

MAYOR OF LONDON



Open Space Strategies

Best Practice Guidance

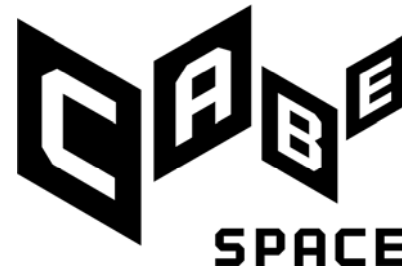
A Joint Consultation Draft by the Mayor of London and CABE Space.

September 2008

MAYOR OF LONDON
THE LONDON PLAN



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CABE Space

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How to give your views

The Draft *Open Space Strategies* forms Best Practice Guidance of the Mayor's London Plan as well as CABI Space's national guidance for England. The Mayor consults on all London Plan documents before finalising them and has published the draft for consultation and your comments are invited. Please reference your comments to the relevant pages in the Draft. **Responses must be received by 5pm Friday, 19 December 2008.** They should be sent to:

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Or by email to mayor@london.gov.uk with 'Open Space Strategies' as the subject. If you send in a response by email it is *not* necessary to also send a hard copy.

Please note that responses to this public consultation may be made available for public inspection.

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Foreword

Open space has never been more important than it is today. In the face of new environmental, social and economic challenges, it is essential to our quality of life, our health and well-being and to ensuring a more sustainable future for all. Creation, protection and improvement of a high quality open space network should be at the heart of every authority's vision for an area.

The policy agenda and context for delivering quality open space is shifting. The planning system is undergoing significant change, as is the way local authorities manage public services. More importance is being placed on the better integration of strategies and programmes, partnership working and effective community involvement. Both mean that open space can no longer be viewed in isolation.

At the same time, there is increased understanding of the vital role of green infrastructure in providing the environmental services, such as flood protection and urban cooling, and environmental protection for wildlife, that creates sustainable places. This has now become a key part of planning and should be considered a fundamental factor in all built development.

A comprehensive open space strategy spanning the planning, design, management and maintenance of open spaces is an essential tool for delivering this multi-functional network of spaces as well as the broader government objectives of health, social inclusion and community cohesion – in short, the creation of excellent places.

The creation of high quality open spaces that benefit the whole community requires joined up thinking and working across occupations and organisations. We are therefore delighted that CABE and the Greater London Authority have pooled their resources and knowledge to create this guide. We hope it will help all those who aim to create vibrant, healthy and sustainable places.



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London



Baroness Andrews
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Communities and Local Government

1. Introduction

Open space is now firmly part of both the statutory and community planning process, and the preparation of an open space strategy is a vital part of the evidence base for local development frameworks. The wide range of different types of open spaces make a valuable contribution to the quality of life and the character of places where people want to live, work and visit. The open space network, the spaces and the links in between, provide a green infrastructure that provides a wide range of functions, from informal and formal recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat to flood catchment areas.

Well-designed and implemented planning policies for open space are fundamental to delivering broader national and regional government objectives of social inclusion and community cohesion. Health and well being and the promotion of sustainable development must be seen as a cross-cutting theme across a number of policy areas, demanding collaborative partnership at national, regional and local level. The shared objective must be to ensure a strategic approach to open space which will maximise its potential to contribute to all aspects of a more inclusive and sustainable future.

This document offers clear, practical guidance on how to create an open space strategy. Drawing on the lessons learnt from 5 years of CABE Space strategic enabling support with local authorities across England, it updates earlier CABE Space guidance, (*Green space strategies: A good practice guide*, 2004), and combines this with an update of the guidance for London, (*Mayor's guide to preparing open space strategies; Best practice guidance of the London Plan*, 2004), to provide one comprehensive guide for England.

The guide forms Best Practice Guidance of the London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004), published in 2008 and hereafter referred to as the London Plan.

The guidance looks beyond an assessment of needs and opportunities, to delivery, management and monitoring through a strategy and action plan. In this way assessments and audits are incorporated into a comprehensive strategy as recommended in the Companion Guide to PPG17 and required in London by policy 3D.12 of the London Plan. This guide is set out as a series of easy-to-follow steps, with practical examples of how to prepare open space strategies which reflect different local conditions and opportunities.

Many local authorities have already completed open space strategies and are now facing the challenges of implementing the strategy policies and actions. This update of the guidance is for those authorities embarking on the strategy process for the first time, those with strategies in progress and, those who are delivering the strategy, the section on implementation and delivery will be particularly relevant.

Policy context

The overall national policy context is now set out within the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 which promotes the sustainability of local communities through a broad agenda for partnership working at the local level, including the development of sustainable community strategies and the negotiation of local area agreements. In addition, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new spatial planning system, comprising regional spatial strategies (RSS) and local development frameworks (LDF), and a requirement for a sustainability appraisal to be undertaken of the proposals in each document.

Following the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the government has updated national planning policy, superseding planning policy guidance (PPG) with planning

policy statements (PPS). These highlight the important role that open space has to play within the spatial planning process. Key PPS for open space are listed below and in Appendix B:

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)
- Supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change (2007)
- PPS3: Housing (2006)
- PPS6: Planning for Town Centres (2005)
- PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005)
- PPS11: Regional spatial strategies (2004)
- PPS12: Local Spatial Planning (2008)
- PPS25: Planning and Flood Risk (2006).

The key national planning document is PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002). PPG17, which is yet to be superseded by a PPS, states that 'local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities' (paragraph 1). The companion guide to PPG17 recommends a strategy approach and sets out ways that local authorities can undertake assessments and audits of open space. Included in its guiding principles for assessment is the need to define the 'extent to which open spaces meet clearly identified local needs and the wider benefits they generate for people, wildlife, biodiversity and the wider environment' (paragraph 2.1).

Open space strategies should also be considered in light of the European Landscape Convention, ratified by government in March 2007. This encourages public authorities to adopt policies and measures at local, regional, national and international level for protecting, managing and planning all landscapes throughout Europe. A framework for implementation in England, produced by Natural England with Defra and English Heritage, can be viewed at www.landscapecharacter.org.uk

Other new national initiatives will impact and influence the open space agenda:

- *Healthy weight, healthy lives – a cross-government strategy for England* (Department of Health 2008) – highlights the important role that open space can play in encouraging people to live more healthy and active lifestyles
- *Fair Play – a consultation on the play strategy* (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2008) – puts forward a vision to make public space more child-friendly
- Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and the Primary Capital Strategy - recognise the important role that school grounds have to play to meet the education, recreational and social needs of young people and the wider community
- *Manual for streets* (Department for Transport, 2007) - provides guidance on the design of residential streets, promoting increased consideration of the 'place' function of streets, for pedestrians and cyclists
- *Lifetime Homes – Lifetime Neighbourhoods* (Communities and Local Government 2008) – a national strategy for ensuring there is appropriate housing, services, facilities and environments that an ageing society can participate in and enjoy
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - is a charge that local authorities will be able to apply to developments to fund the infrastructure needs of the development as identified by the local development framework (LDF). Infrastructure needs include parks, play areas, green spaces and open spaces.

London

While this is a national guide it identifies specific elements that apply to London in order to provide guidance on meeting the requirements of the London Plan. In

addition, some of the arrangements and situations in the guide will not apply in London. For example, the references to parish councils can be ignored as these do not currently exist in London. Combining the London guidance with national guidance removes duplication and provides a clearer and more consistent approach for those preparing a strategy.

The London Plan sets out the spatial planning framework for London. Its policies aim to ensure that London authorities:

- realise the value of open space and green infrastructure
- protect London's green belt, metropolitan open land, and local open spaces, and support regional and metropolitan park opportunities.
- support the creation of networks of strategic open space such as green chains and green corridors
- create new open space in areas of deficiency and promote improvement to existing provision.
- require boroughs to prepare open space strategies to protect, create and enhance all types of open space in their area.
- ensure that children have safe access to good quality, well-designed secure and stimulating play and informal recreation provision.
- protect and improve biodiversity, tackling deficiencies in access to nature
- protect and promote trees and woodland, and geodiversity
- improve access to the countryside and the quality of the landscape in the urban fringe.

Scope of strategy

An open space strategy sets out a shared vision for the network of open spaces across an area and aims to ensure they deliver their potential for cross-cutting benefits. Local authorities should prepare open space strategies to understand supply and demand for open spaces and identify ways of protecting, creating and enhancing them and improving quality through better management. The development of an effective strategy must extend beyond the parks and planning departments and reflect the multi-functional nature of open space. The spatial elements of the open space strategy will also feed into the LDF and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

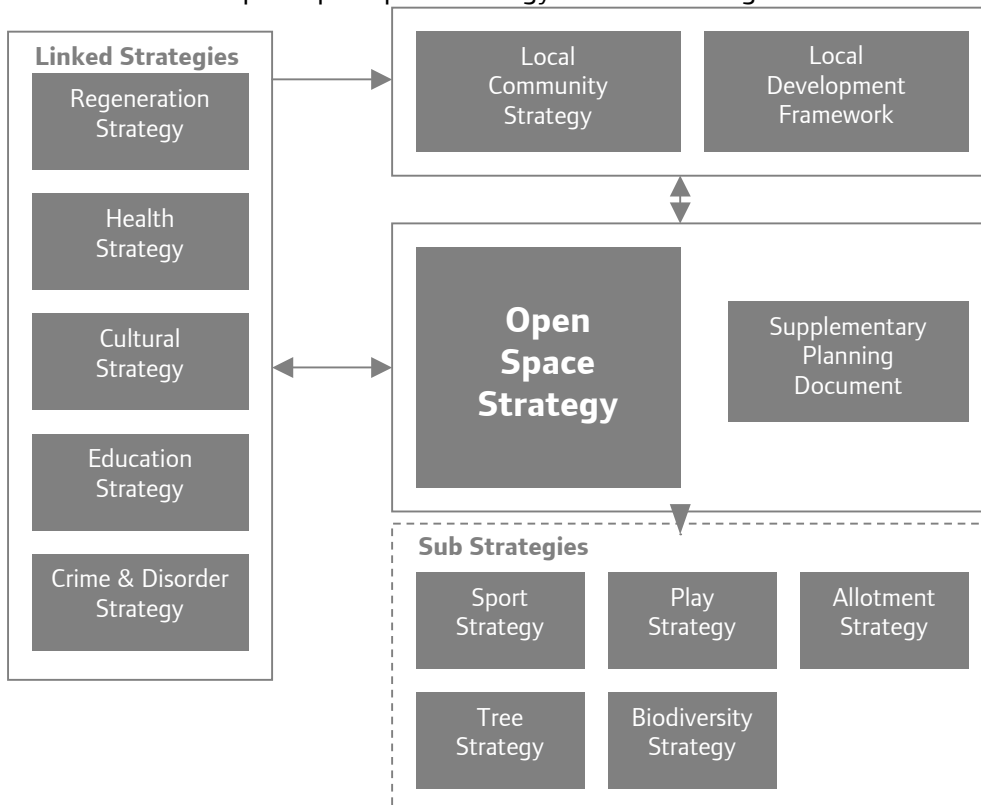
An open space strategy also helps deliver the overarching sustainable community strategy, which sets the strategic vision for an area, and will relate to a raft of other strategies covering issues such as regeneration, health, culture, education, biodiversity and crime and disorder, as set out in Figure 1.

This guidance recommends that open space strategies consider all types of open spaces in an area, irrespective of ownership and public access. PPG17 provides a typology of open space based on function, including hard civic spaces as well as parks and green spaces. However, it is important to recognise that many open spaces are multi-functional in practice and so categories should be refined to reflect local circumstances.

The London Plan sets out a hierarchy of public open spaces relating to size and accessibility which is used to provide a consistent approach across London in identifying broad areas of deficiency in provision.

The open space strategy should provide comprehensive guidance with an emphasis on identifying existing deficiencies and needs and securing new provision and future management. Its vision and objectives should be determined locally through consultation with stakeholders and user groups.

Figure 1 Relationship of open space strategy to other strategies



Some open space types or issues of local importance will require more detailed sub strategies, for example, covering allotments playing pitches, trees or play. These should be informed by the over arching open space strategy and the action plan should set out when these will be developed.

The Mayor of London has published best practice guidance on preparing a play strategy and is currently working with partners to develop guidance for tree strategies.

Why produce a strategy

An open space strategy will provide an action plan for delivery of quality open space in accordance with the vision set out in the sustainable community strategy. It will promote cross-departmental and partnership working to maximise the potential of open space to deliver a more sustainable future. The benefits of preparing an open space strategy include:

- reinforcing local identity and enhancing the physical character of an area, so shaping existing and future development
- maintaining the visual amenity and increasing the attractiveness of a locality to create a sense of civic pride
- raising property values and aiding urban regeneration and neighbourhood renewal
- boosting the economic potential of tourism, leisure and cultural activities
- providing a wide variety of cultural, social and community facilities, including seasonal activities such as fairs, festivals and concerts
- protecting the historical, cultural and archaeological heritage
- illustrating the contribution to health agendas, for example reducing stress levels, by providing formal and informal recreational facilities and promoting participation in sport
- providing popular outdoor educational facilities for schools and academic institutions
- improving physical and social inclusion including accessibility, particularly for young, disabled and older people

- offering alternative routes for circulation, including networks for walking and cycling and safer routes to school
- raising air quality and moderating extremes of temperature
- protecting and enhancing levels of biodiversity and ecological habitats
- providing environmental infrastructure to improve water quality and flood control.

It is also an essential management tool. Without a clear strategy, it will be difficult for an authority to prioritise, spend and plan resources across an area, and crucially, to make the case to funders for increased resources.

A strategy can also be used as a promotional document, raising awareness of issues and encouraging greater use of open spaces. The process of developing the strategy is an excellent way of getting greater community involvement and buy-in from a range of partners.

Who prepares it

It is critical that an open space strategy is a collaboration between the planning and the open space management functions of a local authority. Whilst the planning or parks department should take the lead, the provision and management of open space also cuts across many other local authority functions. An open space strategy is a cross council strategy which will require input from a number of council departments, including leisure and recreation, parks, planning, housing and education. Depending on the skills and knowledge of in-house staff, external consultants may need to be employed to deliver elements of the strategy.

The local government white paper, Strong and prosperous communities (October 2006) envisages local authorities working with their partners to reshape public services around the citizens and communities that use them. The community's needs and aspirations must be at the heart of any open space strategy and they must be engaged at each stage of strategy development. Therefore the local authority must work with local and regional partners and the community in identifying and delivering local priorities.

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) brings together local authorities with key local partners including the police, health services, local businesses and the community and voluntary sectors. Local authorities should liaise closely with their respective LSP at key stages of development of the open space strategy.

Where many open spaces are owned or managed by other organisations, such as parish councils or charitable trusts, they too should be involved in preparing the strategy.

2. How to prepare an open space strategy

A six stage strategy process is recommended as set out in Figure 2 and discussed in more detailed on the following pages. Overall this work should take between 12 and 18 months.

Figure 2 Stages in preparing an open space strategy

Stage 1: Prepare brief/scoping study	Outputs	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • secure elected member support • define the scope and purpose of the strategy • develop the management structure for strategy preparation • review resources • review work undertaken to date and the relationship to other plans • review availability and use of GIS • consider engagement/consultation • determine vision, initial aims/objectives and timetable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scoping report, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – preliminary vision, aims and objectives – work programme – consultation strategy 	2-3 months
Stage 2: Context review	Outputs	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review national, regional and local context • identify key characteristics of the area • review current management and funding of open spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • summary of local open space context 	1-2 months
Stage 3: Understand the supply	Outputs	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify all open spaces • categorise open spaces by function and size • carry out on-site audit of open spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS database of open space data and key information 	3-4 months
Stage 4: Understand demands / needs	Outputs	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider existing demographic and similar information • review existing consultation information and identify existing consultative mechanisms • consult and surveying to assess demands/needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • summary of demands and needs 	2-3 months
Stage 5: Analyse and identify issues and objectives	Outputs	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis of supply and demand • set standards for quantity, quality and accessibility • update themes, aims and objectives in light of analysis • identify deficiency areas and opportunities for redressing them • identify priorities for open space improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draft planning and management policies for open space • local standards for quantity, quality and accessibility 	2-3 months
Stage 6: Prepare strategy and action plan	Outputs	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare draft strategy • prepare action plan • consult on draft strategy and action plan • adopt strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draft strategy and action plan • public consultation • final strategy 	2-3 months

Stage 1: Preparation of the scoping study and brief

Adequate preparation and good project management skills are essential. This stage ensures clarity of purpose and scope as well as the appropriate management structures and resources to help deliver.

The principal output will be a scoping report including a work programme, highlighting what needs to be done, by whom and by when. This may also form the basis of a brief for any consultants.

The essential tasks will comprise:

- securing elected member support
- defining the scope and purpose of the strategy
- developing the management structure for strategy preparation
- reviewing resources
- reviewing work undertaken to date and the relationship to other plans
- reviewing availability and use of GIS
- considering engagement/consultation
- determining vision, initial aims/objectives and timetable.

This stage should take between two and three months.

Secure elected member support

Open space strategies require elected member champions. Strong member support will help secure resources, maintain momentum and ensure the strategy's adoption. One or more councillors, for example the cabinet member with responsibility for environment or planning (or both), should be closely involved. Open space strategies will require political decisions and early support from elected members will avoid later delays and indecision.

Define the scope and purpose of the strategy

It is crucial to understand from the outset:

- the type and size of open space the strategy will cover
- what the strategy aims to achieve
- the timescale the strategy will cover,
- what the status of the strategy will be.

The Companion Guide to PPG17 recommends (and the London Plan requires) that all open spaces, irrespective of ownership and public access, should be included in an assessment, as a basis for setting comprehensive local standards for quantity, quality and accessibility. The strategy should act as a vision for all open spaces.

More detailed sub-strategies should be created for particular types of open space, such as allotments or playing pitches or for priority themes such as play. These will need to be considered when defining the scope and purpose of the open space strategy.

Develop management structure for strategy preparation

The development of an open space strategy requires the participation of parks officers and planning officers, including director level support. Other disciplines such as property, housing, highways, economic development, regeneration, transport, and access officer will also need to contribute. Accordingly, a steering group should be formed, comprising officers from different departments with a designated chair person and a lead project officer. The chair person is likely

to be a senior staff member such as a head of service. The lead project officer should have overall responsibility for the day-to-day progress of the strategy, which will be a full time role if the strategy is to be completed in 18 months. This officer working group needs a system in place by which it can report regularly to members on progress. Where many open spaces are owned or managed by external organisations, such as the Forestry Commission, a wildlife trust, registered social landlords, or parish councils, for example, they should also be involved.

Review resources for strategy preparation

An open space strategy requires sustained effort and occasional intensive work, in the quality audit of sites for example. At the outset there will be a need to consider the availability of skills and resources and whether consultants should be employed. Some local authorities outsource it all. However, it is important to utilise local knowledge and it is preferable for local authorities to lead on strategy preparation, employing consultants for specific technical or resource-intensive tasks. If consultants are employed to prepare all or part of a strategy, it is essential to present them with a detailed brief and that the consultants provide regular progress reports to the lead local authority officer. This will ensure their work meets the local authority's vision. Working across local authority departments will also help in bringing a wider range of skills and experience to the project.

Review work undertaken to date and relationship to other plans and strategies

The process needs to be integrated with other data collection, public engagement and plan and strategy making. The first task will be to identify what information already exists about open spaces, their specific qualities, their management, public attitudes and use. Possible data sources include:

- audits / surveys / monitoring of previously adopted strategies, for example green / open space strategy, parks or play strategy, access audits etc.
- regular surveys of attitudes towards open spaces
- usage surveys of particular parks or playing fields
- minutes of community forums
- LDF evidence base and consultations
- general surveys of public satisfaction with local authority services
- local environmental quality surveys in line with national indicator 195.

The review should seek to establish quantitative data related to use of open spaces and qualitative data on the factors which may encourage use and barriers to use.

It will also be important to look at information on the changing nature of the resident population and development plans, particularly in areas of housing growth. The second task will be to examine the relationship between the open space strategy and other plans and strategies especially the sustainable community strategy and the LDF. Both documents should inform the open space strategy and seek to influence their development and review. The third task will be to consider whether any relevant studies or strategies are underway or are proposed. These may include strategies governing playing fields, children's' play or allotments. The fourth task will involve consulting adjacent authorities to establish work they may have done in preparing an open space strategy and any cross-boundary issues. This most commonly involves the need to consider the use of larger open spaces in adjacent local authority areas, although in some areas, joint open space strategies are being carried out where significant housing growth spanning two authorities is planned.

The data collected from this stage should be summarised, verified by the steering group and made available to all working on the strategy.

Secure availability and use of GIS

GIS is the recommended method of recording and analysing data about open spaces. It should be designed to record basic factual detail and more qualitative information from the site audits, and can allow information to be updated as a result of planning or management interventions.

There are 2 key aspects to creating a robust GIS dataset – digitising site boundaries and populating the associated attribute table for each site. The site boundaries should be snapped to Ordnance Survey Mastermap data. The data in the associated attribute table should include as a minimum:

- site name and ID
- area (size in hectares)
- PPG17 type of open space (Figure 3)
- public open space category
- details of owner/manager
- facilities (comprehensive asset inventory as appropriate)
- access points
- planning policy designations.

Subsequent audit data will provide a qualitative assessment, including individual and overall scores, which can be used as a monitoring tool.

Existing GIS should be examined and decisions taken as to how open space data can best be integrated. It will also be necessary to consider who has the skills to use GIS and how they can be brought into the strategy team.

Accompanying documentation that describes how and when the data was collected and how the GIS layer was created, otherwise known as metadata, is also essential to ensure the dataset's continued use and value.

Standards have been defined for both the creation of GIS data and metadata and are worth sourcing. Data creation standards cover categories such as accuracy, completeness and processes for updating data, whilst the metadata standards cover factors such as descriptions of your data, data type and its geographic coverage. Further information on standards can be found on the Association of Geographic Information's website at: www.agi.org.uk.

GiGL is London's open space and biodiversity records centre, and part of their role is to act as the data custodian for many London-based organisations, including local authorities and the Greater London Authority. GiGL collate, manage and make available many local and regional datasets, including data on London's open spaces, the public open space hierarchy and associated areas of deficiency. These data are made available to GiGL's partners and customers to provide an evidence base to inform their own work. End uses of the data include baseline audit of open space provision, the generation of local statistics and monitoring information, regional overviews of open space provision including PPG17-related facilities information, and as an aid to targeting funding to improve Londoners' access to high quality open spaces. See www.gigl.org.uk for further information.

Agree engagement/consultation strategy

It will be important first to identify the major stakeholders interested in open space. This is likely to include sports clubs, Friends groups, local wildlife groups, community groups and parish councils. Engagement should also involve the whole community, including people who do not currently use open spaces. The use of focus groups embracing, for example, older people or

teenagers, has proven to be useful in targeting hard-to-reach groups. Engagement with local access groups can help to address the access needs of disabled people.

It will be important to understand what aspects of the open spaces people value, how far they travel to different types of spaces and what discourages them. Community involvement will also help build support for, and ownership of, the strategy. It will therefore be important to consider how and when different stakeholders will be involved.

The engagement programme will need to have regard to other council processes and policies such as the statement of community involvement produced to accompany an LDF.

Key stages of strategy development where community engagement may be necessary include:

- the announcement of the intention to produce a strategy
- a visioning workshop
- in verifying the identification, extent and names of sites
- in identifying issues to be appraised in the quality audit
- in contributing to the assessment of demands/needs
- in identifying key issues and objectives
- in reviewing the draft strategy / action plan.

See also Stage 4 for a review of consultation techniques.

Determine vision, initial aims/objectives and timetable

Local authorities should carefully consider their specific aims and objectives and determine a preliminary vision for their open spaces. The development of a local vision can be a useful way of engaging stakeholders at an early stage in plan preparation.

Many local authorities have initiated their open space strategy by staging a visioning workshop, involving both councillors and stakeholders, that explores the issues and aspirations. This can be helpful in building public and political support, raising awareness and helping to determine priority issues. They may help in gathering information on local demands and needs. Above all, embarking on a strategy should reflect a corporate commitment to change and to enhancing the quality of life through better open spaces and a stakeholder workshop can make this public.

This stage of work should conclude with a publicised statement, endorsed by the council, explaining the intention to produce an open space strategy, the overall vision or aim, its scope, the timetable and the opportunities for public engagement.

Stage 2: Context review

The strategy should be developed in the context of current national, regional and local legislation, policy and guidance. The principal output will be a summary of how this context relates to the open space network in the area, which will inform the strategy actions.

The essential tasks will comprise:

- reviewing national, regional and local context
- identifying key characteristics of the area
- reviewing current management and funding of open spaces.

This stage should take between one and two months.

Review national, regional and local context

This should focus on relevant national, regional and local policies and planning guidance and identify how they relate to the local open space context. The key national planning policy and guidance is listed in Appendix B.

The London Plan and many regional spatial strategies include policies on open space networks and green infrastructure and there are an increasing number of sub-regional strategies across the country. These should be considered in establishing the context for an open space strategy. It is also important to understand what impact the pressures arising from the housing growth point areas and housing market renewal areas will have on open space in an area.

The review should also take into account existing relevant council strategies, in particular the overarching corporate objectives set out in the sustainable community strategy. Other relevant strategies to consider include:

- existing open space, green space or parks strategy
- play strategy
- sport strategy
- cultural strategy
- transport strategy
- tree strategy
- climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies
- health inequalities strategy
- equality impact assessments
- race and disability equalities schemes
- carbon reduction strategies.

Identify key characteristics of the area

The specific geological, historic and cultural landscape underlying open spaces define the particular character and qualities of an area. Some urban areas have a significant legacy of big Victorian parks. These can add to local distinctiveness and contribute to a positive perception of an area. Landscape character assessments and /or townscape assessments are useful tools in considering the role of open spaces.

Consideration should also be given to various designations that may apply to open spaces, for example:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's)
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's)

- local nature reserves
- sites of nature conservation importance
- local wildlife sites
- conservation areas, historic landscapes, listed buildings
- landscape characterisations
- planning designations, such as green belt, metropolitan open land and local open space protections, nature conservation and major development opportunity sites.

It is also important to compile a profile of the borough's population, (residents, workforce and visitors) from the most recent local census. This will enable the strategy to take account of any growth and intensification of use and will identify any priority areas.

It will be important to incorporate all these data into the GIS.

Review current management and funding of open spaces

Many local authorities find that their resources for open spaces are constrained. Therefore it is fundamental that the preparation of an open space strategy is informed by a proper understanding of:

- management arrangements and costs
- revenue budgets
- capital budgets
- monies received from section 106 agreements
- monies received from external sources such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Consideration should also be given to open spaces outside the local authority's ownership which are likely to be subject to different management and funding regimes.

The parks and green space sector is currently facing a severe skills shortage. Meanwhile, those working in the sector are under pressure to diversify their skills to create a modern green space service that meets user's needs more effectively and with increasing efficiency. It is therefore also important to identify any skills shortages that the strategy needs to address.

Stage 3: Understanding the supply

The principal output of this stage will be full analysis of existing open space, collated and presented in a GIS database of sites with associated information. This will form a key piece of the evidence base for any open space planning policies.

The essential tasks will comprise:

- identifying all open spaces
- categorising open spaces by function and size
- carrying out an on-site audit of open spaces
- producing datasets and key information.

This stage should take between three and four months.

Identify all open spaces

The objective is to identify all public open spaces within the local authority area regardless of ownership and the extent of public accessibility. In some areas it may be appropriate to set minimum size thresholds for different typologies of open space. However, particularly in dense urban areas, small sites may be valuable locally and should be included in the assessment.

The assembly of data is likely to require reference to local authority records, maps and aerial photographs, in addition to site visits. Each space should be allocated a name and a reference number and all the data should be transferred to GIS. The data should be presented in map form and summarised in a series of tables, by ward if possible. The involvement of local on-site staff to assist with this process is desirable.

Categorise open spaces by function and / or size

The open spaces within an area should be categorised by function and / or size.

It is useful to categorise open space by function so that deficiencies can be identified, such as those in play space or sports facilities. PPG17 sets out a typology of open spaces, reproduced in Figure 3, which is based on function. In some cases local authorities may wish to simplify the PPG17 typology to ease analysis and standard setting. Recognising the importance of multi-functional open spaces, PPG17 suggests the typology is used to identify the primary function of spaces and adapted to local variations as needed. This refinement should be done by adding sub-categories to each of the PPG17 types, which will maintain a coherent strategic context, facilitate cross boundary working and allow benchmarking between authorities.

For large sites with more than one primary function, it may also be useful to consider subdividing the sites into parcels to identify their different functions, which can then be related to standards. In such cases, it will be necessary to maintain a single site category that sets out the primary function and to ensure that the GIS dataset incorporates site and parcel polygons.

Generally speaking the larger an open space, the more varied the potential for recreational opportunities and the further people will travel to visit. It is therefore also useful to categorise open spaces by size. How spaces are categorised depends on local circumstances.

The London Plan sets out a hierarchy of public open spaces, shown Figure 4, which should be applied in London and may be applicable in other metropolitan areas. This provides a consistent approach across London in identifying broad areas of deficiency in provision.

Figure 3 PPG 17 Typology

Parks and gardens – including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens

Natural and semi- natural urban greenspaces - including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (for example, downlands, commons and meadows), wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (for example, cliffs, quarries and pits)

Green corridors - including river and canal banks, cycleways and rights of way

Outdoor sports facilities – (with natural or artificial surfaces and either publicly or privately owned) – including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas

Amenity greenspace – (most commonly but not exclusively in housing areas) including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens.

Provision for children and teenagers - including play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops, and other more informal areas (for example, 'hanging out areas,' teenage shelters).

Allotments, community gardens and city (urban) farms

Cemeteries and churchyards

Accessible countryside in urban fringe areas

Civic spaces - including civic and market squares, and other hard-surfaced areas designed for pedestrians

Figure 4 London’s Public Open Space Hierarchy

Open space categorisation	Size guideline	Distances from homes
<p>Regional Parks Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. Offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.</p>	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 kilometres
<p>Metropolitan Parks Large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities and features at the sub-regional level, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.</p>	60 hectares	3.2 kilometres
<p>District Parks Large areas of open space that provide a 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.</p>	20 hectares	1.2 kilometres
<p>Local Parks and Open Spaces Providing for court games, children’s play, sitting-out areas and nature conservation areas.</p>	2 hectares	400 metres
<p>Small Open Spaces Gardens, sitting-out areas, children’s play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.</p>	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 metres
<p>Pocket Parks Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.</p>	Under 0.4ha	Less than 400 metres
<p>Linear Open Spaces Open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, canals and other waterways; paths; disused railways; nature conservation areas; and other routes that 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.</p>	Variable	Wherever feasible

Audit of quality of open spaces

The objective is to gain information about the nature and quality of each open space and provide a comparative assessment across the local authority area. It provides a snapshot in time and should form the basis for future monitoring. To ensure consistency it should be carried out by a small team who are properly briefed and trained in the survey methodology.

There are no standard or national quality survey criteria for open spaces although the Green Flag award standard provides a useful framework, particularly for green spaces. Its eight criteria are:

- a welcoming place - the overall impression for someone approaching and entering the green space should be positive and inviting

- healthy, safe and secure - the green space must be healthy, safe and secure for all members of the community to use
- well-maintained and clean - issues of cleanliness and maintenance should be addressed, for aesthetic and health and safety reasons
- sustainability - maintenance methods should be environmentally sound
- conservation and heritage - attention should be paid to natural and landscape features, wildlife and flora, buildings and structures
- community involvement - involvement of the community should be actively pursued.
- marketing - there should be a marketing strategy, good provision of information to users and effective promotion of the park as a community resource
- management - there should be an effective management plan for the green space.

Refer to 'Raising the standard, the manual of the Green Flag award' (2004) for further details.

Local authorities may find it helpful to relate their audit to these general criteria because of the importance of the Green Flag award standard as a national quality benchmark. However it is important to note that the Green Flag criteria relate to green spaces and therefore they will need to be adapted to audit other public spaces such as civic spaces.

Some local authorities have used the ENCAMS Local Environmental Quality criteria, alongside the Green Flag award criteria. These relate to specific maintenance issues such as litter, dog fouling, fly-posting, graffiti and waste.

Greenspace Scotland, in their guidance document 'Greenspace Quality – a guide to assessment, planning and strategic development' (2008) suggest a set of criteria or indicators relating to five themes that represent what people expect to find in quality greenspaces. Quality greenspaces that should be:

- accessible and connected
- attractive and appealing
- bio diverse and support ecological networks
- promote activity, health and well-being
- have community benefits.

The audit needs to be tailored to local circumstances so it supplements rather than duplicates existing data and is manageable, given resource availability. It needs to provide sufficient information about open spaces to make strategic decisions. Some local authorities may have the resources and time to score all the individual components of an open space; others may prefer a more generalised approach.

The accessibility of the open spaces in terms of entrances, access for disabled people, proximity to public transport, and car parking provision should form a key part of the audit. This is included within the Green Flag criteria under 'a welcoming place'. Consideration should be given to the quality of access and facilities for disabled people. This is a good opportunity to carry out a more detailed access audit on sites to ensure that disabled people have easy and equal access in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

The audit should include a qualitative assessment of the features present within the open space, which is generally a score on a 1-5 or 1-10 range, reflecting condition and quality. Scores may, with care, be aggregated to give an overall indication of quality.

The audit should also cover issues known to concern users such as vandalism, lack of security, dog fouling etc. It should therefore reflect any previous consultations and may be an

opportunity for public engagement. Some authorities have involved community groups and individuals in undertaking the audit work.

Surveyors should also be asked to make an overall qualitative judgement about the open space and its potential for improvement in quality and function.

As well as assessing the quality of the site, the audit needs to consider its wider values, both existing and potential, which should be based on an understanding of how it is used, its history and cultural associations and its role in the wider physical context. Typical questions to consider in a value audit include:

- what are the site's recreational values
- what are its cultural and historic values
- what are its sustainability and ecological values (for managing climate change effects, for example)
- what are its health values.

The auditors should be encouraged to state how they think the value of the open space could be enhanced.

Produce dataset and key information

The output from this stage should be a GIS dataset of all the open space in the local authority area and a succinct but comprehensive report of the supply and quality of open space, its accessibility and any deficiencies. This will lead to the identification of key issues for the strategy, including the mapping of deficiency areas, (including in quality), key management issues, (including resourcing and skills), and a preliminary assessment of the potential for improvements.

Stage 4: Understanding demands/needs

In tandem with information on existing supply of open spaces, an overview of local needs and demand for different types of open space in the strategy will ensure it provides robust evidence to support open space policies. The essential tasks will comprise:

- considering existing demographic and similar information
- reviewing existing consultation information and identifying existing consultative mechanisms
- consulting and surveying to assess demands/needs
- producing a summary of results.

The principal output will be a summary of the demand for different types of open space and where deficiencies in quantity, quality and accessibility are perceived.

This stage should take between two and three months. Some of the work may be conducted in parallel with stage three.

Consider existing demographic and similar information

Demographic profiles, details of planned developments, attitude and use surveys can all give an indication of the changing demands/needs for open space. An understanding of obstacles to use can also assist with future planning and management.

Review existing consultation information and identify existing consultative mechanisms

Now is the time to further review data collated at the outset of the study, consultations undertaken to date and existing consultation mechanisms. These data can be used to plan surveys related to demand/need. Key issues to be investigated include the barriers to different groups using open space, the distance people will travel for recreation and the facility needs of different groups (disabled people, for example). It may also be timely to canvas local people about their willingness to get more actively involved in their local open spaces through volunteering or joining 'friends of parks' groups. Thought needs to go into how this will be followed up by action, however it is important to manage expectations at any public consultation and that people know where to find out the results of the exercise, to avoid 'consultation fatigue'.

Consult and survey to assess demands/needs

Having decided what further information is needed to provide the evidence base for the strategy, the key decisions will relate to how this information is to be collected. This section outlines a series of methods that have been found to be useful in determining demands/needs. These include:

- consultative forums/ workshops
- general questionnaire surveys
- focus groups
- citizens panels.

Most local authorities now have established mechanisms for regularly consulting their communities. A discussion of open space issues can be built into these consultations and data collated on the demand and need for open space.

However, more specific data is likely to require tailored questionnaire surveys. Questions may be added to wider surveys or questionnaires distributed with council newspapers. Web-based questionnaires are popular with some groups and can enable rapid data collation.

Consultation with key stakeholder groups, such as allotment holders groups, sports associations, and focus groups are a useful way of exploring issues in greater depth and may be particularly useful in probing the concerns of particularly hard-to-reach groups. The Mayor of London has published supplementary planning guidance on planning for equality and diversity (2007) that provides tools for promoting equality, and on accessibility (2004) that provides advice on achieving high standards of accessibility and inclusion.

The conclusion of this stage will be a statement about the need/demand for open space having regard to future changes in population and land use, deficiency areas and the needs of particular groups. It will be appropriate to consider changing demands/needs against current supply. For example, if the amount of open space remains the same and the population increases what are the implications on the open space of more intensive use.

Stage 5: Analysis and identification of objectives

This is a critical stage, when all the information gathered through the assessment of supply and demand, together with an understanding of the national, regional and local context, is analysed, considered and used to shape the strategy. The essential tasks will comprise:

- analysis of supply and demand
- set standards for quantity, quality and accessibility
- update themes, aims and objectives in light of analysis
- identification of deficiency areas and opportunities for redressing them
- identification of priorities for open space improvements.

The output here will be a set of draft planning and management policies that will be incorporated into the draft strategy, including local standards for quality, quantity and accessibility.

This stage should take between two and three months.

Analysis of supply and demand

A key aim of an open space strategy is to ensure there is a range of accessible, high quality open spaces available to everyone. This is assessed by comparing supply to demand and taking into account benchmark standards. The analysis must relate both to the existing and future population at the end of the strategy period. It will be an important input to local development documents. It will also provide the evidence base for policies and for obtaining Section 106 or CIL monies, so it must be robust and carefully argued.

The analysis should consider the total amount and distribution of different types of open space, such as playing fields, allotments, and children's play space. The aim will be to identify areas where new open space is required to meet current and future demands and the type of such provision.

Open space that has existing or potential value should be protected from inappropriate development. Protecting the whole open space network is particularly important in metropolitan areas, especially London, as it functions as the green infrastructure that makes cities liveable. The key issue for open spaces in these areas will be how to improve quality and, accessibility, and how to redress deficiencies in provision.

Where an assessment suggests that an open space is surplus to meeting needs the first step is to consider other open space uses, in particular if there is an identified deficiency in another open space type that could be met. In all other cases a robust approach should be applied before releasing a site for alternative development. The strategy should clearly demonstrate that the open space being considered meets all of the following criteria:

- all functions that open space can perform have been considered and the loss of the open space would not have an adverse impact on the ability of the wider area to achieve these functions
- the open space is not protected by a planning or statutory designation or is of historic significance
- the open space does not form part of a larger space or part of a link between spaces
- the open space does not contribute to or have the potential to contribute to the character or the amenity of the area
- there is no identified open space deficiency in the area and its loss does not create one
- the open space is not required to meet future open space needs
- the open space has no current or potential value to the community

- the community has been consulted and the proposal for re-using the open space for an alternative use is widely supported.

Poor quality or under use are not reasons for considering open spaces for other uses, nor should they be taken as indicating an absence of need in an area. Paragraph 15 of PPG17 and Sport England provide further policy tests for considering playing fields and these should also be applied.

Where an open space is demonstrated to meet the criteria above, an alternative use to open space may be considered in exceptional circumstances, provided that there is a demonstrable need for another land-use. Where a decision is made to dispose of open space for development, the income from the sale of the land should be invested in improving the quality of the remainder of the public open space estate.

Set standards for quantity, quality and accessibility

Open space standards provide an easy-to-use, transparent foundation for the negotiation of planning agreements, providing planning authorities with a robust method for assessing the type, amount, location and quality of provision which developers should be required to make or fund. To this end, standards should be set out in a supplementary planning document (SPD). Developers may challenge local standards, so they must be evidence-based and well argued.

Quantity, quality and accessibility standards need to be set for each typology of open space. It is desirable, but not always possible, for each set of standards to apply throughout a local authority area. Areas with a mix of urban and rural settlements may require more than one approach, most commonly to distance thresholds. Urban residents should ideally be able to walk to most forms of provision, but in rural areas it is likely to be impractical to provide all types in sparsely populated areas.

The best way to set out standards is:

- quantity standards: area of open space per thousand population
- quality standards: a brief description of the required design and management standards
- accessibility standards: a distance threshold (for example, 400 metres).

Quantity Standards

From the site audit and mapping exercise, add up the total area by typology. GIS will give site areas provided that there are layers with the appropriate polygons. Calculate the quantity of provision by population, by typology and for different local areas. Wards can be used to define local areas but it may be more appropriate to use areas defined by barriers to access such as railways, main roads or waterways. In areas where there are distinct settlement areas, these will form the appropriate areas for analysis.

The quantity of open space should be expressed as the area per thousand population for the local authority as a whole and for individual local areas. This is a useful statistic for assessing overall open space provision in comparison with other similar local authority areas. The use of local level data can also enable comparisons of provision within a local authority area. In authorities that contain predominantly urban and predominantly rural areas, it may be appropriate to distinguish these to make the calculations more meaningful.

Compare the quantity of provision with the results of the demand assessment, assessing whether people feel there is enough open space in their local area, and the accessibility assessment. People's perceptions are strongly affected by the quality and accessibility of spaces and do not provide an absolute measure. A suitable quantity standard can be set, based on this analysis but it is also a political and professional judgement based on the evidence.

Quantity standards should be seen as minimum standards not absolutes. If the provision standard is set lower than the quantity of provision in some areas, this does not automatically imply there is a surplus of open space.

Sport England has a standard methodology for determining quantity standards for sports pitches, (see *'Towards a Level Playing Field'*), based on information on local teams. The approach should take into account the aims of increasing the participation in sport and formal recreation and increasing the use and access of facilities by local communities and schools.

Allotments and community gardens provide space for people and local communities to grow their own food. They also provide additional benefits by promoting sustainability, health, biodiversity and social inclusion. The strategy should consider whether there is increasing demand for growing food and relate this to the supply. An increase in demand could be generated by population growth; increasing awareness of food related issues and increased residential development without access to gardens. A standard should reflect the supply and demand to meet the needs of the existing population and the forecast growth. Consideration should also be given to how the quality and accessibility of sites could be improved. The Local Government Association has published good practice guidance for the management of allotments and provides a model for an allotments strategy, covering promotion, resourcing, devolved management, effective administration, monitoring performance and the achievement of best value.

In London, the Mayor has published supplementary planning guidance on providing for children and young people's play and informal recreation. This covers appropriate provision for different age groups and identifying requirements and opportunities to improve and upgrade provision and the access to it.

Quality Standards

Quality standards should set out the design and management standards expected to meet the needs of the community. They should be an aspiration for existing spaces where improvements are needed and a requirement for new ones, provided by developers.

The audit data should be considered in spatial terms and in tandem with other data, for example:

- is there any evidence of vandalism being focused on particular neighbourhoods
- are the poorest quality parks grouped or dispersed across the area
- are larger parks generally considered to be of a higher quality than smaller parks
- is there any correlation between areas of multiple deprivation and supply of or quality of open spaces.

Quality standards should relate to the quality audit carried out on site. The audit scores can be used to provide a local benchmark of quality, based on the score of a site deemed to be of good quality, (such as a Green Flag award winner).

The Green Flag Award criteria provide a good framework for quality standards for green spaces, (including heritage sites, community gardens and nature areas), but will need to be adapted for hard civic spaces. Sport England provides quality standards for sports facilities, including access for disabled people, and Play England has information on what makes a quality play space.

Accessibility Standards

The definition of accessibility standards will enable the identification of areas with open space deficiencies. Standards should be set for the provision of public open space and for access to natural green space, as well as for specific typologies of public open space such as play space,

sports facilities and allotments. Accessibility in this instance refers to the distance to travel to open space, rather than to access for disabled people.

Public Open Space

One methodology is to identify catchment areas from user surveys, taking the distance from which 75% or 80% of users have travelled to reach the sites. Rationalise the results into a limited number of walking, cycling and for larger open spaces, the public transport and / or driving distances. The simplest approach is to adopt 5, 10, 15 or 20-minute travel times and convert them into distances using typical walking, cycling, public transport or driving times.

In London, the London Plan sets standards for the accessibility of each category of open space, as shown in Figure 4. It requires that every Londoner should have a small or local park (less than 20 ha) within 400m of their home, a district park (20-60ha) within 1.2km and a metropolitan scale park (60-400ha) within 3.2 km. This benchmark should be applied across London to ensure that the provision for Londoners is consistent.

Natural Green Space

Natural England is promoting the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGsT). Access to the natural environment close to where people live provides a wide range of benefits particularly for people's health, well-being and quality of life. Most green spaces, corridors and access routes, such as rights of way, can provide access to the natural environment and adopting ANGsT is a key mechanism for planning this provision. ANGsT recommends that everyone should have access to natural green space of:

- at least 2 ha within 300m of their home
- at least 20ha within 2kms
- at least 100ha within 5 kms
- at least 500ha within 10kms.

For London, improving access to nature is promoted in the London Plan, which states that boroughs should identify deficiency areas in access to nature and the opportunities for addressing them. The Mayor has mapped the deficiency areas which are defined as being more than 1km actual walking distance from an accessible site of metropolitan or borough importance for nature conservation. A London Plan Implementation Report on tackling the deficiencies demonstrates how this policy aim can be achieved. It provides guidance on ways to improve access to nature and lists priority opportunities to address areas of deficiency. The London boroughs should incorporate this work into their open space strategies.

Identification of deficiency areas and opportunities for redressing them

Setting accessibility standards will allow the identification of areas where there is a deficiency of particular types of open space. This information should be illustrated by maps showing graphically the different types of open space, the relevant accessibility criteria and from this, the areas which are deficient in open space.

The strategy should be as specific as possible. When areas of open space deficiency are identified, careful thought should be given to the feasibility and location of new provision. If the audit of open spaces considers all non-built space, unused or derelict land which might be converted to open space can be identified. Other solutions might include:

- arranging for public use of private open spaces
- organising dual use of school playing fields, for example through the BSF programme
- creating open spaces, or shared space in areas currently used as part of the highway using Manual for Streets guidance

- creating public open spaces and play spaces within new developments
- improving the accessibility of existing open spaces
- improving access routes through areas surrounding open spaces
- improving the range of facilities in and functions of existing open spaces.

Update themes, aims and objectives in light of analysis

The strategy needs to have a clear focus on the most important issues, negotiated and verified through a process of public consultation and engagement with key stakeholders, including councillors. It is important that the identified issues reflect a corporate view of the council and its partners and are not identified in isolation. The links with key corporate priorities such as regeneration, health, education and social inclusion need to be articulated clearly to embed the strategy in cross-cutting agendas. Key objectives might include:

- raising greater funds for management
- achieving two or more Green Flag awards consistently
- increasing the use of parks by currently under-represented groups
- protecting open spaces
- improving the quality of open spaces
- improving provision in areas of identified deficiency
- improving access and facilities for older and disabled people, drawing on the expertise of local access groups
- raising awareness of open spaces amongst local people
- improving general standards of horticulture
- adapting open spaces for climate change
- increasing the marketing of open spaces to encourage greater use
- developing more and larger Friends groups
- increasing the number of dedicated staff in key parks
- developing a zero-tolerance policy for graffiti
- reducing the number of crimes in open spaces
- reducing the amount of anti-social behaviour in open spaces.

Identification of priorities for open space improvements

An open space strategy is not simply a planning document; it should also be a guide to future investment in open space design and management, setting aspirations for maximising the benefits of a high quality network of open spaces. Greater quality will likely require greater investment – or at least a reallocation of resources to meet new priorities. The strategy should make clear the implications for resourcing and identify potential sources of funding, including:

- revenue funding for management and maintenance
- capital funding from developers through Section 106 agreements
- external funding, (for example from the Heritage Lottery Fund)
- assessing the potential for obtaining management monies from surrounding landowners, for example in terms of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
- calculating the total costs of the desired levels of management
- reassessing current management arrangements, including contracts
- investigating the potential role of Friends groups in management activities and fund-raising
- considering Trust status for some parks
- identifying priorities for filling staffing gaps and where up-skilling of existing staff is needed to improve quality of open spaces.

Stage 6 – Preparation of the strategy and action plan

This is about presenting the strategy in an accessible and clear format and ensuring everyone is supportive and signed up to delivering the strategy actions. The essential tasks will comprise:

- preparation of draft strategy
- preparation of action plan
- consultation on draft strategy and action plan
- adoption of strategy.

This stage should take between two and three months.

Preparation of draft strategy

The draft strategy should contain:

- a revised vision for open spaces
- a brief summary of the national, regional and local context
- the results of the audit
- a description of local needs and demands
- a statement of key issues to be addressed
- a spatial plan or series of plans outlining the spatial strategy
- strategic policies related to both planning and management
- an action plan.

The draft strategy should be succinct, have a sufficient evidence base, be clearly argued and provide clear, implementable policies for planning and managing open spaces. Concise, well-written and well-presented strategies can also be effective marketing tools, making the case for investment in open spaces and raising awareness of key issues. All background data and information should be made available to the public on the council's website.

The draft strategy should also include a statement to confirm the intended status of the strategy within the LDF. For example, will it be adopted as a supplementary planning document.

Preparation of the action plan

The action plan delivers the priorities identified in the strategy. It can be an integral part of the strategy so that each theme of the strategy has an action section or it can be a separate section or document.

There are advantages in the action plan being a separate document:

- it can cover a shorter time period than the strategy
- it can more readily be kept up-to-date, adjusted and reviewed whilst the broad direction of the strategy is maintained, until it itself requires a review
- it is easier to prioritise actions, assess resource requirements and monitor delivery if actions are grouped in one place – there may be synergies and economies of scale if certain actions are implemented together and this will be more evident if they are grouped together
- there will be less need for repetition where one action addresses a number of issues
- if the strategy is to be adopted as a supplementary planning document, it is not necessary for it to contain a delivery plan, particularly on items which relate to non-planning matters.

The action plan may need to have a shorter time-frame than the strategy because:

- local authorities generally set budgets annually, but are likely to have a medium-term financial plan over a three -year period
- authorities enter into local area agreements or other partnership arrangements over the shorter term
- grants and sources of funding may vary over time
- it is more difficult to predict income streams such as Section 106 agreements or the community infrastructure levy over the long term.

In order to give more certainty to resource availability, it is advisable to adopt a shorter-term action plan for a period of one to three years.

An action plan should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-specific). Actions should be clearly linked to specific policies or proposals in the strategy and be realistic when measured against available resources. Agreement should be reached with partners about who will implement the action, whether these are different services within the local authority or external partners. It is also important to agree who is to lead on each project and take responsibility for delivery. There should be a clear start and end date for each action. There will need to be more detailed project plans for the more complex actions. Finally, it is important to include indicators by which the successful delivery of the action will be measured.

The action plan should include the following:

- actions
- relevant policy
- leadership / responsibility
- partners involved
- start date
- completion date
- indicators
- estimated cost (capital and revenue)
- funding sources.

There are unlikely to be enough resources to undertake all potential actions in the short term. Realistically, it will only be possible to include a limited number of priorities in the action plan in the first year or so. As early priorities are met, new priorities will emerge and may be added as the action plan is reviewed. The process of selecting priorities should be informed by:

- the conclusions and recommendations of the strategy
- the opportunity for quick wins which help to achieve early actions and publicity
- resource availability and funding opportunities
- local political priorities
- the priorities of other programmes such as the local area agreement, multiple area agreement or the LDF to which actions in the open space strategy could contribute.

The type of actions that might be included are:

- proposals for maintaining and updating the GIS
- management actions to address the worst-performing open spaces
- proposals to address identified deficiencies in provision and quality.
- publicity and awareness programmes to encourage and broaden use of open spaces

- the adoption of key planning policies in LDFs
- the timetable for producing more detailed sub-strategies
- the timetable for monitoring and review.

Consultation on draft strategy and action plan

A formal consultation on the draft strategy and action plan should ensure it has the full support of members, officers, key stakeholders and the community. This should include:

- regional authorities
- adjacent local authorities
- parish councils
- user groups
- friends groups
- voluntary organisations
- local access groups
- significant land owners, such as housing associations, utility companies.
- national bodies such as Sport England and Natural England.
- the general public.

Adoption of strategy

A response should be made and a record kept of all the comments on the draft strategy and action plan. The final document should be endorsed and formally adopted by the council. If the strategy is to be adopted within the LDF as a development plan document then the relevant additional adoption process will need to be followed.

3. Implementation and delivery

Delivering the strategy is what will make a difference on the ground to stakeholders and is what makes the investment of resources in producing the strategy worthwhile.

This section emphasises the key role of delivering the strategy, translating broad aims, objectives and proposals into programmed and resourced actions. Adopting the strategy is the start of an important programme of delivery.

The following represents the key issues in delivering the strategy:

- promoting the strategy
- managing implementation and delivery
- delivering through the planning system
- delivering through improvements, management and maintenance
- resourcing for delivery
- involving communities and the voluntary sector.

Promoting the strategy

Completing the strategy is a key landmark and an opportunity to promote the issues identified through a launch event. The media will be more interested in what it will mean for the local community than the work which has been behind the development of the document. A launch – perhaps in a venue reflecting one of the key issues – should emphasise the actions that will result and can be a great way to reinforce or build networks, remind people of their progress and the rewards of getting involved.

Managing implementation and delivery

Open spaces are planned, designed and managed by a wide range of people and organisations and the strategy will need to influence others to act if it is to be delivered effectively. There is a real advantage in the partnership which has produced the open space strategy continuing to participate in its delivery, monitoring and review. This builds ownership and responsibility for delivery. The ongoing partnership may evolve to co-opt new skills, but the core group which understands the local issues, priorities and agreed actions of the strategy should continue to remain committed to its delivery. There is also an opportunity to build community engagement and ownership through the implementation and delivery stage.

Delivering through the planning system

Incorporating an open space strategy into the LDF is increasingly important as it brings the status of a statutory document which can:

- protect sites from development and allocate new sites where need is demonstrated
- identify whether there are any areas of open space providing functions that are no longer required and that could be used for fulfilling other open space functions.
- co-ordinate infrastructure including open space with new housing, employment and other development
- set the standard for open space provision and management and the quality of the public realm in relation to new development
- provide the basis for negotiating developer contributions to assist future funding.

The strategic issues and appropriate policies affecting open space in the area should be included in the LDF, as follows:

- an overarching policy that protects the value of the open space network and green infrastructure functions and seeks to address deficiencies in quality, quantity and accessibility should be included in the core strategy
- requirements for new open spaces, or improvements to existing open spaces, should be identified in the site specific allocations documents.
- the quantity, quality and location of open space provision should be included in area action plans and potential locations for new open space should be provided and improvements made
- policies for the protection of open space including the local quantity, quality and accessibility standards for open space should be included in development control policy documents
- supplementary planning documents should be provided on the design guidelines for the creation of new open spaces. It is also useful to prepare an open space supplementary planning document to cover more detailed matters. These could include the quantity, quality and accessibility standards for open space and the up-to-date capital and maintenance costs to be applied when commuted payments are to be collected. Detailed consideration of funding local infrastructure, including open space, is often dealt with in a separate developer contributions supplementary planning document
- the action plan should cross-reference the LDF where this is seen to be the mechanism for implementing parts of the strategy. In this way, the action plan will act as part of the delivery mechanism for the LDF. Delivery of outcomes is increasingly important in demonstrating the soundness of the LDF.

Delivering through improvements, management and maintenance

The strategy should act as an effective management tool. Many of the strategy actions will be delivered over time through refocusing resources for management and maintenance, tackling priority issues and making efficiency savings through improving management practices. Tools such as the performance management framework for parks services, 'Towards an Excellent Service' (TAES) are invaluable in driving organisational improvements, and encourage taking a strategic approach to managing a network of spaces. The Green Flag award self-assessment tool can be used to prioritise improvements within particular sites, highlighting which aspects need to be improved in order to work towards attaining the Green Flag award standard.

The strategy is likely to identify priority sites for major improvements. The task for the group overseeing actions will be to identify potential resources and bring projects forward for implementation.

Resources for delivery

This guidance advocates making a realistic assessment of the resources needed against those available to deliver the strategy. It is also useful to estimate the cost of delivering the entire strategy objectives to make the case for additional funds. This needs to be handled carefully, ensuring that costs are justified by a clear indication of the resulting improvement in quality.

Staff time and skills are often underestimated. Sufficient human resources must be available or projects will run the risk of not being delivered on time or to the quality required.

Some of the principal resources available to assist with the delivery of the strategy are set out below and in Appendix C.

Local authority resources

Both capital and revenue budgets need to be secured for actions to be delivered successfully. Local authorities usually operate a corporate plan which sets out corporate priorities. Associated budgets may be included within the corporate plan, or in a related financial plan. These plans usually last for three to five years, depending on spending cycles, and are generally reviewed

annually. Projects in the first year represent a firm commitment, whilst those in later years are less committed and subject to change. It is therefore important that open space strategy priorities and actions are transferred into the local authority's corporate plan to gain high level officer and member commitment and resources. These plans are usually translated into departmental actions and budgets.

Provision of open space or funding through the planning process

The LDF should set the standard for open space provision and management, together with the quality of the public realm that should be provided within new development. The LDF can also provide a mechanism for negotiating developer contributions for provision in an alternative location(s) by setting out the circumstances where this would be appropriate. Where the facilities are predominantly for the benefit of the new development, this should also include a commuted maintenance sum when a developer hands over responsibility for the long-term maintenance of on-site provision to a local authority or a third party, such as a parish council or trust.

Provision or contributions are usually secured through a Section 106 agreement which will specify how the commuted sum is to be spent, and usually, a time limit for spending it. The local authority should be able to demonstrate where such funds have been spent.

In addition, the government is considering allowing local planning authorities to collect a community infrastructure levy from developers to contribute to strategic infrastructure needs. This could include an element for strategic open space where this is locally deficient. As this mechanism is introduced, it will be important to ensure that specific open space projects are identified and included, as this provides another potential income stream.

Local area agreements

If local authorities are successful at meeting targets set in local area agreements, financial rewards should be received from government. Where open space projects have played a part in achieving a target, financial rewards should be recycled to deliver further actions.

Commercial activities

One approach may be the development of commercial activities such as catering operations within open space where these are likely to contribute to meeting user needs and adding to the attractiveness of the open space. The revenue funding should be ring-fenced to improving open space provision.

External resources

The open space strategy will provide the detailed framework for supporting funding applications, providing the evidence that the project is a priority and is supported by local people.

There is a wide range of national and local sources of funding or volunteer support available to help deliver the action plan depending on the area and the type of project.

A number of potential sources that were available at the time of producing this guidance are listed in Appendix C. It will be essential to keep up-to-date with funding opportunities, criteria for eligibility and potential partnerships.

There may be opportunities for the joint funding of initiatives with other partner organisations and contributions can be made through funding or skills and expertise.

The private sector has demonstrated its willingness to fund and support projects, either on a one-off basis or through a long-term involvement.

Support in kind

Voluntary organisations have an important role to play in open space provision and management. Direct support from parish councils, local volunteers or community groups can help deliver projects in the action plan and also demonstrate the level of community support and involvement to other funding organisations.

Involving the community in the design, implementation, monitoring and operating phases of all forms of open space can bring wider benefits, but should not be viewed as a cheap option. Communities need support and guidance, but time and effort will pay long-term dividends. Different contexts will require locally appropriate solutions but parish councils, Friends groups, special interest groups and sports clubs will be useful starting points.

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, briefing workshops and meetings with 'Friends' groups and residents associations.

Artwork, logo design, and park and garden naming competitions/projects with children and young people are all good ways to stimulate creative thinking and generate interest and ownership. Art workshops engage people in designing and constructing artworks to improve local environments. Community arts projects are particularly useful with young people to enable them to express their creativity, build confidence, develop skills, and cultivate a sense of identity and community pride.

A useful tool for understanding different perceptions of the quality of an open space is '*Spaceshaper*', available from CABE Space. A young person's version is being developed and will be available from 2009.

4. Monitoring and review

The strategy should be monitored to assess whether objectives are being met or whether it should be updated as a result of changing circumstances. The strategy should therefore specify the monitoring and review procedures, which would usually include reference to:

- key performance indicators in the strategy or action plan to be monitored
- who will be responsible for monitoring which indicators
- how frequently the strategy and the action plan will be reviewed.

Indicators

The strategy and action plan should contain performance indicators, against which progress can be measured.

Indicators may measure inputs (for example, how much is spent on a project), outputs (for example, measured improvement in quality or the number of additional children's play areas) and outcomes (what has made a difference on the ground to stakeholders, how that difference is perceived and whether the impact has been sustained). Whilst harder to measure, outcomes are increasingly favoured as a more meaningful method of measuring achievement.

It is advisable to include the minimum number of headline indicators which will be necessary to judge the success of a strategy and whether it requires review. Maximum use should be made of relevant indicators already monitored by a local authority. There is benefit in linking indicators to the national indicators for local authorities and local authority partnerships, the sustainable community strategy and LDF annual monitoring report indicators. This will help in sharing monitoring, understanding and reporting. Importantly, it will also help in understanding how the open space strategy can contribute to the wider agenda.

Many authorities use the site quality audit scores to measure improvements over time, repeating the exercise at agreed intervals and updating the GIS data accordingly.

National Indicators

The government sets national indicators for local authorities and local authority partnerships which relate directly and indirectly to open space. They focus on improving outcomes for local people, local businesses and local places, rather than on processes, institutions and inputs. The national indicators will be the only indicators against which local authorities' performance, alone or in partnership, will be reported to central government. They will therefore be the only measures against which government can agree targets with a local authority or partnership, through local area agreements (LAAs). Local strategic partnerships at the single tier or county council level are to agree with central government up to 35 designated targets for their area. Similarly, Multi-area agreements (MAAs) may agree to use measures from the national indicator set. Or they may use measures from outside of the set, which they feel better describe their sub-regional priorities. The national indicators with potential relevance to open space strategies include (current national indicator number):

- NI5 - overall / general satisfaction with local area
- NI8 - adult participation in sport and active recreation
- NI188 - planning to adapt to climate change
- NI189 – Flood and coastal risk management
- NI195 - improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting) – includes recreation sites
- NI197 - improved local biodiversity – proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented

- NI199 - children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas (from 2009).

Participation of local people

These indicators should be supplemented by targeted consultations and surveys to gauge the level of use or user satisfaction with open spaces or to specified projects. Surveys can take place at the start and finish of projects, with the results collected, analysed and fed back to the community groups and residents. As one way of collecting data to monitor the national indicators, local authorities will undertake a place survey. It may be possible to supplement this survey with user satisfaction questions on open space in the area.

Review

Action plans are short-term documents which should be subject to annual review. This will align with local authority capital and revenue budget-setting and form the basis for securing funding for the next period.

The open space strategy is a document setting a longer-term direction and should be reviewed at a time when monitoring suggests it is appropriate. But, with a sound strategy, this is unlikely to be more frequently than three to five years.

Appendix A Key references

National

CABE Space, 2005. Start with the park – creating sustainable urban green spaces in areas of housing growth and renewal.

CABE Space, 2006. Making contracts work for wildlife – How to manage and encourage biodiversity in urban parks.

CABE Space, 2006. Paying for parks – eight models for funding green space

CABE Space, 2006. Urban parks – Do you know you're getting value for money?

CABE Space, 2007. It's our space – a guide for community groups working to improve public space.

Communities and Local Government, 2008. Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: a national strategy for housing an ageing society.

Communities and Local Government, 2008. National Indicators for local authorities and local authority partnerships: handbook of definitions.

Communities and Local Government, 2008. Trees in Towns II - a new survey of urban trees in England and their condition and management, Chris Britt & Mark Johnston.

Department for Transport, 2007. Manual for streets.

Greenspace Scotland, 2008. Greenspace Quality – a guide to assessment, planning and strategic development.

KIDS, 2008. Inclusion by Design - a guide to creating accessible play and childcare environments, Clare Goodridge, Ed. Philip Douch.

Local Government Association, 2008. Growing in the community, a good practice guide for the management of allotments, 2nd Edition.

ODPM, 2005. How to create quality parks and open spaces.

The Civic Trust, 2004. Raising the standard, the manual of the Green Flag Award (updated), Liz Greenhalgh and Andrew Parsons.

London

Mayor of London, 2004. Accessible London, The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance

Mayor of London, 2005. Guide to preparing play strategies.

Mayor of London, 2007. Planning for equality and diversity in London, The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance

Mayor of London, 2008. The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004), Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London

Mayor of London, 2008. East London Green Grid Framework, The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Mayor of London, 2008. Improving Londoners' access to nature, The London Plan Implementation Report

Mayor of London, 2008. Providing for children and young people's play and informal recreation, The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance

Appendix B Open space in national planning policy

Along with PPG17 referred to within this guide, the following national planning policy documents are relevant to open space planning:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) promotes the delivery of spatial plans which 'goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they can function' (paragraph 30). It seeks an integrated approach to the provision of open space within the planning system to promote sustainable patterns of urban and rural development.

The supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change (2007) sets out how the spatial planning system should contribute to tackling climate change. It recognises 'the contribution to be made from existing and new opportunities for open space and green infrastructure to urban cooling, sustainable drainage systems, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity (paragraph 24); and recognises the benefits provided by multifunctional green spaces for example for shade, shelter, flood storage, wildlife and people.

PPS3: Housing (2006) seeks to create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities that 'provide, or enables good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space) as well as private outdoor space' (paragraph 16).

PPS6: Planning for Town Centres (2005) recognises that 'Well-designed public spaces and buildings, which are fit for purpose, comfortable, safe, attractive, accessible and durable, are key elements which can improve the health, vitality and economic potential of a town centre' (paragraph 2.19). There is currently a revised version out for consultation.

PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005) promotes a strategic approach to the conservation, enhancement and restoration of biodiversity and geology in both urban and rural areas, and recognises that 'healthy functional ecosystems can contribute to a better quality of life and to people's sense of well-being' (page 2)

PPS11: Regional Spatial Strategies (2004) sets out the government's policy for spatial planning at the regional and sub regional level

PPS12: Local Spatial Planning (2008) sets out the requirements of the spatial planning approach to be delivered through the LDF. Spatial planning provides a means of safeguarding the area's environmental assets, both for their intrinsic value and for their contribution to social and economic well being' (paragraph 2.6)

PPS25: Planning and Flood Risk (2006) highlights the importance role that open space can play in flood storage.

Appendix C Funding sources

Big Lottery Fund

Young People's Fund 2: Local grants

The programme is focused on changing the lives of young people aged 10–18 but will also support projects working with young people up to the age of 25 if they are finding the change to independent living difficult. Young people are fully involved and improvements are made to their services. This can include buying or improving land and buildings (for example landscaping works), and buying equipment and fixtures and fittings linked to the land or building

myplace

The Big Lottery Fund is delivering 'myplace' on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This is not lottery funding. The programme aims to deliver world-class youth facilities driven by the active participation of young people, particularly disadvantaged young people, and their views and needs.

Changing Spaces

This is an environmental programme focusing on three priority areas – community spaces; local community enterprise and access to the natural environment. The programme is being delivered in partnership with other organisations who are either delivering a large strategic portfolio or an England-wide open grants programme

- *Community Spaces programme (run by Groundwork UK)* – this funds community groups who want to improve local green spaces such as play areas, community gardens, parks, wildlife areas and village greens.
- *Access to Nature programme (run by Natural England)* – this funds a range of organisations who want to encourage people from all backgrounds, particularly those who face social exclusion or those that currently have little or no contact with the natural environment, to learn more about, and enjoy, the natural environment.
- *Ecominds programme (run by Mind)* – this funds a range of groups who want to encourage people with experience of mental distress to get involved in environmental projects, such as improving open spaces and wildlife habitats, designing public art and recycling.

Heritage Lottery Fund

Heritage Grants

Heritage Grants offer grants of more than £50,000 for projects that help conserve the national, regional or local heritage of the UK. It helps more people, and a wider range of people, to take an active part in, and make decisions about, heritage. Projects might include natural and designed landscapes; habitats and species and archaeological sites.

Parks for People

This three-year joint initiative between the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund helps restore and regenerate public parks and gardens, including squares, walks and promenades in England.

Landscape Partnerships

Landscape Partnerships supports schemes of between £250,000 and £2million led by partnerships of local, regional and national interests, which aim to conserve or restore areas of distinctive landscape character throughout the UK. Each scheme is based on a portfolio of

smaller projects, which together provide a varied package of benefits to an area, its communities and visitors.

Young Roots

The Young Roots offers grants of £5,000 - £25,000 to organisations involving young people aged 13-20 (up to 25 years with special needs) in projects about their heritage - developing skills, building confidence and promoting community involvement.

Entrust

ENTRUST regulates the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) on behalf of HM Revenue & Customs. As a regulator, ENTRUST does not fund any work itself.

This tax credit scheme enables operators of landfill sites to contribute money to enrolled Environmental Bodies (EBs) to carry out projects which meet environmental objectives contained in the Landfill Tax Regulations.

A very wide range of organisations may register as EBs and receive LCF money. In addition, many organisations benefit from LCF funding without enrolling as EBs, choosing instead to work with Distributive Environmental Bodies (DEBs).

The allocation of landfill tax credits remains at the sole discretion of the donor Landfill Operator

Football Foundation

Facilities Scheme

This scheme provides money to develop new or improved facilities for community benefit. These include changing rooms or clubhouses, grass or artificial pitches and multi-use games areas. Applications are welcomed from football clubs, multi-sport clubs, local authorities, all educational establishments, registered charitable organisations, not-for-profit companies limited by guarantee, industrial and provident societies and unincorporated not-for-profit organisations.

Community Grants

Funding is provided for projects that use football and sport to contribute to educational attainment and closing the skills gap, tackling health inequalities and social exclusion, ensuring that supported projects increase participation and consider equality of access.

Community funding is also provided via the '[small grants](#)' scheme for projects which aim to increase participation by both players and volunteers in grass roots football by supporting the costs associated with providing new activity.

Sport England

National Investment

Sport England works with and invests in a range of nationally funded partners. These include national governing bodies of sport, plus partners with expertise in areas such as coaching, equity and volunteering. Investment is prioritised in 31 sports, comprising 10 UK priority, 10 English priority and 11 development sports.

Community Investment Fund (CIF)

Sport England's community – or regional – funding stream, CIF, is the National Lottery funding available through, and managed by, the nine regional offices of Sport England. Its nine regional sports boards make decisions about community funding (grants over £10,000) to projects in their region. All nine regions have produced a plan for sport and investment in their region, detailing their priorities. When making investment decisions, the boards look for evidence that projects will

help meet these priorities and support Sport England's work to get more people involved in sport, and help them stay involved throughout their lives, with a focus on hard-to-reach groups.

Sustrans

Greenways for the Olympics and London (GOAL) aims to improve the lives of all who live in or visit London by creating a safe and attractive environment for walking and cycling, benefiting both their health and the environment. Sustrans has been working with the London boroughs to identify potential Greenways routes across all of London. GOAL brings together Sustrans' work on the National Cycle Routes, Connect2 and DIY Streets in London, as well as other routes funded through Transport for London's Cycling on Greenways programme.

Appendix D Glossary of key terms

Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGsT) is a national assessment framework, developed by Natural England for use outside London, to measure the accessibility of green space to residents.

Area Action Plans are development plan documents that provide a planning framework for an area of significant change or conservation.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) This concept was originally developed in the USA for increasing investment within defined areas of a city such as town centres. This is achieved through changes to local taxation, based on a supplementary rate levied on businesses within that defined area.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a government investment programme to rebuild or renew every secondary school in England over a 10-15 year period.

Carbon Reduction Strategies explain how an organisation is going to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions through a range of measures that address heating and lighting of buildings, powering its equipment, procuring goods and services, sending waste to landfill and staff and visitor travel.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new mechanism to deliver investment into local infrastructure. The levy will be a standard charge decided by local planning authorities levied by them on new development.

Core Strategy sets out the key elements of the planning framework for a local authority area. It should include a spatial vision and strategic objectives for the area.

Development Control Policy Documents describe the criteria against which a local planning authority will assess planning applications and in some instances set out the information that an applicant will need to provide.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) are statutory planning documents produced by local planning authorities that together form the local development framework

Geographic Information System (GIS) is an information system for capturing, storing, analysing, managing and presenting data which are spatially referenced.

Green Belt is a land use designation given to the countryside that lies adjacent to urban areas and is protected from development.

Green Flag award is a national quality standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales.

Green infrastructure is a network of connected, high quality, multi-functional open spaces, corridors and the links in between that provide environmental services and multiple benefits for people and wildlife.

Green space management plans are documents produced for parks or green spaces. They identify the current condition, a vision, an action plan with funding and resources and a monitoring process.

GreenSTAT is a system that gives local residents the opportunity to comment on the quality of their open spaces and how well they feel they are being managed and maintained. It allows site

managers to compare the results with others up and down the country to give a national comparison of what the public think about our open spaces.

Growth Areas / Points are areas identified by the government for new housing development to accommodate future population growth, as outlined in the government's sustainable communities plan.

Housing Market Renewal (HMR) is a government programme to rebuild housing markets in areas of housing market weaknesses

Local Area Agreements (LAA) are contracts between central government and a local area (local authorities and local strategic partnerships), which set the priorities for a local area and identify funding streams.

Local Development Framework (LDF) is a portfolio of local development documents that together provide a framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for an area

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) are non statutory partnerships between public bodies, private business, the voluntary and community sectors to coordinate the contribution that each can make to improving local facilities. They are responsible for developing and driving the implementation of community strategies and local area agreements.

Metropolitan Open Land is strategic open land within the area covered by the London Plan

Multiple Area Agreements are contracts between central government and a group of local authorities / local strategic partnerships, which set the priorities for a designated area and identify funding streams.

Planning Policy Statements are prepared by government to provide guidance to local authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. They explain the relationship between planning policies and other policies which relate to development and land use.

Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) is a development strategy for a region for a fifteen to twenty year period. An RSS informs the preparation of local development documents and local transport plans and sub regional strategies and programmes that relate to land use.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are sites identified for the importance of their geological features and wildlife habitats.

Spaceshaper is a practical toolkit, developed by CABE Space, to measure the quality of a public space before investing time and money in improving it.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a document detailing how local authorities proposed to ensure that local communities and stakeholders can get involved with the planning process in their area

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a piece of guidance supplementing the policies and proposals in development plan documents

Sustainability Appraisals are assessments of the sustainability of a plan, programme or development that must be undertaken by local authorities when preparing development plan documents.

Sustainable Community Strategy is a strategy prepared by a local authority, through a local strategic partnership, setting out a long term vision for promoting and improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area.

Towards an Excellent Service (TAES) is a framework that organisations providing parks, open space, sport and recreation services can use to measure their service against a model of best management criteria.

Appendix E

Useful contacts

Funding organisations

Big Lottery Fund

1 Plough Place
London EC4A 1DE
Tel: 0845 039 0204
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

Environment Agency

Rio House
Waterside Drive
Aztec West
Almondsbury
Bristol BS32 4UD
Tel: 08708 506506
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Football Foundation

30 Gloucester Place
London W1U 8FF
Tel: 0845 345 4555
www.footballfoundation.org.uk

Parks and landscape

ENCAMS

Elizabeth House
The Pier
WIGAN WN3 4EX
Tel: 01942 612621
www.encams.org

GreenSpace

Caversham Court
Church Road
Reading RG4 7AD
Tel: 0118 946 9060
www.green-space.org.uk

Landscape Design Trust

Bank Chambers
1 London Road
Redhill
Surrey RH1 1LY
Tel: 01737 779 257
www.landscape.org.uk

Heritage Lottery Fund

7 Holbein Place
London SW1W 8NR
Tel: 020 7591 6000
www.hlf.org.uk

Sport England

3rd Floor Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square
London WC1B 4SE
Tel: 020 7273 1551
www.sportengland.org

Sustrans

2 Cathedral Square
College Green
Bristol BS1 5DD
Tel: 0117 926 8893
www.sustrans.org.uk

Landscape Institute

33 Great Portland Street
London W1W 8QG
Tel: 020 7299 4500
www.landscapeinstitute.org

Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)

80 Vincent Square
London SW1P 2PE
Tel: 0845 260 5000
www.rhs.org.uk

Royal Parks

The Old Police House
Hyde Park
London W2 2UH
Tel: 020 7298 2000
www.royalparks.org.uk

Community issues

Black Environment Network (BEN)

1st Floor
60 High Street
Llanberis
Wales LL55 4EU
Tel: 01286 870715
www.ben-network.org.uk/

Common Ground

Gold Hill House
21 High Street
Shaftesbury
Dorset SP7 8JE
Tel: 01747 850820
www.commonground.org.uk

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens

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

Nature conservation

BTCV

Sedum House
Mallard Way
Doncaster
Oxfordshire OX10 0EU
Tel: 01302 388 883
www.btcv.org.uk

Natural England

1 East Parade
Sheffield S1 2ET
Tel: 0114 241 8920
www.naturalengland.org.uk

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

The Lodge
Potton Road
Sandy
Bedfordshire SG19 2DL
Tel: 01767 680551
www.rspb.org.uk

Groundwork UK

Lockside
5 Scotland Street
Birmingham B1 2RR
Tel: 0121 236 8565
www.groundwork.org.uk/

National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners

O'Dell House
Hunters Road
Corby
Northamptonshire NN17 5JE
Tel: 01536 266 576
www.nsalg.org.uk

Wildlife & Countryside Link

89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP
Tel: 020 7820 8600
www.wcl.org.uk

Wildlife Trusts

The Kiln
Waterside
Mather Road
Newark
Nottinghamshire NG24 1WT
Tel: 01636 677711
www.wildlifetrusts.org

Sports and play

Fields in Trust

2d Woodstock Studios
36 Woodstock Grove
London W12 8LE
Tel: 020 8735 3380
www.fieldsintrust.org

ISPAL

Abbey Business Centre
1650 Arlington Business Park
Theale
Reading
Berkshire RG7 4SA
Tel: 0844 418 0077
www.ispal.org.uk

Play England

National Children's Bureau
8 Wakley Street
London EC1V 7QE
Tel: 020 7843 6300
www.playengland.org.uk

PLAYLINK

72 Albert Palace Mansions,
Lurline Gardens,
London SW11 4DQ
Tel: 020 7720 2452
www.playlink.org

Waterways

British Waterways

64 Clarendon Road
Watford
Herts WD17 1DA
Tel: 01923 201120
www.britishwaterways.co.uk

Accessibility and inclusive design

Centre for Accessible Environments

70 South Lambeth Road
Vauxhall
London SW8 1RL
Tel: 020 7840 0125
www.cae.org.uk

Living Streets

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

Open Spaces Society

25a Bell Street
Henley-on-Thames
Oxon RG9 2BA
Tel: 01491 573535
www.oss.org.uk

Sensory Trust

Watering Lane Nursery
Pentewan
St Austell
Cornwall PL26 6BE
Tel: 01726 222900
www.sensorytrust.org.uk

Heritage

Civic Trust

The Civic Trust
Essex Hall
1-6 Essex Street
London WC2R 3HU
Tel: 020 7539 7900
www.civictrust.org.uk

English Heritage

1 Waterhouse Square
138 - 142 Holborn
London, EC1N 2ST
Tel: 020 7973 3000
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Garden History Society

70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 8EJ
Tel. 0207 608 2409
www.gardenhistorysociety.org.uk

Trees and forests

Arboricultural Association

Ampfield House
Romsey
Hampshire
SO51 9PA
Tel: 01794 368717
www.trees.org.uk

England's Community Forests

c/o South Yorkshire Forest Partnership
4 Park Square
Newton Chambers Road
Chapelton
Sheffield S35 2PH
Tel: 0114 257 1199
www.communityforest.org.uk

Forestry Commission

Silvan House
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh EH12 7AT
Tel: 0131 334 0303
www.forestry.gov.uk

National Trust

The National Trust
32 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AB
Tel: 01793 817400
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

The Association of Gardens Trusts

70 Cowcross Street
London
EC1M 6EJ
www.gardenstrusts.org.uk

Tree Council

71 Newcomen Street
London SE1 1YT
Tel: 020 7407 9992
www.treecouncil.org.uk

Trees for Cities

Prince Consort Lodge
Kennington Park
Kennington Park Place
London SE11 4AS
Tel: 020 7587 1320
www.treesforcities.org

Rural issues

Field Fare Trust

Volunteer House
69 Crossgate
Cupar
Fife KY15 5AS
Tel: 01334 657708
www.fieldfare.org.uk

Environmental education

Learning through Landscapes

Third Floor
Southside Offices
The Law Courts
Winchester
Hampshire SO23 9DL
www.ltl.org.uk

National Government

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU
Tel: 020 7944 4400
www.communities.gov.uk

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

2-4 Cockspur Street
London SW1Y 5DH
Tel: 020 7211 6200
www.culture.gov.uk

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Eastbury House
30-34 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TL
Tel: 08459 33 55 77
www.defra.gov.uk

Department for Transport (DfT)

Department for Transport
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Chinese

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Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn có văn bản tài liệu này bằng ngôn ngữ của mình, hãy liên hệ theo số điện thoại hoặc địa chỉ dưới đây.

Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυδρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinizde hazırlanmış bir nüshasını edinmek için, lütfen aşağıdaki telefon numarasını arayınız

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਰਾਬਤਾ ਕਰੋ:

Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये पते पर संपर्क करें

Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি (কপি) চান, তা হলে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دئے گئے نمبر پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، يرجى الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو مراسلة العنوان أدناه

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.

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