Huntingdonshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS)** will be held in **LANCASTER & STIRLING, CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 5 MARCH 2026** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES

1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) meeting held on 5th February 2026.

Contact Officer: B Buddle
01480 388008

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary and other interests in relation to any Agenda item.

Contact Officer: B Buddle
01480 388008

3. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 11 - 24)

a) The Panel are to receive the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme
b) Members to discuss future planning of items for the Work Programme

Contact Officer: B Buddle
01480 388008

4. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMERCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (Pages 25 - 192)

The Panel is invited to comment on the Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Sustainability Plan.

Executive Councillor: J Kerr

Contact Officer: G Holland
01480 388157

5. SIGNING OF THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL ARMED FORCES COVENANT (Pages 193 - 206)

The Panel is invited to comment on the Signing of the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant Report.

Executive Councillor: S Conboy

Contact Officer: A Turner
07810 637566

6. LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLAN 2025/26 (Pages 207 - 220)

The Panel is invited to comment on and note the contents of the report.

Executive Councillor: L Davenport-Ray

Contact Officer: H Robinson
01480 388388

7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve:-

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Contact Officer:

8. **AWARD OF CONTRACTS FOR THE PUBLIC ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICE AND INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR** (Pages 221 - 230)

The Panel is invited to comment on the Award of Contracts for the Public Advice and Information Service and Infrastructure and Support to the Voluntary and Community Sector Report.

Executive Councillor: S Howell

Contact Officer: C Deeth
01480 388233

25 day of February 2026

Michelle Sacks

Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests.

Further information on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution

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The District Council also permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council.

Please contact Mrs Beccy Buddle, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny), Tel No: 01480 388008/e-mail Beccy.Buddle@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website.

Emergency Procedure
In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS) held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 5 February 2026.

PRESENT: Councillor N J Hunt – Chair.

Councillors T Alban, S Bywater, S J Criswell, M A Hassall, M Kadewere, C Lowe, S Mokbul, B M Pitt, D J Shaw and N Wells.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors S W Ferguson, S A Howell and J E Kerr .

40. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 22nd January 2026 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

41. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor B Pitt declared a non-registerable interest in Minute 25/44 by virtue of being involved in organising a music festival in Priory Park, St Neots.

42. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and Notice of Key Decisions for the period 1st February 2026 to 31st May 2026 were presented to the Panel.

43. LETTINGS POLICY REVIEW

By means of a report by the Housing Needs and Resources Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Lettings Policy Review was presented to the Panel.

Councillor Bywater expressed his gratitude for the inclusion of Care Leavers into the Policy, a sentiment which was echoed by the Panel. Following which, the Panel were advised that the number of care leavers on the Housing list was low and potential in single figures, however the Panel were assured that Officers worked with Care Leaving Team colleagues to identify care leavers who would be applying for social housing and were able to plan and accommodate for them. It was noted that the very low numbers of care leavers against the total number of households registered to the list meant that this group had a minimal impact on the list overall but that the support provided was invaluable.

The Panel were advised that victims of domestic violence were identified by Officers and case workers through investigative and liaison work and that priority was awarded accordingly.

It was observed that the report identified a future review during the next municipal year of the Policy and requested involvement of Councillors and Overview and Scrutiny within that process. This sentiment was shared by the Panel, the Chair and the Executive Councillor as an action to take forward.

It was clarified to the Panel that the minor amendments referenced in the recommendation for Officer delegation were small amends such as clarification of wording. Further concern was expressed by Councillor Hassall as to whether the term minor amendment could be defined. Following discussion, the Panel were reassured that any decisions taken under this recommendation would be between the Corporate Director Communities and the Portfolio Holder. It was further suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Chair be apprised of these decisions so that they could report back to the Panel if deemed necessary.

Following the discussion, it was

RESOLVED

that the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel be passed to Cabinet for their consideration when making a decision upon the recommendations within the report.

44. HABITAT BANKING PROGRAMME

By means of a report and presentation by the BioDiversity for All Project Manager (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), the Habitat Banking Programme was presented to the Panel.

Councillor Criswell praised the sentiment of the project but expressed concern that the Council as custodians of the public realm were tying up parcels of land for extended periods which may be required for other purposes for the benefit of the public interest in the future. In addition Councillor Hunt queried whether legal contracts would be put in place to protect both the land and the public interest. The Panel were assured that legal agreements would be in place for this purpose and that there would be break causes to take scenarios such as natural disasters and extreme weather into consideration. It was also assured that the programme would look to enhance existing spaces rather than redefine them. An example was given of sites with recreational sports pitches where the programme would keep the pitches but look to enhance the surrounding areas working with what would be feasible and practical.

Following an enquiry in relation to the Priory Park site, the Panel heard that communications were ongoing with the Friends of Priory Park group who were open to the concept of the programme and that the team would be working closely with internal colleagues and external partners to ensure that the end result would enhance the space and not impact recreational use and enjoyment of the space.

In response to a question relating to the inclusion of interest within the financial calculations, the Panel were advised that the figures had been developed in collaboration with Finance colleagues and that the modelling for the programme did not include the interest. The Panel were assured that a fluid case by case approach would be adopted with a further option to increase the number of credits available should the resulting habitats be of a more improved quality than anticipated.

Following an observation in relation to the management of private estates and environments, with the example of Buckden Towers being given, the team advised that the programmes focus would be on the sites identified within the report, however they were aware of further opportunities and although a balanced approach would be undertaken initially this would be reevaluated and opportunities developed in the future if scope allowed.

The Panel were reassured that support from the Council's Operations Team had been factored in to be used in the event of extreme weather and that the legal agreements would be in place to protect the scheme from the unpredictability of nature. It was also noted that the richer and more biodiverse a habitat, the more resistant it was to natural disasters.

Concern was expressed that developers may utilise the credits scheme in place of delivering on development sites thus creating more heavily urbanised environments. The Panel were assured that the team were collaborating with Planning colleagues to develop and monitor habitats and developments across the district to ensure a balanced approach.

Councillor Hunt relayed his experience working with the team in relation to Riverside Park in Huntingdon and that he was impressed with how the suggested changes would enhance the current provision without hindering it's use by residents. He concluded with his belief that the scheme would allow residents to see investment in parks and green spaces for their benefit.

The Panel heard that the team would be working with community groups and residents to develop the scheme and to strengthen community bonds with the Council.

Following a query relating to the omission of Paxton Pits from the scheme, the Panel heard that the existing site was already rich in biodiversity and that the intention of the scheme was to increase the biodiversity of areas. It was noted that the forthcoming expansion of Paxton Pits may create further opportunities and could be included in the programme in the future if appropriate.

It was advised to the Panel that CIL funding would not be appropriate for the scheme due to the potential commercial nature therefore borrowing had been the better option for the programme.

Whilst in support of the scheme in general, Councillor Pitt expressed concern about the timescales within the report, noting that work was anticipated to start in May. The Panel were advised that following the outcome of the Budget through the democratic cycle in February, it was hoped that work would begin immediately to identify and progress the identified sites.

Following the discussion, it was

RESOLVED

that the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel be passed to Cabinet for their consideration when making a decision upon the recommendations within the report.

45. ONE LEISURE INDEPENDENT REVIEW UPDATE

By means of a report and presentation by One Leisure Business and Operations Manager (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), the One Leisure Independent Review Update was presented to the Panel.

Councillor Bywater gave his thanks to the Head of Leisure and his team for the great work undertaken in the progress made by the service. The Panel heard that following the improvement works to the swimming pool at One Leisure Sawtry, an open event was planned for the community ahead of the centres reopening to the public.

Councillor Shaw praised the results shown by the service but expressed disappointment at the level of staff engagement. The Panel heard that work had been undertaken over the past twelve months and that the service was confident that this was improving significantly.

The Panel heard that following the initial review and restructure significant work had been undertaken to develop income streams as well as concessionary memberships. It was noted that marketing support would be put in place in order to communicate the positive work undertaken by the service. The increase in One Leisure’s net promoter score was noted going from below to above the national average. Following a further request from Councillor Hassall, the Officer undertook to review the SWOT analysis from 2025 and to update the Panel with the results of this.

Councillor Alban welcomed the proposed marketing support for One Leisure and noted that the Council’s recycling and waste teams did great work on social media. In response to a further question from Councillor Alban, the Panel heard that an increase in teenage customers within the gyms after school has been observed and that centres had ensured sufficient staffing resources over this time to ensure that this increased footfall was supported.

It was observed that many Councillors received colloquial feedback from residents on One Leisure and that this word of mouth feedback was unlikely to be fed back through official channels.

Councillor Hunt concluded with his experience on the One Leisure Shadow Board and advised that it had provided a useful insight into the developments being made in the service and the progress on the identified actions.

Following the discussion, it was

RESOLVED

that the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel be passed to Cabinet for their consideration when making a decision upon the recommendations within the report.

46. APPOINTMENT BASED FACE TO FACE SERVICES

By means of a report by the Customer Services Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Appointment Based Face to Face Services Report was presented to the Panel.

The Panel heard that multiple partners were located within the reception area at Pathfinder House and that the Customer Services team triaged visitors to the appropriate location, it was advised that these agents did not need to be multiskilled.

In addressing concerns that advisors would no longer have time to support residents with complex issues, the Panel were reassured that the multiskilled team were able to flex and change to best support customers and their circumstances. It was noted that agents could support customers in identifying ways that they could self serve so that they could initiate this in the future. It was further noted that this was a planned trial which would allow the team to be reactionary and adaptable as the pilot scheme developed.

It was noted that many of the partners providing services at Pathfinder House and neighbouring authorities also operated appointment based systems.

The Panel were advised that there was not any capacity inefficiencies within the team under the current model and that it was a data driven and experienced team who would continue to make sure they were achieving KPIs and serving customer needs. It was noted that a potential reduction of 1 FTE post had been identified within the report, however it was hoped that would be achieved through staff turnover should it be necessary.

Chair

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Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2025-26 - Performance and Growth

Forward Agendas

Meeting Date	Pre-Scrutiny	Scrutiny Review
4th March 2026	• Community Infrastructure Levy Funding • Corporate Performance Report 2025/26 (Quarter 3)	
1st April 2026	• Housing Strategy Refresh	

Unscheduled Agenda Items

Item	Notes	Progress
Local Plans		
Parking Strategy Refresh		Under development, anticipated for inclusion in the democratic cycle in Spring 2026

O&S Topics Identified For Further Consideration

Subject	Brief	Status
Huntingdonshire Evening Economy	• Huntingdonshire's Evening Economy - supporting the night-time economy across our District • How HDC currently supports the evening economy across our market towns and rural areas (possibly across financial/business support, safety, growth, CCTV service, rural rates relief policies), as well as how we can influence our partners to provide further support for this strategic sector (including wider economic support, skills and employment).	More info and scoping requested from Cllrs

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2025-26 - Environment, Communities and Partnerships

Forward Agendas

Meeting Date	Pre-Scrutiny	Scrutiny Review
5th March 2026	• Parks and Open Space Commercial Sustainability Plan • Voluntary Sector Grants • Armed Forces Covenant	• Local Area Energy Plan Report 2025/26
2nd April 2026		

Unscheduled Agenda Items

Item	Notes	Progress
Community Safety Partnerships	• Consider bringing forward a paper to review and understand what Huntingdonshire District Council has done or is currently doing in relation to the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). • Given the importance of community safety, I believe it would be beneficial to examine the CSP's activities, outcomes, and any ongoing initiatives to ensure transparency and alignment with	Report being developed ahead of scheduling onto the Agenda.

	local needs, thus improve local understanding. • Is it working, could this be improved?	

O&S Topics Identified For Further Consideration

Subject	Brief	Status
Civil Parking Enforcement Update	• An update on implementation and feedback on progress was requested by Councillor Alban at the July meeting of the Panel	Investigating with Officers an appropriate time to schedule onto the agenda
Hinchingbrooke Hospital	• Update on redevelopment works • Big organisations making a difference locally, local recruitment • Link to preventative and integrated care	More info and scoping requested from Cllrs
Open Spaces in Huntingdonshire	• HDC owned – HCP, Paxton Pits • Great Fen • Green spaces perspective and how links with the local plan • Access for residents – health lifestyles, mental health, OLAL • Purpose of open spaces, and strategic use of them • Mental Health, Well-being • Wildlife corridors	More info and scoping requested from Cllrs
Customer Service Model	• Community support • Merits of speed of customer contact versus depth of discussion and customer outcome	More info and scoping requested from Cllrs
Huntingdonshire’s Legacy	• Culture and influence of Huntingdonshire • Creating a legacy for the district	More info and scoping requested from Cllrs

Working Groups

Climate Working Group
Members: Cllrs N Hunt, T D Alban, M Hassall, C Lowe, B Pitt and D Shaw **Lead Officer:** Adjusted to suit the topic, enquiries to B Buddle
Progress: **November 2022:** Initial Meetings held to establish Terms of Reference for the group. **April 2023:** Regular meetings established. Evidence and information gathering to be progressed. Group to be involved in the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy Development. **January 2024:** Meetings held to discuss proposed work plan for the group and to discuss HVO Fuels project **November 2024:** Meeting to discuss future proposed projects **January 2025:** Group met to review the HVO draft report prior to its consideration by the Panel **August 2025:** Group met twice to discuss both the Energy Strategy and the Fleet Decarbonisation Project for initial feedback prior to their inclusion in the democratic cycle of meetings over Autumn 2025 **February 2026:** Group invited to comment on the Interim RECAP Partnership Waste Strategy. This will be brought to Members through the Members Briefing. **Next Steps:** Meetings to be scheduled as required to allow involvement in proposed works.

Disabled Facilities Grants Group
Members: I P Taylor, B Banks, C Tevlin and C Lowe **Lead Officer:** Claudia Deeth
Progress: **February 2024:** Councillors invited to express their interest in being involved with the project. **August 2024:** initial meeting held and scope of project discussed **February 2025:** Further meeting held to update the group on the progress of the project **Next Steps:** DFG team to arrange ongoing schedule of meetings

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NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS INCLUDING THOSE TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Prepared by: **Councillor Sarah Conboy, Executive Leader of the Council**
Date of Publication: **16 February 2026**
For Period: **1 March 2026 to 30 June 2026**

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor Details		**Councillor Contact Details**
Councillor S J Conboy	Executive Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Place	Cloudberry Cottage 9 Earning Street Godmanchester Huntingdon PE29 2JD Tel: 01480 414900 / 07831 807208 E-mail: Sarah.Conboy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor L Davenport-Ray	Executive Councillor for Climate, Transformation and Workforce	73 Hogsden Leys St Neots Cambridgeshire PE19 6AD E-mail: Lara.Davenport-Ray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor S Ferguson	Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance	9 Anderson Close St Neots Cambridgeshire PE19 6DN Tel: 07525 987460 E-mail: Stephen.Ferguson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Councillor J Harvey	Executive Councillor for Governance and Democratic Services	c/o Huntingdonshire District Council Pathfinder House St Mary's Street Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 3TN Tel: 07941 080531 E-mail: Jo.Harvey@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor S Howell	Executive Councillor for Communities, Health and Leisure	c/o Huntingdonshire District Council Pathfinder House St Mary's Street Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 3TN Tel: 01733 794510 E-mail: Sally.Howell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor J Kerr	Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene	15 Crown Walk St Ives Cambridgeshire PE27 5QN Tel: 07906 899425 E-mail: Julie.Kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor B Mickelburgh	Executive Councillor for Finance & Resources	2 Grainger Avenue Godmanchester Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 2JT Tel: 07441 392492 E-mail: Brett.Mickelburgh@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Councillor T Sanderson	Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Planning	29 Burmoor Close Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 6GE Tel: 01480 436822 E-mail: Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor S Wakeford	Executive Councillor for Economy, Regeneration and Housing	4 Croft Close Brampton Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 4TJ Tel: 07762 109210 E-mail: Sam.Wakeford@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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Notice is hereby given of:

- Key decisions that will be taken by the Cabinet (or other decision maker)
- Confidential or exempt executive decisions that will be taken in a meeting from which the public will be excluded (for whole or part).

A notice/agenda together with reports and supporting documents for each meeting will be published at least five working days before the date of the meeting. In order to enquire about the availability of documents and subject to any restrictions on their disclosure, copies may be requested by contacting the Democratic Services Team on 01480 388169 or E-mail Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk.

Agendas may be accessed electronically at the District Council's website.

Formal notice is hereby given under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that, where indicated part of the meetings listed in this notice will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain confidential or exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. See the relevant paragraphs below.

Any person who wishes to make representations to the decision maker about a decision which is to be made or wishes to object to an item being considered in private may do so by emailing Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk.or by contacting the Democratic Services Team. If representations are received at least eight working days before the date of the meeting, they will be published with the agenda together with a statement of the District Council's response. Any representations received after this time will be verbally reported and considered at the meeting.

Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) (Reason for the report to be considered in private)

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the Financial and Business Affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations that are arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of or office holders under the Authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the Authority proposes:-
   (a)To give under any announcement a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b)To make an Order or Direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon PE29 3TN.

Notes:- (i) Additions changes from the previous Forward Plan are annotated ***
(ii) Part II confidential items which will be considered in private are annotated ## and shown in italic.

Matter for Decision Description of Decision	Decision Maker	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Community Infrastructure Levy Funding	Cabinet	17 Mar 2026		Claire Burton, Implementation Team Leader Tel: (01480) 388274 or email Claire.Burton@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		T Sanderson	Performance & Growth
Corporate Plan Update	Cabinet	17 Mar 2026		Lucy Aston, Business Performance and Transformation Manager Tel: (01480) 388604 or email Lucy.Aston@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		S Conboy	Performance & Growth
Empty Homes Strategy	Cabinet	17 Mar 2026		Pamela Scott, Head of Economy, Regeneration and Housing Delivery Tel: (01480) 388146 or email Pamela.Scott@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		S Wakeford	Performance & Growth

Matter for Decision Description of Decision	Decision Maker	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Parks and Open Space Commercial Sustainability Plan	Cabinet	17 Mar 2026		Gregg Holland, Head of Leisure Service, Health and Environment Tel: (01480) 388157 or email: Gregg.Holland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J Kerr	Environment, Communities & Partnerships
Community Chest Grant Aid Awards 2025/26 To consider applications received via the Community Chest Awards Scheme for 2024/25.	Grants Panel	18 Mar 2026		Claudia Deeth, Public Protection Manager Tel: (01480) 388233 or email: Claudia.Deeth@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		S Howell & L Davenport-Ray	Environment, Communities & Partnerships

Matter for Decision Description of Decision	Decision Maker	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy - Update	Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance and Section 151 Officer	18 Feb 2026		Zoe Warren, Council Tax & Business Rates Manager Tel: (01480) 388461 or email Zoe.Warren@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		S Ferguson	
Award of Contracts for the Public Advice and Information Service and Infrastructure and Support to the Voluntary and Community Sector*##**	Cabinet	17 Mar 2026		Claudia Deeth, Public Protection Manager Tel: (01480) 388233 or email: Claudia.Deeth@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	3	S Howell	Environment, Communities & Partnership

Matter for Decision **Description of Decision**	**Decision Maker**	**Date decision to be taken**	**Documents Available**	**How relevant Officer can be contacted**	**Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)**	**Relevant Executive Councillor**	**Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel**
Housing Strategy Refresh* **	Cabinet	17 Mar 2026		Pamela Scott, Head of Economy, Regeneration and Housing Delivery Tel: (01480) 388146 or email Pamela.Scott@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		S Wakeford	Performance & Growth
Armed Forces Covenant* **	Cabinet	17 Mar 2026		Amanda Turner, Community Development Officer, Community Development Officer Tel: 01480 387058 or email Amanda.Turner@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		S Conboy	Environment, Communities & Partnerships

Public
Key Decision – Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Parks & Open Spaces – Commercial Sustainability Plan
Meeting/Date:	Overview & Scrutiny (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) – 5th March 2026 Cabinet – 17th March 2026
Executive Portfolio:	Councillor Julie Kerr
Report by:	Gregg Holland – Head of Leisure, Health & Environment
Ward(s) affected:	All Ward(s)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities & Partnerships) is invited to comment on the contents of the Parks & Open Spaces – Commercial Sustainability Plan report and make any comments to the Cabinet.

Public
Key Decision – Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Parks & Open Spaces – Commercial Sustainability Plan
Meeting/Date:	O&S (Environment, Communities & Partnerships) – 5th March 2026 Cabinet – 17th March 2026
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene – (Councillor Julie Kerr)
Report by:	Head of Leisure, Health & Environment (Gregg Holland)
Ward(s) affected:	All Ward(s)

Executive Summary:

This report sets out the comprehensive work undertaken by Officer's in conjunction with an external consultancy Theme 3 (T3) towards the development and proposed delivery of a new Commercial Sustainability Plan for the Parks and Open Spaces service with the aim of reducing the service's costs to the Council.

An internal review of the service's commercial opportunities was undertaken in early 2025 by the Commercial Delivery Manager. To aid and enhance this review staff engagement sessions were facilitated to ensure that we had captured vital feedback in how our colleagues working across the district wide sites felt we could maximise commercial projects and to underpin a One team approach towards making the service financially sustainable by 2028.

In May 2025, the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment with support from the Commercial Delivery Manager commissioned T3 an external consultancy to review the internal commercial review and staff engagement feedback and they were asked to *"to create a fully costed investment plan with a creative overview of 'commercial opportunities' - for a total of 5 sites"*:

a) Hinchingbrooke Country Park
b) Paxton Pits
c) Riverside Park, St Neots
d) Riverside Park, Huntingdon
e) Priory Park, St Neots

The commercial investment plan requested from the consultants had a goal to develop a fully costed investment plan, driving additional revenue of £700,000 per annum into the service by the end of financial year 2027/2028.

Following the conclusion of the independent review by T3 further staff engagement sessions were facilitated where the Commercial Delivery Manager presented the Commercial Strategy findings with the aim of gauging any further and final feedback from colleagues so that a full and final report could be prepared and presented to Council to ensure a phased approach to capital investment could be proposed and delivered aiming to facilitate new and innovative activities and services across Parks and Open Spaces to drive investment, increase revenue and empower staff to deliver a commercially sustainable service.

This report therefore aims to set out and summarise the new Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Strategy and underlying principles, to seek approval of the proposed capital investment in Phase 1, to acknowledge that further capital bids for Phase 2 will be developed and submitted as part of the budget and MTFS process for 2027/2028 and to allow the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment delegated authority to deliver the Phase 1 programme of works during 2026/2027.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet/Committee is

RECOMMENDED

1. To endorse the principles put forward in the T3 Commercial Opportunities Report **(Appendix 1),** which will be adopted in seeking to support activities to reduce the costs of the service to the Council and provide a commercially sustainable approach for the service; and which will continue to contribute to the Councils wider strategies and outcomes for the District.

2. To support the principles set out can be used in connection with the identified sites, but also applied in relation to other sites which the Council is or may become responsible for; including those falling within the remit of the Head of Leisure, Health and Environment to support wildlife and conservation, health and wellbeing, physical activity and the introduction of new commercial opportunities.

3. To approve the outline recommendations put forward by T3 Commercial Opportunities Report **(Appendix 1),** by external consultants, the proposed Phase 1 capital investment plan and wider direction of travel as outlined within this report.

4. To approve the proposed Phase 1 programme of investment utilising the capital bids (£1m) which have been included within the 26/27 budget; and which have subsequently been agreed as part of the Councils Capital Programme.

5. To acknowledge and support that the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment continue to develop plans for Phase 2 and will submit capitals bids as part of the 27/28 budget setting process – or earlier if possible and supported by the Corporate Director (Finance and Resources) and Section 151 Officer.

6. To delegate to the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment all necessary activities required to deliver the capital expenditure plan (Phase 1), and within the agreed budgets enable the development, finalisation and delivery of new programmes, events and attractions which align with the principles agreed, and which will contribute to the commercially sustainable approach agreed.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief and seek endorsement from Councillor's on the work undertaken by Officer's and T3 an external consultancy in the development of a new Parks & Open Spaces – Commercial Sustainability Plan; and subsequent to that agreement, support delivery of activities and interventions which align with the plan and will contribute towards the overall aim of providing a financially sustainable service.

1.2 This report also provides background on the current financial position and cost to the Council of operating the Park's and Open Spaces service and thus the key drivers behind the creation, development and proposed delivery programme of the new Commercial Sustainability Plan aimed at removing the operating cost of the service to the Council.

1.3 Detail is given on the approach undertaken by Officer's and T3 in the development of the Commercial Sustainability Plan. The plan includes a fully costed investment plan with a creative overview of commercial opportunities spanning five key sites across Parks and Open Spaces.

1.4 The report outlines the key principles of the plan with the aim of enhancing the visitor experience for visitors and how if approved it can support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, Place Strategy and overall service and financial objectives and improvements.

1.5 The report includes the recommendations identified by T3 during their work, and their conclusions that if adopted by the Council the plan will enhance and further improve the visitor experience, footfall to our open spaces, dwell time (how long residents stay) and income across our sites.

1.6 This report will set out clearly the proposed capital investment plan for Phase 1 – which is now included within the Councils agreed Capital Programme and the plan for delivery; and outlines that a wider development plan for Phase 2 that will be put forward and submitted as an extra capital investment bid in the 2027-2028 budget process.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The HDC Healthy Open Spaces Strategy was created and published in 2020.

2.2 The Healthy Open Spaces Strategy was created to ensure that the parks and open spaces across the district continued to be used and valued by the community and also explore how they can support wider positive change. It set out to understand how greenspaces across Huntingdonshire can support local people to live healthier lives, improve their mental health and wellbeing, contribute to the fight against climate change and address social isolation.

2.3 A £1.5m investment was agreed by Council (January 2019) to ensure the sustainability of strategic open spaces in Huntingdonshire, without subsidy. This concentrated on Hinchingbrooke Country Park (HCP). This business case had aspirations as set out below:

a) provide greater leisure opportunities to increases physical activity levels
b) deliver accessible green space and countryside with greater opportunity for positive activities that support residents' health and well-being
c) continue to support and grow volunteering opportunities
d) deliver a sustainable community facility
e) address local car parking issues

2.4 The Council successfully negotiated the start of a new 99-year lease until 2121 (June 2021), signed 25th of February 2022. The outline site design and location for the enhanced car parking facilities were agreed by Cabinet on 20th January 2022. The project secured an additional £1.5 million from Community Infrastructure Levy on 21st March 2022.

2.5 In addition to this on 8th September 2022 Council approved an updated report on Hinchingbrooke Country Park and the main purpose of this was as follows:

a) To provide an update on the background to the Hinchingbrooke Country Park investment project.
b) To present the updated anticipated business case supporting the investment proposal along with a worst- and best-case model.
c) To gain approval for the £2.994m Hinchingbrooke Country Park Investment Project funded via £1.5m Capital Investment and £1.499m CIL award.

2.6 One of the main catalysts for finalising and moving forward with the capital project at Hinchingbrooke Country Park was to utilise the new Countryside Centre and associated café plus increased parking provision to improve income generation and help reduce the cost of the service to the Council.

2.7 The above confirms that for some years now, the Council has had an agreed direction of travel to seek to improve the quality of existing assets such as Hinchingbrooke Country Park, which offer wide ranging benefits to both residents and visitors. However, the direction has also sought to maximise income potential in order to provide a more commercially sustainable model for the service and reduce the financial demands on the Council for this discretionary service.

2.8 For a wider understanding on the service cost to the Council please see the table illustrated below:

	2026/27 Budget (Baseline)	2027/28 New Budget (Baseline)	2028/29 New Budget (Baseline)	2029/30 New Budget (Baseline)	2030/31 New Budget (Baseline)
Expenditure	£1,472,674	£1,529,491	£1,571,575	£1,609,630	£1,641,869
Income	(£624,149)	(£718,837)	(£774,663)	(£813,548)	(£848,548)
Deficit	**£848,525**	**£810,654**	**£796,912**	**£796,082**	**£793,321**

2.9 Currently the service is budgeted to cost £848,000 in 2026-2027 and £4m over the MTFS period so the main driver for changing the financial outlook within the service should be centred more around income generation with wider efficiency review of costs.

2.10 In February 2025, the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment was tasked with identifying opportunities across the service to help support the income generation and reduction of costs to support the wider financial sustainability of the service.

2.11 A dedicated Commercial Delivery Manager was recruited to the Parks and Open Spaces team in early 2025 and this role centred around developing a commercial strategy for parks and open spaces to include:

a) The review of opportunities for generating income through existing activities including all Service Level Agreement's (SLA's)
b) Reviewing of all buildings and spaces across the service to understand wider opportunities for income generation
c) Drive the development of the commercialisation of parks and open spaces and to review educational opportunities, visitor engagement, events activation, marketing and promotion across the district

2.12 Following this review the Commercial Delivery Manager and Head of Leisure, Health & Environment undertook staff engagement sessions to update colleagues on the commercial review, to ensure there was transparency on what outcome we wanted to achieve from the process and to understand their views on what they believed could be developed and implemented across the district to improve the commercial sustainability of our open spaces. This session was held on 11th June 2025.

2.13 Following the staff engagement session the commercial review as stated above and staff feedback were provided to an external consultancy called T3 in May 2025. They were asked to *"to create a fully costed investment plan with a creative overview of 'commercial opportunities' - for a total of 5 sites"*:

a) Hinchingbrooke Country Park
b) Paxton Pits
c) Riverside Park, St Neots

d) Riverside Park, Huntingdon
e) Priory Park, St Neots

2.14 The commercial investment plan requested from the consultants had a "*goal to develop a fully costed investment plan, driving additional revenue of £700,000 per annum into the service by the end of financial year 2027/2028".*

2.15 Following the conclusion of the work by T3 a final staff engagement session was facilitated on 28th November 2025 where we shared the T3 findings and to enable the team to comment on and gain more exposure to the work that had been undertaken. A further session to finalise staff feedback was undertaken on 8th January 2026.

2.16 The utilisation of this staff led approach and the use of T3 has been critical at underpinning the new Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Sustainability Plan and its key principles. Section 3 provides the overarching detail behind the plan and principles required to deliver Phase 1 and provides initial options for consideration around Phase 2.

3. COMMERCIAL STRATEGY & KEY PRINCIPLES

3.1 T3 are an external consultancy who "specialise in the development, creation and design of commercially successful visitor experiences". They have undertaken extensive works for organisations such as Merlin Entertainment, Centre Parcs, Bourne Leisure and Warwick Castle.

3.2 Their underlying mission is "to always bring a fresh perspective to the creation of memorable experiences so they pro-actively challenge, are true to their client's brand, connect positively with visitors and are commercially successful".

3.3 As stated earlier within Section 2 of the report T3 were selected to help define a new commercial vision for the Council's parks and open spaces. They were asked to "to create a fully costed investment plan with a creative overview of 'commercial opportunities' - for a total of 5 sites":

a) Hinchingbrooke Country Park
b) Paxton Pits
c) Riverside Park, St Neots
d) Riverside Park, Huntingdon
e) Priory Park, St Neots

3.4 The commercial investment plan requested from the consultants had a "goal to develop a fully costed investment plan, driving additional revenue of £700,000 per annum into the service by the end of financial year 2027/2028".

3.5 In line with the above request outlined within 3.4, Officer's also asked T3 to consider within their review and recommendations the following key points:

a) Review & propose initial ideas
b) Focus on traditional commercial gain products
c) Focus on Quick Wins
d) Environmental Considerations
e) Desirability in terms of local demographic

3.6 As part of the process T3 also considered high level benchmarking across the U.K, Europe and Globally when comparing data on the Councils parks and open spaces to other successful operations. This work can be seen in **Appendix 2.**

3.7 To underpin the improvement required in the visitor experience across the Council's parks and open spaces T3 outlined that the following key commercial principles should be adopted not only as part of the new Commercial Sustainability Plan, but also on a case by case basis moving forward when evaluating the viability of new innovative products and services that we may offer. These principles are seen below:

a) Creating quality food, play and events offerings, which meet modern demographic expectations and prolong dwell time. (Golden 4 Hour!)
b) Involve experienced operators to maximize potential
c) Create products that have high marketing potential
d) Clustered products to facilitate easier use of multiple products and maximise staff presence and labour costs
e) Appeal to a wide variety of users
f) Building BRAND and RECOGNITION
g) Supporting Local Growth across Huntingdonshire

3.8 T3 used the following selection principles as part of their recommendations of activities and services that the Council could offer across its sites. These are seen below:

a) Drive footfall and Increase dwell time
b) Generate sustainable income streams
c) Appeal to multiple users
d) Create a Wow factor and Pester Power

3.9 Within their profiling T3 defined the target audiences as follows:

a) Young & Midlife Adults (20-49 years old)
b) Mid-Life Adults (35 – 54 years old)
c) Active 50s (55 – 64 years old)

3.10 The primary catchment for Huntingdonshire is classed as "family heavy and older rich adult".

3.11 In addition to the work T3 undertook on the newly created Commercial Sustainability Plan for Parks and Open Spaces and its key principles set out within Section 3 they also advised and provided some wider ranging recommendations as outlined below that they collectively felt would add more value and go further in the commerciality and financial sustainability of the service. These were:

1. Create a shared vision for Huntingdonshire Parks & Open Spaces:
    - Inclusive access for all
    - Health and wellbeing benefits
    - Safe and engaging spaces for families
    - Opportunities to celebrate nature, heritage, and community
2. Explore growth in adventure and experience - based leisure in Parks & Open Spaces
3. Review demand for staycations and accommodation
4. Develop and implement plans for *"profitable park cafes and concessions"*
5. Assess the opportunities from the "Rise of outdoor fitness" as a business model
6. Consider opportunities across Eco-Conscious consumer spending
    - Low impact outdoor activities – foraging tours
7. Events & "Festivilisation" of Green Spaces – Launch a dedicated events programme
8. Develop Artificial Intelligence (AI) opportunities across parks & open spaces
    - Improves monetization, maintenance and user experience
9. Improve digital integration and booking platforms

3.12 The activities and services that have been developed by T3 and the financial information supplied by them and that of the wider work undertaken by Officer's can be seen in Section 5.

3.13 It should be recognised that the key activities and costings identified within the work were provided to form the basis of the identification of necessary budgets, the final activities and interventions may change, and flexibility will need to be available to enable an agile and commercial approach to be adopted, which can be responsive to changing needs and demands; provided that they continue to align with the overall principles and direction of travel of the plan.

3.14 This plan will allow the Council to set a clear vision to address the core challenge head on which is the cost of the parks and open spaces service to the Council as it is a non-statutory service. This is a discretionary service and in light of the reduction of funding from Government and a higher number of nationwide Council's with financial issues it is important that the Council take a flexible, transparent and pragmatic approach to reduce the cost and ensure that our parks and open spaces are protected for future generations.

3.15 The approach the Council wishes to undertake by implementing the Commercial Sustainability Plan is similar to the approach they took in ensuring that One Leisure moved from a financial deficit of circa £250,000 in 2022-2023 and towards a surplus of circa £600,000 in 2026-2027.

3.16 This happened through adopting a more commercial approach through a review of pricing, targeting increases in membership levels and swim school pupils, launching new membership options, reviewing our cost base and identifying opportunities on how we could adopt new business into the centres through our wider relationships with stakeholders. It is important to note that leisure was a non-statutory service and with patience, time, trust and a clear plan the Officer and staff teams were able to successfully transform the business around in 3 years.

3.17 To conclude on One Leisure and the transformation that the service has seen in recent years it is important that other lessons are learnt from that process which centre around ensuring there is a varied and diversified offer in programming, the ability to be agile and flexible in how we operate and what we offer visitors and ensuring there is balance across everything we do. These important items need to be integrated into the new plan for parks and open spaces and enshrined as the golden thread through how we operate over the coming years.

3.18 Whilst the success that we hope to see from the delivery of the new plan is commercial sustainability for the service it has to be a multi-faceted approach and a mix of new products and services and a forensic review on a continued basis of the costs that we expend. Whilst we need the commercial approach, we must endeavour to be sensitive in how we deliver the programme particularly where there are residents within the immediate area but not stopping the teams from attracting visitors from other areas to enjoy our parks and open spaces.

3.19 Further opportunities exist to support the commercial journey across parks and open spaces and examples of this are around the mechanism in which we use the car park revenues particularly at Hinchingbrooke Country Park following its capital investment. Alongside this new health funding can be investigated to review the opportunity to expand programming and draw more visitors to our sites and importantly use the spaces to become more physically active, spend more recreational time, be one with nature and the wider benefits that brings to residents and to spend time with their families.

3.20 To aid the roll out of the Commercial Sustainability Plan a comprehensive Communication and Engagement Plan will be developed to ensure that we can communicate clearly with our residents and visitors, but at the same time provide a transparent way for them to feedback to the Council and operational teams so that we can consistently improve the service we offer. In addition to this and as part of the same plan we would also ensure there were simplistic systems and procedures in place to facilitate a robust management system for complaints or noise resolution.

3.21 To support the facilitation and success of both the Commercial Sustainability Plan and the Communication and Engagement Plan the Leisure, Health & Environment team are currently recruiting for a dedicated Marketing & Communications Manager for the service who will be supported by a wider support team of marketing professionals. In addition, a revenue bid for marketing expenditure was submitted as part of the budgetary process for 2026-2027 to support both programmes.

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM (LGR)

4.1 As stated earlier within this report the creation and proposed delivery of the Commercial Sustainability Plan enables the Council to be innovative and dynamic in its aim to lower the cost of the service and to secure financial sustainability.

4.2 By facilitating the programme of investment outlined in Phase 1 it does not inextricably bind any future Council to the plan, but it does allow foundations to be set now and a future direction of travel to be formed allowing the existing Council and its visitors to benefit in the short term.

4.3 Moving on from this the new Council could seek to continue to enhance the investment in new activities and services based upon performance or it could reduce levels of service should it seek too, but it would hopefully have a solid foundation to work from and ultimately subject to the success of the plan the new Council would have a commercially sustainable business to inherit.

4.4 The wider benefits that this scheme will bring upon its delivery particularly with Local Government Reform in mind are as follows:

a) All of the projects can be delivered within 2 years prior to the full commencement of LGR
b) The delivery of these new products and services leaves a legacy for Huntingdonshire residents
c) It provides a great opportunity to enhance the visitor economy and links to wider local growth across the District
d) Based upon the mix of new activities we are proposing to launch it enables opportunities for new jobs, skills & training
e) The programme will deliver commercial sustainability (reduces the cost of the service) prior to LGR
f) The plan embraces workforce development and succession
g) Ultimately it leaves a lasting and positive impact for the new unitary authority

5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

5.1 The proposed capital investment plan developed and presented to Officer’s by T3 can we viewed in **Appendix 3**.

5.2 The capital investment plan is recommending a £2m investment over the next two years inclusive of 2026-2027 and 2027-2028. From the plan and based upon the activities identified for delivery and the improvement in revenue it would generate a betterment of £2.5m over a four year period.

5.3 However, as stated earlier within this report in Section 2.15 following the receipt of the Commercial Sustainability Plan from T3 Officer’s facilitated a final staff engagement session and workshopped what they felt were the best products and services to offer across the District with the aim of creating a commercially sustainable service. This can be seen in **Appendix 4.**

5.4 The total capital investment submitted within the 2026-2027 Council budget for Phase 1 is £1,170,000. This amount spans across 2026-2027 and 2027-2028.

5.5 Within this amount and as shown in **Appendix 4** Officers are putting forward an Aqua Park (£170,000) and High Ropes (£500,000) for delivery in 2026-2027 and for the wider financial benefit to be seen in the same period. The rest of the activities totalling £500,000 will be delivered in 2027-2028 and the commercial benefit will be seen in the same financial period.

5.6 The Head of Leisure, Health & Environment will submit a new capital bid for Phase 2 for £1m in the 2027-2028 budget. The activities outlined for delivery and their wider financial benefit can be seen in **Appendix 5**.

5.7 In totality and inclusive of Phase 1 and Phase 2 the capital investment is just over £2m. This can be seen in **Appendix 5.**

5.8 The table below illustrates the financial position of parks and open spaces over the next 5 years as per the budget put forward for 2026-2027. The table shows the direct income and expenditure of the service and the overall costs (deficit) per year as outlined in Section 2.8.

5.9 Under the title "Project Improvement" line in the table this shows the financial improvement in revenue (the difference between income and expenditure) and the direct impact implementing these new products and services will have on the cost of the service over the next five years.

Updated Budget Position (Following Commercial Strategy)					
	2026/27 Budget (Baseline)	**2027/28 New Budget (Baseline)**	**2028/29 New Budget (Baseline)**	**2029/30 New Budget (Baseline)**	**2030/31 New Budget (Baseline)**
Expenditure	1,472,674	1,529,491	1,571,575	1,609,630	1,641,869
Income	-624,149	-718,837	-774,663	-813,548	-848,548
Deficit	848,525	810,654	796,912	796,082	793,321
Project Improvement	-110,000	-469,104	-709,896	-759,390	-708,119
Updated Deficit	**738,525**	**341,550**	**87,016**	**36,692**	**13,202**

5.10 Following the inclusion of the project improvement figures it shows that the cost of the service is proposed to reduce from £848,525 to £738,525 in 2026-2027 following the implementation of the Aqua Park.

5.11 After the delivery of Phase 1 the deficit for the service will reduce from £738,525 in 2026-2027 to £341,550 in 2027-2028. Then subsequently following the proposed delivery of Phase 2 investment the deficit will reduce further from £341,550 (2027-2028) to £87,016 in 2028-2029.

5.12 At this stage, the figures demonstrated within the table above and in points 5.10 and 5.11 do not show all of the impact from the Hinchingbrooke Country Park capital project (Countryside Centre & extra car parking), the wider development or commercial impact of the proposed refurbishment of the existing café nor does it include the financial benefits of the Habitat Banking Programme approved by Cabinet and as outlined earlier within this report.

5.13 The Head of Leisure, Health & Environment has worked with the Head of Finance and wider finance colleagues to identify the revenue impact of the capital required, its inclusion within the 2026-2027 budget and on the repayment of the capital, its interest and the provision of the Minimum Revenue Payments (MRP).

5.14 The Commercial Sustainability Plan requires capital investment of £1.17m in Phase 1 (2026/27–2027/28) and an anticipated £1m Phase 2 capital bid in 2027/28, resulting in a total planned investment of just over £2m across the two phases. The financial modelling provided by T3, reviewed and refined by officers, demonstrates that this investment will generate substantial additional income and reduce the net operating cost of the Parks and Open Spaces service over the Medium-Term Financial Strategy period.

5.15 Phase 1 projects, including the Aqua Park and High Ropes, are expected to reduce the service deficit from £848,525 to £738,525 in 2026/27, with further reductions to £341,550 in 2027/28 as full-year benefits materialise. Following the implementation of Phase 2 improvements, the deficit is forecast to reduce significantly again to £87,016 in 2028/29, eventually reaching £13,202 by 2030/31, thereby moving the service close to full cost recovery and long-term financial sustainability.

5.16 The capital programme assumptions include provision for borrowing costs, interest, and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), with the impacts for the delivery of Phase 1 already incorporated into the 2026/27 budget through collaboration between the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment and Finance.

5.17 The projected income improvements do not yet include the future financial benefits arising from the Hinchingbrooke Country Park capital project or the Habitat Banking Programme, both of which are expected to further strengthen the financial position once operational. Given that Parks and Open Spaces is a discretionary service currently costing the Council over £848,000 per year, the proposed investment is essential to reducing ongoing subsidy pressures and supporting the Council’s wider financial sustainability objectives. The approach mirrors the successful commercial recovery of One Leisure, demonstrating the potential for a similar transformation within Parks and Open Spaces through targeted investment, operational flexibility and improved income generation.

5.18 It is important to note that whilst approval is being sought for the overarching recommendations and capital investment set out within this report wider delegation and flexibility is required whilst reviewing each business case to ensure the right service level assessment and return on investment is captured. This will depend on market changes, new products emerging on the market so therefore we must remain agile, but the overall envelope created is sufficient to allow financial flexibility and bring forward income generation.

6. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

6.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be included in this section prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

7. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

7.1 The table set out in **Appendix 6** outlines the high-level project risks, likelihood and mitigation across the following criteria which are closely associated in the development and proposed delivery of the new Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Sustainability Plan. These are:

a) Capital Investment
b) Health, Safety & Compliance
c) Commercial Performance
d) Local Government Reform (LGR)
e) Stakeholder Engagement
f) Programme & Project Management
g) Ecological Impact

7.2 Detailed Risk Management is embedded within both the Councils BAU activity, and project specific activity, and is considered to be able to be considered as part of established processes. The proposals do not present any unknown or unique risks that the Council is unable to manage or mitigate.

8. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 The table below outlines the timelines involved in delivering the stated capital investment projects within Phase 1 and Phase 2:

Phase	Timeline
Phase 1:	2026-2027
Phase 2:	2027/2028

8.2 As stated earlier within the report all Phase 2 commercial opportunities will be developed and will be submitted as one capital bid for approval via the 2027/2028 budget and MTFS process, or earlier if possible and supported by the Corporate Director (Finance and Resources) and Section 151 Officer.

9. LINK TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

9.1 The development and delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Sustainability Plan strongly supports our corporate objectives and priorities in the following ways:

Corporate Plan:

The Corporate Plan has three key priorities and these are:

1. Improving the quality of life for local people
2. Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
3. Delivering good quality, high value for money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations

a) Improving the quality of life for local people

   A Heritage Lottery Fund survey revealed that:

   a) 95% of visits to parks and open spaces are enjoyable, peaceful and relaxing
   b) 60% of visitors take more physical exercise because they use parks
   c) 80% say the park helps make their area more attractive and a better place to live

   The aim of launching the Commercial Sustainability Plan and its key activities is to provide visitors wider access, choice and opportunity to visit our green spaces supporting our corporate plan priority of improving residents quality of life for local people.

   Further evidence from the National Heritage Fund also stated that the contribution of parks and open spaces can reduce stress, fatigue, anxiety, and depression. Combats loneliness and encourages community cohesion.

b) Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations

   The creation and delivery of new products and services within the Commercial Sustainability Plan coupled with T3's wider recommendations showcase the opportunity across the district to improve services for residents and for visitors in providing them a wider array of activities to participate in thus supporting an increase in visitation, dwell time, cost per visit and to be physically active providing an environment fit for future generations.

c) Delivering good quality, high value for money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations

   The Commercial Sustainability Plan allows the Council and Officer's the opportunity to introduce new products and services and to ensure they are good quality, high value for money services with good control and compliance.

   In support of the Corporate Plan the Council if it chooses can **"Do"** this themselves by utilising their expertise and existing services to best serve Huntingdonshire or they could **"Enable"** these opportunities to improve our parks and open spaces working with and listening to local businesses and finally they could **"Influence"** by working with partner organisations and stakeholders to create a shared vision that benefits Huntingdonshire.

Place Strategy:

a) **Pride in Place:** Supports stronger identity and community connection by enhancing park quality, branding key sites, and hosting events that draw visitors. Community programmes, such as volunteering and adopt-a-park schemes, build local pride, increase usage and reduce maintenance pressures, while creating income opportunities through markets and pop-ups. Examples include themed or heritage-linked events in Riverside Park (Huntingdon), Priory Park (St Neots) or Hinchingbrooke Country Park (Huntingdon).

b) **Inclusive Economy:** Uses parks as drivers of local prosperity by creating green-skills employment pathways, apprenticeships and partnerships with colleges and defence employers. Small businesses benefit from concessions e.g. cafés, fitness providers and seasonal traders, while parks offer spaces for enterprise pilots and circular-economy initiatives

c) **Health Embedded:** Positions parks as essential health infrastructure, supporting social prescribing, active travel and outdoor fitness. Inclusive, accessible spaces improve wellbeing for all ages, while health-based activities e.g. yoga, bootcamps and wellbeing retreats can provide commercial opportunities in partnership with NHS, voluntary groups and armed forces welfare teams.

d) **Environmental Innovation:** Drives sustainability through biodiversity net gain, rewilding, carbon reduction and climate-resilient landscapes. Green innovation creates revenue streams via environmental education, eco-tourism, biodiversity credits and research partnerships. Circular-economy practices such as composting and timber reuse can further enhance commercial sustainability.

e) **Travel Transformed:** Improves access to parks through better walking, cycling and public transport links. EV charging and active travel hubs offer new income potential while supporting greener travel. Enhanced accessibility increases visitor flow, strengthening opportunities for events, guided activities and commercial services.

f) **Collaboration** sits at the heart of delivery working with communities, businesses, MOD partners, schools and environmental organisations to invest in and manage green assets. Embedding place based priorities in governance and contracting ensures parks contribute to district-wide goals for health, climate resilience and economic prosperity.

Economic Growth Strategy:

a) Aligned with the Tourism Growth Plan and the Economic Growth Strategy, the Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Sustainability Plan translates strategic ambitions into tangible, place-based outcomes: driving economic growth, boosting the visitor economy, encouraging enterprise, reducing public subsidy, and supporting sustainable place-making.

b) The Plan supports the Economic Growth Strategy by creating local enterprise opportunities, encouraging private and inward investment, and ensuring council-owned leisure assets operate sustainably. Through a phased capital investment programme, the Council can unlock the economic potential of its parks, reduce long-term subsidies, and contribute to broader objectives for place-making, employment, and district-wide economic development.

Tourism Growth Plan:

a) The Tourism Growth Plan identifies the District's blue and green spaces as key assets and central to its tourism identity. By introducing new events, activities, attractions, improved infrastructure, and revenue-generating experiences, the Council directly enhances the district's tourism offer and improves the overall visitor experience - two core objectives of the Tourism Growth Plan.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 A long-term lease of 99 years is in place between Cambridgeshire Country Council and Huntingdonshire District Council for Hinchingbrooke Country Park. Wider detail on this is outlined in Section 2.

10.2 Cabinet approved an "Extension of Leases" at Paxton Pit Nature Reserve on 16th September 2025. As part of this Officer's will utilise this agreement to support the principle of Officers engaging in efforts to acquire land and buildings in connection with the principle of exploring wider opportunities to not only develop existing sites across the Council's parks and open spaces but also new sites and spaces to support wildlife and conservation, health and wellbeing, physical activity and commercial sustainability opportunities.

10.3 All other sites proposed as the "5 key commercial sites" which are Riverside Park, St Neots, Riverside Park, Huntingdon and Priory Park, St Neots are managed by the Council and therefore the delivery of the Commercial Sustainability Plan across these sites will be in keeping with their surroundings and subject to the right and proper local resident and stakeholder engagement.

10.4 In the event that the Council chooses to review the operational delivery of some of its agreements around the new products or services there may be a requirement for the Council to enter into agreements with third party providers. However, this will be considered on a case by case basis and when needed relevant and independent legal advice will be sought and reviewed. Albeit Officer's will where possible utilise existing and in-house legal advice for business as usual activities.

11. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Healthy Open Spaces Strategy identifies play and access to parks and open spaces as a critical intervention for tackling social isolation, improving mental health, and promoting physical activity from an early age. Well-designed parks and open spaces can encourage active lifestyles, support emotional resilience, and provide opportunities for social interaction, which are essential for reducing loneliness and building stronger communities.

11.2 These outcomes align directly with the Corporate Plan priorities, particularly Priority 1: Improving health and wellbeing, and contribute to the Council's overarching ambition to keep people well and out of crisis. By implementing a new Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Sustainability Plan it will enable and influence a wider product and service offering for local residents to use our parks and open spaces, allowing more people to visit, spend more time at these spaces with their families which will support the wider ambition of creating a healthier community but also a commercially sustainable service.

11.3 The proposal and delivery of the new Commercial Sustainability Plan will be supported and enhanced by the approved " A Sustainable Framework for Play in Huntingdonshire" which will see a £750,000 capital investment to play park infrastructure across the district over the next 4 years aimed at improving our play offering for future generations and aiming to draw more residents into our parks and open spaces and to support the wider mental, social and health benefits this will create for local people and their children.

11.4 The Council has also recently approved the delivery of a Habitat Banking Programme across district wide sites not only to support the commercial sustainability agenda but importantly targeted to attract more local residents to our parks and open spaces allowing them to be more accessible so the wider health and wellbeing benefits of using these important assets can be fulfilled by the entire community that they serve.

11.5 This opportunity will also allow the Active Lifestyles and Sport Development teams a wider opportunity to utilise the parks and open spaces to develop and enhance their programming and provide residents a wider service offering opportunity to stay fit and healthy.

11.6 Overall, increased use of our parks and open spaces will benefit local residents and provide greater access to these spaces to help improve their quality of life, create a better Huntingdonshire for future generations and offer good quality value for money services.

12. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

12.1 The stakeholder engagement plan has been developed to support the proposed Commercial Sustainability Plan and the actions that stem from it. Please see below:

Stakeholder	Status
Staff	- Staff engagement sessions facilitated - Staff 1-2-1's with Head of Service (45) - Weekly staff drop-in sessions & email introduced
Friend's Group's	- Head of Service attendance at quarterly meetings - Setting expectations for commercial sustainability
Resident's	- Developing links & Head of Service + key management staff to attend resident group meetings from April 2026 onwards
Clubs/Hirer's	- Full review of clubs & hirers undertaken since February 2026 - Full understanding of who uses our spaces, fees & charges & what we can do
Businesses	- To work with Economic Development team to assess wider opportunities to enhance visitor economy through associated project delivery
Visitor's	- Stakeholder & Communications Plan to be developed from April 2026 to update on opportunities across parks & open spaces as projects move towards delivery - Parks & Open Spaces email exists for day-to-day contact from residents to feedback to operational teams

13. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Our parks and open spaces are currently managed by a Ranger service to support nature, conservation and biodiversity to a high standard.

13.2 At every point of the introduction of a new commercial activity a robust and external ecological impact assessment will be undertaken to ensure that a balanced approach to delivery is taken, relevant mitigations are put in place or that we do not proceed at all.

13.3 It can be noted by a number of the commercial activities that have been proposed as part of Phase 1 and 2 that these are nature based and that they are in-keeping with local management plans in place at sites.

13.4 To ensure a considered approach is undertaken with biodiversity and ecology across the sites that we wish to implement new activities we will consider and where possible adopt the following principles:

a) Integrate biodiversity into design – embedding ecological features into commercial projects
b) Implement clean, green practices – ensuring operators and partners adopt approaches such as renewable energy, waste reduction and eco-friendly materials
c) Balance development with ecological protection – looking at zoning commercial activity to safeguard habitats leaving most green space untouched whilst enhancing conservation
d) Re-Invest commercial revenue into bio-diversity – funding habitat restoration, rewilding, and education initiatives that directly benefit the parks ecosystems
e) Promoting eco-conscious partnerships – selecting food, beveridge and event partners who share sustainability values and support the parks environmental goals

13.5 In line with this new approach and as part of the programming across the parks and open spaces service we are currently exploring wider opportunities to test and introduce further educational and volunteering opportunities for children, young people and adults.

14. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

14.1 To create and launch a new Parks and Open Spaces Commercial Sustainability Plan

14.2 To utilise this plan to reduce the operational cost of £848,000 (2026-2027) to the service by March 2028.

14.3 To allow the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment to deliver the Phase 1 capital investment programme outlined within this report to support point 14.2.

14.4 To seek approval from Council that the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment can continue to progress and develop investment plans for the Phase 2 programme delivery and submit these for approval as part of the 2027/2028 budget process.

14.5 To use the new Commercial Sustainability Plan to support the wider Council corporate strategic priorities set out within the Corporate Plan and Place Strategies.

15. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 - T3 Commercial Opportunities Report
Appendix 2 - Benchmarking Review
Appendix 3 - T3 Capital Investment Plan
Appendix 4 - Phase 1 Capital Investment Plan
Appendix 5 - Phase 2 Capital Investment Plan
Appendix 6 - Risk & Mitigation Plan

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The HDC Healthy Open Spaces Strategy was created and published in 2020.

Paxton Pits Extension of Leases - Cabinet approved an "Extension of Leases" at Paxton Pit Nature Reserve on 16th September 2025.

A Sustainable Framework for Play in Huntingdonshire

Habitat Banking Programme

Heritage Lottery Fund **-** The National Lottery Heritage Fund: Home

CONTACT OFFICER

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Email: gregg.holland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1: T3 Commercial Opportunities Report – Separate Document

Appendix 2: Parks & Open Spaces Benchmarking

Benchmarking & Visitor Economy

UK
PEMBREY COUNTRY PARK, Wales

Size: 500 acres
Visitation: 520,000
Type: Country Park
Operator: LA with Private Operators
Approx Revenue pa: £ 2 . 8 Million
Income Streams: F&B, Ski Slope, Campsite Accommodation, Paid Activities, Venue Hire for functions & Weddings

Europe
VONDELPARK, Netherlands

Size: 120 acres
Visitation: 10 Million
Type: Public Park
Operator: LA with Partners
Approx Revenue pa: £ 2 - 5 Million
Income Streams: F&B, Cafes, Kiosk and Taproom, Parking, Paid for attractions, Sports & Leisure Hire, Events & Sponsorship, Weddings, Open Air Theatre

Global
SOUTHBANK PARKLANDS, BRISBANE

Size: 103 acres
Visitation: 14 Million
Type: Public Park, Riverfront
Operator: City Operator
Approx Revenue pa: £ 26.5– 37.1 Million
Income Streams: Multiple F&B, Retail Rental, Paid for attractions, Events, Venue Hire, Sponsorship & Concessions

Key Success Levers

- **CONCESSIONS F & B**
- **CONCESSIONS Retail**
- **EVENTS & PROGRAMMING**
- **SEASONAL EVENTS**
- **LEASE & TICKET MODELS**
- **PAID FOR ATTRACTIONS**
- **FOOTFALL & DEVELOPMENT**
- **PUBLIC- PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

Appendix 3: T3 Capital Investment Plan

		Capital Investment	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 10
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	High Low Ropes	500,000	130,660	135,316	138,833	142,403	146,024	164,903
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Weddings	150,000	68,860	73,085	74,802	76,547	78,321	87,636
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Outdoor Sand & Water Play	250,000	77,703	81,357	84,488	87,730	91,087	109,814
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	AquaPark	100,000	13,501	14,228	14,687	15,153	15,623	18,053
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Woodland Axe Throwing	50,000	33,109	34,315	35,097	35,893	36,703	40,967
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Cycling Hub	25,000	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-5,912	-6,263
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Boating Experiences	25,000	46,678	48,015	49,031	50,067	51,122	56,707
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	BeeKeeping & Allotment Play Sound Spots	100,000	28,768	29,869	30,641	31,426	32,222	36,379
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Fun Transport Hire	25,000	38,715	39,902	40,766	41,648	42,547	47,320
Paxton Pits	Sound Spots	25,000	16,906	17,202	17,602	18,009	18,423	20,605
Paxton Pits	GeoCashing	15,000	-1,476	-1,455	-1,444	-1,434	-1,424	-1,380
Priory Park	Jogging Hub	25,000	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-5,912	-6,263
Riverside Huntingdon	Al Fresco Foodie Experience	100,000	48,803	50,479	51,663	52,868	54,093	60,527
Riverside St Neots	Riverside Dining	500,000	66,593	96,158	98,892	101,663	104,470	119,024
Riverside St Neots	Boating, Padel Board & Boathouse	100,000	11,655	12,296	12,717	13,143	13,573	15,790
Riverside St Neots	Designer Deck Chair Hire	15,000	24,339	25,089	25,631	26,183	26,746	29,722
		2,005,000	**591,982**	**644,398**	**661,830**	**679,601**	**697,706**	**793,541**

Game Changer
Destination Products
Imagination Products
Quick Wins

Appendix 4: Phase 1 Capital Investment Plan

		Capital Investment	Yr 1 (26/27)	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 10	Delivered In	Commercial Input
Phase 1:										
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	AquaPark	170,000	110,000	113,300	116,699	120,200	123,806	143,525	26/27	26/27
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	High Low Ropes	500,000	0	130,660	135,316	138,833	142,403	161,026	26/27	26/27
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Weddings	150,000	0	68,860	73,085	74,802	76,547	85,713	27/28	27/28
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Woodland Axe Throwing	50,000	0	33,109	34,315	35,097	35,893	40,085	27/28	27/28
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Boating Experiences	25,000	0	46,678	48,015	49,031	50,067	55,548	27/28	27/28
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	BeeKeeping & Allotment Play Sound Spots	100,000	0	28,768	29,869	30,641	31,426	35,524	27/28	27/28
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Fun Transport Hire	25,000	0	38,715	39,902	40,766	41,648	46,327	27/28	27/28
Paxton Pits	Sound Spots	25,000	0	16,906	17,202	17,602	18,009	20,154	27/28	27/28
Priory Park	Jogging Hub	25,000	0	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-6,187	27/28	27/28
Riverside Huntingdon	Al Fresco Foodie Experience	100,000	0	0	48,803	50,479	51,663	57,891	27/28	28/29
		1,170,000	**110,000**	**470,580**	**537,477**	**551,663**	**565,613**	**639,605**		

Game Changer
Destination Products
Imagination Products
Quick Wins

Appendix 5: Phase 2 Proposed Capital Investment Plan

Phase 2:

Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Outdoor Sand & Water Play	250,000	0	0	77,703	81,357	84,488	101,911	27/28	28/29
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	Cycling Hub	25,000	0	0	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-6,115	27/28	28/29
Paxton Pits	GeoCashing	15,000	0	-1,476	-1,455	-1,444	-1,434	-1,387	27/28	27/28
Riverside St Neots	Riverside Dining	500,000	0	0	66,593	96,158	98,892	113,100	27/28	28/29
Riverside St Neots	Boating, Padel Board & Boathouse	100,000	0	0	11,655	12,296	12,717	14,891	27/28	28/29
Riverside St Neots	Designer Deck Chair Hire	15,000	0	0	24,339	25,089	25,631	28,498	27/28	28/29
		905,000	**0**	**-1,476**	**172,419**	**207,727**	**214,506**	**250,898**		
		2,075,000	**110,000**	**469,104**	**709,896**	**759,390**	**780,119**	**890,504**		
		Current Budget Position	848,525	810,654	796,912	796,082	793,321			
		Updated Budget Position	**738,525**	**341,550**	**87,016**	**36,692**	**13,202**			

Updated Budget Position (Following Commercial Strategy)

	2026/27 Budget (Baseline)	2027/28 New Budget (Baseline)	2028/29 New Budget (Baseline)	2029/30 New Budget (Baseline)	2030/31 New Budget (Baseline)
Expenditure	1,472,674	1,529,491	1,571,575	1,609,630	1,641,869
Income	-624,149	-718,837	-774,663	-813,548	-848,548
Deficit	848,525	810,654	796,912	796,082	793,321
Updated Deficit	**738,525**	**341,550**	**87,016**	**36,692**	**13,202**

Appendix 6: Risk & Mitigation Plan

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Capital Investment	Medium	High	- Industry experienced consultant used - Detailed planning executed - Staff engagement sessions facilitated - 2026-2027 MTFS capital bids submitted
Health, Safety & Compliance	Medium	High	- Industry recognised products bought forward - External H&S support in place subject to project delivery - Internal H&S and Risk Management to be followed with HDC colleagues - Independent accreditation submitted and sought where required
Commercial Performance	Medium	High	- Independent financial information delivered by consultants - Financial information to be reviewed and signed off by finance team - Each project to be assessed on own merits – risk-based approach
Local Government Reform (LGR)	High	Low	- Projects put forward can be delivered within 2 years - Project delivery & commercial approach provide positive outcomes for new unitary authority - All projects delivered on a case-by-case basis subject to financial viability & associated risks
Stakeholder Engagement	Medium	Medium	- Development of a stakeholder engagement plan with support from HDC Communication's Team - Facilitation and attendance at key stakeholder group meetings e.g. HCP Friend's Group - Legal review of stakeholder leases with changes by exception
Programme & Project Management	Medium	Medium	- Industry experienced consultant used + extension to services if required - HDC Project & Programme management teams - Leisure, Health & Environment experience & knowledge - Leisure, Health & Environment Programme Board – Transformation Board

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Ecological Impact	Medium	Medium	- Ecological Impact Assessments to be undertaken subject to service put forward for delivery - Adequately trained staff utilised to review technical information - External consultants used as required to support technical review and industry best practice - Stakeholder management plan to be implemented and reviewed

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Huntingdonshire

Commercial Opportunities

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Contents

Intro to T3

Our Mission

Specialising in the development, creation & design of commercially successful visitor experiences.

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To always bring a fresh perspective to the creation of memorable experiences so we pro-actively challenge, are true to our client's brand, connect positively with visitors and are commercially successful.

Established in 2014, T3 Creative Agency specialises in the strategic development, creative design, and commercialisation of successful guest experiences. We work across the entertainment, leisure, hospitality, and public sectors, helping clients unlock the full potential of their spaces.

Our Commercial Experience Department has become a trusted partner for public sector organisations, private landowners, and local authorities seeking to introduce or enhance commercial elements within their parks, green spaces, and outdoor attraction portfolios. With a strong track record across the UK, we have delivered commercial strategies and creative interventions for clients including Manchester City Council, Lancashire County Council, Warwickshire Council, South Derbyshire District Council, and Alliance Leisure (on the Bristol Parks initiative), as well as a number of privately managed parks, forests, heritage sites and attractions.

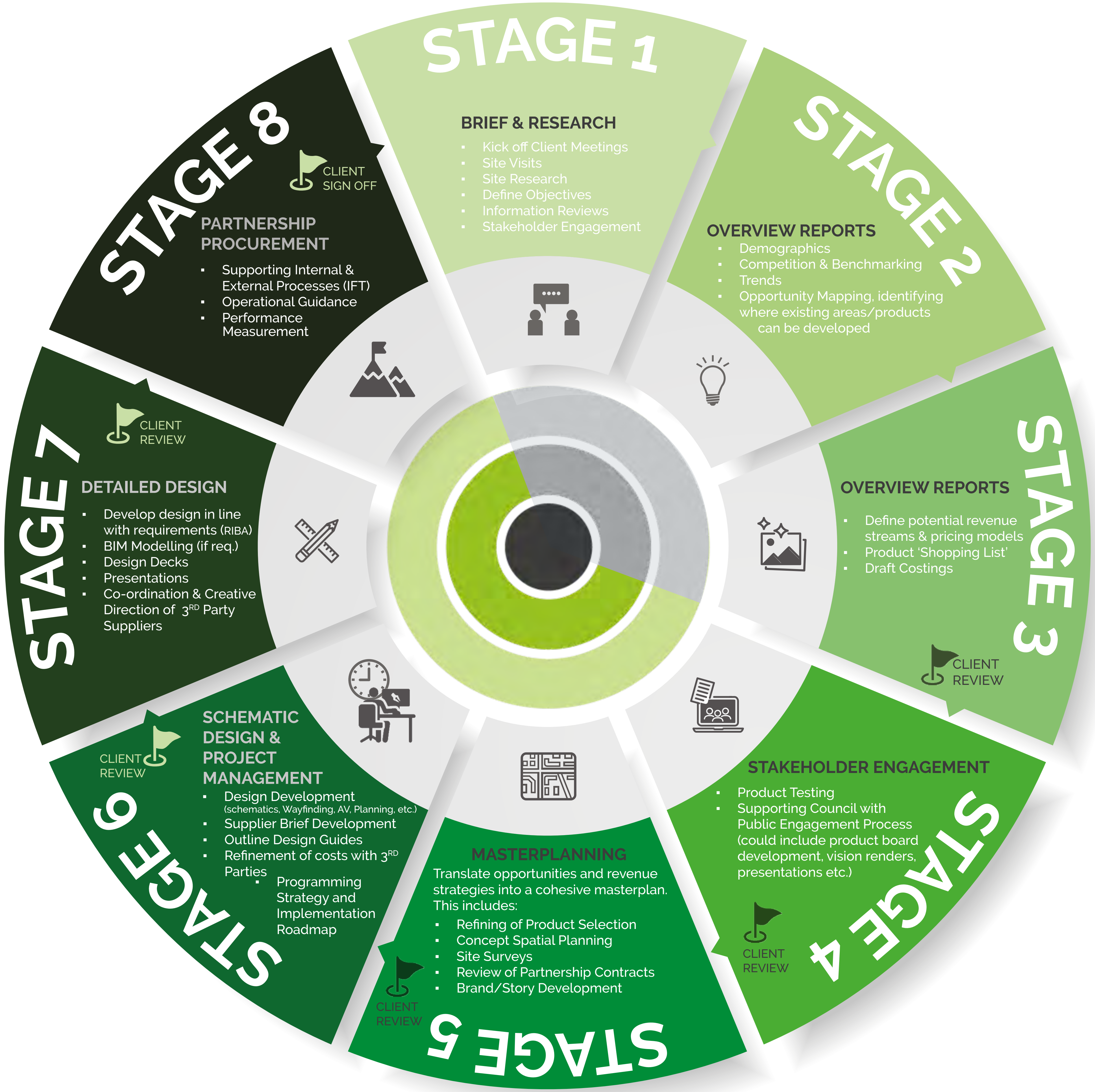
We approach every project with a deep sensitivity to place, people, and purpose—ensuring that any commercial development enhances public value whilst aligning with local priorities. Our work is rooted in creating engaging, sustainable experiences that balance commercial viability with community benefit....and fun!

1.

Intro, Approach & Summaries

1.

Process Overview



Stages 1-3 Complete

1.

What You Have Told Us

Brief

To create a fully costed investment plan with a creative overview of 'commercial opportunities' - for a total of 5 sites:

Hinchingbrooke Country Park
Paxton Pits
Riverside Park, St. Neots
Riverside Park, Huntington
Priory Park, St. Neots

The goal is to develop a fully costed investment plan, which will enable an additional income of **700,000** per annum into the service by 27/28, across Parks and Countryside portfolio through to 2030.

Plan to be delivered by **September 2025,** aimed at transforming a **£1.1m deficit into a break-even position.**

£450k in employment cost savings and re-association.
£650k through new commercial opportunities by FY27/28.
Ensure organisational and community buy-in, whilst maintaining service excellence.

The commercial investment plan must consider:
Ensure financial sustainability over a long-term period, by **reducing operating costs** and **increasing net contribution**, whilst providing a good quality, high value for money and service.

Continue to create beautiful green spaces for the benefit of wildlife, residents, communities, climate resilience, enhancing biodiversity across the parks portfolio; improving quality of life & creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations.

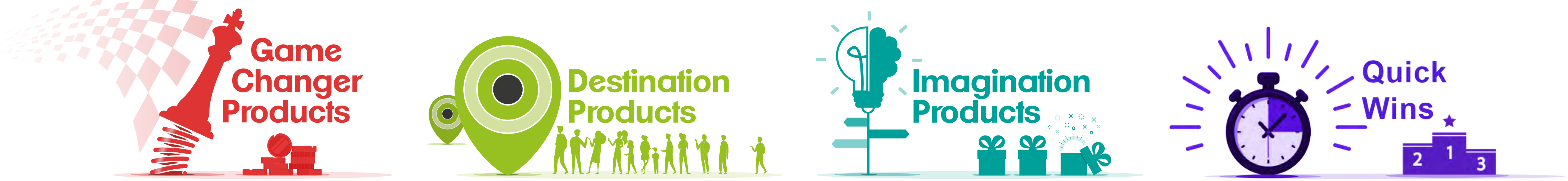
To enhance opportunities for the council to engage with a broader, diverse range of audiences.

Our Approach

T3 have been selected to help define a new commercial vision for HDCC parks.

- Our scope is to review and propose initial ideas for sustainable commercial development for Rosliston Forestry Centre.
- We have focused on traditionally the highest commercial gain products of F&B, Play, Events, and Accommodation, as well as smaller 'quick wins' and experiences that will excite and drive visits to the more commercial product.
- We have taken into account the sensitivity of environmental factors, however at this stage are showing options that may challenge these!
- We have considered desirability in terms of local demographics - new and existing. As well as taking into account the Huntingdonshire public space brand ("Pride of Place").
- We have extensive experience with working with IP's to generate higher interest and footfall, therefore we have included some IP branded ideas, as these can often be 'game changers'.
- We have categorised the product ideas in to **4 categories**, which are explained in the product section (see sections 3-5). This helps to plan, balance the portfolio and prioritise selection.

FINANCIAL APPROACH:
Figures are based on assumptions, exclude central and infrastructure costs, use a **6% interest rate over 10 years**, and remain subject to detailed design. Items must be used as examples and no responsibility or liability is taken for them.



1.

Executive Summary

This document outlines a range of commercial opportunities designed to generate new revenue streams and provide stakeholders with clear options for review. Our analysis focuses on the commercialisation potential of the five selected sites, presenting strategies that balance both short-term gains and long-term sustainability.

We believe that, by pursuing these opportunities, you will be well positioned to achieve your financial goals over the coming years. Based on our research and experience, the options identified not only create immediate benefits but also establish resilient and sustainable revenue streams for the future.

We also recognize the importance of community engagement as a critical next step in the process. Ensuring alignment with community needs will be key to the success of these initiatives.

To support decision-making, this report includes a 'Commercial Star Rating' framework. This highlights which sites offer the strongest potential for commercial development, alongside those that may require a softer approach, ensuring a well-rounded and strategic pathway forward.

1.

Pathway

As per your request please see in the following pages a pathway of potential investment. However;

Disclaimer: The following investment plan is indicative and assumes a prior stage of comprehensive masterplanning. This process should include cluster planning, consideration of brand and vision, economies of scale, and alignment with local demographics. Final investment decisions should be made only after this masterplanning stage is complete.

TOTAL SUGGESTED INVESTMENT LEVELS

As a guide the following figures show a total of suggested spend and return based on our 4 sections of investment

		Investment	Contribution Per Anum after									
No of Suggestions		Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
7	Game Changers	3,530,000	646,780	795,038	817,897	841,084	864,597	888,435	912,596	937,077	961,873	986,983
21	Destination Products	2,815,000	605,418	647,839	680,731	715,948	753,744	729,812	838,237	885,608	936,911	992,595
15	Imagination Products	760,000	130,712	136,126	140,657	144,935	149,275	153,675	158,136	162,657	167,238	171,877
6	Quick Wins	425,000	115,914	120,646	123,846	127,096	130,396	133,746	137,145	140,595	144,094	147,643

AVERAGE SUGGESTED INVESTMENTS

As a guide the following figures show the averages of spend and return based on our 4 sections of investment.

	AVERAGE - Investment	AVERAGE - Contribution Per Anum after									
	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Game Changers	504,286	92,397	113,577	116,842	120,155	123,514	126,919	130,371	133,868	137,410	140,998
Destination Products	134,048	28,829	30,849	32,416	34,093	35,893	34,753	39,916	42,172	44,615	47,266
Imagination Products	50,667	8,714	9,075	9,377	9,662	9,952	10,245	10,542	10,844	11,149	11,458
Quick Wins	70,833	19,319	20,108	20,641	21,183	21,733	22,291	22,858	23,432	24,016	24,607

1.

Pathway

As per your request please see in the following pages a pathway of potential investment. However;

Disclaimer: The following investment plan is indicative and assumes a prior stage of comprehensive masterplanning. This process should include cluster planning, consideration of brand and vision, economies of scale, and alignment with local demographics. Final investment decisions should be made only after this masterplanning stage is complete.

POTENTIAL PATHWAY

As stated in the above disclaimer below is a potential pathway of how we would spend the suggested investment of £2m spread over 2 years and the returns. All subject to masterplanning.

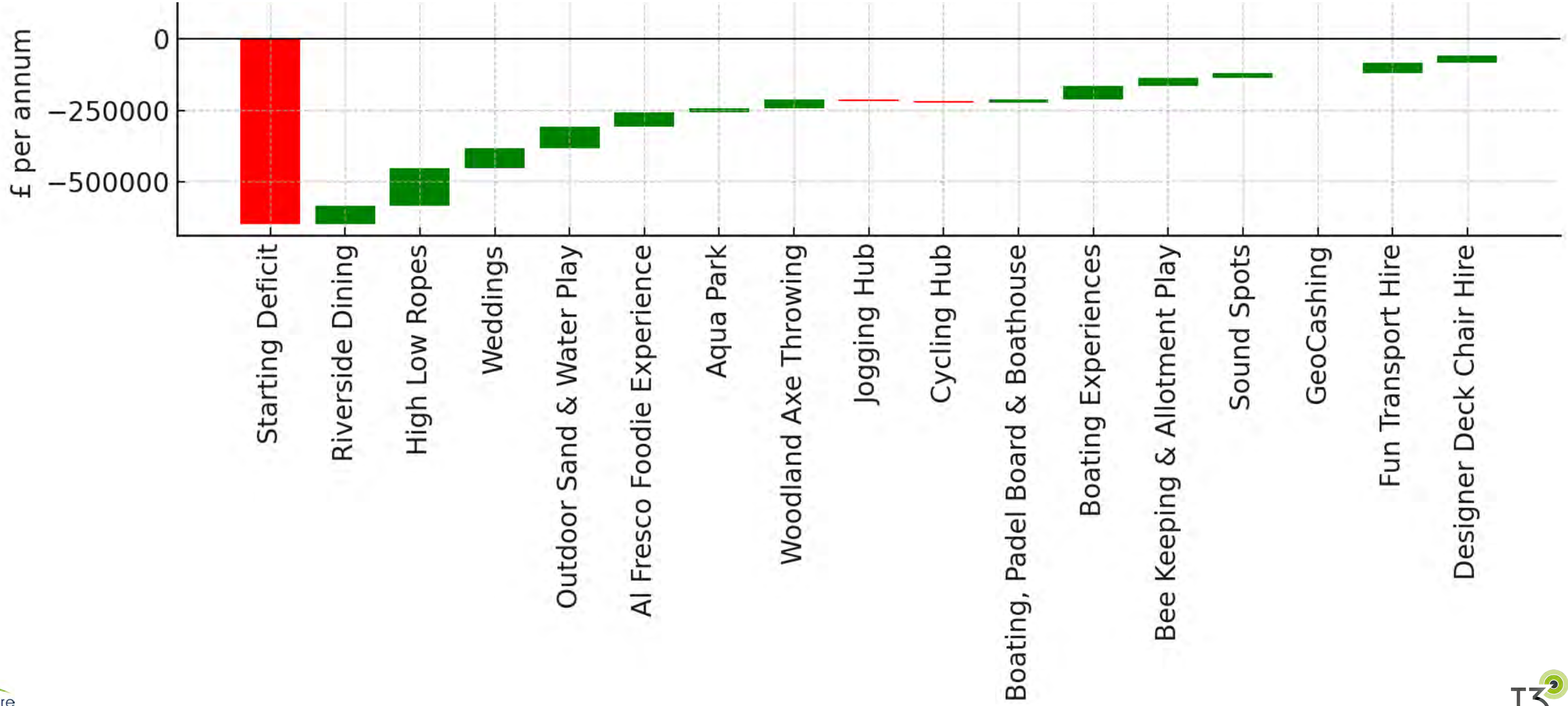
			T3 SUGGESTED - Investment	SUGGESTED - Contribution Per Anum after										
			Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	
Year														
1	Game Changer	Riverside Dining	500,000	66,593	96,158	98,892	101,663	104,470	107,312	110,189	113,100	116,046	119,024	Riverside St. Neots
2	Destination Products	High Low Ropes	500,000	130,660	135,316	138,833	142,403	146,024	149,697	153,422	157,198	161,026	164,903	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
1	Destination Products	Weddings	150,000	68,860	73,085	74,802	76,547	78,321	80,125	81,958	83,821	85,713	87,636	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
2	Destination Products	Outdoor Sand & Water Play	250,000	77,703	81,357	84,488	87,730	91,087	94,566	98,172	101,911	105,789	109,814	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
2	Destination Products	Al Fresco Foodie Experience	100,000	48,803	50,479	51,663	52,868	54,093	55,338	56,604	57,891	59,198	60,527	Riverside Huntingdon
1	Destination Products	Aqua Park	100,000	13,501	14,228	14,687	15,153	15,623	16,099	16,581	17,067	17,558	18,053	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
2	Destination Products	Woodland Axe Throwing	50,000	33,109	34,315	35,097	35,893	36,703	37,526	38,365	39,217	40,085	40,967	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
2	Destination Products	Jogging Hub	25,000	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-5,912	-5,977	-6,045	-6,115	-6,187	-6,263	Priory Park
2	Destination Products	Cycling Hub	25,000	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-5,912	-5,977	-6,045	-6,115	-6,187	-6,263	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
2	Destination Products	Boating, Padel Board & Boathouse	100,000	11,655	12,296	12,717	13,143	13,573	14,008	14,448	14,891	15,338	15,790	Riverside St. Neots
2	Destination Products	Boating Experiences	25,000	46,678	48,015	49,031	50,067	51,122	52,198	53,294	54,410	55,548	56,707	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
1	Imagination Products	Bee Keeping & Allotment Play	100,000	28,768	29,869	30,641	31,426	32,222	33,030	33,850	34,681	35,524	36,379	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
2	Imagination Products	Sound Spots	25,000	16,906	17,202	17,602	18,009	18,423	18,845	19,274	19,710	20,154	20,605	Paxton Pitts
2	Imagination Products	GeoCashing	15,000	-1,476	-1,455	-1,444	-1,434	-1,424	-1,414	-1,404	-1,396	-1,387	-1,380	Paxton Pitts
2	Quick Wins	Fun Transport Hire	25,000	38,715	39,902	40,766	41,648	42,547	43,464	44,400	45,354	46,327	47,320	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
1	Quick Wins	Designer Deck Chair Hire	15,000	24,339	25,089	25,631	26,183	26,746	27,319	27,903	28,498	29,104	29,722	Riverside St. Neots
			2,005,000	484,730	533,790	548,635	563,768	579,193	594,916	610,943	627,277	643,926	660,895	

1.

Pathway

DEFICIT REDUCTION WATERFALL

(Year 1 Contribution)



1.

Overall Commercial Strategy

ENHANCE VISITOR EXPERIENCE BY...

- **Creating quality food, play and events offerings,** that meet modern demographic expectations and prolong dwell time.
- **Involve experienced operators** to maximise potential.
- **Create product that has high marketing potential** (to generate interest and higher usage of space.)
- **Clustered product** to facilitate easier use of multiple products and maximize staffing presence.
- **Appeal to wide variety of users**, so family groups for example with different preferences can be entertained at one destination.
- **Building it's brand and recognition**, by strengthening and introducing suitable offerings at each, in line with the parks individual characteristics, therefore meeting and excelling people's expectations of their visit.

GENERATE SUSTAINABLE INCOME

Sustainable revenue will be generated by strategically commercialising the selected sites, balancing short-term income opportunities with long-term initiatives that create resilient and diversified revenue streams.

ALIGN WITH HDCC'S CORPORATE PLAN

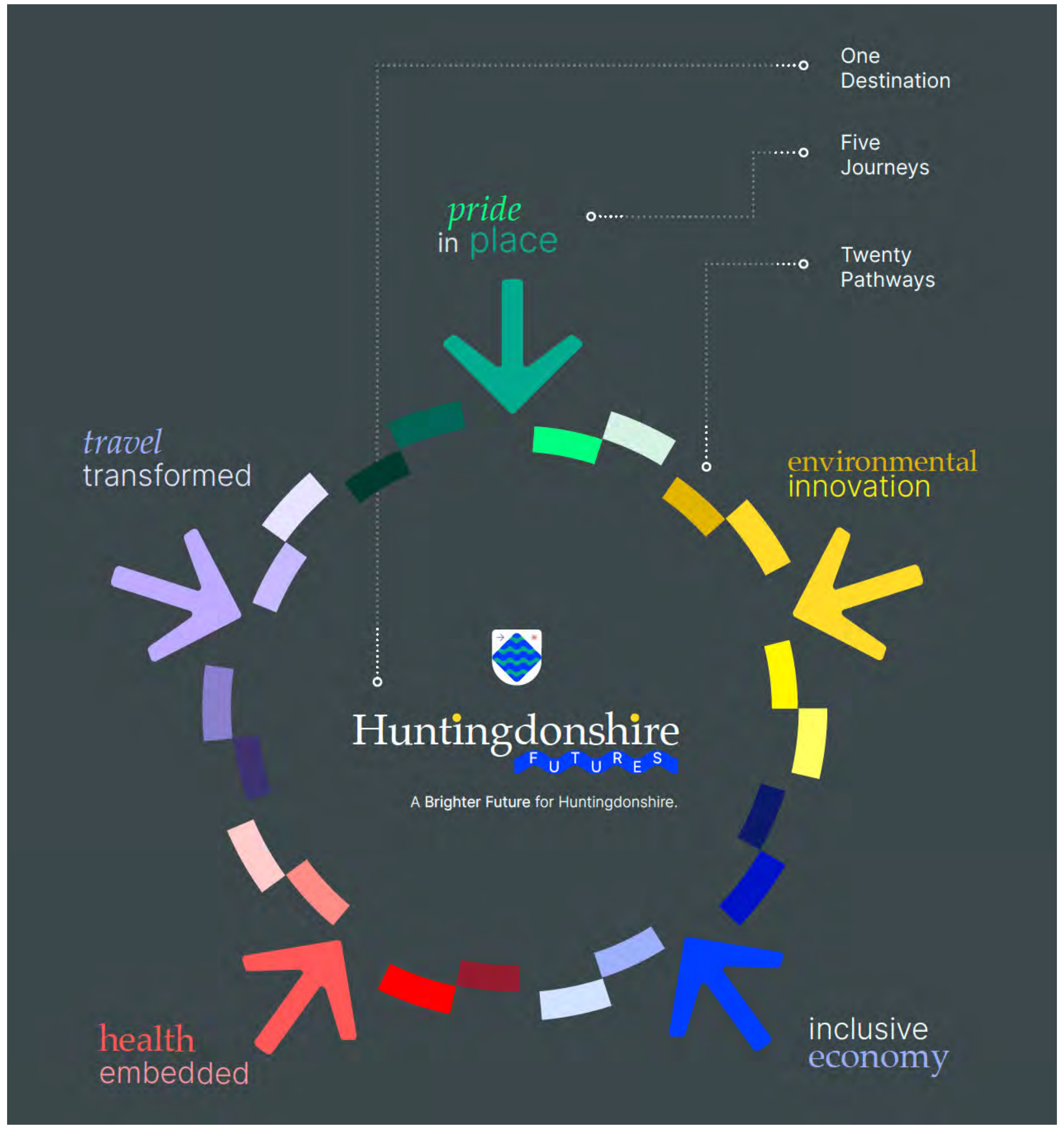
This presentation aligns with your corporate plan by providing commercially viable options that support long-term financial sustainability, strengthen community engagement, and advance your strategic growth objectives.

1.

A Shared Vision for Huntingdonshire Parks

In line with **A Shared Vision for Huntingdonshire Parks**, this strategy demonstrates how carefully targeted, high-quality offerings can monetise a small proportion of green space while respecting and harmonising with the parks and lakes.

By commercialising just 1% of the assets, we can generate sustainable revenue to safeguard the other 99%, ensuring these spaces remain gardens, gathering places, wellness zones, and wildlife sanctuaries rather than being forced into large-scale development.



We envision parks that offer:

- Inclusive access for all
- Health and wellbeing benefits
- Safe and engaging spaces for families
- Opportunities to celebrate nature, heritage, and community

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2.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

- Outdoor Leisure Trends 2025
- Brand Comparison Best In Class

2.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

EXAMPLE OF WHERE IT'S GONE RIGHT (COUNCIL-OWNED, UK):

Coombe Abbey, Coventry

Catering Cafés & Kiosks (record **over £1million revenue!**) and new Paid for Play.

Note - Free entry but charged car park.

There are few that have excellent 'all round - year round' commercial offerings!

UK councils have struggled to achieve what global parks (for example US, Canada, Singapore, & Australia) have, this isn't all about the weather!

Underfunding, inexperience of councils to own-and-operate and the public assumption 'it should be free' all create challenges.

As highlighted in your report, challenging and changing this will require engagement, bravery and imagination!

2.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Commercial Market Trends In Outdoor Leisure

In the UK, as in Europe, we have seen a notable growth in the following:

1. Growth in Adventure and Experience-Based Leisure

Experiential leisure is booming: think outdoor escape rooms, axe-throwing, forest high-ropes, and open-air adventure golf. Many operators are expanding from indoor-only concepts into **hybrid indoor-outdoor formats.**

Examples: Go Ape continues to expand; **Puttshack** are exploring outdoor activations.

Opportunity: Branded outdoor venues, pop-up activity zones, or licensing existing **I.P.s** for outdoor settings.

2. High Demand for Staycations and Accommodation

UK holiday park operators (e.g. **Parkdean Resorts, Haven, Center Parcs**) are investing in upgraded facilities, often **incorporating outdoor gyms, nature trails, splash parks, and adventure play.**

Parkdean Resorts is reportedly raising £250 million to expand its sites to meet staycation demand.

Commercial angle: Strong ROI in offering high-frequency outdoor experiences—like paddle boarding rentals, mobile catering, or guided wildlife walks.

3. Profitable Park Cafés and Concessions

Public parks with high footfall (e.g.**Coombe Abbey, Hyde Park**) are generating catering turnovers exceeding £500,000 per site, with private operators and councils viewing cafés and kiosks as critical revenue streams.

Flexible formats like mobile coffee carts, seasonal ice cream stands, and themed pop-up cafés are outperforming static formats in smaller parks.

Trend: Turn-key food and drink concessions in high footfall green spaces are in demand.

2.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Commercial Market Trends In Outdoor Leisure Continued

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4. Rise of Outdoor Fitness as a Business Model

Outdoor boot camps (e.g. **British Military Fitness/Be Military Fit**), running clubs, and personal trainer-led fitness in parks are commercially thriving. Councils are increasingly open to licensed commercial use of public space for fitness, with some charging per hour for trainers.

Market niche: Offering scalable outdoor fitness franchises, app-based instructor platforms, or branded group wellness events.

5. Eco-Conscious Consumer Spending

Outdoor brands and venues with sustainability credentials (compost toilets, solar-powered equipment, or zero-waste cafés) command loyalty and **higher spend-per-head**.

Businesses like **Canopy & Stars and Kip Hideaways** leverage nature-focused, eco-luxury experiences for urban consumers.

Opportunity: Eco-education trails, solar-powered cafés, green glamping add-ons, or low-impact outdoor activities like foraging tours.

6. Events & 'Festivalisation' of Green Spaces

Themed outdoor events (e.g. light trails, open-air cinema, wellness festivals, food & drink festivals) are turning parks into **multi-revenue seasonal hubs**.

Councils are increasingly licensing out event space for high-return weekend activations.

Commercial growth: Pop-up experiences (e.g. yoga brunches, wild swimming meets, artisan food fests) generate **3–5× more revenue per sqm** than passive green use.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Commercial Market Trends In Outdoor Leisure Continued

7. Artificial Intelligence in Terms of Park Commercial Use

A.I. is pushing the boundaries of what it means to experience public spaces. It is transforming how parks are planned, maintained and monetized.

1. Planning & Development

- **Predictive Design:** AI models can analyze demographic, climate, and mobility data to forecast how different user groups would use the park. This helps guide commercial zoning within the park (cafés, kiosks, bike rentals, pop-up retail).
- **Investment Justification:** AI-driven impact assessments can help councils & private investors justify funding.
- **Design Optimization:** Generative AI tools can help to masterplan - balancing commercial functions with open green space.

2. Operations & Maintenance

- **Smart Infrastructure:** AI can control lighting, irrigation, and waste management, reducing operational costs and allowing reallocation of funds toward commercial activities.
- **Safety & Security:** Computer vision can monitor crowd density, prevent vandalism, & detect emergencies. This increases visitor confidence and thus commercial viability (vendors, events, rentals).
- **Predictive Maintenance**: Sensors + AI predict wear-and-tear, preventing closures that disrupt revenue streams.

3. Visitor Experience & Commercial Use

- **Personalized Engagement:** AI-powered apps can suggest trails, events, or F&B spots inside the park, driving traffic toward concessions and ticketed experiences.
- **Dynamic Pricing:** optimize rental pricing (bikes, sports courts, event spaces) based on demand, weather, and time of day.
- **Augmented Experiences:** AI-enabled AR tours, interactive art installations, or "smart playgrounds" can attract new audiences, increase dwell time, boosting commercial revenues.
- **Targeted Retail & Food Offerings:** AI analyzing visitor flows & preferences can guide placement & product selection.

4. Revenue & Partnerships

- **Data Monetization**: Aggregated, anonymized visitor data could be sold.
- **Corporate Partnerships:** Tech firms may sponsor AI-driven "smart zones" or digital experiences.
- **Event Optimization:** forecast attendance and optimize logistics for concerts, food festivals, or fitness events.

5. Risks & Public Concerns

- Commercial Overreach, Surveillance & Privacy, Equity Issues.

Looking ahead, AI promises further innovations that personalize fitness, enhance nature experiences, and deepen social connections, thus reshaping parks into dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive community hubs that respond to diverse needs.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Commercial Market Trends In Outdoor Leisure continued

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8. Digital Integration & Booking Platforms

Consumers now expect frictionless booking & payment for everything, from paddle boards to pitch-and-putt to guided forest hikes.

Companies offering integrated digital solutions (like booking apps for adventure parks) are advancing into the public sector.
Trend: White-label platforms for councils to manage bookings, memberships, events, F&B Payment and loyalty schemes.

SUMMARY

1. Adventure & Experiential	High-margin, replicable activity concepts.
2. Staycations & Holiday Parks	Investment in multi-use outdoor infrastructure.
3. Park Cafés & Concessions	Growing turnover, low overhead, strong council demand.
4. Outdoor Fitness	Franchise/licensed instructor models flourishing.
5. Eco/outdoor Lifestyle	Premium-priced sustainable options with strong branding appeal.
6. Events & Pop-ups	Park-based events creating seasonal high-yield opportunities.
7. A.I.	Biggest opportunities are in smart infrastructure cost savings, visitor personalization, and dynamic monetization of park assets.
8. Digital Integration	Seamless booking & digital payments driving user spend.

2.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Best-in-class Examples Of Public Parks - UK

As a proof of trend, we have selected a few public parks that have been providing commercial products successfully, All of which have become a destination in their own right.

1. ROUNDHAY PARK LEEDS, ENGLAND

Size: 700 acres
Annual Visitor: 1 million
Type: Public Park
Operator/ Structure: Local Authority with civic enterprise projects
Approx. Annual Revenue: £400,000 from licensed activity and £220,000 from sponsorship.
Income Streams: Parking, F&B, Paid for attractions, Sports & Leisure hire, Events and Sponsorship.

2. HEATON PARK, ENGLAND

Size: 600 acres
Annual Visitor: 2-3 million
Type: Public Park
Operator/ Structure: Local Authority with Private Operators
Approx. Annual Revenue: £462,000 +
Income Streams: Weddings. Parking, Events, Paid Attractions (Tramway, Boating Lake, Golf, Animal Centre, Riding.) Concessions,cafes & Lakeside Dining Domes!

3. PEMBREY COUNTRY PARK, WALES

Size: 550 acres
Annual Visitor: 520,000 (2018)
Type: Country Park (woodland & shoreline)
Operator/ Structure: Local Authority with Private Operators (campsite, adventure sports, events etc.)
Approx. Annual Revenue: £2.8million
Income Streams: F&B, Ski slope, Campsite Accomodation. Paid Activities. Venue Hire for Functions and Weddings (with Catering and Campsite Packages.)

4. THE HELIX (THE KELPIES) SCOTLAND

Size: 865 acres
Annual Visitor: Over 1 million
Type: Pulic Sculpture & Adventure Park
Operator/ Structure: Local Authority and Scottish Canals
Approx. Annual Revenue: £1.5 million
Income Streams: Visitor Centre (cafe, gift shop, exhibitions). Tours. Parking fees.Events & Activities (Bungee Jumps, Ziplines, Luminarium.) Lagoon-based Activities. Weddings (with Revenue from Venue Hire and Photography Permits.)

Note: Precise revenue and visitor numbers may not be available so these are to be considered estimates only.

2.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Best-in-class Examples Of **Public Parks - Europe**

As a proof of trend, we have selected a few public parks that have been providing commercial products successfully, All of which have become a destination in their own right.

5. VONDELPARK, NETHERLANDS

Size: 120 acres
Annual Visitor: 10 million
Type: Public Park
Operator/ Structure: Local Authority with Private Partnerships.
Approx. Annual Revenue: £2-5 million
Income Streams: Parking, F&B (including Cafes, Restaurants and Taproom), Paid-for Attractions, Sports & Leisure hire, Events and Sponsorship. Weddings - Revenue is from Venue Rental. Open Air Theatre. Sponsorships.

6. ENGLISHER GARTEN, GERMANY

Size: 900 acres **(but commercial model is concentrated in midsize concession zones or clusters.)**
Annual Visitor: 2-3 million
Type: Public Park
Operator/ Structure: State of Bavaria
Approx. Annual Revenue: £462,000 +
Income Streams: Beer Gardens and Restaurants - Lease Revenues from Multiple High-turnover F&B. Event Permits.

7. PARC DE LA VILLETTE, FRANCE

Size: 135 acres
Annual Visitor: 10-12 million
Type: Public Park and Institutions
Operator/ Structure: Institution
Approx. Annual Revenue: £8.6 million
Income Streams: Venue Hire (Concert Halls and Open Spaces), Ticketed Cultural Programming (Festivals and Exhibitions). Concessions and Catering Partnerships. Weddings - revenue is from venue rental.

They receive substantial public subsidies.

8. TEMPELHOFER FELD GERMANY

Size: 950 acres (most is an open field but the commercial offering is concentrated in a small number of hubs.)
Annual Visitor: 2 million
Type: Public Park
Operator/ Structure: Government, via State-owned Companies.
Approx. Annual Revenue: £2.6 million
Income Streams: F&B. Food Vendors pay Concession Fees and/or Rental Contracts. **Focuses on street food culture, rotating pop-ups, and craft beer-style offers rather than trad kiosks.** Events & Festivals.

Note: Precise revenue and visitor numbers may not be available so these are to be considered estimates only.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Best-in-class Examples Of Public Parks - Global

As a proof of trend, we have selected a few public parks that have been providing commercial products successfully, All of which have become a destination in their own right.

9. BRYANT PARK, NYC, USA

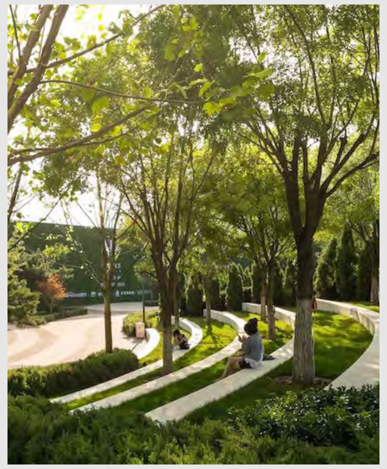
Size: 9.6-acre, Midtown Manhattan
Annual Visitor: 12 million
Type: Public Park
Operator/ Structure: Bryant Park Corporation, no direct public funding relying on concessions, sponsorships & events.
Approx. Annual Revenue: £21.75 million
Income Streams: Seasonal community events, markets, fitness and F&B, offers free reading room which attracts consistent footfall & drives concession spending.

10. DAXING NEW TOWN GREEN HUB & PARK, CHINA

Size: 800 meters long
Annual Visitor: Unknown but popular!
Type: Urban Park with Innovative Design
Operator/ Structure: Local Authorities
Approx. Annual Revenue: Unknown
Income Streams: Retail and Dining. Events (Ticket Sales and Sponsorship.)

Free Playgrounds, Sports Facilities and Rest & Wellbeing Areas.

Unlike most parks, Daxing Park seamlessly integrates with the surrounding buildings. The parking, stations, restaurants, homes, and commercial spaces all plug directly into the fabric of the park. In this context the design of the park does not call for the broadly planted zones or grand spaces of the larger world parks. **Rather it calls for a scattering of outdoor rooms, useable park spaces that fill this territory between the architecture.**



11. SOUTH BANK PARKLANDS, BRISBANE, AU

Size: 103 acres
Annual Visitor: 14 million
Type: Public Parklands on Riverfront
Operator/ Structure: City Authority & Private Ops
Approx. Annual Revenue: £26.5-37.1 million.
Income Streams: Multiple F&B, Retail Rent. Paid-for attractions (Wheel). Events & Venue Hire, Sponsorships & Concessions.

Note: Precise revenue and visitor numbers may not be available so these are to be considered estimates only.

2.

Benchmarking & Commercial Insights

Key Commercial Success Levers Across Benchmarks

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- **Concessions - Food and Beverage** - High Quality F&B attracts high volumes and long dwell times, as well as curated high-quality food and beverage offerings (e.g. Shake Shack, local cafés, market stalls)
- **Concessions - Retail** - Markets and Branded Opportunities
- **Events and Programming** - Destination programming significantly amplify high footfall and concession spending revenue streams
- **Seasonal events** (outdoor cinema, festivals, markets) drive engagement, support concession sales, and justify premium sponsorships.
- **Lease & ticket models** - Either entry based (Paid for play) or concession / event-focused.
- **In-house commercial schemes** - Paid for attractions at parks e.g Leeds Urban Bike Park and Tropical World Zoo & Cafe
- **Footfall & Surrounding Development** - Often surrounded by dense urban cores—support commercial cafés and concessions
- **Public–private partnerships** or dedicated non-profits enable flexible, commercially driven operations.

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2. Accessibility

Accessibility is central to ensuring that Huntingdonshire's parks are welcoming, inclusive spaces for all residents and visitors. Beyond being a legal and moral responsibility, improving access also carries significant social and economic value.

By actively designing experiences that meet the needs of visitors with disabilities or additional needs, Huntingdonshire can broaden its audience, enhance visitor satisfaction, and generate measurable economic and community benefit.

Why Accessibility Matters:

- **Population need:**
  Around 1 in 5 people in the UK have a disability. In Huntingdonshire, this represents tens of thousands of residents, plus visitors from the wider Cambridge, Peterborough, and Bedfordshire catchments.

- **Social value:**
  Accessible parks reduce isolation, promote wellbeing, and create shared community spaces where all residents, children, older adults, carers, and those with SEND can participate.

The "Purple Pound" is estimated at over £14 billion annually in the UK leisure and tourism sector alone.

- **Economic opportunity:**
  Capturing even a small share of the Purple Pound through improved accessibility could significantly increase revenue for events, and park-based businesses.

2.
Accessibility

Practical Opportunities for Huntingdonshire's Parks

Accessibility Guides

- Provide clear, easy-to-find online and on-site guides outlining paths, gradients, facilities, toilets, and parking.
- Use images, icons, and plain language so visitors know what to expect before arrival.

SEND-friendly Sessions and Events

- Introduce quiet hours, smaller group activities, or dedicated sessions for children and families with SEND.
- Train staff and volunteers in SEND awareness and inclusive engagement.

Sensory Trails and Experiences

- Develop trails using tactile markers, sound features, and planting schemes with varied textures and scents.
- These not only benefit neurodiverse visitors, but also enhance the experience for families with young children and older adults.

Infrastructure Improvements

- Continue investment in step-free access, wide paths, accessible play equipment, and Changing Places toilets.
- Ensure signage is high-contrast and easy to read.

Special Education

Note: Where products are particulary SEND-friendly,

we have identified them in this report using this symbol.

Conclusion

By embedding accessibility into both the physical environment and the visitor journey, Huntingdonshire's parks can position themselves as inclusive, future-ready destinations. This strengthens community wellbeing, attracts new visitors, and unlocks a meaningful share of the Purple Pound—benefiting residents, businesses, and the district as a whole.

Infrastructure Enhancements

Key Opportunities Include:

- **Relocation and expansion of car parks** to reduce pedestrian–vehicle conflict, improve safety, and create a more welcoming arrival experience.
- **Development of cycling infrastructure** including dedicated cycle routes, secure bike parking, bike hire services, and e-bike charging stations to encourage sustainable travel, as well as commercial opportunities.
- **Enhanced wayfinding and park signage** with inclusive design principles, ensuring easier navigation for all visitors, including those with accessibility needs.
- **Improved waste management** facilities with well-placed bins, recycling points, and clear messaging to promote responsible disposal and support a cleaner, greener park environment, therefore encouraging spend and partnerships.
- **Accessible pathways and entry points** to ensure that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy the parks, lakes, and amenities without barriers.
- **Upgraded visitor amenities** such as rest areas, seating, water refill stations, and family-friendly facilities to encourage longer stays and repeat visits.

2. Promoting Health & Wellbeing

Key opportunities include:

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- **Expand walking and cycling routes** to create safe, scenic, and accessible pathways that encourage everyday activity for all ages.
- **Introduce outdoor fitness zones** equipped with inclusive exercise stations to support both individual and group training.
- **Create flexible spaces for community wellness events** such as Parkrun, yoga sessions, mindfulness workshops, and fitness bootcamps.
- **Develop dedicated dog play and agility areas** to promote active lifestyles for owners and pets while enhancing responsible dog ownership.
- **Incorporate quiet reflection areas and wellness gardens** to support mental health, relaxation, and stress reduction.
- **Provide accessible seating, hydration points, and shaded rest areas** to make wellbeing activities inclusive and enjoyable for all visitors.

Strong social connections, regular exercise, sufficient sleep, & practicing gratitude are all scientifically proven to boost well-being & happiness.

People who use the natural environment for physical activity at least once per week have about half the risk of poor mental health compared with those who do not do so; and each extra weekly use of the natural environment for physical activity reduces the risk of poor mental health by a further 6%

Family-Friendly Play and Recreation

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Re-imagine parks with centralised family zones that combine play, leisure and revenue opportunities.

- **Destination play areas** with facilities for children aged 2–12, offering inclusive and engaging experiences.
- **Central hubs** with eco-toilets, café access, and family seating areas to encourage longer dwell time.
- **Adventure zones** such as treetop trails, mini climbing walls, or balance bike tracks to appeal to a wider age range.
- **Commercial models to support sustainability:**
  - **Combi-tickets** (e.g., play + café bundle, play + adventure trail).
  - **Family stamp/loyalty cards** to encourage repeat visits.
  - **Season passes or memberships** for unlimited play access.
  - **Pay-to-play premium zones** (e.g., treetop trails, hireable adventure equipment).
  - **Birthday party and group booking packages** linked to play areas and cafés.
  - **Partnership pop-ups** (ice cream stalls, healthy snack vendors, toy hire) that complement family use.

2.

Expanding Food & Beverage Opportunities

- **Leverage commercial partnerships with established F&B operators** to enhance the quality, variety, and consistency of food services across all parks.
- **Benefit from larger supply chain networks** – ensuring reliability, cost efficiencies, and access to sustainable/ethical sourcing.
- **Stronger staffing solutions** through professional operators who can recruit, train, and manage teams more effectively than smaller independent vendors.
- **Deliver higher service standards and customer experience** by aligning with trusted brands known for consistency and quality.
- **Maximise commercial leverage** by negotiating a single, larger-scale contract across all five parks, creating stronger financial returns and reduced procurement complexity.
- **Unlock brand partnerships and co-marketing opportunities** that drive footfall, loyalty, and repeat visits to the parks.
- **Ensure long-term sustainability** with partners capable of investing in infrastructure, innovation, and seasonal programming.

2.

Activating Parks with Events

Employing a qualified Events Manager across all sites ensures professional oversight and maximises commercial potential by coordinating a diverse calendar of events, securing high-quality bookings, managing compliance and safety requirements, building community engagement, and creating consistent visitor experiences.

Centralised management allows for economies of scale, stronger supplier and promoter relationships, and the ability to package events across multiple parks, ultimately driving higher revenues, stronger brand recognition, and long-term sustainability.

1. SEASONAL FESTIVALS & FAIRS

Attract high footfall and can be ticket led or generate revenue via F&B or Sponsorship.

- Christmas Markets and Fairs
- Winter Light Trails
- Flower Festivals (e.g.. Tulley's Farm Tulip Festival)
- Makers Fairs

2. MUSIC & LIVE PERFORMANCE

Parks are increasingly being used as open- air venues for festivals, concerts and performances. High ticket value, merchandise, fees and F&B.

- British Summer Time (London)
- Jazz in the Park (Global)
- Park Life (Heaton Park)

3. OUTDOOR CINEMA NIGHTS

Accessible & scalable. Revenue from ticket sales, F&B, additional merchandise (hampers, chairs, etc.)

- Luna Cinema (UK)

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2.

Activating Parks with Events

4. FOOD & DRINK

Popular with all demographics, low infrastructure. Vendor fees, branded zones optional ticketed event.

Page 87

- Food Festivals
- World Foods - Thai Festival
- Gin & Beer Festivals
- Good Food & Wine Show

5. FITNESS & WELLNESS EVENTS

Regular programming keeps parks busy & repeat footfall. Revenue from Fees & partner activations as well as F&B.

- HIIT in the Park
- Yoga in the Park
- Hyrox
- Triathlons & Runs

2.

Welcoming Entrances and Interpretation

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FEATURE ENTRANCES

- **Create a Strong First Impression** – a welcoming, high-quality entrance sets the tone for the visit, encouraging visitors to stay longer and engage more fully with the park's facilities.
- **Enhance Perceived Value for Money (VFM)** – when visitors feel they are entering a premium, well-managed space, they are more willing to spend on food, activities, and experiences.
- **Strengthen Brand Recognition & Identity** – consistent, memorable entrances across the park network reinforce the overall brand, making the parks more marketable to external investors & partners.
- **Support Commercial Leverage** – iconic entrances can be used as platforms for sponsorship, naming rights, or integration of partner branding.
- **Improve Visitor Flow & Orientation** – clear, well-designed entrances with integrated wayfinding reduce confusion and pedestrian congestion, creating smoother access to commercial zones.
- **Boost Community Pride & External Perception** – feature entrances demonstrate investment in the parks, making them attractive for outside funding, IP investment, and corporate partnerships.

2.

Biodiversity, Clean & Green Commitment

- **Integrate biodiversity into design** – embedding ecological features into all commercial projects, with a special focus on Paxton Pits as a flagship example.
- **Implement clean, green practices** – ensuring operators and partners adopt sustainable approaches such as renewable energy, waste reduction, and eco-friendly materials.
- **Balance development with ecological protection** – zoning commercial activity to safeguard habitats, leaving the majority of green space untouched while enhancing conservation.
- **Reinvest commercial revenue into biodiversity** – funding habitat restoration, rewilding, and educational initiatives that directly benefit the parks' ecosystems.
- **Promote eco-conscious partnerships** – selecting food, beverage, and event partners who share sustainability values and support the parks' environmental goals.

3.

Sites Overview

3. Overview Map

Our Key

INDIVIDUAL PARKS

(so product can be earmarked for more than one site.)

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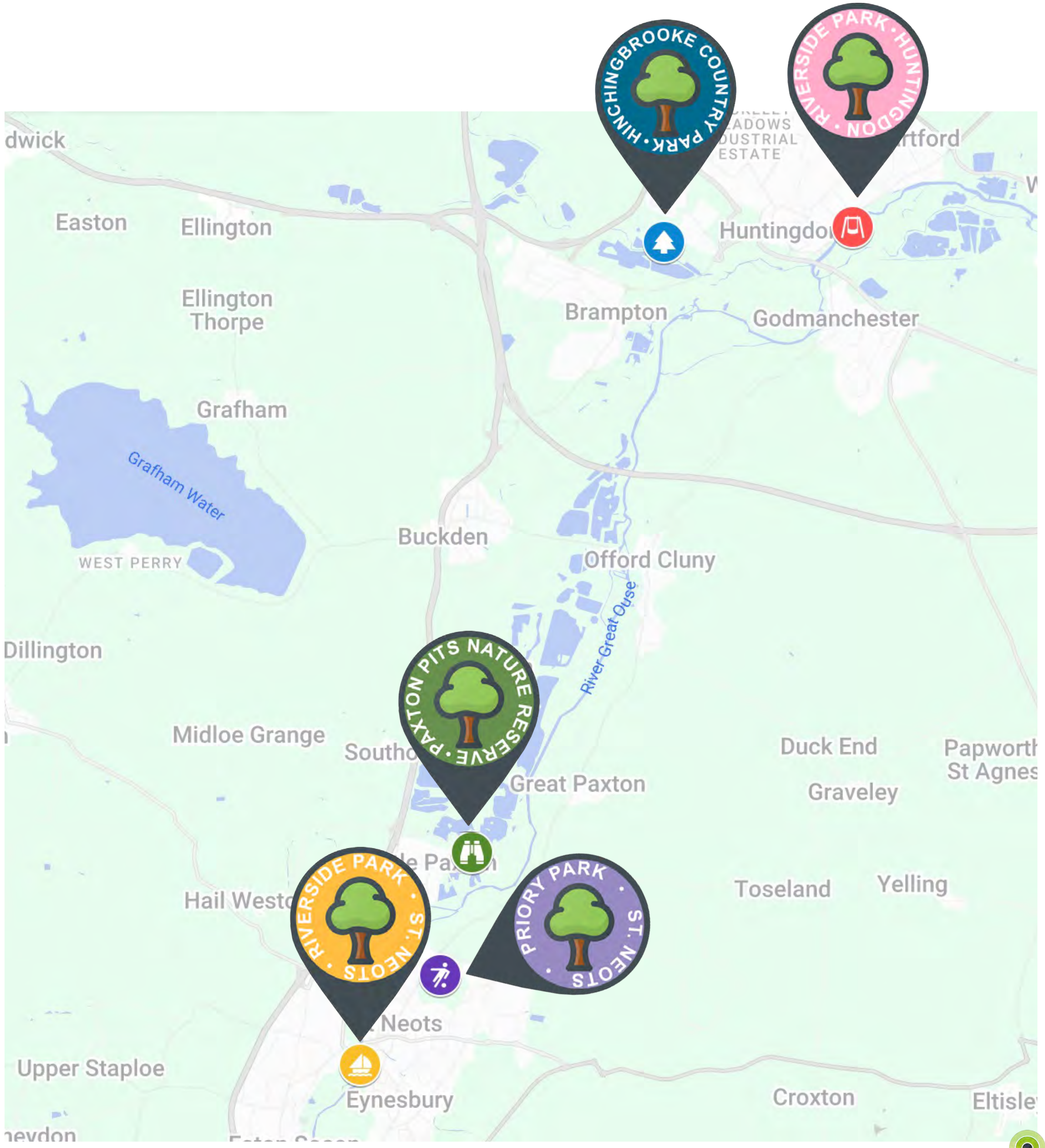
POTENTIAL COMMERCIALITY

RATING

Some sites are more suitable than others, owing to sensitivity of environment, population density, and topography.



Hinchingbrooke Country Park

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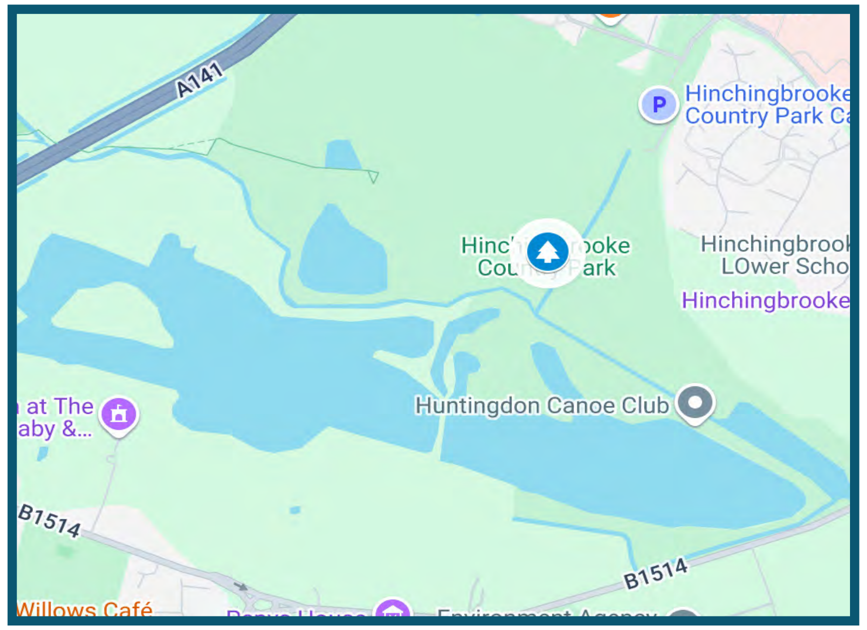
3.

Overview

▪ Footprint Location



VISITOR NUMBERS: Estimated 200,000 annually

SIZE: 70 ha mixed habitat site

DEMOGRAPHIC: Families, Nature Spotters & Dog Walkers

TYPE: Country Park

DURATION PER VISIT: 2-3hrs

COMMERCIALITY RATING: 5

Strengths

- Strong visitor base
- Recognition of brand
- Green flag award status since 2018
- Diverse infrastructure
- Event friendly space
- On site retail
- Diverse natural environment
- Accessibility
- Family friendly
- Community

Weaknesses

- Limited public transport
- Seasonal limitations
- Basic digital infrastructure
- Revenue reliant on café and parking
- Limited shelter options
- No overnight facilities

Opportunities

- Event and venue hire
- Enhanced café and retail
- Membership / loyalty scheme
- Eco tourism & education
- Glamping
- Licensing & franchising
- More indoor attractions
- Community events / markets

Threats

- Weather
- Competition
- Public ownership constraints
- Environmental restrictions
- Over commercial risk – pushing it could affect reputation of a natural peaceful retreat

3. Overview

Why Visit

- Ideal for family outings, nature walks, or dog friendly exploration
- Natural beauty combined with community amenities
- Rich biodiversity

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Summary

Hinchingbrooke Country Park is a 69-hectare green space on the edge of Huntingdon, combining woodland, open grassland, and lakes to create a diverse environment for recreation and wildlife. It is already a popular destination for families, walkers, runners, dog-walkers, and nature enthusiasts, with regular community activities such as parkrun and canoeing adding to its appeal. The park also features a café, children's play areas, and well-maintained paths, making it accessible for both everyday use and special visits.

Looking ahead, there is strong potential to further enhance the visitor experience.

Opportunities include:

- **Improved facilities** such as upgraded toilets, better wayfinding, & enhanced accessibility.
- **Expanded food and beverage provision**, with more varied menus, healthier options, and extended opening hours to encourage longer stays.
- **Enhanced play facilities**, including adventure play equipment, natural play features, and inclusive design to cater for a wider age range and abilities.
- **Additional shelters**, seating, and picnic areas to support families and groups.

By building on its existing strengths, Hinchingbrooke Country Park could grow as both a much-loved local green space and a regional attraction, encouraging repeat visits and longer dwell times.

Paxton Pits

Nature Reserve

3.

Overview

Footprint Location

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VISITOR NUMBERS: Estimated 100000 annually

SIZE: 80 ha mixed habitat site

DEMOGRAPHIC: Walkers, Nature Lovers, School Groups, Artists and Photographers

TYPE: Nature Reserve, Conservation Status

DURATION PER VISIT: x3 Trails (1-2 hour walks)

COMMERCIALITY RATING: 3

3.0 RATING

Strengths

- Strong visitor base
- Recognition of brand
- Green flag award status since 2018
- Diverse infrastructure
- Event friendly space
- On site retail
- Diverse natural environment
- Accessibility
- Family friendly
- Community

Weaknesses

- Limited public transport
- Seasonal limitations
- Basic digital infrastructure
- Revenue reliant on café and parking
- Limited shelter options
- No overnight facilities
- Some revenue schemes not controlled by HDCC. Friends of Paxton Pitts have some control
- Site is heavily restricted due to designation

Opportunities

- Event and venue hire
- Enhanced café and retail
- Membership / loyalty scheme
- Eco tourism & education
- Glamping
- Licensing & franchising
- More indoor attractions
- Community events / markets

Threats

- Weather
- Competition
- Public ownership constraints
- Environmental restrictions
- Over commercial risk – pushing it could affect reputation of a natural peaceful retreat

Overview

Why Visit

- Peaceful escape and biodiversity hotspot
- Great for nature photography, bird watching, family outings and dog walks
- Different trail options

Summary

Paxton Pits Nature Reserve is a 78-hectare Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) near St. Neots, made up of former gravel pits, lakes, meadows, and woodlands along the River Great Ouse. It is nationally recognised for its biodiversity, with birdlife such as nightingales, kingfishers, and wintering wildfowl attracting visitors from across the region. The reserve is also valued by local families, walkers, and community groups, with a visitor centre, café, hides, and well-established trail network supporting year-round use. Volunteers are central to its ethos, helping to maintain habitats, run events, and welcome visitors.

Looking ahead, Paxton Pits has strong potential for growth in eco-tourism, education, and light-touch event programming, provided this is carefully balanced with its conservation priorities and community role.

Opportunities include:

- **Improved facilities** such as upgraded toilets, better signage, & more accessible paths.
- **Expanded food and beverage provision**, including seasonal offers & healthier choices to encourage longer stays.
- **Enhanced play and discovery facilities,** from nature-themed play equipment to family-friendly activity trails.
- **Additional seating,** picnic areas, and shelters to support groups and year-round visits.

Any development must remain low-impact, sustainable, and aligned with the reserve's environmental mission. By building on its strengths as both a wildlife haven and a volunteer-driven community space, Paxton Pits can continue to thrive as a conservation-led destination with a growing role in education and eco-tourism.

Riverside Park

St. Neots

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Overview

Footprint Location

VISITOR NUMBERS: Estimated 75000 annually

SIZE: 29 ha flood plain of St. Neots

DEMOGRAPHIC: Walkers, Families & Event Attendees

TYPE: Town Centre Park

DURATION PER VISIT: 1.5 Hours

COMMERCIALITY RATING: 4

Strengths

- Prime town centre location
- Diverse amenities
- Established events area
- On site café
- Parking approx. 250
- Community attachment
- Skate park - largest outdoor vertical ramp

Weaknesses

- Limited indoor space
- No overnight stays
- Seasonal use
- F&B privately owned

Opportunities

- Expand Events programme
- More pop up vendors / licensing
- Water based activity
- Creative youth engagement (skate park)
- Digital infrastructure

Threats

- Flood risk
- Competition
- Resident backlash if diminishing community feel with payed-for activities

3.

Overview

Why Visit

- Centrally located ideal access for all for an outdoor experience
- Offer a range of recreational activities
- Local events

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Summary

Riverside Park is a large green space at the heart of St Neots, set alongside the River Great Ouse. It combines wide open grassland, mature trees, and riverside walks with play areas, a café, and facilities that support both everyday recreation and community events. The park is well-used by families, walkers, runners, and local groups, and is a focal point for town festivals and activities. It is also home to a popular skate park, which features England's largest drop, making it a significant draw for young people and skate enthusiasts.

Looking ahead, there are clear opportunities to further enhance Riverside Park's role as both a community hub and a visitor destination. These include:

- **Improved facilities** such as upgraded toilets, better signage, & enhanced accessibility.
- **Expanded food and beverage options**, from a more varied café offer to seasonal pop-up catering during events.
- **Enhanced play provision,** including more adventurous and inclusive play equipment to serve a wider age range.
- **Additional shelters,** seating, and picnic areas to support families and encourage longer stays.

By building on its central location, riverside character, and distinctive skate park, Riverside Park has the potential to strengthen its role as a vibrant community space, hosting leisure, play, and cultural activity while offering a welcoming destination for both local residents and visitors.

Riverside Park

Huntingdon

3.

Overview

Footprint Location

VISITOR NUMBERS: Estimated 50000 annually

SIZE: 34 ha with 2km River-front

DEMOGRAPHIC: Walkers, Sports & Play

TYPE: Sports & Country Park

DURATION PER VISIT: 1.5 HOURS

COMMERCIALITY RATING: 4

2.0 RATING

Strengths

- Prime town river front location
- Ample parking
- Children's play
- Football pitches
- Access to river
- Established events venue
- Large flat green space for flexible use
- Established events area

Weaknesses

- Lack of commercial facilities on site, no perm café, VC or stalls
- Dwell time is low
- No accommodation
- No indoor attractions
- Limited identity

Opportunities

- Expand Events programme
- More pop up vendors / licensing
- Water based activity
- Commercial sponsorship
- Collaborative packages, bundle events with town cafés
- Development of existing pavilion

Threats

- Flood risk
- Environmental restrictions
- Competition

3.

Overview

Why Visit

- Family outings, gentle riverside walks & occasional water sports
- Well located open space with parking & play
- Hosts outdoor events & concerts

Summary

Riverside Park, Huntingdon is a much-loved green space set along the River Great Ouse, within easy reach of the town centre. It offers wide open grassland, mature trees, and riverside walks, creating an attractive setting for everyday recreation and community gatherings. The park provides space for walking, running, picnics, and informal play, and is used by local families, dog-walkers, and visitors seeking a riverside escape. Its proximity to the historic town and river-front makes it a natural extension of Huntingdon's cultural and leisure offer.

Looking ahead, Riverside Park has clear potential to develop further as a central community and visitor destination.

Opportunities include:

- **Improved facilities**, such as upgraded toilets, better wayfinding, and enhanced accessibility.
- **Expanded food and beverage provision**, including seasonal kiosks or pop-up catering to serve visitors during busy periods and events.
- **Enhanced play facilities,** with more adventurous and inclusive equipment for a wider age range.
- **More seating, picnic areas,** and shelters to encourage longer stays and make the park more resilient to year-round use.

With its riverside location and strong community use, Riverside Park is well placed to grow as both a daily green space and a setting for light-touch events and festivals, helping to strengthen Huntingdon's identity as a riverside town while maintaining the park's open, natural feel.

Priory Park

St. Neots

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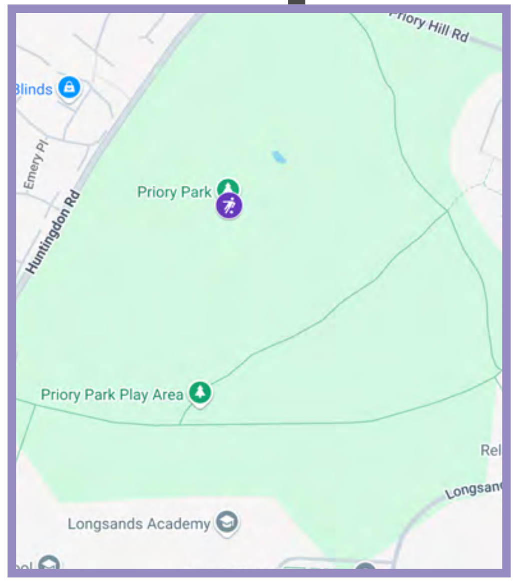
3. Overview

Footprint Location



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VISITOR NUMBERS: Estimated 50000 annually

SIZE: 32 ha

DEMOGRAPHIC: Dog Walkers, Families & Sports Teams

TYPE: Suburban Park

DURATION PER VISIT: 1.5 Hours

COMMERCIALITY RATING: 3

Strengths

- Prime location
- Sports facilities
- Children's play
- Woodland and green space
- Community engagement

Weaknesses

- Lack of commercial infrastructure
- Weather dependency
- No F&B

Opportunities

- Pop up retail and food stalls
- Event hosting
- Partnerships
- Educational programmes
- Infrastructure development

Threats

- Environmental restrictions
- Competition

3.

Overview

Why Visit

- Recreational sports
- Children's play
- Woodland walks

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Summary

Priory Park, St. Neots is a well-used green space close to the town centre, combining open grassland, mature trees, and sports facilities with a strong community focus. It is home to several football pitches for hire with supporting pavilion and changing facilities, making it a key base for local clubs and organised sport. The park is also valued by families, walkers, and residents as an accessible and welcoming space for everyday recreation.

Looking ahead, Priory Park has clear potential to grow both as a community hub and as a venue for light-touch event programming, complementing its sporting role with broader leisure and cultural uses.

Opportunities include:

- **Improved facilities,** such as upgraded toilets, refreshed pavilions, better signage, and enhanced accessibility.
- **Expanded food and beverage provision,** for example through a small café offer, vending, or seasonal catering during matches and events.
- **Enhanced play and recreation facilities,** adding more adventurous and inclusive equipment to serve a wider age range.
- **More seating,** picnic areas, and shelters to encourage longer dwell time and year-round use.

By balancing its established sporting identity with investment in leisure, play, and community programming, Priory Park can strengthen its role as both a neighbourhood green space and a multi-purpose destination serving St. Neots' growing population.

3.

Commercial Selection

These five parks have been selected as the initial focus for investment because they represent the most significant commercial and community opportunities within the Huntingdonshire portfolio.

Their strong visitor bases, central locations, and existing facilities make them well-placed to deliver early returns on investment and to demonstrate the value of a more ambitious approach to managing parks and open spaces.

Hinchingbrooke, Paxton Pits, the two Riverside Parks, and Priory Park together provide a diverse offer – from flagship country park to urban leisure destination and nature reserve – giving us the chance to pilot a range of income-generating models and engagement strategies.

It is anticipated that the success of these projects will set a precedent for future work across other parks and open spaces in the district, ensuring that the benefits of improved facilities, increased visitation, and financial sustainability are rolled out more widely in the coming years.

4.

Demographics

- Local demographics
- Top 4 target demographics

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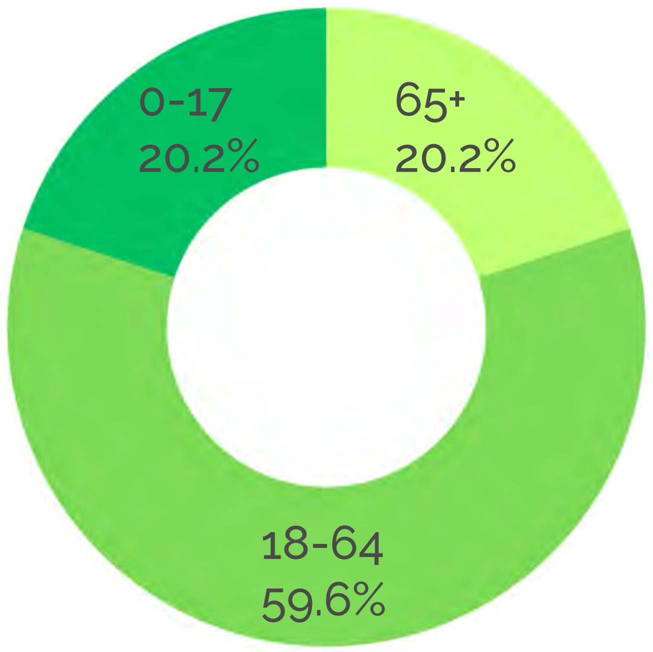
4. Overview of Primary Catchment Demographic

Huntingdonshire Population

Population & Age

Approximate only - based on 2021 Census.



180,800 residents
20.2% - 0-17yrs
59.6% - 18 - 64 yrs
20.2% - 65+ yrs
Median Age 40 yrs

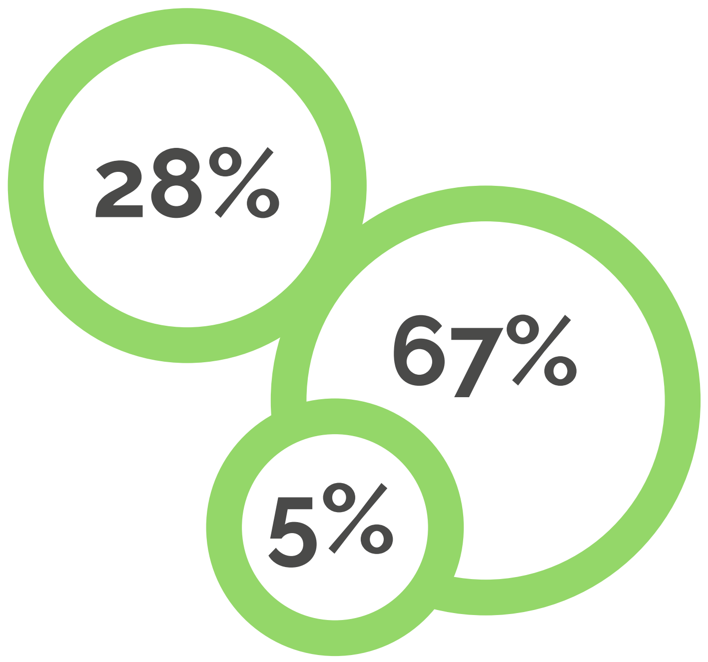
The **50-64** age group is the single largest age band (20.8%), followed by 35-49 (19.8%) and then a cluster in the 25-35 (12.6%) and 65-74 (11.0%) ranges.

A balanced working-age core (60-61%) and a growing 65+ segment (20-21%) **useful for family & active-age programming plus healthy-ageing offers.**

Households & Composition

Approx. 76,881 households
67.29% Single Family
28.05% One Person Units
4.66% Other (non family - multi person)

The vast majority are single-family households, followed by one-person units, and a small share of other household types.



Lifestyle & Leisure Preferences

Overall activity levels* :
60.8% active
13.9% fairly active
25.3% inactive among adults in Huntingdonshire.

Most popular activities locally:
Fitness activities and cycling **(27.6%)**;
Participation cuts across age and gender.

Summary:
Lifestyle fit: High local appetite for fitness, cycling, swimming and general sport, good headroom for outdoor, educational and cultural add-ons tied to wellbeing.

Socio-economic Factors

Employment rate (16–64)*:
85.6% (year to Dec 2023).

Qualifications (16–64):
NVQ4+ **37.7%;**
no qualifications **5.6%**

Summary:
Spending power & stability:
Above-county average employment rate and solid full-time earnings support discretionary spend on leisure/culture.

4. Overview of Primary Catchment Demographic

THREE DEMOGRAPHICS OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE TO HIGHLIGHT:

A Young & Mid-Life Adults (**20-49 years**)

Represents a substantial potential audience for **active leisure** (running, cycling), **event based visits** (evening walks, pop-up markets), and **social media-friendly** experiences. Also the **primary decision-makers** for young family trips.

Households with YOUNGER Children: Family activity + learning
WHY IT MATTERS TO HUNTINGDONSHIRE LEISURE ATTRACTIONS:

- **Regular after-school 60-minute activities** (mini-ranger, bushcraft basics), weekend "nature + STEM" sessions, and **birthday/party packages** to monetise high-demand slots.
- **More covered outdoor** classrooms, pop-up marquees, and micro-exhibits in the visitor centre to protect revenue when trails are less appealing. (A common gap across open-air sites.)
- **Events calendar** that matches local rhythms: **Target** term-time Fridays (under-5s), after-school mid-week, and school-holiday festival days. Pull in local cultural partners for cross-over events (music/storytelling in the woods etc.).

THEY VALUE: a wide range of activities - Engaging the natural world - Relaxation and family bonding - Inclusive and accessible design. Value for Money is also important. Recognisable IP's hit strongly and help perceived VFM.

B Mid-Life Adults (**35-54 years**)

Typically 25-30% of the local population - a mix of parents with older children, and adults without children who still seek active weekend leisure.

Households with OLDER Children & Adults :
WHY IT MATTERS TO HUNTINGDONSHIRE LEISURE ATTRACTIONS:

- They are the **core decision-makers** for family outings and often the most willing to spend on **extras** (cafe, craft activities, seasonal events).
- Many are balancing work and home life = short, **2-3 hour visit formats** work well.
- Also a prime market for **corporate volunteering days** and employer-sponsored wellbeing activities.

THEY VALUE: Special touches and a safe, clean and reliable product. They want the park to be somewhere they can recommend and visit regularly.

Commercial Product that targets A&B: F&B, Play, Weddings, Unique Accommodation, Events.

4. Overview of Primary Catchment Demographic

C Older-adult **(55-64 years - "Active 50's")**

Likely working or semi-retired, with good mobility (keen on active leisure) and spending power.

Excellent candidates for **early evening events**, **volunteer nature activities, weekend guided walks, small group experiences** (such as cookery classes, painting, music & food, etc.) Also wellbeing opportunities during weekdays. They serve as both **hands-on visit participants** and **influencers for multi-generational family outings**.

THEY VALUE: Accessibility and **quality.**

Commercial = cafe spend, events & accommodation.

Nearly one-third of Huntingdonshire residents are **aged 55 or over** - a substantial and growing market segment.

This is the **fastest growing segment,** with **predictable availability** outside school holidays and weekday peaks - ideal for season smoothing.

SUMMARY NOTE:

Huntingdonshire **primary catchment is family-heavy and older-adult-rich** with stable employment and strong appetite for low-barrier, outdoor, learning-infused experiences.

4. Why Defined Demographic Groups are ESSENTIAL for COMMERCIALISM

The products chosen within this report have been carefully selected to represent a commercially diverse audience, offering multiple opportunities for revenue generation. Each park is a park for ALL, but defined groups allow product selection to align with specific needs, preferences and behaviours of your target demographics which is essential for making commercial ventures effective and sustainable.




1. INCREASE RELEVANCE AND SALES

When products are tailored they resonate more

2. MAXIMISES MARKETING EFFICIENCY

Target markets with precision, instead of one size fits all

3. ENCOURAGE REPEAT BUSINESS

Meeting lifestyle & interests of groups establishes loyalty.

4. ENHANCE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Groups are more satisfied when a park provides for their lifestyle.

5. REDUCES COMMERCIAL RISK

Understand the needs reduces adding products that wont sell.

6. SUPPORTS COMMUNITY INCLUSION

A variety of products for different groups, shows inclusivity & all are valued.

Target Demographics - Families

This includes local families as well as those from surrounding area. All ages should be thought of, there is a large percentage of retirees in Huntingdonshire as well as starter families looking for new experiences to do.

The family demographic covers a range of ages, who will attend the park for different activities. E.g. Parents would be attracted to a wine festival and teens an aqua adventure with a group of friends, Families are in the highest bracket for potential commercial spending.

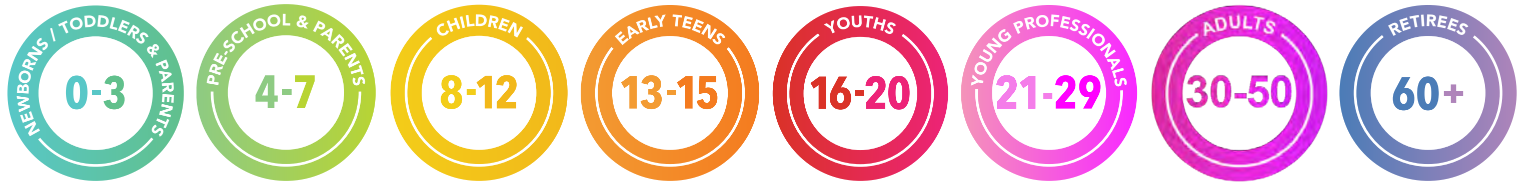
WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM?

- **Family Togetherness**
- **Betterment**
- **Empowering**
- **Healthy Lifestyle**
- **Staying Young**
- **Curiosity**
- **Community Spirit**
- **A Sense of Purpose**
- **Exposure to Nature**
- **Popular (low risk)**

CHARACTERISTICS

- **Parents (27 - 45yrs old)**
- **Visits for play, walks, meet ups, events, things to do and fresh air**
- **Local residents**
- **Often come multiple times per week**



Events Targeted to Families Demographics

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM?

- Fun!
- Socialising
- Staying Young
- Curiosity
- New Experiences
- A Sense of Purpose
- Explorers
- Quality Experiences
- Travel
- Social Media
- Active

CHARACTERISTICS

- Affordable local activities to entertain
- Fun & bonding
- Community engagement
- Social, Music, Food,
- Leisure, Fitness & Wellness
- Unique & memorable
- Cultural
- Educational
- Dog friendly
- Novelty

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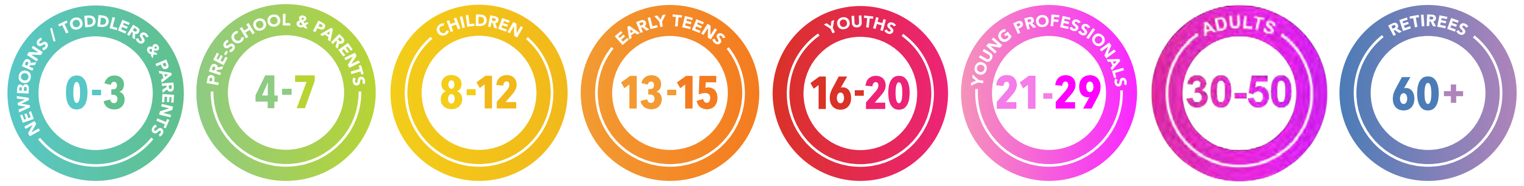
The amount families spend at an event in a park can vary based on event type, available attractions, pricing, and family size. Below is an estimate average spend per family (2 adults 2 children, based on typical expenditure.

Family 2 adults / 2 children

Category	Low (£)	Medium (£)	High (£)
Entry (if applicable)	Free	£5-15	£20+
Car Parking	Free	£5	£10
Food & Drink	£20	£25 - 35	£40+
Kids activities (crafts / rides)	£10	£15 - 20	£25+
Merchandise / souvenirs	£10	£15 - 20	£25+
TOTAL	£40	£65 - 95	£120

Typical Event Examples

Type	Average Family Spend
Free Community Event (Art in the park)	£10 - £25 mostly food / activities
Outdoor Cinema Evenings	£30 - £50 tickets, f&b / picnics
Seasonal Festival (Christmas etc)	£40 - £70 (rides, attractions,f&b & shopping
Craft / Artisan Market	£20 - £40 gifts, f&b, produce
Dogfriendly Event	£20 - £35 tickets, merchandise, f&b
Music Festival	£25 - £60 tickets, f&b & merch



4. Target Demographics - Education & Community Groups

Educational experiences for schools and groups can be highly commercial for public parks. Commercials can come in the form of, direct income from group bookings for an allocated time period, add-on services; park ranger, activity packs, f&b provisions and seasonal / themed programmes which will attract repeat visits to the parks.

As well as providing direct revenue to the parks, educational sessions allow the park to be known for its positive links into community life, creating future paying customers for alternative reasons to visit the parks.

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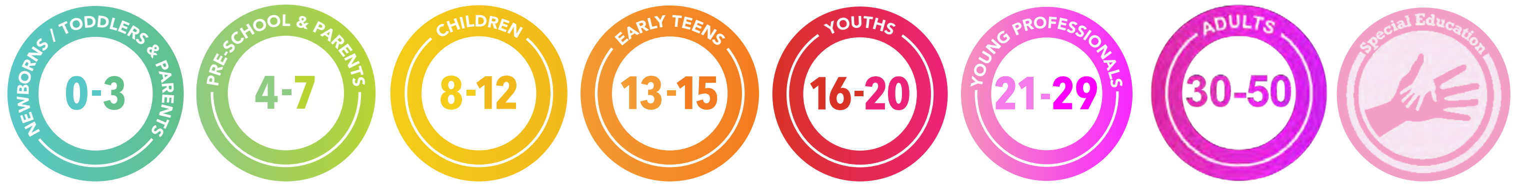
By creating packages for different educational and community needs (schools, scouts, adult learners, corporate teams), parks can ensure steady, year-round income streams alongside their other offerings.



WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM?

- New Experiences
- Developing Skills
- Outdoors
- Curiosity
- Personal Development
- Fun
- Adventure
- Practical facilities and cost
- Ease

CHARACTERISTICS

- Organised & Time conscious
- Curriculum linked
- Large numbers
- Supervision needs
- Repeat visits
- Community groups - flexible scheduling
- Socially driven
- Cause orientated

Typical School Group Revenue

Group size: 30 pupils x £5 = £150 per session
3 visits / week x 8 months (32 weeks) = 96 visits/year
96 visits x £150 = £14,400/year

4.

Target Demographics - Weddings

Weddings held in parks can range widely in cost depending on the level of formality, services included, and infrastructure needed. Below are current pricing trends and examples of weddings held in public parks within the UK.

Hinchingbrooke Country Park is well positioned to host weddings, with its beautiful, natural setting, large open spaces which also offer tranquillity and privacy, accessible location and on-site facilities with the correct commercial packages and permissions it could be a sought-after local wedding location.

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WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM?

- Family Togetherness
- Quality
- Uniqueness
- Ease of 'all in one place'
- Scale
- Cost
- Special 'extras'

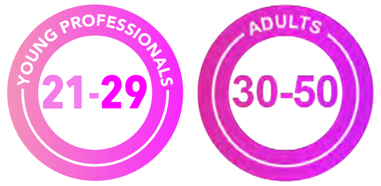
CHARACTERISTICS

- Nature loving
- Outdoors orientated
- Budget conscious
- Experience focused
- Creative / Non traditional
- Local
- Environmentally conscious

General Cost Trends for Public Park Weddings

Component	Typical Cost (£)
Permit / Venue fee	£200 - £3,000
Marquee hire	2,0000 - £10,000
Catering (100 guests)	£4,000 - £8,000
Toilets, power, staff	£1,000 - £3,000
Total estimate (mid-range)	£10,000 - £18,000

Clissold Park (Hackney, London)	Markeaton Park, Derby	Wandsworth Parks. (Battersea Parks)
Location: Clissold House (within Clissold Park, a public park)	Registry office partnership in the Organgery	Venue hire (Pump House Gallery or park grounds): £1,000–£3,000
Ceremony only: From £600–£1,000	Cermonies from: £400	Marquee permitted: Setup costs range £5,000–£10,000
Reception hire: Up to £4,000	Reception extras: Outdoor space can be hired with council permission	Total cost estimate: £10,000–£20,000
Full wedding (with F&B): £7,000–£15,000	DIY Weddings; £5,000 - £10,000 depending on guest no. & services	



5.

Product Ideas

- Game Changers
- Destination
- Imagination
- Quick Wins

5. Product Selection Principles

All products have been considered in order to:

DRIVE FOOTFALL & INCREASE DWELL TIME

- To the under-used parks, to create 'destinations' that maximise opportunity for revenue potential. Value for money activities balanced with higher cost treats.

GENERATE SUSTAINABLE INCOME STREAMS

- Certain products will have separate costs to enter, others offer more reasons to visit and spend on F&B and Retail.

APPEAL TO MULTIPLE USERS

- offer a balanced variety so that everyone can have new experiences at the parks

WOW! CURB APPEAL & PESTER POWER

- create a level of visual appeal that translates into marketing and commercial returns.
- CHANGE PEOPLES OPINIONS! Important to give people a new reason to visit and show them the parks have changed! (and by extension, stay and pay) with the addition of quality projects.

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Our Key

Investment

Demographics

Game Changers

FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN AND EXTENDED FAMILY UNITS

HIGHER INITIAL INVESTMENT

MULTIPLE COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FROM PAID FOR PLAY, F&B & RETAIL

A VERY COMPELLING REASON TO VISIT!

Product Suggestions

5. Product Suggestion
Adventure Play

Adventure Play is a dynamic, commercial play space within the park, featuring imaginative, challenging, and inclusive equipment designed to encourage active play for children of all ages.

Chunky natural materials create tactile and hard-wearing play structures over multiple levels, with integrated net walkways and slides.

Operated on a paid-entry basis, it offers families a high-quality experience that complements the park's free facilities while generating sustainable income.

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Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15
Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£500+k

5. Product Suggestion
IP Adventure Play

IP Adventure Play is a paid-entry attraction featuring imaginative and inclusive equipment that encourages active play for all ages.

Complementing the park's free facilities, it provides a high-quality family experience while generating income, enhanced by a unique IP theme that creates a distinctive branded draw.

Many popular children's books/films/TV series or even retail brands could be explored for the best fit for demographic and site.

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Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£500+k

5. Product Suggestion
IP Maze/Non IP Maze

A Maze (whether IP Branded or not) is a paid-entry attraction within the park, offering a fun, themed experience for all ages.

It adds a distinctive draw to the free facilities while generating sustainable income and encouraging repeat visits.

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Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Nature Accommodation / Spa/ Sauna

Nature-Styled Accommodation offers eco-friendly, characterful stays within the park, blending comfort with the natural setting.

Pods or lodges can have creative themes, from generic 'Enchanted Forest' to IP-led experiences. Additional features such as dark skies star-watching, private saunas or hot tubs, outdoor kitchens, and luxury hampers would elevate the visitor experience. Accomodation attracts new audiences, encourages longer stays, and generates strong income.

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Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 · CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50 · RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

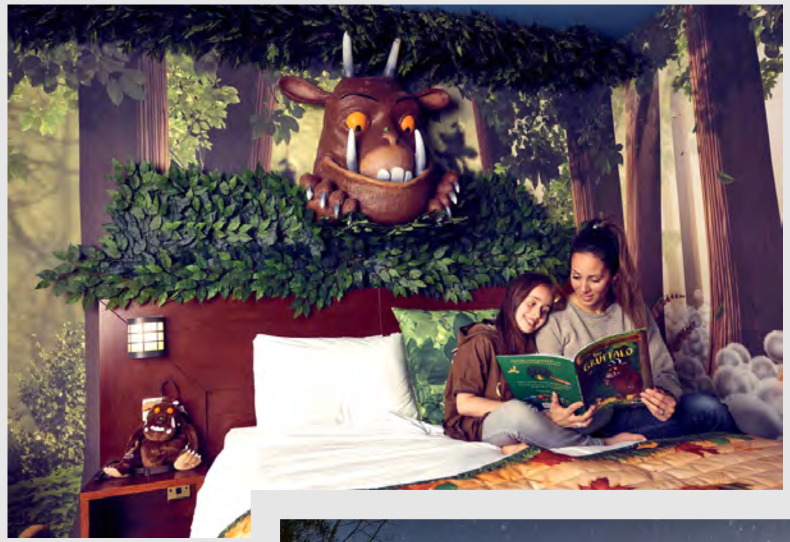
Investment

££££

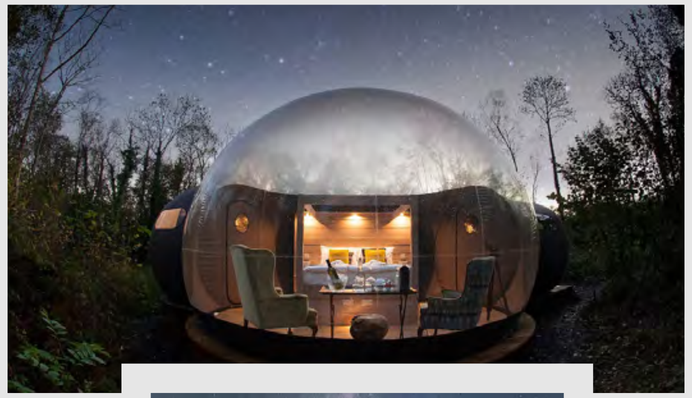
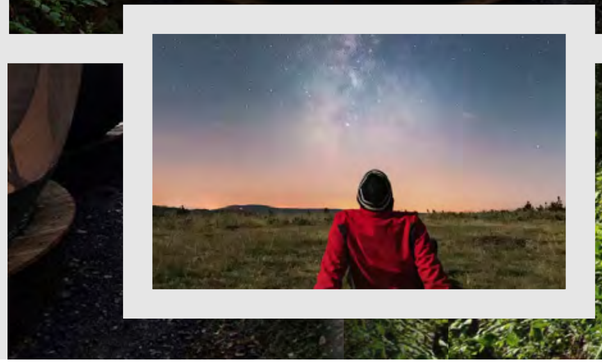
£500+k










5. Product Suggestion

Flotels / Spa/ Sauna

Spa is a wellbeing-focused facility offering relaxation & treatments in a tranquil park setting. Operated commercially, it enhances the visitor offer while creating a sustainable revenue stream.

Saunas provide a unique outdoor wellness experience, complementing the park's natural surroundings. As a paid-entry feature, they add a memorable, health-focused attraction that broadens appeal & supports income generation.

Flotels are floating hotel units that offer unique waterside stays directly within the park's river setting. As a commercial accommodation offer, they create a distinctive visitor experience, extend dwell time, & generate sustainable income while making the most of the natural waterfront.

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Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

Investment

£500+k

5. Product Suggestion

Riverside Dining

Riverside Dining Café offers a paid, high-quality food and drink experience in a scenic riverside setting.

It complements the park's free facilities, encourages longer visits, and provides a sustainable income stream while enhancing the overall visitor offer.

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Demographic

0-3 NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS
4-7 PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS
8-12 CHILDREN
13-15 EARLY TEENS
16-20 YOUTHS
21-29 YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
30-50 ADULTS
60+ RETIREES

Most Suitable Parks

RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON



Investment

£500+k

5. Product Suggestion
Padelball / Pickelball

Padel & Pickleball Courts provide a modern, paid-entry sports offer that appeals to a wide range of ages and abilities.

As a fast-growing leisure activity, they attract new audiences, encourage repeat use, and generate sustainable income while adding diversity to the park's facilities.

IP or celebrity involvement helps take this from a "Destination Product" to a unique "Game Changer"!

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Demographic

YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

RIVERSIDE PARK · ST. NEOTS | PRIORY PARK · ST. NEOTS | RIVERSIDE PARK · HUNTINGDON

Investment

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Adventure Golf

Adventure Golf is a themed, paid-entry attraction that combines fun, challenge, and creativity for all ages, with materials & landscaping suitable to the sensitive nature of the sites.

It offers a distinctive leisure experience that complements the park's free facilities, encourages repeat visits, and provides a reliable source of income.

Page 128

Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 · CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50 · RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS · PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS · RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON

Investment

£££

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion

IP. Adventure Trail

IP Adventure Trails are branded, paid-entry routes that weave storytelling and themed challenges into the park's landscape.

They create an immersive family experience that encourages exploration, repeat visits, and income generation while offering a distinctive draw beyond standard walking trails.

Classic brand I.P.s with longevity of appeal, such as The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Zog or Peter Rabbit, focus on the younger family demographic.

Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 | CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

Investment

£15-50k

Destination

FOR KEY DEMOGRAPHICS;
CORE USERS & REPEAT VISITS

MID RANGE INVESTMENT

MULTIPLE COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

INCREASING DWELL TIME

DRIVE FOOTFALL TO ALL PARTS OF THE PARK

Product Suggestions

5. Product Suggestion
High & Low Ropes

High & Low Ropes Course is a paid-entry adventure attraction that offers exciting, skill-building challenges for a wide range of ages and abilities.

It provides a distinctive, active experience that complements the park's free facilities, encourages repeat visits, and generates sustainable income.

Page 131

Demographic

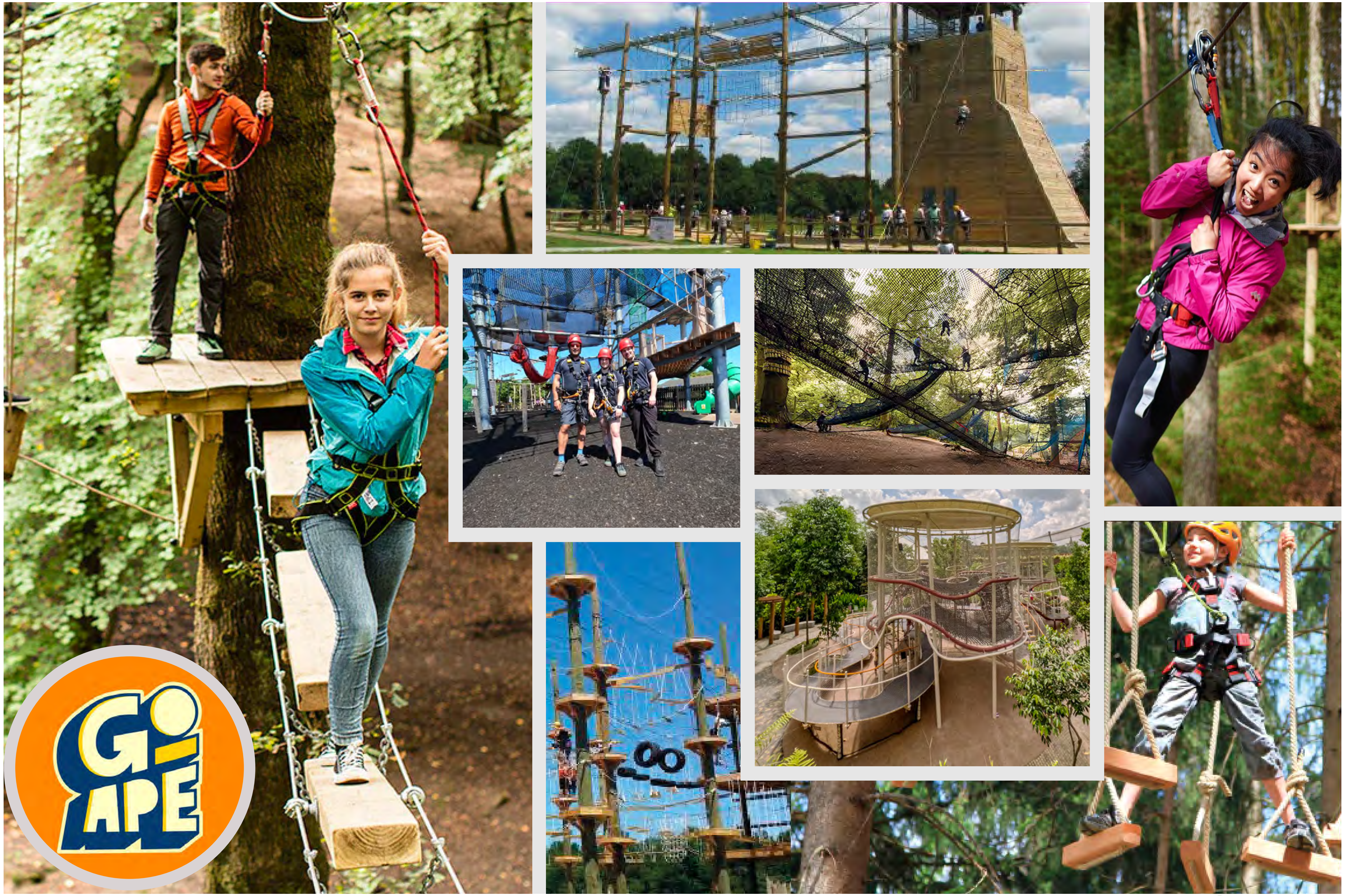
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 · CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · ADULTS 30-50

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£££ £100-500k



5. Product Suggestion
Sky Trail

Sky Trail Course is a paid-entry aerial adventure set on elevated platforms and rope bridges, offering a thrilling challenge in a safe, supervised environment. It delivers a distinctive, active experience that attracts families and groups, extends dwell time, and generates sustainable income for the park.

Sky trails are suitable for a much broader age and energy level than might be using high ropes courses for example. They provide exciting and new perspectives of the area and can also drive visitors to underused parts of the park.

Page 132

Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 | CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£££ £100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Outdoor Sand & Water Play

Outdoor Sand & Water Play is a paid-entry, nature-inspired play space that encourages creative, hands-on fun & learning development for children of all ages.

It complements the park's free facilities, provides a high-quality family experience, and generates sustainable income while encouraging repeat visits.

Popular year round, awnings can make this activity more weather-proof.

Page 133

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7

CHILDREN 8-12

Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£50- £100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Weddings

Weddings in the Parks offer a paid, premium experience that makes the most of the park's natural setting as a unique backdrop for ceremonies and receptions.

This creates a distinctive destination offer, attracts new audiences, & generates sustainable income while celebrating the park's character and beauty.

Commercials come predominantly from site hire.

Page 134

Demographic

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29

ADULTS 30-50

RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion

Adventure Splash/Aqua Parks

Adventure Splash & Aqua Parks are paid-entry water attractions that combine fun, challenge, and active play through pools, inflatables, and splash zones.

They provide a distinctive family experience, attract both younger kids and adults, and generate sustainable income while encouraging longer stays in the park.

Good potential assocatiated F&B spend by spectators.

Page 135

Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£50-100k

5. Product Suggestion

Seasonal Lakeside F&B

A dedicated 're-charge' space for all the target markets, Seasonal Lakeside F&B offers a paid, high-quality food & drink experience set by the water, operating at peak times to target higher visitor numbers and control running costs. It could offer ice creams, picnic bundles and light bites as well as host experiences such as exclusive F&B tastings and events.

It enhances the park's leisure offer, encourages longer visits, and provides a flexible income stream while making the most of the scenic lakeside setting.

Page 136

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3 · PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 · CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50 · RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£££

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion

Interactive Balance Bike Track

Integrated With Physical Play

Balance Bike Track is a paid-entry cycling space designed for younger children to develop confidence, coordination, and riding skills in a safe, fun environment. A special combination of physical obstacle-based play and hardy interactives that can be done with push bikes, peddle bikes and scooters.

It complements the park's free facilities, offers a distinctive family attraction, and generates sustainable income while encouraging repeat visits.

Great sponsorship opportunities.

Page 137

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

RIVERSIDE PARK · ST NEOTS

RIVERSIDE PARK · HUNTINGDON

PRIORY PARK · ST NEOTS

Investment

£££ £100-500k

BRITISH CYCLING

5. Product Suggestion

Boating / Paddle Board / Boat House

Boating & Paddleboarding are paid-entry, on-river experiences that bring adventure and relaxation to the parks waterfronts.

An all year-round activity, attracts families, tourists, couples and schools, as well as various sports, scouting and community clubs.

From casual boat hire to paddleboard sessions, they extend dwell time, and generate sustainable income while showcasing the river setting.

Page 138

Demographic

0-3, 4-7, 8-12, 13-15, 16-20, 21-29, 30-50, 60+

Most Suitable Parks

Hinchingbrooke Country Park, Riverside Park St Neots

Investment

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Boating Experiences

Enhanced Boating Experiences build on standard boat hire by offering paid add-ons, such as onboard picnics, guided tours, or floating cinema events.

These premium options create a distinctive leisure offer, attract new audiences, & generate additional income while maximising the park's riverside appeal.

Page 139

Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 · CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50 · RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion
Quad Bikes

Quad Bike Rental is a paid-entry adventure activity offering safe, supervised rides on dedicated trails.

It provides a thrilling outdoor experience for a wide age range, attracts new audiences, and generates sustainable income while adding variety to the park's leisure offer.

Page 140

Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Jogging & Running Hubs

Jogging & Running Hubs provide dedicated routes and gathering spaces that support health and wellbeing, attracting regular use from local runners and fitness groups.

Their commercial potential comes from integrated food and beverage offers - such as cafés, juice bars, or pop-up kiosks - that serve as social meeting points, encourage longer stays, and generate sustainable income.

Page 141

Demographic

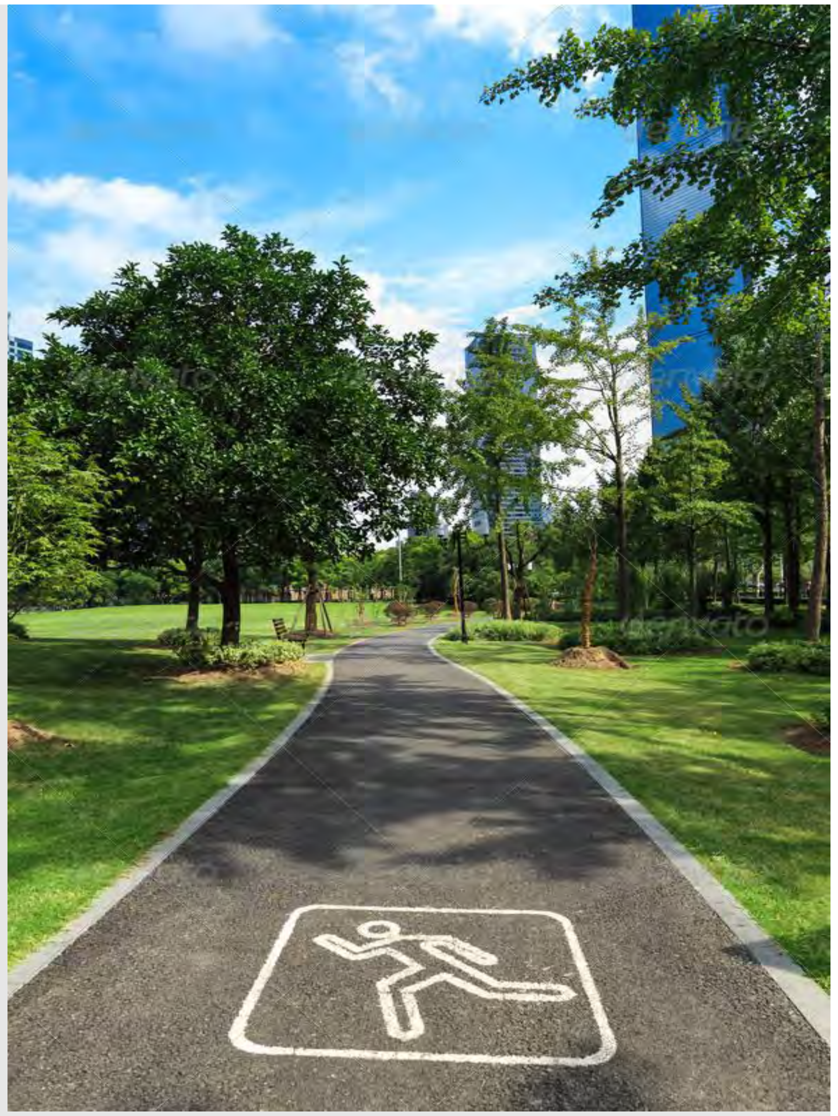
YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK | RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS | PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS | RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON

Investment

£15-50k



5. Product Suggestion

Cycling Hubs & Tracks

Cycling Hubs & Tracks provide safe routes, skills areas, and social spaces for cyclists of all ages and abilities.

Their commercial strength lies in integrated food & beverage offers—such as cafés, repair cafés, or pop-up kiosks—that become natural meeting points, encourage dwell time, and generate sustainable income while supporting the wider cycling community.

Page 142

Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 · CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50 · RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · RIVERSIDE PARK · ST. NEOTS · PRIORY PARK · ST. NEOTS · RIVERSIDE PARK · HUNTINGDON

Investment

£50-100k

5. Product Suggestion
Woodland Axe Throwing

Woodland Axe Throwing is a paid-entry adventure activity set in a natural woodland environment, offering safe, supervised sessions that combine skill, challenge, & stress-busting fun!

It provides a distinctive leisure experience, attracts new audiences, generates sustainable income, while adding variety to the park's attractions.

The 'arenas' can be tailored to suit the shape and lay-of-the-land, to integrate with the natural landscape.

Page 143

Demographic

EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£50-100k

5. Product Suggestion
Remote Controlled Games & Mini Land

Remote-Controlled Mini Land is a paid-entry attraction where visitors can operate remote-controlled boats and other vehicles in a themed miniature landscape.

It offers interactive fun for all ages, creates a distinctive family experience, and generates sustainable income while adding playful variety to the park's leisure offer.

Page 144

Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 | CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+ | Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK | RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£50-100k

5. Product Suggestion

Trampolines & Bounce Pads

Trampolines & Bounce Pads are a paid-entry attraction offering active, high-energy fun for children and families.

They provide a distinctive play experience that complements the park's free facilities, encourage repeat visits, and generate sustainable income through their broad appeal.

Story, theming and music can elevate the bounce experience to make it even more unique.

They also offer additional fitness benefits.

Page 145

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7

CHILDREN 8-12

EARLY TEENS 13-15

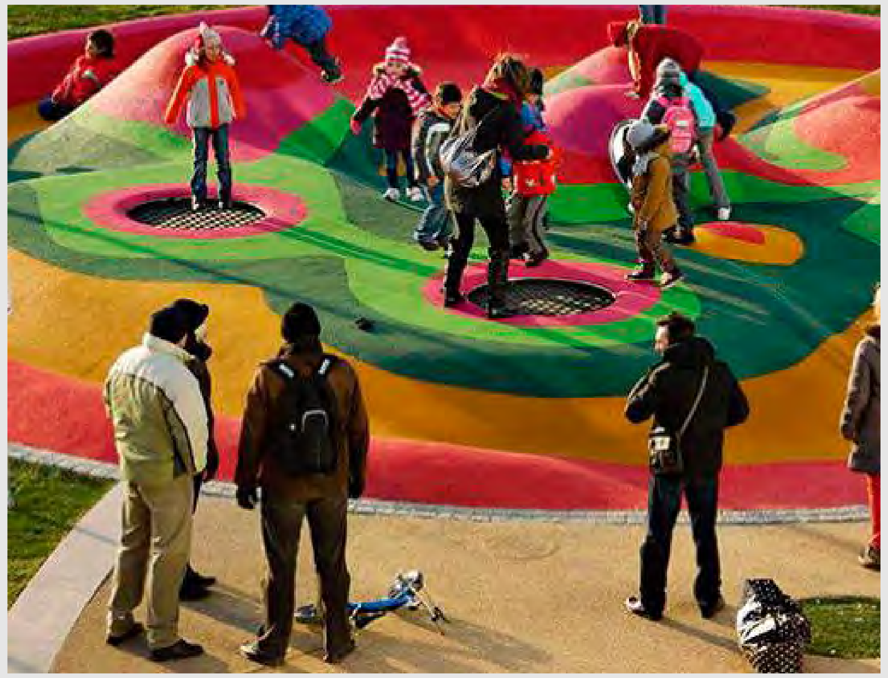
Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

PRIORY PARK · ST. NEOTS

Investment

£50-100k



5. Product Suggestion

Dog Agility

Dog Agility Areas provide dedicated, secure spaces where dogs can exercise and train on specialist equipment.

Pre-booked time slots paid online (and/or payment facility at entrance.)

While free-running and agility encourage regular use by dog owners, the main commercial opportunity lies in integrated food & beverage offers — such as cafés and kiosks designed to be dog-friendly — which create social hubs, extend dwell time, and generate sustainable income.

Page 146

Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Immersive Experiences

Christmas Walk-through

Immersive Christmas Experience is a seasonal, paid-entry attraction that transforms the park into a festive destination with themed trails, lights, and interactive activities such as an Elves Workshop or ice skating.

It creates a memorable family experience, attracts new and repeat visitors, and generates significant seasonal income while enhancing the park's profile as a year-round destination.

Page 147

Demographic

0-3 · 4-7 · 8-12 · 13-15 · 16-20 · 21-29 · 30-50 · 60+

Most Suitable Parks

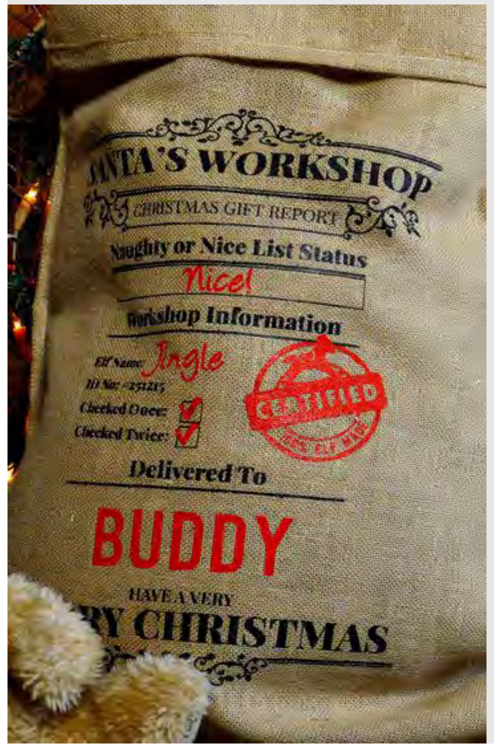
Hinchingbrooke Country Park

Investment

£50-100k







5. Product Suggestion

Immersive Experiences

Winter Light Trail

Immersive Christmas Light Trail is a seasonal, paid-entry attraction that transforms the park into a magical early evening and night-time landscape of illuminated trails & festive displays.

It offers a memorable family & group experience, draws visitors from a wide catchment, and generates strong seasonal income while raising the park's profile as a destination.

Page 148

Demographic

0-3 · 4-7 · 8-12 · 13-15 · 16-20 · 21-29 · 30-50 · 60+

Most Suitable Parks

Hinchingbrooke Country Park · Riverside Park St. Neots

Investment

£50-100k

5. Product Suggestion

Immersive Experiences

Halloween Trail & Maze

Immersive Halloween Trail & Outdoor Maze is a seasonal, paid-entry attraction that combines themed walks, interactive scares, and a spooky maze.

Aimed at the younger family market during the day, with potential to make it slightly older early eve (or, alternatively, aim at a tween/teen/adult market.) Combine with food stands, shows, live music, storytelling, candle-lit tours, hale bale mazes, pumpkin carving, etc.

It delivers a unique, memorable experience for families, parties and groups, attracts visitors from a wide area, and generates strong seasonal income while broadening the park's year-round appeal.

Demographic

0-3 4-7 8-12 13-15 16-20 21-29 30-50 60+

Most Suitable Parks

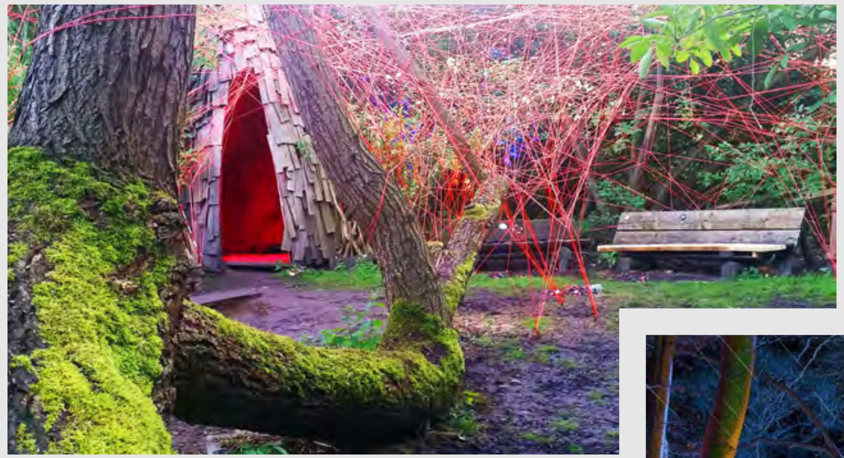
Hinchingbrooke Country Park · Riverside Park St Neots

Investment

£100-500k










5. Product Suggestion

Immersive Experiences

Al fresco Foodie Exp.

Al fresco Food Experience is a paid, seasonal dining offer that brings high-quality food and drink into the open-air setting of the park. Temporary structures & seating house a gourmet pop-up food experience.

It creates a distinctive social experience, encourages longer visits, and generates sustainable income while making the most of the park's natural surroundings.

Possible sponsorship partners from local artisan brewery's or restaurants.

Page 150

Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · RIVERSIDE PARK · ST. NEOTS · PRIORY PARK · ST. NEOTS · RIVERSIDE PARK · HUNTINGDON

Investment

£50-100k







5. Product Suggestion

Immersive Experiences

Pop-up Cinema Experiences

Pop-Up Cinema Experience is a seasonal, paid-entry attraction that transforms the park into an open-air theatre with big-screen films under the stars.

It offers a memorable social experience for families and groups, attracts repeat visits, and generates sustainable income while adding cultural variety to the park's offer.

Page 151

Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS · PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS · RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Farm Shop

Farm Shop is a paid-entry retail offer within the park, showcasing local produce, artisanal goods, and seasonal treats.

It provides visitors with a high-quality shopping experience, supports local suppliers, & generates sustainable income while complementing the park's leisure and food offer.

Page 152

Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50 · RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS · PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS · RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

BBQ & Igloo Boat Hire

BBQ & Igloo Boat Experience is a premium, paid-entry attraction offering private hire boats equipped for dining, grilling, or cosy igloo-style gatherings on the water.

It creates a distinctive & very social media-friendly social experience, attracts families and groups, and generates strong commercial returns from lake or river locations.

Demographic

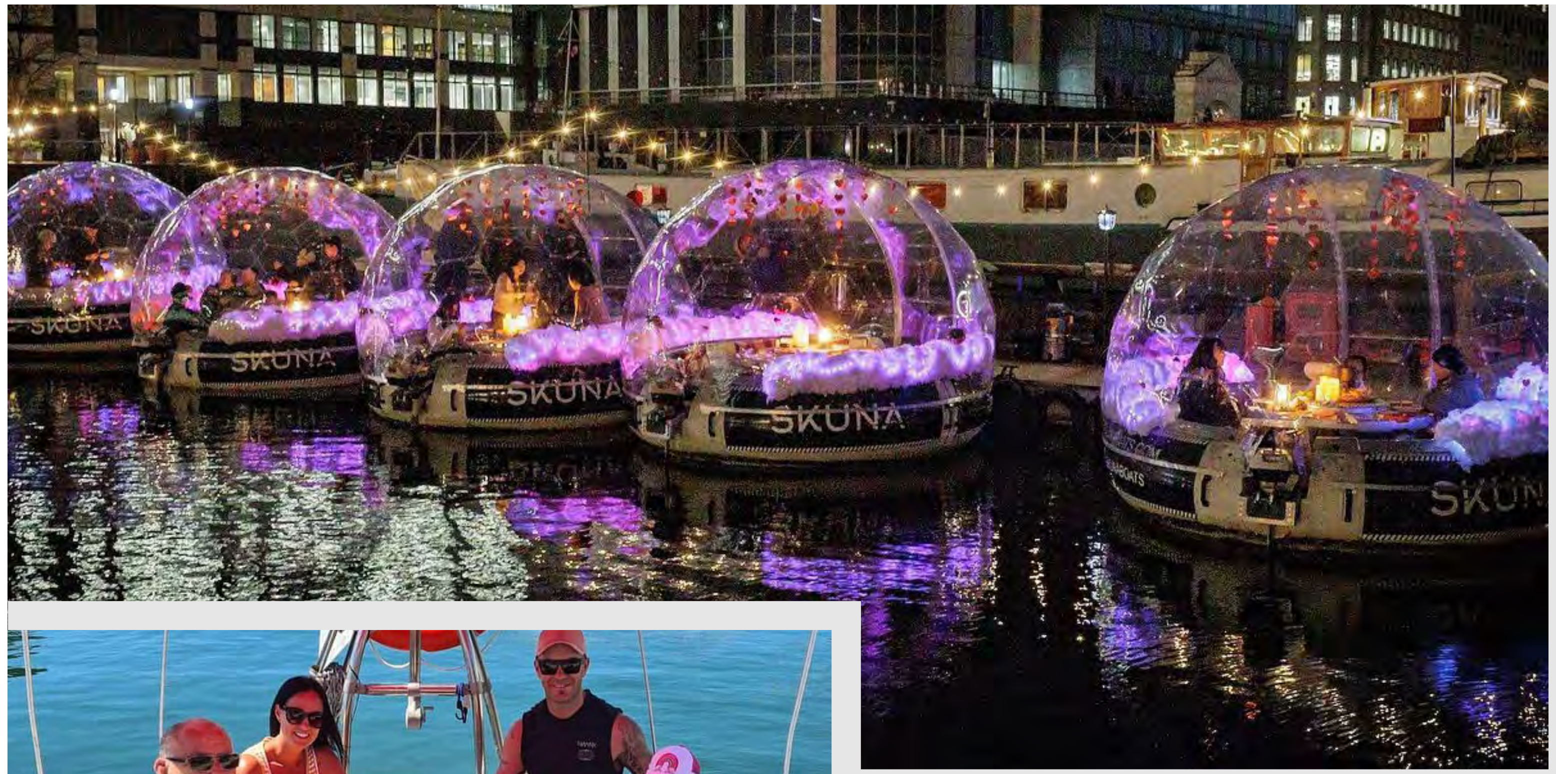
CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS · PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS · RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON

Investment

£15-50k



Imagination

LOW TO MID RANGE INVESTMENT

USED TO HELP REPOSITION THE PARKS IN THE MINDS OF VISITORS

THOUGHTFUL & MEMORABLE

ENCOURAGES SOCIAL MEDIA SHARES & DWELL TIME TO DRIVE FOOTFALL TO THE MORE COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS

Note - these are not considered particularly commercial ideas, but an essential ingredient in elevating the overall quality of the visitor experience, and brand. The social media will generate awareness of the interesting new things at the park, driving footfall to the more commercial ideas.

Product Suggestions

5. Product Suggestion

Bee-keeping & Allotment Play

Bee Keeping and Allotment Play is a paid, hands-on attraction where families can explore themed play spaces inspired by nature, food growing, and pollinators.

Blending education with fun, it encourages learning about sustainability and biodiversity while generating income and adding a distinctive eco-themed experience to the park.

Branded take-home allotment starter kits could be sold, as well as using the produce in the on-site F&B venues.

Page 155

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Sound Spots

Sound Spots are interactive installations placed around the park that use soundscapes, music, or storytelling to create immersive moments along trails and open spaces.

They can bring to life authentic local history, or link directly to the nature you can find on-site. They engage a wide range of ages.

Free for visitors to enjoy, they are funded through sponsorship, offering brands a unique way to support culture and community while enhancing the visitor experience.

Page 156

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15
YOUTHS 16-20
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29
ADULTS 30-50
RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE
RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion
Hedgehogs Experience

Creatures, Burrows & Tunnels, Sand & Water Play

Hedgehog Attraction is a paid-entry experience that combines themed play, interactive features, and conservation learning, centred on one of Britain's most loved animals.

It offers families a distinctive, nature-focused attraction, encourages repeat visits, and generates sustainable income while promoting awareness of local wildlife.

Page 157

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE
RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Dancing Fountains
& Show Space

Dancing Fountains & Water Play is a paid-entry attraction featuring interactive jets, splash zones, and choreographed water displays.

It creates a playful, family-friendly experience that complements the park's free spaces, encourages repeat visits, and generates sustainable income while adding a visually striking feature to the park.

Page 158

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15
YOUTHS 16-20
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29
ADULTS 30-50
RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£££
£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Pop-up Beer Garden

Seasonal Beer Garden is a paid-entry hospitality offer that transforms part of the park into a lively social space during peak months.

Serving drinks and light food in a beautiful outdoor setting, it attracts adults and groups, encourages longer visits, and generates strong seasonal income while adding a vibrant, festive atmosphere to the park.

Page 159

Demographic

YOUTHS 16-20
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29
ADULTS 30-50
RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Exclusive Picnic Spots
(Pre-booked)

Exclusive Picnic Spots are premium, pre-bookable areas within the park offering dedicated seating, scenic views, and optional food and beverage add-ons.

They provide visitors with a unique, private experience, encourage longer stays, & generate sustainable income while enhancing the park's leisure offer.

Page 160

Demographic

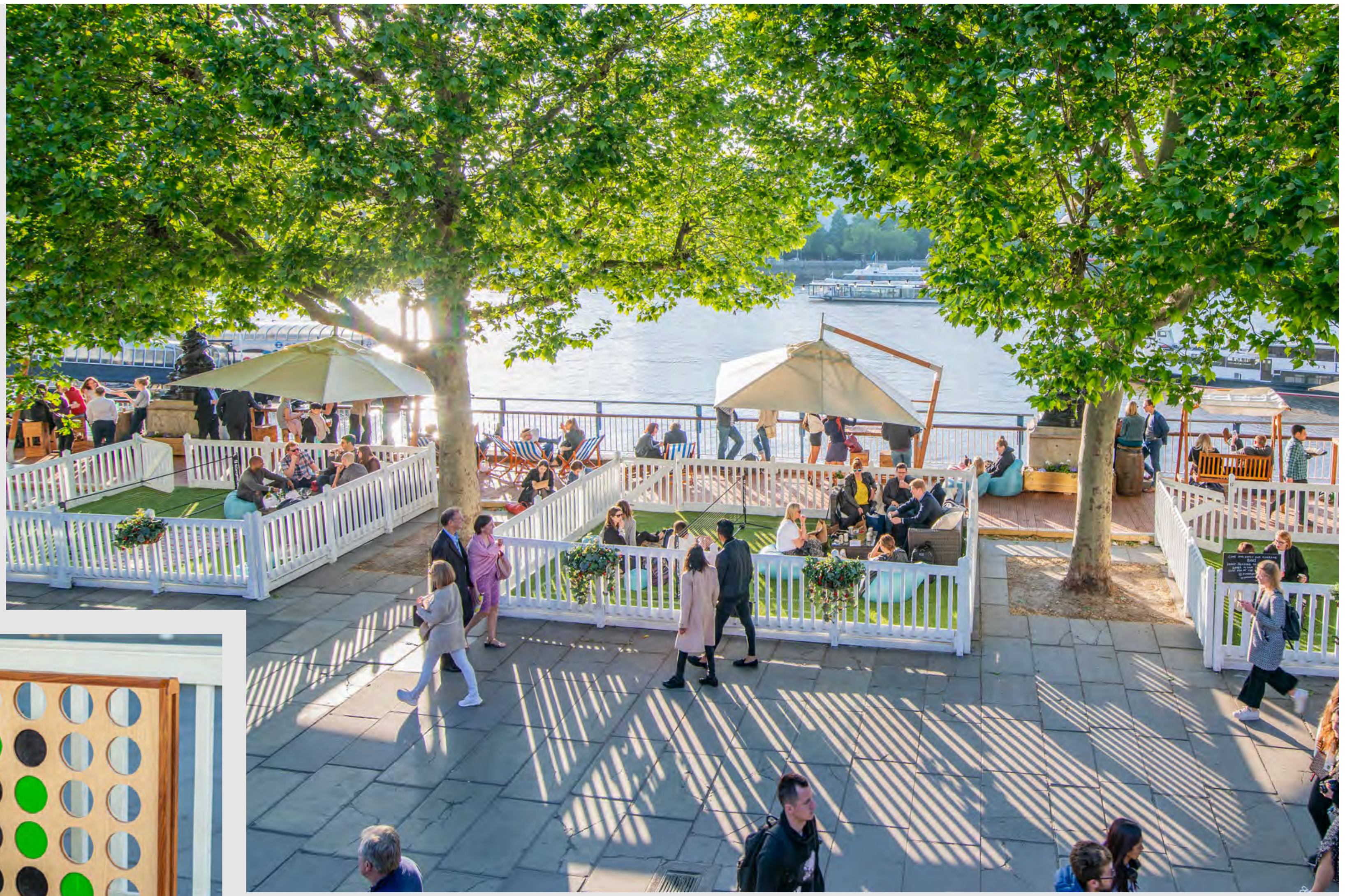
NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & BABIES 0-3 · PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7 · CHILDREN 8-12 · EARLY TEENS 13-15 · YOUTHS 16-20 · YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 · ADULTS 30-50 · RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK · PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE · RIVERSIDE PARK ST NEOTS · RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON · PRIORY PARK ST NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k



5. Product Suggestion

Ice Skating & Hot Chocolate

Ice Rink & Hot Chocolate Experience is a seasonal, paid-entry attraction combining the excitement of outdoor skating with a cosy food and drink offer.

It creates a festive, family-friendly destination, encourages repeat visits, and generates strong winter income while adding a very memorable highlight to the park's seasonal programme.

Page 161

Demographic

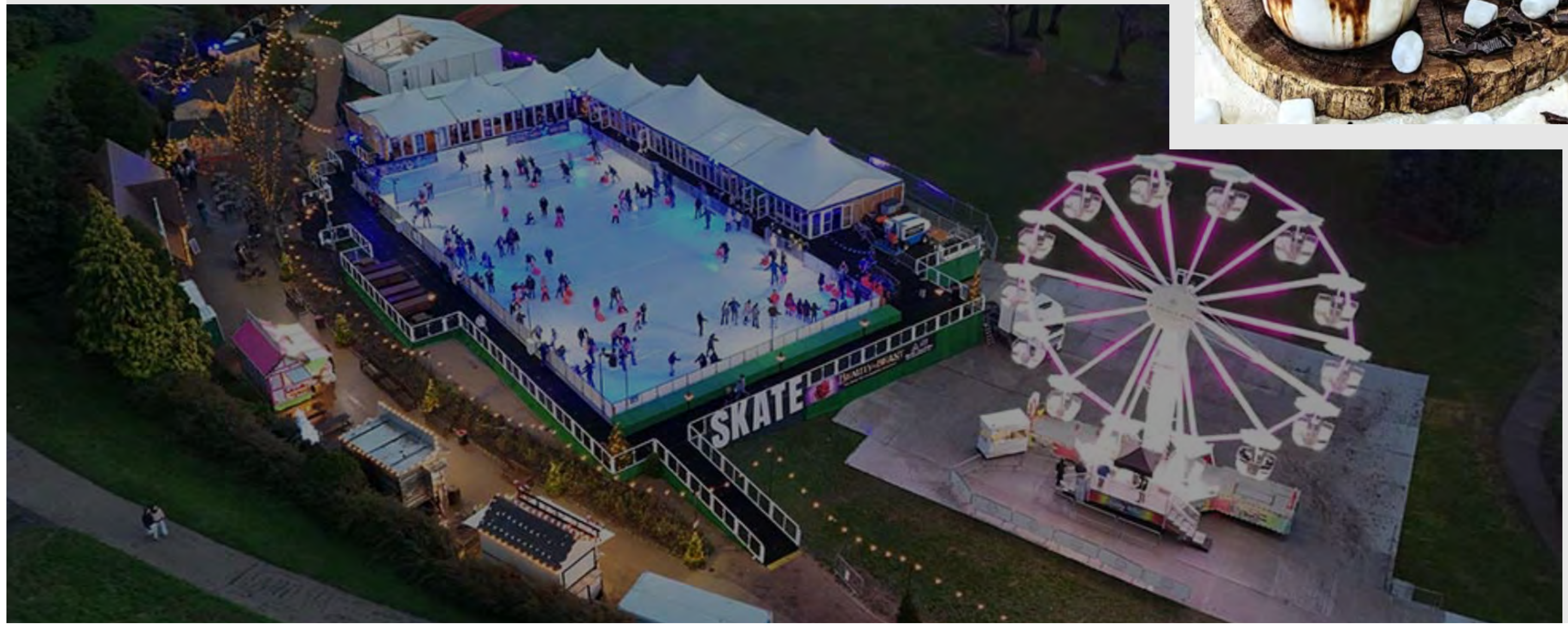
4-7 8-12 13-15 16-20 21-29 30-50 60+

Most Suitable Parks

Hinchingbrooke Country Park · Paxton Pits Nature Reserve · Riverside Park St. Neots · Riverside Park Huntingdon · Priory Park St. Neots

Investment

£££ £100-500k



5. Product Suggestion

Kite Flying Festivals

Kite Flying Festival is a seasonal, paid-entry event that fills the park with colour, movement, and family-friendly activities.

It creates a vibrant community spectacle, attracts visitors of all ages, and generates income through ticketing, food and beverage sales, and sponsorship while celebrating the park's open spaces.

Page 162

Demographic

0-3 · 4-7 · 8-12 · 13-15 · 16-20 · 21-29 · 30-50 · 60+

Most Suitable Parks

Hinchingbrooke Country Park · Paxton Pits Nature Reserve · Riverside Park St. Neots · Riverside Park Huntingdon · Priory Park St. Neots

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Wildlife Discovery Backpacks
"Lakeology"

Nature Backpacks are free-to-borrow activity kits filled with trails, games, and discovery tools that help families explore the park in fun and educational ways.

Funded through sponsorship, they enhance the visitor experience, encourage repeat visits, and give sponsors a visible role in supporting learning and engagement with nature.

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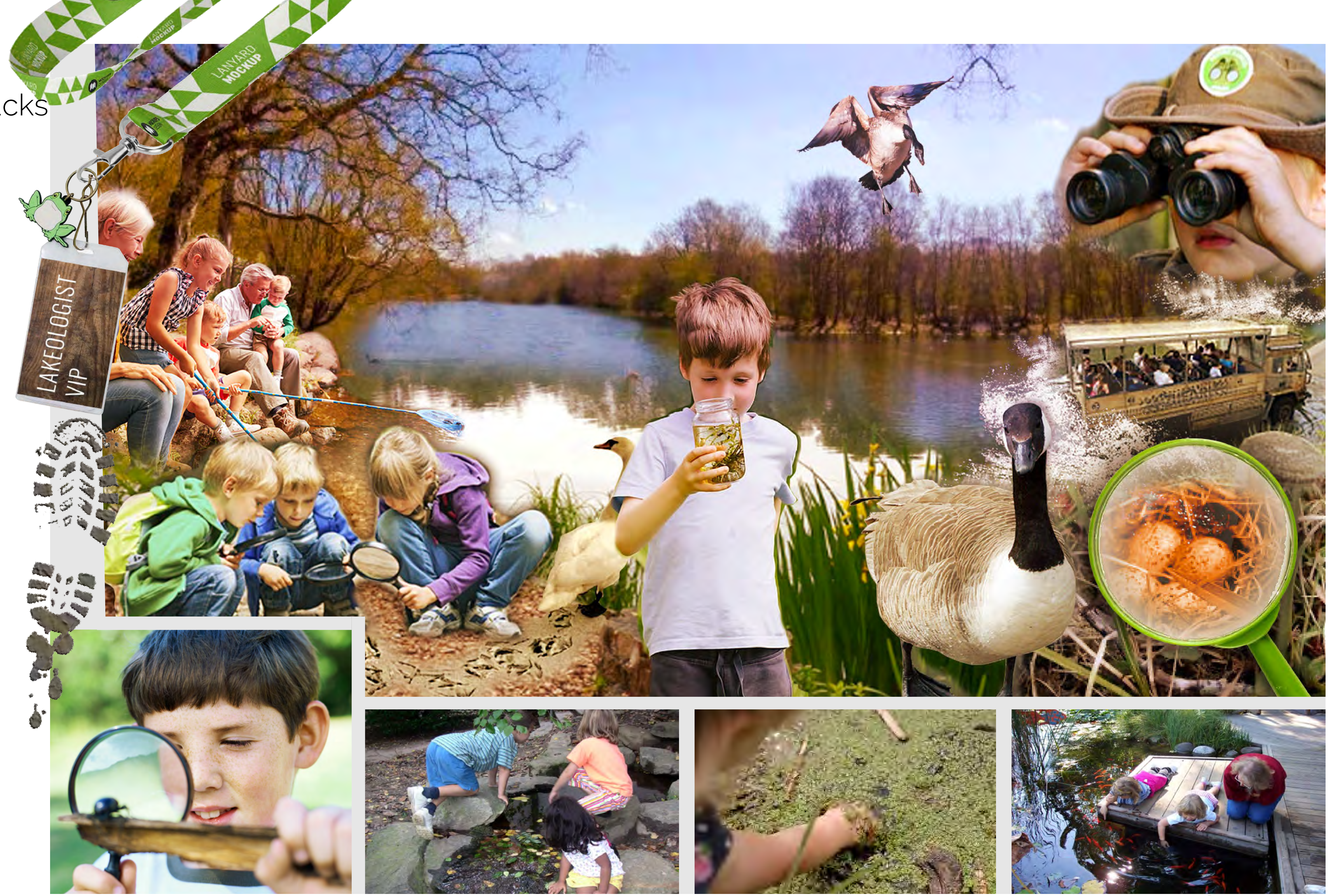


Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7

CHILDREN 8-12

Most Suitable Parks

PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Messy Play

Messy Play is a paid-entry attraction designed for young children to explore, create, and learn through hands-on activities with sand, water, mud, and art.

It offers a distinctive, family-friendly experience, encourages repeat visits, and generates sustainable income while complementing the park's wider play offer.

Page 164

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion
Interactive Sensory Garden

Interactive Sensory Garden is a free-to-enjoy attraction that engages visitors through touch, sound, scent, and sight.

Blending nature with interactive features, it creates a calming yet playful experience for families and individuals of all ages.

Funded through sponsorship, it enhances the park's wellbeing offer, encourages repeat visits, and provides sponsors with a visible way to support community health & engagement with nature.

Page 165

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7

CHILDREN 8-12

Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£50-100k








5. Product Suggestion
Geocaching

Geocaching Experience is a free-to-enjoy digital treasure hunt that encourages visitors to explore the park using GPS-enabled devices.

Blending outdoor adventure with discovery, it appeals to families and groups of all ages.

Funded through sponsorship, it enhances engagement with the landscape, encourages repeat visits, and provides sponsors with a creative platform to connect with the community.

Page 166

Demographic

CHILDREN 8-12 | EARLY TEENS 13-15 | YOUTHS 16-20 | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29 | ADULTS 30-50 | RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion
Forest School

Forest School is a nature-based learning programme delivered through structured, paid sessions in the park's woodland.

It attracts families and schools, offers curriculum-linked outdoor education. It also encourages appreciation of the park's creatures & habitats, supporting its future protection.

As a strong commercial win, it generates reliable income while strengthening the park's role as a centre for play and learning.

Page 167

Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7

CHILDREN 8-12

EARLY TEENS 13-15

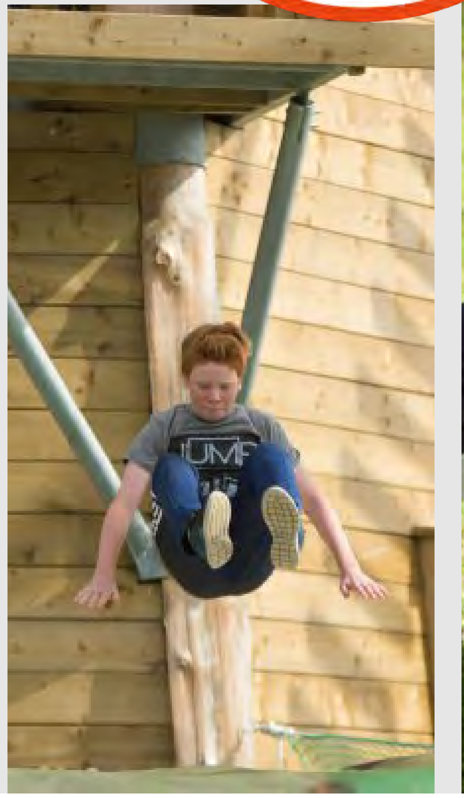
Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

Investment

£15-50k



5. Product Suggestion

Public Art & Photo Ops.

Premium Park Selfies

Public Art & Photo Ops are free-to-enjoy installations placed throughout the park, designed to create striking visual landmarks and engaging backdrops for visitor photos and interactive memorable moments.

Funded through sponsorship, they enhance the park's cultural appeal, encourage sharing on social media, and provide sponsors with high-visibility opportunities to connect with the community.

Page 168

Demographic

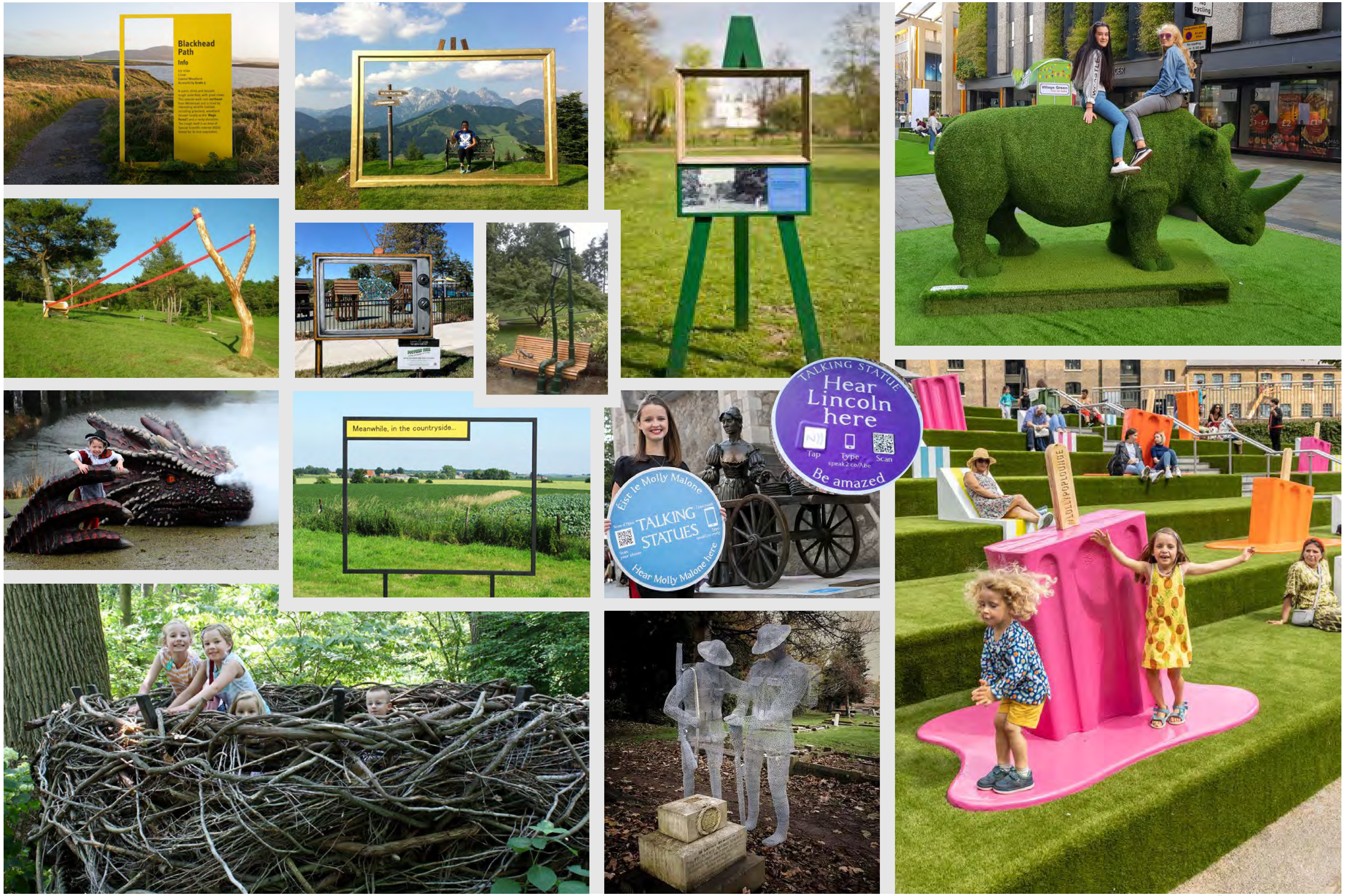
0-3 NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS
4-7 PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS
8-12 CHILDREN
13-15 EARLY TEENS
16-20 YOUTHS
21-29 YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
30-50 ADULTS
60+ RETIREES

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE
RIVERSIDE PARK · ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK · HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK · ST. NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k



Quick Wins

Page 169

LOW TO MID RANGE INVESTMENT

USED TO HELP SHOW PARKS ARE CHANGING

THOUGHTFUL - GENERALLY MAKES VISIT BETTER

Product Suggestions

5. Product Suggestion
Pop-up Shakes/Juice Bar

Pop-Up Shakes & Juice Bar is a quick commercial win, offering refreshing drinks from a temporary kiosk or stall during peak visitor times.

It provides a simple, high-margin addition to the park, encourages dwell time, and generates immediate income with minimal set-up requirements.

Page 170

Demographic

- NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
- PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
- CHILDREN 8-12
- EARLY TEENS 13-15
- YOUTHS 16-20
- YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29
- ADULTS 30-50
- RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

- HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
- PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE
- RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
- RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON
- PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion
Fun Transport Hire

Fun Transport Hire (offering scooters, tricycles, Segways, and similar options) is a quick commercial win that adds playful mobility around the park.

It attracts families and groups, encourages repeat use, and generates immediate income with flexible, easy-to-manage hire operations.

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Demographic

0-3 NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS
4-7 PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS
8-12 CHILDREN
13-15 EARLY TEENS
16-20 YOUTHS
21-29 YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
30-50 ADULTS
60+ RETIREES

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Fitness Indoor/Outdoor Studio

Fitness Hubs are outdoor gym-style zones offering strength, cardio, and mobility equipment in a park setting.

They can also provide space for mindfulness, meditation, fitness & Tai chi classes.

As a quick commercial win, they can operate on a membership or pay-per-use model, attracting regular users, supporting community health, and generating sustainable, recurring income.

Page 172

Demographic

YOUTHS 16-20
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29
ADULTS 30-50
RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
RIVERSIDE PARK · ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK · HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK · ST. NEOTS

Investment

£££

£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Designer Deck Chair Hire

Designer Deck Chair Hire is a quick commercial win that offers stylish, comfortable seating for visitors to enjoy the park's open spaces.

They are also social-media friendly photo ops.contributing positively to increased park awareness.

Easy to manage and highly visible, it encourages dwell time, adds a touch of character, and generates immediate income through simple hire fees.

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Demographic

0-3 NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS
4-7 PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS
8-12 CHILDREN
13-15 EARLY TEENS
16-20 YOUTHS
21-29 YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
30-50 ADULTS
60+ RETIREES

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
RIVERSIDE PARK · ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK · HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK · ST. NEOTS

Investment

£15-50k

5. Product Suggestion

Farmers/Makers Market

Farmers & Makers Market is a quick commercial win that brings local food, drink, and crafts into the park through seasonal stalls and events.

It supports local producers, attracts a broad audience, encourages repeat visits, and generates income through pitch fees and increased food and beverage sales.

Page 174

Demographic

YOUTHS 16-20
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29
ADULTS 30-50
RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£10k

5. Product Suggestion

Bookable Party Gazebo

Bookable Party Gazebos are a quick commercial win, offering sheltered, private spaces for birthdays, celebrations, and group gatherings in the park.

Easy to manage and highly flexible, they generate steady income through hire fees while encouraging longer visits and repeat use.

Page 175

Demographic

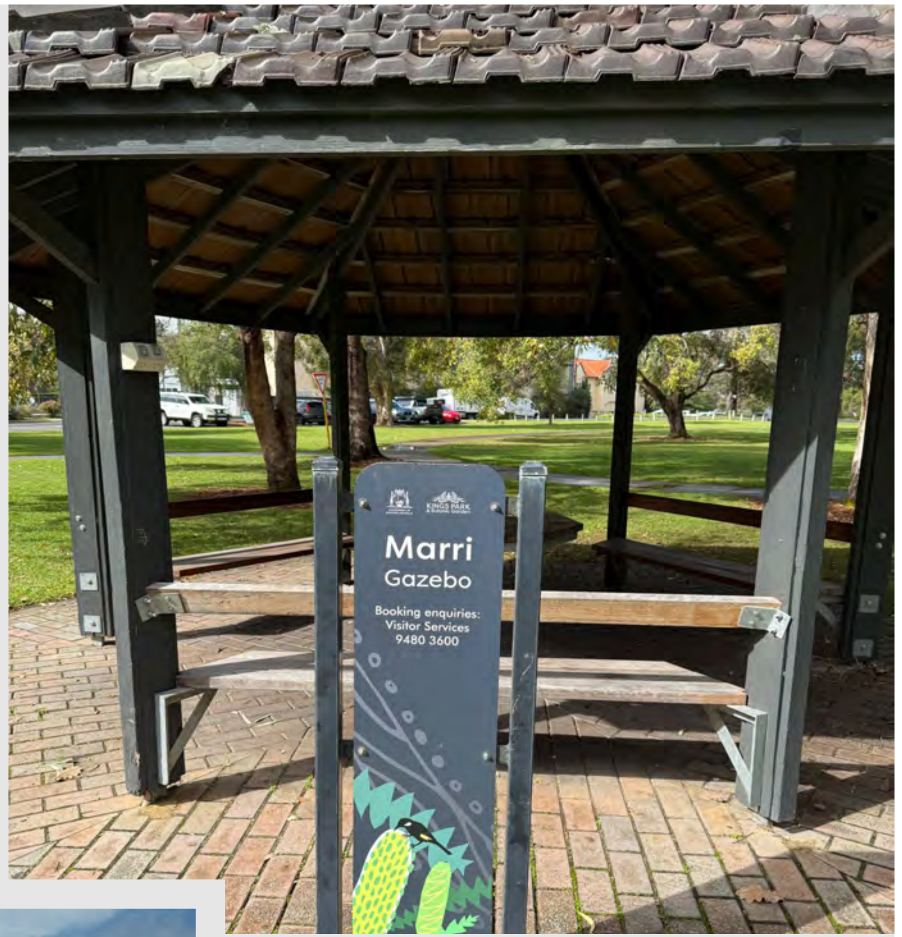
0-3 (Newborns / Toddlers & Parents), 4-7 (Pre-School & Parents), 8-12 (Children), 13-15 (Early Teens), 16-20 (Youths), 21-29 (Young Professionals), 30-50 (Adults), 60+ (Retirees)

Most Suitable Parks

Hinchingbrooke Country Park · Paxton Pits Nature Reserve · Riverside Park St. Neots · Riverside Park Huntingdon · Priory Park St. Neots

Investment

£15-50k



5. Product Suggestion

A Few Extras

These ideas could add variety and fresh appeal to the park, creating both commercial and sponsorship opportunities.

These might include Net Chill-Out Zones, offering playful relaxation spaces for all ages; EV Charging Points, providing practical infrastructure with strong sponsorship potential; and Ninja Courses, delivering paid-entry, high-energy challenges for families and teens.

Each idea brings a distinctive experience or service, encouraging repeat visits while generating income or brand visibility.

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Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15
YOUTHS 16-20
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 21-29
ADULTS 30-50
RETIREES 60+

Most Suitable Parks

HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE
RIVERSIDE PARK ST. NEOTS
RIVERSIDE PARK HUNTINGDON
PRIORY PARK ST. NEOTS

Investment

£10k

net chill out zones
(to enhance F&B)

Motorhome Hook-ups

Sponsored BBQ

Outdoor Fitness Goes Ninja Course!

Rubbish Bin
Way-finding

Cutting Room Floor

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IDEAS THAT DON'T ADD UP (COST, OPERATIONALLY, THROUGHPUT, ETC.)

IDEAS THAT ARE DUPLICATES AND CAN BE COVERED IN SECTIONS ALREADY SHOWN

Product Suggestions

5. Product Suggestion
Skate & Scooter Park

Existing skate park at Riverside St. Neots and in the area to be considered.

Although a strong idea, it is not a very commercial opportunity. The more targeted "Balance Bikes & Play" for young families has stronger potential (see Destination Product section.)

Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3
PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15

Most Suitable Parks

Investment

£££
£100-500k

5. Product Suggestion
Parkour Training

Parkour is a training discipline using movement that developed from military obstacle course training. Freerunning evolved from Parkour as a form of acrobatics and self expression.

Some (normally urban) parks have developed Parkour areas as a way to encourage exercise for the tricky tween to teen market.

Not a very commercial proposition although could be a sponsorship opportunity.

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Demographic

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7
CHILDREN 8-12
EARLY TEENS 13-15
YOUTHS 16-20

Most Suitable Parks

Investment

£15-50k




5. Product Suggestion
Ice Cream Farm Exp.

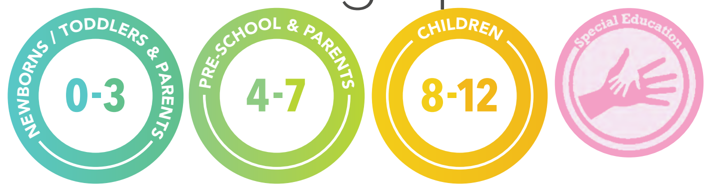
Ice Cream Farm Experience - is recognised as the UK's most unique and successful 'free to enter' family attraction.

A mixture of Free Play, Food & Beverage and Pay To Enter indoor and outdoor play, the attraction predominately appeals to <7 year olds, families and parties.

Probably too commercial and theme park style for the marketplace.

Page 180

Demographic



Most Suitable Parks

Investment

5. Product Suggestion
Large Indoor Play

Large Indoor Play - **Although very commercial, no suitable existing buildings exist.**

Couple this extra investment with local competition makes this non-viable.

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Demographic

0-3 NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS
4-7 PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS
8-12 CHILDREN
Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

Investment

£500+k

5. Product Suggestion

Outdoor Splash Pads

& F&B Unit

Outdoor Water Play - **Environment, facilities, costs, safety, training and safeguarding all cause this to be un-viable.**

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Demographic

NEWBORNS / TODDLERS & PARENTS 0-3

PRE-SCHOOL & PARENTS 4-7

CHILDREN 8-12

Special Education

Most Suitable Parks

Investment

£500+k

5. Product Suggestion

Observation Wheels/Towers

Observation Wheels & Towers - **Investment and lack of population makes these non-viable.**

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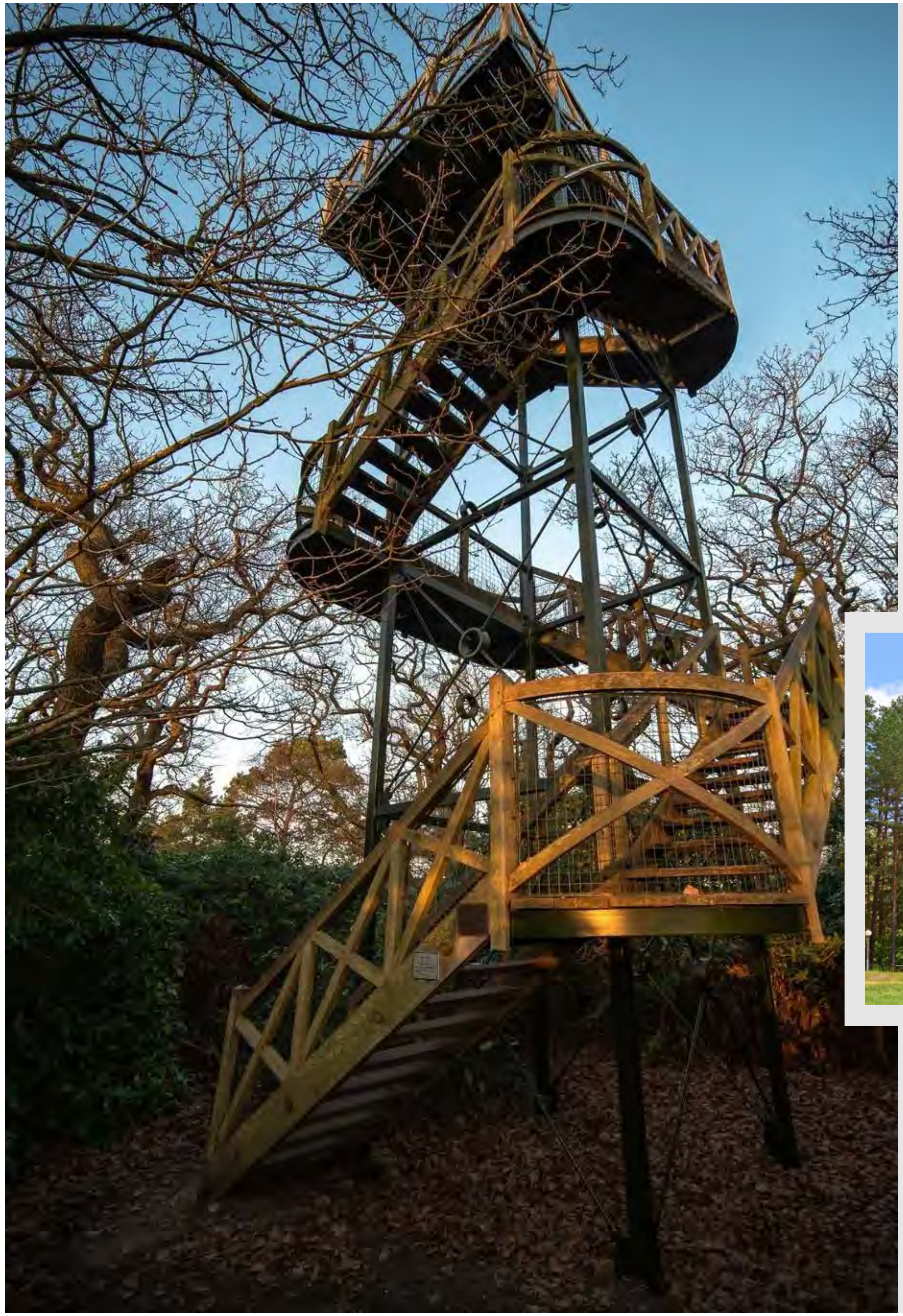
Demographic

4-7 | 8-12 | 13-15 | 16-20 | 21-29 | 30-50 | 60+

Most Suitable Parks

Investment

£500+k



5. Product Suggestion

Experiential Theatrical Shows

Experiential Theatre Shows - Could be viable if a touring show is available.

Could be the task of an event manager but **one offs are non-viable.**

Page 184

Demographic

0-3 4-7 8-12 13-15 16-20 21-29
30-50 60+

Most Suitable Parks

Investment

£500+k

6. Financial Overview

INVESTMENT PLAN

DISCLAIMER

The following investment plan is indicative and assumes a prior stage of comprehensive masterplanning. This process should include cluster planning, consideration of the park brands and vision, economies of scale, and alignment with local demographics. Final investment decisions should be made only after this masterplanning stage is complete.

6. Game Changer Products

Number	Category	Item	Investment Year 0	Contribution Per Anum after Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Occupancy Note	
				GAME CHANGERS											
1	Game Changer	Adventure Play	500,000	38,155	40,441	42,060	43,694	45,342	47,001	48,672	50,353	52,044	53,742	60 days @ 200 Pax per day, 60@100 PPD, 60@50PPD & 180 Zero	£10.00
2	Game Changer	Maze	500,000	12,855	14,461	15,562	16,666	17,772	18,881	19,989	21,097	22,202	23,303	60 days @ 200 Pax per day, 60@100 PPD, 60@50PPD & 180 Zero	£7.50
3	Game Changer	Accommodation (High Level Inv)	1,000,000	384,709	482,259	494,726	507,407	520,302	533,413	546,744	560,294	574,067	588,063	3 months 100% Occupancy, 3 @ 75%, 3 @ 50%, 3 @ 25% based on 60 rooms	£300.00
3	Game Changer	Accomodation (Med Level Inv)	500,000	21,034	33,158	34,633	36,118	37,614	39,119	40,632	42,153	43,679	45,210	3 months 100% Occupancy, 3 @ 75%, 3 @ 50%, 3 @ 25% based on 60 rooms	£150.00
4	Game Changer	Riverside Dining	500,000	66,593	96,158	98,892	101,663	104,470	107,312	110,189	113,100	116,046	119,024	6 months each table being turned 2x per day, 3 months being turned 1 per day and 3 months 1/4 of tables being used.	Food - £15 ph & Drink £12 ph
5	Game Changer	Padel & Pickel	300,000	76,954	79,922	82,013	84,136	86,289	88,473	90,687	92,932	95,207	97,512	6 months all courts are used 50% of the time (8 hours per day), 3 months @ 25% and 3 months @ 10%	£40 per court per hour / £5 ph F&B / £3 ph Retail
6	Game Changer	Adventure Golf	200,000	39,248	41,103	42,259	43,431	44,619	45,822	47,040	48,274	49,522	50,785	60 days @ 200 Pax per day, 60@100 PPD, 60@50PPD & 180 Zero	£7.5 pp, £1 for ice cream, £1 for F&B, £1 for Parties
7	Game Changer	IP Adventure Trail	30,000	7,232	7,537	7,752	7,970	8,191	8,415	8,642	8,873	9,107	9,343	2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd, 2 months @ 25 pd & Six months zero	£2.5 entrance. £0.25p ice cream

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Destination Products

Number	Category	Item	Investment Year 0	Contribution Per Anum after Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Occupancy Note	
				Destination Products											
8	Destination Products	High Low Ropes	500,000	130,660	135,316	138,833	142,403	146,024	149,697	153,422	157,198	161,026	164,903	2 months @ 200 pd, 2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd & Six months Zero	£7.5 entrance £10 photo op, included
9	Destination Products	Sky Trail	150,000	31,464	32,735	33,644	34,566	35,501	36,448	37,408	38,380	39,364	40,359	2 months @ 200 pd, 2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd & Six months Zero	£5.5 entrance
10	Destination Products	Outdoor Sand & Water Play	250,000	77,703	81,357	84,488	87,730	91,087	94,566	98,172	101,911	105,789	109,814	60 days @ 200 Pax per day, 60@100 PPD, 60@50PPD & 180 Zero	£7.50
11	Destination Products	Weddings	150,000	68,860	73,085	74,802	76,547	78,321	80,125	81,958	83,821	85,713	87,636	3 months with 2 weddings per month, 6 months with 4 per month and 3 months with 8 weddings per month. Total of 54 weddings which is extremely pessimistic.	Average charge of £14500 per wedding
12	Destination Products	Aqua Park	100,000	13,501	14,228	14,687	15,153	15,623	16,099	16,581	17,067	17,558	18,053	2 months @ 200 pd, 2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd & Six months Zero	£4 entrance

Number	Category	Item	Investment Year 0	Contribution Per Anum after Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Occupancy Note	
				Destination Products											
13	Destination Products	Seasonal Lake Side F&B	250,000	5,588	6,434	6,977	7,521	8,066	8,612	9,158	9,703	10,247	10,788	Seasonal - 2 months 100 customers, 2 months 50, 2 months 25, 6 months Zero	£9 ph spend
14	Destination Products	Interactive Balance Bike Track	100,000	7,116	7,560	7,870	8,182	8,498	8,815	9,134	9,455	9,778	10,101	Seasonal - 2 months 100 customers, 2 months 50, 2 months 25, 6 months Zero	£4 ph spend
15	Destination Products	Boating, Padel Board & Boathouse	100,000	11,655	12,296	12,717	13,143	13,573	14,008	14,448	14,891	15,338	15,790	Very Low Occupancy Prediction; 2 months at 60 ppm, 2 months at 30 ppm and 2 months at 15 ppm. 6 months zero seasonal	£9 spend ph and £2 Ice Cream spend average
16	Destination Products	Boating Experiences	25,000	46,678	48,015	49,031	50,067	51,122	52,198	53,294	54,410	55,548	56,707	Very Low Occupancy Prediction; 2 months at 100 ppm, 2 months at 50 ppm and 2 months at 25 ppm. 6 months zero seasonal	£10 spend per boat hire
17	Destination Products	Quad Bikes	100,000	22,151	23,194	23,833	24,481	25,139	25,805	26,480	27,164	27,857	28,559	Extreme Low Occupancy Prediction; 2 months at 50 ppm, 2 months at 25 ppm and 2 months at 10 ppm. 6 months zero seasonal	£25 spend per hire
18	Destination Products	Jogging Hub	25,000	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-5,912	-5,977	-6,045	-6,115	-6,187	-6,263	6 months at 100 purchases per day & 6 months with 50 purchases per day average.	£8.50 per head
19	Destination Products	Cycling Hub	25,000	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-5,912	-5,977	-6,045	-6,115	-6,187	-6,263	6 months at 100 purchases per day & 6 months with 50 purchases per day average.	£8.50 per head
20	Destination Products	Woodland Axe Throwing	50,000	33,109	34,315	35,097	35,893	36,703	37,526	38,365	39,217	40,085	40,967	3 months 50 per day, 3 months 25 per day, six months zero	£15 per head plus £5 F&B
21	Destination Products	Remote Controlled Games & Mini Land	50,000	11,835	12,342	12,685	13,032	13,385	13,743	14,105	14,473	14,845	15,222	2 months @ 200 pd, 2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd & Six months Zero	£2.5 per play
22	Destination Products	Trampolines & Bounce Pads	50,000	11,835	12,342	12,685	13,032	13,385	13,743	14,105	14,473	14,845	15,222	2 months @ 200 pd, 2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd & Six months Zero	£2.5 per play
23	Destination Products	Dog Agility	25,000	-6,416	-5,729	-5,788	-5,849	-5,912	-5,977	-6,045	-6,115	-6,187	-6,263	6 months at 100 purchases per day & 6 months with 50 purchases per day average.	£8.50 per head
24	Destination Products	Christmas Walk-through	100,000	13,773	17,257	20,899	24,990	29,587	34,751	40,551	47,067	54,385	62,604	Event. 5000 rising 10% pa.	£15 per head.
25	Destination Products	Winter Light Trail	100,000	13,773	17,257	20,899	24,990	29,587	34,751	40,551	47,067	54,385	62,604	Same as above.	
26	Destination Products	Halloween Lantern Walk & Maze	500,000	4,531	13,024	21,899	31,885	43,119	55,756	69,968	85,950	103,920	124,122	Event. 7500 rising 10% pa.	£25 per head
27	Destination Products	Al Fresco Foodie Experience	100,000	48,803	50,479	51,663	52,868	54,093	55,338	56,604	57,891	59,198	60,527	2 months @ 200 pd, 2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd & Six months Zero	£15 pp
28	Destination Products	Pop Up Cinema Experience	50,000	57,599	59,378	60,645	61,935	63,250		65,952	67,340	68,753	70,193	Event. 30 annual events with 200 people	£20 ticket plus £7.50 F&B
29	Destination Products	Farm Shop	15,000	14,032	14,413	14,741	15,076	15,416	15,763	16,116	16,475	16,841	17,213	Assumption of rental. £2k per month in year 1, growth by inflation	£24k per anum
30	Destination Products	BBQ & Igloo Boat Hire	50,000	33,109	34,315	35,097	35,893	36,703	37,526	38,365	39,217	40,085	40,967	3 months average 50 people and 3 months average 25. 6 Months Zero	£15 per head plus £5 F&B

6. Imagination Products

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Number	Category	Item	Investment					Contribution Per Anum after						Occupancy Note	
			Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10		
				Imagination Products											
31	Imagination Products	Bee Keeping & Allotment Play	100,000	28,768	29,869	30,641	31,426	32,222	33,030	33,850	34,681	35,524	36,379	2 months @ 200 pd, 2 months @ 100 pd, 2 months @ 50 pd & Six months Zero	£5 pp. Assume school groups heavy
32	Imagination Products	Sound Spots	25,000	16,906	17,202	17,602	18,009	18,423	18,845	19,274	19,710	20,154	20,605	Assumption of Sponsorship	£30k per anum
33	Imagination Products	Hedgehogs Experience	25,000	9,016	9,373	9,616	9,863	10,115	10,370	10,629	10,893	11,160	11,431	4 months @ 40 ppd & 4 months @ 20 ppd. 4 months Zero	£5 pp. Assume school groups heavy
34	Imagination Products	Dancing Fountains & Show Space	100,000	531	658	888	1,122	1,360	1,604	1,852	2,105	2,364	2,627	Assumption of Sponsorship	£30k per anum
35	Imagination Products	Pop up Beer Garden	15,000	10,062	10,408	10,662	10,922	11,187	11,456	11,732	12,013	12,299	12,591	Event Rental. 3 months with 3 events per week, 3 months with 2 events per week. 6 months zero	£500 venue hire
36	Imagination Products	Exclusive Picnic Spots	50,000	-3,975	-3,926	-3,908	-3,893	-3,879	-3,866	-3,856	-3,848	-3,842	-3,838	Assumes 10 spots with 48 rentals each per anum.	£20 rental Fee of area
37	Imagination Products	Ice Skating & Hot Chocolate	200,000	38,974	40,652	41,800	42,963	44,141	45,334	46,543	47,767	49,005	50,258	Event. 3 months with average of 75 per day	£20 entrance & £5 F&B
38	Imagination Products	Kite Flying Festivals	15,000	1,242	1,367	1,434	1,503	1,572	1,641	1,712	1,783	1,855	1,927	Event. 1000 per day, weekend 2 days	£5 entrance, £1 Ice Cream, £3 F&B
39	Imagination Products	Lakeology Wildlife Discovery Backpacks	15,000	-1,000	-966	-939	-912	-884	-856	-826	-797	-767	-736	Assumes sponsorship annually	£3k per annum
40	Imagination Products	Messy Play	25,000	12,855	13,029	13,665	13,994	14,328	14,667	15,012	15,363	15,720	16,083	Very Low Occupancy Prediction; 2 months at 100 ppm, 2 months at 50 ppm and 2 months at 25 ppm. 6 months zero seasonal	£5 per child entrance
41	Imagination Products	Interactive Sensory Garden Nature Trail	100,000	24,585	25,603	26,290	26,987	27,694	28,412	29,139	29,877	30,624	31,381	Very Low Occupancy Prediction; 2 months at 100 ppm, 2 months at 50 ppm and 2 months at 25 ppm. 6 months zero seasonal	£10 per child entrance
42	Imagination Products	GeoCashing	15,000	-1,476	-1,455	-1,444	-1,434	-1,424	-1,414	-1,404	-1,396	-1,387	-1,380	Assumes sponsorship annually	£3k per annum
43	Imagination Products	Forest School	25,000	-1,921	-1,886	-1,867	-1,850	-1,833	-1,816	-1,801	-1,786	-1,772	-1,759	Assumes sponsorship annually	£5k per annum
44	Imagination Products	Public Art & Photo Ops	50,000	-3,855	-3,802	-3,782	-3,764	-3,747	-3,732	-3,719	-3,708	-3,699	-3,693	Assumes sponsorship annually	£10k per annum

6.

Number	Category	Item	Investment		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10		Occupancy Note	
			Year 0		Contribution Per Anum after												
					Quick Wins												
45	Quick Wins	Pop Up Shakes / Juice Bar	50,000		-4,398	-4,093	-4,079	-4,067	-4,057	-4,048	-4,041	-4,037	-4,034	-4,035		2 months of 175 sales per day	£8.50 per sale
46	Quick Wins	Fun Transport Hire	25,000		38,715	39,902	40,766	41,648	42,547	43,464	44,400	45,354	46,327	47,320		Very Low Occupancy Prediction; 2 months at 100 ppm, 2 months at 50 ppm and 2 months at 25 ppm. 6 months zero seasonal	£10 average hire
47	Quick Wins	Fitness Studio	300,000		48,482	50,583	52,088	53,612	55,154	56,716	58,295	59,892	61,506	63,137		Membership Model.	200 members paying £75 per month plus £50 F&B Per anum
48	Quick Wins	Designer Deck Chair Hire	15,000		24,339	25,089	25,631	26,183	26,746	27,319	27,903	28,498	29,104	29,722		Seasonal Hire. Assumed 3 months at 50 hires per day	£15 per hire
49	Quick Wins	Farmers Market	10,000		10,197	10,536	10,783	11,035	11,292	11,554	11,821	12,094	12,372	12,656		Hire of area. Assumes 30 pitches for 50 weekends	£20 per pitch
50	Quick Wins	Bookable Party Gazzebo	25,000		-1,420	-1,371	-1,343	-1,314	-1,287	-1,259	-1,233	-1,207	-1,181	-1,156		Assumes 5 Gazebos being rented 50% of the year 2x per week	£25 per hire

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Totals

Number	Category	Item	Investment		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10		
			Year 0		TOTALS SUMMARY - Contribution Per Anum after											
		NET CONTRIBUTION PER ANUM			1,531,934	1,733,965	1,798,228	1,864,957	1,934,714	1,943,195	2,084,479	2,165,153	2,250,201	2,340,064		
		Total Investment	7,580,000													

NOTES

Does not include cost of Brand Licence Fees, Operator Commision (if applicable), rent, waste, Stationary, marketing, legal costs & accountancy as all assumed to be central costs

Does not include any costs of infrastructure such as car parking, road additions, signage etc

Interest rate is set at 6% using PWLB rates over a 10 year term. Longer term is possible?

Investment asumptions are based on areas specified plus market knowledge

All above is conceptual and subject to detailed design. Design fees not included.

Contribution is after repayment of sinking fund, loan intrest & capex and Corporation Tax

7.
Summary

This report explores a comprehensive range of opportunities to enhance the park's visitor experience while generating sustainable income. It identifies potential quick wins - such as pop-up food offers, hireable gazebos, and designer deck chair hire - alongside larger, long-term investments like immersive light trails, indoor play facilities, and accommodation.

The proposals balance commerciality with community and conservation values, offering both paid-entry attractions and sponsored free experiences such as sound spots, nature backpacks, and public art installations. Ideas are designed to encourage longer dwell time, repeat visits, and wider audience appeal, from families and schools to adult leisure seekers.

The report also highlights opportunities for F&B growth through café extensions, seasonal pop-ups, and premium dining experiences, as well as active and wellness attractions including running hubs, cycling hubs, padelball courts, and spa/sauna concepts.

Together, these recommendations provide a roadmap for driving revenue, increasing engagement, and positioning the park as a year-round destination, while remaining sensitive to its natural setting and community role.

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Thank You

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Public
Key Decision – Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Signing of the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant
Meeting/Date:	Overview & Scrutiny (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) – 5th March 2026 Cabinet – 17th March 2026
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Place- (Councillor Sarah Conboy)
Report by:	Community Development Officer, Community Services – People Team (Amanda Turner)
Ward(s) affected:	All Ward(s)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities & Partnerships) is invited to comment on the contents of the Signing of the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant report and make any comments to the Cabinet.

Public
Key Decision

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Signing of the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant

Meeting/Date: O&S (Environment, Communities & Partnerships) – 5th March 2026
Cabinet – 17th March 2026

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Place- (Councillor Sarah Conboy)

Report by: Community Development Officer, Community Services –People Team (Amanda Turner)

Ward(s) affected: All Ward(s)

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval to establish and sign the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant. The Armed Forces Covenant is a national pledge that ensures serving personnel, veterans, and their families are treated fairly and do not experience disadvantage when accessing public services. The Covenant is underpinned by the Armed Forces Act 2021, which places a statutory duty on local authorities to have due regard to Covenant principles in key service areas, including housing.

Signing the Armed Forces Covenant is important to ensure that the Council's commitments reflect current legislation, best practice, and local delivery arrangements, and to demonstrate continued support to the Armed Forces community within Huntingdonshire. The Covenant will provide clarity on how the Council embeds Covenant principles across policy, service delivery, and employment practices, and will align the Council with neighbouring authorities and countywide partnership arrangements.

Huntingdonshire District Council is a signatory to the 2011 shared Community Covenant; however, the statutory duty introduced by the Armed Forces Act 2021, includes evolving expectations from the Ministry of Defence and Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA), and the Council's role within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

There are no direct financial implications arising from establishing the Armed Forces Covenant. The primary risks relate to capacity and consistency of delivery, which will be mitigated through proportionate pledges, partnership

working, and officer oversight. Should any costs be anticipated in the future, Cabinet will be asked to review and sign off on such on a case-by-case basis.

Cabinet is asked to approve the Armed Forces Covenant and support its adoption and publication.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet/Committee is

RECOMMENDED to:

a) Approve the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant, superseding the previous Covenant.

b) Agree that the Council continues to embed Armed Forces Covenant principles across relevant policies, services, and employment practices, where appropriate and proportionate.

c) Agree that a member of Senior Leadership acts as strategic sponsor, and that the Council's appointed Armed Forces Champion acts as Chair of the Armed Forces Covenant Working Group, to support effective coordination and governance.

d) Agree that an annual progress report on delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) Panel to provide assurance, transparency and ongoing oversight.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to sign the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant, ensuring compliance with statutory duties and alignment with current best practice.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

2.1 This report is necessary to ensure that Huntingdonshire District Council remains compliant with the statutory duties introduced by the Armed Forces Act 2021 and aligned with evolving national expectations. It also provides the foundation for implementing a series of proportionate, voluntary pledges across relevant service areas, ensuring the Council keeps pace with current best practice and demonstrates a clear, up-to-date commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community.

3. ROLE OF CABINET

3.1 To support effective governance and organisational ownership of the Armed Forces Covenant, the following is proposed, subject to capacity and agreement:

3.2 That a member of Senior Leadership acts as strategic sponsor, and that the Council's appointed Armed Forces Champion acts as Chair of the Council's Armed Forces Covenant Working Group.

3.3 The Armed Forces Champion will provide Member oversight and support cross-directorate engagement through the Working Group to ensure relevant services can embed Covenant principles where appropriate.

3.4 That Heads of Service support cross-directorate engagement to help ensure relevant services (e.g. Housing, HR, Customer Services, Communities) can embed Covenant principles where appropriate.

3.5 That proportionate officer time is supported to coordinate activity, maintain partnerships, and represent the Council within countywide Armed Forces Covenant arrangements.

3.6 That Cabinet provides visible leadership endorsement of the Covenant to reinforce its importance internally and externally.

4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

4.1 Option 1 – Do nothing: This option would risk misalignment with current legislation and best practice and would not clearly demonstrate compliance with the Armed Forces Act 2021.

4.2 Option 2 – Sign the Armed Forces Covenant (recommended): This option reflects statutory duties, local delivery arrangements, and partnership working. Ensuring compliance, clarity, and continued support for the Armed Forces community.

5. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

5.1 The comments of the Overview and Scrutiny (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) Panel will be added following their meeting on 5th March 2026.

6. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

6.1 Capacity risk: There is a risk that service pressures may limit the ability to deliver all commitments. This will be mitigated by proportionate pledges and use of enabling language such as "where possible" and "encourage".

6.2 Reputational risk: Failure to sign the Covenant could undermine confidence among the Armed Forces community and partners. Establishing and signing the Covenant mitigates this risk.

7. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOWING APPROVAL FROM CABINET:

7.1 Subject to approval, the Armed Forces Covenant will be signed and published.

7.2 Officers will ensure relevant policies and guidance reflect Covenant principles and will continue engagement through countywide partnership arrangements.

7.3 Following Cabinet approval on 17 March 2026, the Council will undertake the required due diligence process with the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA), anticipated to take approximately eight weeks.

7.4 Upon completion of the due diligence process, an Armed Forces Covenant Working Group will be formally scheduled to coordinate delivery of the Action Plan and support cross-service implementation.

7.5 A formal signing ceremony will be arranged following completion of due diligence and establishment of the Working Group, anticipated to take place in May 2026.

8. LINK TO HUNTINGDONSHIRE FUTURES, THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

(See Corporate Plan)(See Huntingdonshire Futures)

8A.1 The Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy is the Council's long-term vision to 2050, developed through extensive engagement with residents, businesses and partners. It sets out five transformational journeys: Pride in Place, Inclusive Economy, Health Embedded, Environmental Innovation and Travel Transformed, underpinned by a commitment to partnership and collective ambition.

8A.2 Huntingdonshire has a significant Armed Forces presence, including RAF Wyton and RAF Alconbury, alongside defence-sector employers. The

Armed Forces Covenant aligns strongly with the Place Strategy by ensuring service personnel, veterans and their families are supported to integrate, thrive and contribute to the district's future.

8A.3 The Covenant supports the Place Strategy journeys as follows:

- Pride in Place– Supporting community cohesion and integration for Armed Forces families who may experience mobility and relocation challenges.

- Inclusive Economy– Enabling veterans and service leavers to transition into local employment sectors including engineering, logistics, digital and security, strengthening the district's skills base.

- Health Embedded– Supporting equitable access to services and recognising the specific health and wellbeing considerations associated with military life.

- Environmental Innovation– Aligning with the Armed Forces' commitment to Net Zero 2050 through partnership on sustainable estates, infrastructure and innovation.

- Travel Transformed– Supporting improved connectivity between bases, towns, education and healthcare provision, benefiting operational and family life.

8.A4 Establishing the Covenant therefore supports not only statutory compliance but also the Council's long-term placemaking ambitions and partnership approach.

8B STRATEGIC CONTEXT – DEFENCE FOOTPRINT IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

8B.1 Huntingdonshire has a strong and growing Armed Forces footprint, centred on RAF Wyton and RAF Alconbury, with associated defence-sector employers contributing significantly to the local economy.

8B.2 The presence of the Armed Forces community brings both opportunity and responsibility. Service personnel and their families contribute to economic growth, community life and skills development. However, the nature of military service can create challenges linked to mobility, housing, employment transitions and access to services.

8B.3 Signing the Armed Forces Covenant ensures the Council recognises this strategic context and formalises its commitment to partnership working with the Ministry of Defence, the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

8B.4 The Covenant provides a framework to support:

- Estate and land-use planning discussions around defence sites

- Alignment of skills and employment pathways for service leavers
- Partnership engagement in climate and infrastructure initiatives
- Enhancing Huntingdonshire's attractiveness for recruitment and retention of service personnel

8B.5 This strengthens the Council's role as a proactive place leader, working collaboratively to support both national defence priorities and local community wellbeing.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 The Covenant has been informed by national guidance, partnership working across Cambridgeshire, and officer engagement.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Armed Forces Act 2021 places a statutory duty on local authorities to have due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant in housing-related functions. Signing the Covenant ensures compliance with this legal requirement.

10.2 It is also important to note that the forthcoming Armed Forces Bill 2026 is expected to extend this duty to additional service areas, including:

- Childcare
- Employment and service in the Armed Forces
- Personal taxation
- Welfare benefits
- Criminal justice
- Immigration
- Citizenship
- Pensions
- Service-related compensation
- Transport

Further details on these proposed extensions can be found in the official guidance here:
https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/covenant-legal-duty/armedforces-covenant-duty-toolkit/the-armed-forces-covenant-legal-dutyextension-what-it-means-for-armed-forces-families/

11. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from establishing the Armed Forces Covenant. The primary risks relate to capacity and consistency of delivery, which will be mitigated through proportionate pledges, partnership working, and officer oversight. Should any costs be anticipated in the future, Cabinet will be asked to review and sign off on such on a case-by-case basis

12. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None identified.

13. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None identified.

14. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Equalities: The Armed Forces community may experience disadvantage linked to mobility and service life. The Covenant supports fair access to services and positive equalities outcomes.

15. SUPPORT AND ADVICE OFFERED TO MEMBERS

15.1 Officers will provide proportionate advice and support to Members in relation to the Armed Forces Covenant, including:

15.2 Briefing Members on statutory duties under the Armed Forces Act 2021 and relevant developments.

15.3 Providing guidance and training, where appropriate, on how Covenant principles may be considered within casework involving serving personnel, veterans, and Armed Forces families.

15.4 Supporting Members with enquiries from residents connected to the Armed Forces community by signposting to appropriate internal services or external partners.

15.5 Providing briefing material for meetings, events, or public engagements involving Armed Forces-related matters.

15.6 Supporting ward-level engagement where Members wish to promote Covenant activity locally.

16. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

16.1 Establishing and signing the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant ensures compliance with the statutory duties set out in the Armed Forces Act 2021 and anticipates the proposed extension of those duties through forthcoming legislation.

16.2 The Covenant formalises the Council's commitment to ensuring that serving personnel, veterans and Armed Forces families are not disadvantaged when accessing services, and that due regard is consistently embedded within relevant policy and operational decision-making.

16.3 Huntingdonshire has a significant Armed Forces and defence-sector presence, including RAF Wyton and RAF Alconbury. The Covenant recognises this strategic context and reinforces the Council's role as a place leader working collaboratively with defence partners, the Ministry of Defence and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

16.4 Signing the Covenant strengthens alignment with Huntingdonshire Futures and the Corporate Plan by supporting inclusive communities, workforce transition, economic resilience and long-term placemaking objectives.

16.5 The recommended approach provides clarity of governance through strategic sponsorship and a coordinated working group, ensuring proportionate delivery, oversight and partnership engagement.

16.6 Failure to establish an updated Covenant would risk reputational impact, reduced partnership influence and misalignment with evolving national expectations. Approval therefore ensures the Council demonstrates visible leadership, statutory compliance and continued support for the Armed Forces community within Huntingdonshire.

17. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 - Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Armed Forces Act 2021
- Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Covenant guidance
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership documentation

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Signing of the Huntingdonshire District Council Armed Forces Covenant

Action Plan

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Action	Pledges	Responsible Service Area
Attend Armed Forces Covenant Working Group	Forming an Armed Forces Covenant & Community working group to manage and coordinate the Council's ongoing action plan	Finance; Democratic Services & Monitoring; Leisure Health & Environment; Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Property & Facilities; Policy, Performance & Energy Planning; Customer Change; Operations; Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery; HR & OD; Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs; AFC
Appoint Service AFC Lead	Appointing Service Team AFC leads to monitor the AFC work and attend the Armed Forces Covenant working group	Finance; Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer; Leisure Health & Environment; Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Property & Facilities; Policy, Performance & Energy Planning; Customer Change; Operations; Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery; HR & OD; Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs; AFC
Appoint Armed Forces Champion to Chair AFC Working Group	Establish Member oversight to support effective coordination and cross-directorate delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan	Democratic Services; AFC
Promote AFC induction and frontline staff modules internally	Encouraging staff to undertake periodic Armed Forces Covenant Induction and Frontline Staff modules	Finance; Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer; Leisure Health & Environment; Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Policy, Performance & Energy Planning; Customer Change; Operations; Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs; AFC
Promote Forces Connect via internal communications and awareness	Making the Forces Connect app and web platforms available to all staff to provide signposting as appropriate and encouraging take up	Finance; Leisure Health & Environment; Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Policy, Performance & Energy Planning; Customer Change; HR & OD; Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs
Incorporate AF Question into customer engagement processes	Updating our systems and processes to ask and record the Armed Forces Question when engaging with our clients, where possible	Leisure Health & Environment; Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Policy, Performance & Energy Planning; Customer Change; HR & OD

Display AFC support information in public-facing service locations	Providing specific space for Armed Forces Covenant and other relevant support information in our public customer service areas	Leisure Health & Environment; Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Policy, Performance & Energy Planning; Customer Change
Review leisure membership conditions for AFC community	Reviewing membership conditions at council owned leisure facilities to ensure that the Armed Forces Community are not disadvantaged due to service requirements	Leisure Health & Environment
Develop targeted communications for AFC licensing and regulatory services	Promoting environmental services to the Armed Forces Community including Taxi and Private Hire licences and Food Businesses	Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection
Provide AFC e-learning and Forces Connect to partners and parish councils	Providing and promoting Armed Forces Covenant and Community e-learning and Forces Connect to partners	Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs
Develop links with local AFC groups and stakeholders	Developing links with all local Armed Forces Community groups and stakeholders to provide advice and engagement opportunities	Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection
Use AFC data to identify trends and target support	Using collected Armed Forces Community data to identify trends and opportunities to target support	Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Policy, Performance & Energy Planning; Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery; HR & OD
Promote and support AFC civic and support events	Promoting and supporting Armed Forces Community civic and support events	Planning Infrastructure & Public Protection; Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs
Consider AFC Community needs within Corporate Plan refresh	Working to identify and map the Armed Forces Community in Hunts and consider needs when refreshing HDC's Corporate Plan	Policy, Performance & Energy Planning
Engage with AFC community to shape services	Engaging with the AF Community to review their experiences of living in Hunts and shape services accordingly	Policy, Performance & Energy Planning

Provide employment and training information to service spouses	Targeting service spouses with education, training and employment opportunities through Invest in Hunts	Policy, Performance & Energy Planning
Target AFC community with revenues and benefits information	Working with partners to ensure that the Armed Forces Community are targeted with information about revenues and benefits	Customer Change
Review housing register and temporary accommodation data	Using collected AFC data to identify trends in housing need	Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery
Ensure compliance with AFC statutory duty toolkit	Ensuring service delivery aligns with statutory duty requirements	Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery
Advocate AFC to commercial partners	Advocating the Armed Forces Covenant to commercial partners through Economic Development team	Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery
Record AFC workforce data via HR systems	Updating internal systems to record Armed Forces Community workforce data	HR & OD
Support Armed Forces Community staff through ERS	Continuing work to support AFC staff and progress through the Employer Recognition Scheme	HR & OD
Identify AFC staff and provide internal support pathways	Identifying Huntingdonshire District Council staff that are members of the Armed Forces Community	HR & OD
Promote employment opportunities via CTP and FFJ	Promoting employment opportunities at HDC by partnering with Career Transition Partnership and Forces Families Jobs	HR & OD
Maintain and update AFC support webpage	Regularly reviewing and updating the HDC Armed Forces Community support page	Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs
Target AFC with grant funding information	Working with partners to ensure AFC community are targeted with grant funding information	Communications, Engagement & Public Affairs

Coordinate AFC Action Plan delivery and monitoring	Quarterly monitoring, support and feedback collection for AFC Action Plan	AFC

Public - Yes
Key Decision – No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Local Area Energy Plan 2025/26
Meeting/Date:	Environment, Community and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 09/03/2026
Executive Portfolio:	Climate, Transformation and Workforce – Cllr Lara Davenport-Ray)
Report by:	Harriet Robinson – Interim Place Strategy and Climate Lead
Ward(s) affected:	All

Executive Summary:

The Cambridgeshire Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) sets out a robust, evidence-based and spatially targeted pathway towards its goal of reaching carbon net zero by 2045. This aligns with Huntingdonshire's growth ambitions and infrastructure needs, identifying the lowest-regret interventions across buildings, transport, industry, local generation and the electricity network. It quantifies investment needs and benefits and proposes a phased delivery roadmap to 2045 across the County. The LAEP was a project led by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) with Huntingdon District Council (HDC) acting as a contributing member to the creation of the Plan.

The LAEP directly supports HDC's Place Strategy, which sets out a vision to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, work and visit over the next 30 years. It also supports the Corporate Plan and Climate Strategy as follows:

- Climate Strategy – reduce energy use, shift to renewables
- Corporate Plan, Action 44 – minimise use of fossil fuels for energy where there is a social, environmental or financial case

The LAEP will guide area-based retrofit, prioritise fuel-poverty action, aim to accelerate clean growth and improving health outcomes through warmers, healthier homes and cleaner air. It also acts as a shared evidence base for planning, funding bids and partnership delivery across the District and the relevant unitary authorities pending local government reorganisation (LGR).

The development of the LAEP began at the end of 2023 with the establishment of the LAEP steering group. This was led by CCC and included representatives from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), HDC,

Cambridge City Council (CC), East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) and South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). Fenland District Council (FDC) were keen to participate but were unable to resource their support at the time. Stakeholder engagement consisted of a series of workshops, an online survey and technical modelling that ran in parallel to establish potential scenarios for future energy needs. Full descriptions of this will be provided once the final LAEP has been approved by CCC and the CPCA. A summary document has been provided with this report to summarise to Members how the LAEP can assist as an evidence base for potential funding investments for Huntingdonshire.

Recommendation(s):

1. To note the strong alignment with HDC's Place and Climate strategies and Corporate Plan outcomes.
2. To review and comment on the Cambridgeshire LAEP document summary
3. To provisionally acknowledge the LAEP as a guide for organisations. undertaking retrofit and decarbonisation across their assets in Huntingdonshire.
4. To note that the LAEP will act as a principle, evidence base as an enabler to secure future external funding.
5. This will sit alongside formal strategies and policies where relevant and as such, this does not require a formal decision by Members.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a summary of the Cambridgeshire LAEP for consideration and approval as part of a strategic, county-wide, evidence-based roadmap to net zero 2045. It will also aim to highlight the guiding points that are place-specific for Huntingdonshire. It will guide investment and spatial planning and coordinate delivery with the United Kingdom Power Networks (UKPN) and National Energy System Operator (NESO). It will aim to provide a shared framework for partners to bring forward retrofit, heat decarbonisation, EV infrastructure, local renewables and flexibility projects.

1.2 There has previously been no formally structured planning process to help local governments transition to low carbon energy systems. Current planning processes for infrastructure in the UK are not delivering the scale of intervention necessary to meet the UK's legally binding goals. A LAEP is a system that has been designed to provide a long-term framework to decarbonise energy systems in the UK and to provide an opportunity for dialogue between local governments, energy network operators, consumers and other stakeholders.

1.3 This report provides a summary of the LAEP prior to its pending approval through the CPCA's Growth Committee on 11th March 2026 and its Board on 18th March 2026. The summary highlights current progress and sets out HDC's position and the actions already underway to reduce emissions. It demonstrates how HDC is continuing to:

- **Lead by example** through its commitment to becoming a net-carbon-zero Council by 2040.
- **Enable action** by supporting our communities, partners and local organisations to accelerate their own transition
- **Encourage collective effort** ensuring everyone who lives, works or visits the District can contribute to reducing carbon. This includes those who live, work and visit Huntingdonshire help to reduce carbon emissions.
- **Provide an evidence base** and a guide for residents and businesses by helping to pinpoint the most effective local energy solutions that support growth, resilience and transition to net zero.

1.4 The LAEP is currently owned jointly by its steering group. The paper presented to the CPCA discusses the need to establish who the long-term owner will be.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 A LAEP is a local, spatial energy plan developed with district councils, UKPN and the Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSENZH). It models 4 scenarios – counterfactual, electric engagement, hydrogen revolution and the preferred option, a holistic transition – to rest cost, benefits and feasibility to reach carbon net zero across Cambridgeshire to 2045. It focuses on areas councils can influence: buildings, personal transport, local-connected industry and distribution-connected generation and flexibility.

2.2 In terms of the policy and regional context, the LAEP aligns with national policy (e.g. Clean Power, Future Homes and Buildings Standard, Warm Homes Plan) and with the CPCA Local Growth Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Framework. These highlight energy as a binding growth constraint and underscore the value of LAEP evidence to prioritise network enforcement and sequencing of development.

3. KEY PROJECT PARTNERS

3.1 Led by CCC, the steering group for this project consists of CCC, HDC, the CPCA, SCDC, CC and ECDC. FDC were keen to participate but were unable to resource their support at the time.

3.2 An advisory group supported the steering group, including UKPN, the GSENZH, the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University (during initial stages) and NESO in the later stages.

3.3 Following procurement in late 2024, the project was supported by technical expertise from CAG Consultants for stakeholder engagement and Mott MacDonald for the technical modelling and production of the report.

3.4 Funding for the LAEP was secured from across the steering group, consist of contributions of:

Partner	Amount contributed
CPCA	£260,000 (£60,000 approved in 2023 and a further £200,000 approved in September 2024)
CCC	£30,000
HDC	£10,000
Greater Cambridgeshire Shared Planning Service (CC and SCDC contribution)	£20,000
	Other partners provided in-kind support via provision of resource

4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Stakeholder engagement took place during summer/autumn 2025, including 6 workshops and an online survey. It involved 96 stakeholders across businesses, the NHS, emergency services and community organisations.

4.2 The technical modelling underpinning the LAEP was carried out alongside wider evidence gathering. This work assessed how future energy demand and infrastructure requirements could evolve under different assumptions. It explored:

- A baseline ‘counterfactual’ pathway, reflecting how the energy system is likely to develop if only current national and local policy commitments progress, without additional intervention.
- 3 forward-looking net zero scenarios based on UKPN’s established projections for electricity network change, each reflecting varying levels of local engagement, uptake of emerging technologies and the influence of a supportive policy environment.
- Growth sensitivity testing, which examined how differing levels of planned and anticipated development could alter infrastructure needs within each scenario.

5. WHAT THE LAEP WILL MEAN FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE

5.1 **Emissions and needs:** county-wide emissions have fallen approximately 35% since 2005 (largely from grid decarbonisation) but transport emissions still remain high and gas heating dominates. Electronic vehicle (EV) uptake is still modest and many homes remain below an energy performance certificate (EPC) rating of C. Huntingdonshire itself has approximately 6,700 fuel-poor households.

5.2 **Networks first:** under all net-zero scenarios, substation headroom turns negative by the late 2030s without proactive upgrades. The Huntingdon primary substation shows early pressure and requires coordinated planning with the UKPN and NESO.

5.3 **Economics:** delivering the holistic transition scenario as stated in the summary in Appendix 1. This requires approximately £2.7-£3.4 billion additional capital expenditure beyond the counterfactual but generates £3.5 billion in carbon benefits, £1.2 billion in bill savings and £5.7 billion gross value added until 2045.

5.4 **Place Strategy alignment:** the LAEP’s short, medium and long-term actions reinforce Place strategy delivery, using retrofit and heat decarbonisation to tackle inequality/fuel poverty aligning with ‘health embedded’, EV and active-travel infrastructure to support ‘travel transformed’ and local renewables and innovation to drive an ‘inclusive economy’ and ‘environmental innovation.’

5.5 **Local Plan alignment:** the LAEP will support delivery of policy LP 35, ‘Renewable and Local Carbon Energy’ in HDC’s Local Plan to 2036. Looking forward, it will align with the aspirations set out in the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046. This seeks to support development of renewable energy schemes in areas identified as providing potential for effective schemes within the evidence base for climate change (see Appendix A in the Renewable Energy Assessment link) Areas of strong potential areas mapped within this will provide a guide to preferable locations for communities and scheme developers. The draft Local Plan also looks to enable action by support community led renewable and low carbon energy schemes.

5.6 **Climate Strategy alignment:** the LAEP directly supports HDC’s Climate Strategy by setting out practical, evidence-based pathways to reduce area-wide emissions in line with the District’s net zero ambitions. Its focus on building decarbonisation, renewable energy deployment, low-carbon transport and grid readiness compliments the Strategy’s priorities around mitigation, resilience and enabling a just transition. By identifying local opportunities for carbon reduction and coordinating action across partners, the LAEP strengthens the District’s ability to delivery sustained emissions cuts while supporting communities and businesses to adapt to a changing climate

5.7 The table below demonstrates the potential short, medium and long-term phasing across 2025 to 2045:

Short term: 2025-2030	Medium term: 2030-2035	Long term: 2035-2045
• Rapid scale-up of heat pumps and building retrofit in social housing and fuel-poor areas • Rollout of on-street EV charging in high-demand areas • Feasibility and piloting of district heating • Targeted industrial engagement	• Major network upgrades • Expansion of district heating zones • Large-scale rooftop solar and storage	• Completion of industrial fuel switching (electricity/hydrogen) • Final push to replace residual gas heating • Full flexibility integration into the grid

6. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

6.1 Not adopting a LAEP creates significant risks including:

- Slower progress towards net zero targets due to the absence of a clear, evidence-based roadmap.
- Poorer coordination of infrastructure investment and network planning, resulting in higher long-term costs and delays to electrification and reduced ability to attract or de-risk private investment because stakeholders lack clarity and confidence in local delivery pathways
- Inconsistent decision making across transport, buildings and energy systems, limiting efficiency and missing opportunities for local economic growth and skills development

7. ACTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

7.1 The LAEP is intended to function as a live, evidence base and will need periodic updating to reflect shifts in policy, changes in local growth trajectories and emerging market trends in technology uptake. Ongoing work will therefore be required to ensure the plan remains current, robust and aligned with Huntingdonshire’s and the wider county’s ambitions.

7.2 Following approval of the CPCA's Local Growth Plan (LGP) in December 2025, several areas for further development have already been identified, which will affect all geographies in the Cambridgeshire area:

- **Enhanced geospatial assessment of growth areas:** more detailed spatial modelling will be undertaken for the LGP's identified opportunity zones and for major development locations emerging through district Local Plans. This will provide a finer-grained understanding of local energy needs at key growth sites. This work is already programmed for delivery within the current calendar year, supported by remaining funding from the original LAEP commission.
- **Reflecting higher aspirational growth needs:** while the LAEP incorporates the LGP's 'doubling of growth' core ambition, the subsequent Mayoral aspiration to 'triple gross value added' was announced too late to be integrated. Future integrations of the LAEP may therefore require further modelling to test and accommodate these higher-growth scenarios.
- **Establishing long-term governance and resourcing:** in the context of the 2024 Devolution White Paper proposals, there is a need to confirm how the LAEP will be governed, maintained and resourced over time. This ensures it remains an up-to-date and credible evidence base for regional and national submissions.
- **Meeting national data requirements:** UKPN currently requests updated datasets from local and strategic authorities twice each year, which aligns with their 5-year investment cycles. NESO is expected to establish similar data-collection processes. It will be important to ensure local authorities can respond consistently and effectively – despite these activities not being currently resourced – will be critical to maintaining the LAEP's value.

8. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, LOCAL PLAN, PLACE STRATEGY (HUNTINGDONSHIRE FUTURES) AND CLIMATE STRATEGIES

8.1 Corporate Plan: Corporate Plan
8.2 Local Plan Draft: Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046
8.3 Place Strategy: Place Strategy - Appendix 3.pdf
8.4 Climate Strategy: Climate Strategy Appendix 1
Document E: Renewable Energy Assessment: Document E Renewable Energy
8.5

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 N/A

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 It is anticipated that a significant proportion of this work can be delivered in house and officers across the partner authorities in the steering group shall remain in collaboration to continue this work.

11. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The LAEP is an evidence base so currently does not directly deliver public health outcomes but is a key enabler of activities that do.

12. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The LAEP advances environmental and climate goals by converting national and local targets into a detailed, location-specific plan. It sets out the most cost-effective interventions needed across heating, transport, buildings, energy infrastructure and local energy generation. Through whole system modelling and high-quality data, it identifies what changes are required, where and when they should occur and who needs to deliver them. This supports more focussed investment decisions, better coordination of infrastructure improvements and clearer prioritisation of immediate actions.

13. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

13.1 The LAEP aligns strongly with HDC's Place, Climate and Corporate Plan priorities, ensuring coordinated local action. Reviewing the Cambridgeshire LAEP allows members to influence a shared, evidence-based approach to decarbonisation, while provisional endorsement offers a clear framework to guide retrofit and wider asset decarbonisation. Endorsing the LAEP as an evidence base also strengthens Huntingdonshire's position to secure future external funding by demonstrating a robust, data-driven foundation as we move toward LGR.

14. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Briefing Summary Document

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Appendix 1: LAEP Briefing Note

Purpose

The Cambridgeshire Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) provides a comprehensive, evidence-based roadmap for achieving net zero carbon by 2045 while supporting sustainable, economic growth.

It aims to:

- Identify the most effective interventions across buildings, transport, local generation and industry
- Ensure energy infrastructure keeps at pace with growth, including major housing and employment expansion
- Provide a shared, country-wide strategic framework enabling coordinated investment, policy alignment and spatial planning
- Act as a live evidence base for Local Plans, the Local Growth Plan, Distribution Network Operator (UKPN) planning and community energy initiatives

The LAEP models 4 scenarios:

1. Counterfactual – business as usual i.e. does not reach net zero
2. Electric engagement – rapid electrification driven by high consumer uptake
3. Hydrogen evolution – hydrogen for hard-to-electrify sectors (not including buildings)
4. Holistic transition (preferred) – a balanced mix of electrification, heat networks and system change, aiming to deliver net zero the quickest

The LAEP provides Huntingdonshire with:

- A clear, evidence-based plan to transition to net zero whilst supporting growth
- Priority status for electricity network reinforcement, especially at Huntingdon
- Opportunities to lead the county in district heating, industrial decarbonisation, EV infrastructure and community energy
- A defensible framework to secure external funding (UK Power Network - UKPN, National Energy Systems Operator - NESO, DESNZ, Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure - LEVI, CPCA)
- Tools to reduce inequality, address fuel poverty and deliver healthier, more resilient homes

Document Summary

Across Cambridgeshire emissions have fallen 35% since 2005 mainly from grid decarbonisation. Transport emissions remain high and static. Gas heating still dominates, electronic vehicle (EV) update is slow and building stock is older and inefficient. Huntingdonshire has high transport emissions, a large industrial/commercial base and over 6,700 fuel-poor households.

The LAEP identifies targeted interventions in:

Energy efficiency
Low-carbon heating
Industrial decarbonisation
Transport electrification and modal shift
Local renewable generation
Grid capacity, storage and system flexibility

Economic Assessment

To achieve net zero, an estimated £2.7-3.4bn additional CAPEX beyond business-as-usual is required. The preferred holistic transition generates:

£3.5bn carbon benefits	£1.2bn bill savings	£5.7bn gross value added to 2045

The delivery approach to achieve this is via a sequenced, phased roadmap (short, medium and long-term) supported by:

Spatial focus zones → Stakeholder collaboration → Networks-first thinking → Continuous monitoring and adaptation

Report deep-dive summary: Chapters 10, 11 and 13

Each District Council was asked to comment on the following Chapters which have been summarised below:

- Chapter 10 – networks, storage and flexibility
- Chapter 11 – system wide results: carbon and energy
- Chapter 13 – implementing the plan

Chapter 10 - networks, storage and flexibility

This chapter assesses:

- Existing electrical network constraints
- Demand growth impacts using UK Power Networks (UKPN) Distribution Future Energy Solutions (DFES) modelling
- How heat pumps, EVs and new development will increase load to the grid
- When and where substations will run out of capacity
- Options for reinforcement and system flexibility, such as battery storage and smart controls

Key findings:

- Under all net zero scenarios, substation headroom becomes negative by the late 2030s without proactive upgrades
- Electrification of heat and transport significantly increases After Diversity Maximum Demand (ADMD)
- Growth itself (housing and employment space) is as large a driver of electrical demand as decarbonisation technologies
- Some primary substations show pressure *earlier* under high-growth sensitivity testing

Implications for Huntingdonshire:

- HDC hosts major growth areas, such as Alconbury and St Neots, which means earlier and more significant grid upgrades that will be required locally
- The ‘Huntingdon’ substation is identified in network growth modelling as showing material ADMD increases, unlike most other Huntingdon substations, which signals early constraints

HDC will need to coordinate with UKPN and NESO to ensure:

- Timely reinforcement of primary substations
- Capacity for industrial electrification (Huntingdon has significant industrial clusters)
- Integration of low-carbon technologies in new developments

HDC will have opportunities to influence:

- Strategic siting of energy-intensive developments e.g. data centres
- Local flexibility markets and neighbourhood-level storage
- Community energy and solar-plus-storage schemes

Chapter 11 – System-wide Results: Carbon and Energy

This chapter covers:

- Total emissions reduction under each scenario
- Energy consumption shifts from gas to electricity
- Sector-by-sector impacts (domestics, non-domestic, industry and transport)
- Comparison of scenarios and identification of the preferred pathway

Key findings (scenario based):

- Only the holistic transition meets the county’s 2045 net zero target.
- Emissions can fall sharply in the 2030s due to: heat pump rollout, EV transition, grid decarbonisation, heat networks in population dense areas
- Transport and domestic heating are the largest contributors to emissions reduction
- Annual electricity use rises substantially by 2045 so gas demand collapses

Implications for Huntingdonshire:

- Huntingdonshire’s large transport emissions means it would benefit from county-wide EV uptake

- It also has:
    - High numbers of EPC properties rated D and E
    - Significant off-gas rural areas
    - Large industrial estates

HDC can leverage these results to:

- Prioritise fabric upgrades and heat pumps where carbon savings are greatest
- Target transport decarbonisation in St Ives, St Neots and Huntingdon i.e. areas with high commuting and car dependency
- Accelerate local renewables to reduce imported electricity and improve resilience

<u>Chapter 13 – implementing the plan</u>

Short term (2025-2030)	Medium term (2030-2035)	Long term (2035-2045)
• Rapid scale-up of heat pumps and building retrofit in social housing and fuel-poor areas • Rollout of on-street EV charging in high-demand areas • Feasibility and piloting of district heating • Targeted industrial engagement	• Major network upgrades • Expansion of district heating zones • Large-scale rooftop solar and storage	• Completion of industrial fuel switching (electricity/hydrogen) • Final push to replace residual gas heating • Full flexibility integration into the grid

Spatial Focus Zones	Risks and Mitigation
• Fuel poverty hotspots • Grid constraint zones • Heat network opportunity areas • Industrial decarbonisation clusters	• National policy delays (e.g. boiler bans) • Supply chain shortages • Network upgrade lag • Public perception barriers • Equity gaps in EV/heat pump transition

Short-term wins	Medium-term opportunities	Long-term positioning	Strategic advantages
• Focus on fuel poverty interventions in parts of Huntingdon, St Ives, Ramsey • Target retrofit and heat pump programmes in areas with high EPC D/E concentrations • Begin industrial decarbonisation partnerships in St Neots and Huntingdon • Identify priority EV charging zones (urban areas and estates with low off-street parking)	• Advocate for and coordinate major network reinforcement for the Huntingdon primary substation cluster • Support development of heat network opportunities around Huntingdon town centre and St Neots (as identified in DESNZ zoning work)	• Use business park clusters (e.g. North Huntingdon) to develop shared energy hubs which will lead to local generation + storage + heat networks • Position HDC as a leader on industrial decarbonisation by facilitating hydrogen/electricity infrastructure uplift	• Strong alignment with HDC's growth areas – ensuring that energy infrastructure keeps pace, enhances deliverability of Local Plan housing, and employment targets • Opportunity to reduce cost pressures on businesses by enabling efficient electrification • Improvement of social outcomes through targeted retrofit, reduced fuel poverty and cleaner air

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