

Straiton Pond LNR

Management Plan

2019-2024



Overview of the Management Plan

The purpose of the Straiton Pond Management Plan is to:

- Detail the vision, aims and action plans to enable the management of Straiton Pond Local Nature Reserve over the next 5 years (2019-2024)
- Assist in applying Green Flag criteria to achieve ongoing Green Flag status for the site.

Our Vision

To actively manage Straiton Pond as a key site within Midlothian for the benefit of people and wildlife in such a way as to ensure it provides one of Midlothian's best places to experience the natural environment.

The plan is made available to all interested parties including the Public, Community, and Council Staff. It was prepared in 2019 and is reviewed annually.

Special thanks to Loanhead local residents William Paris and Sandy Duncan for their permission to allow their cygnet and swan photos to be used in this plan.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site History

Straiton Pond was designated a Local Nature Reserve by Scottish Natural Heritage in 1991 under section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Local Nature Reserves are said to be “areas of natural heritage that are at least locally important” and sit wholly within the responsibility of the local authority, usually through a countryside ranger service. There are currently no other site designations at Straiton Pond.

The site is located on ex-industrial wasteland. The pond itself lies within a deep claypit which previously provided local brickworks with blue clay from 1850 until the mid-1950’s. The area around the pond was used as a dumping ground for railway waste and other industrial salvage.

Residents first showed an interest in preserving the site in 1971 due to the increasing wildlife value. After several attempts to gain permission to infill the pond in late 70’s the Edinburgh District Council gained full ownership of the site in October 1985. Over the next five years remedial works were carried out to neutralise toxic materials and install fencing, gates, signposts and paths. The site was transferred to Midlothian Council in 1996.

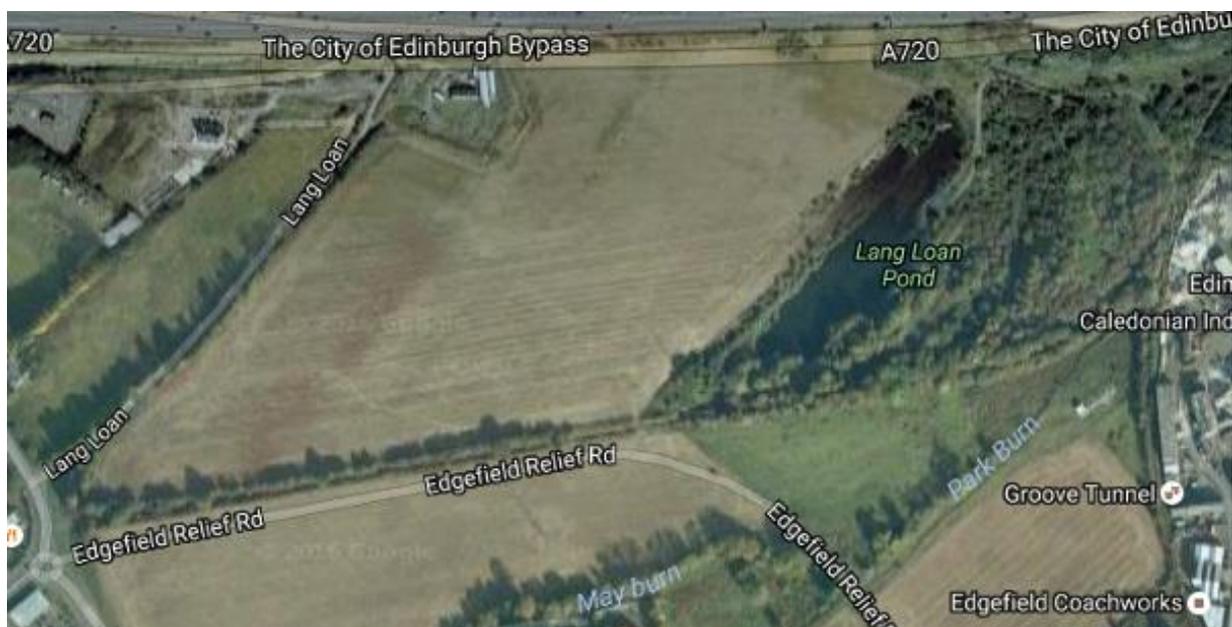
Today after more than 60 years of natural regeneration and active management Straiton Pond is a haven for wildlife. The combination of freshwater pond, scrub and woodland habitats make the site unique in Midlothian.

1.2 Location and Outline Description

Straiton Pond Local Nature Reserve is located in Midlothian, 4 km to the south of the City of Edinburgh (population 476,600 in 2011) and on the outskirts of the small town of Loanhead. The site is also adjacent to the Edinburgh City Bypass and the main entrance is located opposite the busy Straiton Retail Park.

The site is around 5.7 ha in size and features a variety of habitats within it including scrubland, a large pond (approx. 1 ha) surrounded by reed beds, a smaller seasonal newt pond, mixed woodland and areas of amenity grass. Surrounding land use includes the Edgefield industrial estate to the south east and a new CALA homes housing estate to the south.

The area is made up of a long narrow entrance track of around 400m which leads to a circular path network around the south side of the pond and scrubland.



Public facilities include:

- Interpretation and notice board at both the main and side entrances
- 1500m of fully accessible path
- Several informal paths leading to the summit of a small hill in the centre of the site
- 2 benches at the main pond edge
- Litter bin and dog waste bin

1.3 Management and Ownership

The site is owned by Midlothian Council and managed by the Land and Countryside Section within Corporate Resources.

Midlothian Ranger Service, based at Vogrie Country Park, is responsible for the day to day management. The Service also organises environmental events, volunteer activities and delivers environmental education to schools and groups. See web pages for details: http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/114/park_management_and_maintenance/301/midlothian_ranger_service.

A staff structure is included in Appendix 2: Land and Countryside Section Staffing Structure.

1.4 Contact

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2. MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL POLICY CONTEXT

The site is the only designated Local Nature Reserve within Midlothian and provides an important habitat for wildlife and space for public recreation within a busy location. Plans and policies relevant to the site and surrounding countryside are listed below:

2.1 Midlothian Planning Policies

The Midlothian Local Development Plan identifies the following planning policy which relate to Straiton Pond

ENV 1 Protection of the Greenbelt

2.2 Midlothian Open Space Audit and Green Space Strategy

In 2009 the Midlothian Open Spaces Audit recorded public open spaces over 0.4 hectares within Midlothian. Each site was given a PAN 65 typology and the quality assessed in terms of access, attractiveness, biodiversity, functionality and community benefits by independent consultants. The quality score awarded to Straiton Pond was classed as "very good", between 60 and 80%.

2.3 Midlothian Core Paths Plan 2009 and Rights of Way

The Midlothian Core Paths Plan identifies path routes throughout Midlothian. The site is well served by one Core Path which is also a cycleway, providing access to and from the site

- **No 5-** A 1 km section of path that connects the site to the town of Loanhead and the Danderhall to Roslin cycle route

Midlothian Core Paths Plan (which is currently under review) can be viewed at:

http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/527/activities_and_classes/273/walks_cycleways_and_riding_routes/3

2.4 Biodiversity Action Plan

Biodiversity actions are linked to the Midlothian Biodiversity Action Plan covering areas of habitat enhancement, creation and ongoing management. The Midlothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP 2006) contains various habitat action plans for woodlands, rivers, ponds and brownfield sites, all of which are relevant to Straiton Pond. The site is specifically mentioned in the LBAP as a wildlife site.

Details of Midlothian's Biodiversity Action plan can be viewed at:

http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200134/biodiversity/409/biodiversity_duty/2

2.5 Countryside Management Rules

Management Rules are in place for all countryside sites in Midlothian and are reviewed on a ten year cycle. Authorised Officers enable enforcement, which includes Midlothian Ranger Service staff.

3. VISION AND AIMS

3.1 Vision

Midlothian Council's Corporate Plan sets out areas for improving the local environment. Under Objectives 1 and 2 there is a requirement to:

- Improve people's health and well-being
- Conserve and improve Midlothian's natural environment

Straiton Pond is one of Midlothian's main countryside sites for outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the countryside and contributes strongly to the objectives above.

In developing this management plan, site and departmental staff and the Straiton Pond Volunteer Group (SPVG) were consulted.

The vision for the site is:

To actively manage Straiton Pond as a key site within Midlothian for the benefit of people and wildlife in such a way as to ensure it provides one of Midlothian's best places to experience the natural environment.



3.2 Aims

Management of Straiton Pond requires a balance between a variety of interlinked and sometimes conflicting interests. Ten management aims have been derived as steps towards achieving the overall vision. Table 1 below shows how aims have been linked to the eight criteria of the Green Flag Award Scheme.

This plan will aid staff to manage and implement improvements over the next 5 years adhering to Green Flag criteria.

**Table 1: Midlothian Council Countryside Management Aims and Green Flag Criteria
Green Flag Criteria Management Aim**

Green Flag Criteria	Management Aim
A Welcoming Place	<p>Landscape: To enhance the existing levels of landscape value and amenity value.</p> <p>Recreation: To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive safe and secure environment.</p>
Healthy, Safe and Secure	<p>Safety: To ensure the safety of visitors and staff working on the site.</p> <p>Legal: To ensure that the site management works complies with all legal obligations.</p> <p>Recreation: To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive safe and secure environment.</p>
Well Maintained and Clean	<p>Maintenance: To ensure that a maintenance programme is in place to reinforce the aims of the site and meet visitor expectations.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Sustainability: To ensure policies, management practices and operations accord with sustainable principles.</p>
Conservation and Heritage	<p>Conservation: To increase the biodiversity value of the site.</p> <p>Cultural: To protect and conserve all features of cultural significance and industrial heritage value.</p>
Community Involvement	<p>Community Involvement: To engage with the local community and user groups, and to encourage their active participation in decision making and practical activities on site and to use the area as an environmental educational resource.</p>

Marketing	Marketing: To positively promote Straiton Pond to Midlothian residents and potential visitors to the area.
Management	<p>Sustainability: To ensure policies, management practices and operations accord with sustainable principles.</p> <p>Community Involvement: To engage with the local community and user groups, and to encourage their active participation in decision making and practical activities on site and to use the area as an environmental educational resource.</p>

4. SITE ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

An assessment and analysis of the site is given below with recommendations contained within the Action Plan. See Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan
The Green Flag Criteria have been used to assess Straiton Pond to work towards obtaining Green Flag status.

4.1 A Welcoming Place

Management Aims:

Landscape: To enhance the existing levels of landscape value and amenity value.

Recreation: To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive, safe and secure environment.

Straiton Pond provides a peaceful setting within a developing urban and industrial environment. Given LNR status due to its scrubland, the habitat corridor of hawthorn, elder and blackthorn linking Straiton Retail Park to the Loanhead to Roslin cycle path is a well used and attractive walk for the local community.

An important feature of any site is to make users feel welcome. Straiton Pond is open 365 days of the year and the site attracts a large number of visits per year of which many are environmental and school groups, walkers and dog owners.

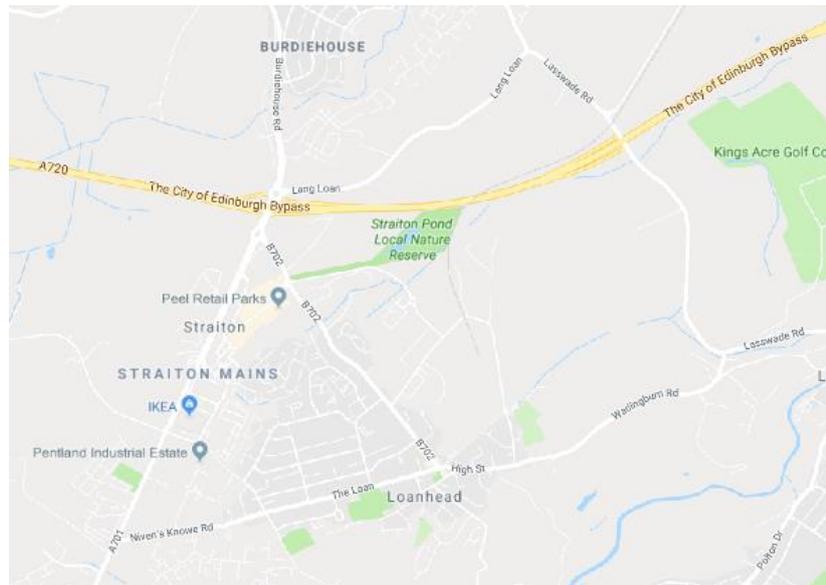
4.1.1 Announcing the Site

Most visitors access the site on foot, coming from the surrounding housing in Loanhead to



Straiton Pond LNR main entrance

walk their dogs. Some may arrive by car and park along Edgefield Relief road or Lang Loan road, though there is no official car park.



The site is signposted by Visit Scotland Approved signage situated off the B702 at the site entrance. This signage is maintained by the Council Roads Department.

The site can be accessed on foot and bike by using the Core Path and off-road routes. The main entrance is announced using wooden signage detailing site rules and also a large interpretation board containing a map of the site, event information and notices regarding emergency service contact details.

Black bollards with padlocks allow access to the site by pedestrians, pushchairs, wheelchairs and cyclists, but prevent cars and larger vehicles.

An alternative pedestrian entrance is situated about 400 metres along the main entrance track. This entrance is only accessible to those with good mobility as it features access via wooden steps (see Appendix 6.) which are maintained by Midlothian Ranger Service. A wooden sign announces the site at this entrance and details the contact number for Midlothian Ranger Service.

There is also an access point to the site at the northern end via the Shawfair to Roslin cycle path which is signposted.



L-R Straiton Pond LNR cycle track entrance, wildflowers on hill top, cycle path signage

All site information is designed to be welcoming, clear, standardised and in keeping with the countryside setting.

4.1.2 Access – Physical

Straiton Pond can be accessed safely by road, on foot, by bicycle or by nearby public transport.

In the main it is accessed from the Loanhead to Roslin cycle path (Core Path map 5- Route 11), via the town of Loanhead or by car just off the City of Edinburgh Bypass at the Straiton junction.

Public transport options include regular bus services (Lothian Buses 37, 47 and X47) from Edinburgh and other locations within Midlothian.

The site has a tarred entrance apron and black bollards which allow access to the site by pedestrians, pushchairs, wheelchairs and cyclists, but prevent most motor vehicles. However vehicles are able to drive over the verges at the main entrance as access is needed for maintenance and litter collection although Operational Vehicle access is kept to a minimum. Alternate pedestrian entrances are sited at a point 400 metres along the main entrance and at the far north end of the site just off the Shawfair to Roslin cycle path (see Appendix 6.)

Access is also occasionally required by Scottish Power who carry out works on power lines on the northern side of the pond via a small track that leads from the main path network onto the cycle path. Scottish Power have a key to the padlocks on the bollards at the main entrance, and also can access the site by removing a section of fence adjacent to the field at the side entrance. This fence is reinstated within 7 days of works having been completed.

4.1.3 Access – Social

Straiton Pond welcomes all visitors. The site has free and open access 365 days of the year and is accessible to all, during day and night. The site is widely used by the local community as well as numerous user groups who enjoy the site as a place to spend time walking, dog walking, running or cycling whilst enjoying the scenery, peace and nature. Many volunteers continue to help to actively conserve the environment.

Feedback is obtained from site users via on site contact with the Midlothian Ranger Service as well as through the councils Feedback Service which can be accessed at https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/670/have_your_say/316/complaints_compliments_and_comments or as a leaflet in various Council buildings.

There are various Ranger events throughout the year including the annual Midlothian Outdoor Festival, nature activities and community litter picks.

All Ranger staff have undertaken Council Equality and Diversity training as well as Customer Care. The Ranger Staff handbook details how to deal with aggression and violence at work, as well as lone working, which are all supported by Council Policies. All staff receive a Code of Conduct information booklet detailing good practice. Ground staff can be readily identified with uniforms and/or name badges.

4.1.4 Aspects of Design

The paths through the site have been designed to give access to the various habitats contained within the site. The paths also allow users a quick and direct route across the site. The entrance track flows through an important habitat corridor adjacent to the Edgefield Link road and then leads around the southern edge of the large pond, passing a smaller newt pond on the right and various areas planted up with attractive spring bulbs and summer wildflowers (see map in Appendix 1).

Informal paths lead the user to a small hill top, referred to as the oak plantation in interpretation, which is regularly used by school groups and has impressive views across the farmland near Loanhead and Bonnyrigg.

Furniture placed through the site is constructed using stone and concrete due to issues with wooden furniture being set alight. Two concrete benches have been placed at an open site beside the main pond, an ideal site for relaxation and contemplation.



L-R Straiton Pond LNR side entrance and steps, benches at pond edge, footbridge at Newt Pond

For actions relating to a Welcoming Place see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan 2019- 2024

4.2 Healthy, Safe and Secure

Management Aims:

Safety: To ensure the safety of visitors and staff working on the site.

Legal: To ensure that the site management works complies with all legal obligations.

Recreation: To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive safe and secure environment.

Straiton Pond is well resourced, designed and maintained to high standards which ensure the site is a healthy, safe and secure environment for all visitors and staff. Much of the work onsite is carried out in order to enhance feelings of safety and well being.

4.2.1 Health and Well Being

Straiton Pond offers a range of opportunities for recreation, health and wellbeing including:

- A fit for purpose path system suitable for all users offering a variety of routes for all fitness levels to discover and explore.
- Clear lines of sight along main walking routes.
- Links to signed longer distance routes out-with the site and a link to the Shawfair to Roslin cycle path.
- Areas suitable for quiet relaxation.

- Opportunities for conservation volunteer work, environmental education and events with the Ranger Service.
- Opportunities to make contact with the local community
- Opportunities to observe and enjoy wildlife and plant life

4.2.2 Equipment and Facilities

Well maintained site facilities and equipment are kept to a minimum to preserve the feeling of a natural environment. These include those in the table below.

Facility/Equipment	Brief Description	Location
Interpretation and Notice Board	An attractive wooden structure with artwork and map, which gives an over view of the site, with a notice board of info and events etc on it's reverse.	Main entrance
Welcome signage	Wooden boards containing site name, contact details and site rules	Main and side entrances
Two concrete benches	Simple benches painted in a neutral colour providing seating for up to five people on each	Beside main pond
Concrete information cairn	A small cairn painted in a neutral colour (to match benches above) containing an information board matching, but smaller than, the entrance interpretation map.	Beside main pond at east side
Dog waste bin	Emptied on a regular basis by Midlothian Council	Main entrance
General waste bin	Provided, emptied and maintained by McDonalds fast food restaurant.	Main entrance

4.2.3 Security

The proximity of local housing means the site is well used giving users a sense of security. In addition the local residents keep a close eye on all activities and there is street lighting at the main entrance.

Several residents, who use the site regularly, support management of the area by either dealing with issues directly or by calling the Ranger Service and/or Midlothian Council if there are problems.

Midlothian Ranger Service instructs removal and clearance of vegetation when required to create better sightlines throughout the site and improve feelings of safety,

In addition the Ranger Service patrols weekly, as well as being on site to carry out group work, maintenance and events. Any problems arising are dealt with promptly by either the site Ranger or through the Work Tickets System within the Land Service Team. Dangerous works can be actioned immediately if needed.

Rangers are trained to enforce management rules, resolve conflict and ensure accordance with the Nature Conservation Scotland Act (2004) and Land Reform Act (2003). Staff have procedures relating to Persons and Vulnerable Groups and have clearance to ensure their

suitability to work with groups. Lone working systems and procedures are in place and all staff are First Aid trained to deal with Emergencies at Work.

Key contacts are listed on the notice board. Midlothian Council operates a public 24 Hour Telephone Contact Service on 0131 663 7211. There is a Council Incident Response Procedure if a major incident occurs.

4.2.4 Health and Safety Policies

Midlothian Council and its employees are made aware of their duties contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). All Midlothian Council employees have undertaken training in Health and Safety at Work. Specific staff undertake risk assessment, fire risk assessment, COSHH and manual handling training. Some staff are IOSH qualified.

Midlothian Council has robust safety systems in place that are audited every three years. Safe Working Systems, Risk and COSHH assessments are extensive and reviewed annually. All policies and assessments are made available to staff on paper (in Rangers office) or electronically. Site checks, work schedule reporting forms, staff meetings and Ranger patrols identify health and safety issues as they arise. Visitor health and safety is a priority. Any major faults are reported immediately. Small scale repairs are carried out by site staff and temporary measures such as closure/site signage/fencing etc. are put in place to prevent putting the public at risk.

An example Risk Assessment is included in Appendix 3: Example Risk Assessment

Key legislation relating to Straiton Pond includes:

- The Health and Safety at work Act (1974)
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health COSHH
- The Fire Safety Order 2005
- The Road Traffic Act 1991
- The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003
- Control of Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- Occupiers Liability (Scotland) Act 1960
- Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

4.2.5 Control of Dogs

Straiton Pond is frequently used by dog walkers, many of whom visit daily and maintain good contacts with staff and residents. Regular users often report problems that arise.

- The Council's Dog Warden is informed of any conflict and irresponsible behaviour, which can often be resolved by speaking to all parties. If problems occur on a routine basis, the Dog Warden can fine users or impose an anti-social behaviour order.
- Information on the Green Dog Walking Scheme is displayed on the interpretation board at the main entrance.
- A litter bin where dog waste can be disposed is located at the main entrance and there is also one approximately 50 metres from the side entrance on the pavement by the Edgefield Relief road.
- The Dog Warden is able to enforce the existing Management Rules relating to dogs and the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003, which states that dog foul must be uplifted.

For actions relating to Healthy, Safe and Secure see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan 2019- 2024

4.3 Well Maintained and Clean

Management Aims:

Maintenance: To ensure that a maintenance programme is in place to reinforce the aims of the site and meet visitor expectations.

Straiton Pond is kept clean and maintained to a high standard to reduce hazards for visitors and staff. We aim to create a feeling that the site is valued and cared for to enhance visitor enjoyment.

4.3.1 Litter and Waste Management

The site has one dog waste bin at the main entrance, which is emptied once per week by Midlothian Council Waste Services. There is another general waste bin (which can be used for dog waste) situated approximately 50 metres from the side entrance next to the Edgefield Relief road. In addition McDonalds have provided a general waste bin at the main entrance to the site (not for disposal of dog waste) and McDonalds staff empty this on a weekly basis.



Midlothian Council dog waste bin and McDonalds general waste bin at main entrance

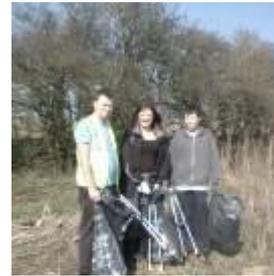
Litter is a big problem at this site due to its proximity to the Straiton Retail Park, and in particular McDonalds. The creation of the Edgefield Relief road in 2014 has also exacerbated the problem of litter.

The exposed nature of the site also renders it susceptible to windy weather which blows litter in and causes it to gather in the steep sided slopes of the main entrance path.

In response to the litter problem McDonalds send an employee around 200 metres down the main track and around the entrance to pick litter once a week.

Midlothian Ranger Service also carries out weekly litter picks, sometimes with the assistance of members of the Straiton Pond Volunteer Group who also pick litter independently on an ad hoc basis.

A public litter pick is held during June, however it has proved useful to also organise litter picks with surrounding businesses. In 2015 and 2016 a group from McSween Foods accompanied the Ranger Service on a litter pick of the site, as well as McDonalds organising an annual litter pick in conjunction with the site Ranger. Fly tipping is common at the Lang Loan road beside the sites main entrance. This is reported by the Ranger Service to the Midlothian Council Dog Warden who arranges investigation and subsequent clearance of dumped materials.



Staff from McSween Foods

All staff are requested to be vigilant towards litter and pick up pieces when visiting the site. The above measures set the tone and level of council commitment to keeping the park clean and litter free. The thinking behind litter management is that a clean site is more likely to stay clean and that the presence of litter is likely to attract more litter. Those involved in the management of the site aim to remove litter or fly-tipping as quickly as possible.

Dog poo is also prevalent on the site, especially at the main entrance, even though there is a dog waste bin. Signage, designed by school children from Hawthornden Primary School in Bonnyrigg, has been installed to try to highlight the problem.

4.3.2 Grounds Maintenance

The site is maintained to the standards set out in the Council's Operations Specification. A maintenance schedule for the site can be seen in Appendix 5: Straiton Pond Works and Maintenance Schedule.

These operational documents contain task specification and frequency, quality of operational requirements and a reporting system to ensure allocated works are completed to schedule.

One off tasks such as dealing with dangerous trees, repairs or faults are either reported and works arranged by the Area Foreman, or managed by the Ranger Service.

Examples of grounds maintenance site tasks include:

- Weekly litter collection
- Seasonal mowing of paths and verges
- Strimming around benches and information board

Paths, steps and other structures such as fences, seating and signage are inspected by the Ranger Service and remedial work is programmed and prioritised either through Land and Countryside staff or the volunteer programme as appropriate. Works are prioritised according to risk and/or impact on the public's use of the site. Areas which require specialised maintenance such as the ponds and wildflower areas are managed by the Ranger Service.

4.3.3 Infrastructure and Other Facilities

Countryside bridges, fences and steps are inspected by the Ranger Service, with input from the Land Services team where required.

4.3.4 Equipment Maintenance

All Council staff are trained in the use of tools equipment and are provided with personal

protective equipment required.

Fuel and chemicals are stored off site and have the relevant COSHH assessment data. All staff including the Ranger Service are trained in the use of chemical application where applicable.

Vehicles, machinery and power equipment are maintained and serviced according to a maintenance schedule by the Council's Fleet Services based at Stobhill Depot, Gorebridge. Risk assessments and safe working systems are in place for operational activities. Staff training records are maintained centrally and certificates are updated as necessary. See Appendix 3: An Example Risk Assessment

For actions relating to Well Maintained and Clean see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan 2019- 2024

4.4 Sustainability

Management Aim:

Sustainability: To ensure policies, management practices and operations accord with sustainable principles.

Midlothian Council's Corporate Plan Sustainability theme, states: "We want to ensure that everything that we do can be justified by its positive long-term social, economic and environmental benefit to Midlothian and so is not done merely for short-term gain". Under the Community Planning Partnership agreement, Midlothian Council has a duty to protect and improve the environment.

While the Council is working on many fronts to improve sustainability, it is recognised that the management of countryside sites often requires few inputs yet provides clear social and environmental benefits.

4.4.1 Environmental Management

Midlothian Council is working on a number of initiatives towards sustainable management Practices including those which are outlined in the Council's Sustainable Development Framework and Action Plan which is available on the Midlothian Council website at: https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/1231/environment/445/sustainable_development_and_climate_change

4.4.2 Pesticides

At countryside sites such as Straiton Pond pesticide use is restricted to key operations, which form part of a larger plan or strategy such as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan and therefore such interventions are minimal.

Application of chemicals is always carried out by trained staff, with the relevant certification. Rangers advise the public and sign areas where spraying work is being carried out which will always be undertaken at non-peak times of public use.

The use of chemicals within the publicly accessible areas of the site is mainly restricted to the application of glyphosate used to control invasive species, in particular Giant Hogweed.

4.4.3 Use of Materials

The Council's Sustainability Action Plan targets procurement policies as a key means of delivering sustainable services stating that:

"We will adopt a strategic approach to procurement which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development".

The procurement of goods and services takes into account not only value for money but other factors such as environmental performance by encouraging suppliers, manufacturers and other parts of the supply chain to promote responsible use of resources including human resources.

This is further developed through the statement in the sustainability plan that:

"We will give consideration to increasing the procurement of ethically and fairly traded goods."



Willow fence/hedge constructed by Straiton Pond Volunteers

4.4.4 Resource Conservation and Waste Management

The purchase of materials is guided by the Council's Sustainability Plan which aims to reduce the impact on resources. The Sustainability Plan states:

"We will ensure we are on-track with our involvement in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme".

4.4.5 Recycling

While tree cuttings and trimmings are recycled and used on site in the form of mulch or as habitat piles, there are no facilities for the sorting of recyclable waste on site at Straiton Pond. The waste from the dog bins and general waste bins is collected and disposed of in landfill sites.

4.4.6 Horticultural and Arboriculture Management

Paths and verges are mown to routine schedules, with in-built weather dependent flexibility. Several areas within the site have been sown with wildflower seeds to reduce the regular need for mowing and will be cut by hand with the Straiton Volunteer Group once they have been established for at least two years.

Wooded areas have been managed to improve the biodiversity, landscape and amenity of the site. All newly planted woodland and hedgerow trees are native. Maintenance schedules for all site activities are detailed in Appendix 5. Straiton Pond Works and Maintenance Schedule.

4.4.7 Pollution Reduction

Fuel and chemical usage is limited on site and is audited through the Health and Safety Plan for the Ranger Service and Land and Countryside. Any pollution incidents are reported using the Council's incident report forms and SEPA contacted if there are any spillages affecting water courses.

4.4.8 Water Efficiency

There is virtually no water used on site due to the lack of horticultural features. The ponds are actively managed for biodiversity, educational and amenity purposes.

4.4.9 Energy Efficiency

The Council's Transport Service which is responsible for fleet also commits to reducing fuel usage through its fleet procurement programme which also includes a gradual roll-out of electric vehicles with electric fuel points at council buildings and premises of other partners in the private and third sector.

4.4.10 Air Quality

The improvement in air quality is measured by the Council as part of its Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government. The Council's Fleet Service contributes to this measure by compliance to EC 91/542 emissions directive, the latest standard on air quality which applies to all Land & Countryside and Ranger Service plant and machinery.

For actions relating to Sustainability see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan 2019- 2024

4.5 Conservation and Heritage

Management Aims:

Conservation: To increase the biodiversity value of the site.

Cultural: To protect and conserve all features of cultural significance and industrial heritage value.

The sites designation as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) ensures that it is managed with biodiversity at the forefront. A mixture of habitats including, ponds, scrubland, woodland and grassland provide host to a large variety of wildlife and plant life and as such has to be sympathetically managed.

4.5.1 Water Management

The large pond that the path network runs adjacent to has been formed by the natural infill of a previously man made pit. It does not have any obvious sources of water input, although

in winter and spring months it feeds into a much smaller pond known locally as the newt pond. This smaller pond dries up in the warmer months and as such is referred to as seasonal.

The large pond hosts a large variety of life including pike, perch, mute swans, mallards and dabchicks, and its marginal vegetation is an ideal habitat for nesting birds.

The smaller newt pond is a hive of activity during the spring months with frogs, newts and invertebrates, which hatch in this shallow and muddy bed before it dries up in the summer.

Management of these water bodies is minimal. However annually, in spring time, volunteers are enlisted to help clear litter accumulation from the eastern end of the large pond and in the autumn sweet reed grass is removed from the western end. In addition a small grant was received from Conservation Volunteers Scotland (CVS) in 2015 to increase biodiversity along the pond edges by planting yellow flag iris, purple loosestrife and ragged robin. This was carried out with the Straiton Pond Volunteer Group.



Straiton Pond Volunteers planting pond plants in 2015 with CVS funding

The smaller newt pond requires a little more management than the large pond as overhanging vegetation is reduced where necessary to increase light and also prevent leaf build up and consequent eutrophication. Large reeds that take seed in the newt pond from the nearby larger pond need to be removed each autumn so as not to choke the water body. Marginal plants purchased using the CVS grant money were also planted around the edges of the newt pond in 2015.

4.5.2 Woodland and Trees

Woodland areas within the site are managed for people and wildlife. As such management actions include:

- Small scale thinning
- Re-stocking and planting of hedges with native species
- Tree tube removal where appropriate
- Removal of dangerous trees and branches overhanging paths
- Creation of habitat piles using dead and removed wood, normally with volunteer and educational groups

Regular thinning is undertaken along the habitat corridor at the entrance to the site to ensure good sightlines and enhance a feeling of safety.

Many areas of scrubland within the site are not openly accessible to the public and do not have paths leading through them. This allows maintenance and wildlife disturbance to be kept to a minimum.

4.5.3 Grassland

Grasslands provide a key habitat for all stages of the invertebrate life cycle. While there are only a few areas providing grassland habitat at Straiton Pond, these are managed so as to increase biodiversity value and amenity value for the visiting public.

Two areas at the main site entrance were cleared of broom and gorse and sown with a native wildflower seed mix called "Bird, Bee and Butterfly" purchased from Scotia Seeds in 2015. This was part of the volunteer project funded by CVS Action Earth.

Results have proved mixed with little wildflower establishment in the summer of 2015. However blooms and coverage in 2016 showed increased success with vipers bugloss, cornflower, and white campion dominating.

It was raked and topped up with more of the same seed mix by volunteers in spring 2016, and 2017 to help increase ground coverage of the meadow.

In October 2018 this area was cut by hand by volunteers using scythes as it was agreed that the wildflower meadow was now established and could be managed using traditional methods.

Various wildflower sowing projects have taken place over the past ten years with the most successful plot being situated opposite the entrance from the Loanhead to Roslin Glen cycle path. This is a small, but vital area of approximately 400m² which is bursting with colour throughout spring and summer and provides food and shelter for insects, birds, small mammals and amphibians.



In 2017 and 2018 two small patches of grassland were sown in June with a non-native French seed mix in order to add some colour in autumn and the start of winter as they are still in bloom well into December. One of these areas is a small section at the side entrance of the site, and the other is on the top of the oak plantation hill.



Wildflowers on top of oak plantation hilltop

As well as increasing diversity and amenity value, the management of grasslands is far less intensive, which has reduced overall staff time, fuel & machinery costs. This is an important

factor in site management given the present economic climate. The Ranger Service has played a key role in advising the Council on wildflower grassland establishment and maintenance throughout Midlothian.

4.5.4 Other Habitats

Other habitats include open amenity grassland on top of the small hill and by the area with benches by the pond side.

The site was previously surrounded by farmland and open fields however this land has now been sold for development and is being used to build houses, thus fragmenting much of the habitat connectivity that the site provided.

There is a young tree plantation to the immediate north also owned by Midlothian Council which provides a relatively quiet undisturbed habitat for wildlife including roe deer, however the future of this piece of land is also uncertain.

4.5.5 Flora and Fauna



Records for the site's wildlife are stored with the Lothian's Wildlife Information Centre who can provide detailed datasets of biological records. This information is provided to them by a range of interested organisations including the Ranger Service, Scottish Natural Heritage and other interest groups and individuals.

There are few records for mammals with only evidence of rabbits present, however there are many eye witness accounts of stoats and roe deer.

Records for bird life are more comprehensive and species such as Little Grebe, Tufted Duck, Mute Swan and Goosander can be seen on the pond, while the habitat corridor leading from the main entrance plays host to Goldhammers, Goldfinch and Song Thrush.

Other notable species, listed in the biodiversity action plan include: Purple Loosetrife, Toads, Frogs, Palmate Newt and Brown Trout.

A pair of Mute Swans nested and successfully produced young on the pond in 2017 and 2018. Sadly in both years there was a high mortality rate among the cygnets which could in part be due to such close proximity to the public and disturbance and harassment by dogs. In addition the feeding of large quantities of bread and other unsuitable foodstuffs may have reduced the capabilities of the cygnets to forage for their own food and hinder development. Temporary signage was erected during the summer of 2018 to advise the public on the dangers of feeding bread to wildfowl.

Members of the public became attached to the family of swans and were able to regularly update the site Ranger on the development of the cygnets and also contact the SSPCA when needed.



Cygnets being bagged for ringing in 2017 and adult swans with young

The site also provides conditions suited to a host of fresh water, grassland and woodland invertebrate species. Many of the small-scale biodiversity activities undertaken in the past have helped to further improve conditions for invertebrates, through for example the provision of deadwood habitat piles and minibeast hotels located on the top of the oak plantation.



Minibeast hotel created by a local school

The Ranger Service does not undertake any species survey work but works with the following partners:

Survey Surveyors

National Bat Monitoring Programme Survey Lothian's Bat Group
Bat Box and Roost Checks Lothian's Bat Group
Dragonfly and Damselfly Survey British Dragonfly Society

For actions relating to Conservation and Heritage see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan 2019-2024

4.6 Community Involvement

Management Aims:

To engage with the local community and user groups, and to encourage their active participation in decision making and practical activities within the site and to use the site as an environmental educational resource.

Straiton Pond is well used by locals and visitors, as well as educational groups and groups working with the Ranger Service.

Dog walkers are the main site users with the site being one of the only relatively enclosed spaces in the Loanhead area. The main path also serves as a link between the north west of the town and the large Straiton Retail Park and as such is also used heavily by cyclists and local residents.

Other groups that have made use of the site include a Forest Schools group from Lawfield Primary School in Mayfield, who have used the hill top oak plantation site twice a week to run bushcraft and outdoor learning. School groups from Loanhead Primary and Paradykes Primary have also visited the site to do environmental activities with the Ranger Service. In addition small groups from St Davids High School in Dalkeith have carried out work on site with the Ranger Service including building and fixing log seating for the forest school children, litter picks and bulb planting.

4.6.1 Community Involvement in Management and Development

While Straiton Pond currently has no official "Friends" group, the Straiton Volunteer Group carry out a large proportion of the work on site and are consulted in any proposed development works. This group was started in 2014 and has grown from three to around now twelve active members who meet with the site Ranger on a monthly basis to carry out a variety of tasks. The Straiton Pond Volunteers also pick litter on an ad hoc basis and report to the Ranger Service with any issues that arise.

The Ranger Service provides the Straiton Pond Volunteers with tools and safety equipment including full training on how to use them.



By means of a thank you to these volunteers every session includes a cup of tea or hot chocolate using water boiled with a Kelly kettle and there are normally either biscuits or cake too! A special "thank you" session is also held during National Volunteer Week in June where we combine our session with a public litter pick and have a small celebration afterwards.

The input of the Straiton Pond Volunteer Group is crucial to the management of Straiton Pond and this group is managed sensitively to ensure that all the group feel appreciated and enjoy their time working at the pond.

In addition, management of the site by Midlothian Ranger Service is often carried out with the help of local school groups such as Paradykes and Loanhead Primary school, and local volunteer groups such as the Lothian Conservation Volunteers, the Orchard Centre or the Green Team. Where more specialised or intensive labour is required, the Criminal Justice Team have been able to provide assistance. These groups have carried out such activities as:

- Creation of wildflower meadows
- Building and erecting bird boxes
- Pond clearance
- Pond plant planting
- Removal of large volumes of litter and waste
- Tree thinning
- Habitat creation
- Signage maintenance and path works



Straiton Pond Volunteers building steps by pond edge

4.6.2 McDonalds "Love Where you Live"



A good relationship has been forged with McDonalds fast food restaurant within Straiton Retail Park. McDonalds runs a "Love Where you Live" scheme and are always keen to get involved at Straiton Pond and their continuing help is highly valued.

They have provided a general waste bin at the main entrance to the site which they also empty on a weekly basis. They will also empty this on instruction by the Ranger Service if needed.

In addition a member of staff from the restaurant carries out a partial litter pick along the main entrance of the track and along the banking at Edgefield Relief road once a week. There have also been staff litter picks organised in conjunction with the Ranger Service.

4.6.3 Events for the Community

The Ranger Service organises a series of events throughout the year throughout Midlothian, attracting more than 2340 visitors (figures from 2017/2018). Examples of some events held at Straiton Pond include:

- Annual Public litter picks during National Volunteer Week (normally in June)
- Bat walks and minibeast hunts suitable for families and children of all ages
- Events during the Midlothian Science Festival
- The site is also often included in the routes of the annual Midlothian Outdoor Festival

4.6.4 Educational Facilities

The Ranger Service works with around 3600 (figures from 2017/18) pupils on an annual basis. We offer educational sessions on various school curricular related areas linked to the Curriculum for Excellence and Tertiary Syllabus. Numbers in each session are limited to one Ranger to a maximum of 15 pupils to ensure good communication and to allow feedback from the pupils. Activities are promoted through word of mouth, the Ranger Service web pages and via a leaflet.

Bookings are taken by phone and confirmed with bookings forms, up to 1 week before the session. Details of the particular needs of the school, based around the activity are discussed as well as any special needs pupils may have. Resource Boxes are also available to borrow, free of charge covering pond dipping, minibeast hunting, woodland studies and nature games and activities. These are available as an educational tool to any interested group, party or individual. Details of Midlothian Ranger Service and it's free educational sessions can be viewed at:

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200283/parks/394/midlothian_ranger_service/2

Local schools such as Paradykes, Loanhead and St Margaret's primary are targeted and specific packages have been developed to suit their needs such as the offer of minibeast activities and bushcraft sessions.



L-R Seating at forest schools fire circle, Midlothian Ranger Service education session

The Ranger Service's education sessions are free of charge. The Ranger Service has also encouraged the use of safe walking routes to the site to promote health and well being. School groups coming from local Loanhead schools are able to walk to the site. As well as curricular activities, we offer free Ranger- led sessions to Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownies working towards badges. These sessions are also offered to Duke of Edinburgh groups and other local organisations wanting to visit the countryside.

4.6.5 Accessibility for All

Straiton Pond is regularly patrolled by the site Ranger to ensure all access routes are open,

safe and fit for purpose and that any problems are quickly resolved. Access is promoted by signage for pedestrians and cyclists from local paths. The Midlothian Core Paths are now all signed, which means there is an increased number of sign posts pointing to the site from further afield. There are links to Roslin, Bilston, Lasswade, and even Gilmerton via the cycle path to the west of the site. The site can also be included as a stopping point as part of much longer walks using the Midlothian Core Path network. The main path around the edge of the site is accessible to wheelchair users and pushchairs, although the surface underfoot can be uneven in places. The main entrance opposite the retail park and the entrance joining on to the cycle path at the far end both offer good access for wheelchairs, bikes and pushchairs. However the side entrance can only be accessed by a set of steps and therefore is only suitable for walkers and cyclists.

For actions relating to Community Involvement see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond LNR Action Plan 2019-2024

4.7 Marketing

Management Aim:

To positively promote Straiton Pond to Midlothian residents, groups and visitors to the area.

The Ranger Service works closely with Midlothian Council's Communications Section to produce high quality branded interpretive materials to promote the site and events to a wide audience. Information relating to the site and its management and development is available online, which includes this plan.

4.7.1 Site Interpretation and Leaflets

Straiton Pond is promoted on the Midlothian Council website with links to a site map. While the leaflet is no longer physically available (no new leaflets have been ordered or distributed in recent years), the two interpretation boards present on site display a site map and information about the nature and heritage of the site.

The interpretation panel at the main site entrance is attached to a large wooden notice board which contains information relating to site rules and the outdoor access code, details of local events, and emergency contact details. The location of these interpretation panels can be seen in appendix 6.

The site is introduced at both the main, front entrance and the side entrance by wooden signage with contact information for the Midlothian Ranger service as well the site rules.

4.7.2 Website

Midlothian Council's website contains promotional information relating to its countryside sites, including events, site descriptions, directions, maps and facilities as well as a downloadable map.

4.7.3 Events

Events are advertised on the Midlothian Council web pages, in the Ranger Service Events leaflet and on the site notice board.

For actions relating to Marketing see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond LNR 2019-2024

4.8 Management

Management Aims:

To ensure policies, management practices and operations accord with sustainable principles.

To engage with the local, wider community and user groups, and to encourage their active participation in decision making and practical activities within the Park and to use the Park as an environmental educational resource.

4.8.1 Land and Countryside

The Land and Countryside Services Section within the Commercial Services Division of Midlothian Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of open spaces in Midlothian. This remit includes parks, countryside sites such as Straiton Pond, cemeteries, allotments, woodlands, play areas and sports pitches as well as events management such as gala days.

The Ranger Service, which is a unit within Land and Countryside, is responsible for countryside sites and also runs an annual programme of Midlothian-wide countryside events including the Midlothian Outdoor Festival.

4.8.2 Management of the Site

The Ranger Service and Area Foreman are responsible for operation and maintenance of the site. Their activities are given technical and strategic support by Land and Countryside.

The Land Service Operations section carry out the maintenance of amenity grass, grasslands and arboriculture works as well as major path repairs.

Waste Services, which is also part of the Commercial Service Division, is responsible for the collection from litter bins and other waste materials. See Appendix 2: Land and Countryside Staff Structure.

4.8.3 Management Plan

This Management Plan seeks to provide a holistic and integrated approach to the management of the site involving not only Midlothian Council but also key stakeholders and the local community in the decision making process

The Management Plan includes an action plan (See Appendix 5: Straiton Pond LNR Action Plan) which details and timetables the various improvements that have been recommended. The Management Plan provides opportunities for both Land and Countryside and the various stakeholders including elected members and the wider community to contribute and understand how the site is managed. The Ranger Service will oversee the implementation of the Plan.

4.8.4 Monitoring and Review of Management Plan Implementation

This Plan will be monitored by the Site Ranger and the action plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Progress with the Plan will be reported to the Land and Countryside Management Team.

The aim of this plan, along with the action plan is designed to implement site improvements and link with the Green Flag Award Scheme, with the purpose of obtaining Green Flag Status.

Methods of monitoring our progress include:

- Monitor and review of Plan to meet targets set out in the Maintenance Plan
- Monitor and review of Plan to meet targets set out in the Action Plan
- National bench marking with Local Authorities carried out by submission of specific categories of data
- Update and records of progress within the Councils quality assurance Covalent Performance Management System
- Staff feedback, management meetings and rewards assessed through staff Competency
- Framework Plans
- Visitor feedback

For actions relating to Management see Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan 2019-2024

Section 5 Appendices

Appendix 1. Straiton Pond LNR site interpretation panel

Straiton Pond

Local Nature Reserve

Straiton Pond is a small wildlife haven amid farmland, Loanhead Village and Straiton retail park. Designated as a Local Nature Reserve in 1991, the site supports a variety of watery and woodland plants and animals. This biodiversity makes the site a unique and important area to Midlothian.

Ducks

Watch out for diving and dabbling ducks on the open water searching for small fish, insects and algae. You may see coots or a shy dabchick (little grebe) emerge from the reed beds where they nest and take shelter.

Pentland Hills

Look towards the west on a clear day and you may see a fine view of the Pentland Hills.



Trees and Scrub

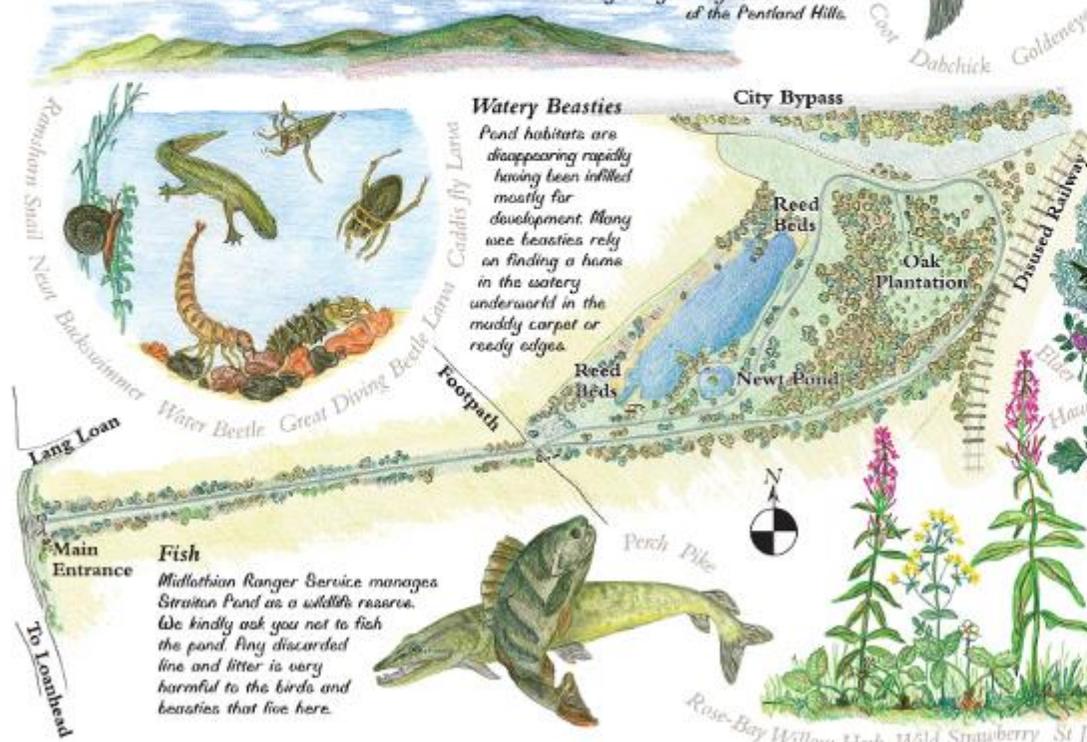
Listen to a chorus of birdsong around the pond. Many birds flock to the small trees and scrub for food, shelter and to nest. Hawthorn and Elder both produce a crop of berries, which make very good eating in the autumn.



Flowers

Straiton is a reclaimed industrial site. The poor soils are ideal for wildflowers, which thrive in nutrient poor conditions. Wild Strawberry creeps closely to the ground, St John's Wort adds a splash of yellow in springtime and Rose Bay Willow Herb gives a backdrop of pink at the end of summer.

Rose-Bay Willow Herb Wild Strawberry St John's Wort



Waterside

Pond habitats are disappearing rapidly having been infilled mostly for development. Many wetland species rely on finding a home in the watery underworld in the muddy carpet or reedy edges.

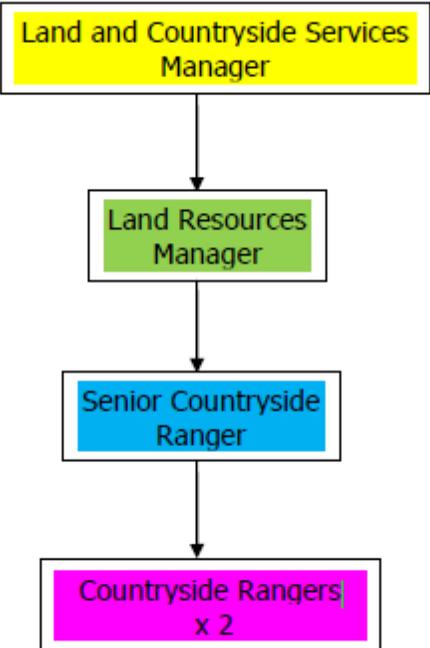


Fish

Midlothian Ranger Service manages Straiton Pond as a wildlife reserve. We kindly ask you not to fish the pond. Any discarded line and litter is very harmful to the birds and beasts that live here.



Appendix 2: Land and Countryside Staffing Structure



Appendix 3. Risk Assessment Template

DATE OF ASSESSMENT 2018		Midlothian Ranger Service		ACTIVITY: Group Conservation Tasks		
Group Supervision is key to safety when undertaking site tasks. The Ranger Service will work with no more than 15 people over 18 years of age in a group. If the Ranger feels that behavior is not appropriate, the activity will not be undertaken or stopped.						
Activity/ Situation/ Hazard	L	S	Score	Control Measures	Result	
Use of hand tools	2	4	8	Instruction on tool use (tool safety talk) , operational procedures, tool storage & carrying techniques given at start and reinforced throughout task Check that all participants are wearing appropriate clothing Gloves must be worn when using bow saws Be aware and discuss safe working distances within the group and for passersby, especially when hand felling trees Carry a first aid kit	A	
Heavy lifting	2	2	4	Share lifting heavy materials i.e. timbers Reduce carry load by using wheel barrows	A	
Invasive vegetation removal – ragwort, hogweeds	2	2	4	Dangers of toxins should be discussed Gloves must be worn Long sleeved clothing must be worn	A	
Site hazards	4	4	16	Assess and discuss potential site related hazards i.e power cables, steep slopes, poor weather, extreme temperatures, fast moving water, dangerous trees etc. Be prepared to alter or cancel activities.	A	
Litter picking, contact with hazardous materials	4	4	16	Participants given gloves, litter pickers and provided with strong black bags to collect litter. Participants advised not to pick any dog foul or dog foul in bags	A	
L = likelihood of injury 10 Likely or frequent, occurs repeatedly, to be expected 8 Probable, not surprised, will occur several times 6 Possible, could occur sometimes 4 Remote, unlikely, though conceivable 2 Improbable, so unlikely that probability close to zero 0 Zero Probability			S = severity of injury 10 Fatalities (more than one) 8 Fatality 6 Major Injury 4 Minor Injury 2 Damage to property/equipment 0 No injury/damage to property		Risk Rating L x S	Result A = Acceptable C = Controlled adequately N = Not Controlled adequately F = Further Action Required
0 - 16 Very Low Risk		17 - 33 Low Risk	34 - 50	51 - 68	69 - 86	87 - 100

Appendix 4: Straiton Pond Action Plan

This action plan lists the recommendation for the management of Straiton Pond over a 5 year period. An indication of the timing of each action is given with annually meaning that the action should be repeated every year.

NO.	RECOMMENDATION	AGENTS	TIMING
Welcoming Place			
1	Regularly update and clean notice board and maintain all relevant public and security information	Rangers	Ongoing
2	Paint wooden notice board, signage and metal fencing	Rangers and SPVG	Every 2 years or as required
3	Include the site as part of walking routes within the Midlothian Outdoor Festival	Rangers	Annually
4	Maintain wooden steps at side entrance with replacement and repairs when required	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
5	Maintain cut grass verges at entrance	Land Services	At least twice a year
6	Monitor litter levels and maintain regular litter picking at entrances	Rangers and SPVG	Weekly or as required
7	Enhance attractiveness of entrance with wildflower management including autumn cutting and springtime sowing	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
8	Enhance entrance with planting of daffodil and crocus bulbs	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
9	Prepare ground and sow attractive wildflower seeds from French mix at side entrance	Rangers and SPVG	Annually
10	Monitor Loanhead to Roslin cycle path at eastern entrance to site and report issues to Midlothian Councils Road Department	Rangers	Ongoing
11	Continue to allow access for Scottish Power works vehicles when required	Rangers	Ongoing
Healthy, Safe and Secure			
1	Plant hedge along exposed areas of entrance track beside Edgefield Relief Road	Rangers SPVG	2020/2021

2	Replace worn steps at side entrance	Rangers And SPVG	2019
3	Continue to provide year round opportunities for volunteering	Rangers	Ongoing
4	Promote accessibility for local schools	Rangers	Ongoing
5	Regular Ranger site checks including quarterly recorded visits	Rangers	Ongoing
6	Ensure that Ranger Service risk assessments cover all tasks carried out on site.	Rangers	Ongoing
7	Prune back low hanging branches and keep sightlines clear	Rangers and Landscape Services	Ongoing
8	Remove dangerous trees asap	Rangers and Land Services	Ongoing
Well Maintained and Clean			
1	Maintain signs and furniture via Ranger site checks and actions	Rangers	Ongoing
2	Keep site litter free	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
3	Cut path verges and amenity grass areas twice a year	Land Services	Annually
4	Prune back encroaching branches from bushes for full path length	Land Services	Annually
5	Paint over graffiti from side entrance hand rail	Rangers	Ongoing
6	Hand cut wildflower meadows at entrance	Rangers and SPVG	Annually
7	Paths along main entrance track to be scraped to ensure full path width can be accessed	Rangers and SPVG	2019/2020
8	Drainage works needed on path between the field to the north and the slope at the side entrance	Land Services	tbc
9	Replace concrete interpretation cairn at side entrance with simple wooden design	Rangers	2019/2020
10	Replace concrete benches at pond edge with recycled plastic wood	Rangers	2019/2020

	effect benches Lay wooden sleepers for installation of these to reduce impact on grass		
11	Monitor all fences around site and repair or replace as required	Rangers	Ongoing
12	Check that regular emptying of bins is being carried out at main entrance and also the bin on Edgefield Relief Road and report any issues	Rangers	Ongoing
Sustainability			
1	Continue to treat giant hogweed where it appears	Land Services	Ongoing
2	Source all plants of local provenance using peat free compost	Land Services	Ongoing
3	Increase the use of recycled products on site for the structure of signs and path materials.	Land Services and Rangers	Ongoing
Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage			
1	Thinning of small areas of birch woodland near Newt Pond	LCV	2019
2	Maintain light levels over Newt Pond by removing over hanging branches	Rangers and SPVG	Annually
3	Remove encroaching reeds and young tree growth from Newt Pond and around its bankings	Rangers and SPVG	Annually
4	Maintain wildflower meadows at entrance bankings	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
5	Mow amenity grassland on top of oak plantation hill	Land Services	Twice a year
6	Maintain open sightlines at view point with sweet reed grass removal in pond	LCV	Annually
7	Increase biodiversity at main pond edge at view point by planting aquatic and pond specific plants	Rangers and SPVG	2020
8	Create habitat piles using cuttings from any woodland management	Rangers, SPVG and	Ongoing
9	Install bird boxes in suitable places	Rangers and SPVG	
10	Organise and run public bat walks	Rangers	Annually
11	Develop a minibeast hunting area by creating more bug hotels and insect habitats on top of oak plantation	Rangers and local community groups	2019/2020
12	Monitor the main pond for signs of pollution and invasive species	Rangers	Ongoing

13	Maintain willow fence structure at edge of pond	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
14	Monitor swans and waterfowl and report any injuries or welfare issues to SSPCA or police	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
Community Involvement			
1	Consult local community (SPVG) on production of management plan and planning actions	Rangers and SPVG	2019
2	Create a leaflet promoting the site for educational and recreational uses	Rangers	2020/2021
3	Contact local schools to promote education opportunities at Straiton Pond with the Ranger Service	Rangers	Ongoing
4	Run at least three annual public events on site, catering for all ages	Rangers	Annually
5	Continue to hold monthly SPVG sessions and promote the group to potential new volunteers	Rangers and SPVG	Ongoing
6	Continue to maintain forest schools site on top of oak plantation	Rangers	Ongoing
Marketing and Communications			
1	Continue to include routes through Straiton Pond during the annual Midlothian Outdoor Festival	Rangers	Annually
2	Create a leaflet promoting the site for educational and recreational uses	Rangers	2020/2021
3	Continue to promote the site and its public events through the Midlothian Council website and through the Ranger Events Leaflet	Rangers	Ongoing
4	Continue to promote Straiton Pond as a key countryside site through Midlothian councils Healthy Working Lives initiative	Rangers	Ongoing
Management			
1	Implement the Green Flag Management Plan	Rangers	Ongoing
2	Consult on management plan and actions with Senior Management and SPVG	Rangers, Land Services and SPVG	Ongoing
3	Implement maintenance schedule	Rangers and Land Services	Ongoing

Appendix 5: Straiton Pond Works and Maintenance Schedule

Action	Who	When
Maintaining grassed edges to main path network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paths should be kept to a minimum of 1.5m wide - Grass and vegetation should be cut to a height of approx. 75mm 	Land Services	Twice annually First cut in May Second cut in July/August
Maintaining short grass at entrance verges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grass and vegetation should be cut to a height of approx. 75mm 	Land Services	At least twice annually First cut in May Second cut in July/August Other cuts when requested by Ranger Services
Pruning of overgrown tall vegetation at side of paths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Side arm flail used to trim back overgrown bushes such as brambles and raspberries - Arisings left on site 	Land Services	Annually in February
Maintaining wildflower areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand cut using Austrian scythes - Cuttings removed 	Rangers and SPVG Ranger Service provides full training and supervision of volunteers using scythes	Annually in September/October
Keep pond viewing area clear of sweet reed grass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reeds cut by hand below water line - Cuttings taken off site and disposed of appropriately 	Rangers and LCV	Annually in September
Clearance of encroaching reeds in Newt Pond. In addition any young trees growing around the pond edge are removed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reeds are pulled out by hand - Reed cuttings taken off site - Young trees and over hanging branches are removed and arranged as habitat piles 	Rangers and SPVG	Annually in October
Removal of Litter in Eastern corner of main Pond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Litter collected in the reed beds is removed 	Rangers and SPVG	Annually in March
Maintenance of trees in hedge along field edge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replacement of broken tree tubes and stakes and general assessment of 	Rangers and SPVG	Annually in December/January

hedge made including noting any trees to be replaced		
Application of glyphosate to invasive Giant Hogweed	Land Services	Generally on an annual basis, in May/June

Appendix 6: Map of Furniture and Points of Interest

