCOVERY CENTRE, GREAT
NOTLEY ON 12 MARCH 2014**

Attendance:

Councillors:

John Jowers	- Essex County Council (ECC)
Simon Walsh	- Essex County Council (ECC)
Graham Butland	- Braintree District Council (BDC)
Mrs Wendy Schmitt	- Braintree District Council (BDC)

Officers in attendance:

Teresa Ash	- Essex County Council/Senior Project Manager
Nick Day	- Braintree District Council/Parks and Open Spaces Manager
Julie Nash	- Essex County Council/Operations Manager
Paul Partridge	- Braintree District Council/Head of Operations
Sophie Champion	- Committee Officer (ECC)

1. Apologies and Substitution Notices

There were no apologies reported from Members of the Board.

There were two apologies from officers noted, Tim Dixon, Head of Country Parks, ECC and Steve Bunn, Head Ranger.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

4. Proposal regarding a new adventure course at Great Notley Country Park

The Board received report (GTP/01/14) from Julie Nash, Operations Manager, Essex County Council. Teresa Ash, Senior Project Manager, Essex County Council was also in attendance for this item.

It was explained to the Board that this proposal came out of the County Council's work to move the country parks service to a cost neutral position, whilst increasing the offer to customers. There were a number of opportunities to do

this and each consideration was being given to what options would be suitable for each of the Country Parks.

Great Notley County Park had been identified as a suitable potential site for an 'Adventure Ropes Course' attraction which visitors would pay to use. The reasons why this site had been identified as the most suitable option were set out in the report.

During the discussion the following points were made:

- There were no similar attractions in the Essex area.
- The projected surplus income had been based on a cautious projection of the number of visitors, particularly as it would be largely reliant on word of mouth marketing rather than a large marketing campaign.
- Options to go into partnership with an industry provider had been looked at but discounted due to a significant reduction in potential income. However this proposal offered a real opportunity for joint working between the County Council and Braintree District Council and early informal discussions indicated an enthusiasm to pursue a more detailed business case.
- It was noted that this type of attraction would not be suitable for every Country Park and consideration was being given to the function of each Park and what options may be suitable at each site from a wide range of potential offer.
- It was suggested that car parking would need to be looked at as part of the business case, to ensure there was sufficient parking for visitors.
- Members generally considered this to be an exciting opportunity for the Park particularly as it built on the existing offer at the Park of play equipment for up to age 13 and being a destination place.
- Members noted the projected surplus income figures based on a model for a good value price per head.
- With regard to timescales, it was reported that the aim would be to have the equipment in place for April 2015 if the proposal went ahead. The next stage would be to put together a detailed full business case for consideration by the Board.

Paul Partridge, Braintree District Council, suggested that this was an opportune time to review the working arrangements of the Joint Working Agreement and financial operating model which had been in place in since 2008. Councillor Jowers agreed that it would be appropriate to review it at this stage.

The Board agreed that subject to consideration of a full Business Case, there was overall agreement in principle to pursuing the proposal.

5. Sports Update

The Board received report (GTP/02/14) providing an update on the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Great Notley Country Park. Paul Partridge, Head of Operations, BDC and Nick Day, Parks and Open Spaces Manager, BDC were in attendance for this item.

Progress

Following the formal agreement of a new Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Braintree District Council (BDC) and Braintree Town Football Club (BTFC) Youth Academy, the Agreement had now been in place for six months and there had been a number of key achievements to date set out in the report.

The progress made towards the Football Development Plan had been noted by the Football Foundation and Football Association with positive feedback.

BTFC had provided an appendix to the report setting out the achievements to date and the aims for the next six months.

Budget Update

The income from the period April 2013 – January 2014 was £42k compared to £30k for the same period in the previous year. The projected income for 2013/14 was £46.5k compared to operating costs of £49k, so there was a small short-fall but showed a significant improvement on previous years as reported to the Board.

Conclusion

Following discussions between BTFC and the Great Notley Football Club (GNFC) both clubs were now fully engaged and have agreed on a number of areas of partnership working.

It was considered that overall the partnership with BTFC had been very successful and led to excellent progress and further opportunities for the future.

Following a question raised regarding whether there were many girls involved in the activities, it was reported that whilst it was mostly boys at the current time, part of the plan was to encourage greater participation by girls, disabled young people and ethnic minority groups.

The Board welcomed the report.

6. Stakeholder Feedback

No issues have been raised by the Stakeholder Groups.

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was **Agreed** that the next meeting of the Board would be provisionally arranged for July 2014. However if the Business Case referred to under item 4 was ready sooner than that, a meeting of the Board would be convened at an earlier date.

8. Urgent Business

The Chairman agreed to take an item of urgent business relating to the wind turbine at the Discovery Centre.

Representatives from Braintree District Council expressed their concern regarding a request to remove the wind turbine due to on-going maintenance costs. There was particular concern that the District Council had been unaware that the turbine had not been in working order for the past couple of years.

It was suggested that options for the future needed to be considered and presented to the Board.

It was **Agreed** that:

The status of the wind turbine would be reviewed and the options for the future be considered.

The meeting closed at 10.55am.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		GTP/01/15
Meeting:	GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
Date:	23 January 2015	
Great Notley Country Park Site Report January		
Enquiries to:	Tim Dixon Head of Country Parks Essex County Council Email :tim.dixon@essex.gov.uk	

Country Park activities

A variety of events took place over the summer at Great Notley Country Park including, the Grey Hound Show and parking for the Tour De France.

“Park Run” started over the summer months and has proved to be very successful. On average we welcome around 100 runners per week. Park Run is a voluntary organisation where a group of runners meet every Saturday morning at parks across the country and complete a 5km course. The event is completely free to enter and encourages all ages to join in and run for fun. Park Run has also held a joint event with Witham Running Club. One of the aims is to encourage Park Run runners to join a running club.

The site is becoming very popular with green gym type exercise, such as Boot Camps. We now have three different Boot Camp groups using the site.

Work on the play equipment safety surfaces was started and completed ready for the summer holidays. The new safety surface, Tiger Bark, comprises of a bonded shredded rubber material. It is a cost effective solution due to its durability and low maintenance requirements.

We also had the annual play inspection and the inspector was impressed with the improvements that have made around the play trail and to the individual items of play equipment. However, as the play equipment is now six years old and parts are starting to need to be replaced. One of the poles for one of our largest pieces of play equipment had to be removed and reported to the manufacturers due to rot.

The frontage of the Discovery Centre has been resurfaced ready for the summer period and this was well received by our visitors. The new surface reduces the amount of mud brought into the centre and also aids access to the building for less able visitors. The addition of extra new picnic benches in this area, made by one of

the rangers, was also appreciated by visitors. The two pathways leading up to the Discovery Centre now need to be improved and we are working on this, along with the landscaping of the frontage to improve the overall look of the Discovery Centre.

Further to the new frontage, additional ground works around the Discovery Centre were completed, as new gabions were constructed and installed by the rangers.

We are aiming to award a contract to upgrade a 1000m of footpath within the park. Quotes have been obtained and we will be expecting works to be completed before Easter. A new tractor and flail has been ordered and will be arriving on site early spring 2015. This will assist with on-site and Flitch Way maintenance.

With all the recent rain, the park is already beginning to look rather water logged. The rangers are continuing with further drainage work around the site.

We are looking to recruit a new ranger, as one of our rangers left to take up a new role in Berkshire. There have been 57 applicants for the role and we are hoping to have the new person in post by the end of January.

The park also hosted a New Year's Eve Marathon which started at the Bird of freedom and incorporated the Flitch Way. Over 250 runners entered the race.

This year was the first year there has been a water vole has been seen on the lake. This is a significant sighting, as the water vole is becoming an endangered species in the UK. A Barn Owl has also been seen hunting along the play trail mounds. It has also been a record year for orchids on the site, with Bee and Pyramidal Orchids showing in most of the meadows on the park.

Report by Steve Bunn, Head Ranger, ECC Country Parks

		AGENDA ITEM 6
		GTP/02/15
Meeting:	GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
Date:	23 January 2015	
SPORTS UPDATE - ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCH AND MULTI-USE GAMES AREA		
Enquiries to:	Nick Day, Parks & Open Spaces Manager Braintree District Council Email: nick.day@braintree.gov.uk	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides Members with an update on progress and performance with the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Great Notley Country Park from 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014.

2. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Our key achievements at the facility since the last Board Meeting (March 2014) are summarised below. These have been taken from the latest progress report prepared by Braintree Town Football Club (BTFC) Youth Academy, our delivery partners for the facility. (The full report is attached at Appendix A.)

- Six one-day soccer camps held in Summer 2014 for over 120 boys & girls aged 7 to 11.
- 55 local boys attending the Academy full-time using the facility 3 days per week during the off-peak daytime periods.
- The introduction of "Walking Football" sessions for the over 40 age group to encourage a healthier lifestyle.
- The launch of a Disabled Sport programme with an Essex Soccability Day hosted on behalf of the Essex FA.
- The staging of a "Football & History" event in partnership with Braintree Museum over the Summer holidays.
- Weekly Goalkeeper coaching and Elite coaching sessions for promising young footballers supervised by the Academy's own coaches.
- The purchase of a 17-seat minibus for transporting Academy boys between the BTFC Stadium (where academic studies take place) and GNCP where coaching takes place. The bus has also been used for community sessions such as providing transport to/from the Walking Football.
- John Ray School Day – On hearing the news about the fire at John Ray School, BTFC organised a day of football fun for John Ray pupils at Gt Notley. Academy coaches and students supervised the children. BDC & BTFC provided this free of charge.
- The training of 60 students to be qualified as Football Association Level 1 Coaches. These in turn are now qualified to promote football in the area.

- The qualification of 15 Academy students as FA Level 2 Coaches, together with invited Coaches from other local youth football clubs.

Over the past year a total of 42 different football teams representing 19 different sports organisations have used the facility on a regular basis.

This equates to over 900 players regularly using the facility through their football club, with an additional 451 hours of casual bookings being made by individual players over the last 12 months.

3. BUDGET UPDATE

Income received during the 8-month period from April 2014 – November 2014 was £28k compared to £22.4k for the same period in the previous year, representing an increase of just over 24%.

Total annual income for 2014-15 is projected to be around £45k, with the full year's operating costs also expected to come in around the £45k mark. The facility is therefore expected to reach the break-even point for the first time since its first full year of operation in 2010/11.

4. ONGOING DEVELOPMENT

We are currently working on the following areas of development:-

- A revised version of the Football Development Plan produced by BTFC was recently approved by the Football Foundation and the Football Association and we are looking forward to making excellent progress in delivering the key components of the improved plan (attached in Appendix B).
- Securing the support of **The Football Conference Community Trust** to promote its community activities such as Soccer Camps, Specialist Coaching, school visits, Walking Football and Disabled Sport.
- Seeking 'kite mark' recognition for BTFC's community activities by achieving Football League **'Community Capability Status'**. Part of this will be the establishment of BTFC's community section, Community Iron, as a Charitable Independent Organisation.
- The hosting of a "Soccability" Festival as part of the FA's national scheme to encourage people with disabilities to play and enjoy football.
- The planning of two further "Soccability" events to be held in March and May 2015 to encourage more schools to take part – as requested by the Essex FA following the success of the initial festival held in November 2014.

5. CONCLUSION

Excellent progress has continued to be made over the past 8 months. In addition to increased use of the off-peak sessions by local clubs and community groups, Gt. Notley Football Club (which is the single largest user) has continued to take a more pro-active role in our monthly management meetings and has committed resources to help develop and deliver the Football Development Plan.

Looking ahead over the longer term, we are confident that our partnership with BTFC will result in greater promotion and increased use of the facility which will contribute towards our future vision and aspirations for the development and management of the Country Park as a major visitor attraction in the Braintree District and County of Essex over the next 5 to 10 years.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the report.

Nick Day

Parks & Open Spaces Manager
Braintree District Council

13 January 2015



DEVELOPING FOOTBALL AT THE GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK – A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH:



COUNCIL MEMBERS REVIEW: OCTOBER 2014

GNCP – Great Notley Country Park

BDC - Braintree District Council

BTFC - Braintree Town Football Club

GNFC – Great Notley Football Club

1. Introduction:

This document provides a summary of football-related activities at Great Notley Country Park. These are conducted as part of the on-going partnership between Braintree District Council and Braintree Town Football Club which aims to increase usage of the football facilities at the venue.

- The latest **usage & income statistics** (shown below in 2.2) confirm the success of the partnership in attracting users to the football facilities at GNCP.
- A new **5 year Development Plan for Football at GNCP** has been approved by the Essex Football Association. This document from the national Football Association is used as a template by all county FA's to ensure major football venues have a consistent, approved plan to justify the investment in the venue.
- The programme of '**Community**' **football-related events** started with the partnership has continued to grow.
- **Braintree Town FC Academy** – a full-time Further Education programme for over fifty 16 to 18 year olds - has made the GNCP its base for all midweek coaching, and continues to use the facility 3 days per week. It also has moved the home 'base' of one of its football teams playing on Wednesdays to the grass pitch at GNCP.

2. The last 6 months

2.1 BTFC Football Activities at GNCP:

- **6 one-day Soccer Camps** have been run at GNCP during summer 2014 with 120+ children attending. Another is scheduled for October Half Term week. These provide a fun, football-based day for children supervised by BTFC coaches.
- **Elite Coaching** for promising young footballers from any (or no) club – every Thursday afternoon after school, again supervised by BTFC coaches.
- **Goalkeeper Coaching** – open to all local goalkeepers; supervised by Braintree's first team goalkeepers, every Thursday afternoon.



- A successful joint venture **with Braintree Museum** over the Summer Holidays to stage a Football & History themed day for local youngsters. All attendees and their parents were then invited to come along to a Home Braintree Town match.



- The introduction of a programme of **Walking Football** – designed for gentlemen over a certain age, but who would like some exercise and social activities based around football. Our first taster had 14 attendees and we plan a fortnightly programme every other THURSDAY, 1 to 3 pm, starting on 6th NOV. Everyone is welcome! We organised free parking at BTFC at Clockhouse Way and free transport for all attendees to/from GNCP to save the cost of Car Parking at GNCP. BTFC coaches were in attendance to supervise the session.



- We are about to start a **Disabled Sport** programme – beginning with the staging of **Essex Soccability Day** on THURSDAY 20th NOVEMBER from 10 to 12.
All are welcome to come along to this event which we are hosting on behalf of Essex FA.
Over the next 6 months we plan to take coaches into local schools – both mainstream schools and those for children with special educational needs – to supervise coaching sessions. These will be inclusive, for disabled and non-disabled children.
We hope this will then lead to the creation of disabled football events and one or more teams at GNCP.
- 55 young men at **BTFC's** full-time Further Education **Academy** use the GNCP facilities 3 days per week during the day. While most aspire to become footballers, the academic part of their course provides the skills and qualifications required to become a Sports Leaders in environments such as schools. Where appropriate we provide Academy students with practical leadership opportunities during events such as Soccer Camps. This season 3 Academy students have been registered as players for the BTFC 1st team, and one has made his 1st team debut in The Football Conference – a national football league.



2.2 GNCP Usage statistics & income summary.

	Total hours booked Jul-Sep 2014	Total hours booked Jul-Sep 2013	Total income Jul – Sep 2014	Total income Jul-Sep 2013
Peak Time Bookings	654	349	£9,495	£8,560
Off peak Bookings	43	55	£893	£507
Weekend Bookings	121	59		
TOTAL	818	463	£10,388	£9,067

2.3 Strategic Developments:



- **Great Notley Football Club (GNFC)** has been consulted during the drafting of the new 5 year plan for the Essex FA, who oversee the development of football facilities throughout the County. BTFC and GNFC are shown as joint promoters of activities in the new Development Plan; although in practice the majority will be tackled by BTFC.
- GNFC were the lead Community Football Club partner when the facilities at GNCP were built.



- BTFC has secured the support of **The Football Conference Community Trust** to promote its Community activities such as Soccer Camps, Specialist Coaching, School visits, Walking Football and Disabled Sport.

- The BTFC Academy would welcome discussions about **relocating all BTFC Academy activities to GNCP**. Currently the Academic sessions take place at BTFC's stadium in Clockhouse Way with only the practical football coaching activities taking place at GNCP.

This would require the provision of student facilities at GNCP and possibly extra pitches for matches. Current student numbers are around 50.

Provisional plans are being developed to introduce a Girl's stream to the Academy within the next 2 years which would increase Academy students to around 70 per year

- BTFC is to seek 'kite mark' recognition for its Community activities by achieving Football League '**Community Capability Status**'. Part of this will be the establishment of BTFC's Community section, **Community Iron**, as a **Charitable Independent Organisation**.

2.4 Other BTFC Community Activities

These activities are not necessarily all at GNCP. Page 17 of 50

- Sports sessions have been run in **John Bunyan Infant School** 4 days per week since January 2014. We have just circulated other local junior schools offering to conduct a free coaching session at the school.
- Soccer Camp 'graduates' and attendees to our shared event with **Braintree Museum** were invited to Braintree Town for a presentation & to be the Guard of Honour for a match



- **Community Iron** has grown into a self-contained part of BTFC.
Moneys raised for good causes amount to over £2500 for **J's Hospice, Help for Heroes, Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research; Braintree Food Bank; Sport Relief, Essex Air Ambulance,**
For further details see www.communityiron.co.uk
- **Friends of Braintree Town** is a Business Networking group - with very successful, free monthly meetings at the football stadium with an average 70 people attending.
BDC send a representative to these meetings.
Anyone is welcome.

2.5 A recap of Other Activities over the last year.

- **John Ray School Day** – On hearing the news about the fire at John Ray School BTFC organised a free day of football fun for John Ray pupils at Gt Notley. Academy coaches and students supervised the children. BDC & BTFC provided this free.
- BTFC Academy has now trained **60 students** to be qualified as **Football Association Level 1 coaches**. They in turn are now qualified to promote football in the area.
- BTFC has employed an **apprentice** from another Community partner, **The College at Braintree** to help in the administration of Community schemes.
- BTFC Academy has purchased a 17 seat **Minibus** for transporting Academy boys between The BTFC Stadium (where academic studies take place) and GNCP where coaching takes place. The bus has also been used for Community sessions such as providing transport to/from the Walking Football.
BDC has kindly arranged servicing of the bus with the Council's vehicle maintenance contractor.
- Academy staff and students supported **Tabor Science College** to run a **charity** football-themed day to raise money for Hurricane Haiyan victims.
- **15** of the BTFC Academy students are qualifying as **FA Level 2 coaches** together with invited coaches from other local youth football clubs.

Alan Stuckey, Director, BTFC
October 2014

The FA Football Development Programme Football Development Toolkit

Football Development Plan

Seasons 20__ / __ to 20 __ / __



YOUR VISION

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Develop a shared vision that is representative of the full club, not just one person! By involving as many people as you can in your organisation you can establish a 'shared vision' that is representative of your members and clearly identifies your purpose.

CLUB DEVELOPMENT TABLE

Remember to complete the season date and identify the number of teams for each season.

	Current season 20__ / __			Year 1 20__ / __			Year 2 20__ / __			Year 3 20__ / __			Year 4 20__ / __			Year 5 20__ / __		
	Male	Female	Disability	Male	Female	Disability	Male	Female	Disability	Male	Female	Disability	Male	Female	Disability	Male	Female	Disability

GROWTH AND RETENTION		This section identifies how the club plans to retain and grow provision and develop flexible club formats that will support existing players and introduce new male, female and players with a disability and from diverse communities into football.		
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 			
Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
1				
2				
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5				

Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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RAISING STANDARDS AND ADDRESSING ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR		This section identifies ways in which the club can create a fun and safe environment for everyone involved in it's structure. This includes how the club will raise standards of behaviour and ensure a safe and positive environment for children and vulnerable adults.		
Aim	• • •			
Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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BETTER PLAYERS		This section identifies how the club will support every player to realise his/her potential - in particular support the development of skills at a younger age. The 5-11 year-old group is absolutely crucial to embedding basic skills, enhancing enjoyment of the game, developing healthy lifestyles and creating a new generation of talented players.		
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 			
Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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RUNNING THE GAME		This section focuses on the identification of ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how the club is run.		
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 			
Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT		This section looks at how the club will recruit, train and develop the workforce that will support the administration, development and promotion of the club.		
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 			
Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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FACILITY DEVELOPMENT		This section identifies the facilities required by the club to sustain and increase participation.		
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 			
Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Your plan

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

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PROMOTION		Marketing and PR communication campaigns can play a significant role in helping deliver the key messages of the club around raising standards and safety in the youth section together with promoting the club to it's membership and potential new sponsors.		
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Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION		To engage with young people and contribute towards wider community benefits.		
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">			
Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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Page 36 of 50				

Objective	Achievement targets	Timescale	Responsibility	Costs
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		AGENDA ITEM 7
		GTP/03/15
Meeting:	Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board	
Date:	23 January 2015	
Developing Great Notley Country Park further as a ‘Destination Park’		
Enquiries to:	Tim Dixon, Head of Country Parks Essex County Council Email : tim.dixon@essex.gov.uk and Paul Partridge Head of Operations, Braintree District Council Email : paul.partridge@braintree.gov.uk	

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on the following areas relating to Great Notley Country Park:

- The proposed car parking charges.
- The proposed 'Sky Trail' course.
- The photovoltaic panels on the Discovery Centre and the replacement of the existing Wind Turbine.

The report also seeks the following decisions from the Partnership Board:

1. To approve the proposed parking tariff for the Country Park as set out within this report, subject to any changes arising from public consultation.
2. To confirm that Essex County Council (ECC) and Braintree District Council (BDC) may proceed with negotiations for the land lease for the Sky Trail course.
3. To agree to the installation of PV Panels on the roof of the Discovery Centre and the replacement of the Wind Turbine at the Country Park as outlined within this report.

2.0 Car parking capacity and proposed charges

2.1 Charges

Essex County Council's Country Parks service provides access to the County's prime sites for countryside recreation, manages visitor centres and provides on-site staffing to ensure safe enjoyment for all ages and abilities.

All of the income generated from car parking goes directly towards offsetting the costs of staff and managing operating the parks.

Car parking is being reviewed in Essex Country Parks with the aim of offering even better value and greater convenience and flexibility for visitors. It is

therefore proposed that the current flat rate charge and reduced flat rate winter charge be replaced with variable charging models based on the length of stay,

The current and proposed parking tariffs for the Great Notley Country Park are shown below:

Current Charges

Period	Charge
1 April to 31 October	£3.50 a day
1 November to 31 March	£2.50 a day

Proposed charges for Great Notley Country Park

Band	Length of Stay	Tariff
1	Up to 30 mins	£1.00
2	Up to 1 hour	£2.00
3	Up to 2 hours	£3.00
4	Up to 3 hours	£4.00
5	Over 3 hours	£5.00

For example, if you have a family of four visiting the park for up to 3 hours (band 4); the proposed maximum charge would be £4 which equates to £1 per person.

By comparison, Braintree District Council's parking charges are as follows:-

Hourly Charge	Monday to Sunday 7am to 7.30pm
Up to 1 hour	£0.90
1-3 hours	£1.80
3-6 hours	£3.00
Over 6 hours	£5.50

The introduction of a banded charging system offers customers greater choice and more flexibility and convenience when parking. It also accommodates those customers who only wish to stay for a very short period, as they would pay less than half of the fee they are currently charged.

Alongside the new charging tariff it is proposed to introduce a pay on foot/exit operating system. Payment will be collected through cash, credit/debit card and contactless as well as remote payment over mobile phone. The cost of installation will be fully funded by ECC.

The charge for a car parking season ticket that enables parking across all ECC country parks will remain at £65 for 12 months and £40 for 6 months, reduced to £45 and £30 respectively for Blue Badge Holders and over 60's.

This more flexible and affordable parking tariff seeks to address the current imbalance between customers who pay for parking at the Country Park and those who avoid paying by parking on the roads in Gt. Notley Garden Village.

2.2 Car park capacity

Current capacity is 200/250 hard standing and 400 overflow car parking spaces. The maximum number of cars parking at the park on any day this year has reached two thirds of the capacity available, including the overflow. There is a further overflow area capable of holding another 200 cars in an adjacent field, should it be required.

The existing car park is considered adequate for the current operation and the proposed Sky Trail course, given the fact that there is an overflow car park (and additional overflow capacity) to meet seasonal fluctuations in demand. It is recognised however, that more permanent car parking may be required if the park continues to grow. This will be included in the scope for the review of the longer term vision for the park.

2.3 Financial

The new charges will generate additional income for the County's Country Parks Service of up to £15k per annum excluding VAT, taking into account additional visitors using the proposed Sky Trail course. Customers on bands 1-3 will be paying less, balanced out by those who pay slightly more on bands 4 and 5.

2.4 Legal

Under Section 43 of the Countryside Act 1968, a local authority has the power to make reasonable charges for any facilities or services provided by them in a Country Park.

2.5 Communication with Stakeholders

- Stakeholders, including Great Notley Football Club, will be advised of the proposed tariff in writing prior to public consultation. Great Notley Parish Council has already been engaged with and other sports clubs will also be contacted as part of the consultation.

It is ECC's policy to consult on changes for a period of 6 weeks following approval by the Partnership Board, commencing on 26 January, and the information gathered will be used to feed into the final version of the charging model. Should there be any changes to the proposed charges, members of the Partnership Board will be asked to agree them 'virtually' without the need for another Board Meeting. Should no changes be required the new charges will commence in April 2015.

- Posters will be displayed in the park for 6 weeks inviting visitors to e-mail or write in with their views on the proposals. An e-mail (Countryside.assets@essex.gov.uk) and postal address will be provided for visitors to send in their views too.

- The ECC and BDC websites, Country Parks website <http://www.visitparks.co.uk/>, Twitter and Facebook page will also provide details on the proposed changes and explain where to send any comments.

2.6 Risks

2.6.1 Opportunity Risks:

Delivering more affordable and flexible charging will have a positive impact on reputation as the new model provides better value for money.

2.6.2 Reputational risks:

The potential consequences of the new car parking model could be that some customers stay for a shorter period of time.

The new variable charging model may be viewed by the press in a negative way and result in a temporary reduction in visitor numbers. Publicity will focus on better affordability, increased choice that reflects the duration of stay and cashless parking. ECC and BDC Communications Teams will monitor and manage this potential risk.

3.0 Sky Trail Course

3.1 Building on the existing successful Joint Venture Partnership with BDC, ECC is seeking to invest circa £390k (Capital) in a 'pay to use' new adventure activity installation. This will deliver additional annual net revenue of over £250,000. It will enable the Partnership to move the park towards being cost neutral, whilst improving customers' experience of the recreational and play value the park has to offer. Great Notley has been identified as the most suitable site for this type of attraction within Essex because:

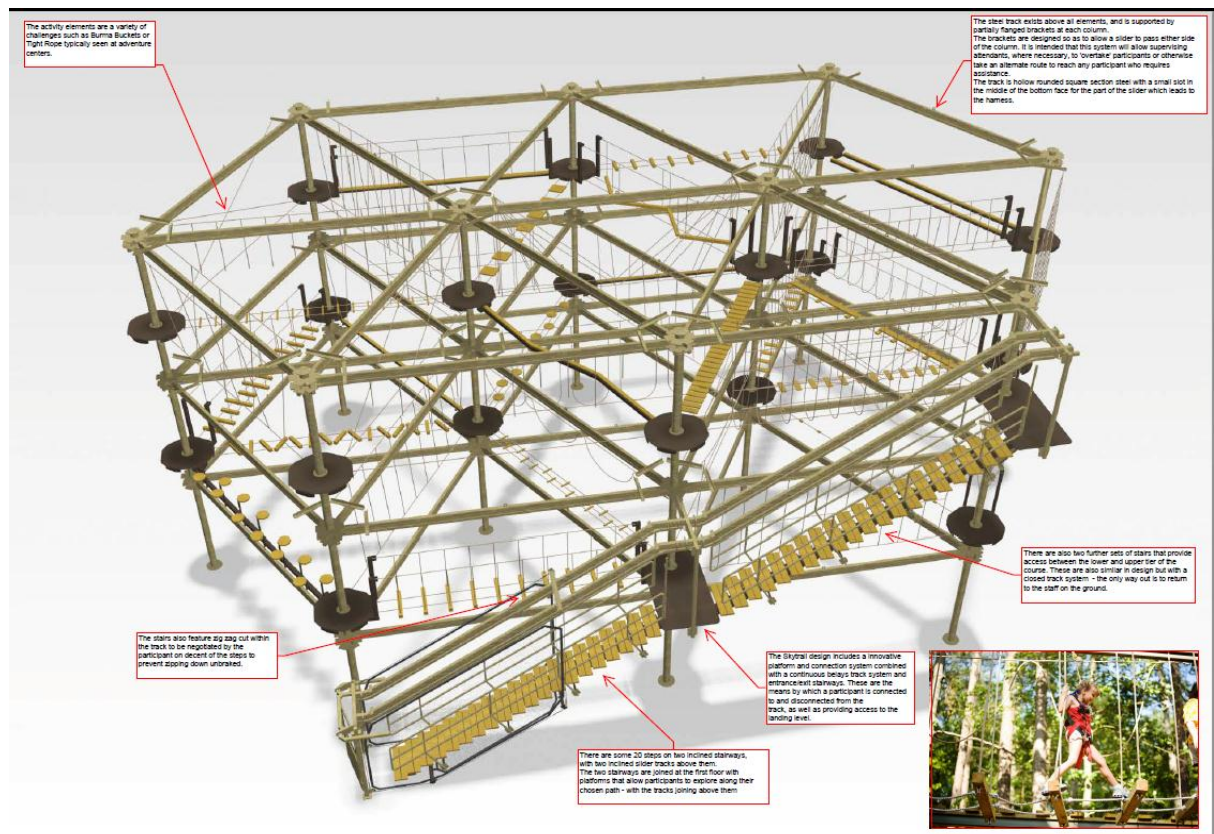
- ECC has an excellent working relationship with Braintree District Council.
- It is already a 'destination park' with good transport links and its existing offer of adventure and sensory play attracts visitors from within a 30 mile radius.
- It is a popular destination for families with children up to the age of 13. The adventure ropes course, whilst designed to be used by all ages and abilities including those with limited mobility, it will increase the facilities on offer to families with teenagers.
- It already has a large number of customers (at least 150,000 a year) and therefore the early success of the new attraction will not have to rely on a specific marketing campaign.
- There are no restrictive covenants on the land and historically local residents have welcomed developments.

The proposal is in line with recommendations made by Vision XS - a leading consultancy in the leisure industry - to create an additional attraction at the park for which customers are willing to pay.

Procurement Exercise

Three companies were invited to tender and all submitted proposals in response. ECC officers, alongside BDC officers, have undertaken a procurement exercise and have selected a preferred supplier - Innovative Leisure - and their 'Sky Trail' system (image below).

Innovative Leisure Sky Trail



The Sky Trail offers a unique high ropes adventure course with traditional activity elements, but with distinct advantages over other traditional high ropes courses. It has an overhead continuous belay safety system and has the ability for users to overtake, which reduces bottlenecking and allows continuous circulation. It is a unique shared high ropes experience for the whole family. At no point are participants detached from the rail course or be required to make transitions at height.

As part of this package, it is proposed to provide a ropes course for little ones! The 'Sky Tykes' course is specifically designed for children ranging in age from 2 to 7 years old (up to 1.2 metres in height). This course allows for a parent/carer to accompany their child while they are navigating around the course. The course will enable more users to use it at one time and the

operational costs are lower than the traditional type of course as less staff are required to operate it.

The Sky Trail and Little Tykes trail provides a high ropes experience for the widest possible age range, from 3 years to adults. The offer promotes active recreation and challenges all participants at levels appropriate to their physical fitness and ability.

The scenarios offered to users will potentially improve balance and co-ordination and increase confidence in their ability to overcome challenges. The continuous rail system and the design of the course enables a broad range of abilities to have the opportunity to participate in an adventurous activity without direct supervision. A range of abilities are able to use the course at the same time without causing operational delays and delaying other users on the course.

3.2 Location of the New Facility

It is proposed to locate the equipment in between the Discovery Centre and the 'Bowl' on the hard-standing area currently being used to store woodchip. A Planning Application was submitted to Braintree District Council at the end of December 2014 and a decision is expected by late February/early March.

3.4 Financial model

Following a visit to an existing facility already in operation at the National Watersports Centre in Nottingham, we have made the following assumptions regarding customer take up and are proposing a charge as set out below.

1. 61,000 customers per annum will use the course (60:40 Sky Trail and Little Tykes respectively). Of these 20,000 will be new customers to the park. This will equate to around 100 more cars per week, based on four people in a car, which the existing car parking infrastructure can accommodate.

The expected visitor numbers reflect a combination of the views of the service combined with figures supplied by an industry provider and validated by the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham who run an existing facility.

2. The proposed charges are £10 for adults for up to an hour and £4 for Little Tykes for up to 40 minutes. This is based on benchmarking with the existing operation based in Nottingham.

Capital: Item	Amount
Capital cost	£390,000
Revenue: Item	Amount
Annual operational costs:	
Staff	£ 56,000
Marketing	£ 12,000
Maintenance	£ 5,000
Total	£ 73,000

Forecast annual income (inc VAT) (excluding car parking income)	£493,000
Annual net revenue (net of VAT)	£338,000

ECC has already secured the capital funding to install the Sky Trail course, including Little Tykes and so, subject to the Board's agreement, it is proposed that ECC proceeds with the project on that basis.

In order to build the new facility it is proposed that BDC agrees a new land lease for the proposed location, car parking and access, incorporating the existing café in the Discovery Centre. This would be for a ground rent of £15k from 2015/16 and increasing to £30k in 2016/17, which equates to a 50% reduction in BDC's current revenue contribution of £60k p.a. to ECC by April 2016 over two years.

3.5 Management and Operation

Dedicated staff will be recruited and trained specifically to manage the Sky Trail. It is proposed that one additional full time member of staff supplemented with seasonal and casual staff.

An online booking facility will be offered in addition to pay on arrival, and there is scope for integrating the booking of the Artificial Grass Pitch and Multi Use Games Area facilities operated by BDC into this approach.

A marketing budget has been identified to promote the course to draw in new visitors to the park. Special packages will be developed to support this, such as themed packages, birthday parties and youth groups.

3.6 High Level Key Milestones

Milestone	Timescale
Procurement process	October to November 2014
Partnership Board	January 2015
Planning process	December 2014 to February 2015
ECC governance	February 2015
Contract awarded	March 2015
Build	March to July 2015
Recruitment of staff	May to June 2015
Commence marketing	May 2015
Go live	End July 2015

3.7 Risks

There is a risk that the planning permission would not be approved, and ECC has looked to mitigate this with early engagement with the key stakeholder Great Notley Parish Council who responded favourably to the proposal.

As with any facility of this type, there are always risks associated with health and safety. However, this will be mitigated by formal training of the staff who will manage and operate the facility. In addition, the Sky Trail Course

incorporates a safety system that is unique to this piece of equipment which ensures that the user is harnessed to the equipment from start to finish.

3.8 Conclusion

The Sky Trail and Little Tykes Courses offer customers a unique play experience, with high level thrills and progressive structured challenges that the whole family can experience together in complete safety.

The facilities will help us to further promote and achieve our respective health and wellbeing aims and objectives and enhance the overall status of the park as a first class destination/visitor attraction for leisure and recreational activities along with sports and nature conservation.

4.0 PV Panels and Wind Turbine

4.1 Solar Panels

BDC is seeking funding as part of its 2015/16 capital programme to remove the existing faulty solar thermal panels and replace them with an 18kW 72 panel solar photovoltaic array on the south facing roof elevation of the Discovery Centre, which will generate 17,000kWh/yr. The green electricity generated will be consumed on site. The cost of the system is £30k and offers a 7-8 year payback on the investment.

4.2 Replacement Wind Turbine

In addition, it is proposed to remove the faulty 6kW turbine and replace it with a 20kW turbine on a 20m mast in the same location. This would generate an estimated 45,000kWh/yr. The original 6kW Proven wind turbine has not been in operation for at least 2 years. To repair the turbine would not be cost effective for a number of reasons:-

- The outdated model of turbine does not have available spares and would require comprehensive replacement, along with its inverter, when numerous modern, better performing alternative small scale wind turbines are now available.
- The performance of the original turbine is now hampered by the established landscaping. We have sought the advice of commercial small wind turbine installers who have modelled the site's parameters and determined that a 20kw turbine on a 20m mast is the best for investment and return.

The green electricity generated would be consumed on site. The cost of the system is £76,000 which should be recouped within 7-8 years. Both these projects are being led by BDC and funding is included in the 2015/16 budget.

4.3 Indicative Timeline

The solar panels would qualify as permitted development and planning permission would not be required. Subject to Member approval and the

procurement process, the project can be progressed quickly within 3 months at the start of the new financial year.

The wind turbine will be subject to the same procurement process, but will also require planning permission; it is anticipated that this will take approximately 9 months to complete from 1st April 2015.

BDC will engage with ECC to sign off the designs prior to installation. Braintree will be responsible for the maintenance.

5.0 Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Partnership Board:

1. Approves the proposed parking tariff outlined within the report, subject to any changes arising from key stakeholder and public consultation, which can be implemented from April 2015;
2. Confirms that Essex County Council and Braintree District Council may proceed with the land lease and the construction of the Sky Trail & Little Tykes courses (funded by ECC), the Discovery Centre and car parking and access; and
3. Agrees to the installation of PV Panels on the roof of the Discovery Centre and the replacement of the Wind Turbine at the Country Park as outlined within this report.

		AGENDA ITEM 8
		GTP/04/15
Meeting:	GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
Date:	23 January 2015	
Joint Partnership and Long Term Vision for Great Notley Park		
Enquiries to:	Tim Dixon, Head of Country Parks Essex County Council Email : tim.dixon@essex.gov.uk and Paul Partridge Head of Operations, Braintree District Council Email : paul.partridge@braintree.gov.uk	

1. Purpose

This report seeks approval from the Joint Venture Partnership Board (JVPB) to undertake a strategic review of Great Notley Country Park (GNCP) setting out the vision and aspirations over the next 5 to 10 years for the development and management of the Country Park as a major visitor attraction in the Braintree District and County of Essex.

In addition, the Board's approval is sought to review the current partnership arrangements and Joint Committee Agreement to reflect the changing needs of the partnership, a new shared vision and long-term plans for the Country Park.

2. Background

The current partnership between Braintree District Council and Essex County Council for the management and operation of the GNCP was established back in 2008. Over the past 6 years, the partnership has seen the park transform into an important visitor attraction in the Braintree District. Investments in play equipment, the visitor centre, car parking, an Artificial Grass Pitch and Multi-Use Games Area, other grass pitches, organised events and the overall maintenance of the park itself has significantly increased its popularity amongst local residents and visitors who use the park for both informal and formal leisure and recreational activities.

3. Strategic Context

The importance of the park and its role in meeting our respective partnership aims and objectives around people's health and wellbeing, giving children the best start in life and providing a high quality environment, is fully recognised. Also important is the park's identity (as a flagship country park) and the distinctive role it has in helping to shape the local economic, social and environmental wellbeing of communities within the District and indeed countywide. When considered in the context of BDC's new Local Plan and additional property growth, the park will continue to play an important part in helping to shape and develop the local area. In addition, the need to improve the financial sustainability of the

park to a point where it becomes cost neutral is critical in meeting the current and future financial challenges facing our respective Authorities.

4. Proposed Review

It is considered appropriate and the right time to commission a strategic review of our aspirational longer-term vision of the park, its operation and the joint partnership model.

The outcome will be for BDC and ECC to agree a new shared vision and 'master plan' for the development and future direction of the park, that safeguards and ensures a sustainable future for it as a first class destination/visitor attraction for leisure, recreation, sport, nature and conservation.

Members of the JVPB will be asked for their views to help inform the proposed Scope, Terms of Reference and Timeline for the review at its meeting of the JVPB on 23rd January 2015. The intention is to commence the review in the second half of 2015 to allow sufficient officer participation, as by that time the project for the new High Ropes Course at the park will have been completed and officer time will be freed up to work on this and other projects.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

It is proposed to engage an external consultancy through a procurement framework agreement to carry out the review in conjunction with officers from both BDC and ECC. This will include examining and incorporating best practice and innovative thinking from other successful country parks across the country.

An indicative cost of the review is circa £30k which will be funded equally between BDC (Local Plan Fund) and ECC.

6. RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Venture Partnership Board approves a strategic review of the park setting out the options for its future direction over the next 5 to 10 years, including the operational and the joint partnership/governance models.

Paul Partridge
Head of Operations

Tim Dixon
Head of Country Parks

28th November 2014