

# Thrapston Nene Valley Park Project



## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***About the project***

#### **What is the overarching plan for the area?**

Our plan is to create a nature park, as a legacy for the town, from the 122,000 square metres (30 acres) of wasteland and wooded area by the River Nene and adjacent to the lake owned by Middle Nene Sailing Club.

It will be a place of peace and tranquility, where families and friends can meet, where adventure can begin, and where nature can thrive and be enjoyed.

This is our park - created and cared for by the people of Thrapston for the local community and visitors.

#### **How will this work be carried out and by whom?**

The park will be created over a number of phases over several years, depending on when we are successful in bidding for government money through applications, and donations.

We want to build an army of Park Maker volunteers to carry out work under expert supervision if required. If you're interested in supporting the creation of the park please email <mailto:thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com>

#### **Who owns the land?**

Thrapston Town Council

#### **The land has been used by locals anyway for years, why do anything to it now?**

In the last 10 years Thrapston has transformed from a sleepy Northamptonshire town into a bustling, lively and [award-winning place to live](#); full of young families and an incredibly supportive community. We have made the most of our green space, with numerous pocket parks around the town and the Peace Park in the centre, but we need more. We're carefully converting the wasteland area and woodland near the lake into something more useful that can be enjoyed by everyone, year round.

#### **Why isn't Thrapston Town Council managing the project?**

The council doesn't have the resources and expertise to manage the project in-house. A group of volunteers who have previously supported Town Council projects has created a management committee to guide the project. All proposals for each 'opportunity area' of the park will need approval from the Council.

#### **Who is managing the project?**

The project is being run by the volunteer management team in conjunction with Thrapston Town Council. The committee has two elected Town Councillors as permanent members of the team. The management team is working to a constitution approved by the Town Council. It has key members and is recruiting talented and skilled professionals and volunteers from the town to help guide the project.

### **Who is paying for this project and how much will it cost?**

Funds will be sought through government and nationwide grants, public donations and legacy donations from local people. Local people may also wish to donate equipment such as benches and items such as trees and shrubs.

The project is not being funded by Council Tax or from the budget of Thrapston Town Council. However, once each phase is complete, it will be handed to the Council and volunteers to maintain. Some of this maintenance cost will be met by the Council's budget allocation for facilities, the remainder through volunteers, donations and potential income.

### **Where is the new park area?**

It runs from the Water's Edge estate to the south of the sailing lake and includes the Thrapston Town Walk to the east, woodland and fields, as well as the SkatePark and BMX track.

The park is in the heart of the Nene Valley, at the centre point of the 114 mile Nene Way, which starts in Badby, Northants, and ends at Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire, where the River Nene outflows into The Wash.

### **Will this lead to more people coming to Thrapston?**

Yes, but we're not creating a tourist attraction. Like many small towns, Thrapston is growing and the council and local traders have worked hard to build a thriving High Street of local businesses and facilities. We want to see this continue to blossom and hope that having a nature park as a destination, in the heart of the Nene Valley, at the centre of the Nene Way, will draw walkers, cyclists and visitors to our town.

The park will also be part of the [Greenway project](#) - run by Destination Nene Valley and North Northants Council; a series of walkways and cycle paths connecting East Northamptonshire's communities to a central route that will run from Wellingborough Railway Station in the south and to Peterborough railway station in the north.

### **How can I help or get involved?**

Become a Park Maker!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of this project. It will be a wonderful opportunity for lots of local people to help deliver the most amazing nature park in the heart of the Nene Valley.

Together we will create, build, clear land, fundraise, dig, plant, promote, maintain, get stuck in and have some fun as we transform 122,000 square metres (30 acres) of riverside wasteland, woodland and open space into a legacy green space for the town.

Please contact us at [thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com) or complete [this contact form](#).

There's lots to do...

As a Park Maker you could volunteer PHYSICAL help such as clearing land, digging, planting, building stuff and helping maintain the landscape.

You could also volunteer SOFT SKILLS such as publicity, social media, fundraising, grant application, professional advice like legal, accountancy, etc.

Finally, you can DONATE. This is a legacy project for Thrapston so we're looking for generous individuals or companies to support by way of donating equipment (benches, fencing, signage) or natural items like new trees and shrubs. We open to conversations about materials donations, cash, legacy or sponsorship.

### **Why become a Park Maker?**

- Create a legacy park for Thrapston that will be enjoyed for generations to come
- Play a vital role in the conservation and enhancement of our treasured local landscape
- Volunteers are the lifeblood of our park. So much can be achieved from a little dedication and commitment
- Be outside in our beautiful countryside, mix with local people, make new friends, keep fit and improve your wellbeing.

### **Where can I see the plans?**

The plans for each phase will be shared with the community on our Facebook page and via Thrapston Town Council. We'd welcome your feedback and ideas.

A costed proposal works will be submitted to Thrapston Town Council for approval. The cost for each phase will be covered by grants and donations with volunteers doing the majority of the work. Professional companies will be hired if required for certain jobs, but we'd hope they can offer their service pro-bono.

### **Which organisations are you working with to create the park?**

Partners:

- Thrapston Town Council
- North Northants Council (inc. Highways Dept.)
- Wildlife Trusts
- Natural England - the government's adviser for the natural environment in England.
- Destination Nene Valley

Stakeholders:

- Thrapston residents, traders and local businesses
- Middle Nene Sailing Club and the Sea Cadet Training Centre
- Thrapston Sports Association
- Islip Parish Council

### **How do I raise an objection?**

If you'd like to ask a question about the plans or share your ideas, please visit our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/thrapstonnvparkproject> or email [thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com).

We hope you'll have nothing to object to, but should you need to, please email [thrapstonnparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonnparkproject@gmail.com)

### **How can we share ideas and feedback with the project management team?**

You can share your feedback and ideas directly with the team through our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/groups/thrapstonnparkproject/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/thrapstonnparkproject/) or by email at [thrapstonnparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonnparkproject@gmail.com).

We'd also be happy to talk to you. We'll regularly be at the monthly Farmer's Market. Come and talk to us!

### ***Information***

Where can I find more information and keep up to date with progress?

We'll post all the information and latest news on our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/groups/thrapstonnparkproject/>

### ***About the work***

#### **What are you planning to do?**

The area is split into several phases or 'opportunity areas'. Each area will have a particular purpose. For example, thanks to a study by the Wildlife Trusts we've already identified an area we want to protect for local wildlife/nesting birds and wet woodland, so we'll cordon that off so it can be observed but not disturbed. Other areas are just full of weeds and have little purpose currently so we'll look to open those up, creating natural pathways and places to sit and enjoy the natural surroundings. Some larger phases require dredging streams and moving logs, so we'll seek professional help with that.

We plan to involve the community, schools and businesses in our project. This park is being created as a legacy for the community by the community. It will all be kept naturally. We'd love to hear your ideas. You can contact us through our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/groups/thrapstonnparkproject/> or via email at [thrapstonnparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonnparkproject@gmail.com).

Rest assured, we have lots of ideas but we are not planning to build big play areas. It's a nature park.

#### **Will you include play equipment?**

We're not creating a new Wicksteed Park. We may well include natural (wooden) play equipment, adventure trails and natural activities like den building, but not a traditional park, like The Peace Park - there are plenty of local play areas already in the town already.

#### **Will the work impact local nature and if so, how do you plan to protect it?**

We're working with Natural England, Wildlife Trusts and professional rangers to identify areas of importance for local wildlife and nesting birds. We plan to cordon off areas that need protection and create safe walkways through other areas, so that nature can be observed but not disturbed.

#### **Where are the areas of the new park?**

The park runs from the Water's Edge estate adjacent to the River Nene, to the south of the sailing lake and includes an area of woodland, the Thrapston Town Walk, SkatePark and BMX track

### **Which areas will you work on first?**

The plan is to work on an opportunity area around the riverbank first. Thrapston Town Council plans to rebuild the old pathway that runs from the end of the Water's Edge estate, along the side of the bund (river run off) to the service road on Meadow Lane.

We'll carefully work through the area between the path and river, which is overgrown and full of weeds. More details will be shared on our Facebook page.

### **How long will the work take?**

The park may take 2 - 3 years to create depending on funding and volunteer help. We also need to be mindful of peak nesting times in areas we've identified for protection. The first phase should take a few weeks to create. We hope it'll be ready for spring 2022.

### **Will the public be consulted ahead of this work taking place?**

There won't be a public consultation as no building work is taking place, purely maintenance of Council-owned land, but we would encourage any residents or businesses to get involved to offer ideas and help to create the park.

### ***About the facilities***

#### **Will we still be able to walk our dogs around the area?**

Yes, this is a nature park and open to everyone to use. We plan to add more refuse and garbage bins to help keep the place tidy and free from dog mess, however, we can't account for the local wildlife leaving deposits! We will monitor this.

#### **Will there be more litter and dog litter bins?**

Yes, we plan to include more dog mess and litter bins, which will be maintained by Thrapston Town Council. It will be up to all of us to keep this area clean and tidy though.

#### **Will there be seating?**

Yes, we would like to include seating and will look to local residents and businesses for donations, perhaps as a legacy or in memorium for a loved one. If you would like to make a donation of any kind to our park, please email us at [thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com)

#### **Will there be play equipment and if so, what will it be?**

We may include some natural play equipment, similar to that found in [Salcey Forest near Northampton](#). We also plan to build adventure trails and wood for den building..

#### **What other amenities will there be?**

There are no plans to add any other amenities although there have been plenty of ideas suggested, which will be looked into and costed. Anything we plan to add will be shared with the community and submitted to Thrapston Town Council for approval.

### ***Ongoing management***

#### **Who will manage the area once the work is complete?**

Once each phase is completed, Thrapston Town Council will adopt the area and maintain it with a group of volunteers.

### **How will this be funded?**

Funding will be drawn from the current parks and facilities budget, alongside donations and volunteer rangers.

### ***Support the project***

#### **How can I leave a legacy for the project?**

Please contact us at [thrapstonvnparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonvnparkproject@gmail.com) and one of our management team will be in touch. We're grateful for any contributions towards the creation of our park.

Become a Park Maker!

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#### **What skills are most needed for the project?**

You can [sign up any time to be part](#) of our volunteer army! We'll be in touch when we need your help but feel free to send us your thoughts and ideas for the park. We'd love for you to get involved. Email us at [thrapstonvnparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonvnparkproject@gmail.com).

As of September 2021, we are also looking for skilled and talented professionals to volunteers time on our management team with particular skills:

1. Project management
2. Grant and bid lead
3. Publicity/social media

If you are interested, please email us at [thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com](mailto:thrapstonnvparkproject@gmail.com).