
Town Quay Park Management Plan 2024 - 2029



Produced by the City Services Division
and key Town Quay Park Stakeholders

Updated January 2025

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Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This management plan sets out the general principles that should be applied over the five-year term and includes an Action Plan for specific developments and improvements.

The management plan is a 'live' document, in that the development of the park is guided by the plan but not limited by it. Staff working in the park and the various key stakeholders including the Friends of Town Quay Park have assisted in writing the document and have copies to refer to during the year.

This plan must be read in conjunction with the "***Green Flag Management Principles***" which provides the overarching principles and corporate approach to Green Flag management in Southampton. This plan only includes site specific information and has been written to follow the categories judged for the Green Flag Award.

The Green Flag Award measures the performance of all aspects of park management against set criteria. It represents the best industry practice for public green open space management, while allowing and encouraging the individuality of parks to shine through.

1.2 Vision Statement

"For Town Quay Park to offer an inviting, attractive and interesting park within the historic setting of the Old Town. With the local community at its heart, working with the City Services team to continually improve recreation, biodiversity, events and involvement to ensure the park continues to be clean, safe and accessible for all."



1.3 Aims

Town Quay Park serves a wide range of functions for the local community and draws people in from further afield due to its proximity to the docks and ferry terminal. It is a vital green space for many in the community that live in local apartment accommodation and do not have access to a garden. It is located on the tourist route of the old walled town sitting adjacent to the old vaults and offers a quiet oasis for relaxation in an otherwise busy town setting.

The overall character of the park should be recognised and enhanced whilst maintaining and improving the individual components that make it unique. The aims of the plan are:

- To retain and enhance the distinctive quality of the park, and ensure it is regularly maintained to a high standard.
- Provide a park that meets and continues to meet user need, both locally and strategically through the objectives of the City Council
- Promote the park to ensure the benefits it offers are maximised
- Ensure the park is accessible to all elements of the community.
- To actively encourage local people to get involved with the Friends of Town Quay Park to support the management and maintenance of the park.

1.4 Objectives

A number of objectives have been identified for Town Quay Park and these will continue to be applicable. Specific actions to address these objectives are identified in the Action Plan in section 6.

- Increase community involvement in the management and maintenance of the park by continuing to work closely with the Friends Group and other key stakeholders;
- Maintain and improve the unique character of Town Quay Park;
- Enhance biodiversity;
- Increase customer satisfaction in Town Quay Park;
- Provide and promote key events in the park, raising environmental awareness and increasing community involvement;
- Keep Town Quay Park clean and litter free.

Section 2 – Park Guide

2.1 Description and Arial View of Town Quay Park

Town Quay Park sits within the historic Old Town area of Southampton. It is a green oasis in a large urban area that includes numerous apartments and commercial buildings. In addition to residents' needs, it also provides an environmental resource for the neighbouring primary school. The park is divided into two sections by French Street and is surrounded by historical buildings from the medieval Wool House (now housing a micro-brewery) at Bugle St, to Quilters Vault on the lower High St, and Canute's Palace on Porters Lane. A large proportion of the park is set back from the main A33 by historic buildings fronting Town Quay making for a quiet corner in an otherwise busy area.

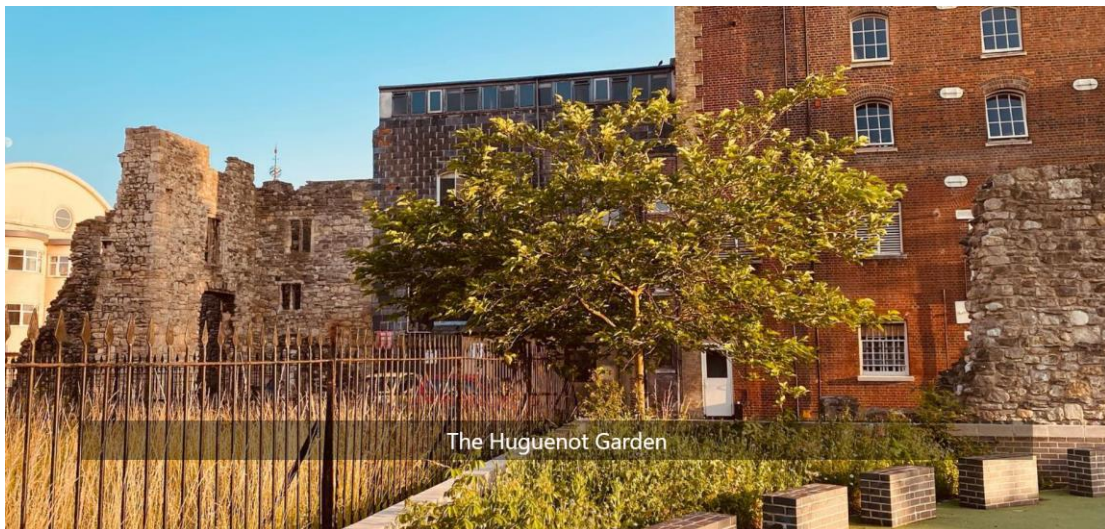
Town Quay Park has level entrances at French Street, Porters Lane and High Street.

There is a noticeboard at the French Street entrance, giving details of relevant contact numbers, and information about the park. These are reviewed regularly and updated by council staff and members of the Friends Group.



The park itself is a mix of grass lawns surrounded by trees, Mediterranean planting, fruit trees, herb beds, colourful bulbs and flowers. At the High Street end, there is a large open area containing a Mizmaze. In a corner of this area lies a small Huguenot garden. Adjacent to the French Street entrance is a Far East Prisoners of War memorial and a memorial to the Basque Children refugees. Alongside the Mound, on the opposite side of French St, lie remains of an old corn store.

2.2 The Huguenot Garden



This small garden, redesigned and planted in 2021 when the adjacent Mizmaze was created, is dedicated to the Huguenots who came to Southampton in the 1560s seeking sanctuary from religious persecution in France and the Netherlands. Huguenots brought their knowledge and skills in silk making to Britain. In the centre of the bed a Mulberry tree stands, kindly sponsored by a local family (symbol of the silk industry). The surrounding planting is of French origin. Nearby interpretation signage details the history of the adjacent ancient monuments.

2.3 FEPOW (Far East Prisoners Of War) Memorial



Near the French Street entrance is a stone memorial plaque to the 22,000 men, women and children, who were repatriated to Southampton in November 1945 after being held as prisoners of war in the Far East. The names of the 22 repatriation ships are listed on the memorial.

Beds surrounding the commemorative plaque have been planted with bamboos and grasses to evoke a sense of the Far East. Together with spring and summer bulbs symbolising hope.

The FEPOW memorial was unveiled in October 2013. Since then, FEPOW has held an annual ceremony in thanks for those who returned and in memory of those who did not.

In November 2021 a commemorative cherry tree was planted nearby in memory of Bob Hucklesby, a 100-year-old veteran of the infamous Burma Railway. Bob was a former president of the National Far East Prisoner of War Fellowship Welfare Remembrance Association and played a key part in the establishment of the memorial and annual ceremony in the park.

2.4 Memorial dedicated to the Basque Children



On the northern side of the wall is a plaque and dove in memory of Los Niños, Basque Children refugees from Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. They arrived into Southampton and were encamped at Eastleigh.



On Saturday 22 October 2022 the memorial plaque was unveiled to mark the 85th anniversary of the successful evacuation, organised by ordinary people, of almost 4,000 Basque refugees to Britain.

The event was attended by Josephina Stubbs, aged 95, one of the Basque children who had arrived in Southampton on 21 May 1937. The Spanish Ambassador to the UK, José Pascual Marco unveiled the plaque in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Southampton, Councillor Jacqui Rayment, a representative from the Basque Government and Simon Martinez, representing the Basque Children of '37 Association UK.

Section 3 – Heritage and Nature Conservation

It is important that the unique characteristics of Town Quay Park are maintained, and that the local history is preserved where possible. Moreover, nature conservation is increasingly important within this previous amenity dominated open space and FTQP are working together with SCC to improve biodiversity at the park to increase the number and variety of species.

3.1 Brief History

Town Quay Park was created in 1964 on a site made derelict after the Luftwaffe raids of November 1940 destroyed the waterfront buildings that covered the area.

Surrounding the Park are reminders of its older history. At the High Street end lie remains of a Saxon rampart, defensive walls and gates, medieval wine vaults and the striking ruins of 'Canute's Palace' and 'Quilter's Vault'. At the opposite end sits the medieval Wool House. As well as storing wool, on which Southampton's wealth-generating trade was based, the Wool House also housed French prisoners during the Napoleonic wars.



Aerial view of 1961, before Town Quay Park created.

During the 17th century the Town Quay area experienced an influx of Huguenots fleeing France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. This is commemorated in the Huguenot Garden within the park.

The Old Town was heavily blitzed in 1940. A tree in the Mound area of the park commemorates the ensuing loss of life of residents who lived on the site that is now Town Quay Park.

3.2 Buildings and Structures Conservation

Town Quay Park provides a setting for several important listed historical buildings / structures:

- The Wool House, Grade I - 14th Century Store built by Cistercian Monks.
- 15th Century House, later used as a corn store (remains), Grade II
- Canute's Palace, Grade I - 12th Century merchant's house
- Mediaeval wall, Grade II
- Quilters Vault, Grade II - 13th Century semi-circular vault

The Monuments and Memorials Officer regularly inspects these structures and any ad hoc issues such as vandalism or graffiti are reported to the officer by Parks and Street Cleansing staff. It is recognised that these historic structures act as a frame to the park and are indelibly linked to the park landscape. It is crucial that they are both managed in a sensitive manner.

3.3 Biodiversity

Town Quay Park is managed by SCC to ensure biodiversity does not decrease, and there is a strong desire from FTQP that it should be enhanced. During 2018/19 FTQP gardening volunteers cleared an overgrown area of shrubs, which had become a site for antisocial activities, to create a wildlife area planted with 5 native trees (sponsored by the adjacent school & local businesses) and hundreds of native woodland plants. Seeing the resulting increase in bees, butterflies and birds in this area has been greatly appreciated by the school children and local residents.



Biodiversity value is also taken into consideration when assessing trees and wherever suitable, deadwood, broken branches and dead trees are left in situ to provide habitats. Where crown reductions are required, wherever possible we undertake final cuts using coronet cuts. This gives an impression of a broken branch end rather than a truncated stump and provides extra habitats for insects. We also wire pieces of hollow trunks back into trees to provide bird and bat roosts.

Section 4 – Community Involvement

4.1 Target Audience

There are two distinct user groups of Town Quay Park. Being on the ‘Walk the Walls’ tour of medieval Southampton it sees many tourists pass through and admire the floral displays, with the associated historical features within and surrounding the park. Another key user group are local residents, many of whom have no private garden. The park therefore offers space to sit and relax and meet friends. The adjacent school also uses the park for educational purposes. Provision for children is in the form of informal play and learning. Large stones were added during the Mound area makeover and the mizmaze offers family fun.

4.2 Friends of Town Quay Park (FTQP)

The Friends of Town Quay Park (FTQP) was formed in April 2010 when a group of local people got together to stop the park from being sold for development.

Since this successful campaign, FTQP has grown to approximately 100 members, including over 20 gardening volunteers with an elected Management committee. They organise regular gardening sessions and litter picks throughout the year, and encourage both members, and non-members to attend and join in. They have also organised community events, often working with other local groups to deliver them.

The aims of the Group are:

- to preserve and improve the Town Quay Park site for the well-being and pleasure of the community and visitors to the city;
- to work with other interest groups and Southampton City Council to preserve the heritage of the Old Town area for the people of Southampton, visitors to the city and future generations;
- maintain and improve the physical and natural environment of the park in liaison with Southampton City Council;
- help make the Park a clean, safe and healthy place to be;
- ensure community-based involvement in the future of the Park.

FTQP liaise with the community and work closely with Southampton City Council to prioritise improvements in the park.

Section 5 – Marketing and Communication

5.1 On the web and on “the move”

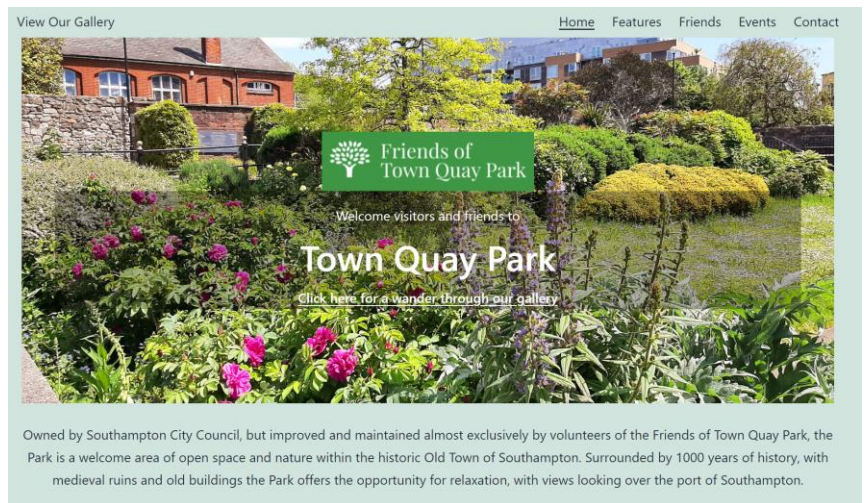
People’s main source of information is now on the web and on ‘the go’. This provides us with great opportunities to get messages to users in a timely fashion. Town Quay Park has a dedicated page on the Southampton City Council website.

Additionally, FTQP markets the park and their activities through social media, with both a Facebook page

[Friends of Town Quay Park | Facebook](#)

and a website

[The Friends of Town Quay Park - Friends of Town Quay Park : Friends of Town Quay Park](#)



Website home page

5.2 Events

Events in Town Quay Park are used to promote the park more widely and are advertised via the FTQP Facebook page and in the on-site noticeboard.



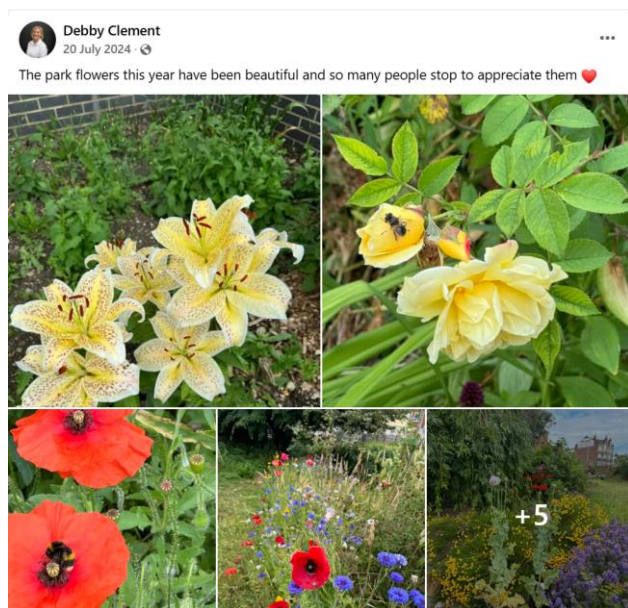
Far East Prisoners of War
Commemoration event 2024



5.3 User Feedback

The Friends of Town Quay Park are in constant touch with park users and regularly update Council officers with user feedback.

Feedback also comes in the form of online reviews and comments on FTQP Facebook page.



Section 6 – Actions and Recommendations

6.1 Action Plan

This dynamic working document is reviewed and updated annually. Some proposed actions are aspirational and will depend upon sourcing adequate funding. Although the plan has been ordered according to Green Flag criteria, several of the actions fall under more than one heading. The actions below are over and above the core maintenance tasks undertaken by the Central District Team

In 2017 a Town Quay Park improvements plan was produced. This laid out various aspirations for park developments over the short to medium term. This Plan was developed after extensive consultation led by FTQP with the support of the Council (Groundwork, under their Council contract, helped with survey design and trained volunteers to do interviews).

Workshops were held with the amenity/community groups, the school (parents, children, staff), local residents, park users and businesses. 120 local households were interviewed in a targeted door to door survey which added qualitative detail. The plan is shown below and is referred to in the following Action Plan.



Note – some of the designs and aspirations shown above were subsequently revised during and after the public consultation.

Action	Lead officer	Key partners and consultees	Estimated resource required and source of funding	Target Completion date	Progress / Comments
<i>A welcoming place</i>					
Concrete circular seat on the Mound	Cliff Brown	FTQP	£7,000	2017	Complete
Install new benches within Corn Store	Cliff Brown	FTQP	c. £4,000	2017	Complete
Improved access from French Street	Cliff Brown	FTQP Central District Manager	£20,000	2019	Complete – to allow equal access for all from that entrance
New surfacing in arena area (446m2) and Mizmaze installation	Cliff Brown	FTQP Central District Manager	£18,700	2022	Complete
Install Green Flag Pole on the mound	Kelvin Wyatt	Landscape	£1,500	2022	Complete
Remark Mizmaze	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP Cliff Brown		2025	
Install renovated High Street Welcome Sign	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	£2000	2024	Complete
Improve interpretation signage around site, providing more historical content.	Cliff Brown	Jo Bailey		2025	
Install new memorial bench adjacent to the FEPOW memorial.	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	Officer time	2025	

Action	Lead officer	Key partners and consultees	Estimated resource required and source of funding	Target Completion date	Progress / Comments
<i>Healthy, safe and secure</i>					
Install brick boundary wall to defend against vehicle incursion from Porters Lane	Cliff Brown	FTQP	£5,800	2018	Complete
Steel post & rails to defend Porters Lane Boundary	Cliff Brown	FTQP	£2,500	2018	Complete
Increase boundary planting adjacent to the Dancing Man PH to prevent vehicle access	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	£500	2023	Complete
Installation of new picnic area	Cliff Brown	FTQP	£6,972 for new surface to match arena & £4,500 for picnic tables	Funding dependant	
Infill disused WC electric cabinet pit.	Simon Buston	Kelvin Wyatt		2025	Confirm no longer in use beforehand
<i>Clean and well maintained</i>					
Repairs to uneven paving areas (394 m2)	Cliff Brown	Central District Manager	£31,520	Funding dependant	Some repairs undertaken in 2024
Keep noticeboard up to date with information about Town Quay Park	FTQP	FTQP Kelvin Wyatt	Officer time Volunteer hours	Ongoing	Keeping noticeboards up to date with information will add to the overall park experience and raise awareness of park users to activities and relevant guidance. Links to SCC website and FTQP website required.

Action	Lead officer	Key partners and consultees	Estimated resource required and source of funding	Target Completion date	Progress / Comments
Replace wooden slats on bench adjacent to Mizmaze with recycled decorative sawn timber.	Kelvin Wyatt	Landscape	£1200	2024	Complete
Continued renovation of the Lavender beds with new infill planting.	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	Plants funded by FTQP	2025	
Remove all self-set trees particularly Ash and Sycamore adjacent to Canute's Palace	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	Officer and volunteer time	2025	
<i>Environmental Management</i>					
To further reduce the use of chemical treatments within the park	Kelvin Wyatt	Area team	Officer time	Ongoing	Most chemical treatments have ceased. However, small spot treatments are still necessary to some areas e.g., seat slab bases. Increase use of mulch to suppress weeds on shrub beds.
Implement electric compact sweepers	Fleet Transport	Simon Buston	£1,000,000	2022	Complete

Action	Lead officer	Key partners and consultees	Estimated resource required and source of funding	Target Completion date	Progress / Comments
<i>Heritage and Conservation</i>					
Removal of non-native leylandii trees and replacement with flowering fruit trees.	Dave Butcher	FTQP, SCC Tree Team	6 Fruit trees funded by FTQP	2018	Complete
Installation of new raised beds and back retaining wall to Huguenot bed to prevent damage to Ancient monument	Cliff Brown	FTQP	£9,400	2022	Unofficial access between Canute's Palace and Town Quay Park was causing damage to this ancient structure. Complete
Research the history of the park area and publish information online, through social media, FTQP website and on-site interpretation boards	FTQP	FTQP/local history groups	FTQP time	2024	Town Quay Park is surrounded by historically important structures and buildings within the old town. Complete
To fully restore the Huguenot garden area, and increase the variety of habitat available for wildlife	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	Officer/FTQP time	2024	To present an important historical feature within the park through appropriate planting schemes and encourage wildlife.

Action	Lead officer	Key partners and consultees	Estimated resource required and source of funding	Target Completion date	Progress / Comments
Introduce wildflowers to all sides of the flag pole mound to further increase biodiversity	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	Officer Time seed costs £200	2025	
<i>Community involvement</i>					
Continue to support weekly gardening sessions	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP	Officer Time	On-going	To help maintain momentum and good communication between SCC staff and FTQP
Continue to support FTQP events	Kelvin Wyatt	FTQP Parks Team	Officer time	On-going	To encourage more use of the park by local residents and strengthen community involvement.
<i>Marketing and communication</i>					
Ensure the council website is kept up to date with Town Quay Park information and event details	Cliff Brown	Simon Buston, Nick Yeats,	Officer time	Ongoing	Includes making use of what's on pages. FTQP to communicate regularly with SCC officers to enable relevant information to be published on council website
FTQP to keep noticeboards, website, and social media pages relevant and current to update followers on park activities and news	Chair of FTQP	FTQP	Volunteer hours	Ongoing	Ongoing

Action	Lead officer	Key partners and consultees	Estimated resource required and source of funding	Target Completion date	Progress / Comments
<i>Management</i>					
Continue to meet and discuss FTQP aspirations and develop agreed actions to progress	Kelvin Wyatt Cliff Brown	FTQP Simon Buston	Officer time	Ongoing	It is important for all parties to continue to work for continuous improvement of the park.