

Vogrie Country Park



Management Plan
2018–2023



Overview of the Management Plan

Vogrie Country Park Management Plan will:

- Detail the vision, aims and action plan to enable continuous improvement to Vogrie Country Park over the next five years (2018-2023).
- Assist to maintain green Flag standards and to achieve ongoing Green Flag status.

Our Vision:

To manage Vogrie Country Park for the benefit of people and wildlife to ensure it is one of Scotland's most attractive countryside sites for Midlothian's residents and visitors.

The Plan is available to all interested parties including the Public, Community, Elected Members and Council Staff.

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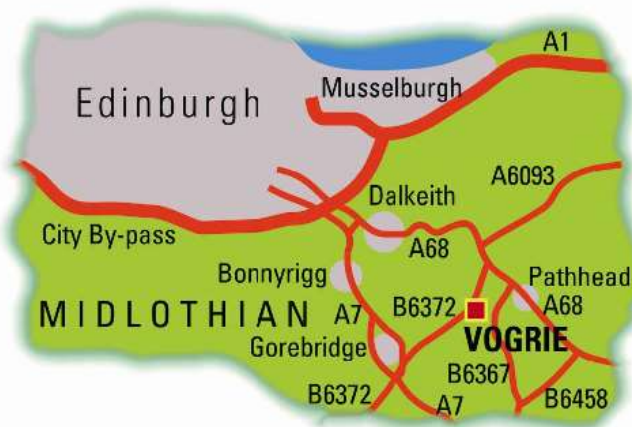
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1 INTRODUCTION

Location and Outline Description

Vogie Country Park is located in Midlothian, 16 km to the south east of the City of Edinburgh (population 486,120 in 2010) and 5km south of Dalkeith (population 11 566 in 2001). The small village of Pathhead is 1.5km to the north east of the Park and the larger settlement of Gorebridge is 3 km to the south west, while the tiny settlement of Dewarnton is immediately adjacent to the Park. The A68 trunk road lies to the north east of Vogrie and the A7 trunk road lies to the south west. The main, vehicular entrance to the Park is off the B6372 (which links the A68 and A7).



The Park comprises 103 hectares of semi mature to mature mixed woodland, mown and rough grassland and amenity parkland. It lies within the Tyne Water Valley, which dissects the plateau between the Central Lowlands and the Moorfoot and Lammermuir Hills. The centre of the site is on National Grid Reference NT 380 632 on the 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Landranger Map No 66: Edinburgh, Penicuik and North Berwick. An estimated 250 000 visitors use the park annually.

Public facilities include:

- Vogie House with Tree Top Cafe
- Adventure playgrounds
- Nine hole golf course
- 11.5 miles of multi use woodland walks
- Miniature railway
- 4 BBQ sites
- A flexi field for organised events
- 2 wig-wam outdoor classrooms
- Car parking and toilets

A map of park facilities is included in Appendix 1: Leaflet.



Management and Ownership

Vogie Country Park is owned by Midlothian Council and is managed by the Land and Countryside Section within the Resources Division. The Park is also protected by Fields in Trusts status requiring the Trust give consent to any significant changes of use.

Midlothian Ranger Service is based within Vogie House and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Park and Vogie House. The Service also organises environmental events, volunteer opportunities and delivers environmental education to schools and groups.

Vogrie's Nine Hole Golf Course is maintained by green keepers, within Land and Countryside Operations, who are site based. Entry to the golf course is administered at the Park Information/Golf Starters Hut by the park entrance.

The Council's plant production unit is based within the walled garden. Land and Countryside Operations staff are responsible for various tasks including grass cutting, litter collection and park opening.

A staff structure is included in Appendix 2: Staffing Structure.

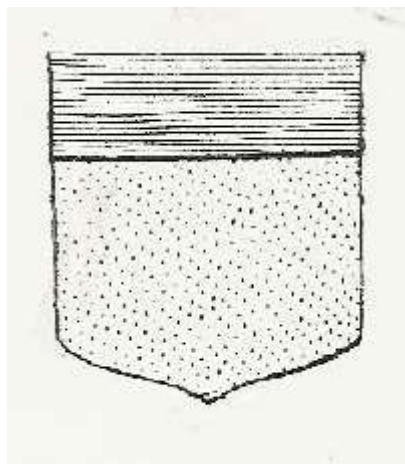
Historic Background of the Park

The Dewar Family acquired Vogrie Estate in 1719, with later expansion by the addition of the Stobbs Estate in 1753. Throughout the 19th century the Dewar's were the largest landowner and principle mine owner in Borthwick Parish, their wealth derived from rents, farming, industry, gunpowder production and coal.



The current family country house, designed by Perthshire architect Andrew Heiton in the late Scottish baronial style, was completed in 1876, by the sixth Laird Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Cummings Dewar, on the site of the previous house. By this time the estate had decreased in size from 2000 acres (809 hectares) to the present size of 103 hectares. There are several other original estate buildings including stables, north and west gate lodges & gardeners' cottage and walled garden.

The Estate remained in the Dewar Family until the death of Captain James Cummings Dewar in 1908. At this time, his wife, Lady Katherine, whilst residing at the nearby Dower House in the village of Ford, rented Vogrie House.



In 1924, the house was bought by the Royal Edinburgh Hospital for Mental & Nervous Disorders. The house became an exclusive residential nursing home and the stables provided nursing staff accommodation. Latterly the house was used as a Civil Defence headquarters shared with the Police, from 1963.

Midlothian Council acquired Vogrie House and estate in 1975. The site was developed into a Country Park, under the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967, and opened in 1982. The estate has retained much of its Victorian parkland character, along with the house, carriage drive, policy trees and lawns edged with ha ha walls and landscaped vistas and woodland walks.



2 MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL POLICY CONTEXT

The Park has a strong strategic significance within the region with importance as a wildlife haven and as a public open space, within easy reach of population centres. Plans and policies relevant to the Park and surrounding countryside are below:

Midlothian Planning Policies

ENV 4	Prime Agricultural Land
ENV 6	Special Landscapae Areas
ENV 14	Regionally and Locally Important Nature Conservation Sites
RD 1	Development in the Countyside
RD 4	Country Parks

Midlothian Open Space Audit and Green Space Strategy

In 2009, the Midlothian Open Spaces Audit recorded all 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 accorded to Vogrie was 89%. This represents a high score and reflects efforts over recent years to improve against the aforementioned audit quality criteria, visitor surveys and external assessments by VisitScotland.

Midlothian Core Paths Plan 2009 and Rights of Way

The [Core Paths Plan](#) for Midlothian identifies key path routes in the Midlothian area, of which there are 3 in the Park:

- **No 7-24 & No 7-27:** Following the main path and track network of approx 4 miles within the Park.
- **No 7-37:** Connecting the Park to the neighbouring farm / equine centre of Vogrie Grange and beyond to the village of Newlandrigg.

There are two claimed Rights of Way within the Park, both deriving from the same point next to the Twin Bridge on the Tynewater. One follows the Tyne and leads south towards Crichton Castle. The other rises above the Tyne and contours North West to reach the North Lodge and the village of Dewarton. A disputed Right of Way leads from this point to the village of Ford, north of the Park. This route is accessible and well used.

A section of the 13-mile [Tyne Esk trail: Vogrie Trail](#), designed by The British Horse Society follows the northern park boundary.

Woodland Classification and Woodland Management Plan 2008-2017

The Country Park covers an area of 103ha, of which 51% is classed as woodland. The majority is mature broadleaf, recorded in the Ancient Woodland Inventory as Ancient Semi-natural Woodland or Long Established Plantation Woodland. The remaining mature woodland was planted more than 150 years ago. There are three main age-classes present: sapling, semi-mature and mature.

A Long-Term Forest Plan was produced in 2011 and includes a site description, survey and assessment of the woodlands in the Country Park together with proposals for improvement over a 10-year period. The Draft Plan was subject to wide consultation including key Council officers, neighbouring landowners, community councils, Access Forum and park users. The feedback was invariably positive.

To date the proposals of the previous woodland plan have been implemented on a small scale by the site grounds staff, the Ranger Service and volunteers but delivery of the total plan has not been progressed due to changes in the Forestry Commission grant system that are now much less favourable towards woodland management rather than woodland expansion.



Edinburgh and the Lothian's Forestry Habitat Network

The Edinburgh and the Lothian's Forestry Habitat Network plan has mapped the Vogrie area as a Core Woodland Area, containing very high quality habitat. The woodland within the Park combines with woodlands to the north and south to provide a valuable and extensive area of gorge woodland.

Biodiversity Action Plan

Biodiversity actions have previously linked to the [Midlothian Biodiversity Action Plan](#) covering areas of habitat enhancement, creation and ongoing management. Midlothian Biodiversity Partnership is currently creating an updated 3 year Biodiversity Action Plan.

Notable species found at Vogrie include Herb Paris, Purple Loosestrife, Greater Tussock Sedge, Barn Owl, 5 species of Bat, Badger, Otter, Toads, Frogs and Palmate Newt.

Vogrie is a Listed Biodiversity Site (LBS) due to its range of flora, fauna, user groups and accessibility.

Countryside Sites Management Rules

Management Rules are in place for all key countryside sites in Midlothian to enable enforcement by Authorised Officers, which includes the Ranger Service.

Other Historic Plans

Many previous plans are held on paper the Ranger Service office. The most recent and relevant are:

- Vogrie Country Park Green Flag Plan 2012 – 2017
- Vogrie Long Term Forestry Plan 2013 – 2032
- Vogrie Country Park Woodland and Access Management Plan 2008-2017
- Park Visitor Survey 2006/7.
- Vogrie Country Park Designed Landscape, Parkland Tree Restocking – 2005
- Tree Survey and Management Recommendations 1999

3 VISION AND AIMS

Midlothian Council Single Plan

In 2003, the Community Planning Partners set a vision for Midlothian, leading up to 2020, based on two key principles of People and Place. The vision statement being:

Midlothian – A Great Place to Grow

This statement can be broken down into the following shared tasks;



The [Midlothian Single Plan](#) lists 3 priorities up to and including 2019/20

- Reducing the gap in learning outcomes
- Reducing the gap in health outcomes
- Reducing the gap in economic circumstances

Vogrie County Park is one of Midlothian's key sites for outdoor recreation, learning and enjoyment of the countryside and contributes strongly to these priorities.

In developing this management plan, site and departmental staff were consulted.

The Vision for the Park is:

To manage Vogrie Country Park for the benefit of people and wildlife and to ensure it is one of Scotland's most attractive countryside sites for Midlothian's residents and visitors.

Aims

Management of Vogrie Country Park requires a balance between a variety of interlinked and sometimes conflicting interests. Table 1 below shows how the management aims are linked to the eight criteria of the Green Flag Award Scheme.

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

Green Flag Criteria	Management Aim
A Welcoming Place	<p>Landscape: To enhance the existing levels of landscape 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 Park which meets 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 Park.</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 to encourage participation in decision making and practical activities.</p> <p>To use the Park as an environmental educational resource.</p>
Marketing	<p>Marketing: To positively promote Vogrie Country Park to Midlothian residents and potential visitors to the area.</p>
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 to encourage participation in decision making and practical activities and to use the Park as an environmental educational resource.</p>

4 SITE ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

An assessment and analysis of the Park is given below with recommendations contained in the Action Plan. See Section 5 – Action Plan

The Green Flag Criteria are used to assess Vogrie Country Park to work towards retaining Green Flag status.

The Midlothian Open Space Audit also provides an assessment of the quality of the park and provides a context for Vogrie Country Park, within all of Midlothian's Open Spaces.

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.

Vogrie Country Park is open 365 days of the year from dawn until dusk - between the hours of 8am and 10.00pm - and is well placed and designed to attract visitors and a variety of users. The Park receives an estimated 250 000 visitors per year, with busiest days at the weekends, public holidays and during school holidays. Green Flag status has been achieved on an annual basis since 2010.

Announcing the Park

Due to its location, most visitors access the Park by car via the B6372. Clear brown road signs, approved by VisitScotland, with thistle tourism symbols, are located at all major road links to the Park including from the villages of Newtongrange and Gorebridge and from the A7 and A68 trunk roads to the east and west. There are further motorist signs when nearing the Park and at the entrance. All signs accord to the national Roads Traffic Standard, are easy to read and are maintained by the Council's Roads Department.

The Park can be accessed on foot, horse or bike by using paved footpaths on the B6372 and various countryside off-road paths from the north, south and east. These are signposted. Key access routes at the Park boundary, leading into the Park, are signed with standardised wooden sign boards.

At the attractive park entrance gates, visitors are welcomed with wooden signage and safely guided into the visitor car park. Information boards are placed prominently for the attention of visitors in main car parking areas. A small shelter provides information, key contacts, details of events, management rules and a park map. Further interpretive panels, with map and park information, are displayed near the car park entrance barrier. They are located to be visible to all motorists and pedestrians. A further panel at the walled garden path ensures most pedestrians can locate themselves and their destination.

Within the coach parking area there is a small wooden shelter area, with tourism information.

Clear and standardised wooden finger posts within the car park and at all pedestrian exit routes direct visitors to Park destinations and facilities such as BBQ sites, flexi field, toilets, golf course and Vogrie House.



All Park signage and interpretation is designed to be welcoming, clear, standardised and in keeping with its countryside setting.

Access – Physical

Vogie Country Park can be accessed safely by road, on foot, bicycle or horse or nearby public transport.

The Park has a well surfaced entrance apron and level car parking areas with good sight lines and low fencing to prevent motorists driving in public recreation areas.

Parking is available for approximately 200 cars, with 10 allocated disabled spaces and a coach park that can hold up to 6 vehicles. An overflow car parking area is used in busy periods. Signage advises motorists of car parking charges and park opening hours. Parking charges of £1 per vehicle per day apply (excluding coaches) from 11 am-6 pm. Out with these times, parking is free.

Road markings and signage guide coaches and disabled visitors to alternative parking spaces. Additional disabled, staff and service user car parking is available adjacent to Vogrie House. Speed limits are signed at 10mph on all vehicle routes.

All longer stretches of road, including the drive to Vogrie House, have marked speed bumps and passing places. Staff at the information hut/golf starter oversee car parking areas and the park entrance with a CCTV camera to ensure visitor safety.

Vehicle access to Vogrie House and adjacent car park via the park driveway is kept to a minimum to promote visitor safety and enjoyment of the peace and tranquillity of the countryside setting. Access is controlled by a barrier system with intercom, operated by the Information and Golf Starter staff.

Borders Buses operate an hourly service from Edinburgh to Jedburgh, which stops 1½ miles from the Park, at the village of Edgehead crossroads. Contact [Traveline](#) for more details - 0870 608 2 608.

The Park is a popular destination for cyclists and children learning to ride, as the tarred driveway is a relatively traffic free area. A small number of mountain bikers use the site, although excessive group usage is not encouraged due to the nature of the narrow, steeply winding and unsurfaced paths in the River Tyne valley.

Horse riders visit Vogrie via the [British Horse Society's Tyne Esk Trail](#) at the Park's eastern boundary, which is part of a wider 13 mile horse-riding trail. At narrow points the route separates pedestrians and riders and at intersections riders are slowed by barriers and gates.

All staff and maintenance vehicles park beside the walled garden compound or in the small car parking area near Vogrie House. Access and egress beyond the house is limited by signage, barrier control and local agreements between renting tenants.

Access – Social

Vogie Country Park welcomes all visitors. The Park has open access 365 days of the year and provides a variety of facilities, activities and multi user attractions. A broad section of the community as well as numerous user groups enjoy the Park as a place to spend time with family and friends, whilst walking, using play areas or visiting the cafe. Over 89% of users rate the Park as either good or very good, as stated in the Park Visitor Survey 2006/7.



Vogie House, toilets and car parking facilities have been audited by trained Council officers and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

Adventure playgrounds at Vogrie are a key attraction to visitors. A small fenced toddlers play area is located near the main car park. The adventure play area beside Vogrie House caters for juniors, teenage children and toddlers with seating for adults.

This play area was reviewed and additional equipment was installed to improve the play experience and age range of users in 2009. All play equipment and surfacing conforms to British Safety Standards and is checked by trained staff on a weekly basis.

Ranger Service events for all ages and abilities are held at Vogrie, principally, between April and October. Easter activities, educational workshops, family pond dipping, minibeast hunting, toddler's trails, bush crafts and Walking Festival events give a flavour of some of these. They are advertised on our events leaflet and via the web pages. Over 1800 participants took part in the 2016/17 events programme.



The Ranger Service coordinates site improvements beyond the day-to-day management and maintenance undertaken by landscaping staff. During 2016/17 12 412 hours of voluntary or partnership working were carried out by various groups supervised by the Ranger Service. The Vogrie Volunteers meet monthly to discuss and carry out conservation and access tasks. Midlothian Paths Team often meet to clear and maintain Core Paths and Rights of Way. Other partners include Lothian's Conservation Volunteers, The Green Team, The Criminal Justice Team, Midlothian Scouts and groups such as those brought by Midlothian Council Life Long Learning.

Aspects of Design

Vogrie Country Park opened in 1982. It was the second country park to be developed (after Strathclyde Country Park), as part of the government initiative to create places, for people to freely access the countryside, as directed by the Countryside Commission for Scotland.

The main visitor area of the Park retains its Victorian Parkland character and the designed landscape has been used as the setting for recreational facilities such as the golf course, woodland walks, car parking, adventure play etc. The design is in



keeping with the role of the former estate as a Country Park. Facilities and park landscaping features are designed to welcome visitors and to provide an attractive and safe amenity space for informal recreation.

Features of design at Vogrie include the use of appropriate materials i.e. wooden signage and furniture, unbound path surfacing and native planting where appropriate. Specimen trees planted in policy areas reflect the Park's origins as a designed landscape. Many of the open areas are a remnant of the Park's original landscape design forming part of the main public areas. Within this, there remain quieter areas and

secluded spots for relaxation and contemplation. Areas for specific activities such as golf, the flexi-events field and private BBQ's are located away from busy informal recreational areas.

Various walking routes of length, ability and habitat provide stimulating walks throughout the Park landscape and beyond. The extensive path network of 11.5 miles, designed for multi-use where appropriate is in keeping with the countryside setting. Many paths are informal comprising beaten earth following steep or narrow routes and requiring good high mobility by users. All paths are kept open by removing overhanging vegetation, maintaining drainage and mowing where necessary.

Arts and craftsmanship have been used to create interest such as carvings in the adventure playgrounds and peace garden and art sculptures within the policies.

A Welcoming Place – Actions – See Section 5: Action Plan

4.2 Healthy, Safe and Secure

Management Aims:

- To ensure the safety of visitors to the site and staff working on the site.
- To ensure that the site management works comply with all legal obligations.
- To provide a place to enjoy informal recreation in an attractive safe and secure environment.

The Country Park is safe is a safe and secure environment to visit due to high maintenance standards.

Health and Well-Being

The Park offers a range of formal and informal opportunities for recreation, health and well being, including:

- An excellent varied, 11.5 mile, well sign-posted multi-use path system that provides opportunities for a variety of users and is suited to a range of fitness levels.
- Opportunities for walking, running, cycling and horse riding.
- Adventure playgrounds for active play from toddlers to teens.
- Attractive areas suitable for quiet relaxation.
- Opportunities for conservation volunteer work.
- Events for all ages and abilities.
- Availability of flexi field area for organised sports and events
- A nine hole pay as you play golf course
- Facilities for all users including toilets, first aid and on site staff



The Ranger Service works with over 3000 schools pupils, groups and volunteers per annum on activities that are active and outdoors.

Equipment and Facilities

All facilities and equipment are maintained to a high standard. Principal facilities in the park – most of which are detailed in Appendices 1 & 2 - include:

Facility	Brief Description
Car Parking	Approximately 200 spaces, including disabled car parking spaces and separate coach parking facilities.
Play Areas	Adventure play area including tree sculptures, toddlers play area
Nine Hole Golf Course	Pay and play golf course staffed daily
Miniature Railway	Operated at weekends by the Esk Valley Model Engineering Society.
Vogrie House	Staffed by the Ranger Service includes toilets, public information, interpretation and parts which are privately tenanted
Tree Top Cafe	Comprises cafe, conservatory area and patio run by private tenants
Flexi-field	Field for hire for events
Information and Golf Starters Hut	Staffed daily, including first aid facilities and emergency telephone
Outdoor Toilets	Designed for disabled use located at main car park and adventure play area
Indoor Toilets	Located in Vogrie House includes disabled toilet
Picnic Areas	Including sites for disabled use
Barbecue sites	Available for hire and serviced before and after use
Art sculptures	Giant chairs and bicycle used services as play equipment
Outdoor wigwams	Two structures used as outdoor classrooms for up to 30 people and, when not in use, for shelter by the public
Interpretation	Five site well produced site boards at key locations providing information about the site – leaflets and other information in Vogrie House
Saltersgate School Hut	Used by school pupils on daily site visits
Litter, dog and refuse bins	Located at key locations and emptied daily and twice daily in busy periods by Land Service staffs.

Maintenance sheets for all park facilities and features are included in Appendix 3.

Security

A sense of security is provided by the presence of around 6-8 staff working on site from 8am to 5pm. The Information/Golf Starters Hut opens daily from 8am until 1 hour before dusk.

The Ranger Service, based within Vogrie House, patrols the site on a weekly basis to enforce Park Management Rules, resolve conflict and ensure accordance with the Nature Conservation and Land Reform Acts as well as meeting and greeting the public. The Ranger Service has procedures relating to the Persons and Vulnerable Groups (PVG) with all Ranger staff having Enhanced Clearance to ensure their suitability for working with children and vulnerable adults. Lone working procedures are in place. A key part of the Ranger patrol is to carry out checks for dangerous structures, facilities, trees etc., as listed in the staff handbook. The Ranger deals with problems promptly and if any ongoing hazards are identified, the public are made aware through signs and warning barriers, in accordance with risk assessment procedures and appropriate action taken accordingly.

The Tree Top Cafe opens every day except Wednesday from 10am – 4pm.



All site staff deal with public emergencies or can call for help to the Ranger Service or the Information/Golf Starter staff, who are also responsible for the Incident Response Plan implementation and Park closure if there is any danger to the public or staff.

A key advantage of the Park is that there is a Gate Keeper (living adjacent to the main entrance) who is on duty to close the gate to the car park, and able to report any identified difficulties.

The local Community Police patrol the site occasionally and are informed of any incidents relating to site security.

Several visitors are regular site users (on a daily basis for dog walking). They are helpful in passing information about site issues and problems to the Ranger Service and other site staff.

Safer Parks Emergency Procedure

In the event of emergency contact details of the Ranger Service, Midlothian Council and the local Community Police Officer are available at the information boards. This includes an emergency 24-hour council contact.

The Ranger Service staff handbook details how to deal with minor incidents or accidents, as well as other problems such as lost children, dangerous dogs, irresponsible behaviour etc.

Key staff implement the Council Incident Response Procedure if a major incident occurs and are first aid trained.

Health and Safety Policies

Midlothian Council and its employees are 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 undertakes risk assessment, fire risk assessment, COSHH and manual training and some staff are IOSH qualified.

Midlothian Council has robust safety systems in place, audited every three years. Risk and COSHH assessments are extensive and reviewed annually. 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 within the Park. Major faults are reported centrally. Site staff carry out small-scale repairs and temporary measures such as closure/site signage/fencing are in place to prevent putting the public at risk.

Policies relating to Health and Safety at Vogrie Country Park including risk assessments, safe working systems and COSHH assessments are established. These are stored in the Ranger's and "Gardener's Bothy" offices at Vogrie, as well as electronically in Land and Countryside's main office in Bonnyrigg. The files are accessible to all staff. Annual risk assessments reviews take place. An example risk assessment is included in Appendix 4.

The key legislation relating to Vogrie Country Park 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



Control of Dogs

Vogrie used by dog walkers, many of whom visit daily and maintain good contacts with park staff. Regular users often report on problems that arise.

Most regular dog walkers behave responsibly; however, increasingly the Park is used by professional dog walkers and by dog training groups. This can cause conflict with local visitors who have reported both themselves and in some cases their dogs feeling intimidated by large groups of “uncontrolled” dogs. 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.



Litterbins where dog waste can be disposed are in place at the main car park, start of the north walk and at far end of the north path. Dog owners are advised of a “No Dogs” policy in all adventure play areas.

The Ranger Service and Dog Warden are 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.

Healthy, Safe and Secure – Actions- See Section 5 - Action Plan

4.3 Well Maintained and Clean

Management Aim:

- To ensure that a maintenance programme is in place to reinforce the aims of the Park and meet visitor expectations.

We aim to create a feeling that the site is valued and cared for. A dedicated team of Grounds Maintenance staff, Gardeners, Ranger Service and Land and Countryside Management staff manage the Park grounds and its facilities in accordance with clear management policies and procedures.

Litter and Waste Management

The Country Park has 11 attractive litterbins in its busier locations. These may also be used to dispose of dog waste, as well as in dog waste bins located on the North Path, where fouling was problematic. Each bin has a flap to prevent crows and squirrels raiding and scattering rubbish and minimising access to wasps in late summer. Park bins are emptied on a daily basis and twice daily during busier periods, by Land and Countryside staff. Two rubbish storage areas are discretely located behind fences near the main car park. Rubbish storage areas are emptied weekly in winter and twice weekly in summer. A contractor on a schedule that mirrors busier park periods empties the sanitation and nappy bins on a scheduled frequency.

Four bookable BBQ sites are checked and cleaned after use and all litter is removed.

Ranger site patrols take place weekly, during which staff carry out litter picks and health and safety checks. All staff are vigilant towards litter and pick up pieces when passing through the site.

The above measures set the tone and level of council commitment to keeping the park clean and litter free.

The thinking behind the 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. Spring Clean events take place with schools during April.

Grounds Maintenance

The Country Park maintenance standards are listed in the Council's Operations Specification. Details of the maintenance schedule for the Park, including the Golf Course is included in Appendix 3. These operational documents contain task specification and frequency, quality of operational requirements and a reporting system to ensure allocated works are completed to schedule.

Scheduled grounds maintenance tasks in all amenity areas allocated to Land and Countryside Operations staff by the area Forman are checked on a weekly basis. One off tasks such as dealing with dangerous trees, repairs or faults are reported and arranged by the area Foreman in key amenity areas or managed by the Ranger Service in the outlying areas of the Country Park.

Examples of grounds maintenance site tasks include:

- Weekly litter collection
- Seasonal mowing of amenity grassland
- Seasonal mowing of rough grassland
- Seasonal leaf clearance
- Footpath mowing
- Hedge cutting
- Daily golf course upkeep
- Attendance to garden and bedding areas

Details of all routine maintenance operations and maps are included in Appendix 3.

Paths, steps and other structures such as handrails, 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 amenity.

The Ranger Service manages the areas that require specialised maintenance such as ponds, wildflower grasslands and International Conifer Conservation Project trees.

The Nine Hole Golf Course is maintained on a daily basis by two dedicated golf course Landscape Gardeners. They are trained operators and ensure the course is in excellent condition. They operate a 7-day schedule and advise the Golf Starter of any course closures due to inclement weather. The maintenance schedule for the golf course is contained in Appendix 3.



Building Management and Maintenance

Vogrie House

The Ranger Service, Tree Top Cafe, Lothian's Wildlife Information Centre and a private office tenant occupy Vogrie House. Midlothian Council Estates Department prepares and manages private lease agreements. During Cafe opening hours, Vogrie House is open to the public.

Public areas of the House consist of the Cafe and Soft Play area and an adjoining corridor, with interpretation, information and leaflets to the public toilets and baby changing area. The House has disabled toilets and baby changing facilities in the basement with lift and exterior access.

The Ranger Service checks the House and its associated buildings. Faults are reported to the Council Property Services Team, who are responsible for implementing repairs via termed contractors.

Routine maintenance checks are carried out by the Council's Property Maintenance contractors including those to: emergency lighting, water quality and temperature, the lift, the fire protection panel and the main house boiler and portable appliance testing. Window cleaning takes place quarterly. During the week, house cleaning takes place daily for 2 hours in the building. The cleaner's duties also include the immediate surrounds, outdoor toilets and Gardener's Bothy. At weekends and key holidays, cleaning staff work for 4 hours operating to a schedule organised by the Ranger Service and monitored by Cleansing and Catering Services. All cleaning materials are stored on site to ensure constant supply. The cleaning staff wear uniforms and act as a contact for visitors during working hours.

Details of routine maintenance operations and are included in Appendix 3.

Information and Golf Starters Hut

The Information/Golf Starter Hut is serviced and maintained by the Council's Property Maintenance Team. It is staffed from 8am until dusk.

Details of all routine maintenance operations and map are included in Appendix 3.

Girl Guides Centre (The Coach House and Stables)

This property is leased to the Girl Guides Association Scotland for over thirty years on a full repairing and insuring basis.

The Girl Guides use the building for Guide and Brownie weekend holidays from March until November. An outside area is set aside for camping where public access rights remain. The Girl Guides Association has an annual meeting with the Council to review arrangements.

Walled Garden and Gardeners Bothy (Including Machinery Store, Wood Chip Boiler and Chip Storage Shed)

The former Estate Walled Garden is used as a plant production unit for Land and Countryside's horticultural activities.



The area produces bedding, shrubs, trees and hanging baskets,

which are planted out throughout Midlothian's towns and villages. The Gardeners Bothy, adjacent to the Walled Garden, contains an office and Gardener's staff room. Staff and walled garden management is organised by the Site Foreman. Staff structures are included in Appendix 2. Public access is prevented to the walled garden area, except on open days and the annual plant sale, as the site is an operational area.



Some original features within the Walled Garden have fallen into disrepair, due to extensive snow damage. Refurbishment costs are, at this stage, prohibitive. There are several outhouses, tools garage and container and wood chip boiler & chip shed in the surrounding area to the west and east of the walled garden. Public access is prevented to these facilities and vehicular access is limited to delivery and collection vehicles.

All nursery buildings are inspected and maintained by the Council's Property Services and audited for Fire and Health and Safety every three years. Details of routine maintenance operations are included in Appendix 3.

Events Storage Shed

Located between Vogrie House and the former stable block is a large shed which houses fittings for events and gala days. This property is closed to all users except operational staff working on events. The store is managed by the Technical Support Officer for Events and the Foreman responsible for events. The health and safety of this building is monitored by these staff.

Infrastructure and Other Facilities

Countryside bridges, railings, paths, steps, walls etc. are monitored weekly during site patrols, by the Ranger Service, and larger structures such as the bridges across the River Tyne are inspected by the Council's Structures Section on a five-yearly cycle.

Areas under temporary repairs are signed and path closures are noted with diversions. Serious problems, which cannot be undertaken by site staff, are reported to the Structures Section as necessary.

Details of all routine maintenance operations are included in Appendix 3.

Equipment Maintenance - Staff

Council staff trained to operate equipment are provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment. Appropriate locked storage facilities for tools, vehicles and personal protective equipment are on site.

Fuel and chemicals are stored on site and in accordance with COSHH and have the relevant COSHH assessment data. 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, stored centrally are updated as necessary.



Outdoor Play Equipment Maintenance

The Council's ROSPA Trained Play Maintenance Team visits the play areas and art sculptures within the Park to:

- Carry out visual inspections to equipment and play surfaces and to remove litter, graffiti, unwanted debris etc. on a twice weekly basis
- Carry out weekly technical inspections to check equipment and ensure correct depth of safety surfacing where needed.

Independent safety specialists carry out annual inspections and recommendations for action are prioritised and programmed each year. All inspections reports are recorded and filed.

Details of all routine maintenance operations are included in Appendix 3.

Well Maintained and Clean – Actions – Section 5 - Action Plan

4. 4 Sustainability

Management Aim:

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

Midlothian Council's Single Plan, under its-Sustainable Growth theme aims *to 'Ensure a sustainable environment while promoting economic growth'*. 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.

Environmental Management

Pesticides

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

Trained staff, with the relevant certification, always carry out application of chemicals. 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 Park is mainly application of glyphosate used to control invasive species, in particular Japanese Knotweed. The location of these sites is usually well away from public access routes and is restricted to less than 0.12 ha in total.

Occasionally tree or shrub stumps are treated with herbicides. This occurs where non-native species such as sycamore or rhododendron are removed and treatment is the only option to control re-growth where native species should be planted in the gap created.

Within the Nursery plant production area, which is not generally accessible to the public, chemical use accords to an Integrated Pest Management process that minimises the effects on the environment.

Use of chemicals on the Golf Course includes up to three applications per year of selective weed killer, fertilizer and fungicide to greens, tees and fairways.

Use of Materials

The Council's Procurement as a key means of delivering sustainable services states that:

To ensure Sustainable Procurement, through the Category Strategy process and all relevant tender activity, Midlothian Council will consider the environmental, social and economic consequences of non-renewable material use and re-use options'.

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 further in the Strategy for the following outcomes:

- Avoidance and/or reduction in negative environmental impacts;
- Delivery of social and economic benefits locally;
- Lower emissions and air pollution level from sustainable transportation usage; and
- Less waste going to landfill.

No tropical hard woods are used within the Park. Wooden park signs are chosen for durability and sustainability, sourced from a local supplier. All furniture and signage paint is water-based.



Recycled plastics used to construct pond dipping platforms and picnic benches are working well and proving to be very durable. Bunker sand for the golf course also includes use of recycled glass.

All timber felled on site, where appropriate, is chipped and used to fuel the nursery wood chip boiler. Smaller arisings and tree thinnings are stacked to form woodland habitat piles.

Peat substitutes have been trialled at the plant production nursery, but this has met with very limited success and in some instances complete failure. In the meantime, the Council uses compost with only a small percentage of peat and the remainder comprising recycled material. We try to use carefully managed peat reserves which are not derived from areas scientific or scenic interest and which are locally based in order to minimise carbon miles.

Resource Conservation and Waste Management

The purchase of materials guided by the Council's Procurement Strategy aims to reduce the impact on resources. The Strategy states:

'Procurement will be used as a lever to support wider Council objectives and corporate social responsibility such as the Capital Plan, equality and diversity, sustainability, carbon management, community benefits and local economic regeneration'.



Recycling

Green waste, collected throughout Midlothian from both households and public areas is sent for composting by Forth Resource Management. This waste is windrow composted to create PAS100 screened compost, for use as a soil improver and substitute for chemical fertilisers. Any contamination removed before the composting process begins is disposed of responsibly to a licensed non-hazardous landfill site.

To support this activity Land and Countryside recycles all its green waste and now uses a 10" bore chipper to enable arisings from its arboricultural activities to be used to fuel the nursery woodchip boiler or recycled.

Horticultural and Arboriculture Management

High amenity grass areas are mown to routine schedules, with in-built weather dependent flexibility. Several areas of the Park and golf course seeded with wildflower meadow mixes or managed as species

rich grassland are mown once per year. As these areas require less maintenance, fuel, machinery usage and dedicated staff time is reduced.

Small scale horticultural activities take place in the Orchard, Peace Garden and the front of Park bedding and Vogrie House herbaceous borders.

Woodlands are now managed through the Forest Plan that aims to improve the biodiversity, landscape and amenity of the site. All newly planted woodland trees are native sourced from local provenance. Specimen trees, in the former designed landscape, are subject to ongoing replenishment via the Land and Countryside's Landscape Architect who has selected over 100 new trees to develop and improve Vogrie's specimen tree stock in accordance with a design plan from a historic study of Vogrie's original design for planting. Woodchips arising from tree works are either used on site or given away to local allotments groups or recycled at the Council's green waste amenity site.

Maintenance schedules for all Park activities, including the Golf Course are detailed in Appendix 3.

Quality specifications are detailed in the Land and Countryside Operational Specification document.

Pollution Reduction

Fuel and chemical usage is limited. Any pollution incidents are reported using the Council's incident report forms and SEPA contacted if there are any spillages affecting water courses.

Water Efficiency

Water is available to park users at the public toilets and outside taps located in the flexi-field, Guides House and Vogrie House.

Operations using water include watering of bedding plants, cleaning of seed trays and operation of staff and public toilets. The public toilet urinals use a waterless system to conserve water.

Energy Efficiency

The conversion of electric to woodchip boiler at the Nursey has reduced park fuel costs by 75%. Vogrie House is the second largest user of energy and while investigation into a conversion from oil to wood fuel is considered, due to capital costs, it is most likely to be undertaken when the boiler is replaced. In the meantime, the house is a listed building and fuel efficient measures such as double glazing are too costly.

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, which applies to all Land and Countryside and Ranger Service plant and machinery.

Sustainability – Actions – See Section 5 - Action Plan

4.5 Conservation and Heritage

Management Aim:

- To increase the biodiversity value of the site.
- To protect and conserve all features of cultural significance and industrial heritage value.

The combination of the original setting of Vogrie as a Victorian Estate and Gardens, with woodland and riverside walks and its built heritage result in a beautiful, interesting and exciting attraction, visited by an estimated 250 000 people per year.



Site management rules and the guidance offered within the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code \(SOAC\)](#), ensure that site users behave and act responsibly when visiting the site, in order to protect themselves and allow the ongoing conservation of the countryside.

The Park has a mosaic of varied habitats including woodland, pond and river, grassland, gardens and mature trees within policy parklands.

Each of these habitats is managed sympathetically towards the Park wildlife as well as its visitors.

Water Management

The River Tyne forms a riparian corridor along the parks eastern edge. The river has received very little man made interference and regularly floods. Bank erosion occurs naturally and apart from at bridge structures banking is not stabilised, which allows the river to meander and take its natural course; slowing flow rates to reduce the risk of flash flooding downstream.

Vogrie has three ponds, managed to ensure they remain as mainly open water. Pond clearances take place every two years to the main house pond and curling pond. Sweet Reed Grass, cleared by volunteers is composted at the Councils green waste site. No chemicals are used in or around the pond areas. Over-hanging vegetation is reduced where necessary to increase light and also prevent leaf build up and consequent eutrophication.

Ponds are monitored from spring to autumn by the Ranger Service through pond dipping activities with various groups. This activity is undertaken from dipping platforms located along a gently sloping edge. Several amphibian refuges have been constructed near the ponds for newts, toads and frogs.

Woodlands and Trees

The Country Park covers an area of 103ha, of which 52.25ha, or 51% is classed as woodland. The majority of the woodland cover is mature broadleaf, recorded as Ancient Semi-natural Woodland or Long Established Planted Woodland on the ancient woodland inventory. The remaining mature woodland was planted more than 150 years ago. There are three main age-classes present – sapling, semi-mature and mature.

The most recent draft Long-Term Forest Plan for Vogrie was produced in 2013 and includes a site description, survey and assessment of the woodlands in the Country Park together with proposals for improvement over a 20-year period. A recent staff and public consultation was undertaken before the final action plan is decided. To date the proposals of the previous Woodland Management Plan were implemented on a small scale by the site grounds staff, the Ranger Service and volunteers.

Funding to carry out extensive operations listed in the new Forest Plan is not going to be progressed significantly until the Forestry Commission.

An executive summary of the Forest Plan is can be found in Appendix 5.



In partnership with the Royal Botanical Gardens, Edinburgh, the Ranger Service has planted 30 rare conifers within the policies as part of the International Conifer Conservation Programme. During the last inspection comment was made on the excellent care and establishment of the trees and consequent success of tree planting on this site.

Following a Designed Landscape and Parkland Trees restocking report (2006), over 30 trees were planted to ensure the continuity of the parkland landscape with mature trees. The Councils Landscape Architect has also selected and located specimen species to ensure a high quality tree stock within formal policies. A further 2-3

ornamental trees are added to the policies areas on an annual basis to ensure varied and interesting policy parkland is established for the future.

Grasslands

Wildflower grasslands form an important part of the diverse mosaic of habitats at Vogrie. Amongst many rough open areas of vegetation, glades, lawns and fields there are two compartments managed for enhanced grassland diversity. The Tyne Valley grasslands and former calf meadow are cut in late summer and all risings are either lifted by machine and composted or raked by volunteers.

These two grassland areas were surveyed using the National Vegetation Survey methods before cutting and then again 5 years after the first cut. They classify as a mesotrophic or neutral grassland



(MG1) and are managed using a cut and lift regime every other year to prevent scrub encroachment. This maintains the mosaic of habitats within the area to increase biodiversity.

New wildflower meadows were created in October 2011 at the 'rough' areas of the golf course with the aim to establish a species rich area adjacent to the pond.

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 reduction in funds available.

Other Habitats

Other habitats include formal gardens, parkland policies with mature trees and areas of scrub vegetation. The woodland edge and adjacent open farmland combine to provide excellent feeding ground for a number of bird species. The "edge effects" which this produces are likely to enhance the number of bird species within Vogrie.

The ground flora beneath the woodland canopy contains a number of indicator species, which demonstrate that the site has a long history of woodland cover, including Bluebells, Dog's Mercury, Woodrush, Wild Garlic and Wood Sorrel.

Flora and Fauna

Wildlife records are stored with The Wildlife Information Centre who provide detailed datasets of biological records at Vogrie. Details are at [TWIC](#).

More generally, the site provides a home for a range of wildlife including Roe Deer, Badger, Otter, Pipistrelle, Daubenton's, Brown Long Eared and Noctule Bats and bird species including Green and Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch, Kingfisher, Barn and Tawny Owl, Buzzard and Dipper.

The Park 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 improve conditions for invertebrates for example the provision of deadwood habitat piles.

Notable species, listed in the biodiversity action plan include Herb Paris, Purple Loosestrife, Greater Tussock Sedge, Toads, Frogs, Palmate Newt and Brook Lamphey.

The Ranger Service undertakes its own survey work of protected species but increasingly works in partnership with other organisations to deliver surveys of key species. These include:

Survey	Surveyors
National Bat Monitoring Programme Survey	Lothian's Bat Group
Bat Box and Roost Checks	Lothian's Bat Group
Common Bird Census	Volunteers
Badger Sett Monitoring and Video installation	Chris Sydes – Scottish Natural Heritage
Herb Paris monitoring	Ranger Service
Wildflower Grasslands NVC Survey	Ranger Service
Invasive Monitoring	Ranger Service

Geological and Physiographic Features

The Park occupies the gently sloping valley of the River Tyne. The river has cut through the superficial glacial deposits and the underlying Carboniferous sediments, which form part of the Upper Carboniferous millstone grits. Exposures of sandstones, siltstones, shale and ironstone occur in a number of locations.

The site is a Regionally Important Geological Site – [RIGS](#) - due to the exposure of Carboniferous cyclothem of coal, shale, muddy limestones and sandstone. This status is promoted through information from the

[Edinburgh Geological Society](#), although there is limited access to the type site as the outcrop is very difficult to reach, situated, as it is, on the steep sided valley of the Vogrie Burn.

Soils at Vogrie form part of the Darvel association, derived from the Carboniferous sediments. They comprise alluvial deposits of the river floodplain and brown earths on freely drained slopes. Small areas of non-calcareous gleys exist on imperfectly drained slopes.

Conservation of Landscape

Ash Consulting Group (1998) carried out the Lothian's Landscape Character Assessment for Scottish Natural Heritage. Vogrie is classed as being within the Upper Tyne Valley, which falls into the broad landscape type of Lowland River Valleys. The character of the Upper Tyne Valley is strongly determined by the presence of Preston Hall, Oxenfoord and Vogrie Estates. These estates have contributed to the "well defined large scale field pattern of improved grassland and arable on the higher ground; with fringes of dense mixed and broadleaved woodland on the lower valley sloped and floor: curved shelter belts: scrub on valley sides; parkland trees and avenues of mature trees".



"Designation as Country Park means that it should be afforded a good degree of protection from development by the Local Authority. This will also help to achieve the Key Strategic Aim of the Landscape Character Assessment, which is to 'safeguard dominant influence of major estate landscapes.'"

Conservation of the Built Environment

A record of all Midlothian Council property in the Councils Asset Management Plan, which informs strategic decisions on property allocation, management and maintenance.

As referred to in section 4.3 the buildings and structures within the Park are monitored and maintained by the site staff, the Council's Property Services and termed contractors.

Vogrie House is a Category A listed building. All other properties associated with the estate including the former stables, Walled Garden and Lodge Houses are Category B listed.

A brief interpretation of Vogrie's historic past is contained on the outdoor site panels and is expanded within Vogrie House.

A series of Ranger-led guided tours is offered annually around Vogrie House as part of Midlothian's Doors Open Day.

Conservation and Heritage –See section 5 - Action Plan

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 Park and to use the Park as an environmental educational resource.

During 2006/7 an extensive visitor survey was carried out to improve management knowledge of site users and their usage. The survey used both on-site data collection from park users and randomised postal surveys.

Patterns of Use

The Park is open 365 days of the year and attracts an estimated 250 000 visitors on an annual basis. 89% of visitors rate the Park as either a good or a very good place to enjoy.

On a daily basis users are primarily local people (95%) but the Park becomes much busier at weekends and during holidays when visitors more likely to come from out with the immediate area. The busiest time of day at the Park is usually around midday and early afternoon.

Of the 2000 respondents surveyed in the Visitor Survey:

56% of park visitors are female

90% arrive by car

58% visit with family

The most popular reasons for visiting include (which may have included more than one response):

45% play areas

43% walking

41% café

The overall opinion/rating of the Park given is as follows:

Very Good – 53%

Good – 36%

Fair – 5%

Poor – 1%

(no response – 5%)

Community Involvement in Management and Development

Vogrie Country Park has benefited from the sustained interest of the local community, schools, groups and conservation volunteers. Midlothian Ranger Service works with various volunteer groups at Vogrie, including among many others: the Lothian's Conservation Volunteer, Edinburgh Dirty Weekenders, the Green Team, Midlothian Paths Team and the Criminal Justice Team. On an annual basis the Ranger Service organise and deliver conservation tasks covering over 12 412 voluntary hours during 2016/17.



Examples of community involvement include:

- Ranger led School visits and environmental education sessions
- Path clearance and maintenance of the Core Path, Right of Way and wider path network by the Midlothian Paths Team.
- Volunteer led walks during the Midlothian Walking Festival
- A variety conservation volunteer groups working on pond clearance, path and step maintenance, woodland thinning, invasive clearance, tree brushing, river clearances, litter picks and hedge planting.

- Works in partnership with the Criminal Justice Team including woodland management, path and pond clearance, signage installation and dry stone walling repairs.
- Provision of a site for the Esk Valley Model Railway Society



Events for the Community

The Ranger Service organises a series of events throughout the year, attracting more than 1800 visitors. Examples of some events planned for 2018 include:



- Ranger led drop in family activities such as pond dipping, mini beast hunting, Bushcraft and crafty days
- Ranger led and volunteer led guided walks and open days: House tours, Doors Open day, Plant, Midlothian Walking Festival walks, Midlothian Science Festival activities.

The flexi field is available to hire at a low cost for community and special interest events. This year's events have included the Dog Aid Society Show, the Springer Rescue Show, various equestrian events and the Scouts Jamboree.

Another popular attraction at Vogrie is the miniature train rides offered by the Esk Valley Model Railway Society on Sundays from Easter until October. The Society has worked closely with park staff to ensure the safe and enjoyable running of several steam and diesel locomotives, designed and built by members of the club.



Educational Facilities

Formal Environmental Education

The Ranger Service works with around 3000 pupils on an annual basis. We offer educational sessions linked to the Curriculum for Excellence and Tertiary Syllabi. Numbers in each session are limited to one Ranger to a maximum of 15 pupils to ensure good communication and allow feedback from the pupils.



Activities are promoted through word of mouth, council web pages and leaflet. Diary bookings are taken by phone. Details of the particular needs of the school, based around the activity are discussed as well as any special needs pupils may have. The Ranger Service's education sessions are free of charge. Safe walking routes to the Park to promote health and well-being.

Resource Boxes are available to borrow, free of charge covering pond dipping, minibeast hunting, woodland studies and nature games & activities. These are available as an educational tool to any interested group, party or individual.



Informal Education

Midlothian Ranger Service promotes informal education to a wide range of groups, including members of the public, walking groups, brownies, guides and scouts. Regular activities include guided walks, night hikes, pond dipping and evening presentations. During our busiest periods the Service is often fully booked. If this is the case, we lend free activity based resource boxes to groups, of which we have three.



Accessibility for All

It is a key objective to provide opportunities for access to all users of the site. Access is promoted to the Park by road signage, signage for pedestrians and cyclists and equestrian users via the Tyne Esk Trail. The Service is represented at the Midlothian Access Forum quarterly meetings.

The Ranger Service patrols Vogrie on a weekly basis to ensure all access routes are open, safe and fit for purpose and that any problems are quickly resolved.

The main and lower car park areas, cafe, and house are accessible to wheelchair users. Accessible picnic benches and seating are located at regular points to allow all abilities to enjoy Vogrie. Due to topography, much of the Park is inaccessible to wheelchair users or those without a reasonable level of fitness.

Community Involvement – Actions - See Section 5 - Action Plan

4.7 Marketing

Management Aims:

- To positively promote Vogrie Country Park to Midlothian residents 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 Park and events to a wide audience. Information relating to development and management issues is available to all at the [Ranger Service](#) web page, which includes a [PDF of this plan](#).

Information Provision and Interpretation

Site Interpretation and Leaflets

Vogrie is promoted by wide distribution of the [site leaflet](#), principally in the Lothians, containing a map, information and details of facilities. This is available on site, on the [Council website](#), in local libraries and leisure centres at the Midlothian Tourist Information Centre and in other community outlets. This leaflet is also available to download from the Council [Ranger Service](#) web pages.

Several routes within the park are listed at [Walking and Cycling](#).



Site interpretation includes:

- Five high quality interpretation panels, with park map, facilities information and interesting nature and historical facts. These are located at key gathering points, car park and house. Suggested walking routes are on the map, with average time taken to complete and distance. Visit Scotland judges, who subsequently designated Vogrie as a three star visitor attraction, commented upon the high quality of these boards.
- A tourism information panel is located at the shelter in the visitor coach park.
- Information on events, park contacts, attractions, cafe, golf etc. are on the wooden information shelter in the main car park
- Vogrie House displays include House and Estate history, Ranger Service community works, the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, Ranger Service events, walking festival information and wildlife identification boards.
- Leaflet dispensers in Vogrie House contain leaflets on all Midlothian Council Countryside sites including Vogrie.
- The EskValley Model Engineering Society produces an annual leaflet on their running schedule, model engines and contacts.

Website

Midlothian Council's website contains promotional information relating to [Vogrie](#), including events, site descriptions, directions, maps and facilities as well as a downloadable leaflet with map.

Walking, cycling and horse riding routes, which include those in and around the Park can be at [Walking, Cycling, Horse Riding Midlothian](#).

Additional Advertising

The Ranger Service advertises all events in the local press. Special events such as the Midlothian Outdoor Festival, Midlothian Science Festival and Midlothian Doors Open Day are publicised through the Council's Communications Section.

Marketing Plan and Park Promotion

The vision for Vogrie Country Park is:

To manage Vogrie Country Park for the benefit of people and wildlife to ensure it is one of Scotland's most attractive countryside sites for Midlothian's residents and visitors.

Marketing – Actions – See Section 5 – Action Plan

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.

Land and Countryside

The Land and Countryside Services Section within the Resources Division of Midlothian Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of open spaces in Midlothian. This remit includes parks,

countryside sites such as Vogrie, 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. With regard to the management of Vogrie Country Park this structure provides the clear and coherent approach required for the maintenance and improvement of the site.

Management of the Country Park

The Ranger Service and Area Foreman are responsible for the day-to-day running of the Park. Specialist Land and Countryside staff support technical projects.

Land Service Operations carry out maintenance of amenity grass, grasslands and arboricultural works as well as major path repairs.

Waste Services, which is also part of the Commercial Service Division, is responsible for the collection of litter bins and other waste materials

Estates Services manage properties leased to private organisations including the Tree Top Café, Brownie House and various offices.

A park staffing structure is in Appendix 2.

Management Plan

This Management Plan provides opportunities for both Land and Countryside and the various stakeholders including elected members and the wider community to contribute to and view how the Park is managed. The Ranger Service will oversee the implementation of the Plan. An action plan (in Section 5) which details and timetables the various ongoing and scheduled improvements.

Management – Actions – See Section 5 - Actions

A Management Action Plan is contained in Section 5.

Park Maintenance Schedules and Maps are detailed in Appendix 3.

Operational specifications for all estate management tasks are in the Land and Countryside Operations Specification Document.

Monitoring and Review of Management Plan Implementation

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

The aim of the plan is to implement Park improvements linked with Green Flag Award Scheme, with the purpose of achieving 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 and Marketing 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.
- Achievement of Green Flag and / or response to Green Flag Judge Comments.
- Staff feedback, management meetings and rewards assessed through staff Competency Framework Plans.
- Visitor feedback.

5 ACTION PLAN

This action plan lists the recommendations for the management of Vogrie Country Park over a 5-year period. An indication of the timing of each action is given with status in colour.

Green Flag Criteria 1	Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
A Welcoming Place	Update visitor information shelter, golf & info hut notice board and Vogrie House display regularly to include Ranger events, park facilities info such as golf info, cafe and railway opening and park/emergency contacts.						
	Check and maintain and repair or replace park signage on an annual basis.						
	<i>Consult all relevant park staff on Green Flag Plan.</i>						
	Implement Vogrie Maintenance Schedule (See Appendix 3)						

Green Flag Criteria 2	Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Healthy, Safe and Secure	Ensure Risk Assessments and Safe Working Systems are made available to all staff, up to date and reviewed on an annual basis by the Ranger Service and Land & Countryside Staff.						
	Ensure Park Management Rules are publicly available at notice boards and within Vogrie House.						
	Ensure First Aid training for all relevant site staff is up to date						
	Carry out annual tree inspection in Spring and after severe weather events.						
	Implement revised Vogrie Maintenance Schedule (See Appendix 3).						

Green Flag Criteria 3	Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Well Maintained and Clean	Implement Vogrie Maintenance Schedule (See Appendix 3)						
	<i>Organise an annual Spring Clean, during 'National Spring Clean Week' event with schools, local groups or Neighbourhood Partnership.</i>						
	Maintain play equipment in accordance with ROSPA and BSEN 1176 and 1171 Safety Standards.						
	Clean and maintain Vogrie House to specified works plans and inspection checks.						
	Maintain all vehicles and equipment as per fleet maintenance schedules						
	Ensure Vogrie House and other buildings & structures are preserved and do not deteriorate by carrying out regular checks and annual inspections, whereby faults are reported and recommendations are implemented.						

Table Key:

Action achieved	
Action partly achieved or ongoing	
Action investigated but not carried forward	
Future action	

Green Flag Criteria 4	Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Sustainability	Provide free access to the Park users arriving by non motorised means.						
	Continue to use recycled products where possible, including plastic wood picnic benches, tree tubes, stone and top soil.						
	Source all woodland tree plants from local tree nursery and reuse old tree tubes and stakes when planting.						
	Reduce strimming by widening all paths to allow mower access, reducing fuel and staff costs.						
	Demonstrate sustainability by the use all suitable timber felled in the Park to supply the nursery biomass boiler to reduce timber, transportation and fuel costs.						
	Encourage staff to turn off unnecessary electronic equipment and to store and maintain equipment to ensure longevity.						
	Use low energy light bulbs in all areas where possible.						
	Control invasive species i.e. Japanese Knotweed, at present only located at the curling Pond.						

Green Flag Criteria 5	Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Conservation and Heritage	Implement Vogrie Maintenance Schedule (See Appendices 3).						
	When planting in woodlands and areas out with the policies source only native woodland species.						
	Maintain ICCP trees in partnership with the Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh.						
	Monitor and manage wild grassland and flower meadows by cutting and lifting clippings once per year in late September. the Tyne Valley and Calf Meadow areas with NVC survey every 5 years.						
	Maintain 3 ponds to ensure there is at least 30% open water by clearing Sweet Reed Grass, with volunteers every two years.						
	Facilitate flora and fauna surveys i.e. bat, badger and bird counts with various specialist organisations.						
	Continue to monitor and control invasive species i.e. hogweed, knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.						
	Monitor and maintain Vogrie House and associated buildings by reporting all faults to Property Services to ensure the preservation of the built environment.						
	Organise and deliver volunteer conservation tasks which are part of the Green Flag.						
	Update the Divisional Asset Management Plan						

Table Key:

Action achieved	
Action partly achieved or ongoing	
Action investigated but not carried forward	
Future action	

Green Flag Criteria 6	Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Community Involvement	Continue to plan and organise 15 volunteer tasks to improve the Park for people and wildlife. Volunteer groups include The Green Team, Lothian's conservation Volunteers, schools, The Edinburgh Dirty Weekenders etc.						
	Facilitate unsupervised projects for volunteers and partnership groups such as the Midlothian Volunteer Action Gardeners etc.						
	Continue to organise projects and volunteers of Midlothian Paths Team to carry out access works throughout Midlothian and at the Park.						
	Work in partnership with the Criminal Justice Team to provide suitable site projects to improve the Park.						
	Organise approx 35 Ranger Service events						
	Provide a site for the Esk Valley Model Engineering Society to store engines, maintain a model train track and offer rides to the public.						
	Provide cafe services via The Tree Top Cafe (including wedding and soft play facilities) at weekends and key holiday periods in Vogrie House and conservatory.						
	Plan and deliver 35 Ranger led Curricular based environmental education sessions to schools and tertiary groups.						
	Ensure free resource boxes (pond, woodland & minibeast and nature studies) are made available to all visiting groups and persons, especially when the Ranger Service is already booked, during periods of high demand.						
	Provide outdoor classroom areas for visiting schools and groups, which can be used as wet weather shelter.						
Provide 10 environmental Ranger led activities for informal groups and visitors i.e. Guides and Brownies, Ageing Well Groups, Cubs and Scouts, Community groups etc.							

Table Key:

Action achieved	
Action partly achieved or ongoing	
Action investigated but not carried forward	
Future action	

Green Flag Criteria 7	Marketing Objective	Action	Agent	18	19	20	22	21	23
Marketing	Achieve Green Flag Award.	If successful, use Green Flag brand to promote park and service.	Land and Countryside / Rangers /						
	Promote the Park with leafleting.	Continue with wide distribution of the Park leaflet	Ranger Service						
	Marketing of whole Park	Continue to advertise whole park in Edinburgh and Lothian's based publications	Land & Countryside						
	Promote the site through web information.	Continue to review and update Council web pages for Vogrie Country Park and ensure Green Flag Plan is available on the Vogrie Country Park web page.	Ranger Service						
	Build upon the existing links with local schools and	Continue to work with schools and groups	Ranger Service						

	groups.								
	Increase the awareness of the path routes within the Park to promote health.	Include the Park as part of walks within the annual Midlothian Walking Festival Programme.	Ranger Service						
	Promote grant aided and other projects.	Prepare press releases and other publicity information associated with new initiatives to promote the site and the service to internal and external stakeholders.	Land and Countryside / Rangers						
	Promote the site as an educational resource for the use as a Forest Schools site.	Promote Education Service to local schools to sell the site an educational resource.	Ranger Service						
	Annual Events Programme.	Promote events at the Park and guided	Ranger Service						
	Volunteering Opportunities.	Continue to promote volunteer opportunities and activities	Ranger Service						
	Strategic Development.	Promotion of strategic initiatives such as the Long-Term Forest Plan at a Regional and National level to maximise funding opportunities and wider stakeholder support.	Land and Countryside						

Green Flag Criteria 8	Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Management	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 and Marketing 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.						
	Achievement of Green Flag and /or response to Green Flag Judge Comments.						
	Staff feedback, management meetings and rewards assessed through staff Competency Framework Plans.						

Table Key:

Action achieved	
Action partly achieved or ongoing	
Action investigated but not carried forward	
Future action	

Vogrie Country Park



From Country Estate to Country Park
 Vogrie (hobby place) lands were purchased by James Dugan in 1719. His descendant Lt Colonel Alexander Cunningham Dugan built Vogrie House in 1876. The Royal Hospital for Nervous Disorders owned the Estate from 1923 - 1963. Vogrie House was then used as the base of the Civil Defence Force until 1972. Vogrie was designated Scotland's second country park in 1982.



Woodlands, Water and Wildlife
 Habitats found at Vogrie include a mixture of woodlands, ponds & streams, grassland and parkland. Midlothian Ranger Service wildlife records show that this variety of habitats supports a diverse range of species.



Exploring the Park
 There are 11.5 miles of signed paths sweeping through sweeping parkland, woodlands and the River Tyne valley. With a choice of routes available there is something to suit all needs. Short and level routes lead to and from the car park to Vogrie House, avoiding the main entrance road. (000). North Walk routes (000) are ideal for all ages and the Tyne Esk horse trail which takes in a 13 mile loop of Midlothian countryside. For a walk on the wild side take one of the steeper paths to the River Tyne Valley (000) and grasslands. Here you will find quiet places, with sweeping views of the woodlands and surrounding countryside.



Join in....

Useful Information

Midlothian



- Vogrie Country Park Information:**
 Tel: 01875 821710
- Barbecue (1 and 2) and Events Field Hire**
 (see map overleaf for location):
 Tel: 01875 821710
- 9 Hole Golf Course** (see times booklet)
 24 hours ahead
 Tel: 01875 821710
- Miniature Railway:**
 Tel: 01875 822388 or 01875 821687
- The Cedar Tree Cafe and Soft Play:**
 Tel: 01875 823660
- Midlothian Ranger Service** for countryside information, events, school & group visits and resource box hire:
 Tel: 01875 821990



Vogrie Country Park is patrolled and managed by Midlothian Ranger Service. Please act responsibly and do not damage or remove any plants or animals. Please do not drop any litter, and clean up after your dog. Thank you.

- PLEASE REMEMBER**
- No Firearms
 - No Fires
 - No Swimming



WELCOME TO

Vogrie

Country Park

Discover...

Oogrie's secrets for yourself
Just 12 miles from Edinburgh the busy city centre, Oogrie Country Park offers the best of both worlds in an idyllic location in the heart of Edinburgh's country estate.

Oogrie invites much of its charm over on a Victorian parkland estate, with sweeping views of the city, landscaped formal gardens, an original walled garden and the historical neogothic Oogrie House.

With open areas of rolling parkland, woodland walks, meadow, ponds and a river.

Oogrie offers visitors a chance to

enjoy nature in a unique and very special setting

Whether you simply want to relax or try something a bit more active, Oogrie is the perfect place for your day out.



Explore...

The wilder side of Oogrie

Enjoy a leisurely stroll around the parkland or go walking from the coast to the city in the wilder.

Choose your own path or try one of our suggested walks through quiet woodland or along the River Tyne.



Experience...

The amazing variety of flora and fauna

at Oogrie House in what is one of the most beautiful gardens in Edinburgh. The garden is a mix of formal and informal styles, inspired from many sources of the time of King James VI and I.

There are also many other species of plants and trees in our 50 species of birds.

In a landscape of wildflowers, grasses and a variety of trees - it's a wonderful sight to see in the summer months. The garden is a mix of formal and informal styles, inspired from many sources of the time of King James VI and I.



Enjoy...

Oogrie's excellent range of visitor attractions, catering for every age and interest

- Car and coach parking, charged from 10am-6pm
- Disabled parking
- Fully accessible coffee or tea room, car park area and a children's playground by Oogrie House
- Oogrie House and The Cedar Tree Cafe & Bar Day Room
- A mini 'fun in a playground' golf course
- Five children's play areas and outdoor play park
- Picnic areas and open lawns in Oogrie's Park area
- 2 barbeque areas for private hire
- Picnic area for private hire
- 2 outdoor tables, suitable for up to 30 persons
- A miniature railway run by the Edinburgh Railway Society



Appendix 2: Staff Structure

Land & Countryside Services Manager		
Land Resources Manager 	 	Technical Officer (Including Galas and Events)
Senior Ranger 	Area Foreman 	
Countryside Ranger x 3 Vogrie House Cleaner	Senior Greenkeeper Greenkeeper/Gardener Assistant Nursery Person Gardener/Groundsman	Leisure Attendant (Golf Starter Information Hut)

Appendix 3: Asset Maintenance Schedule

FIELD	FIELD/ TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND STRUCTURES	Property/Built Environment						
	Vogrie Mansion House	Map1	n/a	n/a	Full Health and Safety Management and Property Audit	Every Three Years	Corporate Health and Safety Unit
					Property Suitability Survey	Annually	Property Strategy
					Repairs and maintenance	Ongoing reporting	Property Services
					Fire alarm system check	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Nursery (including Gardeners Cottage, Timber store and Walled Garden)	Map1	n/a	n/a	Full Health and Safety Management and Property Audit	Every Three Years	Corporate Health and Safety Unit
					Property Suitability Survey	Annually	Property Strategy
					Repairs and maintenance	Ongoing reporting	Property Services
					Health and safety checks	Ongoing reporting	Senior Nursery Person/Area Foreman
	Golf Starters Hut and Former Golf Starters Hut	Map1	n/a	n/a	Property Suitability Survey	Annually	Property Strategy
	Events Store	Map1			Property Suitability Survey	Annually	Property Strategy
	Stable Block (Guide Centre – Private Lease)	Map1	n/a	n/a	Property Suitability Survey	Annually	Property Strategy
	Public Toilets						
	External (at Main Car Park)	Map1	Item	1	Inspection/Clean	Daily (x3) Weekends (x5)	Gardener/Grounds person and Caretaker
	External (Main Play Area)	Map1	Item	1	Inspection/Clean	Daily (x3) Weekends (x5)	Gardener/Grounds person and Caretaker
	Vogrie House	Map1	Item	1	Inspection/Clean	Daily (x3) Weekends (x5)	Caretaker
	Bridges & Structures						
	Timber Concrete Foundations	Map 2	Item	7	Patrol	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Steel Timber Boarded	Map 2	Item	2	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Brick	Map 2	Item	1	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Masonry/Stone	Map 2	Item	1	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Culvert	Map 2	Item	1	Patrols	Monthly as required	Ranger service
	All structures	Map 2	Items	12	Structural Survey	Every 5 Years	Roads - Structures

FIELD	FIELD/ TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND STRUCTURES	Boundary Walls and Fences						
	Two metre high random rubble wall with apex cope -	Map 2	Lin m	831	Staff reports on condition and disrepair	On a five yearly maintenance schedule	Property maintenance
	Steel palisade fence	Map 2	Lin m	118	Staff reports on condition and disrepair	On a five yearly maintenance schedule	Property Services
	Wrought Iron 900mm high Fencing on wall	West Gate Lodge	900 high, Lin m	30	Cleaned and painted	On a five yearly maintenance schedule	Property Services
	Wrought Iron Gates	West Gate Lodge	2.7m high	1.95x2	Cleaned and painted	On a five yearly maintenance schedule	Property Services
	Wrought Iron Gates	North Gate Lodge	1.8 high	1.50x2	Cleaned and painted	On a five yearly maintenance schedule	Property Services
	Non Boundary Walls						
	Brick 5m High Wall Up to 5m	Walled garden	Lin m	386	Staff reports on condition and disrepair	n/a	Staff/Ranger Service
	Ha Ha wall	Map 2	Lin m	578	Staff reports on condition and disrepair	n/a	Staff/Ranger Service
	Shelters						
	Outdoor Class rooms	Map 1	n/a	2	Ranger service inspection	On a five yearly maintenance schedule	Ranger Service
	Internal Fencing						
	Birds mouth trip rail	Main car park	Lin m	577	Repair	as necessary	Capital works squad
	Ranch Style P & R (3')	Overflow car park	Lin m	85	Repair	as necessary	Capital works squad
	Wooden Palisade (4')	Storage bays	Lin m	37	Repair	as necessary	Capital works squad
	Wooden P & R (3')	Barbeque 1	Lin m	91	Repair	as necessary	Capital works squad
Equine safety fence	North walk	Lin m	90	Repair	as necessary	Capital works squad	

FIELD	FIELD/ TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
Hard Landscaping and Features	Play Areas and Sculptures						
	Adventure	Map 1	m ²	4,277.00	Safety Inspection	Weekly	Play Squad
					Independent Safety Inspection	Annually	Dunlop Playground Services
	Toddlers	Map 1	m ²	250.6	Safety Inspection	Weekly	Play Squad
	Giant Chairs	Map 1	Item	2	Inspection Regime Independent Safety Inspection	Annually Monthly	Dunlop Playground Services Play Squad
	Giant Tricycle	Map 1	Item	1	Inspection Regime	Monthly	Play Squad
	Paths						
	Hardcore/Whin 1.5-1.8m Wide	Map 2	Lin m	5948	Patrol	Weekly	Ranger Service
					Strimmed to 0.5m	Annually (x2)	Gardener/Grounds person
					Top Up with Whin Grit	As required	Gardener/Grounds person
	Beaten Earth	Map 2	Lin m	1687	Patrol	Monthly	Ranger Service
					Strimmed to 0.5m	Annually (x2)	Gardener/Grounds person
	Tyne Esk Trail	Map 2	Lin m	1362	Patrol Strimmed to 0.5m	Weekly Annually (x2)	Ranger Service Gardener/Grounds Person
					Cut to 3.0m wide	Annually (x2)	Gardener/Grounds Person
	Asphalt 3.8m wide Road/Path	Map 2	Lin m	1322	Staff reports on condition and disrepair	Daily	All staff
					Gulley's cleared and hot tar works	As required	Roads
					Application of glyphosate	Annually	External contractor
					Re-marking Road markings	Annually	Roads
	Barbeque Areas						
	One & Two	Map 1 Map 1	Item	2	Inspected pre & post event	As required	Gardener/ grounds person
	Car Parks						
	Main	Map 1	m ²	7,279	Patrolled	Daily	Gardener/ grounds person
	All Staff/ Disabled	Map 1	m ²	2,247	Patrolled	Daily	All Staff
	Operational Staff/Disabled	Map 1	m ²	225	Patrolled	Daily	All staff
Overflow / Coach parking	Map 1	m ²	4830	Patrolled	Daily	Gardener/ grounds person	

FIELD	FIELD/ TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO	
Hard Landscaping and Features	Interpretation Boards etc							
	Metal framed GRP Information panels (Renewed every 5-10 years)	Map 2	Item	4	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger service	
	Brown wooden park signage including directional signs	Map 2	Item	45	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service	
					Annual Condition Survey/Repaint	Annually and as required	Ranger Service	
	Vogrie House Interpretation and Leaflets		Item	N/A	Check and update as required	Weekly	Ranger Service	
	Information Board and Bus Shelter		Item	2	Check and update as required	Weekly	Ranger Service	
	Seating and Bins							
	Litter bins	Various locations	Item	*25	Emptied	Daily	Gardener/Grounds person	
					Painting and refurbishment	As necessary	Criminal Justice Team	
	Dog bins	N/A	Item	*2	Emptied	Weekly	Waste Services	
	Benches	Map 2	Item	27	Patrols	See Section 8.3.2 of the Operations spec	Ranger Service	
	Picnic tables	Map 2	Item	39	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service	
	Rest perch	Map 2	Item	6	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service	
	Wayside bench	Map 2	Item	6	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service	
	Log bench	Map 2	Item	3	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service	
	All seating	Map 2			Refurbished	As necessary	Ranger Service/CJT	
	Gates							
	Timber farm gates	Overflow car park	EA	11	Repair	As necessary	Capital works squad	
	Timber Equine gates	Tyne Esk Trail	EA	2	Repair	As necessary		
	Decorative double gate	Storage bays	EA	1	Repair	As necessary	Capital works squad	
	Galvanised steel farm gates	Council work and storage area	EA	3	Repair	As necessary	Capital works squad	
	Timber Main drive gate	By Golf Starters	EA	1	Repair	As necessary	Capital works squad	
	Bollards at Car Park, Vogrie House	Various locations	Item	17	Refurbish/replace	As necessary	Ranger Service/CJT	
	FIELD	FIELD/ TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO

LAND USE	Trees and Woodlands						
	High Access Areas (policies, car parks, play areas and paths)	Map 3	n/a	n/a	Annual Safety Inspection	May	Arboriculture Foreman/Ranger Service
	Policy trees	Map 3	Item	400 approx	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Woodlands	Map 3	item	84 Ha	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Fruit Trees standards	Map 3	Item	35	Pruned	Annually - December	Senior Nursery person
	Fruit Trees standards	Map 3	item	29	Pruned,	Annually July	Senior Nursery person
	Wall trained				Trained & wired	December	Senior Nursery person
	Hedges Yew	Main Car Park	lin. m	176	See section 4.6 of Operations Spec	Annually as Required	Gardener/Grounds person
	Hedges Mixed	Equine trail/ Overflow Car Park	lin. m	571	See section 4.6 of Operations Spec	Annually as Required	Gardener/Grounds person
	Hedges Leylandii	By walled garden	lin. m	60	See section 4.6 of Operations Spec	Annually as Required	Gardener/Grounds person
	Timber tree guards	Policy woodland	EA	35	Painted	5 years	Gardener/Grounds person
	Grass Areas						
	Amenity grass (inc Events Field)	Map 3	m ²	29806	See section 3.1 to 3.5 of Operations Spec	Apr-Nov	Gardener/Grounds person
					Leaf blowing	Annually	Gardener/Grounds person
	Managed Natural Grasslands	Map 3	m ²	12,500.00	See section 3.1 to 3.5 of Operations Spec	Once per annum	Gardener/Grounds person Ranger Service
	Grass roundel	by Vogrie House	m ²	375.00	Edge annually in addition to Section 3.1 to 3.5 of Operations Specification		Gardener/Grounds Person
	Water Features						
	River Tyne	Map 3	Item	N/A	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Vogrie Burn	Map 3	Item	N/A	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Curling Pond	Map 3	m ²	279	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	North Pond	Map 3	m ²	750	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Main Pond	Map 3	m ²	1,309	Patrols	Weekly	Ranger Service
	All Ponds				Vegetation Clearance	Every two years	Ranger Service/Vols
					Maintain Platforms	When required	Ranger Service/Vols
	Golf Course Pond	Map 3	m ²	217	Inspection	Weekly	Greenkeeper/Groundsmen

FIELD	FIELD/ TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
LAND USE	Mulched Beds						
	Vogrie House (Front)	Map 3	m ²	343	See section 4.3.5 of Operations Spec	Maintenance programme	Gardener/grounds person
	Vogrie House (Back and side)	Map 3		455	See section 4.3.5 of Operations Spec	Maintenance programme	Gardener/grounds person
	Coach Car Park	Map 3	m ²	72	See section 4.3.5 of Operations Spec	Maintenance programme	Gardener/grounds person
	Peace garden, Bird garden, former golf starters hut	Map 3	m ²	662	See section 4.3.5 of Operations Spec	Maintenance programme	Gardener/grounds person
					Edged and trimmed with a half moon edging iron	As necessary	Gardener/grounds person
	Annual Beds						
	Main Entrance	Map 3	m ²	8	See Section 5.3 of the Vogrie spec doc	Maintenance programme	Gardener/grounds person
					Edged and trimmed with a half moon edging iron	As necessary	Gardener/grounds person
	Sensory Wildlife Garden						
	Wildlife garden				Group activity to enhance	As necessary	Ranger Service and with volunteers
	Proposed Allotment						
	14 plot proposed allotment	Map 3	m ²	1400	Maintain fencing and paths	As necessary	Gardener/grounds person
GOLF COURSE	Golf Course						
	Greens	Map 4	m ²	2071	See section 3.1 to 3.5 of the Vogrie operations specification doc	Daily/ Weekly	Green keeping staff
	Tees	Map 4	m ²	1564	As above	As Above	Green keeping staff
	Fairways	Map 4	m ²	37571	As above	As Above	Green keeping staff
	Fairway rough	Map 4	m ²	75240	As above	As Above	Green keeping staff
	Bunkers	Map 4	m ²	530	See section 3.6	As Above	Green keeping staff
Trees and Woodlands	Map 3	m ²		Annual Safety Inspection	October	Arboriculture Foreman/Ranger Service	

FIELD	FIELD/ TYPE	MAP CODE LOCATION	UNIT	QUANTITY	ACTIVITIES	WHEN	WHO
	BIODIVERSITY						
	Bat boxes	Mapped by Lothian Bat Group	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual	Lothian's Bat Group
	Common Bird Census	Survey only	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual	Ranger Service Volunteers
	Herb Paris Monitoring	Mapped by Ranger Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual	Ranger Service
	OTHER ACTIVITIES						
	Litter picking – policies	See Map 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	Daily	Gardener/grounds person
	Litter picking - play areas	See Map 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Daily	Gardener/grounds person Play Squad
	Litter picking - café area	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Daily	Cedar Tree Café
	Litter picking - other areas	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Weekly	Ranger Service
	Parking opening and closing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Daily	Senior Nursery Person/ Golf Starter
	Token machine - cash emptying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Senior Nursery Person/ Golf Starter
	Storage bays	N/A	N/A	N/A	Tidied	As necessary	Area Foreman
	Septic tanks	N/A	N/A	N/A	Emptied	As necessary	Ranger Service
	Tenancy renewals for Guide Centre, Caretakers Cottage, Private lets and Café	N/A	N/A	N/A	Administered and lease renewed	As necessary	Estates Services
	North Field	See Map 3	m ²	110,000	Administered and lease renewed	As necessary	Estates Services
	North Lodge	Map 1	Item	1	Administered and lease renewed	As necessary	Estates Services

Appendix 4: Risk Assessment

DATE OF ASSESSMENT 2018	Midlothian Ranger Service	ACTIVITY: PLANNED FIRES
--------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------

Group Supervision is key to safety when lighting and working around fires. The Ranger Service will work with no more than 15 young people, with at least 2 other responsible adults, supplied by the visiting group. The group leader (teacher, scout leader etc) is responsible for pupil and group behavior. If the Ranger feels that behavior is not appropriate, the activity will not be undertaken or stopped.

Activity / Situation / Hazard	L	S	Tot	Control Measures	Result						
Contact with flames	4	4	16	When teaching fire lighting make sure instructions are understood and followed Ensure long hair is tied back and loose clothing is secured Matches / fire strikes will be distributed by the Ranger and collected once fire is lit Anything thrown on the fire stays on the fire. No burning sticks etc are to be removed Ensure there are no trip hazards nearby Nobody should walk over the fire Carry a fire blanket and first aid kit	A						
Smoke inhalation	4	4	16	Site fire in well ventilated area	A						
Flammable liquids	4	4	16	Keep vehicles and any flammable liquids / gas at least 30m from fire No flammable liquids should be used to start or increase a fire	A						
Fire spread	4	4	16	Do not light fires in very dry or excessively windy weather Ensure 1 person is attending the fire at all times Do not light fires directly under trees Keep a debris free zone around the fire, allowing nothing to catch in this area Allow a fire to die down before the end of an activity If appropriate put the fire out by turning in and dousing with water Only leave fires burning where there is no risk of spreading	A						
Smoke obscures hazards	4	4	16	Fire will not be lit by buildings or near roads	A						
Campfire cooking	4	4	16	Use protective gloves when moving pans / kettles from the fire Ensure all food is thoroughly cooked	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						
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	Result						
				L x S	A = Acceptable C = Controlled adequately N = Not Controlled adequately F = Further Action Required						
0 – 16		17 - 33		34 - 50		51 – 68		69 – 86		87 - 100	
Very Low Risk		Low Risk		Significant Risk		High Risk		Very High Risk		Unacceptable Risk	

Appendix 5: Long Term Forest Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Midlothian Council produced a Long Term Forest Plan to guide the management of the woodlands at Vogrie Country Park over the next twenty years. The finalised Plan was approved by the Forestry Commission Scotland.

The Long Term Forest Plan for Vogrie Country Park Woodlands

Midlothian Council employed Mark Hamilton Landscape Services to assist them in the production of the Long Term Forest Plan.

The plan was approved by the Forestry Commission in 2013.

Objectives

Silvicultural

Sustainable management of the woodland through a phased programme of selective felling, thinning and ongoing maintenance.

- Thin 18.57 ha of woodland
- Selective fell 6.45 ha of woodland (while retaining woodland cover)
- Re-space 3.45 ha of dense broadleaf saplings

Biodiversity

Increase the biodiversity of the woodlands, largely by enrichment planting of native woodland and removal of invasive exotics and saplings

- Removal of 5.36 ha of invasive rhododendron by cutting and repeat spraying with herbicide
- Cut and spray 0.56 ha of snowberry with herbicide
- Spray Japanese knotweed with herbicide
- Planting of 9,000 native broadleaved trees and shrubs in tree shelters
- Clearfell 0.54 ha of woodland to allow planting of native mixed broadleaves
- Coppice 0.55 ha of scrub woodland to diversify age and structure
- Clearance of tree/scrub regeneration from grassland areas
- Removal of sycamore saplings from 22 ha of woodland

Recreation

Improve, and enhance the access network and related features throughout the woodlands, and create new features to improve access.

- Fell and cut back 405m of pathside vegetation
- Reroute 20m of beaten earth path
- Create 70m of new hardcore path

Due to changes in the FC grant system which favoured new planting over woodland management, the opportunities for managing Vogries woodlands are now much reduced.

