

MAYOR OF LONDON

Guide to preparing Open Space Strategies
Best practice guidance of the London Plan

March 2004

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Mayor's foreword

The wide variety of open spaces in London makes a valuable contribution to the quality and character of the capital's environment, contributing to my vision of a sustainable world city. They contribute to the positive image of London as a place to live, work and visit. They improve the quality of life and can encourage people to live and work in London. They give places their identity and have an important role to play in promoting regeneration objectives. They provide places for healthy exercise, for people to connect with nature and for the community to meet in and to use.

The planning and management of open spaces face a number of challenges and increasing pressures. The quality of open spaces is declining in many areas, reflecting particular problems such as vandalism and a lack of investment. The future development of London as a 'Compact City' will have implications for the use and preservation of open space. The increased demands and needs placed on open spaces as a result will require greater appreciation of the value and benefits that they contribute to sustainable living and the quality of the urban environment. The preparation of this Guide is a response to these many challenges.

Creating and managing high quality public spaces is essential to delivering an urban renaissance in London. I am committed to all Londoners having access to good quality open spaces within a short walk of where they live and will work with the London boroughs to achieve this. Boroughs should prepare an Open Space Strategy to promote a more consistent approach to open space planning across London that will assist in providing good quality open spaces that are accessible to everyone. My 100 public spaces programme *making space for Londoners* seeks to deliver projects that enhance the value of London's existing network of public spaces and to show how new and improved public spaces can make a real difference to individual quality of life, community vitality and London-wide liveability.

The Guide will provide practical guidance and advice to London boroughs on the preparation of an Open Space Strategy.



Ken Livingstone
Mayor of London



1 introduction

Purpose of the Guide

- 1.1 The London Plan (February 2004) sets the strategic context for open space planning that is based on protecting and promoting the network of open spaces throughout London. Policy 3D.11 of the London Plan states that the London boroughs should prepare Open Space Strategies to understand the supply and demand of open spaces and identify ways of protecting, creating and enhancing them and improving the quality through better management. This Guide sets out best practice guidance to the London Plan on the methodology and content of an Open Space Strategy within the London context. It provides advice on assessing the quantity and quality of open spaces and in identifying the needs of local communities and other users of open spaces. It also suggests ways of promoting open space improvements, including funding, the use of planning obligations and how to effectively engage the local community and establish collaborative partnerships.
- 1.2 The production of a Strategy will also meet the requirements for assessments and audits for open spaces contained in Planning Policy Guidance 17: *Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation* (PPG17)(July 2002). The Companion Guide to PPG17 (September 2002) also sets out useful information on undertaking audits and assessments.
- 1.3 The benefits of preparing an Open Space Strategy are many and varied, including:
 - bringing together a range of issues, disciplines and interests and promoting closer inter-departmental and inter-authority working arrangements
 - promoting a more holistic view of open space provision, distribution and quality
 - providing a basis for a consistent approach that contributes to a strategic overview
 - identifying areas of open space deficiency, gaps in types of provision and spaces that need improvements
 - assisting in the identification of priorities for improvements or the creation of new spaces
 - highlighting areas where issues of quality, access and accessibility in relation to open space provision need to be addressed
 - maximising the effectiveness of limited local authority budgets
 - providing support for funding applications
 - assisting in development plan review and development control decision making and the negotiation of developer agreements
 - inputting into Best Value reviews and other corporate strategies
 - promoting partnership working, social inclusion and community involvement.

- 1.4 The Guide is not intended to be prescriptive. It provides a framework of what should be included in Open Space Strategies and a tool kit of different approaches illustrated by practical examples. This will enable individual boroughs to select the methods of most relevance to them.

Scope of the Strategy

- 1.5 The Open Space Strategy should assess and analyse the quantity and quality of existing open spaces, the varied functions and significance of open spaces and the needs of local people and other users. It should also consider the wider corporate objectives of the borough, such as area regeneration, and the potential contribution of open spaces to achieving these objectives. Most importantly, open spaces should not be viewed in isolation or as the sole responsibility of a single service area and the strategy should be developed by cross-departmental and partnership working.
- 1.6 The Strategy should set out a vision of what the Council wants to achieve, setting out aims, objectives and broad policies. This vision should be based on an understanding of the supply, distribution, quality, level of use, needs of local communities and the wider borough, sub-regional and London context. An Action Plan or delivery mechanism should be developed as a key component that focuses on the implementation of the Strategy.
- 1.7 The principal objectives of an Open Space Strategy should be to:
- protect and improve open space provision in terms of quality/quantity/accessibility/ safety
 - improve linkages within and between the open space network
 - ensure open spaces meet the needs of all local people and promote greater social inclusion
 - ensure open spaces enhance the quality of the local environment
 - provide a clear framework for investment priorities and action.
- 1.8 The development of an Open Space Strategy will be required to reflect the new focus on liveability and delivery of the urban renaissance and must seek in particular to meet the needs of local communities including groups which have traditionally suffered exclusion such as children, disabled people, minority ethnic communities, older people and women.
- 1.9 It is recommended that the preparation of an Open Space Strategy should be based on the following general principles, which develop the principal objectives above:
- establishment of a clear policy framework

- understanding the values, needs and aspirations of local people and other users
- formation of collaborative and enabling partnerships
- development of a clear and shared vision
- long term viability, sustainability and safety of all sections in the community
- sustainable management and maintenance arrangements
- understanding and promotion of heritage, nature and cultural values
- inclusive and safe design
- innovation and learning
- imaginative and innovative techniques.

1.10 As stated in paragraph 3.254 of the London Plan open space strategies should include:

- a comprehensive audit of **all** open space
- assessments of local needs and the value of existing open space, including for cultural, educational, structural, amenity, health and biodiversity value
- protection by appropriate designation on UDP maps
- prioritisation of investment to address identified needs and deficiencies
- identification of opportunities for improving access to and the accessibility of open spaces, particularly by promoting public transport, cycling, walking and improving access and facilities for disabled people
- identification of opportunities for improving linkages between open spaces and the wider public realm.

Definition of Open Space

1.11 A clear and consistent definition is particularly important in a large urban area like London where the character, role and significance of open spaces will also be subject to wide variations. It is important to recognise the value to the community and contribution to the environmental quality of an area of all open space, not just that which is publicly accessible or has a defined recreational role. The recreational and non-recreational roles of both public and private open space should also be recognised. A definition is set out below.

1.12 PPG17 (July, 2002) states that open space should mean all spaces that are of public value. The PPG17 typology (see page 23 of this Guide) illustrates the broad range of open spaces, which includes elements of the townscape such as squares and areas of water such as rivers. Consideration should also be given to the quality of linkages between open spaces, including the promotion of a network of open spaces, and the potential to use vacant and derelict land as temporary open spaces.

Boroughs may consider it appropriate to prepare a separate Public Realm Strategy or Design Guidelines for treatment of the streetscape (such as the Streetscape Design Guide prepared by LB Tower Hamlets).

Definition of Open Space in the London Plan

All land use in London that is predominantly undeveloped other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use. The definition covers the broad range of open space types within London, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, limited or restricted.

note For the purposes of producing an Open Space Strategy the definition does not include private residential gardens or incidental areas, such as road verges, or streets (unless these form part of a link in the open space network).

Who prepares it?

- 1.13 In order to develop a comprehensive strategy, a joint or collaborative approach is required between the Planning and Parks/Recreation Department, other relevant service departments, other key open space owners and managers and interest groups. Leadership and clear political commitment to an open space strategy is key to contributing to its overall success.
- 1.14 The strategy needs to recognise that open space is not the sole responsibility of the Parks and Planning Departments. There are extensive areas of open space on land owned or managed by a wide range of other Council departments or are privately owned and managed.
- 1.15 There will also be a large number of voluntary and community groups, businesses, including housing associations, and national and regional Government agencies who should play a role in strategy development from the outset. For example, strategic bodies like the GLA, London Parks and Green Spaces Forum, Countryside Agency, English Nature and Sport England. Examples of local stakeholders are shown in the box below.
- 1.16 All these groups and organisations should be involved in the preparation of the Open Space Strategy, which should take into account their aims, aspirations and comments. They should be consulted on the scope of the Strategy as well as on the form of the draft and final Strategy, and should also be considered for membership of the steering group.

Examples of Local Stakeholders

Representatives from these local groups should be involved in the process of preparing a strategy:

- relevant local authority departments, including planning, parks/leisure, education, housing, highways, regeneration
- other key owners and managers of open space
- Local Strategic Partnership
- sport and recreation interests
- children's play interests and young people generally
- amenity interests and 'friends' groups
- disabled interests
- ethnic minority communities
- representatives of housing associations
- cycling interests
- developers.

Resources

- 1.17 The availability of resources will be a critical factor in determining the scope of work and timescale for preparation of an Open Space Strategy. Some of the work and tasks set out in this Guide may have already been undertaken. Consideration should be given to how other work to date may contribute to strategy preparation and be supplemented by further complementary tasks. The level of resources committed to previous studies by the London boroughs has varied considerably and is influenced by the following principal factors:
- whether the work is done by the borough or by external consultants
 - the scope and geographical coverage of the study
 - whether an appropriate range of skills are available within the authority (eg: landscape design, urban design, community working and ecology).
- 1.18 The collaboration between planning, parks and other officers is an important means of carefully focusing resources and increasing awareness of what existing work may be drawn upon in the preparation of the Open Space Strategy. Linking the development of the open space strategy to other work, such as Best Value or other research/survey work, will make the most effective use of available resources. Undertaking cross departmental consultation exercises will be more cost effective, avoids duplication and minimises consultation fatigue of participants. In preparing action plans it is important that parks managers and planning officers work together to agree priorities for investment.
- 1.19 Specialist advice is available from advisory organisations such as Sport England and the GLA Biodiversity Strategy Team. Some organisations can

also provide borough-based data, such as that available from the GLA Open Space and Habitat Survey for Greater London. This will help to reduce the level of direct data collection that will be needed and facilitate cross boundary working. CABE Space provides advice and support on the production of a strategy to local authorities through the Strategic Enablers scheme.

- 1.20 Consultants could be employed to do all or part of the work, for example undertaking the audit or assessments as stand alone pieces of work.

Examples of Approaches

Sutton Surveys undertaken by Council staff. Consultants analysed the data provided by the borough and made recommendations on policy review. Borough officers provided support to the Consultants throughout.

Ealing Consultants did data collection, consultation and analysis. Borough Officers worked in parallel with the consultants throughout.

Merton Consultants appointed to undertake assessment of supply and demand and to identify areas of deficiency but not to prepare action plan or prioritise projects.

Barking & Dagenham Officers produced detailed scoping report and consultants appointed to undertake individual stages of work.

Southwark Steering Group included officers from neighbouring boroughs. Best Value consultation provided information. Consultants appointed to undertake work as pilot of early draft of this Guide.

Cross Boundary Working

- 1.21 There is a need to address cross boundary issues including the creation of green chains and urban fringe management in the preparation of an Open Space Strategy. Consideration should be given to the creation of more formal associations. Neighbouring boroughs provide opportunities for partnership and there are a number of existing organisations which bring adjoining London boroughs together to improve open space provision. Examples include:

- **London Parks and Green Spaces Forum** a forum, involving all the key stakeholders, taking a strategic view of green space issues in London, including developing a network for the sharing of best practice and information.
- **Lee Valley Regional Park Authority** an independent body that was set up to improve, preserve and manage the Lee Valley Park. It is financed by a precept from all London boroughs and certain local authorities in Essex and Hertfordshire.
- **Green Chain Joint Working Committee** a forum involving representatives from both the Planning and Parks Departments at Bexley, Greenwich, Bromley and Lewisham. This has been running for 20 years. It now employs a Green Chain Officer funded jointly by the boroughs. The Officer does project-based work throughout the Green Chain.
- **Green Corridor Partnership** London Boroughs of Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow.
- **West London Alliance** funding responsibilities of Gunnersbury Park are shared between the London boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow.
- **London Borough's Biodiversity Forum** brings together biodiversity officers from the boroughs and develops common themes.
- **East London Green Grid** partnership project involving the boroughs and strategic partners to develop a framework for creating a network of interlinked open spaces as an integrated part of achieving social and economic regeneration.
- **The Green Arc** project to explore the potential for improving the accessibility and quality of the Green Belt and its contribution to quality of life in north and east London. Partners include Thames Chase Community Forest, GLA, Countryside Agency, Forestry Commission, Corporation of London – Epping Forest, Lee Valley Regional Park, Forest Enterprise, Forestry Commission, Woodlands Trust, Hertfordshire County Council and Essex County Council.

1.22 The importance of open spaces for people who live outside the borough must be considered in Open Space Strategies. Large parks and Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation can attract people from large distances. They will attract visitors from a number of neighbouring boroughs. People who live in the inner boroughs often have less access

to open spaces, particularly playing pitches and wildlife sites. It is common for such areas in the outer boroughs to be used by people who live in the inner boroughs as well as local residents.

- 1.23 It is recommended that, as a minimum, boroughs should consult with neighbouring local authorities on the following issues:
- the planning and management of public open spaces within 1.2 km of the borough boundary
 - Green Chains and Green Corridors
 - open spaces which straddle the borough boundary
 - Green Belt management issues (outer London boroughs and the adjoining districts)
 - open spaces designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.
- 1.24 Boroughs should also consult with other relevant boroughs and districts where surveys highlight open space users who are not borough residents. Boroughs should share the results of audits and surveys with neighbouring boroughs to facilitate cross boundary planning.

Definition of Green Chain and Green Corridor in the London Plan

Green Chains These are areas of linked but separate open spaces and the footpaths between them. They are accessible to the public and provide way-marked paths and other pedestrian and cycle routes.

Green Corridors This refers to relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment, which may be linked and may not be publicly accessible. They may allow animals and plants to be found further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension to the habitats of the sites they join.

Timescale

- 1.25 It is considered that the preparation of an open space strategy should generally take 12-18 months depending on resource availability and the extent to which the scope of work dovetails into other initiatives and Best Value exercises. An example timescale for strategy preparation is set out in Table 1.

table 1 Example Timetable for Strategy Production

Stage	Estimated Duration
1 Preparation	1-2 months
2 Review	1-2 months
3 Supply	3-4 months*
4 Demand	3-4 months*
5 Analysis	2-3 months
6 Draft	2-3 months

* These stages can be run concurrently

2 methodology

- 2.1 A staged approach to the preparation of an Open Space Strategy with clearly defined outputs at each stage of this process is recommended as set out below:

- 1 Preparation of Brief/Scoping Study
- 2 Review
- 3 Understanding the Supply
- 4 Understanding Demands/Needs
- 5 Analysis and Identification of Objectives
- 6 Preparation of Strategy and Action Plan

Stage 1: Preparation of Brief/Scoping Study

2.2 Essential Tasks

- i Review scope of work undertaken to date
- ii Identify key issues to be addressed and initial objectives
- iii Establish management structure
- iv Decide engagement/ consultation programme
- v Consider use of GIS
- vi Identify key pieces of further detailed work (eg sub-strategies)

i. Review

- 2.3 The relationship of the Open Space Strategy to other strategies and initiatives must be clearly defined. The range of other strategies and initiatives are illustrated in Annex 1. The background work to these strategies may provide useful background information to inform the preparation of the Open Space Strategy.
- 2.4 All local authorities are required to undertake Best Value reviews of their services on a five year rolling programme. Much of the information from this on-going work can be incorporated into an Open Space Strategy. Preparation of a strategy will itself be of use in future Best Value reviews and in the preparation and monitoring of Best Value Improvement Plans.

LB Barking and Dagenham is producing and implementing the Green Spaces Strategy in parallel with the Best Value Review of Parks, Open Spaces & Grounds Maintenance. This is to ensure synergy is developed between the two processes and that there is no duplication in analysis work undertaken or consultation with stakeholder groups. The Government's Best Value guidance of the '4 Cs' - Challenging, Consulting, Comparing and Competing has been adopted as an overarching framework for preparation of the Green Spaces Strategy.

ii. Identifying Key issues

- 2.5 An Open Space Strategy is one in a family of strategies to be prepared by a borough. It will be possible to identify key issues that the Strategy should address through an understanding of the borough's corporate objectives and community priorities. It will be necessary to understand the purpose of producing the strategy, to identify who should be involved in the Steering Group, to secure their commitment and involvement and to get them to sign up to an initial set of aims and objectives, which can be refined during the production of the strategy. The preparation of an initial brief or scoping study is an essential prerequisite of strategy preparation regardless of whether the work is to be undertaken in-house or by external consultants. This may range from a simple brief based on the methodology set out in this Guide to a more detailed scoping or framework report.
- 2.6 A Framework Report can include a history of the borough's parks and other open spaces, an examination of the range of benefits of open space, categorisation of open space in the borough, details of the management framework, parks and open spaces expenditure and capital programme, performance indicators, background on community involvement and key issues. Preparation of the Framework Report should include a SWOT analysis (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) and preparation of a strategy model and structure. The collection of existing information, corporate aims and objectives will provide an overview of current provision and a critical evaluation of the issues that need to be addressed in the strategy, for example, the need to improve access for disabled people.

iii. Managing the Process

- 2.7 A Steering Group should be formed as set out in paragraphs 1.13-1.16 of this Guide. The steering group should consider who shall do the work and whether consultants will be used. Collaboration can be effectively promoted through the formation of a Strategy Team of responsible officers. The Strategy Team should include the borough's Access Officer or if there is no Access Officer in post, consideration should be given to employing an access consultant or taking other expert advice. A Project Manager should be appointed with overall responsibility for the day to day progress of the strategy and for reporting to the Strategy Team.

iv. Engagement and Consultation

- 2.8 The involvement and participation of representatives outside of the council should be decided. The organisations and groups with an interest in open space are illustrated in paragraphs 1.13-1.16 of this Guide. Table 2 illustrates the opportunities at each stage.

- 2.9 Engaging stakeholders at an early stage and throughout the preparation of the strategy can have a number of benefits:
- better decision making- stakeholders are a source of knowledge and experience. It makes good sense to harness the range of information and viewpoints.
 - sense of ownership- when people are engaged in creating and enhancing their environments, a sense of ownership often results in a greater sense of responsibility and decreased likelihood of vandalism and neglect.
 - additional resources- authorities rarely have the means to solve all the problems of an area. Stakeholders can often bring additional resources that may be crucial to the successful accomplishment of projects and to meeting people's needs and fulfilling their aspirations.

table 2: Engagement/Consultation/Involvement Opportunities

Stage	Opportunity
1. Preparation	Engagement:
	• Formulation of aims and objectives
	• Scoping
	• Securing commitment and involvement
	• Advice
	Involvement:
	• Inclusion in Steering Group/ Strategy Team
	• Partnership building
2. Review	
3. Supply	Engagement:
	• Availability/ sharing of information /audit data
	• Specialist advice
4. Demand	Consultation:
	• Views on existing provision and aspirations
	• Surveys
5. Analysis	
6. Draft	Consultation:
	• Consultation on draft strategy
Implementation	Involvement:
	• Partnership; Management; Projects

v. Use of GIS

- 2.10 GIS is the best way to record information throughout the process, particularly the results of the audit and assessments, and will allow for the data to be linked easily to other datasets such as population data and enhance the analysis. All the London boroughs are part of the Ordnance Survey agreement for the use of large scale Landline / Mastermap and it is recommended that this should be used to ensure a consistent approach and compatibility of data. The data should be held in a standardised way to facilitate the sharing and compatibility of information and the following headings should be included as a minimum:
- site name and ID
 - points of access

- categorisation using POS hierarchy
- categorisation using PPG17 Typology and local subdivision
- size in hectares
- facilities/features
- ownership/management
- condition/quality
- functions
- present level of use
- access and facilities for disabled people.

vi. Further Detailed Work/ Sub-Strategies

- 2.11 The Open Space Strategy should provide an overarching review of open space in the borough. More detailed audits and assessments of particular types of open spaces can form part of the Strategy or be done as a sub-strategy. Sub-strategies could address a range of open space types or issues of local importance in more detail. The GLA is working with partners to produce a best practice guide for the production of children's play strategies, which can form a detailed sub-strategy.

Examples of Possible Sub-Strategies

Children's Play: LB Ealing: Strategy involved separate assessment of children's playgrounds

Outdoor Sports: LB Merton: demand assessment for outdoor sports and assessment of strategic role of borough for sports and recreation

Allotment Studies: LB Bexley: surveys of allotments under the umbrella of the overall strategy

Stage 2: Review

2.12 Essential Tasks

- i Review national, regional and local policy context
- ii Identify key characteristics of borough on an area basis (including identification of regeneration initiatives and major development opportunities)
- iii Summarise information collected

i. Context

- 2.13 Annex 1 illustrates the range of strategy documents considered of relevance to the preparation of an Open Space Strategy.

National Context

- 2.14 The Urban White Paper, *Our Towns and Cities: the Future* (2000), recognises that well managed public open spaces improve the attractiveness of urban areas and help to promote a healthier lifestyle and highlights the need for improvements in their management and maintenance. It highlights a number of actions which are being taken by the Government to promote these objectives, notably:
- new sources of funding such as the New Opportunities Fund Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities Programme and the Heritage Lottery Fund Urban Parks Programme
 - preventing the loss of school playing fields
 - encouraging improvements in the quality of service standards in the provision and management of parks and open spaces through the Best Value regime
 - taking environmental action by enabling and funding environmental and voluntary groups such as the Groundwork Trusts, BTCV and Wildlife Trusts to take action to improve the quality of local environments.
- 2.15 The Urban White Paper recognises that there is a requirement to do more than halt decline in the quality of open spaces and identifies a requirement to find ways of improving the quality of parks, play areas and other open spaces and to make them cleaner, safer and better maintained places. The need for more imaginative thinking about open space planning and design is highlighted and three key areas of action are proposed:
- development of a shared vision for the future of our parks, play areas and open spaces
 - improved information on the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces and the way in which they are used and maintained
 - improved planning and design of new parks, play area and public spaces and the management and maintenance of existing ones.
- 2.16 The Government has demonstrated its support for public space by recognising it as a component of sustainable communities. The Sustainable Communities Plan (Feb, 2003) underlines its commitment to the 'liveability' agenda that includes open spaces and the public realm.
- 2.17 CABE Space is a new unit set up by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) at the request of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. There are 5 strategic partners supporting the work of CABE Space and they are represented on the steering group. These are Groundwork, GreenSpace, the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM), the Landscape Institute and the Improvement

and Development Agency (IDeA). The unit champions high quality planning, design and the management and care of parks and public spaces. Hands-on support and guidance is provided to local authorities and others to apply best practice to improve the local environment.

- 2.18 Planning policy guidance notes (PPGs) should be referred to in establishing the planning policy context. Of particular relevance will be the PPGs covering: Green Belt (PPG2); Housing (PPG3); Countryside (PPG7); Nature Conservation (PPG9); Transport (PPG13); Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17); Noise (PPG24); and Flood Risk (PPG25).
- 2.19 PPG17 sets out policy guidance that is relevant to the preparation of a strategy. In particular it requires audits of provision and assessments of need and opportunities to be undertaken and open space standards to be set locally. In addition, a Companion Guide to PPG17 illustrates one way that the required audits and assessments can be done, while recognising that other approaches are possible, setting out a range of methods to achieve them.
- 2.20 Other legislation covers open spaces and will have an impact on the status of the land, for example, the Allotments Act 1925 and the Playing Fields Direction 1998.

Other National Initiatives

The **Beacon Council** theme of Improving Urban Green Spaces aims to promote better quality services and to raise the standards of management and good practice. Beacon status will be awarded to local authorities who can demonstrate:

- vision and strategy
- an active programme of community engagement
- partnership working
- a management and maintenance plan
- good practice
- user and community satisfaction.

The **Green Flag** scheme rewards and encourages good management and maintenance of parks. Awards are made to individual green spaces and sites are judged against a number of criteria including whether it is:

- a welcoming place
- a safe environment
- maintained in a sustainable and environmentally sound way
- clean and well maintained
- accessible and inclusive
- actively involving the local community.

Strategic Context

- 2.21 The Mayor is required to produce a number of strategies for London that are integrated with the London Plan. These deal with Transport, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Air Quality, Ambient Noise, Municipal Waste and Culture. In addition, the Mayor is also producing supplementary planning guidance and strategies on a range of other topics. It will be necessary to understand the strategic framework set out in these strategies and guidance notes.
- 2.22 The London Plan sets the spatial planning framework for London for the next 15-20 years. The Plan sets out a number of policies in respect of London's open spaces. These may be summarised as follows:
- realise the value of open space
 - protection of Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and locally important open space including green corridors and important wildlife habitats
 - support for creation of networks of strategic open spaces such as green chains and improved access to and connections between spaces
 - creation of new open spaces in areas where there is inadequate provision and promotion of improvements in existing provision
 - ensuring that everyone has equal access to and can use London's open spaces
 - management of open space and encouragement of boroughs to prepare open space strategies to identify priorities and opportunities based on local needs.

Other Mayoral Strategies of Particular Relevance

Biodiversity Strategy (July, 2002) promotes the protection, management, enhancement and creation of open space for wildlife habitats and biodiversity. Public access and appreciation of nature is promoted.

Ambient Noise Strategy (forthcoming March, 2004) promotes frameworks for the management of noise in open spaces and the wider public realm and exploring the value of designating 'Areas of Relative Tranquillity' where appropriate and practicable.

Culture Strategy (forthcoming March, 2004) promotes the cultural benefits of open space as an important resource for providing a range of opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. Open space contributes to London's cultural identity and can provide good locations for events that bring people together in formal and informal activities and can provide quiet space for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

Children and Young People’s Strategy (January, 2004) promotes access to a range of play, recreational and leisure opportunities and highlights issues of importance to these groups such as the lack of safe areas for play and the safety of the wider public realm. Children’s Play Strategies are encouraged and a best practice guide for producing a strategy will be produced.

Making Space for Londoners

The Mayor’s 100 public spaces programme seeks to deliver projects that enhance the value of London’s existing network of public spaces and to show how new public spaces can make a real difference to people’s quality of life. There will be 100 projects spread across all of London within 5 years. These will act as examples of the difference improved public space can make, and of the ways in which the highest quality designs can be secured at reasonable cost. The GLA Architecture and Urbanism Unit (A+UU) is already working with partners, including Transport for London and the London Development Agency, on 24 projects, advising on how to obtain the best possible quality of design.

Local Context

- 2.23 Annex 1 illustrates the wide range of documents that will set the local context. The Community Strategy will be of particular importance. In general, development plans contain policies to protect and enhance existing open space, to address open space deficiency and to create new areas of open space, including green chains and green corridors. However, development plans do not contain detailed policies on implementation and this is an issue which should also be addressed in the preparation of an Open Space Strategy.
- 2.24 Many boroughs have or are developing strategies to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and have developed action plans to better promote access for disabled people in order to meet the 2004 provisions of the DDA. There will be a requirement for all boroughs to comply with DDA legislation in their open spaces. The Mayor’s forthcoming Supplementary Planning Guidance on Accessible London will provide further advice.

ii. Borough Characteristics

- 2.25 Each borough should consider what characteristics are important for its local area and regard should be given to other relevant strategies and corporate objectives. The characteristics of the borough’s population,

including residents, workers, and visitors, and infrastructure must be understood before the aims and objectives of the Strategy can be effectively developed and will also inform the priority given to the different parts of the strategy. A profile of the borough should therefore be assembled building on a range of available data sources. The 2001 census information will provide an up-to-date picture of the local area and should be examined by output areas or a ward basis. The list below illustrates the type of information which should be considered

- population distribution and age structure
- percentage of children; retired; disabled people (if available)
- ethnicity: Percentage of ethnic minority groups
- percentage of people without a car
- percentage of people without a garden
- poverty, deprivation and polarisation: Indices of deprivation eg: income, employment, health, education, housing, access and child poverty
- other strategy areas eg regeneration initiatives
- public transport routes; cycle routes.

2.26 Based on the GLA's population projections, it will be possible to chart projected population changes. This assessment of published data sources could be supplemented by a character or landscape appraisal of the borough and information on key development sites and regeneration areas. It will be useful to show this information on a series of maps of the borough and GIS allows land use and population data to be easily linked, recorded and analysed. This will assist in identifying areas of particular need and in assessing these characteristics against the distribution of open space.

iii. Summary

2.27 The review of the national, regional and local context, relevant initiatives, documents and guidance should be summarised and form part of the final strategy document.

Stage 3: Understanding the Supply

2.28 Essential Tasks

- i Desk top study and identification of open spaces
- ii Categorisation of public open space and identification of areas of deficiency
- iii Development of local typology of open space
- iv Audit of all open spaces over 0.4 ha (including, quantity, quality, use, roles facilities and accessibility)
- v Produce results – key information, dataset.

i. Desk Top Study

- 2.29 A desk top study will provide a useful starting point for understanding the supply and spatial distribution of open space. The study should compile and map information on existing open space (for example, from the UDP, aerial photos and other datasets). This should identify:
- sites designated in the UDP, eg Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, Green Chains, sites of nature conservation importance and locally protected sites
 - brownfield land
 - all Public Open Spaces
 - all other open spaces eg: school playing fields, private sports grounds, allotments, burial grounds, wildlife sites, playgrounds and amenity areas on housing estates
 - site information eg provision of facilities.
- 2.30 This information should be recorded in a comprehensive schedule with reference numbers corresponding to a series of OS sheets on a ward basis. The use of GIS is recommended to assist regular updating of this information.

LB Southwark's audit involved identifying all open space in the borough, whether in public or private ownership. A desk study involved identifying open spaces using aerial photographs supplemented by Ordnance Survey Landline data to identify property boundaries. This study identified 360 sites of which 340 were within the borough boundary. Data on each site over a threshold of 0.3ha was recorded on a GIS. Site surveys using a hand held computer were undertaken using a standard form to gather information on the quality of provision and the data collected was added to the GIS database. The GIS was used to analyse the data and establish areas of deficiency for different types of open spaces.

Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land

- 2.31 Both designations are long term and boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances as part of a review of the development plan. In such cases, reviews should be included as part of the Open Space Strategy. The Strategy could include proposals to improve the Green Belt and areas of MOL.

ii. Public Open Space Categorisation and Areas of Deficiency

- 2.32 The categorisation of publicly accessible open spaces should be based on the London Plan open space hierarchy in order to provide a consistency of approach across London in identifying broad areas of deficiency in provision. In order to reflect local variations, an additional

category of small local or pocket parks has been added to the hierarchy and is set out in Table 3. Annex 3 illustrates the main function and characteristics of the categories.

table 3 London's Public Open Space Hierarchy

Open space categorisation	Size guideline Hectares (ha)	Distances from homes to open spaces	Distances refined to take into account barriers to access
Regional	Over 400 ha	8 km	
Metropolitan	60 - 400 ha	3.2 km	
District	20 – 60 ha	1.2 km	
Local Parks	2 – 20 ha	400 m	280 m
Small Local Parks	0.4 – 2 ha	400 m	280 m
Pocket Parks	Less than 0.4 ha	400 m	280 m
Linear Open Spaces	Variable	Where feasible	

source London Plan, February 2004

- 2.33 The starting point in defining the pedestrian catchments of local parks is the 400 metre fixed radius catchment identified by the hierarchy. This should also be done for District size parks using the 1.2km radius. This will provide the basis for identifying which parts of the borough are not adequately served in terms of access to public open space. However, this approach does not take account of the fact that individual open spaces may have larger or indeed smaller catchments depending on a number of other quality and functional criteria, such as the actual walking route and point of access. The areas of deficiency highlighted by this approach should be viewed as indicative only and should be used as a guide to broadly identify those areas of the borough which are deficient in public open space.
- 2.34 It is recommended that a more detailed assessment is undertaken to identify where local circumstances such as the location of entrance gates, street patterns, the severance effects of railway lines or heavy traffic flows could reduce the accessibility of open spaces. This could take the form of reducing the catchment area at the local park level to 280 metres to take into account local barriers to accessibility. Physical barriers that prevent movement, such as a railway line without any means of crossing, should limit the catchment area and provide its edge. This would extend the identified area of deficiency. Alternatively, if time and resources permit, account should be taken of actual walking distances and barriers on a case by case basis to provide a better understanding of deficiency areas.

- 2.35 Public transport catchments could be estimated in more detail for Metropolitan and District Parks. This will require consideration of existing public transport services. Park users can be expected to make bus journeys of up to 4.8 km (or 15 minutes) to Metropolitan Parks and up to 3.2 km to District Parks and the areas within 400 metres of the bus corridors can be regarded as being part of the catchment areas. People can be expected to make rail journeys of up to 5.9 km (or 10 minutes) to District parks and areas within 400 metres of the stations on these lines can be considered to be within the catchment areas of the parks.
- 2.36 It is also important to recognise that catchment areas will be smaller in practice for some groups, for example disabled people, children and parents with young children. The accessibility of open spaces will be affected by the design of entrances as well as their location. For example, narrow gates and steps may mean that some people would have to travel further to enter an open space. Public transport catchments will also be different if stations are not accessible. Barriers to access will be more extensive for disabled and older people and priorities for action should take into account how accessible the space is in practice for disabled people based on the principles of inclusive design.
- 2.37 The assessment of existing public open space should extend beyond the borough boundary. It is recommended that the study area should be extended by a minimum of 1.2 km to identify district and local park catchment areas that fall within the borough boundary. This is already the practice when evaluating Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. In considering the role of Metropolitan Parks and Regional Parks in providing for the open space needs of a borough, it will be necessary to consider a wider area of coverage corresponding to the catchment areas defined in the hierarchy.

Public Open Space is defined as public parks, commons, heaths and woodlands and other open spaces with established and unrestricted public access and capable of being classified according to the open space hierarchy which meets recreational and non-recreational needs.

Private Open Space is defined as open space to which public access is restricted or not formally established but which contributes to local amenity or wildlife habitat or meets or is capable of meeting recreational or non-recreational needs, including school and private playing fields. Private residential gardens are not included for the purposes of producing an Open Space Strategy.

iii. Typology of Open Space

- 2.38 The use of the typology contained in PPG17 (set out in Table 4) is recommended so as to promote data compatibility, supporting cross boundary working and strategic thinking. This typology includes a broad range of open space types, both green spaces and hard surfaced areas, which can be refined to suit local circumstances. In order to maintain a coherent strategic context and facilitate cross boundary working local refinements can be achieved by sub-dividing the typology by adding sub-categories that can be related back to PPG17. While the Typology indicates the primary purpose of the open space, most areas are multi-functional in practice.

table 4 PPG17 Typology

Typology	Description
i. parks and gardens	including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens
ii. natural and semi-natural urban green spaces	including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (eg downlands, commons and meadows) wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (eg cliffs, quarries and pits)
iii. green corridors	Including river and canal banks, cycleways and rights of way
iv. outdoor sports facilities	including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas
v. amenity greenspace	including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens
vi. provision for children and teenagers	including play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops, other informal areas (eg 'hanging out areas, teenage shelters)
vii. allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms	
viii. cemeteries and churchyards	
ix. accessible countryside in urban fringe areas	
x. civic spaces	including civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians

iv. Audits

- 2.39 There is value in assessing the types and characteristics of open space available within a borough, in order to show the range of open space facilities and functions being provided. This should cover such issues as quantity, quality, level and type of use, roles, facilities and accessibility. As a general principle, as much information as possible should be recorded and the preparation of the survey form should seek to minimise subjective judgement. At the minimum audits should include the information listed in paragraph 2.10 of this Guide for each site.
- 2.40 Seven roles of open space were identified in the 1992 LPAC study of Open Space Planning in London undertaken by Llewelyn-Davis: Recreational; Structural; Amenity; Ecological; Educational; Social; and Cultural. A combination of these roles can be performed by spaces and they each contribute to the quality of open space. In addition to these roles, the London Plan recognises the value and benefits that open spaces have that are associated with flood mitigation, health and accessibility. Boroughs may consider other roles important in their area.
- 2.41 At the minimum all open spaces over 0.4 ha should be included in the audit and sites of less than 0.4 ha should be included at the discretion of the borough. It will be useful for many Boroughs, particularly in inner London, to assess smaller open spaces and the contribution these make to the provision of public open space, especially in areas of deficiency. The GLA Open Space and Habitat Survey for Greater London covers all open spaces of 0.25ha and above using the survey form shown in Annex 2.

LB Southwark audited all sites over 0.3ha as a review of the information recorded on the GIS database indicated that there was a significant number of open spaces that fell between 0.3ha and 0.4ha.

Assessing the Quality of Open Space

- 2.42 It is necessary to consider the quality of open spaces in order to:
- recognise the benefits and value of open space
 - ensure a range of different types of open space and facilities is provided
 - assist the integration of decision making on priorities for park improvements.
- 2.43 The assessment of quality should include an assessment of visual and aural quality and the range of facilities available. Benchmark standards, such as the Green Flag, can be applied. Quality is partly defined by the needs of local residents, which will be identified in Stage 4 of the

development of the strategy, and it is important to incorporate this information.

LB Ealing has undertaken an audit of parks based on the standards set by the Green Flag scheme. Parks were audited on 21 measures or criteria of quality resulting in scores out of 10. For a park to qualify for the Green Flag it must score over 65 per cent. The scores are indicative of quality rather than an absolute measure and other factors such as range of facilities and management issues need to be considered.

Assessing the Recreational Role of Open Space

- 2.44 Open spaces provide opportunities for a variety of formal and informal types of outdoor recreation that encompass active and passive activities, including organised sports, play, sitting, walking, running, exercising, informal games and picnicking. In addition to the basic audit of recreational facilities and functions, more detailed assessments can be made to address identified local issues, such as the provision of playing fields or children's play facilities. These assessments are closely linked to demand and further detail is outlined in paragraph 2.81 in Stage 4. Sport England can provide advice on assessing different types of sport facilities and playing fields. The National Playing Fields Association can provide advice on general recreation provisions and, along with the Children's Play Council and London Play, advice on children's play provisions.

Playing Pitch Audit

- 2.45 An audit of playing pitches is required which at the very least covers the list below.
- identifies particular sports
 - differentiates between the public, private and educational sectors and ascertains the availability of school pitches
 - identifies pitch availability on different times and days (including the impact of floodlights if appropriate)
 - identifies the availability and quality of changing accommodation
 - assesses the quality of pitches
 - takes account of the availability of safe and adequate car parking and accessibility by public transport
 - assesses whether individual pitches have capacity for further use
 - considers any constraints on use such as the shortage of changing accommodation, dual use, drainage etc.
 - considers whether opportunities for other open space uses have been or could be realised.
- 2.46 Information on pitches is available from the following sources:
- the Register of English Football Facilities: The Football Foundation

is creating a database capable of identifying the quality, quantity and demand for facilities in every part of the country, highlighting hot spots and areas where conditions are inadequate

- local knowledge and records
- questionnaire surveys of existing sports clubs.

Audit of Play Space for Children

- 2.47 The Children's Play Council is preparing a Guide for Children's Play Space. It sets out the principles and processes in the development and maintenance of appropriate and sustainable outdoor play spaces for children and young people. The Mayor is working with partners to develop best practice guidance on producing children's play strategies that will include guidelines on auditing play provision, assessing requirements and implementing standards. Mapping where children play and the range of facilities provided is needed to inform any strategies that seek to improve children's play.

Questions to consider in play space audit

- What already exists for children and young people with differing needs and aspirations?
- Do all children and young people have ready access to play spaces appropriate to their age, interests, cultural needs and physical, learning and sensory abilities?
- How well is existing space currently used by different groups of children and young people?
- What are the reasons behind the ways in which children and young people currently use the spaces?
- Where is the existing provision in relation to the children and to where the children, parents and other community members want it to be?
- How safe, easy and accessible are the routes between home, school, play spaces and other spaces?
- How easily can children and young people travel independently to outdoor play spaces in other areas?
- In spaces used by other groups and members of the community, how well is the shared use managed?

- Is the environment of the facility such as to provide opportunities for encounters with wildlife and natural landscapes?

Assessing the Structural/Landscape Role of Open Space

- 2.48 Land designated as Green Belt and MOL performs a structural role in shaping future development and contributing to the character and attractiveness of areas. Individual open spaces form part of a wider network of open spaces. The wider structural role of these spaces must be acknowledged and also be recognised in the protection they are given and in their management. Land identified as of importance for wildlife also performs a structural role as wildlife corridors, links or stepping stones from one habitat to another. Landscape and visual quality can be assessed at different levels of detail, ranging from an overall impression of quality to a systematic assessment using a checklist.
- 2.49 Assessments of the landscape framework of open spaces, including the historical context, will contribute to the study of environmental quality. Areas of different landscape types, including grass areas and trees, can be identified from aerial photographs. These features and topography could be assessed in more detail by on-site surveys. Guidance on undertaking landscape assessments is available in the following Countryside Agency publications: *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland*, (2002) and *Countryside Character Volume 7 Southeast and London* (1999).

LB Sutton undertook landscape assessments as part of the assessment of open spaces and a quality landscape score was awarded to each park. This enabled the identification of public open spaces that require priority attention and wards for landscape improvements.

Assessing the Amenity Role of Open Space

- 2.50 All open space, both public and private, contributes to the visual amenity of the urban streetscape and adds to its form. Open spaces are appreciated both visually and passively and not only through the active use of its facilities. They contribute to the attractiveness of areas as places to live, work and visit.
- 2.51 Noise issues arise in open spaces, both from external sources and from certain activities, which can cause disturbance to users and neighbours. Environmental Health departments and noise mapping can contribute to assessing noise levels and appraising the sound environment. Surveys of people's attitudes and priorities can help to refine data. Blind or

partially sighted people need good sound environments to access open spaces effectively.

Test for assessing the amenity role of open space

- Does the open space contribute significantly to the balance of open space and buildings in the area? – can be assessed using a green space ratio
- Is the open space visible or can it be made visible from a significant amount of the surrounding area? – can be assessed using visual envelopes
- Does the open space contribute to the street scene by softening the urban texture, opening up views or adding to the variety of sights, sounds and smells?

(Llewelyn-Davis, 1992)

Assessing the Ecological Role of Open Space

- 2.52 Wildlife sites in London are identified by the Mayor and by the boroughs with the Mayor's assistance, using the procedures in Appendix 1 of the Biodiversity Strategy. The GLA Biodiversity Strategy Team should be contacted when considering how to assess nature conservation as part of any Open Space Strategy.
- 2.53 The GLA Open Space and Habitat Survey for Greater London collects information on a wide range of attributes beyond those methods employed for nature conservation surveys elsewhere and is described in Appendix 4 of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (the latest survey form is included here as Annex 2). The whole of London was surveyed in 1984/85 and many boroughs were re-surveyed in subsequent years. The Mayor has decided to implement a rolling programme of surveys over a period of 10 years and it is expected that every borough will have had a recent review of its sites by 2007.
- 2.54 The data from these surveys relate to parcels of land of 0.25 hectares and larger and are held by the GLA and the London Biodiversity Records Centre. The Sites of Nature Conservation Importance for 22 London boroughs are described in detail in the Handbooks of the, now abolished, London Ecology Unit. Copies of these Handbooks and some subsequent updates are held by the boroughs and the GLA. Citations are available from the GLA for all Sites of Metropolitan Importance and for the other grades of sites that have been reviewed recently.
- 2.55 Areas of deficiency in accessible wildlife sites are defined as built-up areas more than 1 km actual walking distance from an accessible site of Metropolitan or Borough Importance. The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy

promotes the removal of deficiencies by improvements to areas not presently reaching the threshold of Borough Importance and providing access or improving accessibility to existing sites.

- 2.56 Information on protected and priority species in London is available from a variety of sources, including local naturalists, the Audit in the London Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), local BAPs, the GLA Open Space and Habitat Survey, the individual recorders of the London Natural History Society and the London Biodiversity Records Centre. Much of this information has already been taken into account in identifying the Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Classification of Nature Conservation Sites in London

Sites of Metropolitan Importance 136 sites*

Sites of Borough Importance:

Grade I 315 sites*

Grade II 490 sites*

Site of Local Importance 484 sites*

Countryside Conservation Areas: broad areas of traditional landscapes with wildlife value

Green Corridors: relatively continuous areas often linking sites

*source Mayor's State of the Environment Report, May 2003

Assessing the Flood Mitigation Role of Open Space

- 2.57 Open spaces can provide wider natural functions of flood mitigation and reducing water run off, for example in the integration of open spaces with development as well as along water courses of the Blue Ribbon Network. This will become increasingly important as the effects of climate change are experienced. The Environment Agency can provide information on flood risk and offer good practice advice on design. There are opportunities to integrate these functions within new developments, for example sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) and green roofs, which can also help to deliver biodiversity objectives. The Mayor's forthcoming supplementary planning guidance on sustainable design and construction will provide further information.

Assessing the Educational Role of Open Space

- 2.58 Open spaces can be used by schools for a variety of purposes, including sports, science, history, ecological and environmental activities. Assessments can be made of which schools visit, the frequency of visits

and the range of education activities in each open space. The identification of which open spaces are accessible to schools and their potential education value will identify the range of education opportunities and where these could be improved. It will also identify schools without access to open space. These areas should be given priority for improved access to open space.

- 2.59 Other forms of informal and formal education activities take place in open spaces, including:
- naturalists record species in open spaces
 - walks and talks on the history and wildlife of open spaces
 - interpretation material, eg leaflets and information boards illustrate features of the open space.
 - opportunities for practical conservation work by volunteers.

Assessing the Social and Cultural Roles of Open Space

- 2.60 Criteria for assessing the social and cultural roles of open space should include:
- the range of age groups using the open space
 - use of the open space by community groups e.g. play schemes, youth clubs, OAP groups, special interest groups,
 - use of the open space by ethnic minorities, visitors and tourists
 - are there organised activities e.g. community festivals, fireworks displays, concerts, circuses? • does the open space contain cultural, social or community facilities
eg band stands, community centres, club meeting rooms, cafes and incidental social meeting space e.g. children's play areas and pavilions?
 - the historic importance of the open space and its heritage interest.
- 2.61 The Mayor's forthcoming supplementary planning guidance on the Spatial Needs of London's Diverse Communities will provide further guidance.
- 2.62 Assessments should be made to determine the historical importance and value of open spaces. Open spaces in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historical Interest, compiled by English Heritage, have significant value. Other open spaces not on the list may be of local importance. The London Inventory of Historic Green Space, maintained by the London Parks and Gardens Trust, can provide information on most sites throughout London. The following should be considered:
- relationship of open space with surroundings eg conservation areas, listed buildings, monuments, archaeological remains
 - origin and development of the open space eg design, shape, function
 - features eg designed landscapes.

Assessing the Health Role of Open Space

- 2.63 The physical and psychological benefits of open space are increasingly being recognised as providing opportunities for better health through recreation and for their restorative qualities. The British Heart Foundation has been actively involved in the research and marketing of these benefits. An assessment of the health benefits of open space requires an assessment of what facilities exist and how these are used. Facilities with direct health benefits include:
- sports pitches, courts and tracks
 - orienteering and walking trails
 - allotments
 - organised exercise activities, eg green gyms
 - sensory environments for the visually and hearing impaired
 - dog walking facilities.
- 2.64 There are other health benefits from informal uses of open space, such as preventative health and stress relief, including walking and the quiet enjoyment of natural surroundings.

Accessibility

- 2.65 The accessibility of open space is crucial to ensuring open spaces are used, used appropriately, and used by all those who wish to. There are three aspects of accessibility:
- physical accessibility
 - social accessibility
 - intellectual accessibility.
- 2.66 Physical accessibility is a prerequisite of social accessibility. The identification of catchment areas will identify how physical access improvements can be made for pedestrians. This could be through the position of entrances or means of overcoming barriers e.g. improved road crossings. The quality of the linkages between open spaces can also affect their accessibility, which can be assessed by considering the provision of cycle routes, greenways and public rights of way. Improvements can be pursued through walking strategies and transport plans to create safe green routes between homes and destinations.
- 2.67 Intellectual accessibility relates to the information that is made available, knowing that an open space exists and how to get there. Social accessibility is covered in Stage 4.

Facilities for Disabled People

- 2.68 Consideration should be given to the quality of access and facilities for disabled people. Specialist organisations should be consulted such as the

Fieldfare Trust and The Sensory Trust. The Sensory Trust aims to make connections between people and the natural world and make sure that the opportunities to enjoy landscape and wildlife are open to everyone regardless of age or disability. The Trust provides information on accessible and therapeutic design, runs projects and training courses and highlights sources of advice and good practice.

- 2.69 Good physical access for disabled and older people should be matched by good quality information, interpretation and site layout. *Sense and Accessibility: How to improve access on countryside paths, routes and trails for people with mobility impairments* produced by the Countryside Agency provides guidelines. Examples of access action plans that have been implemented include:
- Epping Forest- the Corporation of London were involved in the BT Countryside for All initiative and undertook work on interpretation;
 - Hampstead Heath- introduction of mobility scheme whereby disabled people can borrow a scooter to access the Heath;
 - Lee Valley Regional Country Park- installation of wheelchair accessible bird hides;
 - London Wildlife Trust- installation of sensory garden and trail in Wildlife Garden Centre.

v. Produce Results Dataset and Key Information

- 2.70 The information collected during the audit should be brought together and will form part of the final strategy document. Information on the provision of public open space, deficiency areas and the results of the audit should be included. The presentation of data should enable the information collected on each site to be accessible. The use of GIS will improve the ability to produce informative maps and diagrams.

Stage 4: Understanding Demands/ Needs

2.71 Essential Tasks

- i Review existing consultation information and identify existing consultative mechanisms
- ii. Consult and survey to assess demands/ needs
- iii Consider use of appropriate standards
- iv Produce summary of results

i. Approaches to Consultation and User Surveys

- 2.72 Existing consultation and survey information should be reviewed to determine relevance, gaps in the data and further work required to understand open space needs and demand in the borough. Wherever possible use should be made of established consultation mechanisms and other consultation initiatives being undertaken by the borough in order

to avoid duplication. Information on demand may also be available from external bodies. A variety of consultation and survey methods may be considered including:

- **Corporate research studies regarding Council services and facilities** – these can include questions on open spaces. A coordinated approach to gathering information prevents survey overload and can link questions and survey techniques to the borough's corporate objectives. A disadvantage of the corporate approach, however, is that the volume of questions may dictate that only superficial responses will be obtained. The use of opinion polls as part of the Best Value Review can be a useful source of information.
- **Citizens' Panels or Community Forums** – established panels or forums where representative samples of the community are questioned on a regular basis about a range of service issues.
- **'Listening Days'** – a more informal approach adopted by the London Borough of Newham. Shopping centres across the borough are the venues for Listening Days at which senior Council officers and members discuss issues of concern to residents and visitors.
- **Consultation/displays in public places** – displays showing existing conditions and proposed strategy/ design alternatives can be used in site visits and field workshops or in places where local people gather, such as shopping areas, employment locations or even carnivals. Questionnaires, personal interviews, interactive displays and street stalls are often incorporated as part of consultation exercises.
- **Personal interviews, surveys and questionnaires** – these techniques may also be used on a more targeted basis, such as directly door-to-door to households and businesses, by direct mail, or on location with users of open space. This can also involve meetings with specialist groups such as sports clubs and wildlife groups.
- **Discussions, events and briefing workshops** – these could be held with a range of community groups including 'Friends of' groups, residents associations and other client groups. These can be simple and easy to organise and can be used to inform groups and people about the strategy; to establish key issues; to get people involved; to build ownership; to identify local talent and potential contributions; and to determine next steps.

- **Educational events** – the engagement of local schools in projects related to open space can assist in understanding the needs and aspirations of children and in developing a sense of shared ownership and responsibility.

2.73 Consultation and displays in public spaces should be accessible to all and consideration should be given to a range of issues, including choice of venue, design of displays, accessible formats and alternative languages. Access groups should be included in the list of community groups to be invited to discussions and events. Discussions with partners, stakeholders and adjoining boroughs should also be undertaken to contribute to assessing needs and demands.

LB Barking & Dagenham

- Research study to establish views on the importance of Council services and facilities
- 2000 residents selected at random from Electoral Register
- Data weighted by age, sex, work status and ethnicity
- Parks and open spaces were ranked as an important priority by all ages, particularly the 16-34 age group.

ii. Assessing Demands/ Needs

2.74 Any assessment of demand for open space will require an understanding of current usage, preferences, trends, identification of the main users, and who is currently excluded and why. Preparation of an open space strategy should therefore include an assessment of current usage and non-user surveys, such as head counts, levels of use and client group surveys.

This can be used as a basis for forecasting demand drawing on needs, changing population and aspirations including changing activities associated with open space. Consultation methods and user and non-user surveys should identify the following:

- peoples attitudes/perceptions of existing provision – facilities, safety and security, condition, maintenance, involvement/ownership
- patterns and levels of use – how often, who, why, reason why not
- expectations and needs/demands – views on location/accessibility, facilities, quality and quantity
- quality of provision that people want – level of satisfaction, what is valued, what is an ideal park.

Social Accessibility

2.75 The Urban Green Spaces Task Force report concluded that focused initiatives are needed to stop the exclusion experienced by groups such as children, disabled people and black and minority ethnic communities.

These groups should be fully engaged in the preparation of a strategy which should specifically address their needs. A socially accessible open space is one that is used by people from the local community of all ages, gender, race, disability etc. Surveys of users will identify who uses open spaces. Wider surveys of the local community will identify those groups who do not use all or specific open spaces and the social barriers involved. In doing on-site surveys, it should be noted that different groups may use the open space on different days and at different times of the day. Gathering information on where users and non-users live can help to identify problem areas and assist in understanding cross boundary issues.

- 2.76 Social barriers prevent different groups from feeling they can make use of an open space or that it is a place for them. This may be because they find the environment threatening, or not relevant to their needs or due to conflict with, or fear of other user groups. Assessments of the level of use and user groups should cover accessibility and safety by age and gender. The presence of staff, such as rangers, can have an impact on safety and the perception of safety and information on staffing and policing should be included.
- 2.77 The views of disabled people are often ignored as they are not given information in accessible formats so lack access to information and consultation methods may inadvertently exclude them. Local access groups are active in many parts of London and are a good way of engaging with disabled people.
- 2.78 Assessments must consider the aspirations and needs of children and young people and identify factors that threaten or inhibit the use, development and maintenance of outdoor play facilities. Further information on doing assessments will be included in the best practice guide to producing children's play strategies that is being developed by the GLA and London Play. Further information on planning for children's outdoor play needs is also available from the Children's Play Council, which states that play impact assessments be undertaken to assess the implications of changes to open space for children.
- 2.79 Consideration should be given to the particular needs of disabled children. Consultation should be undertaken with relevant organisations which promote play for disabled children, such as Kids UK. Assessing children's open space needs can be achieved through play questionnaires, play diaries and school projects. The ODPM's best practice guide *Developing Accessible Play Space* (Nov, 2003) gives advice on creating play space that disabled children can use.

Minimum Questions for a Simple Play Impact Assessment:

Do children and young people use this location now?

YES Which children and young people use the space?
 What will they do if the nature of the space changes?
 What do they think about the proposed changes to the space?

NO Why do children and Young people not use the space?
 Would they want to use the space if it changed?
 What do they think about the proposed changes to the space?

iii. Using Standards

2.80 Whilst user surveys will provide one method for understanding changing demands and needs, the use of standards and other quantitative techniques should also be considered to assist comparisons between boroughs and wards within the same borough. They can also be used as a means of:

- checking whether the use of the hierarchy (Table 3) is obscuring deficiencies in provision
- refining the development of local standards
- providing a quantitative standard of open space provision for new development.

2.81 A desk top study can be undertaken to assess demand based on the application of appropriate standards. Boroughs should assess the amount of open space per 1000 population at the borough and ward level as a starting point for developing a local standard. It is important, however, to recognise the limitations on the use of standards and to treat them as a yardstick or basis for comparison. These may include in appropriate circumstances the following standards;

- **National Playing Field Association Standard** – the standard of 2.43 hectares (6 acres) of outdoor playing/ recreational space per 1000 population is for many boroughs an unattainable target but can assist in strategic open space planning for children’s play and active recreation. The adoption of that part of the NPFA standard which relates to team pitch sports is recommended as an interim measure and the first stage of preparing a local assessment. The current standard is broken down between provision for youth and adult use (1.68-1.8 ha per 1000 population) and children’s play (0.2-0.3 ha outdoor equipped playgrounds and 0.4-0.5 ha informal play space/ 1000 population). This standard can provide a useful yardstick for determining the level of open space provision in new development schemes.

- **Open space ratio** – total amount of open space as a proportion of land area compared to other boroughs with similar characteristics and as a basis for comparison between wards.
- **Ratio of people to public open space** by borough and ward.
- **Detailed assessment using Sport England’s methodology**- this method is set out in *Towards a Level Playing Field: a guide to the production of playing pitch strategies* (2002). The aim is to determine the number of pitches required for each activity to meet demand. The results can be used to reflect the existing situation, assess the adequacy of provision or predict a future situation. There is a staged approach to demand assessment;
 - 1 identifying teams/ team equivalents
 - 2 calculating home games per team per week
 - 3 assessing total home games per team per week
 - 4 establishing temporal demand for games
 - 5 defining pitches used/ required on each day
 - 6 establishing pitches available.
- **Children’s play areas** – Table 5 sets out standards that can be applied to assess demand as set out by the National Playing Fields Association.

table 5 Standards to assess the demand for children’s play areas

Facility	Time	Walking Distance	Radial Distance	Min. Size	Nearest Dwelling	Characteristics
LAP Local Area for Play	1 min	100m	60m	100m ²	5m from Activity Zone	Small low-key games area
LEAP Local Equipped Area for Play	5 min	400m	240m	400 m ²	10m from Activity Zone	5 types of play equipment, small games area
NEAP Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play	15 min	1000m	600m	1000 m ²	30m from Activity Zone	8 types of play equipment, opportunities for ball games or wheeled activities

source National Playing Fields Association

iv. Summary of Results

- 2.82 A summary of the results of the consultation and survey work should be produced and will form part of the final strategy document. Information on identified needs, the perceptions and attitudes to the existing provision and the views and expectations on addressing problems should be presented. The use of GIS will improve the ability to produce informative maps and diagrams.

Stage 5: Analysis and Identification of Objectives**2.83 Essential Tasks**

- i Analysis of supply and demand
- ii Identification of themes, aims and objectives
- iii Identification of open spaces to be protected
- iv Identification of deficiency areas and opportunities for addressing them
- v Identification of priority open spaces for improvements.

i. Analysis

- 2.84 Once existing provision and local needs have been identified, it is necessary to compare supply and demand. An understanding of the types of open space will provide a basis for analysing the results of site audits and user surveys. For example, this would identify those types of open space that are well or poorly used and whether particular types of open space experience greater problems of antisocial behaviour. It would also enable an assessment of whether the provision of open space in the local area meets the needs of local people. Locally derived standards based on this information can then be set for the quantity and quality of provision and its access. These standards should then be included in development plans and will provide the basis for planning conditions and/ or obligations for the provision of open space in appropriate circumstances.

ii. Aims and Objectives

- 2.85 The Strategy aims should be based on protection and enhancement of existing open space and the provision of additional open space to address deficiencies. The identification of aims and objectives can be assisted by a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) with a particular emphasis on identifying opportunities for improvements in the quality of service and provision. This must include both the recreational and non-recreational roles. Boroughs should identify aims and objectives as part of an overall vision for open space in their area. These should relate and be cross-referenced to other initiatives and the borough's corporate aims, including the Community Strategy and development plan.

LB Bexley has produced a parks Strategy which sets out the following broad aims and a series of related objectives and actions to:

- improve the quality of parks
- increase and broaden the community use made of parks
- encourage community involvement and participation in planning and managing parks
- understand and respond to the present day user requirements of parks
- understand and respond to issues of public safety and community concern that relate to parks
- increase significantly public awareness of the value of parks
- conserve and enhance the natural environment and ecological balance in parks
- maximise support for parks development and maintenance through external funding opportunities and ensure that new resources are directed to benefit customers using parks.

iii. Protection

- 2.86 Open spaces that are identified as being of value or potential value to the community should be identified and protected. In addition to designated areas of Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains, a single category of 'Local Open Space' is recommended, comprising both public and private open spaces. It is considered that this single category of 'Local Open Space' would provide a useful and consistent basis for the protection of open space across London.
- 2.87 Even though there is a wide overlap with open space designations the Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation are of sufficient importance to be protected specifically for their wildlife value.

iv. Deficiencies

- 2.88 The Open Space Hierarchy in Table 3 should be used as a benchmark for considering open space deficiency of public open space to ensure consistency across London. In order to assess the significance of deficiencies, and to identify priorities for action, it is recommended that key census indicators of sensitivity to open space deficiency identified in paragraph 2.25 should be applied and include areas with a high percentage of: children aged 0-15; retired people without access to a private car; and people without access to a garden.
- 2.89 Improvements to the accessibility of open spaces would also have a positive impact and enable more people to use these spaces. Additional access points can extend considerably the catchment areas of open spaces where there are few or inappropriately located entrance

points. Crossing points over busy roads and other barriers would also improve accessibility.

- 2.90 Providing access to private open space is often more achievable than the creation of new public open spaces. School playing fields and private recreation grounds are examples of private open space where a degree of public access could be achieved.
- 2.91 Particular consideration should be given to ways of increasing provision of public open space in areas of deficiency. These could include:
- **increasing amount of publicly accessible open space** – could be increased by securing public access to a private space in or near an area of deficiency, the provision of new areas of open space, or the expansion of existing sites, for example as a requirement of new development schemes
 - **improving access to local parks** – improving access through areas which previously created barriers, for example, opening additional park entrances
 - **avoiding the loss of open space in the neighbourhood** – this could be achieved by protecting a site from development or by a partnership agreement with the landowner
 - **providing additional facilities** – for example, nature conservation potential could be realised and the provision of play facilities could be considered in areas of deficiency.
- 2.92 Reducing the areas of deficiency in accessible wildlife sites should also be a key aim. Information on deficiency areas are available from the Biodiversity Strategy Team of the GLA and reducing these areas closely parallels the process for other open space deficiencies.
- 2.93 Deficiencies in the quality of provision should be identified. This can be assessed against meeting a qualitative standard such as those for the Green Flag. A list of improvements that are required to meet the standard could then be compiled for each site. This can then feed into the production of management plans.

Comparing supply and demand for children's play space

- identify where children and young people's outdoor space needs are currently being met.
- identify where children and young people's outdoor play space needs are not currently being met and the implications of this.
- identify deficiencies in access for disabled children.
- establish what works now.

- identify problems with the existing provision.
- identify play areas that are staffed/ supervised or not.
- identify gaps in existing provision.
- check that children and young people with a wide range of needs and abilities will find any new developments both attractive and accessible.

LB Sutton assessed open space deficiencies on a ward level by the use of the following key indicators of sensitivity in order to identify priorities for action:

- wards with a high percentage children aged 0-15.
- wards with a high percentage retired people without access to a car.
- wards with a high percentage households without cars.
- wards with a high percentage flats.

v. Prioritising

- 2.94 Consideration should be given to how investment in open spaces is to be prioritised. A simple scoring system can be adopted relating to a number of standard categories including socio-economic characteristics. The contextual review (Stage 2), including data relating to indicators of deficiency, is a valuable source of information for prioritising, particularly in identifying opportunities to improve the quality of existing open space through better management, maintenance and use of resources.

LB Ealing has adopted a Priority Matrix which enables investment to be prioritised on the basis of a number of standard categories. Each Park is assessed in relation to:

- deficiency in play provision
- park deficiency as defined in UDP
- nature conservation deficiency
- parks Audit Score
- playground Audit Score
- deprived area in line with Multiple Deprivation Indicators
- funding available to undertake improvements
- is it a key Park
- community involvement/ usage
- potential sports centre of excellence.

Each category is scored: 3 Important, 2 Medium, 1 Less Important. Each category is also given a weighting so that an area of deficiency in park provision is highly significant and weighted 5 whereas access to nature conservation has been weighted as 2. The overall assessment is presented in the form of a spreadsheet.

Stage 6: Preparation of Strategy and Action Plan

2.95 Essential Tasks

- i Preparation of Draft Strategy
- ii Preparation of Action Plan
- iii Consultation on Draft Strategy
- iv Adoption of Strategy

i. Draft Strategy

2.96 The strategy should bring together the work done in each stage of the process and set out the framework for the future planning and management of open spaces in the borough. The Open Space Strategy should set out:

- statement of purpose (vision and rationale)
- national and regional context
- local context (including local needs)
- results of audit of existing provision
- summary of assessments of need
- identification and analysis of key issues
- development of policies and goals
- Action Plan.

The 2020 Vision of **LB Barking & Dagenham** is based on the aspirations of the borough's Citizens and is drawn around the elements of equality, environment and equity. The following aspirations have been identified:

- all our parks are renovated, safe, stimulating and providing for everyone
- there is community involvement in the management of parks and open spaces
- there is more wildlife and plant species present in our parks, open spaces and new wildlife areas
- there is a programme for community gardens and allotments linked to community local enterprise
- there is substantial planting of new trees in the borough
- high quality landscaping is included in all large developments.

ii. Action Plans

2.97 The Open Space Strategy should include an action plan with a programme of annual review to enable effective measurement of targets achieved and to reflect changes in strategic priorities. The approach to the preparation of an action plan will relate to the Best Value Review and preparation of Service Delivery Plans. It should, however, seek to:

- identify and prioritise a set of actions, initiatives, timescales and delivery agents in order to implement the policies and to achieve the goals

- establish means of assessment, performance indicators and targets for these actions and initiatives, how these will be monitored and if necessary, how they will be adjusted in the light of actual performance and changing circumstances
- indicate implementation, those who will be responsible and sources of funding.

2.98 A series of management plans should be prepared in respect of key open spaces. These can take the form of individual site Management Plans which reflect local needs and specific issues.

iii. Consultation

2.99 The Draft Open Space Strategy should be the subject of consultation with stakeholders, including the following:

- adjacent local authorities
- organisations involved in open space eg: GLA, London Parks and Green Spaces Forum, Sport England, Countryside Agency, Environment Agency, English Nature, London Wildlife Trust
- major open space owners/ managers eg: Commons Conservators, Utilities Companies, housing associations
- voluntary organisations, community groups, local groups eg: schools, 'Friends' groups, sports clubs
- general public.

2.100 This can take the form of requests for formal responses, questionnaires, public displays and focus group meetings. In order to ensure that consultation on issues relating to open spaces is maintained, consideration could be given to the establishment of a permanent consultative network. Friends and User Groups could be brought together with other interested bodies in an Open Spaces Forum that would provide a borough-wide perspective on open space issues. An annual meeting could be held to review progress on the Open Space Strategy and inform and set priorities for action to improve open spaces. This Forum could also scrutinise the borough's achievements in meeting the objectives expressed in the strategy.

iv. Adoption

2.101 Once the consultation exercise is completed and any necessary amendments done the Open Space Strategy should be adopted by the borough. The adoption of the strategy will provide the framework for the delivery of the identified aims and objectives. The strategy and the site information should be made available as widely as possible, for example on the borough's website and in libraries.

3 implementation and delivery of the Strategy

Planning Policy

- 3.1 The development plan should contain policies regarding the protection of open space, how to address deficiencies, the enhancement of existing provision and the creation of new open space. The emphasis should be on the achievement of improvements in the quantity and quality of open space with clear policies relating to implementation. Policy themes should include:
- protection of open space using appropriate designations
 - improved access to and linkages between open space
 - improving the quality and safety of existing provision and creating new open spaces
 - addressing deficiencies
 - social inclusion
 - use of vacant land as temporary open space
 - retention of allotments as open land for community use particularly in areas of deficiency
 - retention, enhancement and creation of linear open space, Green Chains and Green Corridors
 - protection of biodiversity and promotion of nature conservation
 - use of Section 106 agreements to address deficiencies and improve quality of open space.
- 3.2 Development plans should identify all open space in the borough that is to be protected. Consideration should be given to the identification of standards for open space in new development. It will be necessary to consider how open space requirements should be calculated and how to encourage the greening of the built structures themselves. Supplementary Planning Guidance should be developed to cover the capital and maintenance costs of open space.

Development Briefs/Frameworks/Masterplans

- 3.3 The preparation of development briefs or development guidelines in respect of major development sites can provide an effective mechanism for securing new open space provision and improving the quality and facilities of existing open space. These could be adopted as supplementary planning guidance. Development briefs should provide information on the level and type of open space provision and facilities required. Particular consideration should be given to the quantity and quality of space provided, linkages to the surrounding area, the creation of networks of open space and the creation of a range of open spaces to meet the varied needs of the community, including age appropriate play facilities. Design guidelines should be provided on the creation of new open spaces and play areas, covering issues such as safety in terms of design, lighting and staffing.

- 3.4 Comprehensive redevelopment provides opportunities to create better located and higher quality open space incorporating more innovative approaches to such things as the use of roof spaces as gardens or green roofs, high quality hard landscapes, sustainable urban drainage systems, flood mitigation areas, woody planting and acoustic design measures.

Developer Agreements

- 3.5 Planning conditions and Section 106 agreements can be used to address identified quantitative and qualitative deficiencies in provision or where new development would increase local needs. Agreements can secure both capital and revenue funding to provide for the future maintenance of open space. Boroughs should develop a broad strategy for the use and negotiation of Section 106 agreements. Consideration should be given to the following:
- commuted capital and revenue payments in lieu of direct provision where development sites are small and fragmented
 - commuted maintenance sums for the long term management and maintenance of new or improved open space to ensure financial viability
 - the achievement of on-site provision
 - for feasibility studies
 - for specific improvement projects e.g. improving access for disabled people.
- 3.6 The potential for increasing private sector financial contributions to open space enhancements should be fully explored and the implications of changes in existing legislation for open space provision and improvements monitored. One approach could be the development of small scale commercial activities such as catering operations within public open space where these are likely to contribute to meeting user needs and add to the attractiveness of the open space, but do not compromise other policy objectives. Business Improvement Districts provide further opportunities.

External Funding

- 3.7 The Open Space Strategy will provide the detailed framework for supporting funding applications and implementing the Action Plan. There are a number of external sources of funding that are available for the creation and improvement of open space. It is more difficult to attract revenue funding than capital funding, often resulting in the deterioration of open spaces despite good initial investment. Potential external funding sources currently available are summarised in Annex 4. It will, however, be essential to keep up to date with changes in funding opportunities, criteria for eligibility and potential partnerships.

- 3.9 There may also be opportunities for the joint funding of initiatives with other agencies and organisations. Voluntary organizations/ charitable trusts have an important role to play in open space provision and management eg: Wetland Centre, Barnes.
- 3.10 In addition to developer agreements, the private sector, from larger multinational businesses to independent neighbourhood retail shops, has demonstrated its willingness to fund and support projects, either on a one-off basis, or through a longer term involvement with a particular programme or area.
- 3.11 Individual members of the community and community groups themselves are often an important source of 'funding' - either through modest financial contributions to a local project, or through working on an 'in-kind' basis which can demonstrate the level of community support and involvement to other funding organisations.
- 3.12 Boroughs should consider innovative approaches to the creation and enhancement of open spaces. This will involve creative approaches to funding and to the use of land. A number of schemes in London demonstrate interesting features or management approaches. The examples included in Annex 5 demonstrate how benefits can be achieved through the application of a comprehensive strategy.

Community Involvement and Partnership Working

- 3.13 The creation of partnerships and increased community involvement in the use and management of facilities can assist in project implementation. Maximum use should be made of community resources in the design, implementation, monitoring and operating phases of all forms of open space and enhancement projects. Different contexts will require different solutions but 'Friends' groups, special interest groups and sports clubs will be useful starting points. Implementing a Strategy can potentially provide training opportunities associated with the management and maintenance of open spaces.
- 3.14 There is a vast range of methods that can be used to engage communities in planning, designing, creating, maintaining and managing open spaces. It is important to adapt the techniques to the needs and aspirations of the different preferences, backgrounds and ages of people in the community. Techniques range from Planning for Real exercises, involving 3-D models, and exhibitions to less resource intensive techniques such as newsletters and meetings with 'Friends' groups. Several techniques should normally be used to ensure a wide range of people have an opportunity to participate.

- 3.15 Artwork, logo design, and park and garden naming competitions/projects with children and young people are all good ways to stimulate creative thinking and to generate interest and ownership. Art workshops engage people in designing and constructing artworks to improve their local environments. Community arts projects are particularly useful with young people to enable them to express their creativity, build confidence, develop skills, and develop a sense of identity and community pride.
- 3.16 Discussions, events and briefing workshops with a range of community groups including 'Friends' groups and residents associations are helpful in ensuring communication is clear and on-going. These can be simple and easy to organise and can be used to inform groups and people about planned projects; to establish key issues for planning a project; to get people involved; to build ownership; to identify local talent and potential contributions; and to determine next steps. Celebration events can be a great way to launch a project, to build social networks, and to remind people of their progress and the rewards of getting involved.
- 3.17 It is critical that the techniques for promoting community involvement are understood to be part of a fuller process of meaningful community engagement. Applying techniques in isolation or haphazardly can raise unrealistic expectations, especially by asking people to state what they want rather than to have them express their views of a problem or aspects of areas that need to be changed. In addition, the post-consultation process is essential in order to analyse the results of a community involvement process, to generate options and to work with communities to prioritise and agree preferences.

***Prove It!* Measuring the effect of neighbourhood renewal on local people**

Prove It!, is an approach to measuring and assessing the impact of a project or activity developed by The New Economics Foundation in partnership with Groundwork and Barclays to evaluate Barclays SiteSavers, a national programme of local community regeneration projects. *Prove It!* is an evaluation technique which engages community participants at the start and finish of projects, and contains three central ingredients:

Participation of local people Local people are more likely to measure what matters, and to take time and trouble in collecting data.

Focus on outcomes Outcomes are harder to measure than outputs or inputs. All the *Prove It!* indicators connect to social energy (meaning people's ability and willingness to work together for a common purpose) outcomes.

Core indicators Local people and Groundwork Trust staff developed indicators. These provided a focus for evaluation and could be used with locally determined indicators.

Surveys take place at the start and finish of projects The results are collected, professionally analysed and fed back to the community groups and residents. Sixteen Groundwork Trusts were involved in test pilots which yielded results showing that in all cases, the local sense of community, empowerment, and ability to get things done had been significantly enhanced.

Planning for Real®

'Planning for Real'® uses three-dimensional models of a neighbourhood as a focus for people to put forward and prioritise ideas on how their areas can be improved. It is a highly visual, hands-on community development and empowerment tool, which people of diverse abilities and backgrounds have found easy and enjoyable to engage in. Action planning events are often incorporated or follow on from 'Planning for Real'® workshops. These events involve people in producing action plans at carefully structured sessions at which all those affected work creatively together. They can be used at any stage of the development process.

4 monitoring and review

- 4.1 The progress and ultimate delivery of any strategy must be measurable in relation to a range of indicators. It will be necessary to assess whether the direction and focus of the strategy requires modification, whether it is achieving its objectives and whether targets are still relevant. It will be necessary to consider:
- achievements – quantity and quality
 - target dates
 - costs
 - measurable outcomes
 - progress review dates.
- 4.2 Performance indicators could include:
- cost/efficiency
 - usage by target groups
 - satisfaction ratings
 - awareness of opportunities
 - community involvement
 - inclusive access.
- 4.3 In addition, there are a range of nationally recognised performance indicators provided by the Audit Commission that can be applied to open spaces including:
- percentage of borough's open spaces that are credited with a Green Flag
 - the number of playgrounds and play areas provided by the council per 1000 children under 12
 - the number of sports pitches available to the public per 1000 population
 - total net spending per head of population on open spaces.
- 4.4 Local performance indicators will include:
- survey of park users, for example satisfaction, number of visitors
 - completion and implementation of parks management plans
 - Mayor's State of the Environment Report for London
 - Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy targets
 - Biodiversity Action Plan targets.
- 4.5 Action Plans should be subject to annual review. The Strategy should be kept up to date and the need for review will depend on whether there are any significant changes in the borough and any changes linked to strategies such as the review of the community plan or development plan.

useful contacts

BTCV

36 St Mary's Street
Wallingford
Oxfordshire OX10 0EU
Tel **01491 821600**
Web **www.btcv.org**

British Heart Foundation

14 Fitzhardinge Street
London W1H 6DH
Tel **020 7935 0185**
Web **www.bhf.org.uk**

British Waterways

The Locks
Hillmorton, Rugby
Warwickshire CV21 4PP
Tel **01788 570625**
Web **www.britishwaterways.co.uk**

CABE Space

The Tower Building
11 York Road
London SE1 7NX
Tel **020 7960 2400**
Web **www.cabespace.org.uk**

Centre for Accessible Environments

Nutmeg House
60 Gainsford Street
London SE1 2NY
Tel **020 7357 8182**
Web **www.cae.org.uk**

Children's Play Council

8 Wakley Street
London EC1V 7QE
Tel **020 7843 6016**
Web **www.ncb.org.uk/cpc**

Civic Trust

17 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 9BU
Tel **0207 930 9730**
Web **www.civictrust.org.uk**

Colne Valley Regional Park

c/o Groundwork Thames Valley
Denham Court Drive
Denham, Uxbridge
Middlesex, UB9 5PG
Tel **01895 832662**
Web **www.groundwork-tv.org.uk**

Community Initiatives Partnership

Feltham Airpark Leisure Centre
Uxbridge Road
Hanworth
Middx TW13 5EG

Countryside Agency

Dacre House
19 Dacre Street
London SW1H 0DH
Tel **020 7340 2900**
Web **www.countryside.gov.uk**

English Heritage

23 Savile Row
London W1X 1AB
Tel **020 7073 3000**
Web **www.english-heritage.org.uk**

English Nature (London Office)

Devon House
12-15 Dartmouth Street
Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9BL
Tel **020 7340 4870**
Web **www.english-nature.org.uk**

Environment Agency

Kings Meadow House
Kings Meadow Road
Reading RG1 8DG
Tel **0845 9333111**
Web **www.environment-agency.gov.uk**

**Federation of City Farms
and Community Gardens**

The GreenHouse
Hereford Street
Bristol BS3 4NA
Tel **0117 923 1800**
Web **www.farmgarden.org.uk**

Field Fare Trust

67a The Wicker
Sheffield S3 8HT
Tel **01742 701 668**

Football Foundation

The Football Foundation
25 Soho Square
London W1D 4FF
Tel **020 7534 4210**
Web **www.footballfoundation.org.uk**

Forestry Commission

231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh EH12 7AT
Tel **0131 334 0303**
Web **www.forestry.gov.uk**

Garden History Society

77 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6BP
Tel **0207 608 2409**
Web **www.gardenhistorysociety.org**

**GLAD (London Disability
Associations)**

336 Brixton Road
London SW9 7AA
Tel **020 7346 5800**
Web **www.glad.org.uk**

GreenSpace

Caversham Court
Church Road
Caversham RG4 7AD
Tel **0118 901 5270**
Web **www.green-space.org.uk**

Green Corridor

C/o Heathrow Airport
234 Bath Road, Hayes
Middlesex UB3 5AP
Tel **020 8745 5362**
Web **www.greencorridor.org.uk**

Groundwork London

1 Kennington Road
London SE1 7QP
Tel **020 7922 1230**
Web **www.groundwork.org.uk**

**Improvement and Development
Agency (IDeA)**

Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG
Tel **020 7296 6600**
Web **www.idea.gov.uk**

**Institute of Leisure and Amenity
Management**

ILAM House
Lower Basildon
Reading
Berks RG8 9NE
Tel **0870 845 8475**
Web **www.ilam.co.uk**

National Playing Fields Association

Stamley House
St Chad's Place
London WC1X 9HH
Tel **020 7833 5360**
Web **www.npfa.co.uk**

Landscape Institute

6-8 Barnard Mews
London SW11 1QU
Tel **020 7350 5200**
Web www.l-i.org.uk

Learning Through Landscapes

Third Floor
Southside Offices
The Law Courts
Winchester SO23 9DL
Tel **01962 846258**
Web www.ltl.org.uk

Lee Valley Regional Park

Middleton House
Bulls Cross
Enfield EN2 9HG
Tel **01992 702200**
Web www.leevalleypark.org.uk

Living Streets

31-33 Bondway
London SW8 1SJ
Tel **020 7820 1010**
Web www.livingstreets.org.uk

London Access Forum

(RADAR 12 City Forum)
250 City Road
London EC1V 8AF
Tel **020 7566 0114**

London Parks & Green Space Forum

c/o Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA
Tel **020 7983 4495**
Web [www.green-space.org.uk/
Network/lpgsf.htm](http://www.green-space.org.uk/Network/lpgsf.htm)

London Parks & Gardens Trust

Duck Island Cottage
St James's Park
London SW1A 2BJ
Tel **020 7839 3969**
Web www.londongardenstrust.org

London Biodiversity Partnership

c/o London Wildlife Trust
Harling House
47-51 Gt Suffolk St
London SE1 0BS
Tel **020 7261 0447**
Web www.lbp.org.uk

London Play

Units F6-F7
89-93 Fonthill Road
London N4 3JH
Tel **020 7272 2464**
Web www.londonplay.org.uk

London Playing Fields Association

Fraser House
29 Albermarke Street
London W1X 3FA

**London Sports Forum
for Disabled People**

Ground Floor, Leroy House
436 Essex Road
London N1 3QP
Tel **020 7354 8666**
Web www.londonsportsforum.org.uk

London Wildlife Trust

Harling House
47-51 Great Suffolk Street
London SE1 0BS
Tel **020 7261 0447**
Web www.wildlondon.org.uk

National Trust

36 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AS
Tel **020 7222 9251**
Web **www.nationaltrust.org.uk**

National Urban Forestry Unit

The Science Park
Stafford Road
Wolverhampton WV10 9RT
Tel **01902 828 600**
Web **www.nufu.org.uk**

Open Spaces Society

25s Bell Street
Henley on Thames
Oxfordshire RG9 2BA
Tel **01491 573535**
Web **www.oss.org.uk**

PLAYLINK

Unit 5
11 Mowll Street
London SW9 6BG
Tel **020 7820 3800**
Web **www.playlink.org.uk**

Royal Parks Agency

The Old Police House
Hyde Park
London W2 2UH
Tel **020 7298 2000**
Web **www.royalparks.gov.uk**

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

South East Office
2nd Floor Frederick House
42 Frederick Place
Brighton BN1 1AT
Tel **012273 775333**
Web **www.rspb.org.uk**

The Sensory Trust

Watering Lane Nursery
Pentewan, St. Austell
Cornwall PL26 6BE
Web **www.sensorytrust.org.uk**

Sport England (London Region)

Crystal Palace National Sports Centre
PO Box 480
London SE19 2BQ
Tel **020 8778 8600**

Sport England

3rd Floor Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square
London WC1B 4SE
Tel **020 7273 1500**
Web **www.sportengland.org**

Thames Chase Community Forest

The Forest Centre
Broadfields Farm
Pike Lane
Upminster RM14 3NS
Tel **01708 641880**
Web **www.thameschase.org.uk**

Tree Council

51 Catherone Place
London SW1E 6DY
Tel **020 7250 3857**
Web **www.treecouncil.org.uk**

Trees for London

Prince Consort Lodge
Kennington Park Place
London SE11 4AS
Tel **020 7587 1320**
Web **www.treesforlondon.co.uk**

resources

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annex 1 examples of other relevant strategies and initiatives

Context	Key Relationships
National	DTLR: Green Spaces Taskforce, Neighbourhood Renewal Department of Culture, Media and Sport: Local Culture Strategies Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Working with the Grain of nature, A Biodiversity Strategy for England Department of Employment and Education: Education Development Plan
Regional	Greater London Authority Strategies: London Plan, Biodiversity, Cultural, Transport, Ambient Noise, Air Quality, Municipal Waste, Children's and Young Person's, Equalities London Development Agency: Economic Development Strategy London Biodiversity Action Plan London Tree and Woodland Framework
Sub-Regional	Sub-Regional Development Frameworks Partnerships eg. Thames Gateway London Partnership Lee Valley Regional Park Colne Valley Regional Park Community Forest Plans – Thames Chase; Watling Chase West London Green Corridor East London Green Grid Green Arc – Improving the Green Belt
Borough Statutory and Non-statutory plans	Community Strategy; Best Value Performance Plan; Development Plan; Leisure Plan/Sports Strategy; Nature Conservation Strategy; Agenda 21 Strategy; Housing Strategy; Asset Management Plan; Regeneration Strategy; Heritage and Arts Strategy; Education Plan; Biodiversity Action Plan; Cultural Strategy; Walking Strategy; Rights of Way Improvement Plan; Play Strategy
Statutory and non-statutory agencies	Countryside Agency, Environment Agency, Sport England, English Heritage, English Nature, London Wildlife Trust, London Parks and Green Spaces Forum
Local	Community and stakeholder groups e.g. park user groups; Citizens panels; Community forums
Service plans	Departmental eg Street scene, Neighbourhood Renewal Programme

annex 2 GLA open space and habitat survey for Greater London – survey form

Site & Parcel Details	
Site & Parcel no: _____ / _____	Grid ref _____
Site Name _____	Surveyor/s _____
Parcel Name _____	Borough _____
Location _____	Area _____ Ha
Owner / Manager _____	Date _____
Access / View from _____	Time Spent _____ hrs _____ mns
Permission to enter from _____	Weather _____
	Access to: <input type="checkbox"/> all <input type="checkbox"/> part <input type="checkbox"/> none

Open Space Typology					
i. Parks and Gardens	iii. Green Corridors	iv. Outdoor Sports Facilities	v. Amenity	vi. Children and Teenagers	
<input type="checkbox"/> park	<input type="checkbox"/> river	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation ground	<input type="checkbox"/> village green	<input type="checkbox"/> play space	
<input type="checkbox"/> formal garden	<input type="checkbox"/> canal	<input type="checkbox"/> playing fields	<input type="checkbox"/> hospital	<input type="checkbox"/> adventure playground	
ii. Natural and Semi Natural	<input type="checkbox"/> railway cutting	<input type="checkbox"/> golf course	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> youth area	
<input type="checkbox"/> common	<input type="checkbox"/> railway embankment	<input type="checkbox"/> other recreational	<input type="checkbox"/> back garden land		
<input type="checkbox"/> private woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> disused railway trackbed		<input type="checkbox"/> landscaping around premises	vii. Allotment	
<input type="checkbox"/> nature reserve	<input type="checkbox"/> road island/ verge		<input type="checkbox"/> reservoir	<input type="checkbox"/> vii. Community Garden	
	<input type="checkbox"/> walking/ cycling route			<input type="checkbox"/> vii. City Farm	
viii. Cemetery/ Churchyard	ix. Other Urban Fringe	x. Civic Spaces	Other		
	<input type="checkbox"/> equestrian centre	<input type="checkbox"/> civic/ market square	<input type="checkbox"/> sewage/ water works	<input type="checkbox"/> land reclamation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> other hard surfaced area	<input type="checkbox"/> disused quarry/gravel pit	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> nursery / horticulture		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant land		

Planning Status	Ownership	Public Access	Accessibility (Score 0-2)	Level of Use
<input type="checkbox"/> SSSI	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Free	<input type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian	<input type="checkbox"/> Not or hardly used
<input type="checkbox"/> LNR	<input type="checkbox"/> Government / Crown	<input type="checkbox"/> De facto	<input type="checkbox"/> Cycle	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate numbers
<input type="checkbox"/> SINCR or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Transport	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent Use
<input type="checkbox"/> Green Belt	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted (describe):	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Car	
<input type="checkbox"/> MOL	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		<input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair	
<input type="checkbox"/> Green Chain	<input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Organisation			
<input type="checkbox"/> Green Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/> Rail Company	Entry Points	Maintenance & Management	Predominant Recreational Use
<input type="checkbox"/> No open space designation	<input type="checkbox"/> LRT	<input type="checkbox"/> Open access to whole/part of site	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Active
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas Company	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited entry points	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Passive
<input type="checkbox"/> Other protected open space (specify):	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Company	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole surrounded by accessible open space	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> None
	<input type="checkbox"/> Electric Company			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Private			

Facilities					
<input type="checkbox"/> Tennis court (specify number)	<input type="checkbox"/> Golf course	<input type="checkbox"/> Play for under 7s	<input type="checkbox"/> Litter bins	<input type="checkbox"/> Historic features	
<input type="checkbox"/> Playing Pitch (specify number and type)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pitch & putt / crazy golf	<input type="checkbox"/> Play for 7-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Recycling facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Art gallery	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> All Weather	<input type="checkbox"/> Driving range	<input type="checkbox"/> Play for over 13 s	<input type="checkbox"/> Dog litter bins / area	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculptures / monuments	
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior <input type="checkbox"/> Natural	<input type="checkbox"/> Changing rooms	<input type="checkbox"/> BMX track	<input type="checkbox"/> Nature trail	<input type="checkbox"/> Public art	
<input type="checkbox"/> Full <input type="checkbox"/> Floodlit	<input type="checkbox"/> Motor cross	<input type="checkbox"/> Skateboard area	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal / bird enclosure	<input type="checkbox"/> Listed buildings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cricket pitch	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor swimming pool	<input type="checkbox"/> Seats	<input type="checkbox"/> Open air performance area	<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological remains	
<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics track	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor paddling pool	<input type="checkbox"/> Operational toilet	<input type="checkbox"/> Car parking	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bowling green	<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Disabled facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Horse riding		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Water sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Waymarked walking route		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Basketball hoops	<input type="checkbox"/> Refreshments	<input type="checkbox"/> Cycle paths		

Threats and Disturbances (give details of severity etc)	
Invading plants	Vandalism/graffiti
Erosion	Litter/Dog fouling
Motorcycle scrambling	Tipping
Intrusive buildings	Pollution
Boundary treatment	Aircraft noise
Redevelopment	Road/rail noise
Safety and Security	Other

Interest/ Potential for Enhancement	
Recreation	Social & Cultural
Structural	Heritage
Amenity	Health
Ecology	Accessibility
Education	Other

Changes since last survey	
<input type="checkbox"/> No apparent change since last survey	Geology, topography, aspect, drainage and soil
<input type="checkbox"/> Part not previously surveyed	
<input type="checkbox"/> All not previously surveyed	Contacts /Other s Information / History and succession
<input type="checkbox"/> Significant	
<input type="checkbox"/> Minor	
<input type="checkbox"/> Error in last survey	

Biodiversity			
Site and parcel no:	/	Date:	

Habitats (%)		
<input type="checkbox"/> 01 Native broadleaved woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> 08 Acid grassland	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 Bog
<input type="checkbox"/> 02 Non- native broadleaved woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> 09 Neutral grassland (semi-improved)	<input type="checkbox"/> 17 Reedswamp
<input type="checkbox"/> 03 Coniferous woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> 35 Neutral grassland (herb rich)	<input type="checkbox"/> 40 Typha etc. swamp
<input type="checkbox"/> 37 Scattered Trees	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Basic grassland	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 Wet marginal vegetation
<input type="checkbox"/> 05 Recently felled woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Improved / reseeded agric grassland	<input type="checkbox"/> 19 Fen carr (woodland / scrub over fen)
<input type="checkbox"/> 06 Scrub	<input type="checkbox"/> 07 Amenity grassland	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 Standing water (includes canals)
<input type="checkbox"/> 38 Planted shrubbery	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Ruderal or ephemeral	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 Ditches (water filled)
<input type="checkbox"/> 25 Native hedge	<input type="checkbox"/> 33 Roughland (intimate mix of 9, 14 & 6)	<input type="checkbox"/> 22 Running water (rivers & streams)
<input type="checkbox"/> 34 Non-native hedge	<input type="checkbox"/> 13 Bracken	<input type="checkbox"/> 23 Intertidal mud, sand, shingle etc
<input type="checkbox"/> 31 Orchard	<input type="checkbox"/> 14 tall herbs	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 Saltmarsh
<input type="checkbox"/> 36 Vegetated walls, tombstones etc	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 Heathland	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 habitat information not available
<input type="checkbox"/> 26 Bare soil and rock	<input type="checkbox"/> 39 Allotments (active)	<input type="checkbox"/> 29 Other
<input type="checkbox"/> 27 Bare artificial habitat	<input type="checkbox"/> 28 Arable	

<input type="checkbox"/> Treeline w/out hedge	<input type="checkbox"/> Hedge w/treeline	<input type="checkbox"/> grazed	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently mown	<input type="checkbox"/> Floating vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> Submerged vegetation
<input type="checkbox"/> Even-aged plantation	<input type="checkbox"/> Ancient woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> Infrequently mown	<input type="checkbox"/> Cuttings removed Y/N	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergent vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> saline <input type="checkbox"/> tidal
<input type="checkbox"/> Coppice	<input type="checkbox"/> Dead wood	<input type="checkbox"/> Unmanaged grassland	<input type="checkbox"/> Ridge & furrow	<input type="checkbox"/> Naturally formed river bank	
<input type="checkbox"/> Flush	<input type="checkbox"/> wet	<input type="checkbox"/> pollarded	<input type="checkbox"/> Sand/clay bank		
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood shrub layer					

Trophic status:
 eu- meso- oligo- dys-

Interest			Species Richness		
<input type="checkbox"/> Invertebrate	<input type="checkbox"/> Bird	<input type="checkbox"/> Geology	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Average / rich	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher plant	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor / average	<input type="checkbox"/> Rich	
<input type="checkbox"/> Amphibian	<input type="checkbox"/> Bryophyte		<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Not known	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reptile	<input type="checkbox"/> Lichen				
<input type="checkbox"/> Mammal	<input type="checkbox"/> Fungi				

Nature Conservation Value (surveyor's personal opinion)

NOTES / SKETCH MAP
Record dominant and notable plant species, birds, butterflies etc.

annex 3 types of public open space in London

Type and Main Function	Approx size and distance from home	Characteristics
REGIONAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACES (Linked Metropolitan Open Land and Green Belt corridors) Weekend and occasional visits by car or public transport	400 hectares 3.2-8km	Large areas and corridors of natural heathland, downland, commons, woodland and parkland also including areas not publicly accessible but which contribute to the overall environmental amenity. Primarily providing for informal recreation with some non-intensive active recreation uses. Car parking at key locations.
METROPOLITAN PARKS Weekend and occasional visits by car and public transport	60 hectares 3.2km or more where the park is appreciably larger	Either i) natural heathland, downland, commons, woodland etc, or ii) formal parks providing for both active and passive recreation. May contain playing fields, but at least 40 hectares for other pursuits. Adequate car parking.
DISTRICT PARKS Weekend and occasional visits by foot, cycle, car and short bus trips	20 hectares 1.2km	Landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing for a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups, and informal recreation pursuits. Should provide some car parking.
LOCAL PARKS Pedestrian visits	2 hectares 0.4km	Providing for court games, children's play, sitting-out areas, nature conservation areas.
SMALL LOCAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACES Pedestrian visits, especially by old people and children; particularly valuable in high density areas	Under 2 hectares Less than 0.4km	Gardens, sitting-out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.
LINEAR OPEN SPACES Pedestrian visits	Variable Wherever feasible	The Thames, canals, other waterways and associated open spaces and towpaths; paths; disused railways; nature conservation areas; and other routes which provide opportunities for informal recreation. Often characterised by features or attractive areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.

annex 4 examples of funding sources

- **Liveability Fund:** The Government's Sustainable Communities: building for the future (February, 2003) announced a total of £201 million to improve the local environment over the next three years, of which:
 - £89 million Liveability Fund for projects to improve parks and public spaces – awarded February 2004 and included London Boroughs of Camden, Ealing and Greenwich.
 - £41 million to promote high quality, design and management, including the establishment of CABI Space, to develop standards and targets, provide enabling support to local authorities in producing strategies and expand Green Flag partnerships.
 - £40 million for Groundwork for new projects and a 'community enabler scheme'.
- **Regeneration programmes:** Support in the 88 most deprived local authority districts through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Communities in the most deprived districts will receive funding to help them participate in Local Strategic Partnerships through the Community Empowerment Fund. Community Chests will fund small grant schemes to enable communities to run their own projects.
- **European Union:** Funding through EC LIFE which seeks to integrate environmental considerations into land use planning.
- **New Opportunities Fund:** The Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities fund is aimed at projects which will improve the quality of life for individuals and communities, promote social inclusion, encourage community involvement and compliment and enhance relevant national, regional and local strategies.
- **Heritage Lottery Fund:** The Public Parks Initiative is aimed at projects that conserve and enhance the park's heritage and encourage greater public access, involvement and interest. Grants of more than £50,000.
- **Royal Society for Nature Conservation (RSNC):** The RSNC is the lead partner in a consortium to deliver the SEED programme. Grants of up to £100,000 can be awarded to projects including environmental education and sustainable transport projects.

- **Banardo's and The Children's Play Council:** The Better Play scheme awards grants to children's play projects that are distinctive and innovative and to organisations wishing to develop local play strategies. Grants range from £2000 to £100,000.
- **BTCV:** The People Places Award Scheme objective is to support the creation and renovation of green spaces. Projects involving the local community are encouraged. BTCV offers guidance and training alongside the grant awards.
- **Sport England:** The Playing Fields and Community Green Spaces Scheme encourages projects that help communities to gain access to playing fields, green space, school playgrounds and community play areas. Schools will be offered funding for playgrounds in partnership with learning through landscape. Community care projects for children and young people will be supported.
- **Sustrans:** The Green Routes, Safe Routes Scheme will seek to deliver sustainable transport projects. It will seek to produce social, economic and environmental benefits through the creation of green corridors, safe routes to school and home zones.

annex 5 examples of innovative projects

- **St. Paul's Green, Hammersmith** – a town centre park was created, in part, by incorporating a temporary car park beneath the Hammersmith Flyover. The need for a town centre park was identified in the UDP and as a result S106 funding could be used from appropriate development proposals in the area. This demonstrates the possibility of developing open space in the least promising environments and the benefit of long term strategic planning.
- **Holmewood Road Home Zone Project, Lambeth** – illustrates how access to existing open space can be improved and small additional play areas created by using surplus road space.
- **Bedfont Lakes Country Park, Hounslow** – a new country park on a former gravel workings and landfill site. It was funded entirely by a developer agreement which formed part of the strategic development of a large rundown area.
- **Mile End Park, Tower Hamlets** – the construction of a landscaped bridge joining two sections of open space and providing cycle track and footpaths. The scheme demonstrates new approaches to park management and elements of self-financing.
- **Chinbrook Meadows, Lewisham** – an underused park was transformed with active community involvement. The river was hidden in a concrete channel and formed a barrier, effectively dividing the open space. Opening up the river and making it part of the landscape made the park more attractive to both people and wildlife.
- **Aberfeldy Millennium Green, Tower Hamlets** – involves the transformation of a rundown housing amenity area into an attractive public open space through the creation of new landscaped gardens, informal performance and play spaces and a water feature.
- **The Wetlands Centre, Barnes** – developed through Heritage Lottery Fund grant and Section 106 contributions from disused water supply reservoirs on MOL and now attracts London's best range of birdlife and is a major visitor attraction and educational resource.
- **Riverview Walk, Bell Green, Lewisham** – an unattractive concrete channelled river was replaced with an attractive meandering watercourse using funding from developer contributions. This has improved the quality of the environment, provided a central feature to the open space and increased the biodiversity of the area.

- **25 Cannon Street and Newspaper Square, City** – were formerly unattractive private courtyards within post-war office developments. These were transformed into attractive landscaped pocket parks.
- **Wandle Meadow Nature Reserve, Colliers Wood** – used the natural colonising vegetation of a disused sewage works as the core of its landscaping, providing a rich variety of habitats and retaining an area of local open space through a planning agreement.
- **Royal Northern Park, Islington** – a good example of community involvement in the design and implementation of proposals for the creation of new open space and the use of Section 106 funding for a feasibility study.
- **Hillingdon Lake Farm, Hillingdon** – took the views of a range of different user groups into account increasing its usefulness to a wider range of people. The design incorporates biodiversity, informal recreation, playgrounds, horse riding routes, BMX track and trim trail into an improved integrated landscape.