

Eastville Park Access Plan



**YOUR
PARK**

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In partnership with:

Facilitated by: Your Park Bristol & Bath.

Community partners: Friends of Eastville Park.

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Note on bolded words:

Words in **bold** are explained in the Jargon Buster at the end of the document.

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Introduction

This plan is a list of changes to make to Eastville Park, which are intended to make it more accessible for Disabled people and unpaid carers. The ideas came from a group of 16 local Disabled people and unpaid carers working with the charity Your Park Bristol and Bath. The Disabled people had a wide range of disabilities including **neurodiversity**, **mobility** and **sensory impairments**. This group came up with lots of changes they wanted to see, then decided together which were the most important **priorities** to go into this plan.

All **accessibility** changes suggested by the group have been added to the plan. The aim is to work on all the ideas, but to start with the high-**priority** ideas, followed by medium, then low **priority**.

Several other **priorities** based around 'community', 'nature' and 'health' are included. These are ideas that will make the park more interesting to visit regularly and better looked after by the community.

The actions in the plan are a list of suggestions which will be discussed further and used by community partners (Your Park Bristol & Bath, Friends of Eastville Park) and the local authority, (Bristol City Council), in their work to look after and improve Eastville Park.

The lessons learned from the project are being used to make a **toolkit** that other communities can use to make their parks better for Disabled people and unpaid carers. This work is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Accessibility priorities

High priorities

Toilets at Car Park

Improvements to the existing toilets at the car park at Eastville Park were highlighted as a high **priority**. They have been **vandalised** and are currently not in use, which is a clear barrier to using the park. These toilets should have a **Changing Places** toilet, and a **handheld bidet spray** for religious purposes.

Improvements to these toilets, as well as additional **accessible** toilets in this area of the park would **accommodate** more visitors and support children and parents when visiting the nearby playground. Adding **CCTV** to areas of high footfall, or areas where **anti-social behaviour** exists could help to reduce it and offer more security and safety for park users. How **CCTV** would be managed needs to be considered.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: High

Time: High

Toilets at the Lake

Toilets at the lake would make visiting the lake more comfortable and **accessible** for Disabled adults, older visitors, families and unpaid carers. Having facilities nearby would allow people to stay at the lake for longer without needing to travel across the park to use the toilets. **Accessible** toilets would also be important for making community activities and events around the lake more inclusive.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: High

Time: High

Increase Blue Badge Parking

There are a couple of **Blue Badge** parking spaces in the existing car park, but not enough for the size of the park, and therefore more are required. The car park area may need to be expanded to provide additional **Blue Badge** parking spaces.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Car Park under Motorway (Blue Badges)

Providing better parking access to the lake area would significantly improve **accessibility** for Disabled adults and unpaid carers. Currently, visitors using the existing car park must travel through much of Eastville Park before reaching the step-free route to the lake.

Creating a car park beneath the motorway could provide additional **Blue Badge** spaces or could be designated exclusively for **Blue Badge** users. This would provide a more direct route to the lake, lower playground and surrounding fields, making these areas easier to access for Disabled people and unpaid carers.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: High

Time: High

Resurfacing at Wickham Glen

The surface on the path from Wickham Glen and Snuffmills area towards the bridge is uneven and has a large gully and slope, which makes it unsafe and not **accessible**. This needs to be resurfaced so that people using wheelchairs, prams and mobility aids can cross the path safely.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: High

Time: Medium.

Resurfacing the path around the park and lake

There are lots of areas of the paths around Eastville Park that need resurfacing. This is also true of the paths around the lake. This is due to tree roots breaking up and lifting some of the concrete, or the path being too narrow for people to pass each other. At the lake, there is a water spring that runs onto the path and makes the path surface slippery. The paths need to be resurfaced around the top section of the park, as well as down towards the lake.

The path should be made wider, with clear markings to show the edging in a different colour. In addition, some of the concrete or stone around the benches along the path is uneven and needs replacing. More stone or concrete should be added next to each bench to allow space for wheelchairs, mobility aids and pushchairs next to the benches. Providing **step-free access** to the lake at Eastville Park will make the area

significantly more **accessible** and easier to enjoy for Disabled adults and unpaid carers. Installing **handrails** along paths leading to the lake at Eastville Park would improve safety, stability and confidence for visitors. **Handrails** would provide additional support on slopes, uneven sections or areas where the path level changes, helping people to maintain their balance and move around the park more independently.

A continuous, flat route would remove physical barriers such as steps and steep changes in level, allowing people with **mobility impairments** to reach the lake independently and safely. Focus should be placed on creating a zig-zag path on the cemetery end of the lake, replacing the current straight steep slope. Improving the route would allow for more people to access this area of the park.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: High

Time: High

Benches at Lake

Adding more benches around the lake at Eastville Park would make the area more **accessible** and comfortable for Disabled adults and unpaid carers.

Ideally, seating should use **accessible** designs with armrests and back supports, with enough space for wheelchairs and mobility aids next to the seating.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Medium Priorities

Signage in the Park

There should be signs in Eastville Park showing the key areas, including images. The information should be written in different languages. Finding your way around places can be more challenging for people with certain impairments, particularly **cognitive or neurological conditions**. To make it easier for people to see and understand the signs, they should be clear, have a high contrast between the text and background and placed in well-lit areas. They should also be placed at a suitable height for wheelchair users.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Disabled Access Information on Notice Boards

There should be separate notice boards that show Disabled access information, such as routes that are flat and wheelchair friendly in the park. The font should be large enough to clearly read and **easy read** language. Images should be used alongside text. There should be information about **accessible** toilets, quiet areas, benches and step free access routes. A **QR code** on the sign could be added to take people to online information about Eastville Park, providing information about the nearest Defibrillator and providing the information in different languages.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Low

Picnic Benches

Picnic benches should be added to the grass area next to the Tennis Courts and in the grass area between the playground and the car park.

This would allow families to gather, in the natural shade of the surrounding trees, close to play facilities, toilets and the car park. The picnic benches should have extra space for wheelchair users and prams. A solid base under the picnic benches should be considered to prevent the ground becoming uneven or affected by rain and becoming inaccessible.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Lighting around the Lake

Introducing lighting around the lake would improve safety, accessibility and confidence for everyone, particularly during the darker months and early mornings or evenings. Well-positioned, low-level lighting along key paths could make routes easier to follow and reduce the risk of trips and falls.

It would also help people feel more comfortable using the lake area outside of daylight hours, including Disabled people, unpaid carers, families and older people. Carefully designed lighting could provide these benefits while minimising disturbance to wildlife and preserving the natural character of the park.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: High.

Time: High.

Low Priorities

Accessible Play Equipment

At Eastville Park there is a playground area with various pieces of equipment. This should be developed so it is **accessible** to a wide range of people. This should include having well maintained, wide and flat paths, including a solid surface both inside and outside the playground, with a fence dividing both areas. The gate should also be changed to make it wide enough for wheelchair users.

The playground needs to have inclusive play equipment on solid surfaces like rubbery ground or concrete. The inclusive playground equipment would be designed to allow people of all abilities to play together in the same space. Examples include wheelchair-**accessible** roundabouts, basket swings, ramp-accessible play structures, ground-level **sensory** panels and musical instruments.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: High.

Time: High.

More Buses

Increasing bus services between the city centre and Eastville Park could improve access for people who do not drive or have limited access to a car.

More frequent or better-connected services could make the park easier to reach and allow more people to take part in community activities and events. However, this was identified as a lower **priority**, as changes to bus routes and timings may be more complex and costly to bring in, compared with improvements in the park itself.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: High.

Time: High.

Café at Lake

A café at the lake was suggested to provide visitors with access to food, drinks and a place to rest while enjoying the area. However, the lake café was identified as a lower priority, with more support for

repurposing the abandoned building in the park as a community café.

Adding **CCTV** to areas of high footfall, or areas where **anti-social behaviour** exists, could help to reduce it and offer more security and safety for park users.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: High.

Time: High.

Bins

Increasing the number of bins throughout Eastville Park could help keep the park cleaner, safer and more pleasant for visitors. Additional bins, particularly near seating areas, the lake and popular routes, could reduce litter and encourage visitors to dispose of waste responsibly.

Consideration is needed for the management and collection of the bins waste.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Community priorities

High Priorities

Communal Seating (Circular)

Seating that is in a circular formation would invite people to come together and encourage people to talk to each other. It would also provide accessible seating for people to enjoy the park with others. Circular seating also increases visibility, as people can see what is happening around them, which can make the area feel safer and more sociable.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Free activities

Having more activities in the park that are free for everyone to use, would bring more of the community together. Free events remove any financial barriers and allow people of different ages and income levels to take part.

Who: Community partners

Cost: Low.

Time: Medium.

Medium Priorities

Disused Sports Building Converted to Cafes / Toilets

The large disused sports building in Eastville Park could be used as a café and toilets at this end of the park. Currently the only toilets are located at the car park, which are a long way from the sports area.

Having **accessible** toilets into this building would increase the amount of time people can stay in the park. The café could provide refreshments during markets, performances, workshops and other free events. A community hub could also be added with health support (including a GP) and local groups could meet here. Adding **CCTV** to areas of high footfall, or areas where **anti-social behaviour** exists, could help to reduce it and offer more security and safety for park users. How this would be managed needs to be considered.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: High.

Time: High.

Bandstand

Having a Bandstand in the lower open grass of the park between the sports fields and the smaller playground, would offer a place for community events and performances to take place. Currently this area is not used as much as other parts of the park. The Bandstand would need to have step free access. It would also offer some shade in hot and wet weather.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: High.

Time: High.

Accessible natural 'log' seating

Repurposing fallen logs and tree stumps into seating provides natural seating that blends into the landscape, encourages people to spend more time in nature and can be designed to provide habitats for insects, **fungi** and moss, supporting **biodiversity** alongside recreation.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Water Splash area

Adding a water splash area in or near to the playground would provide fun and interactive activities for children and adults. The area should be **step free**, and offer different heights of water tables, fountains and sprinklers. The consideration of our changing climate and increased heat in the summer months would allow people to come into this area to cool down and enjoy the park in the warmer months.

Who: Bristol City Council

Cost: Medium/High.

Time: Medium.

Low Priorities

Community Hall

A community hall at Eastville Park could provide a dedicated space for local groups, activities, workshops and community events, helping to

bring people together and reduce social isolation. This could be in one of the abandoned disused buildings in the park.

It could support a wide range of users, including Disabled people and unpaid carers, by providing an indoor space for **accessible** activities.

However, this was identified as a lower **priority**, with a preference for using the existing buildings as a cafe and improving outdoor accessibility and facilities.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: High.

Time: High.

Boating on the Lake

There used to be boating on the lake at Eastville Park. This could be reintroduced as a way of bringing more visitors into the park and lake area. It would offer an activity for children and families and perhaps a way of bringing **revenue** to the park. How to manage this and any impact on the lake's wildlife needs to be considered. It was also raised that this may not be **accessible** for all people and could be difficult to maintain.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: High

Time: High.

Nature priorities

High Priorities

Sensory Area

A flower rich and **sensory** area at Eastville Park would provide a calm and welcoming space enabling visitors to engage with and benefit from having contact with nature – the sights, sounds, scents and textures this offers. The suggestion of using the old bowling green space opposite the Nissen Hut was given, as it is **enclosed** and offers lots of space for trees, plants and quiet areas. The plants and flowers would be chosen to stimulate the senses and attract local wildlife, including plants of different colours and textures which bloom in different seasons.

This area would be designed to be **accessible** for all, considering different people's conditions, needs and abilities. It would ideally include raised flower beds, wide paths and a quiet area for those who can feel overwhelmed easily

including **pollinator plants** such as lavender. A community orchard with raised planters for vegetables would offer opportunities to grow food and support wildlife, increasing the **biodiversity** of the park.

Who: Community partners.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Medium Priorities

Accessible Wildlife Signs

Clear, easy-to-read information, with tactile elements or visual symbols, would make information about the park's wildlife more **accessible**. This would also provide educational opportunities for Disabled people, children and families and make people more aware of local wildlife.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

More trees

Increasing the number of trees in Eastville Park would provide a range of environmental and social benefits. Trees could help support local wildlife, reduce surface water and flooding, and provide much-needed shade for visitors during the warmer summer months.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Low Priorities

Bird Food – Vending Machine

Installing a bird food vending machine could encourage visitors to engage with and learn about the wildlife in Eastville Park. It could provide suitable food for local birds as well as being a fun activity for families and children.

If introduced, the machine would need to provide appropriate food and be carefully managed to avoid attracting pests or overfeeding.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Low,

Bird Boxes

Bird boxes would provide safe nesting spaces for local birds, helping to support and increase **biodiversity** in the park.

Bird boxes could also create opportunities for visitors, particularly children and families, to learn more about local wildlife and the importance of protecting natural **habitats**.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Ramps for Animals in Lake

Wildlife escape ramps installed around the lake will help animals safely get out of the water if they fall in or become trapped against steep or hard-edged banks. They would provide an easy route back onto land for animals such as hedgehogs, ducklings, frogs, toads, newts and other small mammals, reducing the risk of drowning. In Eastville Park, these simple features could support local **biodiversity** by making the lake safer for wildlife and helping protect the many animals that live there.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Water Quality on Lake

To improve water quality in Eastville Park Lake, measures should focus on reducing excessive **algae** growth, which is often caused by high nutrient levels and poor water flow. **Algae** can reduce oxygen levels in the water; block sunlight needed by **aquatic** plants and negatively affect fish and other wildlife. Introducing more **native aquatic** plants, creating reedbeds to soak up extra nutrients, improving water flow where possible and reducing polluted runoff entering the lake can help restore a healthier balance.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Health and Wellbeing

High Priorities

Water Fountains - Drinking

Accessible water points would encourage visitors to stay hydrated, particularly during warmer weather and when taking part in physical activities. This could be particularly beneficial for Disabled people and unpaid carers, who may spend longer periods in the park and require **easy** access to drinking water.

Placing fountains near key areas such as the lake, sports facilities, playgrounds and main paths would make them easy to access and encourage healthier, longer visits to the park. Including handwashing facilities would be helpful for hygiene and religious needs.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: High.

Time: Medium.

Shaded Areas

Providing shade would help protect visitors from too much heat and direct sunlight, particularly during warmer summer months. This could be especially beneficial for Disabled people, older people and unpaid carers, who may need to take regular breaks when using the park. This could be achieved by installing shade sails near to the playground, and over the picnic areas.

Shaded seating and rest areas would also make the park more comfortable and encourage people to spend longer outdoors, supporting physical activity, social interaction and overall wellbeing.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Walking Loop of Park (with information)

Creating an **accessible** walking loop around Eastville Park, supported by clear information and signage, would encourage more people to explore and enjoy the park independently. A **step-free**, well-maintained route with information about the distance, surface, slopes, rest points and key facilities would help Disabled people and unpaid carers plan their visits with more confidence.

Regular seating and **accessible** rest areas along the route would provide opportunities to stop and take breaks. Information boards at wheelchair height, could also share information about the park's wildlife and history.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Medium Priorities

Accessible Sports Activities

Providing **accessible** sports activities would create more opportunities for Disabled people to be physically active, socialise and take part in community activities.

Adapted activities and inclusive equipment could allow people with different abilities to take part alongside family, friends and other park users. This would support physical and mental wellbeing, reduce social isolation and increase confidence and independence.

Accessible sports would also make better use of the park's existing open spaces and encourage more people to see the park as a place where everyone can take part in activities.

Who: Community partners.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Accessible Gym Equipment

Having an outdoor gym at Eastville Park would provide free, **accessible** exercise opportunities for all. This is a great way of improving people's health and wellbeing, while bringing people of all ages in the community together for enjoyable, pressure-free social exercise.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Medium.

Time: Medium.

Quiet Areas

To have dedicated quiet areas in the park would offer a **sanctuary** away from noise and others. Noise and overcrowding can be more challenging for people with certain impairments, particularly **cognitive or neurological conditions**. This could be done by finding quieter areas furthest away from traffic, having trees as natural sound barriers, dog-free zones, an area for seating away from paths, and having signs asking people to keep the noise down in these areas.

There could be quiet areas in various parts of the park, such as near the lake, as well as within the closed off gated old Swimming Pool. The exact location of these could be linked to the **Sensory Garden** idea and decided upon by the Council and community partners.

Who: Bristol City Council and community partners.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Low priorities

Lido

A **lido** at Eastville Park could provide opportunities for swimming, exercise, recreation and social interaction, supporting the health and wellbeing of the local community.

An **accessible lido** could also offer inclusive swimming opportunities for Disabled people, unpaid carers and families.

However, it was identified as a lower priority due to the high costs and challenges of construction, staffing, water management and ongoing maintenance. It is understood that suggestions for a **Lido** are in place being led by a local community group. If developed, it would need to include **step-free** access, **accessible** changing facilities, **changing**

places toilets and pool access to make sure it could be used by all people.

Who: Bristol City Council. and community partners.

Cost: High.

Time: High.

Cycle only paths

Creating cycle-only paths could encourage cycling and active travel within Eastville Park while separating cyclists from **pedestrians**. This could be done by creating new paths for cycling or adding in a separate-coloured path to the existing paths in Eastville Park.

This would help keep shared paths clearer and safer for Disabled people, wheelchair users, unpaid carers and others who may need more space or predictable routes.

Who: Bristol City Council.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Bowling Green / Football Pitches

Clearly marking out the bowling green and football pitches would make the park sports areas easier to identify and use.

Defined spaces could encourage more people to take part in physical activity, support organised community sports and reduce confusion between different activities. It would also give a feeling of safety in these open areas, as people would be aware that sports were taking place on the grass and will be able to avoid them if needed.

Who: Community partners.

Cost: Low.

Time: Low.

Jargon Buster

Accessible: When something meets the needs of Disabled people so that they can use it without problems.

Access needs: The changes a person needs to be able to take part in something.

Accommodate: to have enough space for someone or something, or to change something to help someone's needs.

Adapted activities: Activities changed so that people with different needs can join in.

Algae are living things that live mostly in water and make their own food using sunlight.

Aquatic: Habitats like oceans, rivers, lakes, and ponds

Anti-social behaviour: Behaviour that makes people feel unsafe or uncomfortable, like vandalism, shouting, or harassment.

Audio descriptions: When something is described with spoken words so that the **visually impaired community** can access it.

Biodiversity: Different kinds of plants, animals, and insects living in the same place.

Blue Badge holders: A Blue Badge is a UK disabled parking permit that allows Disabled people to park closer to their destinations. It is linked to the individual, meaning it can be used whether they are the driver or a passenger.

British Sign Language (BSL): This is a language that uses hand gestures. It is used by many **d/Deaf** people in the UK.

CCTV: Cameras that film an area so that it is easier to tell who carried out any **vandalism** that happens.

Changing Places toilet: A large **accessible** toilet with extra equipment, like a hoist and changing bench, for Disabled people with high support needs.

Co-design: When people work together and are treated equally, using their lived experience, to solve problems.

Cognitive or neurological conditions: These are impairments which may affect the brain, spinal cord, or nervous system, affecting how people think, move, feel, and interact with the world (e.g. stroke, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, or multiple sclerosis).

Costs – Low (£0- £5,000), Medium (£5,000 - £50,000) and High (£50,000 +)

Contributors: People who were part of making something.

d/Deaf: People who don't have any hearing. The capital 'D' is used when someone is part of the community of Deaf people. **BSL** is often their first language.

Deafblind: People who don't have much hearing and sight so talking or BSL might not be **accessible** for them.

Designed: Planning how something will be made.

Dropped kerb: When part of the pavement slopes down so that people can get up and down from it easily.

Enclosed: Surrounded by walls, fences or hedges.

Easy Read: This is a document that meets the **access needs** of people with **learning difficulties**. It has easy language and pictures to make the text easy to understand.

Fungi: Living things like mushrooms and mold.

Habitats: the natural home or environment where a plant, animal, or other living thing lives and grows.

Handrails: a bar that people can hold on to for balance and support while walking along stairs, ramps, or walkways.

Handheld bidet spray: A small spray used with water to help people clean themselves after using the toilet.

Learning disability: Terms that may be used by people who experience barriers with learning or understanding information. People may prefer different terminology, so it is important to respect how each person describes themselves.

Lido: An outdoor swimming pool.

Mobility impairments: When someone finds it harder to move around.

Native: Living or growing naturally in a region, rather than being brought there by humans.

Neurodiversity: The natural diversity in people's brains.

Nocturnal: Animals that are active during the night.

Partners: Someone who you work with to do something. When we say Partners in this project, we mean the Disabled people and unpaid carers that are being worked with.

Pedestrians: is anyone traveling on foot or using a mobility device to move at walking speed.

Priorities: Something that is very important.

Pollinator plants: Plants that attract bees, butterflies, and other insects that help flowers grow seeds.

QR code: A square barcode that you can scan with a phone to open information.

Repurposing: Giving an old building or object to a new use instead of destroying it or throwing it away.

Revenue: Revenue is just the money coming in. Profit is what remains after you subtract your business expenses and costs.

Sanctuary: A quiet, safe place where people can rest.

Sensory impairments: When someone is **d/Deaf**, **visually impaired**, or **deafblind**.

Sensory overload: This refers to an intense feeling of being overwhelmed when the brain gets too much information from the senses – taste, touch, sight, sound or smell – and cannot process it. Triggers can vary from individual to individual, often leading to stress, anxiety and panic.

Sensory trail: A walk that has lots of experiences that are good for people who have **sensory impairments**. For example, visually impaired people may benefit from experiencing the variety of smells around.

Step-free: A route with no steps, so it is easier for wheelchair users and other people with mobility needs.

Toolkit: A guide people can use to help them do a piece of work.

Vandalism: When something is damaged or broken or made to feel unsafe.

Visually impaired community (VIs): The community of people who are blind or who find it hard to see.

Appendix

Cost and time ranking

Each change has been ranked low, medium or high for cost and time.

This has been done to give an idea of how much money and time it would take to make them happen.

The rankings are based on these categories:

	Cost	Time
Low	£0 - £5,000	0-6 months
Medium	£5,000 - £50,000	6 months – 1 year
High	More than £50,000	More than 1 year

Other Ideas

There were other suggestions given during our consultation that didn't receive support when **prioritising** but were shared within the Park Visit workshops. These are outlined below:

- Bridge across the lake to reduce the length of the route around the lake
- Volunteering Hub
- Different coloured paths for cycling and walking
- Wifi in the park

- Amphitheatre
- Shade over the boating platform at the lake