



APPENDIX F CASE STUDIES OF COUNTRY PARKS, URBED

Nene Valley Park, Peterborough

Nene Valley Park provides highly valued public space within easy access of the town and the wider area. Located to the west of Peterborough the park straddles the River Nene for five miles, forming an unbroken green space for all year round public use and enjoyment. The park covers a total of 1,026 hectares and contains a country park, two 18 hole golf courses, a railway and organised recreation such as horse riding, rowing, water-sports and trout fishing.



The development of Peterborough has sought to conserve and enhance the city centre, while expanding existing villages into a series of townships. The park has provided a linking theme to bring the different parts together, and also to provide some positive benefits to the existing community from the process of expansion.

The park was conceived as part of the town's 1968 expansion masterplan and has significantly achieved its envisaged aims. The Nene Park Trust is tasked "*to provide for the recreation of the public by the provision of a park for the benefit of the inhabitants of Peterborough and visitors with the object of improving the conditions of life for such persons*". The park combines a balance of commercial attractions and informal and formal recreational pursuits appropriate to the quiet enjoyment of the countryside, in addition to farmed land and nature areas. The main attraction, Ferry Meadows, runs for six miles along the River Nene and is just over three miles from Peterborough.

At a time when many traditional parks have experienced a decline in use, Nene Park attracts in excess of 1,000,000 visits per year whilst achieving its aims of nature conservation and the provision of informal recreation in an urban setting. The country park has compensated for lack of access to real country, and has provided a major recreational attraction for the new town.



Shenley Park, Hertsmere

Shenley Park is a good example of a development trust taking on the development and management of a park and related buildings as part of a new settlement of 900 homes in Hertfordshire. It brings out the benefits in terms of innovation and flexibility, but also the costs and risks in terms of endowment and sources of income. The Director of the Shenley Park Trust has gone on to develop another trust at nearby Highfield Park, which offers further lessons.



The adopted brief and masterplan *Securing a Good Future for Shenley* set out 30 policies under four themes, one of which was strengthening the greenbelt. Others included meeting community needs, planning for growth, and creating new employment. The brief required the NHS to hand over the freehold of a defined area together with an endowment to cover the expected ongoing maintenance costs of a park under a Section 106 agreement. After extensive local consultation over a draft brief, outline planning permission for the new village was given in 1989 following a Public Inquiry, and the phased closure of the hospital began in 1991.

In 1992 Hertsmere Borough Council granted a 150 year long lease to the Shenley Park Trust, which is structured as a charitable trust company limited by guarantee. A financial endowment of £1.5 million was secured for the future maintenance of the park and £500,000 for laying it out.

People make places and an increasing role of the Shenley Park Trust is to act as an animator, promoting events of different kinds. From the restored orchard, apples are harvested and as well as being sold on Apple Day they are also turned into juice and sold to the public. Local school children are also involved in collecting, sowing and planting native trees and shrubs.

