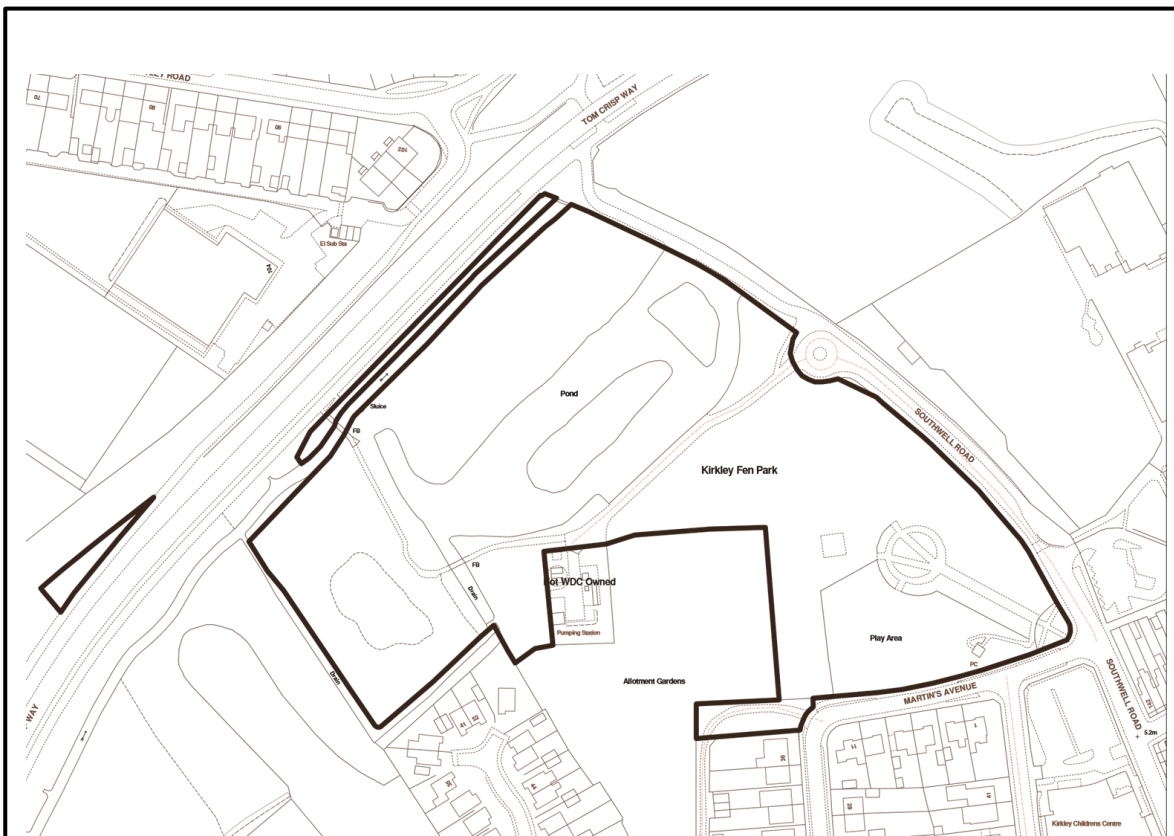


Fen Park, Kirkley, Lowestoft, Suffolk



Current Site information

Ward: Kirkley

Site Reference: SK261230

Area:

Special Status:

Covenants:

Entrances: 4

TPOs:

Services:

Facilities on site:

Access: The park has several entrances. The two main entrances are off of Southwell Rd and the junction of Southwell Rd and Martin's Road. There are also pedestrian entrances at the junction of Martin's Avenue and Newark Road and from Tom Crisp Way. Additionally, there is an entrance from Tom Crisp Way at the old junction with Southwell Rd which is gated with access only for LTC, Norse, Anglian Water and the Friends.

Species on Site:

Soil Type:

Issues:

Large body of water with fish and oxygenating issues. Derelict toilets on site

Current main use of site:

Play area, fishing, recreation, woodland

Future planned use of site:

Ideally Fen Park should be a destination 'wetland' park in the south of the town. It is close to local residents' hearts. The park along with surrounding land forms a wildlife corridor through the southern half of the town which needs to be maintained. There are adjoining parcels of land which would enhance the park if they could be added to our portfolio especially if they could be secured with a dowry. Most important of these would be Kirkley Ham to the north east but also the corridor of woodland running south along Tom Crisp Way to the rear of the Phoenix St Peter Academy as far as to Pakefield Riding Stables. This would secure this land as a nature corridor and provide an excellent public space. Much of the space is natural or semi-natural woodland and this should not be substantially altered. The site also adjoined allotments owned by LTC as was as a pumping station which can only be accessed via LTC lands. Next to the pumping station is an area of land that we have been contacted regarding its use as a butterfly area. To the south west there is an area of shrubby woodland with a cleared mound which could provide a location for a bike/nature trail.

The majority of the park has always been grass, ponds and woodland and there would be no major plans to change that. Any planting would be around the edges of the park and in the north east corner where the key shaped entrance to the park is, that was previously attractively planted. However, planting should be done to maintain sight lines through the park.

Key Development Opportunities:

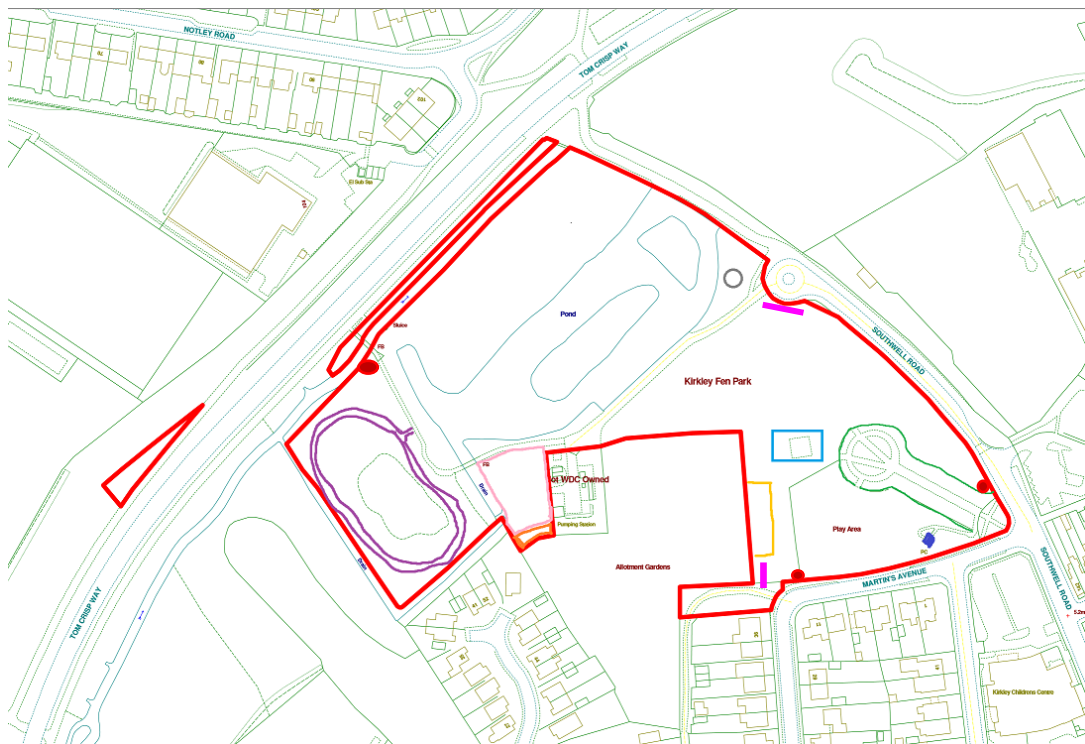
- Toilets – renovate existing toilet block
- CCTV – improve coverage
- Consider options for pond depending on survey results
- Work with Suffolk County Council to investigate transfer of the Ham and adjoining land along Tom Crisp Way and possible dowry
- Seating
- Bins
- Bike Racks
- Investigate kayaks/punts on pond and kiosk near pond for refreshments & hire
- Bike Track
- Assault course/fitness
- Sensory garden
- Butterfly garden
- Signage
- Drinking Water fountain

Resources Required:	Various
Funding Required:	Funding for toilets as agreed by council CCTV as part of future budget Grant via environment agency and matched funding for aerator
Stakeholder Group	Yes
Friends Group	Yes

Current Benches, Bins and Bike Racks Inventory



Code			
	Item	Quantity	Potential Needed
●	Bin	4	With an aim of a bin at each entrance this would lead to the addition of 3 bins. One by the main entrance from Martin's Avenue/Southwell Road, one from the entrance by the allotments in Martin's Avenue and one at the entrance from Tom Crisp Way.
●	Benches	13	Although there is not a shortage of benches there is potential for additional benches and picnic benches depending on how the park is developed
	Bike Rack	0	Potential for three main locations, one near each main entrance.



Code

	Kiosk/Boat Hire		Toilets
	Formal Planting		Butterfly/Wildlife Garden
	MUGA		Leaf Composting area
	Assault Course		BMX/Bike track
	Bins		Bike Racks

Action Plan Further Information

Toilets

The toilets have been scheduled for being renovated in 2021-22. Hopefully we should be able to have two single cubicles which are disable friendly and with baby changing facilities.

Pond

The pond has been surveyed and needs work. This needs to be a priority action for wildlife and any remaining fish. Advice is being sought from the consultants, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency and grants should be sought for required solutions. Remedial work should be prioritised and a maintenance schedule developed to be managed by either our contractor or a specialist.

In order for a park to be a destination park toilets and refreshments are key. There would probably not be the footfall to sustain a café however the pond used to be used for boating. It might be sustainable to build a kiosk which could be combination refreshment kiosk/boat hire/store. This could be investigated to see if it would be a viable proposition and what space would be required. Boats might be able to be moored on the island overnight during the season. Punting might be an alternative to boats or canoes.

MUGA

The existing basket ball hoop should ideally be replaced with a full MUGA to allow a wider range of activities in the park.

Assault Course

The assault course has just provisionally been sited in this location as the provision at Fen Park has been discussed and this is one of the more level areas of the park. It would give fun and fitness provision for teenagers and adults.

Butterfly Garden

Early on in the council's formation we were approached with regard to having a butterfly garden in the park in this location which is an under-utilised area (although it could also be a potential area for the assault course). This would tie into our environmental concerns and could combine a wildflower area with external planting of shrubs and perennials which attract butterflies and other insects such as buddleia, honeysuckle, and cone flowers etc. If this was progressed there might be the possibility of involving Anglia Water because of the adjoining sewage works and the neighbouring schools, Red Oaks and Phoenix St Peter.

Compost area

If the Butterfly Garden was progressed it might provide the opportunity to create a leaf mulch production area at the rear of the garden which could be fenced and gated. This might also be a useful site to add a store for the Friends to keep their tools and other equipment. If required this area could have CCTV provision in time.

Bike/BMX Track

A circular track may be able to be installed into the woodland area of the park without too much disturbance and would provide another activity area in the park in an area which does not see a lot of use. It would be beneficial to get a consultant in to look at this at the same time as consulting about Clarkes Meadow and Normanston Park. It might be that as well as creating the bike area we might also be able to open up some paths for dog walkers.

Planting

The park has generally been a more open, green park rather than a formal pleasure garden although historically there was boating on the lake with monkeys on the islands and fishing provision. There are still fishing decks around the pond, the majority of which are in good conditions although a lot do not have disabled access.

There was only one area of the park that had formal planting and the Friends did propose re-instating this with a sensory garden as it is adjacent to the play area. If this is still an aim for the current friends' group then this is something which the council could progress with them and look at having the tarmacked over beds open up again and the Friends could apply for a grant for planting up the beds. It could be considered in conjunction with the sensory garden at Sparrow's Nest.

The aim for the rest of the garden would be to maintain the natural feel working with the Friends Group. Planting of spring bulbs and even some native shrubs/perennials around the outer edge of the park if desired. It may be interesting to consider whether some colourful 'native' plants could be added to the islands however they would need to be able to hold their own as they would not be able to be cared for much.

Seating

If the kiosk is developed then additional picnic benches may be needed in that area and if the pond is rejuvenated then more people may wish to sit around the edges of the pond so there may be more demand for seating.

Lighting

It would be useful to provide lighting through the park to extend the use of it and make it safer for people to travel through the park. We have to consider the effects of light pollution and gain approval of the environmental health officer however it may be possible to achieve lighting via low level solar powered LED lighting along the main path from Tom Crisp Way to Southwell Road. With further low-level lighting by the play area that may allow enough lighting to access the slope from the lower path to the upper path. Again, it would probably be beneficial to bring in consultants to look at all the parks in which we wish to put lighting as one time.

Play area

The current play area is in reasonable condition and has a good amount of equipment. The matting is being replaced as required. This is a play area which sees a lot of use so it should be as high up on the renovation list as possible and only play areas where equipment is in a worse state should rank above it. It may be that with the size of the play area that rather than replacing all the equipment at once it could be replaced as pieces come to end of life. This should be a Toddler/Junior play area with other facilities on site benefiting Teens and adults.

CCTV

This is a fairly open park so CCTV provision could capture a lot of the park with minimal cameras apart from the wooded areas towards Tom Crisp Way.

Long term.

If all the above provision was considered then Fen Park would be a destination park. What could enhance the park further would be if the council wished to consider discussing with Suffolk County Council the possibility of transferring The Ham and further land bordering the Tom Crisp Way from the park to Pakefield Riding Stables. The Ham has potential as a wildlife area rather than as an extension to the park and the area to the south could be incorporated into a woodland walk.

5-year plan schedule of works				
Year	Item/project	Cost	Existing Budget	To be budget for that year.
2021-22				
2022-23				
2023-24				
2024-25				
2025-26				
Longer Term				