

# **Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies**

Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London  
Draft Best Practice Guide

June 2003

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

THE LONDON PLAN





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**Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London**  
*Draft Best Practice Guide*

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## **How to give your views**

The Mayor's draft Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies best practice is published for consultation and your comments are invited. Please reference your comments to the relevant paragraphs in the Guide. **Responses must be received by 5pm Friday, 5 September 2003.** They should be sent to:

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Or by email to [mayor@london.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@london.gov.uk) with 'Open Space Strategies' as the subject.

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## Mayor's Foreword

The wide variety of open spaces in London makes a valuable contribution to the quality and character of the capital's environment. They contribute to the positive image of London as a place to live, work and visit. They improve the quality of life and can encourage people to live and work in towns and cities. They give places their identity and have an important role to play in promoting regeneration objectives. However, the planning and management of open spaces face a number of problems and increasing pressures are being placed on them. The quality of open spaces is declining in many areas, reflecting particular problems such as vandalism and a lack of investment. There is a growing awareness of the need for open spaces which are safe, accessible and sustainable and which will perform a range of functions and benefit local communities. I am committed to all Londoners having access to good quality open spaces within a short walk of where they live.

The future development of London as a 'Compact City' will have implications for the use and preservation of open space. The increased demands and needs placed on open spaces as a result will require greater appreciation of the value and benefits that they contribute to sustainable living and the quality of the urban environment. The preparation of this Guide is a response to these many challenges.

Creating and managing high quality public spaces is essential to delivering an urban renaissance in London and I am committed to working with the London boroughs to achieve this and the London Plan will provide a framework for boroughs to plan for and manage changes to the built and open environment. I support a more strategic and holistic approach to open space provision, enhancement, management and protection. Boroughs should prepare an Open Space Strategy to promote a more consistent approach to open space planning across London that will assist in providing good quality open spaces that are accessible to everyone. My 100 public spaces programme *making space for Londoners* seeks to deliver projects that enhance the value of London's existing network of public spaces and to show how new and improved public spaces can make a real difference to individual quality of life, community vitality and London-wide liveability.

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



**Ken Livingstone**  
Mayor of London

# 1 Introduction

## Purpose of the Guide

- 1.1 The draft London Plan (June 2002) sets the strategic context for open space planning that is based on protecting and promoting the network of open spaces throughout London. Policy 3D.11 of the draft London Plan states that the London boroughs should prepare Open Space Strategies to understand the supply and demand of open spaces and identify ways of protecting, creating and enhancing them. This Guide sets out best practice guidance to the draft London Plan on the methodology and content of an Open Space Strategy within the London context. It provides advice on assessing the quantity and quality of open spaces and in identifying the needs of local communities and other users of open spaces. It also suggests ways of promoting open space improvements, including funding, the use of planning obligations and how to effectively engage the local community and establish collaborative partnerships.
- 1.2 The production of a Strategy will also meet the requirements for assessments and audits for open spaces contained in Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17)(July 2002). The Companion Guide to PPG17 (September 2002) also sets out useful information on undertaking audits and assessments.
- 1.3 The benefits of preparing an Open Space Strategy are many and varied, including:
  - bring together a range of issues, disciplines and interests and promote closer inter-departmental and inter-authority working arrangements
  - promote a more holistic view of open space provision, distribution and quality
  - provide a basis for a consistent approach that contributes to a strategic overview
  - identify areas of open space deficiency, gaps in types of provision and spaces that need improvements
  - assist in the identification of priorities for improvements or the creation of new spaces
  - highlight areas where issues of quality, access and accessibility in relation to open space provision need to be addressed
  - maximise the effectiveness of limited local authority budgets and support funding applications
  - assist in Development Plan review and development control decision making and the negotiation of developer agreements
  - input into Best Value reviews and other corporate strategies
  - provide support for funding applications
  - promote partnership working, social inclusion and community involvement.
- 1.4 The Guide is not intended to be prescriptive. It provides a framework of what should be included in Open Space Strategies and a tool kit of different approaches illustrated by practical examples. This will enable individual boroughs to select the methods of most relevance to them.

## Scope of the Strategy

- 1.5 The Open Space Strategy should assess and analyse the quantity and quality of existing open spaces, the varied functions and significance of open spaces and the needs of local people and other users. It should also consider the wider corporate objectives of the borough, such as area regeneration, and the potential contribution of open spaces to achieving these objectives. Most importantly, open spaces should not be viewed in isolation or as the sole responsibility of a single service area and the strategy should be developed by cross-departmental working.
- 1.6 The Strategy should set out a vision of what the Council wants to achieve, setting out aims, objectives and broad policies. This vision should be based on an understanding of the supply, distribution, quality, level of use, needs of local communities and the wider borough, sub-regional and London context. The Strategy should be supplemented by a practical implementation or action plan, which is subject to monitoring and review.
- 1.7 The principal objectives of an Open Space Strategy should be to:
  - improve open space provision in terms of quality/quantity/accessibility
  - improve linkages within and between the open space network
  - ensure open spaces meet the needs of all local people and promotes greater social inclusion
  - ensure open spaces enhance the quality of the local environment.
- 1.8 The development of an Open Space Strategy will be required to reflect the new focus on liveability and delivery of the urban renaissance and must seek in particular to meet the needs of local communities including groups which have traditionally suffered exclusion such as children, people with disabilities and minority ethnic communities.
- 1.9 It is recommended that the preparation of an Open Space Strategy should be based on the following general principles, which develop the principle objectives above:
  - establishment of a clear policy framework
  - understanding the values, needs and aspirations of local people and other users;
  - formation of collaborative and enabling partnerships
  - development of a clear and shared vision
  - long term viability and sustainability
  - sustainable management and maintenance arrangements
  - promotion of heritage, natural and cultural values
  - inclusive design
  - innovation and learning
  - imaginative and innovative techniques.
- 1.10 The production of an open space strategy should assist in identifying needs and in providing a clear framework for investment priorities and action. It is recommended that open space strategies should include:

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

1.11 Some Boroughs may have already undertaken some of the stages of work and tasks set out in this Guide. It may not be necessary to repeat these steps but to consider how the work undertaken to date may contribute to strategy preparation and be supplemented by further complimentary tasks. An Action Plan or delivery mechanism should be developed as a key component that focuses on the implementation of the Strategy.

#### **Definition of Open Space**

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

1.13 The Urban Green Spaces Taskforce Report (November 2001) has adopted a definition of urban open space which includes elements of the townscape such as boulevards, plazas, pedestrian areas, streets and squares. This category of open space could be particularly important in meeting the needs of the community in high density inner London Boroughs. Boroughs may consider it appropriate to prepare a separate Public Realm Strategy or Design Guidelines for treatment of the streetscape (such as the Streetscape Design Guide prepared by LB Tower Hamlets) or to give consideration to elements of the public realm such as squares and plazas as an integral part of the Open Space Strategy. Consideration could also be given to the quality of linkages between open spaces, including the promotion of a network of open spaces, and the potential to use vacant and derelict land as temporary open spaces as part of the Open Space Strategy.

#### **Definition of Open Space**

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

Note: For the purposes of producing an Open Space Strategy the definition does not include private residential gardens or incidental areas, such as road verges.

## Who prepares it?

- 1.14 In order to develop a comprehensive strategy, a joint or collaborative approach is required between the Planning and Parks/Recreation Department and other relevant service departments. This is to provide the strategic planning context and to ensure that the aims and objectives of the strategy can be implemented on the ground. Collaboration can be effectively promoted through the formation of a **Strategy Team** of responsible officers. The Strategy Team should include the borough's Access Officer or if there is no Access Officer in post, consideration should be given to employing an access consultant or taking other expert advice.
- 1.15 Open space is not the sole responsibility of the Parks and Planning Departments. There are extensive areas of open space on land owned or managed by the Housing Department, the Education Department, the Highways Department and other Council departments. Some open spaces are located in areas included in regeneration programmes. Open spaces can also be privately owned and managed. Some open spaces have user groups or "friends of" groups.
- 1.16 There will also be a large number of voluntary and community groups, businesses and national and regional Government agencies who should play a role in strategy development from the outset, including such bodies as the local access group, the GLA, Countryside Agency, and Sport England. The Open Space Strategy should take into account the aims, aspirations and comments of all these organisations and seek to show how all stakeholders can work together for the well-being of borough residents.
- 1.17 All these groups and organisations should be involved in the preparation of the Open Space Strategy. They should be consulted on the scope of the Strategy as well as on the form of the draft and final Strategy, and should also be considered for membership of the steering group.

In the approach adopted by **London Borough (LB) of Barking & Dagenham**, a core Green Spaces Strategy Team was established to reflect existing internal and external partnerships for green space management and to ensure a holistic approach to strategy preparation. The Core Strategy Team comprises the following:

- Project Manager (Group Manager Park & Leisure Development)
- Project Officer (Park Development Officer)
- Project Officer (Planning Officer-Secondment)
- Project Officer (Policy & Review Officer-Secondment)
- External Consultant

The Green Spaces Strategy Team reports through the project manager on a monthly basis to a Green Space Strategy Management Group comprising:

- Head of Leisure Services (Chair of Management Group)
- Head of Planning Services
- Head of Strategic Regeneration
- Head of Heritage Services

## How does it relate to other strategies and initiatives?

- 1.18 An Open Space Strategy is one in a family of strategies to be prepared by an authority and must reflect the corporate aims and objectives of the authority. The relationship of the Open Space Strategy to other strategies and initiatives must be clearly defined. It should be cross-referenced to other strategies in order to ensure that they are mutually supportive. Of particular relevance is the relationship of the Open Space Strategy to the authority's Cultural Strategy, Community Strategy, Biodiversity Action Plan and UDP. The background work to these Strategies may provide useful background information to inform the preparation of the Open Space Strategy. Table 1 illustrates the range of strategy documents considered of relevance to the preparation of an Open Space Strategy.
- 1.19 The relationship of the Open Space Strategy to the borough's UDP will be of critical importance as the UDP will provide the policy framework for implementing the land use aims and objectives of the Strategy. The UDP provides the key policy framework for environmental protection, biodiversity, nature conservation, open spaces and leisure and recreation facilities in addition to design guidelines for key development sites.
- 1.20 Many Boroughs have or are developing strategies to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and have developed action plans to better promote access for disabled people in order to meet the 2004 provisions of the DDA. There will be a requirement for all Boroughs to comply with DDA legislation in their open spaces. The Mayor's forthcoming Supplementary Planning Guidance on Accessible London will provide further advice.
- 1.21 All local authorities are required to undertake Best Value reviews of their services on a 5 year rolling programme. Much of the information from this on-going work can be incorporated into an Open Space Strategy. Preparation of an Open Space Strategy will itself be of use in future Best Value reviews and in the preparation and monitoring of Best Value Improvement Plans.

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

**Table 1: Example of Relationship of Open Space Strategy to other Strategies and Initiatives**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Key Relationships</b>
<b>National</b>	DTLR: Green Spaces Taskforce, Neighbourhood Renewal Department of Culture, Media and Sport: Local Culture Strategies Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Working with the Grain of nature, A Biodiversity Strategy for England Department of Employment an Education: Education Development Plan
<b>Regional</b>	Greater London Authority Strategies: London Plan, Biodiversity, Cultural, Transport, Ambient Noise, Air Quality, Municipal Waste, Children’s and Young Person’s, Equalities London Development Agency: Economic Development Strategy
<b>Sub-Regional</b>	Sub-Regional Development Frameworks Partnerships eg. Thames Gateway London Partnership
<b>Corporate</b>	Council Community Priorities Best Value Performance Plan
<b>Borough Statutory and Non-statutory plans</b>	Unitary Development Plan; Leisure Plan; Nature Conservation Strategy; Agenda 21 Strategy; Housing Strategy; Asset Management Plan; Regeneration Strategy; Heritage and Arts Strategy; Education Plan; Biodiversity Action Plan; Cultural Strategy
<b>Statutory and non-statutory agencies</b>	Countryside Agency, Environment Agency, Sport England, English Heritage, English Nature, London Wildlife Trust
<b>Local</b>	Community and stakeholder groups e.g. park user groups; Citizens panels; Community forums
<b>Service plans</b>	Departmental e.g. Street scene, Neighbourhood Renewal Programme

## Resources

1.22 The availability of resources will be a critical factor in determining the scope of work and timescale for preparation of an Open Space Strategy. The level of resources committed to previous studies by the London Boroughs has varied considerably and is influenced by the following principal factors:

- whether the work is done by the borough or by external consultants
- the scope and geographical coverage of the study
- whether an appropriate range of skills are available within the authority (eg: landscape design, urban design and ecology).

1.23 The majority of work to date has been undertaken by the London Boroughs themselves. This generally has a lower capital requirement but can take longer than if the work is done by external consultants. An alternative approach may be for consultants to be employed to do part of the work. For example, to undertake audit work or an assessment of existing facilities as stand alone pieces of work.

- 1.24 Advice is available from advisory organisations such as Sport London and the GLA Biodiversity Unit. Some advisory organisations can also provide borough-based data, such as that available from the GLA habitat survey. This will help to reduce the level of direct data collection that will be needed and facilitate cross boundary working. Other organisations can provide advice on methods of data collection and analysis.
- 1.25 The collaboration between planning and parks officers is an important means of carefully focusing resources and increasing awareness of what existing work may be drawn upon in the preparation of the Open Space Strategy. In preparing action plans it is important that parks managers and planning officers work together to agree priorities for investment.

#### **Examples of Approaches**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Cross Boundary Working**

- 1.26 There is a need to address cross boundary issues including the creation of green chains in the preparation of an Open Space Strategy. Consideration should be given to the creation of more formal associations. Neighbouring boroughs provide opportunities for partnership and there are a number of existing organisations which bring adjoining London boroughs together to improve open space provision. Examples include:
- **London Parks and Green Spaces Forum:** a forum, involving all the key stakeholders, taking a strategic view of green space issues in London, including the sharing of best practice.
  - **Lee Valley Park:** The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority is an independent body that was set up to improve, preserve and manage the Lee Valley Park. It is financed by a number of local authorities in London, Essex and Hertfordshire.
  - A number of neighbouring boroughs work together on specific areas of open space that straddle the borough boundary. For example, LB Sutton and LB Merton work closely on issues affecting an area of Metropolitan Open Land that runs through both boroughs.

- **Green Chain Joint Working Committee:** a forum involving representatives from both the Planning and Parks Departments at Bexley, Greenwich, Bromley and Lewisham. This has been running for 20 years. It now employs a Green Chain Officer funded jointly by the boroughs. The Officer does project-based work throughout the Green Chain.
  - **Green Corridor Partnership:** London Boroughs of Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow.
  - **West London Alliance:** funding responsibilities of Gunnersbury Park are shared between LB Ealing and Hounslow.
  - **London Borough's Biodiversity Forum:** brings together biodiversity officers from the boroughs and develops common themes.
- 1.27 The importance of open spaces for people who live outside the borough must be considered in Open Space Strategies. Metropolitan Parks and Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation can attract people from large distances. They will attract visitors from a number of neighbouring boroughs. People who live in the inner boroughs often have less access to open spaces, particularly playing pitches and wildlife sites. It is common for such areas in the outer boroughs to be used by people who live in the inner boroughs as well as local residents.
- 1.28 It is recommended that, as a minimum, boroughs should consult with neighbouring boroughs on the following issues:
- the planning of open spaces within 1 km of the borough boundary
  - Green Chains
  - open spaces which straddle the borough boundary
  - Green Belt management issues (outer London boroughs and the adjoining districts)
  - open spaces designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).
- 1.29 Boroughs should also consult with other relevant boroughs where user surveys highlight open space users who are not borough residents or resident within adjoining authorities. Boroughs should share the results of audits and surveys with neighbouring boroughs to facilitate cross boundary planning. The use of an agreed standards audit form between boroughs will assist in comparing information and benchmarking results.

### **Timescale**

- 1.30 It is considered that the preparation of an open space strategy should generally take 12-18 months depending on resource availability and the extent to which the scope of work dovetails into other initiatives and Best Value exercises. An example timescale for strategy preparation is set out on in Table 2.

**Table 2: Example Timetable for Strategy Production**

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Duration*</b>
<b>Stage One</b>	<b>Establish Strategy Brief</b>	
<b>Stage Two A</b>	<b>Consultation, audit and assessment: quantity, quality and user demands</b>	<b>3-6 months</b>
<b>Stage Two B</b>	<b>Landscape audit and assessment</b>	<b>3-6 months</b>
<b>Stage Three</b>	<b>Analysis and development of strategies priorities</b>	<b>2-3 months</b>
<b>Stage Four</b>	<b>Action plan</b>	<b>2-3 months</b>
<b>Stage Five</b>	<b>Production and distribution</b>	<b>1-2 months</b>

*(Source: LB Barking and Dagenham, August 2001)*

\*It is likely that this timetable would only be achieved with the appointment of external consultants and the provision of dedicated in-house resources, particularly staffing resources.

## 2 Methodology

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

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

### ***Stage 1: Preparation of Brief/Scoping Study***

#### 2.2 Essential Tasks

- **Review scope of work undertaken to date**
- **Identify key issues to be addressed**
- **Establish Steering Group and Strategy Team of responsible officers**
- **Appoint Project Manager**
- **Identify key pieces of additional further detailed work that is related (eg sub-strategies)**
- **Consider appointing external consultants**

2.3 It will be necessary to understand the purpose of producing the strategy, to identify who should be involved in the Steering Group, to secure their commitment and involvement and to get them to sign up to an initial set of aims and objectives which can be refined during the production of the strategy. The preparation of an initial brief or scoping study is an essential prerequisite of strategy preparation regardless of whether the work is to be undertaken in-house or by external consultants. This may range from a simple brief based on the methodology set out in this Guide to a more detailed scoping or framework report.

2.4 A Framework Report can include a history of the borough's parks and other open spaces, an examination of the social, wildlife, educational, health and economic regeneration benefits of green space, categorisation of green space in the borough, details of the management framework, parks and open spaces expenditure and capital programme, performance indicators and key issues. Preparation of the Framework Report should include a SWOT analysis (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) and preparation of a strategy model and structure. Preparation a more detailed framework report on the commencement of strategy preparation will allow for the co-ordination of existing information and will provide an overview of current provision and a critical evaluation of the issues that need to be addressed in the strategy, for example, the need to improve access for disabled people.

- 2.5 A **Strategy Team** should be formed as set out in paragraphs 1.14-1.17 of this Guide. A project manager should be appointed with overall responsibility for the day to day progress of strategy preparation and for reporting to the Management Team.
- 2.6 The Open Space Strategy should provide an overarching review of open space in the borough. Sub-strategies could address a range of open space types or issues of local importance in more detail eg: allotments, or that provide additional recreational facilities eg for indoor sports.

#### **Examples of Possible Sub-Strategies**

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

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

**Allotment Studies:** LB Bromley: separate allotment strategy  
LB Bexley: biannual surveys of allotments under the umbrella of the overall strategy

### **Stage 2: Review and Objectives Setting**

#### **2.7 Essential Tasks**

- **Understand current national/ regional policy context and relevant initiatives**
- **Review relevant documents and planning guidance**
- **Identify key characteristics of borough on an area basis (including identification of regeneration initiatives and major development opportunities)**
- **Consider potential use of existing GIS if available**
- **Establish corporate objectives and priorities**

#### **National Context**

2.8 The Urban White Paper recognises that well managed public open spaces improve the attractiveness of urban areas and help to promote a healthier lifestyle and highlights the need for improvements in their management and maintenance. It highlights a number of actions which are being taken by the Government to promote these objectives, notably:

- new sources of funding such as the New Opportunities Fund Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities Programme and the Heritage Lottery Fund Urban Parks Programme
- preventing the loss of school playing fields
- encouraging improvements in the quality of service standards in the provision and management of parks and open spaces through the Best Value regime

- taking environmental action by enabling and funding environmental and voluntary groups such as the Groundwork Federation, BTCV and Wildlife Trusts to take action to improve the quality of local environments.
- 2.9 The Urban White Paper recognises that there is a requirement to do more than halt decline in the quality of open spaces and identifies a requirement to find ways of improving the quality of parks, play areas and other open spaces and to make them cleaner, safer and better maintained places. The need for more imaginative thinking about open space planning and design is highlighted and three key areas of action are proposed:
- development of a shared vision for the future of our parks, play areas and open spaces
  - improved information on the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces and the way in which they are used and maintained
  - improved planning and design of new parks, play area and public spaces and the management and maintenance of existing ones.
- 2.10 The Government has demonstrated its support for public space by recognising it as a component of sustainable communities. The Sustainable Communities Plan (Feb, 2003) underlines its commitment to the 'liveability' agenda that includes open spaces and the public realm.
- 2.11 CABE Space is a strategic partnership of Groundwork, GreenSpace (formerly the Urban Parks Forum), the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management, the Landscape Institute and the Improvement and Development Agency. The unit will champion high quality planning, design and the management and care of parks and public spaces. Hands-on support will be provided to local authorities and others to apply best practice to improve the local environment.
- 2.12 Planning policy guidance notes (PPGs) should be referred to in establishing the planning policy context. Of particular relevance will be the PPGs covering: Green Belt (PPG2); Housing (PPG3); Nature Conservation (PPG9); Transport (PPG13); Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17); and Noise (PPG24).
- 2.13 PPG17 sets out policy guidance that is relevant to the preparation of a strategy. In particular it requires audits of provision and assessments of need and opportunities to be undertaken and open space standards to be set locally. In addition, a Companion Guide to PPG17 illustrates one way that the required audits and assessments can be done, while recognising that other approaches are possible, setting out a range of methods to achieve them.

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

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

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

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

The DTLR is funding the 'Raising the Standard' project. This aims to develop the scheme into a nationally recognised award for excellence in park management and maintenance through developing:

- a community award to encourage and reward the efforts of local communities and people who enhance green spaces
- an award to promote excellence in provision and care of play areas associated with parks and local green spaces
- quality standards for managing and maintaining green spaces in conjunction with GreenSpace.

### **Strategic Context**

- 2.14 The Mayor is required to produce a number of strategies for London that are integrated with the London Plan. These deal with Transport, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Air Quality, Ambient Noise, Municipal Waste and Culture. In addition, the Mayor is also producing supplementary planning guidance and strategies on a range of other topics. It will be necessary to understand the strategic framework set out in these strategies and guidance notes.
- 2.15 The **London Plan** will set the spatial planning framework for London for the next 15-20 years. The draft London Plan sets out a number of policies in respect of London's open spaces. These may be summarised as follows:

- protection of Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and locally important open space including green corridors and important wildlife habitats
- support for creation of networks of strategic open spaces such as green chains and improved access to and connections between spaces
- creation of new open spaces in areas where there is inadequate provision and promotion of improvements in existing provision
- ensuring that everyone has equal access to and can use the facilities in London's open spaces
- management of open space and encouragement of Boroughs to prepare open space strategies to identify priorities and opportunities based on local needs.

#### **Other Mayoral Strategies of Particular Relevance**

**Biodiversity Strategy** (July, 2002) promotes the management, enhancement and creation of open space for biodiversity. Public access and appreciation of nature is promoted through a variety of different types of open spaces. Development proposals and the use of open spaces should be ecologically sensitive.

**Draft Ambient Noise Strategy** (March, 2003) promotes frameworks for the management of noise in open spaces and the wider public realm and exploring the value of designating 'Areas of Relative Tranquillity' where appropriate and practicable.

**Draft Culture Strategy** (Feb, 2003) promotes the cultural benefits of open space as an important resource for providing a range of opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. Open space contributes to London's cultural identity and can provide good locations for events that bring people together in formal and informal activities and can provide quiet space for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

**Draft Children and Young People's Strategy** (April, 2003) promotes access to a range of play, recreational and leisure opportunities and highlights issues of importance to these groups such as the lack of safe areas for play and the safety of the wider public realm.

#### **Making Space for Londoners**

The Mayor's 100 public spaces programme seeks to deliver projects that enhance the value of London's existing network of public spaces and to show how new public spaces can make a real difference to people's quality of life. There will be 100 projects spread across all of London within 5 years. These will act as examples of the difference improved public space can make, and of the ways in which the highest quality designs can be secured at reasonable cost. The GLA Architecture and Urbanism Unit (A+UU) has begun working with local partners, including Transport for London and the London Development Agency, on the first 10 pilot projects, advising on how to obtain the best possible quality of design.

#### **Local Context**

- 2.16 The characteristics of the borough's population and infrastructure must be understood before the aims and objectives of the Strategy can be effectively developed and will also

inform the priority given to the different parts of the strategy. A profile of the borough should therefore be assembled building on a range of available data sources. The list below illustrates the type of information which should be considered. Each borough will already have much of this information available and it will be important to ensure that the use made of existing data sources is maximised wherever possible. The 2001 census information will provide an up-to-date picture of the local area. This should be examined by output areas or a ward basis.

- Population distribution and age structure
- Percentage of children; retired; disabled people (if available)
- Ethnicity: Percentage of ethnic minority groups
- Percentage of people without a car
- Percentage of people without a garden
- Poverty, deprivation and polarisation: Indices of deprivation eg: income, employment, health, education, housing, access and child poverty
- Other strategy areas e.g. regeneration initiatives
- Public transport routes; Cycle routes

2.17 This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Each borough should consider what characteristics are important for its local area and regard should be given to other relevant strategies and corporate objectives. Based on the GLA's population projections, it will be possible to chart projected population changes. This assessment of published data sources could be supplemented by a character or landscape appraisal of the borough and information on key development sites and regeneration areas. It will be useful to show this information on a series of maps of the borough and **GIS** allows land use and population data to be easily linked. This will assist in identifying areas of particular need and in assessing these characteristics against the distribution of open space. The use of GIS can be an invaluable tool for recording information and during the analysis of data.

2.18 In general, UDPs contain policies to protect and enhance existing open space, to address open space deficiency and to create new areas of open space, including green chains and green corridors. However, UDPs do not contain detailed policies on implementation and this is an issue which should also be addressed in the preparation of an Open Space Strategy. It will be possible to identify key issues which the Open Space Strategy should address through an understanding of the borough's corporate objectives and community priorities. Draft themes can be developed and refined through each stage of strategy preparation.

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

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

## **Stage 3: Understanding the Supply**

### **2.19 Essential Tasks**

- **Review existing information on supply of open space**
- **Desk top study and identification of designated open spaces**
- **Categorisation of public open space according to Hierarchy and identification of areas of deficiency**
- **Development of local typology of open space**
- **Audit of open spaces over 0.4 ha (including, quantity, quality, use, function facilities and accessibility)**

### **Preparation of Audit**

2.20 An effective open space strategy must be based on a sound understanding of the supply and varied functions of open space comprising:

- **Step 1: Desk-top study:** The compilation and mapping of information on existing open space (for example, from the UDP and aerial photos), classification of parks and open spaces and the identification of areas of deficiency based on the existing provision of publicly accessible open space
- **Step 2: Site audits:** an assessment of parks and open spaces based on site visits and completion of a standard pro-forma. This should cover such issues as quantity, quality of landscape, level and type of use, facilities and accessibility. As a general principle, as much information as possible should be recorded and the preparation of the pro-forma should seek to minimise subjective judgement. More detailed audits of particular functions or types of open space can be undertaken where necessary. These could include audits of playing fields, children's play spaces and allotments.

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

### **Step 1: Desk Top Study**

2.21 A desk top study will provide a useful starting point for understanding the supply and spatial distribution of open space. This should identify:

- sites designated in the UDP, eg Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, Green Chains, sites of nature conservation importance and locally protected sites
- derelict land

- all Public Open Spaces
- all other open spaces eg: school playing fields, private sports grounds, allotments, burial grounds, wildlife sites, playgrounds and amenity areas on housing estates.

2.22 This information should be recorded in a comprehensive schedule with reference numbers corresponding to a series of OS sheets on a ward basis. The use of GIS is recommended to assist regular updating of this information.

### ***Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land***

2.23 A key feature of Green Belt and MOL is their permanence. Both designations are long term and boundaries should only be reviewed in exceptional circumstances as part of a review of the UDP. In such cases, reviews should be included as part of the Open Space Strategy. The Strategy could include proposals to improve the Green Belt and areas of MOL.

### ***Public Open Space Catchment Areas and Areas of Deficiency***

2.24 The categorisation of publicly accessible open spaces should be based on the draft London Plan open space hierarchy in order to provide a consistency of approach across London in identifying broad areas of deficiency in provision. In order to reflect local variations, an additional category of small local or pocket parks has been added to the hierarchy. It will be useful for many Boroughs, particularly in inner London, to assess smaller open spaces and the contribution these make to the provision of public open space. The recommended hierarchy of publicly accessible open space and catchment area distances is set out in Table 3. This should provide the basis of any assessment of areas of open space deficiency.

**Table 3: London's Open Space Hierarchy**

<b>Ratio of total open space (public and private) to people by borough and ward; Type</b>	<b>Approximate Size</b>	<b>Indicative Catchment Area</b>	<b>Indicative Catchment Area (refined to take into account barriers to access)</b>
Regional	Over 400 hectares	8 km	
Metropolitan	60 - 400 ha	3.2 km	
District	20 – 60 ha	1.2 km	
Local Parks	2 – 20 ha	400 m	280 m
Small Local Parks	0.4 – 2 ha	400 m	280 m
Pocket Parks	Less than 0.4 ha	400 m	280 m
Linear Open Spaces	Variable	Where feasible	

Source: Draft London Plan, June 2002

2.25 The starting point in defining the pedestrian catchments of local parks is the 400 metre fixed radius catchment identified by the hierarchy. This will provide the basis for identifying which parts of the borough are not adequately served in terms of access to public open space.

However, this approach does not take account of the fact that individual open spaces may have larger or indeed smaller catchments depending on a number of other quality and functional criteria. The areas of deficiency highlighted by this approach should be viewed as indicative only and should be used as a guide to broadly identify those areas of the borough which are deficient in publicly accessible open space.

- 2.26 It is recommended that a more detailed assessment is undertaken to identify where local circumstances such as the location of entrance gates, street patterns, the severance effects of railway lines or heavy traffic flows could reduce the accessibility of open spaces. This could take the form of reducing the catchment area at the local park level to 280 metres to take into account local barriers to accessibility. This would extend the identified area of deficiency. Alternatively, if time and resources permit, account should be taken of actual walking distances and barriers on a case by case basis to provide a better understanding of deficiency areas.
- 2.27 Public transport catchments should be estimated for Metropolitan and District Parks. This will require consideration of existing public transport services. Park users can be expected to make bus journeys of up to 4.8 km (or 15 minutes) to Metropolitan Parks and up to 3.2 km to District Parks and the areas within 400 metres of the bus corridors can be regarded as being part of the catchment areas. People can be expected to make rail journeys of up to 5.9 km (or 10 minutes) to District parks and areas within 400 metres of the stations on these lines can be considered to be within the catchment areas of the parks.
- 2.28 It is also important to recognise that catchment areas will be smaller in practice for disabled people. The accessibility of open spaces will be affected by the design of entrances as well as their location. For example, narrow gates and steps may mean that some people would have to travel further to enter an open space. Public transport catchments will also be different if stations are not accessible. Barriers to access will be more extensive for disabled and older people and priorities for action should take into account how accessible the space is in practice for disabled people based on the principles of inclusive design.
- 2.29 The assessment of existing supply should extend beyond the borough boundary. It is recommended that the study area should be extended by a minimum of 1 km in identifying publicly accessible open space. This is already the practice when evaluating Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. In considering the role of Metropolitan Parks and District Parks in providing for the open space needs of a borough, it will be necessary to consider a wider area of coverage corresponding to the catchment areas defined in the hierarchy.

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

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

### ***Other Measures of Quantity, Distribution and Accessibility***

2.30 Other quantitative measures can be applied in the assessment of the provision of open space including:

- **Open space ratio** - total amount of open space as a proportion of land area compared to other Boroughs with similar characteristics and as a basis for comparison between wards
- **Ratio of people to public open space** by borough and ward.

### **Step 2: Site Audits**

2.31 There is value in assessing the types and characteristics of open space available within a borough, in order to show the range of open space facilities and functions being provided.

### ***Typology of Open Space***

2.32 The use of the typology contained in PPG17 is recommended so as to promote cross boundary working and strategic thinking and is set out in Table 4. This typology includes a broad range of open spaces, both green spaces and hard surfaced areas such as civic spaces, which can be refined to suit local circumstances, while maintaining a coherent strategic context and facilitating cross boundary working. While the Typology indicates the primary purpose of the open space, most areas are multi-functional in practice.

**Table 4: PPG17 Typology**

<b>TYOLOGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY PURPOSE</b>
<b>Green spaces</b>	
parks and gardens	accessible high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events
natural and semi-natural	wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness
green corridors	walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel and opportunities for wildlife migration
outdoor sports facilities	participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside and water sports
amenity	opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas
provision for children and young people	areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters
allotments, community gardens and city farms	opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social interaction
cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds	quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity
<b>Civic spaces</b>	
civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians	providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events

In order to refine the typology to reflect local circumstances **LB Southwark** subdivided the Urban Task Force typology by adding sub-categories as follows:

<b>Urban Parks Task Force</b>	<b>Local Sub-Typology</b>
Parks and gardens	Major parks, Local parks, Squares, Gardens
Playspace	Playground, Adventure playground
Amenity Greenspace	Green/Common, Housing greenspace, Large roadside sites, Institutional open space
Sports Grounds	
Allotments and City Farms	
Semi-natural Sites	Ecological sites
Brownfield Land	Derelict/vacant/brownfield, construction site, Operational open space
Cemeteries and Churchyards	
Green Corridors	Green links, Restricted railway, Embankment
Civic Spaces	Civic square, Dock/waterbody, Riverfront

### **Audits**

- 2.33 Audits should be prepared on the basis of a standard pro-forma and incorporate quantitative and qualitative data. Examples of audit forms are included in Appendix A. The use of pre-prepared forms will enable a standardised assessment. Site visits are advised although some information such as the provision of facilities may be held by Parks Departments and can be obtained through a desk top study. Site visits would be needed to address issues of quality.
- 2.34 The amount of information to be collected as part of the audit will be dependent on a number of factors, notably the level of resources and timescale available. It is recommended that Audits should, as a minimum, include the following information:
- open space size, facilities/ features and condition
  - present level use and recreational/ non-recreational roles
  - functions
  - accessibility
  - access and facilities for disabled people.
- 2.35 Reference should be made to published guidelines such as the BT Countryside for All Guidelines, British Standard BS 8300, Sport England Guidelines, the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy and the access audit checklist produced by the Centre for Accessible Environments.
- 2.36 At the minimum all open spaces over 0.4 ha should be included in the audit and sites of less than 0.4 ha should be included at the discretion of the borough especially in areas of deficiency. More detailed audits are recommended to include an assessment of landscape and visual quality and the identification of weaknesses/ constraints and opportunities for enhancement.

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

### ***Assessing the Quality of Open Space***

2.37 It is necessary to consider the quality of open spaces in order to:

- recognise the benefits and value of open space
- ensure a range of different types of open space and facilities is provided
- assist the integration of decision making on priorities for park improvements.

2.38 The assessment of quality should include an assessment of visual and aural quality and the range of facilities available. Quality is partly defined by the needs of local residents and it is important to identify these needs in consultation and incorporate these in the audit of open spaces.

**LB Ealing** has undertaken an audit of parks based on the standards set by the ILAM led and Government endorsed Green Flag Parks Awards scheme. Parks were audited on 21 measures or criteria of quality resulting in scores out of 10. For a park to qualify for the Green Flag Park Award it must score over 65% (or a score of 6.5 in the parks strategy audit). The scores are indicative of quality rather than an absolute measure and other factors such as range of facilities and management issues need to be considered.

### ***Assessing the Recreational Roles of open space***

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

#### *Playing Pitch Audit*

2.40 An audit of playing pitches is required which at the very least:

- identifies particular sports
- differentiates between the public, private and educational sectors and ascertains the availability of school pitches
- identifies pitch availability on different times and days (including the impact of floodlights if appropriate)
- identifies the availability and quality of changing accommodation
- assesses the quality of pitches
- takes account of the availability of safe and adequate car parking and accessibility by public transport
- assesses whether individual pitches have capacity for further use

- considers any constraints on use such as the shortage of changing accommodation, dual use, drainage etc.
- considers whether opportunities for other open space uses have been or could be realised.

2.41 Information on pitches is available from the following sources:

- the Register of English Football Facilities: The Football Foundation is creating a definitive database capable of identifying the quality, quantity and demand for facilities in every part of the country, highlighting hot spots and areas where conditions are inadequate
- the Register of Recreational Land
- local knowledge and records
- questionnaire surveys of existing sports clubs.

*Audit of Play Space for Children*

2.42 The Children’s Play Council is preparing a Guide for Children’s Play Space. It sets out the principles and processes in the development and maintenance of appropriate and sustainable out-door play spaces for children and young people. The Mayor is working with partners to develop a Children’s Play Strategy for London that will include guidelines on assessing and implementing play requirements and standards.

<p><b>Questions to consider in play space audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What already exists for children and young people with differing needs and aspirations?</li> <li>• Do all children and young people have ready access to play spaces appropriate to their age, interests, cultural needs and physical, learning and sensory abilities?</li> <li>• How well is existing space currently used by different groups of children and young people?</li> <li>• What are the reasons behind the ways in which children and young people currently use the spaces?</li> <li>• Where is the existing provision in relation to the children and to where the children, parents and other community members want it to be?</li> <li>• How safe, easy and accessible are the routes between home, school, play spaces and other spaces?</li> <li>• How easily can children and young people travel independently to outdoor play spaces in other areas?</li> <li>• In spaces used by other groups and members of the community, how well is the shared use managed?</li> <li>• Is the environment of the facility such as to provide opportunities for encounters with wildlife and natural landscapes</li> </ul>
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***Assessing the Other Non-Recreational Roles of Open Space***

2.43 Six categories of non-recreational roles of open space were identified in the 1992 LPAC study of Open Space Planning in London undertaken by Llewelyn-Davis: Structural; Amenity; Ecological; Educational; Social; and Cultural. Each of these roles contributes to the quality of open space. In addition to these roles, the draft London Plan recognises the value and

benefits that open spaces have that are associated with health and accessibility. Boroughs may consider other roles important in their area.

#### *Structural / Landscape*

- 2.44 Land designated as Green Belt and MOL performs a structural role in shaping future development and contributing to the character and attractiveness of areas. Individual open spaces form part of a wider network of green spaces. The wider structural role of these spaces must be acknowledged and also be recognised in the protection they are given and in their management. Landscape and visual quality can be assessed at different levels of detail, ranging from an overall impression of quality to a systematic assessment using a checklist.
- 2.45 Assessments of the landscape framework of open spaces will contribute to the study of environmental quality. Areas of different landscape types, including grass areas and trees, can be identified from aerial photographs. These features and topography could be assessed in more detail by on-site surveys. Guidance on undertaking landscape assessments is available in a number of Countryside Agency publications. It is recommended that landscape consultants be used for detailed landscape appraisals unless in-house landscape architects are available.

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

#### *Amenity*

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

#### **Test for assessing the amenity role of open space**

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

*(Llewelyn-Davis, 1992)*

## Ecology

- 2.48 Wildlife sites in London are identified by the Mayor and by the Boroughs with the Mayor's assistance, using the procedures in Appendix 1 of the Biodiversity Strategy. Information on their grading and location is available from the London Biodiversity Records Centre. The GLA Biodiversity Unit should be contacted when considering how to assess nature conservation as part of any Open Space Strategy.

<b>Classification of Nature Conservation Sites in London</b>	
Sites of Metropolitan Importance	140 sites
Sites of Borough Importance: Grade I	315 sites
Grade II	490 sites
Site of Local Importance	480 sites
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Countryside Conservation Areas:	broad areas of traditional landscapes with wildlife value
Green Corridors:	relatively continuous areas often linking sites
Source: Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, July 2002	

- 2.49 The Open Space and Habitat survey for Greater London collects information on a wide range of attributes beyond those methods employed for nature conservation surveys elsewhere and is described in Appendix 4 of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (the survey form is reproduced here as Appendix A3). The whole of London was surveyed in 1984/85 and many boroughs were re-surveyed in subsequent years. The Mayor has decided to implement a rolling programme of surveys over a period of 10 years and it is expected that every borough will have had a recent review of its sites by 2007.
- 2.50 The data from these surveys relate to parcels of land of 0.5 hectares and larger and are held by the GLA and the London Biodiversity Records Centre. The Sites of Nature Conservation Importance for 22 London Boroughs are described in detail in the Handbooks of the, now abolished, London Ecology Unit. Copies of these Handbooks and some subsequent updates are held by the Boroughs and the GLA. Citations are available from the GLA for all Sites of Metropolitan Importance and for the other grades of sites that have been reviewed recently.
- 2.51 Areas deficient in nature conservation sites are defined as built-up areas more than 1 km actual walking distance from an accessible site of Metropolitan or Borough Importance. The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy promotes the removal of deficiencies by improvements to areas not presently reaching the threshold of Borough Importance and providing access or improving accessibility to existing sites.
- 2.52 Information on protected and priority species in London is available from a variety of sources, including local naturalists, the Audit in the London Biodiversity Action Plan, the GLA habitat survey, the individual recorders of the London Natural History Society and the London Biodiversity Records Centre. Much of this information has already been taken into account in identifying the Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

### *Education*

- 2.53 Open spaces can be used by schools for activities, including sports, science, history, ecological and environmental activities. Assessments can be made of which schools visit, the frequency of visits and the range of education activities in each open space. The identification of which open spaces are accessible to schools and their potential education value will identify the range of education opportunities and where these could be improved. It will also identify schools without access to open space. These areas should be given priority for improved access to open space.
- 2.54 Other forms of informal and formal education activities take place in open spaces, including:
- naturalists record species in open spaces
  - walks and talks on the history and wildlife of open spaces
  - interpretation material, e.g. leaflets and information boards illustrate features of the open space.
  - opportunities for practical conservation work by volunteers.

### *Social and Cultural*

- 2.55 Criteria for assessing the social and cultural roles of open space might include:
- the range of age groups using the open space
  - use of the open space by community groups e.g. play schemes, youth clubs, OAP groups, special interest groups
  - use of the open space by ethnic minorities, visitors and tourists
  - are there organised activities e.g. community festivals, fireworks displays, concerts, circuses?
  - does the open space contain cultural, social or community facilities e.g. band stands, community centres, club meeting rooms, cafes and incidental social meeting space e.g. children's play areas and pavilions?
- 2.56 Sites below half a hectare are more likely to provide a social function than a cultural function. The Mayor's forthcoming supplementary planning guidance on the Special Needs of London's Diverse Communities will provide further guidance. The London Parks and Historic Gardens Inventory can provide information on certain sites throughout London covering, history, description, ownership, access and management.

### *Health*

- 2.57 The physical and psychological benefits of open space are increasingly being recognised as providing opportunities for better health through recreation and for their restorative qualities. The British Heart Foundation has been actively involved in the research and marketing of these benefits. An assessment of the health benefits of open space requires an assessment of what facilities exist and how these are used. Facilities with direct health benefits include:
- sports pitches, courts and tracks
  - orienteering and walking trails

- allotments
- green gyms
- sensory environments for the visually and hearing impaired
- dog walking facilities
- organised exercise activities.

2.58 There are other health benefits from less formal uses of open space, such as preventative health and stress relief, including walking and the quiet enjoyment of natural surroundings.

### **Accessibility**

2.59 The accessibility of open space is crucial to ensuring open spaces are used, used appropriately, and used by all those who wish to. There are two aspects of accessibility:

- physical accessibility
- social accessibility.

2.60 Physical accessibility is a prerequisite of social accessibility. The identification of catchment areas will identify how physical access improvements can be made for pedestrians. This could be through the position of entrances or means of overcoming barriers e.g. improved road crossings. Assessments can also be made of the physical accessibility of open spaces by pedestrians and other modes of transport e.g. cycling, public transport and car.

2.61 Social barriers prevent different groups from feeling they can make use of an open space or that it is not a place for them. This may be because they find the environment threatening or not relevant to their needs. Assessments of the level of use and user groups should cover accessibility and safety by age and gender.

### **Facilities for Disabled People**

2.62 Consideration should be given to the quality of access and facilities for disabled people. Specialist organisations should be consulted such as the Fieldfare Trust and The Sensory Trust. The Sensory Trust aims to make connections between people and the natural world and make sure that the opportunities to enjoy landscape and wildlife are open to everyone regardless of age or disability. The Trust provides information on accessible and therapeutic design, runs projects and training courses and highlights sources of advice and good practice.

2.63 Good physical access for disabled and older people should be matched by good quality information, interpretation and site layout. Examples of access action plans that have been implemented include:

- Epping Forest- the Corporation of London were involved in the BT Countryside for All initiative and undertook work on interpretation;
- Hampstead Heath- introduction of mobility scheme whereby disabled people can borrow a scooter to access the Heath;
- Lee Valley Country Park- installation of wheelchair accessible bird hides;
- London Wildlife Trust- installation of sensory garden and trail in Wildlife Garden Centre.

## **Stage 4: Understanding Demands/Needs**

### 2.64 Essential Tasks

- **Compile/ review existing survey information**
- **Identify existing consultative mechanisms available within the borough eg: Residents Panels**
- **Identify existing user groups**
- **Develop realistic consultation strategy which reflects resource availability**
- **Consult with external bodies regarding availability of information on demand eg: Regional Office of Sport England, Football Federation, GreenSpace, Children's Play Council**
- **Consider use of appropriate standards**

2.65 Community engagement at an early stage in strategy preparation can have a number of benefits:

- It will result in **better decision making**- Community stakeholders are a source of local knowledge and experience. It makes good sense to harness the range of information and viewpoints.
- It will result in a sense of **ownership**- When people are engaged in creating and enhancing their environments, a sense of ownership often results in a greater sense of responsibility and decreased likelihood of vandalism and neglect.
- Local people bring additional **resources**- Authorities rarely have the means to solve all the problems of an area. Local people can often bring additional resources that may be crucial to the successful accomplishment of projects and to meeting people's needs and fulfilling their aspirations.

2.66 In order to make best use of available resources, it will be important to develop a consultation strategy and wherever possible to make use of established consultation mechanisms and other consultation initiatives being undertaken by the borough in order to avoid duplication.

### **Approaches to Consultation and User Surveys**

2.67 Any assessment of demand for open space will require an understanding of current usage, preferences and trends and identification of the main users, who is currently excluded and why. User surveys are one method by which demand for open space can be determined. Preparation of an open space strategy should therefore include an assessment of current usage and non-user surveys, such as head counts, levels of use and client group surveys. This can be used as a basis for forecasting demand drawing on needs, changing population and aspirations including changing activities associated with open space. A variety of survey methods may be considered including:

- **Corporate research studies regarding Council services and facilities**- these can include questions on open spaces. A coordinated approach to gathering information prevents survey overload and can link questions and survey techniques to the borough's corporate objectives. A disadvantage of the corporate approach, however, is

that the volume of questions may dictate that only superficial responses will be obtained. The use of opinion polls is becoming standard practice in Boroughs as part of the Best Value Review and can be a useful source of information.

- **Citizens' Panels or Community Forums** – many Boroughs have established panels or forums where representative samples of the community are questioned on a regular basis about a range of service issues.
- **'Listening Days'** – a more informal approach adopted by the London Borough of Newham. Shopping centres across the borough are the venues for Listening Days at which senior Council officers and members discuss issues of concern to residents and visitors.
- **Consultation/ displays in public places**- displays showing existing conditions and proposed strategy/ design alternatives can be used in site visits and field workshops or in places where local people gather, such as shopping areas, employment locations or even carnivals. Questionnaires, personal interviews, interactive displays and street stalls are often incorporated as part of consultation exercises.
- **Personal interviews, surveys and questionnaires**- these techniques may also be used on a more targeted basis, such as directly door-to-door to households and businesses, by direct mail, or on location with users of open space.
- **Discussions, events and briefing workshops** – these could be held with a range of community groups including 'Friends of' groups, residents associations and steering groups and can be helpful in ensuring communication is clear and on-going. These can be simple and easy to organise and can be used to inform groups and people about the strategy; to establish key issues; to get people involved; to build ownership; to identify local talent and potential contributions; and to determine next steps.
- **Educational events**- the engagement of local schools in projects related to open space can assist in understanding the needs and aspirations of children and in developing a sense of shared ownership and responsibility.

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

#### **LB Barking & Dagenham**

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

## Other Relevant Surveys

- 2.69 A socially accessible open space is one that is used by people from the local community of all ages, gender, race, disability etc. Surveys of users will identify who uses open spaces, wider surveys of the local community will identify those groups who do not use all or specific open spaces. These surveys should also identify the social barriers to using open space. In doing on-site surveys, it should be noted that different groups may use the open space on different days and at different times of the day.
- 2.70 The public realm, including open space should be socially-inclusive and socially sustainable. This means that diverse groups of people should feel comfortable meeting and gathering there; in other words, the space should feel accessible socially as well as physically. A wide range of people of different lifestyles, ages and backgrounds should also be able to relate to and identify with the space and to feel some sense of ownership of it and resulting responsibility for it.
- 2.71 The Urban Green Spaces Task Force report concluded that focused initiatives are needed to stop the exclusion experienced by groups such as children, disabled people and black and minority ethnic communities need focused initiatives. These groups should be fully engaged in the preparation of Open Space Strategy and the strategy should specifically address their needs. The views of disabled people are often ignored as they are not given information in accessible formats so lack access to information and consultation methods may inadvertently exclude them. Local access groups are active in many parts of London and are a good way of engaging with disabled people.
- 2.72 A study has been undertaken by the Children's Play Council of children's play behaviour and whether this is reflected in planning policies. It concluded that Planning Officers underestimate children's use and preference for playing in public open space. Planning Officers also overestimate the popularity of equipped play areas. These perceptions are likely, in part, to be a result of the influence on the NPFA standards on planning policies. These findings support the need to consult with all potential open space users to identify their needs and preferences.
- 2.73 Further information on planning for children's outdoor play needs is available from London Play and the Children's Play Council. Mapping where children play is needed to inform any strategies that seek to improve children's play provisions. This must consider the aspirations and needs of children and young people and identify factors that threaten or inhibit the use, development and maintenance of outdoor play facilities.
- 2.74 Consideration should be given to the particular needs of disabled children. Consultation should be undertaken with relevant organisations which promote play for disabled children, such as Kidsactive. Assessing children's open space needs can be achieved through play questionnaires, play diaries and school projects. The Children's Play Council also recommends that play impact assessments be undertaken to assess the implications of changes to open space for children.

### Minimum Questions for a Simple Play Impact Assessment:

Do children and young people use this location now?

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>YES</b> | Which children and young people use the space?<br>What will they do if the nature of the space changes?<br>What do they think about the proposed changes to the space? |
| <b>NO</b>  | Why do children and Young people not use the space?<br>Would they want to use the space if it changed?<br>What do they think about the proposed changes to the space?  |

## Using Standards

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

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

2.76 A desk top study can be undertaken to assess demand based on the application of appropriate standards. It is important, however, to recognise the limitations on the use of standards and to treat them as a yardstick or basis for comparison. More detailed assessments of particular types of open space, such as playing pitches, can form part of the Strategy or be done as a sub-strategy. These may include in appropriate circumstances the following standards to determine demand for sports pitches and play facilities;

- **National Playing Field Standard** – the standard of 2.43 hectares (6 acres) of outdoor playing/ recreational space per 1000 population is for many Boroughs an unattainable target but can assist in strategic open space planning for children’s play and active recreation. Although the adoption of the NPFA standard is not an adequate long term solution, the adoption of that part of the NPFA standard which relates to team pitch sports is recommended as an interim measure and the first stage of preparing a local assessment. The current standard is broken down between provision for youth and adult use (1.68-1.8 ha per 1000 population) and children’s play (0.2-0.3 ha outdoor equipped playgrounds and 0.4-0.5 ha informal play space/ 1000 population). This standard can provide a useful yardstick for determining the level of open space provision in new development schemes.
- **Team Generation Rates**- an improvement to the basic methodology is the application of ‘team generation rates’ to the local population structure. The team generation rate is the number of males/ females it takes within a specified section of the population to generate one team for a given sport. This method is more refined than the NPFA standard as it can reflect the demographic profile of the area to which it is applied. The drawback is the relative lack of availability of suitable rates.

- **Detailed assessment using Sport England’s methodology-** this method is set out in The Playing Pitch Strategy and its aim is to determine the number of pitches required for each activity to meet demand. The results can be used to reflect the existing situation, assess the adequacy of provision or predict a future situation. There is a staged approach to demand assessment;
  1. identifying teams/ team equivalents
  2. calculating home games per team per week
  3. assessing total home games per team per week
  4. establishing temporal demand for games
  5. defining pitches used/ required on each day
  6. establishing pitches available.
- **Green Ratios-** the supply of all green space can be related to a borough or Ward. A low green ratio could be used in defence of the loss of open space to development.
- **Site of Nature Conservation Importance-** criteria used to identify sites of importance and identifies areas of deficiency, providing a minimum standard for local provision.
- **English Nature’s Accessible Natural Greenspace-** standards developed for application across open space hierarchy and for statutory Local Nature Reserves and can assist in making comparisons between different areas.
- **Children’s play areas-** Table 5 sets out standards that can be applied to assess demand as set out by the National Playing Fields Association.

**Table 5: Standards to assess the demand for children’s play areas**

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

Source: National Playing Fields Association

## **Stage 5: Analysis and Identification of Objectives**

### **2.77 Essential Tasks**

- **Analysis of Supply and Demand**
- **Identification of themes, aims and objectives**
- **Identification of open spaces to be protected**
- **Identification of Priority Areas of Deficiency**
- **Identification of opportunities for addressing deficiencies**
- **Identification of Priority Open Spaces for improvements**

### **Analysis**

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

### **Aims and Objectives**

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

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

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

## Protection

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

## Deficiencies

- 2.82 The Open Space Hierarchy in Table 3 should be used as a benchmark for considering open space deficiency of publicly accessible open space to ensure consistency across London. In order to assess the significance of deficiencies, and to identify priorities for action, it is recommended that key census indicators of sensitivity to open space deficiency identified in Stage 2 should be applied. These indicators should include areas with a high percentage of: children aged 0-15; retired people without access to a private car; and flats.
- 2.83 Improvements to the accessibility of open spaces would also have a positive impact and enable more people to use these spaces. Additional access points can considerably extend the catchment areas of open spaces where there are few or inappropriately located entrance points. Crossing points over busy roads and other barriers would also improve accessibility.
- 2.84 Providing access to private open space is often more achievable than the creation of new public open spaces. School playing fields and private recreation grounds are examples of private open space where a degree of public access could be achieved.

### Comparing supply and demand for children's play space

- Identify where children and young people's outdoor space needs are currently being met
- Identify where children and young people's outdoor play space needs are not currently being met and the implications of this
- Identify deficiencies in access for disabled children
- Establish what works now
- Identify problems with the existing provision
- Identify gaps in existing provision
- Check that children and young people with a wide range of needs and abilities will find any new developments both attractive and accessible.

- 2.85 On this basis, those areas where open space deficiencies are most significant and which require priority consideration can be highlighted. Particular consideration should be given to ways of increasing provision of public open space in areas of deficiency. These could include:
- **increasing amount of publicly accessible open space**:- the amount of open space could be increased by securing public access to a private space in or near an area of deficiency or the provision of new areas of open space, for example as a requirement of new development schemes

- **improving access to local parks-** improving access through areas which previously created barriers (for example, opening additional park entrances) can increase the accessibility to local facilities
- **avoiding the loss of open space in the neighbourhood-** this could be achieved by protecting a site from development or by a partnership agreement with the landowner
- **providing additional facilities-** for example, nature conservation potential could be realised and the provision of shared play facilities could be considered in areas of deficiency.

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

- Wards with a high % children aged 0-15
- Wards with a high % retired people without access to a car
- Wards with a high % households without cars
- Wards with a high % flats

## Prioritising

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

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

- Deficiency in play provision
- Park deficiency as defined in UDP
- Nature conservation deficiency
- Parks Audit Score
- Playground Audit Score
- Deprived area in line with Multiple Deprivation Indicators
- Funding available to undertake improvements
- Is it a key Park
- Community involvement/ usage
- Potential sports centre of excellence

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

## ***Stage 6: Preparation of Strategy and Action Plan***

### **2.87 Essential Tasks**

- **Preparation of Statement of Purpose**
- **Preparation of Action Plan**
- **Consultation on Draft Strategy**

2.88 The strategy should include a framework for the future planning and management of open spaces which encompasses such issues as delivery, funding, management, safety and partnership working. The adoption of the strategy will provide the framework for the delivery of aims and objectives through the establishment of targets and mechanisms for review based on local performance indicators. The Open Space Strategy should set out:

- Statement of Purpose (vision and rationale)
- National and regional context
- Local context (including local needs)
- Identification of Key issues and analysis
- Action Plan

### **Action Plans**

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

- develop the vision into policies and goals
- identify a set of actions, initiatives, timescales and delivery agents in order to achieve the policies and goals
- establish means of assessment and targets for these actions and initiatives, how these will be monitored and if necessary, how they will be adjusted in the light of actual performance and changing circumstances
- indicate implementation and sources of funding.

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

### **Consultation**

2.91 The Draft Open Space Strategy should be the subject of consultation with the following:

- GLA
- adjacent boroughs
- organisations involved in open space eg: Sport England, Countryside Agency, Environment Agency

- major open space owners/ managers eg: Commons Conservators, Utilities Companies, London Wildlife Trust
- voluntary organisations
- community groups
- general public
- local schools.

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

### **3 Implementation and Delivery of the Strategy**

#### **Planning Policy**

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

#### **Development Briefs/ Frameworks/ Masterplans**

- 3.3 The preparation of Development Briefs or development guidelines in respect of major development sites can provide an effective mechanism for securing new open space provision and improving the quality and facilities of existing open space. These could be adopted as supplementary planning guidance.
- 3.4 Comprehensive redevelopment provides opportunities to create better located and higher quality open space incorporating more innovative approaches to such things as the use of roof spaces as gardens or green roofs, high quality hard landscapes, sustainable urban drainage systems, flood mitigation areas, woody planting and acoustic design measures.
- 3.5 Development briefs should provide information on the level and type of open space provision and facilities required based on the Open Space Strategy. Particular consideration should be given to the quantity and quality of space provided, linkages to the surrounding area, the creation of networks of open space and the creation of a range of open spaces to meet the varied needs of the community. Design guidelines could be provided on the creation of new open spaces and play areas.

## **Developer Agreements**

- 3.6 A source of capital funding for the creation of new open space and for improvements to existing provision, such as better maintenance and facilities is developer contributions via Section 106 type agreements. Agreements can secure both capital and revenue funding to provide for the future maintenance of open space. Boroughs should develop a broad strategy for the use and negotiation of Section 106 agreements.
- 3.7 Planning obligations can take a number of different forms depending on the size, location and type of development proposed. Consideration should be given to the following:
- commuted capital and revenue payments in lieu of direct provision where development sites are small and fragmented
  - endowments to obtain funds for the long term management and maintenance of new/improved public open space
  - to achieve on-site provision
  - for feasibility studies
  - for specific improvement projects e.g. improving access for disabled people.
- 3.8 The potential for increasing private sector financial contributions to open space enhancements should be fully explored and the implications of changes in existing legislation for open space provision and improvements monitored. One mechanism is to link public realm improvements to enhanced property values through local partnership arrangements. Another approach could be the development of commercial activities such as retail or catering operations within public open space where these are likely to contribute to meeting user needs and add to the attractiveness of the open space. Business Improvement Districts provide further opportunities.

## **Community Involvement and Partnership Working**

- 3.9 The creation of partnerships and increased community involvement in the use and management of facilities can assist in project implementation. Maximum use should be made of community resources in the design, implementation, monitoring and operating phases of all forms of open space and enhancement projects. Different contexts will require different solutions but 'Friends' groups, special interest groups and sports clubs will be useful starting points.
- 3.10 There is a vast range of methods that can be used to engage communities in the planning, designing, creating, maintaining and managing of open spaces. It is important to adapt the techniques to the needs and aspirations of the different preferences, backgrounds and ages of people in the community. Techniques range from Planning for Real exercises, involving 3-D models, and exhibitions to less resource intensive techniques such as newsletters and meetings with Friends of Groups. Several techniques should normally be used to ensure a wide range of people have an opportunity to participate.
- 3.11 Artwork, logo design, and park and garden naming competitions/projects with children and young people are all good ways to stimulate creative thinking and to generate interest and ownership. Art workshops engage people in designing and constructing artworks to improve their local environments. The artwork can be an end in itself or incorporated into a wider

regeneration initiative. Community arts projects are particularly useful with young people to enable them to express their creativity, build confidence, develop skills, and develop a sense of identity and community pride.

- 3.12 Discussions, events and briefing workshops with a range of community groups including 'Friends of' groups, residents associations and steering groups are helpful in ensuring communication is clear and on-going. These can be simple and easy to organise and can be used to inform groups and people about planned projects; to establish key issues for planning a project; to get people involved; to build ownership; to identify local talent and potential contributions; and to determine next steps. Celebration events can be a great way to launch the project, to build social networks, and to remind people of their progress and the rewards of getting involved. Consideration should be given to the use of local access groups in conducting access audits.
- 3.13 It is critical that the techniques for promoting community involvement are understood to be part of a fuller process of meaningful community engagement. Applying techniques in isolation or haphazardly can raise unrealistic expectations, especially by asking people to state what they want rather than to have them express their views of a problem or aspects of areas that need to be changed. In addition, the post-consultation process is essential in order to analyse the results of a community involvement process, to generate options and to work with communities to prioritise and agree preferences.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Planning for Real ©

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

## Funding

- 3.14 The Open Space Strategy will provide the detailed framework for supporting funding applications and implementing the Action Plan. To be successful, implementation of projects and actions will require a co-operative approach. There are a number of external sources of funding that are available for the creation and improvement of open space. It is more difficult to attract revenue funding than capital funding, often resulting in the deterioration of open spaces despite good initial investment. However, the acquisition of any funding often requires imaginative approaches. Flexibility is also needed to respond to the constantly changing array of funding sources and their different criteria.
- 3.15 Potential funding sources currently available may be summarised as follows. It will, however, be essential to keep up to date with changes in funding opportunities, criteria for eligibility and potential partnerships.
- **Liveability Fund:** The Government's *Sustainable Communities: building for the future* (February, 2003) announced a total of £201 million to improve the local environment over the next three years, of which:
    - £89 million Liveability Fund for projects to improve parks and public spaces;
    - £41 million to promote high quality, design and management through CABI Space, to develop standards and targets, provide enabling support to local authorities in producing strategies and expand Green Flag partnerships;
    - £40 million for Groundwork for new projects and a 'community enabler scheme'.
  - **Regeneration programmes:** Regeneration is supported in the 88 most deprived local authority districts through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. In addition, communities in the most deprived districts will receive funding to help them participate in Local Strategic partnerships through the Community Empowerment Fund. Community Chests will fund small grant schemes to enable communities to run their own projects.
  - **European Union:** European Funding through EC LIFE which seeks to integrate environmental considerations into land use planning is a potential source of funding.
  - **Lottery Funding:** The *New Opportunities Fund: Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities* fund is aimed at projects which will improve the quality of life for individuals and communities, promote social inclusion, encourage community involvement and compliment and enhance relevant national, regional and local

strategies. The remaining three lottery streams of heritage, arts and sports will provide potential opportunities for heritage, arts and sports related projects.

- **Royal Society for Nature Conservation (RSNC):** The RSNC is the lead partner in a consortium to deliver the **SEED programme**. Grants of up to £100,000 can be awarded to projects including environmental education and sustainable transport projects.
- **The Countryside Agency:** The **Doorstep Greens Scheme** will help 200 communities to create their own new green spaces or to transform old ones to meet their needs. Grants of over £10,000 will be considered.
- **Banardo's and The Children's Play Council:** The **Better Play** scheme will allow grants to be awarded to children's play projects that are distinctive and innovative and applications are invited from organisations wishing to develop local play strategies. Grants can range from £2000 to £100,000.
- **BTCV:** The **People Places Programme** is in partnership with English Nature and supported by Rio Tinto. The objective is to support the creation and renovation of green spaces. Projects involving the local community are encouraged. BTCV offers guidance and training alongside the grant awards.
- **English Nature:** The **Wildspace Scheme** will involve local communities in the improvement, care and enjoyment of the local environment. Applications are invited from organisations involved in or interested in managing and developing Local Nature Reserves particularly in disadvantaged areas that lack access to natural open spaces. Grants are available for project costs, the employment of the community and for the purchase of land.
- **Sport England - Umbrella Scheme:** The **Playing Fields and Community Green Spaces Scheme** encourages projects that help communities to gain access to playing fields, green space, school playgrounds and community play areas. Playing fields and green spaces will be improved and protected with support from a variety of private and public sector partners/ organizations. Schools will be offered funding for playgrounds in partnership with learning through landscape. Community care projects for children and young people will be supported.
- **Sustrans- Umbrella Scheme:** The Green Routes, Safe Routes Scheme will seek to deliver sustainable transport projects. It will seek to produce social, economic and environmental benefits through the creation of green corridors, safe routes to school and home zones.

### ***Other Agencies and Organisations***

- 3.16 There are a range of other organisations and agencies that can provide funding, including Sport England (non-Lottery) and the Football Foundation. Voluntary organizations/ charitable trusts have an important role to play in open space provision and management eg: Wetland Centre, Barnes.
- 3.17 In addition to developer agreements, the private sector, from larger multinational businesses to independent neighbourhood retail shops, has demonstrated its willingness to fund and support projects, either on a one-off basis, or through a longer term involvement with a particular programme or area.

3.18 Individual members of the community and community groups themselves are often an important source of 'funding' - either through modest financial contributions to a local project, or through working on an 'in-kind' basis which is often critical in demonstrating the level of community support and involvement to other funding organisations. Of course, this level of community support, whether financially or in-kind, is an indication of the level of interest in the project and needs to be seen in a much wider context of community engagement and sustainability. 10% of recent open space projects in London have been implemented through community initiatives eg: Groundwork Trust.

### **Innovative Approaches to Creating and Enhancing Open Space**

3.19 Boroughs should consider innovative approaches to the creation and enhancement of open spaces. This will involve creative approaches to funding and to the use of land. A number of schemes in London demonstrate interesting features or management approaches. The following examples demonstrate how benefits can be achieved through the application of a comprehensive strategy:

- **St. Paul's Green, Hammersmith-** a town centre park was created, in part, by incorporating a temporary car park beneath the Hammersmith Flyover. The need for a town centre park was identified in the UDP and as a result S106 funding could be used from appropriate development proposals in the area. This project demonstrates the possibility of developing open space in the least promising environments and the benefit of long term strategic planning;
- **Holmewood Road Home Zone Project, Lambeth-** illustrates how access to existing open space can be improved and small additional play areas created by using surplus road space;
- **Bedfont Lakes Country Park, Hounslow-** a new country park on a former gravel workings and landfill site. It was funded entirely by a developer agreement which formed part of the strategic development of a large rundown area.
- **Mile End Park, Tower Hamlets-** the construction of a landscaped bridge joining two sections of open space and providing cycle track and footpaths. The scheme demonstrates new approaches to park management and elements of self-financing;
- **River Wall and Walk, Southwark-** a new 4 metre wide promenade cantilevered over the Thames. The walk links with other open space improvements in the area and whilst not overcoming open space deficiencies will serve to help ameliorate their impact;
- **Aberfeldy Millennium Green, Tower Hamlets-** involves the transformation of a rundown housing amenity area into an attractive public open space through the creation of new landscaped gardens, informal performance and play spaces and a water feature;
- **The Wetlands Centre, Barnes-** developed via Section 106 contributions from disused water supply reservoirs on MOL and now attracts London's best range of birdlife and is a major visitor attraction and educational resource;
- **Riverview Walk, Bell Green, Lewisham-** an unattractive concrete channelled river was replaced with an attractive meandering watercourse using funding from developer contributions. This has improved the quality of the environment, provided a central feature to the open space and increased the biodiversity of the area;

- **25 Cannon Street and Newspaper Square, City-** were formerly unattractive private courtyards within post-war office developments. These were transformed into attractive landscaped pocket parks;
- **Wandle Nature Reserve, Colliers Wood-** used the natural colonising vegetation of a disused sewage works as the core of its landscaping, providing a rich variety of habitats and retaining an area of local open space through a planning agreement;
- **Royal Northern Park, Islington-** a good example of community involvement in the design and implementation of proposals for the creation of new open space and the use of Section 106 funding for a feasibility study.

## 4 Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 The progress and ultimate delivery of any strategy must be measurable in relation to a range of indicators. It will be necessary to assess whether the direction and focus of the strategy requires modification, whether it is achieving its objectives and whether targets are still relevant. It will be necessary to consider:
- achievements – quantity and quality
  - target dates
  - costs
  - measurable outcomes
  - progress review dates.
- 4.2 Performance indicators could include:
- cost/ efficiency
  - fair access
  - usage by target groups
  - satisfaction ratings
  - awareness of opportunities
  - community involvement
  - inclusive access.
- 4.3 In addition, there are a range of nationally recognised performance indicators provided by the audit commission that can be applied to open spaces including:
- % of borough's open spaces that are credited with a Green Flag Award
  - the number of playgrounds and play areas provided by the council per 1000 children under 12
  - the number of sports pitches available to the public per 1000 population
  - total net spending per head of population on open spaces.
- 4.4 Local performance indicators will include:
- survey of park users
  - completion and implementation of parks management plans
  - Mayor's State of the Environment Report for London
  - Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy targets.
- 4.5 Action Plans should be subject to annual review and it is recommended that the Open Space Strategy should be reviewed every 5 years. The need to review will also depend on whether there are any significant changes in the borough and any changes linked to strategies such as the review of a UDP.

## Useful Contacts

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1 Kennington Road  
London SE1 7QP  
Tel. 020 7922 1230

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers  
36 St Mary's Street  
Wallingford  
Oxfordshire OX10 0EU  
Tel: 01491 821600

London Wildlife Trust  
(London Biodiversity Records Centre)  
Harlington House  
Great Suffolk Street  
London SE1 0BS  
Tel: 020 7261 0447

GreenSpace (formerly Urban Parks Forum)  
Caversham Court  
Church Road  
Caversham RG4 7AD  
Tel. 0118 901 5270

London Parks & Green Space Forum  
Greater London Authority  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA

CABE Space  
The Tower Building  
11 York Road  
London SE1 7NX  
Tel: 020 7960 2400

London Parks & Gardens Trust  
Duck Island Cottage  
St James's park  
London SW1A 2BJ  
Tel: 020 7839 3969

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

Sport England  
16 Upper Woburn Street  
London WC1H 0PQ  
Tel: 020 7273 1500

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management  
ILAM House  
Lower Basildon  
Reading  
Berks RG8 9NE  
Tel. 0870 845 8475

Children's Play Council  
8 Wakley Street  
London EC1V 7QE  
Tel. 020 7843 6016

London Play  
Units F6-F7  
89-93 Fonthill Road  
London N4 3JH  
Tel. 020 7272 2464

English Heritage  
23 Savile Row  
London W1X 1AB  
Tel. 020 7073 3000

English Nature  
Ormond House  
26/27 Boswell Street  
London WC1N 3JZ  
Tel. 01733 455000

Environment Agency  
Kings Meadow House  
Kings Meadow Road  
Reading RG1 8DG  
Tel. 0845 9333111

Countryside Agency  
Dacre House  
19 Dacre Street  
London SW1H 0DH  
Tel. 020 7340 2900

Forestry Commission  
231 Corstorphine Road  
Edinburgh EH12 7AT  
Tel. 0131 334 0303

Civic Trust  
17 Carlton House Terrace  
London SW1Y 9BU  
Tel. 0207 930 9730

National Playing Fields Association  
Stamley House  
St Chad's Place  
London WC1X 9HH  
Tel. 020 7833 5360

London Playing Fields Association  
Fraser House  
29 Albermarke Street  
London W1X 3FA

Football Foundation  
The Football Foundation  
25 Soho Square  
London W1D 4FF  
Tel. 020 7534 4210

Garden History Society  
77 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6BP  
Tel. 0207 608 2409

Open Space Society  
25s Bell Street  
Henley on Thames  
Oxfordshire RG9 2BA  
Tel. 01491 573535

Community Initiatives Partnership  
Feltham Airpark Leisure Centre  
Uxbridge Road  
Hanworth  
Middx TW13 5EG

Trees for London  
Prince Consort Lodge  
Kennington Park Place  
London SE11 4AS  
Tel. 020 7587 1320

Centre for Accessible Environments  
Nutmeg House  
60 Gainsford Street  
London SE1 2NY  
Tel. 020 7357 8182

London Sports Forum for Disabled People  
Ground Floor, Leroy House  
436 Essex Road  
London N1 3QP  
Tel. 020 7354 8666

Tree Council  
51 Catherone Place  
London SW1E 6DY  
0207 250 3857

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
South East Office  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Frederick House  
42 Frederick Place  
Brighton BN1 1AT  
Tel. 012273 775333

Lee Valley Regional Park  
Middleton House  
Bulls Cross  
Enfield EN2 9HG

Thames Chase Community Forest  
The Forest Centre  
Broadfields Farm  
Pike Lane  
Upminster RM14 3NS

The Royal Parks Agency  
The Old Police House  
Hyde Park  
London W2 2UH

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

GLAD (London Disability Associations)  
336 Brixton Road  
London SW9 7AA  
Tel. 020 7346 5800

The National Trust  
36 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AS  
Tel. 0207 222 9251

British Waterways  
The Locks  
Hillmorton, Rugby  
Warwickshire CV21 4PP  
Tel. 01788 570625

Field Fare Trust  
67a The Wicker  
Sheffield S3 8HT  
Tel. 01742 701 668

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## Appendix A: Examples of Survey Forms

## A1. LPAC Survey Form

<b>1 Site</b>	__ / __ __	<b>14 Sporting Facilities</b>	
<b>2 Site Name</b>		Cricket Pitch	Other Pitches
<b>3 Grid Reference (6 fig)</b>		Athletics Track	Tennis
<b>4 Size</b>	Ha	Fishing	Horse Riding
<b>5 Physical Character</b>		Outdoor Paddling Pool	Water Sports (Exc. Swimming)
Natural Heath / Common / Woodland	Water Agriculture / Horticulture	Changing Rooms	Outdoor Swimming Pool
Formal/Landscaped Park		Cycling	Bowls
<b>6 Typology</b>		Motor Cross	BMX Track
Park	Play Space	Golf Course	Driving Range
Parkland	Other Recreation	All Weather Surfaces	Floodlit Surfaces
Common	Nature Conservation	Other (Specify Below)	Pitch & Put / Crazy Golf
Green (village)	Rough Pasture	<b>15 Maintenance</b>	
Cemetery	Nursery/Horticulture	Good	Poor
Allotment	Agriculture	Satisfactory	
Woodland	Golf Course	<b>16 Vandalism</b>	
Recreation Ground	Reservoir/Water Body	None	Considerable
Playing Field	Equestrian Centre	Some	
Other (specify)		<b>17 Intrusion</b>	
<b>7 Predominant Use</b>		Aircraft Noise	Road/Rail Noise
Active Recreation	No Recreational Use	Buildings/Structures	Boundary Treatments
Passive Recreation		Other (Specify)	None
<b>8 Ownership</b>		<b>18 Visual Quality</b>	
Local Authority	Health	Very Attractive	Unattractive
Government/Crown	Education	Attractive	Very Unattractive
Private	Voluntary Organisation	Neutral	
<b>9 Access Arrangements</b>		<b>19 Notes</b>	
Open Access to Public	No Access to Public		
Limited Access to Public			
<b>10 Points of Access/ Entry Points (indicate on map)</b>			
Open Access	If Limited Access Specify		
Combined Access	Number.....		
<b>11 Accessibility By Mode</b>			
Pedestrian (0-2).....	Public Transport (0-2).....		
Cycle (0-2).....	Private Car (0-2).....		
<b>12 UDP Designation</b>			
Metropolitan Open Land	Green Belt		
Nature Conservation (e.g. Nature Reserve / SSSI)	No Open Space Designation		
Other Protected Space (Specify)			
<b>13 General Facilities</b>			
Play Equipment	Nature Trails		
Under 7's	Animal/Bird Enclosure		
7-13	Historical Features		
Over 13's	Art Gallery		
Operational Toilets	Sculptures/Monuments		
Refreshments	Cycle Paths		
Seats	Dog Litter Bins/Area		
Facilities For Disabled People	Recycling Facilities		
Litter Bins	Information		
Car Parking	Other (Specify)	<b>NAME:</b>	
		<b>DATE OF SURVEY:</b>	
		<b>WEATHER:</b>	

## A2. Merton Open Space Survey



### MERTON OPEN SPACE STUDY



Q1. Date of Survey	<input type="text"/>	Q6. Grid Reference	<input type="text"/>
Q2. Local Reference No.	<input type="text"/>	Q7. Ward	<input type="text"/>
Q3. Unique ID No.	<input type="text"/>	Q8. Size (ha)	<input type="text"/>
Q4. Name of open space	<input type="text"/>	Q9. Photo number	<input type="text"/>
Q5. Location / Address	<input type="text"/>	Q10. Direction of view	<input type="text"/>
		Q11. Weather conditions	Wet <input type="checkbox"/> Dry <input type="checkbox"/> Windy <input type="checkbox"/> Snow <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny <input type="checkbox"/> Overcast <input type="checkbox"/>

Q12. Type of open space (Tick one)

- Regional Park
- Metropolitan Park
- District Park
- Local Park
- Small Local Park and Open Space
- Linear Open Space
- Playing Fields / Sports Grounds
- School Playing Field
- Allotments
- Sites of wildlife value
- Playgrounds in housing areas
- Amenity areas in housing estates
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Hospital grounds
- Railway / road embankments

Q13. Who owns the open space? (Tick one)

- Common Land
- LBM / Public
- Private
- Joint ownership
- Owner

Q14. What access arrangements exist? (Tick one)

- General public access
- De facto public access
- Restricted access (eg. to clubs)
- No access (eg. for safety reasons)
- Shared use
- Other

Q15. Does the open space have a significant amenity value?   
(Tick if you have ticked for any of the following criteria)

CRITERIA

- Is it visible from parts of the surrounding area?
- Is it visually attractive?
- Does it have a clearly definable townscape value?
- Does it provide relief from the built-up area?
- Is there potential for enhancement and would this contribute to the regeneration of the areas?

Q16. Does any part of the open space have a significant ecological value?   
(Tick if you have ticked for any of the following criteria)

CRITERIA

- Is it a local nature reserve?
- Is it a SSSI?
- Is it a non-statutory nature reserve?
- Is it a site of importance for nature conservation?
- Is it classified by the LEU as metropolitan?
- Is it classified by the LEU as Borough (Grade 1)?
- Is it classified by the LEU as Borough (Grade 2)?
- Is it classified by the LEU as being of local importance?
- Is it classified by the LEU as a nature conservation walk?
- Is the site part of a green corridor?
- Does it seem that the site has ecological value and would justify further investigation?

Q17. Does the open space have an educational role?   
(Tick if you have ticked for any of the following criteria)

- Is it likely to be used for environmental education or other education purposes?
- If, yes, please specify (eg. adjacent / accessible schools, features of environmental study relevance)

Q18. Does the open space fulfil a cultural role?   
(Tick if you have ticked for any of the following criteria)

- It is used for regular cultural events (eg. carnivals, fairs, fireworks)

Q26A. Is there signage to the open space?

Q26B. Is there signage within the open space?

Q27. What is the condition of the following?   
(Tick one box for each area)

	Good	Fair	Poor
Park overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Built structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Railings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drives and paths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog litter bins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q28a. Is vandalism an obvious problem?

Q28b. Is graffiti an obvious problem?

Q29. Which of the following best describe the physical character of the open space?

	%
Natural heathland / downland / common	<input type="text"/>
Natural woodland	<input type="text"/>
Formal planted park, with trees and shrubs	<input type="text"/>
Informal Grassland	<input type="text"/>
Recreational grassland	<input type="text"/>
Agricultural land	<input type="text"/>
Hard playing surface	<input type="text"/>
Water area (lakes / marshes etc)	<input type="text"/>
Derelict / wasteland	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

Q30. How would you describe the condition of the open space? (percentage)

	None	Good	Fair	Poor
Trees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shrubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flowers and bedding plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water features	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q31. How would you describe the topography and landform?

Undulating

Gently sloping

Steep

Flat

Embankment

Other

Q32a. Is it in a floodplain?

1:50 year  1:100 year

Q32b. How would you describe the drainage?

River

Stream

Pond

Lake

Reservoir

Water features

Man made drainage

Q33. How would you describe the aesthetic factors / pattern?

Balance

Harmonious

Discordant  Chaotic

Scale

Intimate  Small

Medium  Large

Enclosure

Confined  Enclosed

Open  Exposed

Colour

Monochrome  Muted

Colourful  Garish

Diversity

Uniform  Simple

Diverse  Complex

Movement

Through  Active

Within:  Passive

Unity

Unified  Interrupted

Fragmented  Chaotic

Form

Straight  Angular

Curved  Sinuous

Security

Comfortable  Safe

Unsettling  Threatening

Stimulus

Boring  Bland

Interesting  Invigorating

Pleasure

Offensive  Unpleasant

Pleasant  Beautiful

Q34. How would you describe the other senses?

Sounds

Intrusive / Dominant  Unpleasant

Pleasant  Quiet

Smells

Unpleasant  Pleasant

None

Source

A3. Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy Form

Site & parcel no. _____ / _____		Grid ref. _____
Site name _____		Surveyor/s _____
Parcel name _____		Borough _____
Location _____		Area _____ ha/m <sup>2</sup>
Owner / Manager _____		Date _____
Access / view from _____		Time spent _____ hrs _____ mns
Permission to enter from _____		Weather _____
Species richness: <input type="checkbox"/> poor <input type="checkbox"/> poor/ave. <input type="checkbox"/> ave. <input type="checkbox"/> ave./rich <input type="checkbox"/> rich <input type="checkbox"/> not known		Access gained to <input type="checkbox"/> all <input type="checkbox"/> part <input type="checkbox"/> none

---

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

---

<input type="checkbox"/> Treeline w/out hedge <input type="checkbox"/> hedge w/treeline <input type="checkbox"/> even-aged plantation <input type="checkbox"/> ancient woodland <input type="checkbox"/> coppice <input type="checkbox"/> dead wood <input type="checkbox"/> pollarded <input type="checkbox"/> flush <input type="checkbox"/> wet wood shrub layer %	<input type="checkbox"/> grazed <input type="checkbox"/> frequently mown <input type="checkbox"/> infrequently mown cuttings removed Y/N <input type="checkbox"/> unmanaged grassland <input type="checkbox"/> ridge & furrow <input type="checkbox"/> flush <input type="checkbox"/> wet <input type="checkbox"/> sand/clay bank	<input type="checkbox"/> floating vegetation <input type="checkbox"/> submerged vegetation <input type="checkbox"/> emergent vegetation <input type="checkbox"/> saline <input type="checkbox"/> tidal <input type="checkbox"/> naturally formed river bank <b>trophic status:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> eu- <input type="checkbox"/> meso- <input type="checkbox"/> oligo- <input type="checkbox"/> dys-
--	--	---

---

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

Site and parcel no:

date:

**Land use**

- Park
- Common
- Village green
- Town square
- Recreation ground
- Playing fields
- Golf course
- Play space
- Other recreational
- Educational
- River
- Reservoir
- Canal
- Disused quarry/gravel pit
- Railway cutting
- Railway embankment
- Disused railway trackbed
- Road island/verge
- Hospital
- Churchyard/cemetery
- Nature reserve
- Landscaping around premises
- Back garden land
- Allotment
- Agriculture
- Nursery/horticulture
- Equestrian centre
- Sewage/water works
- Land reclamation
- Vacant land
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Planning Status**

- SSSI
- LNR
- SINC or equivalent
- Green corridor
- Green chain
- MOL
- Green Belt
- Other protected open space specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- No open space designation

**Ownership**

- Local Authority
- Government/Crown
- Health
- Education
- Religious \_\_\_\_\_
- Voluntary organisation
- Railtrack
- LRT
- British Gas
- Water company
- Other private

**Public access**

- Free
- De facto
- Restricted (describe restrictions): \_\_\_\_\_
- Wheelchair
- None

**Entry points**

- Open access (whole/part of site)
- Limited entry points
- Whole parcel surrounded by accessible open space

**Accessibility by mode (score 0-2)**

- Pedestrian
- Public transport
- Cycle
- Private car

**Nature conservation value (surveyor's personal view)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Potential for enhancement**

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Amenity \_\_\_\_\_

Nature Conservation \_\_\_\_\_

**Threats and disturbances (give details of severity etc)**

Invading plants \_\_\_\_\_

Pollution \_\_\_\_\_

Tipping \_\_\_\_\_

Motorcycle scrambling \_\_\_\_\_

Erosion \_\_\_\_\_

Vandalism \_\_\_\_\_

Aircraft noise \_\_\_\_\_

Road/rail noise \_\_\_\_\_

Intrusive buildings \_\_\_\_\_

Unsympathetic boundary treatment \_\_\_\_\_

Redevelopment \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Safety/security \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Change since last survey**

No apparent change since last survey

Not previously surveyed:  Part  All

Significant \_\_\_\_\_

Minor \_\_\_\_\_

Error in last survey \_\_\_\_\_

**Geology, topography, aspect, drainage and soil** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Contacts/Others' information/History and succession**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Interest**

- Invertebrate
- Fish
- Amphibian
- Reptile
- Mammal
- Bird
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Higher plant
- Bryophyte
- Lichen
- Fungi
- Physiography
- History
- Landscape

**Predominant recreational use**

- Active
- Passive
- None

**Level of use**

- Not or hardly used
- Used by moderate numbers
- Frequent use by large numbers

**Maintenance**

- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor

**Facilities**

- Play equipment:  under 7s  7-13  over 13's
- Operational toilet
- Seats
- Litter bins
- Refreshments
- Facils for disabled
- Car parking
- Nature trails
- Historical features
- Animal/bird enc.
- Art gallery
- Sculptures/monum.
- Recycling facilities
- Dog litter bins/areas
- Information
- Changing rooms
- Cycle paths
- Golf course
- Tennis
- Water sports
- Bowls
- Driving range
- BMX track
- Motor cross
- Fishing
- Athletics track
- Cricket pitch
- Other pitches
- Horse riding
- Outdoor paddling pool
- Pitch & putt/crazy golf
- Outdoor swimming pool
- Floodlit surfaces
- All weather surface
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_



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Nếu bạn muốn bản sao của tài liệu này bằng  
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liên lạc với địa chỉ dưới đây.

### Greek

Αν θα θέλατε ένα αντίγραφο του  
παρόντος εγγράφου στη γλώσσα  
σας, παρακαλώ να τηλεφωνήσετε  
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στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

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### 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 दस्तावेज़ की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं,  
तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नम्बर पर फोन करें अथवा दिये  
गये पता पर सम्पर्क 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 دیئے گئے نمبر پر فون کریں  
یا دیئے گئے پتہ پر رابطہ قائم کریں۔

### Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، الرجاء  
الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو الكتابة الى العنوان

### 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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