

Southampton's Green Space Strategy Technical Document

Information supporting Southampton's Green Space Strategy

Green spaces great places



Foreword

Good quality green spaces are an essential part of Southampton's future that offer a wide variety of facilities and activities for the whole community. They are the 'green lungs' of the city and make Southampton a unique place to live and visit.

We have heard from many people and received some very positive feedback that clearly show that the people of Southampton care for their parks and green spaces. It is therefore essential that we continue to care for and protect our green spaces so that future generations are also able to enjoy them.

Green spaces are at the heart of many communities and it is essential that they remain so. By continued community involvement we can make our green spaces sustainable and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that help to manage our green spaces and encourage those of you that don't to get involved.

Our recent Green Flag Award successes show that investment in parks is underway and working. However we must continue to reinvigorate all our green spaces so that Southampton can continue to be the 'Green City' of the south.

I am thrilled to endorse the Southampton Green Space Strategy "Green Spaces Great Places" and believe it is an important document that will enable us to prioritise where there is a need for improvement and guide planning policy to ensure green spaces are protected into the future.

Cllr Phillip Williams
Cabinet Member for Housing and Local Services

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Introduction

This Technical document has been developed using existing consultation and audit results. It is a dynamic document that will be continually reviewed as new consultation and audits are carried out. This document is not Council policy, but does give evidence, advice and recommendations that could be adapted as future policy following appropriate consultation procedures.

A Brief History

Why we have parks- the history and heritage.

The concept of public green spaces in Britain dates back to the seventeenth century. Owners of private residences opened their landscaped grounds to visitors of all social classes. The early nineteenth century saw the emergence of the urban 'middle class' park. By the middle of the 19th century overcrowding, poor sanitation and pollution contributed to the low quality of life for people living in urban areas. The reaction to these problems was to provide public open spaces for the urban poor.

The resulting parks gave an opportunity for designers to demonstrate their skills and anything natural or untidy was removed to be replaced with formal paths, close-mown turf, exotic bedding and exotic wild animals and birds in cages.

In some areas, civic pride lay behind the creation of intricate bedding displays, floral clocks, winter gardens and pavilions which acted as venues for receiving the town's special guests. Open spaces were seen as the jewel in the crown of public corporations, who employed many skilled horticulturalists and park superintendents.

However, the general perception now is that green spaces and public parks in Britain have undergone a gentle decline since the Second World War, a period during which many facilities lost their railings for the 'war effort' and others were temporarily ploughed up for food production. It was inevitable that greater prosperity and mobility since that time has given the average citizen a wider choice of leisure pursuit.

In Southampton green spaces are greatly appreciated by residents, visitors and businesses in the city. They are a valuable resource that should be preserved and enhanced for future generations to continue to enjoy.

The key challenges facing the City of Southampton include providing sufficient housing, reviving its urban areas and the city centre, achieving economic growth and addressing transport, environmental and sustainability issues. Green spaces are particularly important as the proportion of flats and maisonettes in the city is above the regional average. It is however acknowledge that good quality green spaces are a central part of the regeneration agenda. There is much well regarded evidence that well maintained parks add to the perceived and realised value of property in an area.

The success of regeneration projects that put parks and green spaces at their heart has resulted in the development of National policy, the regional Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) agenda and Local Development Framework (LDF) in placing emphasis on the importance of strategic planning for green spaces and their role in improving the economy, providing a sense of place, encouraging community involvement and offsetting impacts of climate change.

For many years, green spaces have suffered a funding shortfall that is now being seen in declining quality and infrastructure. Southampton City Council is now looking to external sources of funding to provide well needed investment in key green spaces.

This strategy will consider how all aspects of local green spaces could be improved – how provision is planned, protected, designed, managed, used and maintained and will enable prioritisation of improvements and identify potential sources of funding, providing internal revenue support in order to sustain those developments.

The aims and objectives are based on local research, consultation and regional and national policy guidance. We already know that Southampton’s residents love their green spaces, now we want to safeguard and improve their future.

By adopting a strategic approach to Southampton green spaces it should help to :

- Develop a shared vision
- Generate political and inter-departmental support for green spaces
- Lead to the creation of a comprehensive policy framework for protecting, enhancing and creating green spaces
- Define the value and role of green spaces in meeting corporate and community aims
- Make sure that green spaces enhance the quality and diversity of the environment as well as promoting civic pride and social inclusion
- Ensure that the green space network meets local needs – now and in the future
- Involve voluntary and community groups in green space provision and management
- Allocate resources in a way that maximises the value of capital investment and revenue expenditure

Vision

“Southampton will be recognised as the regional Green City, with a range of fine parks and open spaces that are easily accessible, represent good value for money and delivered in partnership with the local community for everyone to enjoy.”

Aims and Objectives

The City of Southampton Strategy includes a requirement for the city to “have a varied and exciting cultural landscape and be known for its innovative and creative businesses, leisure opportunities and fine parks and open spaces”. Recognising the contribution that well managed parks and open spaces can make to the achievement of this 20 year vision, the following key aims have been developed:

i. To provide a network of high quality green spaces contributing to a unique sense of place

It has been recognised that there needs to be a series of parks and green spaces across the city providing a variety of experiences for everyone to easily access. The collective green spaces will be seen as a major positive influence on establishing Southampton as the Green City in the region. Information on the green space quality, quantity and accessible distance contained in the strategy will be used in shaping future planning decisions.

This can be achieved by:

- agreeing the range of different types of parks and green spaces across the city and agreeing a “Southampton” standard.
- ensuring that good quality green spaces are accessible to all communities.

ii. To promote active community involvement and improved access for citizens and visitors

Green Spaces are for people and in Southampton we want to put people at the heart of the service. The strategy has highlighted examples of good work already being undertaken to include local people in the design, maintenance and management of the green spaces and this will be expanded over the coming years. Busy green spaces are safer spaces and the importance of increasing the visible presence in parks in particular (and some green spaces) has been highlighted at national and local level.

This can be achieved by:

- maximising the opportunities for local people to take an active role in the management and development of their green spaces
- ensuring the needs of different sections of the community are clearly recognised and provided for
- listening to the aspirations of local communities and friends groups for their green spaces.
- encourage informal use of green spaces for such activities as sports (not on formalised pitch/court), picnics, dog walking, etc
- Clearly identify green spaces where performances and events can take place and ensure they are fully promoted.
- Exploring opportunities to encourage people to congregate in areas of green space, such as seats that people can arrange themselves, board games areas or arts markets.

iii. To establish the contribution parks make in developing the city economy and cultural opportunities

The close proximity of good quality parks and green spaces has been shown to positively affect the value of property and this in turn boosts the economic prosperity of the city. There is an opportunity to develop parks as event spaces, boosting the city’s economy and promoting the cultural experience.

There are a number of 'hidden gem' green spaces in Southampton that many Southampton residents are not aware of or do not appreciate are on their doorstep.

This can be achieved by:

- highlighting and raising the profile of the significant contribution made by green spaces to the economic, health, social and cultural development of the City and the region.
- developing a marketing / communications plan as part of the development of the Southampton brand to promote the wide variety of green spaces that we have in Southampton and highlighting seasonal special features more effectively

iv. To achieve attractive and sustainable green spaces in the city

Southampton has a fantastic mix of formal parks and gardens through to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) and local natural spaces. Further work to develop a more cohesive green grid network for people and wildlife to move around the city is required. There are a series of targets to achieve in terms of increasing biodiversity and sustainability that will enrich the city and potentially lead to increased resources. There are also a series of significant and positive actions that parks and green spaces can contribute towards reducing the impact of climate change in Southampton:

This can be achieved by:

- developing, promoting and demonstrating the importance of the natural environment and improving biodiversity citywide.
- developing a series of practical green space adaptations that will positively contribute towards reducing the impact of climate change in the city and lead to more sustainable environments.
- developing a green grid across the city

v. To maximise value for money and resources available

The current level of service reflects a low cost high quality service, however there are significant concerns about the current infrastructure standards and the challenge is to build on the current value for money position to ensure that future services can be sustained. There is a need to attract other resources to support the core funding through external grants, community volunteering, partnerships and sponsorships.

This can be achieved by:

- exploring new funding sources and identifying partnerships for targeted projects
- developing opportunities for volunteer working.
- exploring new opportunities for attracting income

Scope of Strategy

The green space strategy will enable the Council, its partners and the local community to protect and enhance Southampton's parks and green spaces over the next 20 years. It sets out a clear framework for improving and upgrading green spaces by providing guiding principles and standards.

This document sets out the consultation to date and technical analysis of existing data on the green spaces, in order to provide an evidence base for the Green Space Strategy Summary Document

An assessment of the value of each park, following PPG17 guidelines, has been undertaken and makes up part of the Open Spaces Strategy Jan 2007. Where appropriate this work has been incorporated into this document. Ongoing assessment will be undertaken as part of the implementation of the strategy.

This document has taken the PPG17 categories and adjusted them to meet the needs of Southampton. Therefore the categories proposed in this document are:

- City Park
- District Park
- Local Park
- Amenity Green Space
- All Other Green Space

The Council has already set provision standards for playing pitches, although these are soon to come under the control of Open Spaces. The provision will therefore be reviewed as per the recommendations in the Playing Pitch Strategy. Playing Pitch provision is therefore considered in this document as part of the overall reassessment of Section 106 contributions only.

Provision of Allotments is considered in this document, but will be the subject of an independent allotments strategy to be written in the next 2 years.

This document therefore includes all publicly owned green spaces in Southampton. It also considers some of the key privately owned green spaces where they provide a strategic link for wildlife or make part of a green grid across the city (for example Dumbleton's Copse and Marlhill Copse). Unless specifically mentioned by name all categories will be referred to as green space.

The vast majority of green spaces fall under the Housing and Neighbourhoods Portfolio. The exception to this is school grounds, which fall under the Children's Services and Learning Portfolio, and some of the recreation areas (such as the Golf Course) which fall under Leisure and Culture. School grounds are, however, on the whole managed by the Neighbourhood Services Team which is part of the Housing and Neighbourhoods Portfolio.

This document does not consider privately owned green space that is not readily accessible to the public.

In addition to its management of the publicly owned green spaces the Neighbour Services Division also provide other areas of expertise to various Council departments and external organisations. They have a role in protecting and enhancing biodiversity and trees across the city, on private land as well as public. They also provide expert advice to Development Control on biodiversity,

sustainability, environmental impact and arboriculture for all new developments. This wider role falls outside the remit of this document, which concentrates on accessible green spaces.

The guiding principles that overarch the production of this Green Space Strategy are:

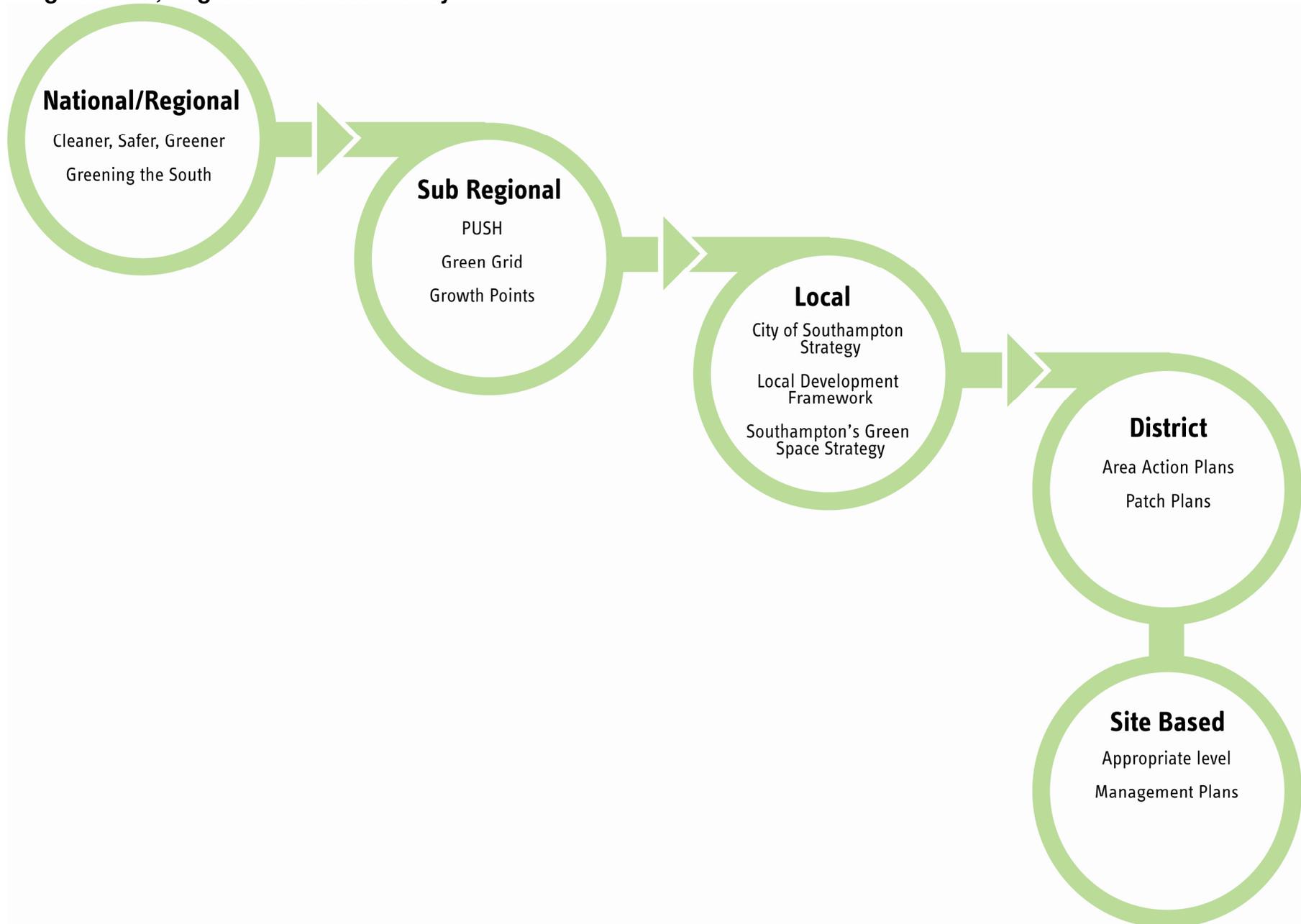
- 1 Delivering the Political agenda around Regeneration and Environmental Sustainability;
 - There needs to be stakeholder engagement (internal and external);
 - To achieve active stakeholder involvement and improved access for all;
 - To provide a sense of place - Quality Parks, meeting the needs of all communities;
- 2 Funding;
 - Budget clarification;
 - Levering in external funding;
 - Data about what parks cost and the spend across the city
- 3 Local Development Framework (LDF)
 - 106 contributions – policy for targeting contributions;
 - Legal framework to maximise levered in funds to obtain maximum return on investments and flexibility in their application and usage;
- 4 To ensure that Health and Wellbeing are an explicit part of the strategy;
- 5 To recognise the value of parks and greenspaces as key economic development drivers;
 - To develop KPIs to measure success with;
- 6 The role of a GSS in mitigating the impact of Climate Change;
- 7 Marketing
 - The development of a marketing plan to deliver the GSS;
- 8 CPD, to achieve a sustainable and skilled workforce to deliver the GSS;
- 9 To optimise value for money and ensure appropriate resources to deliver the above;
 - To seek external objective quality marks for greenspaces, e.g. Green Flag Award
 - To use a 'hybridised' version of the GFA to assess the value of all Greenspaces, and as a driver for improvement programmes;

When considering those principles the following issues are crucial

- 1 The Social Dimension of Public Space;
 - it contributes to the cultural identity of an area, and its use reflects cultural practice;
 - it provides a sense of place and a point of focus for local communities,
- 2 Health and Wellbeing;
 - a place to improve physical and mental health,
 - encouraging people and families to walk and play sport,
 - thereby it is a powerful contributor in the strategy to reduce obesity and ill-health.
- 3 Routes, corridors and between spaces;
 - connecting streets and pedestrian routes,
 - thereby encourage walking and cycling.
- 4 Environment and Biodiversity
 - green spaces role in climate change,
 - opportunity for people to be close to 'nature', particularly important in urban areas.
- 5 Benefits for Children and Young People;
 - opportunities for exercise, fun, and learning in a safe environment.
- 6 Economic Value;
 - a magnet for business considering relocation and therefore a useful marketing tool
 - contributor to stability and improving residential housing economy,
 - offers very clear benefits to the local economy.
- 7 Reducing Crime and Fear of Crime;

- well designed with better management helps to reduce crime and fear of crime,
- 8 The role of Housing land to contribute to some of the above.
- 9 The contribution that the Parks and Green Space Strategy makes to the Council's Policy Framework, strategic planning and economic policies.
- 10 The need to consider whether streamlining land holding powers, in order to ensure a single service area and simplified approach to management is advantageous;
- 11 The need to consider whether a re-appraisal of landholding and possible divestment of underused or an oversupply of land has advantages as a funding mechanism for enhancing and safeguarding the future of Parks and Greenspaces.

Linking National, Regional and Local Policy



National Context

The Government has made several commitments to improving the provision and quality of green space particularly in urban areas;

Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener

This document sets out the Government's approach to making cleaner, safer, greener public spaces. The document explains the need for new thinking to sort out the complex, overlapping responsibilities for public spaces, to remove the cumulative symptoms of degradation, to tackle the problems in deprived areas and to respond to changing times. It also identifies some key components that underpin successful schemes – committed leadership, strong partnerships, active community involvement, desire for quality and innovation and better communicating and sharing of ideas.

The document goes on to explain that local environments also need to be greener and healthier and details the need for a good balance of green spaces in our towns and cities. It launches a new national campaign for raising awareness, stimulating debate and inspiring action for cleaner, safer, and greener spaces in all our communities.

Living Places: Caring for Quality

This document seeks to reverse the dissatisfaction and pessimism identified by the Urban Task Force. This pursuit of more 'liveable' public space represents a key aspiration of Government as set out in *Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future* the action plan launched by the Deputy Prime Minister in February 2003. On the basis of extensive research evidence, a wide range of ideas are outlined in the document to help move practice towards new more holistic approaches to public space management and therefore towards the delivery of more sustainable communities.

CABE Space

This Government organisation champion best practice for protecting and improving open spaces, particularly in an urban environment. 'Good quality green spaces are an essential element of urban neighbourhoods and make a profound contribution to the quality of life of communities. They offer many economic, social and environmental benefits', (CABE Space, 2006, *Green Space Strategies*, a good practice guide, p. 10).

Planning Policy Guidance

All Southampton's green spaces have their own character and are used for different purposes. They are shaped by national policies and guidance from policies on sport to protect playing fields, to the government's vision for better urban areas from the Urban White Paper (2000) onwards. General planning guidance in PPS1 *Delivering Sustainable Development* asserts the importance of public spaces in ensuring development is high quality. PPS3 (Housing) advises that new dwellings should provide, or have good access to, sufficient open space, particularly play space where family housing is proposed.

National planning policies on open spaces are found in PPG17 *Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation* and its companion guide. These documents recognise that parks, playing fields and other green spaces are an important part of people's enjoyment of life and set out what development and improvements may be appropriate. In accordance with PPG17, local authorities are required to assess the needs of local communities and undertake an audit of existing open spaces looking at the quantity and quality of open spaces, their use and accessibility. These assessments provide the basis of a local strategy for open space.

PPG17 also advises that wherever possible Local Authorities to look to develop their own local standards and policies. The GSS has therefore taken into consideration its guidance and where appropriate will apply its principles to aid future management.

There is a requirement under PPS9 *Biodiversity and geological conservation* for planning to contribute to a better quality of life and people's sense of well being by enhancing biodiversity in green spaces. In addition, one of the priorities of the national biodiversity strategy for England is to make sure that these issues are looked at and relevant open spaces are protected and managed for wildlife.

Regional Context

South East Plan

The South East Plan sets out planning policies for this region. It includes policies to promote healthy communities, increase participation in cultural and sporting activities and improve urban areas. According to the South East Plan, encouraging people to use green spaces can help make them healthier, their communities stronger and increase their enjoyment of life.

The South East Plan also sets out the policy framework for the sub-region of South Hampshire reaching from the Waterside in the New Forest to Havant and including the cities of Southampton and Portsmouth. The strategy for this area, drawn up by PUSH, is based on higher levels of economic growth and investment in infrastructure. As part of the policies for South Hampshire, Southampton will have to continue building housing at similar or higher rates than in the last ten years. The strategy also states the importance of biodiversity and the green infrastructure network.

Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996 – 2011

This is the overarching Plan adopted by Hampshire County, Southampton City and Portsmouth City Councils that guides the Local Plan.

The policies put forward in this Plan will shape the pattern of development and the conservation of the environment in the period up to the year 2011 and beyond. It proposes an overall strategy for development, for improving the environment, and managing the need to travel. It sets out how much new housing should be built and how proposals for economic growth should be considered. It puts forward policies for improving urban areas and town centres and for protecting and improving the environment and heritage.

Partnership for Urban South Hampshire

PUSH is commissioning a Green Infrastructure Study which will be carried out by Hampshire County Council. This study will show how the new growth points can be integrated into the whole new landscape of South Hampshire and to establish the connectivity between areas of open space and the landscape.

This strategy links to PUSH and the emerging infrastructure plan that has come from this partnership. In line with the information coming out of the PUSH infrastructure study the action plan advocates a Green Grid approach to ensure there are green links across the city and to the wider countryside in Hampshire. It promotes the use of local urban green spaces, reducing the pressure on the potentially more sensitive habitats in the countryside, whilst recognising the greater links through to areas such as The New Forest, Country Parks and other Hampshire green spaces which are important as wildlife corridors.

Local Context

The City of Southampton Strategy

Sets out a vision and aims for Southampton over the next 20 years until 2026. Within the vision it is expressed that Southampton will be known for its “fine parks and open spaces”. This reflects the importance of parks and open spaces in Southampton. The aims and objectives of this strategy have been aligned to the City of Southampton Strategy wherever possible. Objective 4 is the most relevant as green spaces contribute to achieving an attractive and stimulating environment and an imaginative and creative use of public spaces. It also prescribes attractive, safe and welcoming open spaces for everyone within the urban environment. Southampton’s green spaces are also a major contributor to objective 6, ‘a sense of place’ giving the city a sense of place as a local community, district hub, regional heart and national centre.

It is important to note that the City of Southampton Strategy is a 20 year plan; therefore it is vital to safeguard the quality and improvement of green spaces now to meet this commitment.

Council Priorities

Southampton’s green spaces provide a valuable asset to visitors and residents of Southampton and contribute to Southampton City Council’s five key priorities in the following ways;

Tackling Deprivation and Inequalities; all Council owned green spaces are free to anyone wishing to use them, the parks host a wide range of events that are usually free.

Promoting Lifelong Learning; use of green spaces for educational purposes, environmental education programmes.

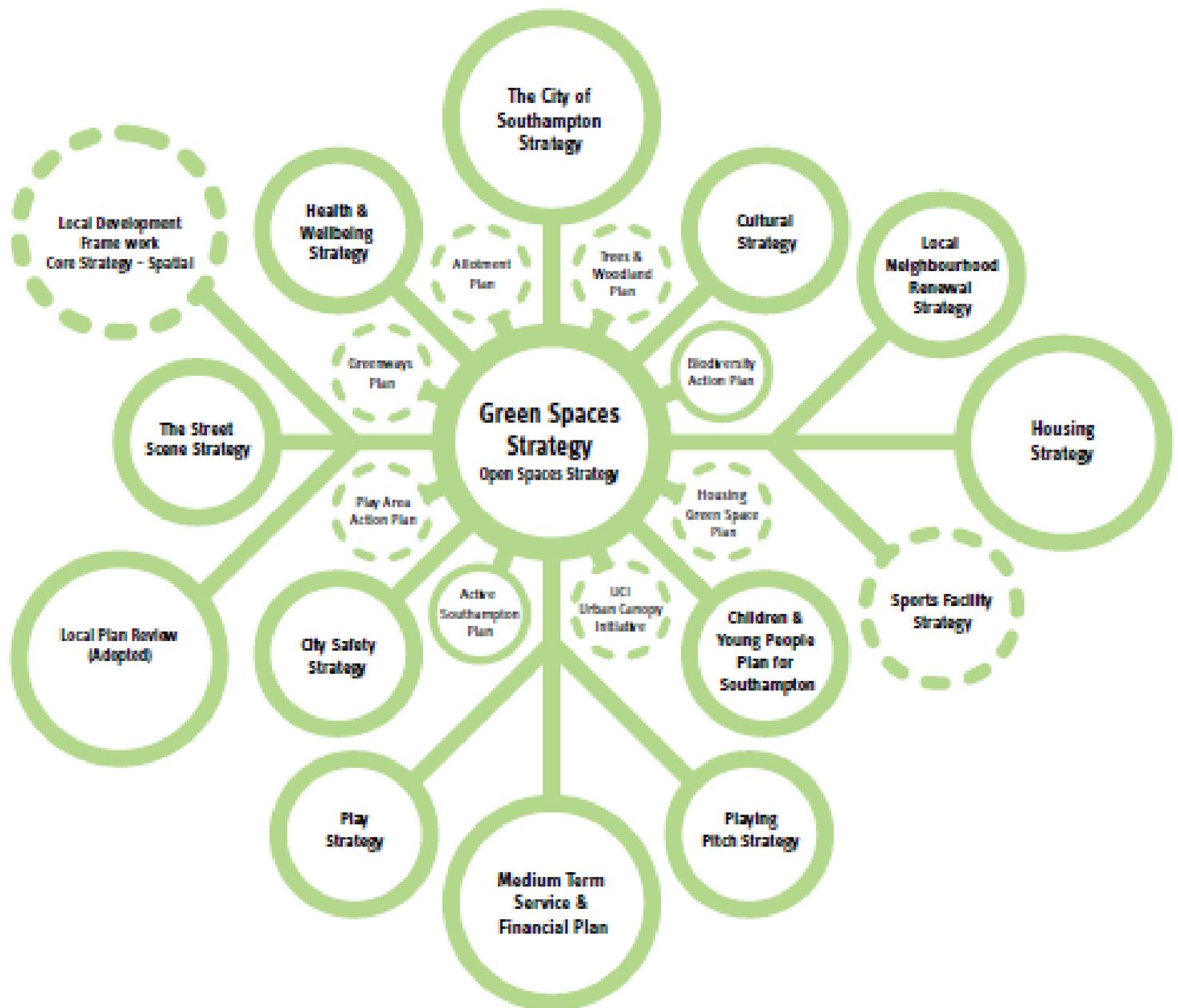
Improving community safety and reducing crime and disorder; encouraging community involvement in management and maintenance of green spaces to encourage a sense of ownership, improving perception of safety in parks, enforcement activities in relation to graffiti and litter.

Improving the street scene and environment; green spaces are a major contributor to the street scene and environment through management of SSSIs, Green Flag Award winning spaces, increasing biodiversity. Improving green spaces will improve the overall street scene and environment.

Promoting independent living; provide accessible green spaces wherever possible, encouraging safe but challenging play in green spaces, range of opportunities for citizen participation.

Local Policy Framework

Current Policy Context

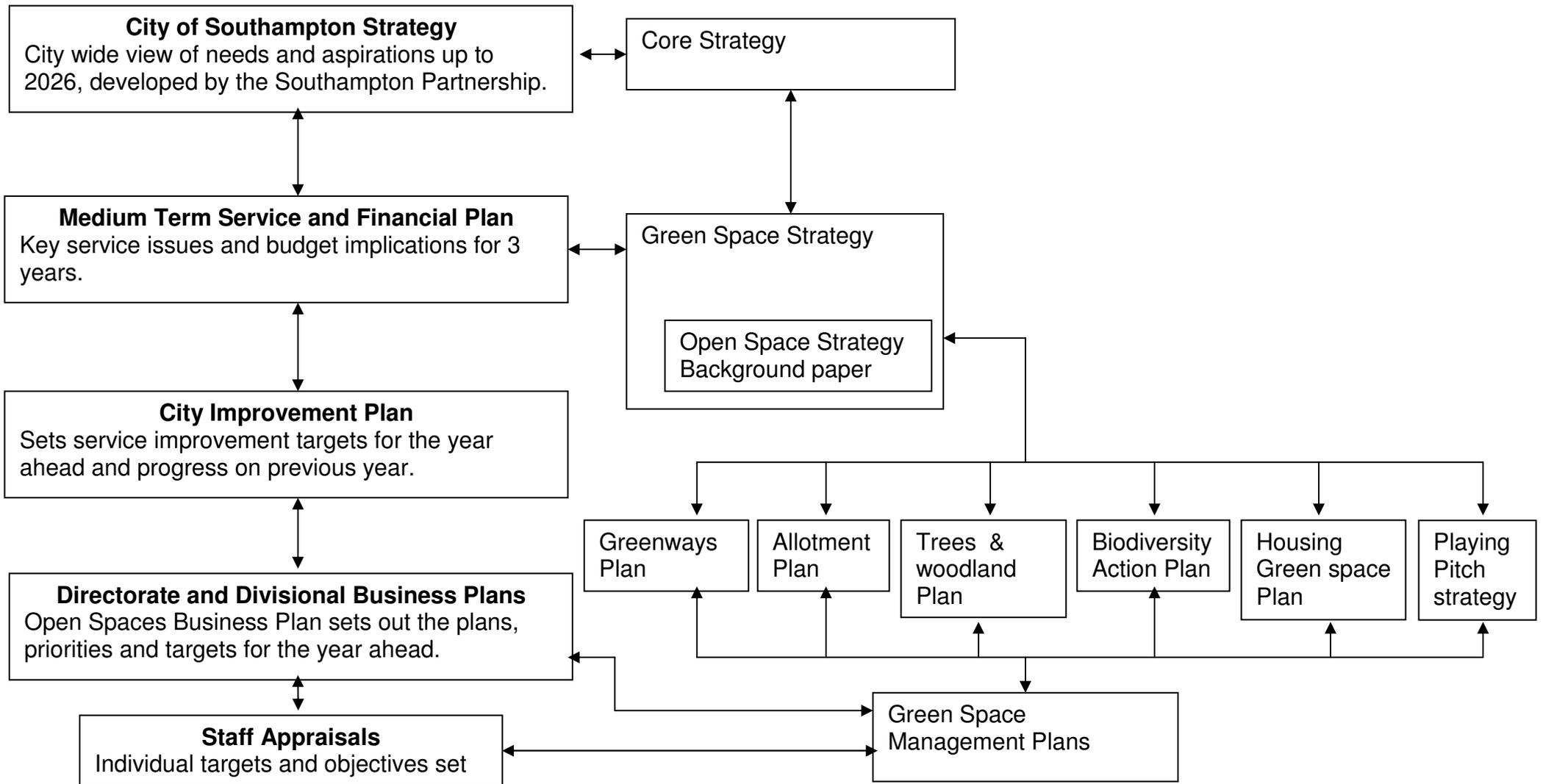


Key

- Large circles - Key Strategies
- Medium circles - Other relevant SCC Strategies
- Small circles - Action Plans

- Existing
 - To be completed

'Golden Thread' Framework Hierarchy



Although green spaces may not be specifically mentioned in some of the Council's key policy documents, it is recognised that green spaces play an important role in achieving some of their objectives. For example, the Hosing Strategy seeks environmental improvements to walk up blocks which can be achieved through green space improvements. It also contains an action to identify vacant, underused land for housing development, this Green Space Strategy will identify land use and guidance on surplus areas; the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy also aspires to improve health and the physical environment, green spaces have been identified in CABI Space guidance as making a profound contribution to quality of life.

Local Development Framework

The Local Plan Review was adopted in March 2006. Its policies will apply until September 2009 after which they will be replaced over time by the policies within the Local Development Framework. This new style development plan will consist of a folder of documents and will include the Core Strategy containing the general principles for development in the city. The principles proposed include improving the accessibility and quality of open space, protecting and enhancing the natural environment and creating sustainable neighbourhoods.

The Core Strategy is supported by other documents including the Residential Design Guide SPD which outlines principles and provides detailed design guidance for making better places for living and transforming the city and its neighbourhoods. It also contains a Landscape Checklist for New Development.

Further guidance on specific open spaces and detailed policies will be contained in the Allocations DPD and the Development Control Policies DPD following the Core Strategy. The Green Spaces Strategy is one of a number of studies that will provide the background information for this new type of development plan.

From the Green Spaces Strategy it will be possible to see how wide ranging the benefits of green spaces are. The Green Spaces Strategy will therefore contribute to ensuring that the Spatial Objectives of the Core Strategy can be met.

Medium Term Service and Financial Plan

The MTP sets out how the Council can achieve its 5 Key priorities over a period of 3 years, between 2007 and 2010. It is recognised within different areas of the mid term plan that there is a need to ensure an improvement of green spaces in the future and the action to do this is to provide a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy along with an audit of the existing green spaces.

Southampton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy

One of the cross cutting themes within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, produced by the Health and Social Care Partnership, is contributing to sustainable development and an environment that safeguards health. The strategy states that in the long term a healthy environment could be promoted by developing more parks, open spaces and other places where people can get regular exercise in a pleasant environment. Green Spaces do make a contribution to tackling the major killers and therefore the natural environment should be protected. The GSS shows that green spaces can be a major contributor to improved health and reduced obesity, as they provide a free and safe environment to carry out exercise.

City Safety Strategy

This document gives some basic principles for safety throughout the city to reduce anti-social behaviour and crimes.

The GSS has taken note of the basic principles and will provide recommendations on measures for reducing future anti-social and criminal activity.

The Street Scene – A Strategy for streets, parks and open spaces.

The GSS encompasses some of this strategy's vision to ensure that the City's outside living spaces will be accessible and well managed and that the urban environment street scene and open spaces will be pleasant places to be.

The Cultural Strategy

Parks and open spaces are seen as part of the key priority of developing the cultural infrastructure of the city.

The GSS will encompass the key issues and priorities raised by the Cultural Strategy.

Southampton Play Strategy

Although play areas are not specifically designed or developed by the Open Space department they are intrinsically linked with green spaces. Green spaces also provide a wider scope for play through activities not formalised in play areas. The Southampton Play Strategy recognises this and encourages it.

The GSS will therefore provide guidance on how best to promote a wide range of play opportunities throughout green spaces.

Local Transport Plan

Other strategic documents such as the Local Transport Plan (LTP) will influence how the city develops. This plan considers how to tackle transport growth and congestion in the city and also includes a wider strategy for South Hampshire. As part of the local strategy, there are measures to promote walking and cycling such as a programme of walk to work routes and cycle routes.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The SCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) was adopted in November 2007. The RoWIP has overlaps with this strategy as its principal aims are to:

- Establish a framework towards enhancing and maintaining a high quality access network;
- Develop the network to benefit as wide a range of users as possible;
- Improve accessibility for those with mobility or sight difficulties.

Within the RoWIP is an Action Plan which sets out how the aims of the RoWIP will be implemented. Wherever possible recommendations within this document will compliment those actions required to implement the RoWIP.

Biodiversity Action Plan

Southampton City Council's adopted Biodiversity Action Plan contains up-to-date information about the requirements for, and status of, nature conservation in Southampton based on national legislation, other City Strategies, policies and plans together with local community requirements and aspirations. The action plan sets out the City Council's general policy approach to Natural Environment issues. It addresses five themes and key requirements set out in law: protection of Southampton's biodiversity; enhancement of the environment; information and education; involvement, access and health; and monitoring and links with other strategies.

Southampton Playing Pitch Strategy

The Playing Pitch Strategy provides a focus for investment and future development in the provision of playing pitches in Southampton. It aims to ensure that facilities are good quality, appropriate and accessible.

The audit of playing pitches within the strategy shows that there is insufficient quantity in many of the wards to meet the Sport England standard and there is an overall deficit in the city. The strategy also assessed the current and future demand for a number of sports and sought the views of users. It concludes that the highest priority should be given to improving the quality of pitches (including drainage and maintenance). Specific facilities with high usage and low pitch quality, and with a higher probability of securing external funding, should also be prioritised.

Active Southampton Plan

The Active Southampton Plan provides actions to ensure that residents of Southampton become more active through sport and exercise. It provides a three year action plan that supports the LAA targets of getting adults and children more active by the year 2010. The GSS supports this document and shares similar aims for improved health through greater use of green spaces for sports and general exercise.

Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

Within the Priority Neighbourhoods, the focus is on mainstreaming service improvements. The LNRS sets out 5 local priorities for Neighbourhood Renewal:

1. Support and ensure delivery of the:
 - Thornhill Plus You Delivery Plan
 - Outer Shirley Delivery Plan
 - Bevois and Bargate Action Plan
 - Specific Action Plans for the other 8 Priority Neighbourhoods
2. Focus on improving educational attainment and employability.
3. Commit to using mainstream resources to achieve the necessary improvement to floor targets.
4. Develop effective ways to lead, manage and monitor how we are closing the gap.
5. Develop the neighbourhood management agenda through the Neighbourhoods Partnerships.

Under each of the above Priorities, there are a number of objectives. Some of the objectives have direct implications for the Green Space Strategy. Priority 3 includes objectives which seek to re-allocate mainstream resources by changing spending patterns to target the most deprived areas and to ensure that new policies and strategies specifically consider their impact on Priority Neighbourhoods.

Legal Context

Legal Framework

Although green spaces provision is not a statutory provision in itself, it is still governed by Acts of parliament and there are certain legal obligations placed on the management of green spaces.

Legislation such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation and Heritage classifications put a legal obligation of the Council to manage those pieces of land to a standard that does not let them degrade.

Why Do We Need Green Spaces?

Parks and green spaces are now being recognised for their contribution to the overall well-being of citizens and for their value as part of the driver for a developing economy. Well managed, good quality green spaces greatly improves the perception of an area. On a city wide level it helps bring tourists to the city and helps attract investment from the relocation of businesses. At a local level it makes people feel good and have pride in the area where they live. It has a significant impact on property prices and can raise them in excess of 10%.

CABE Space have noted seven areas where green spaces improve urban areas and these relate directly to Southampton.

Economic Value

High-quality public open spaces can have a significant impact on the economic success of cities. It is therefore essential that parks and green spaces are part of the regeneration and economic development of the city. As Southampton increasingly competes with its neighbours to attract investment, the presence of good parks, squares, gardens and other public spaces becomes a vital business and marketing tool: companies are attracted to locations that offer well-designed, well-managed public places and these in turn attract customers, employees and services. Making sure that the city and district centres are pleasant and well-maintained environments will help to increase the number of people visiting these areas.

A good public landscape also offers very clear benefits to the local economy in terms of stimulating increased house prices, since house-buyers are willing to pay to be near green space. Properties close to good quality parks and green spaces attract higher property values. This provides an overall economic gain to the city where there are more opportunities for developments close to high quality green spaces.

Health and Wellbeing

Access to green spaces can improve physical and mental wellbeing. In Southampton the rate of obesity among children is thought to be higher than the national average. Tackling it is a local priority identified by the city's Health and Wellbeing Partnership which has adopted the term "Fit for Life" as one of its cross cutting themes. It is also one of the major targets within the Children and Young People's Plan.

Local research carried out in 2003 showed that among children who started school that year 20% were overweight, 9% were obese and 5.6% were severely obese. Nationally, 40% of adults are overweight and 22% are obese. Being overweight or obese costs the UK £2.5 billion a year¹. The increase in obesity is linked to ever more sedentary lifestyles and a reduction in outdoor activity. Parks can therefore make a valuable contribution to reducing obesity through providing opportunity for exercise.

The history of parks and green spaces shows that they have always been linked to promoting good health. *Building Health- Creating and enhancing places for healthy, active lives*² describes the importance of green space in urban areas to the health and wellbeing of the community. The

¹ Chief Medical Officer's report 2004. *At least five a week – evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health*

² National Heart Forum, Living Streets and CABE; *Building Health; Creating and enhancing places for healthy, active lives*; 2007

'biophilia effect' shows that contact with nature has a beneficial effect on health and reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, tension, insomnia and others. This is in addition to the benefits of physical exercise in green spaces that can improve fitness levels and contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Professor Roger Ulrich of A & M University, Texas, has studied the link between green space and human health for over 20 years. His work shows how the positive effect that trees and natural green space have on healthy living is measurable and considerable. Stress can be measured physiologically through such indicators as forehead muscle tension, blood pressure and electrical activity in the brain. Ulrich's experiments have consistently shown that stress is very significantly reduced – within as little as three minutes – when people leave a situation such as a busy street or an intense meeting, and move into green space. Car commuters who drive along leafy tree-lined streets show sustained improvement in performance at work, and less aggressive domestic behaviour than those commuting along treeless routes. Hospital patients make more rapid post-operative recovery, require a lower level of medication, and are more amenable patients if they have a view of green space from their hospital beds. Ulrich's work has recently been augmented by similar investigations carried out by the University of Essex. Their results are showing very similar results that trees and green spaces do have a positive effect on mental and physical well being.

There are concerns regarding mental and physical fatigue given the stressful lives that many now lead. Each year the economy loses millions of working days through stress-related employee absence. Access to good-quality, well-maintained public spaces can help to improve both physical and mental health by encouraging us to walk more, to play sport, or simply to enjoy a green and natural environment. In other words, our open spaces are a powerful weapon in the fight against obesity and ill-health.

Benefits for Children and Young People

Under the UN Convention on the *Rights of the Child*, children have the right to play, recreation and culture. Play is crucial for many aspects of children's development, from the acquisition of social skills, experimentation and the confrontation and resolution of emotional crises, to moral understanding, cognitive skills such as language and comprehension, and of course physical skills. But increasing urbanisation has left our children with far fewer opportunities than previous generations to play freely outdoors and experience the natural environment. Southampton has an adopted play policy and strategy which works towards good-quality public spaces – including well-designed school grounds – that help to fill this gap, providing children with opportunities for fun, exercise and learning.

The Social Dimension of Public Space

Southampton's public spaces are free and open to all 365 days a year, regardless of ethnic origin, age or gender, and as such they represent places to communicate and learn tolerance in. When properly designed and cared for, they bring communities together, provide meeting places and foster social ties of a kind that have been disappearing in many urban areas. These spaces shape the cultural identity of an area, are part of its unique character and provide a sense of place for local communities.

Southampton's green spaces are used by a wide variety of the community. Many use green spaces to socialise and often meet other like minded people. People have picnics, walk dogs, go to events and all are welcome. Dog walkers often see the green spaces at times of the day when many others do not. They are the eyes and ears in the early morning and late afternoon and play an important role in the management of green space. However, there are areas where it is not desirable for dogs to roam. These are already clearly marked in most green spaces and include children's play areas and education land. In 2005 new legislation came into being enabling the Council to formalise "dog control". The Council is therefore looking into how to apply this legislation, which overrides byelaws and any previous legislation on dog fouling. Full public consultation must be undertaken before any dog control orders are put in place. The Council's proposals will therefore be published within the next 12 months.

One of Southampton's strongest links is with its maritime heritage. The Rivers Itchen and Test join and broaden out to Southampton Water and the Solent and form Southampton's waterfront. In the Solent, recreation is one of the most significant uses in terms of the number of people involved and the diverse activities taking place. These activities cover land based recreation and watersports. Recreational uses include angling and walking, with the Solent Way long distance coastal walking route passing through Southampton from Town Quay to Weston Shore. Local watersports range from canoeing to sailing and rowing.

Open space alongside the rivers and Southampton Water plays a vital role in meeting one of the wider objectives of the City Council to improve access to the waterfront. The rivers and Southampton Water themselves can also provide some of the functions of open space; they are important to the identity and provide the setting for the city and can be a location for sport and recreation. Government guidance in PPG17 states that in applying its policies open space should be taken to mean all open space of public value including areas of water which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity. Whilst recognising their importance, this strategy does not classify Southampton's waterfront as open space counting towards any standards because of its many other functions and issues of access to the water.

Climate Change and Biodiversity

The exact impact that climate change will have in Southampton over the next 20 years is not fully known however it is clear that any significant increase in hard surfacing and the reduction in green spaces in the city will lead to higher temperatures than in the surrounding countryside. This is known as the 'heat island effect'. Southampton's many parks and green spaces – whether in public spaces or private gardens – can help to redress this imbalance. Green spaces bring many important environmental benefits to urban areas, including the cooling of air, storage of water, reducing the risk of flooding and the absorption of atmospheric pollutants.

Whilst there is no definitive view of the effects of climate change, we are expecting more extremes of weather with warmer wetter winters and drier hotter summers. This will impact on maintenance regimes and we are already working towards adapting design and planting in green spaces to minimise this impact. Research and work on this will continue into the future. Southampton is also committed to an urban canopy initiative, which will ensure that large canopy trees are planted back into the city. These will help to reduce city temperatures, hold up rain fall thus helping to reduce flooding and help to improve air quality.

Southampton needs to be part of the wider picture with regards to climate change. It will only be through many small changes in many cities, towns and villages that the effects of climate change will be diminished. Green Spaces in Southampton therefore have a definite role to play in reducing the effects of climate change and making the city a more pleasant place to live.

As identified in the Biodiversity Strategy for England, green spaces have the potential to enhance quality of life through contact with nature close to where people live. Southampton's green spaces provide areas for wildlife to flourish and form niches which are easily accessible for much of the local community. Southampton has a wide variety of wildlife habitats and aims to improve many of these .

Movement in and Between Spaces

One of the fundamental functions of public space (roads, pavements, parks and green spaces) is that it allows us to move around on foot, by bicycle, by car, motorbike or public transport. A key objective of public space design and management is therefore to reconcile the needs of these often conflicting modes of transport. Well designed streets and public spaces encourage walking and cycling, and have the power to make our environment a safer one by reducing vehicle speeds and use. In Southampton supplementary planning documents such as the Streetscene Manual and initiatives such as 'Home Zones' have begun to demonstrate the benefits of redesigning streets for shared use by residents and pedestrians, not just cars.

Southampton has had a network of greenways since the 1980's. These are ribbons of open spaces which follow stream valleys through the city. They form valuable breaks in built-up areas or between built development, with the primary purpose of improving biodiversity and acting as a "green lung" buffer between buildings. These greenways provide a good basis on which to improve access between Southampton's open spaces and the surrounding countryside outside of the City. There are opportunities to develop a green grid, with green routes for walking and cycling, which contribute towards the sustainable transport plan for movements around the city. This aspiration links with the recently adopted Rights of Way Improvement Plan and should ensure that people walking in Southampton can do so in a pleasant environment away from cars wherever possible.

Cycling in green spaces is recognised as a major issue for many users. The main issue appears to be with the conflicts between those walking, those wishing to use green space to commute on bicycle, those wishing to use the green space for leisure cycling with their families, and the local byelaws. In order to address these issues it is recommended that a wider public consultation is undertaken, within the life of this strategy, with the aim of providing clarification on the legality of, and solutions to, cycling in green spaces.

Improving Safety

Fear of crime and, to a much lesser extent crime itself, can deter people, not just vulnerable groups, from using even good quality public spaces. A recent survey of 141 people in Southampton showed that only 5% said that they did not feel safe. An overwhelming 84% said they either felt safe or very safe. However, children and young people, for example, are often prevented from using our parks because of their parents' fears about crime, whilst women often also face particular concerns. Physical changes to, and the better management of public space in Southampton can help to allay these fears. Such changes can help everyone to make the most of public spaces.

Chapter 2

How Well Are We Doing?

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The City in Context

Southampton is the principal city in central southern England. It is a port city located at the head of Southampton Water and is the centre of the UK cruise industry. It is also a business and financial services centre, a manufacturing economy, home to two universities, a regional medical destination and regional transport hub. The city centre is being transformed and the recent development of the West Quay Shopping Centre has helped boost Southampton to the rank of 7th in the UK's shopping centre hierarchy.

Southampton Population Fact File (mid year estimates 2006 unless stated)	
Population	228,600
Percentage men	50%
Percentage women	50%
Percentage from an ethnic minority background (2005)	7.6%
Percentage under 5 years	4.9%
Percentage 5-15 years	10.2%
Percentage 16-24 years	20.6%
Percentage 25-44 years	30.7%
Percentage 45-64 years	20%
Percentage over 65 years	13.4%
Projected population increase 2007-2013	3,074 people
Claimant rate – people out of work and claiming unemployment benefits (2005)	2.1%
People with limiting long term illness (2001)	17.3%
Percentage of households without access to a car (2001)	30.3%

The population of Southampton has grown steadily since the late 1980's and the latest official population estimates from the Office for National Statistics suggest that in 2006 the population of Southampton was 228,200.

Southampton is the largest city in the south east region. The city provides work for over 110,000 people and covers an area of 49 square kilometres (4900 ha or 19 square miles). Although Southampton has developed up to most of its boundaries, its high quality natural environment includes Southampton Common which covers over 300 acres, the Central Parks, the Greenways network and waterside in addition to smaller open spaces throughout the city, and the internationally important River Itchen and River Test.

How Much Do We Have?

We have 49 parks, 23 allotments, over 30000 individual grass and shrub plots making up amenity green spaces and over 90 other green spaces in Southampton that make up around 1140 Hectares of land. Based on MORI survey data it is estimated that the parks in Southampton get in the region of 17,000,000 visits per year or 2 people every second using a park. Publicly accessible green space under Council management accounts for approximately 20% of the land use in Southampton.

The green spaces range in size from a triangle of grass at the corner of the road to large areas such as the Common and Sports Centre. They provide everything from a space for a deck chair to facilities to go skiing, cycling, play golf and watch wildlife. They have rare species of plants and animals, champion trees, listed monuments and sporting facilities. The parks and green spaces are often referred to as one of the reasons to visit Southampton.

Unfortunately there are shortfalls of green space within parts of the city and where population density is increasing with the development of flats replacing houses, pressure on green spaces is increasing. Increased use of parks leading to a failing infrastructure and a higher quality expectation of users has meant that existing budgets are being continually stretched.

For these reasons it is important in the future to identify where council priorities and investment in green spaces can make a difference. (money can be best spent). In order to achieve this approach (One step towards this is to group th) green spaces will be categorised into groups that identify their range of facilities and size. In this way, parks will be programmed for maintenance and management treatment that reflect their needs and their agreed category. A further advantage will arise from this practice, as it will assist us in identifying communities that are lacking in certain types of green space and assist us in prioritising these area for targeting financial resources as they become unavailable.

The Open Spaces Audit, carried out in 2004/5, gives results on surveyed users of parks and open spaces. In summary the following results were found:

- 74% of people surveyed visited parks once a week.
- More people visited alone or with friends / relatives than with children.
- 57% walked to the parks.
- The most cited reason for visiting a park was for healthy exercise and fresh air.

Some in-depth consultation was carried out with children at primary and secondary school age. The conclusions from discussions with the children were:-

- For young children, parks play a significant part of their everyday lives and are a resource which should be developed;
- For older children, they provide a relatively safe environment to exercise their freedom, gain further independence and develop social skills;
- Parks provide an opportunity to take exercise in the open air;

Current Standards

The Council currently works to a number of standards which are, on the whole, to be found in the Adopted Local Plan Review, and the emerging Core Strategy. These were set to give a bench mark for the Council to work towards and tell us how much different types of green space we should have. They are typically shown as the amount of each type per 1000 people.

Southampton currently works to a number of national and County standards based on advice from the National Playing Field Association (NFPA), Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) and the Hampshire Structure Plan adopted March 1994 (HSP). The standards for these are as follows:

Body	Standard	Allowance per 1000 people
NFPA	Provision of outdoor sports facilities	1.6ha
NFPA	Provision for Children and Teenagers	0.8ha of which 0.2ha is equipped or formal space
ANGSt	Accessibility Standards for natural green space	2.0ha
HSP	Urban Parks	0.4ha
HSP	Amenity Open Spaces	1.2ha
1969 Thorpe Report*	Allotment Standard	0.2ha
Local Plan Review March 2006	Open Space in new residential developments	2.4ha This is broken down as 1.2ha for parks, 1ha for playing pitches and 0.2ha for play areas

Although the above standards were used for the purpose of the Audit, it should be noted that the current HSP no longer has the Urban Parks or Amenity Open Spaces quantity standards and has moved to the NFPA standards for provision of outdoor sports facilities and provision for children and teenagers only.

Survey Data (The Audit)

Global To Local Survey

The city council appointed consultants Global to Local Ltd to carry out an Open Space Audit. The report entitled "Parks and Open Spaces in Southampton" was received at the end of 2005.

The aim of the audit was to carry out a comprehensive survey of open space, sport and recreation provision within the city. The audit highlights the importance of open space in the city. It looks at management and supply as well as peoples' perception of spaces within the city, the issues which affect Southampton's open space provision and its future needs and demands. The Audit was carried out in accordance with advice in PPG17.

The Audit used the open space typology which is set out in PPG17 in order to categorise green spaces by their primary use. As with many cities Southampton's green spaces are often multi-functional in nature and do not neatly fit into a typology where primary use only is considered. The Audit assessed both the quality and quantity of the open spaces.

* the 1969 Thorpe Report was for the Department Committee of Inquiry into Allotments.

Below is a summary table of the findings of the Audit, compared with standards set either nationally or by previous Local Plan Reviews.

Category	Total Area (hectares)	Hectares per 1000 population	Status (ha) +/- or – standard
Formal Parks and Gardens	69.1	0.32*	-0.08
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Spaces	277.8	1.28	-0.72
Outdoor Sports Facilities	306.3	1.41	-0.19
Green Corridors	192.7	0.89	No standard
Amenity Green Space	47.7	0.22*	-0.98
Provision for Children and Teenagers	10.64	0.05	-0.75
Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms	58.2	0.27	+0.07
Total	962.44	4.44	-

Hectares per thousand population was based on estimated figures for mid year 2004 for the population which equates to 221,200 residents.

Civic spaces and cemeteries were not included in this data.

GIS Mapping

As many of Southampton's parks are multi-functional spaces, categorising them by principle use can give a skewed view of the actual provision in Southampton. It was therefore decided to update the accuracy of the Audit by mapping each green space and in the case of Parks, splitting these down into their individual PPG17 categories.

* This figure is based on the standards set in the 1991-2001 Southampton Local Plan and the HSP 1994. This has since been dropped from the Local Plan Review March 2006 and HSP.

Below is a summary of the updated areas for each category.

PPG17 Category	Total Area (ha)	Hectares per 1000 population	Current standard ha per 1000 population	Status (ha per 1000) +/- standard	Amount in Ha required in city to make the standard
Formal Parks and Gardens	95.70	0.42	No standard	No Standard	N/A
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Spaces	399.35	1.75	2	-0.25	5.7
Outdoor Sports Facilities	248.75	1.09	1.6	-0.51	11.7
Amenity Green Space	219	0.96	No standard	No standard	N/A
Provision for Children and Teenagers	9.08**	0.04	0.8	-0.76	17.4
Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms	49.09	0.22	0.2	+0.02	N/A
Cemeteries and Churchyards	49.46	0.22	No standard	No Standard	N/A
Civic Spaces	3.48	0.01	No Standard	No Standard	N/A
Total	1073.91	4.71			

The figure for the area per 1000 population is based on the current estimate by the Office of National Statistics of 228,600 residents in Southampton.

The total of provision under each of the PPG17 categories is lower than that of the total green space provision in the city. This is due to not including School grounds in the statistics. These account for 64.24 ha of provision and have been left out as they are not open to the general public out of school time.

Other discrepancies in the figures between the Audit and the recent GIS mapping can be accounted for in a number of ways:

- In the current exercise each green space has been split down into its individual PPG17 categories, rather than including the whole area as its principle use. This has the effect that where there is a multifunctional space, such as Mayfield Park, all its uses are taken into consideration. This may therefore increase certain category provision and decrease others.

** This figure is for Play Areas in Parks only. Play areas in amenity green space and housing areas have not been included.

- Certain categories may have been given different re-categorised, although on the whole they are very similar.
- The Audit only considered a limited number of sites, the mapping exercise can be considered as comprehensive.

The current mapped data is considered to be more accurate and will be used when setting standards. The public comments received during the Audit are still considered pertinent and often reflect the current situation and therefore have been included.

Adequate provision has been measured against national standards, it is therefore reasonable when considering if Southampton has enough provision to exclude those categories which do not have a national standard. This would effectively remove the provision for Formal Parks and Gardens, Amenity Green Space, Cemeteries and Churchyards and Civic Spaces.

Removing these categories from the calculation of total green space provision gives Southampton a grand total of $4.71 - 1.61 = 3.10$ ha/1000 population. Nationally Southampton would be expected to provide 4.6ha/1000 population and therefore there is a total under provision of 1.5ha/1000 population. This means that 34.29ha would need to be provided across the city as a whole.

Comparison of Audit Data and Mapping Exercise

Formal Parks and Gardens - the GIS Mapping shows that there is 95.7Ha of formal parks and gardens as apposed to the Audit which showed only 69.1Ha. There is currently no standard for this category of green space but based on the 1991 Local Plan and the 1994 HSP there does appear to be a very small over provision. However, the Audit results did show that 54% of the people they asked said that there was a “deficiency of provision”. The figure of 0.42ha/1000 population will therefore be taken forwards as a proposed local standard for parks provision.

Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Spaces – the GIS mapping shows that there is 399.35 ha of this category of provision, as apposed to the 277.8 ha shown in the audit. Even with the revised amount there is still a shortfall of 5.7 ha in the City. The audit showed that only 8% of stakeholders considered that there was a surplus of provision of this category of open space, 46% considered that it was about right and 46% considered that there was a deficiency. This category of green space can be fairly subjective. Southampton is striving to manage all its green spaces with biodiversity in mind and therefore many of the other categories will have natural and semi-natural components to them. Within the city it is unlikely that this type of land will become available in the future, we are therefore looking at making the current provision the standard. The proposed standard therefore is 1.75 ha per 1000 population.

Green Corridors - These have not been mapped as areas as they fall into other categories, such as Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Spaces and Formal Parks and Gardens. The Audit categorised the Greenways as green

corridors, but for the mapping purpose these were assessed to be Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Spaces. Green Corridors have been mapped as linear routes and will become part of the green grid network. The Audit also showed that 54% of stakeholders believed that the level of provision for Green Corridors was about right and 38% that there is a deficiency of provision. Therefore no standard will be taken forward for this type of provision.

Outdoor Sports Facilities – The GIS mapping showed there to be 248.75 Ha of this provision as apposed to the 306.3 ha shown in the Audit. However, the Playing Pitch Strategy gives a total of 195.14 ha over the whole city, including education sports pitches. Discrepancies between the Audit and the GIS wrk may be attributed to the inclusion (in the Audits case) of School grounds. Discrepancies between the Audit, GIS work and the Playing pitch strategy are likely to be due to what has been included. The Audit and GIS work both included all provision for outdoor facilities, including areas such as the Golf course and the numerous bowling green, whereas the Playing Pitch Strategy includes only playing pitches. Over half of stakeholders, 54%, believed that there was a deficiency of provision of outdoor sports facilities in general compared with 38% who believed it was about right. It is proposed to take forward a local standard of 1ha per 1000 population. This is the current standard within the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, and very close to the amount identified in the GIS Work.

Amenity Green Space – There is a marked difference in the amount of amenity space shown. This is due mainly to the criteria set for including the space. The Audit set a criteria of nothing smaller than 0.2ha to be included. The GIS mapping set an initial criteria of nothing smaller than 0.1ha for mapping purposes, however in order to get a true indication all amenity green spaces no matter what the size have been included in the data above. It is important when setting local standards to consider this figure as the audit found that when asked whether there is enough amenity green space only 38% of stakeholders believed that the provision of this category was about right with 62% considering there was a deficiency of provision. There needs to be a balance struck between the amount of this type of space provided and its quality. Management of these areas also need to be taken into consideration as small fragmented areas are more costly to maintain than larger unified areas. It is proposed to take forward a standard of 0.22ha per 1000 population. This is based on the figures given by the Audit and a size that is economical to manage.

Provision for Children and Teenagers – Although the figures above only include those formal play areas within parks there are in fact 115 play areas in city, 40 of which are within housing/amenity green space. There is no current data for the total area of all this provision in green spaces. The Play Area Strategy does not concentrate on quantity of provision but makes quality its priority. In order to meet national standards the City would need to provide an additional 17.4 ha of space based on the NPFA standards. However these standards do include both informal (0.6Ha/1000 pop) and formal space (0.2ha/1000 pop). Green space in general does provide for informal play space and as part of this strategy there will be a recommendation to improve

of this type of provision throughout green spaces. It is therefore considered only necessary to concentrate on formal, equipped play space. It should be noted that the Audit showed that a majority of stakeholders, 70%, considered that there was a deficiency of provision of this category with only 23% considering that provision was about right. It is therefore proposed that the NPFA standard is adopted and that 0.2ha per 1000 population is made the local standard.

Allotments – The GIS mapping data shows allotments to be minimally over provided by 0.02 ha per 1000 people. This equates to approximately 0.5ha over the whole city. However, it is noticeable that when the allotments are mapped that there is a distinct under provision in certain areas. For instance there are 13 allotments (approx 0.2ha) at Radcliffe Road serving an area of approximately 8000 addresses and probably in excess of 10000 people*. This area therefore appears to be under provided by 1.8ha of allotments. Whereas other areas, such as Millbrook have a provision of approximately a third more than is required for the population of the area. The Audit shows that a majority of stakeholders, 70%, believed that provision was about right with 22% considering there was deficiency in 2004/5. However, since the Audit the Allotments take up has risen from 78% to around 96% with nearly all available allotments now being taken and many waiting lists for the more popular sites. It is therefore proposed to take forward a standard of 0.22ha per 1000 population, but redistribution will be explored wherever possible.

Cemeteries and Churchyards – There are no standards set for amount of cemeteries provision as a green space. However, cemeteries and churchyards do provide important green space and in particular biodiversity sites and often add to the strategic green links across the City. There is 49.46 Ha under SCC ownership. The proposed standard for this provision as a green space is 0.22ha per 1000 population

Civic Spaces – There are 3.48 ha of Civic Spaces and these mainly include the Central and district shopping parades. There is no standard for the quantity of provision.

How Good Is It?

The quality of Southampton's green spaces varies widely across the city. Quality is a subjective matter and can mean different things to different people. A wildlife area may be considered untidy and unmanaged to an untrained eye, and conversely a manicured lawn may look like a green desert to an ecologist. The key is to get a balance to ensure that the area is providing an amenity to the widest community possible without significantly affecting the biodiversity of the area.

Southampton has 3 parks recognised as being of high quality through the Green Flag Award scheme and applied for 2 additional parks in 2008. There are currently only 554 Green Flag Award winning parks in the country.

* This figure is based on there being an average of 2 people per dwelling and that not all the addresses will be residential.

One of the recommendations of this document is therefore to develop a system of assessing the quality of green spaces based on the Green Flag Award criteria. This will reduce subjectivity and provide a clear system for grading the green spaces.

Southampton also has a wide range of formal sporting facilities which due to reduced maintenance budgets, it has not been possible to sustain. Some have therefore come into disrepair and others have been abandoned altogether.

There is a playing pitch strategy and it is important that this is considered when future management of these sites is put into action. In December 2007 the management responsibility for the majority of the outdoor sports pitches was moved from Leisure to the Neighbourhood Services Team. This should give a much more unified approach to green space management.

Certain green spaces are within routes that are currently assessed using Government Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI). Inspections are carried out and data is collected against BVPI 199 and 119.

BVPI 199 (a) refers to amounts of litter and detritus and Southampton has consistently done well in maintaining a low level of this.

BVPI 199 (b) refers to amounts of graffiti and (c) refers to amounts of flyposting and Southampton has been reducing these on a year to year basis for some time now.

BVPI 119 (e) refers to the levels of satisfaction with parks and again Southampton has always done well with a high satisfaction in the cities parks.

Current Standards

There are no national or local standards for quality of green spaces. However, various service level agreements between Neighbourhood Services and other Council Divisions do set out some “Service Promises” that apply to green spaces. These assure a level of quality and are summarised in the table below:

Service Type	Service Promise	Review frequency	Target
Grass Cutting	General grass height maintained at < 75mm with no ribbing or scalping except where other management regime has been identified, ie for biodiversity.	Monthly	90%
	Litter and other debris removed prior to cut	Monthly	90%
	Follow - up mowing completed within 24 hours of initial cut	Monthly	90%

Service Type	Service Promise	Review frequency	Target
	Unsightly or hazardous cuttings removed from adjacent paths or hard standing.	Monthly	90%
	Grass will be returned below 75mm height within 7 days of being reported, except where other management schemes are in force, such as for biodiversity	twelve monthly	90%
Shrubs & Hedges	Shrub pruning appropriate to function and location, with no obstruction of signs, paths and access points.	Monthly	90%
	Bed edges neatly defined	Monthly	90%
	Bed more than 90% free of weed.	Monthly	90%
	Bed more than 90% free of litter and other debris	Monthly	90%
Play Areas	Play equipment and play surfaces maintained in a safe and serviceable condition, or safely immobilised and reported to Play Services Officer/Rangers	Monthly	90%
	Play area surfaces clean and well maintained, with no fouling, and little evidence of litter or other debris.	Monthly	90%
	Play area equipment and infrastructure (signs, bins, fences, gates) clear of fouling and inappropriate or offensive graffiti.	Monthly	90%
Tree Risk Management	To reduce the risk posed to the public by tree related hazards we aim to meet the following targets: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of all trees will be inspected within their designated timeframes. • 100% of all identified hazards will be addressed within a 12-week period. • Staff training plans will be produced via the appraisal process, and will ensure that all staff are updated on developments in tree hazard identification. 	Twelve monthly	90%
	To ensure that the system is defensible: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All appropriate tree related records will be stored and linked to the relevant tree. • The rules and service standards will be subject to regular review. 	Twelve monthly	90%
City Tree Maintenance	To ensure that the service maintains a customer focus, and meets corporate standards: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All tree enquiries will receive an acknowledgement response within 10 days 	Twelve monthly	90%

Service Type	Service Promise	Review frequency	Target
Tree Planting Programme	To ensure that a sustained tree cover is maintained in Southampton: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A survival rate of 90% (three years after planting) will be the target for all tree plantings (excluding losses from vandalism). 	Twelve monthly	90%
Tree Emergency Response	To ensure that risk to the public through tree related failures is minimised: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All emergency works will be addressed within 2 hours (excluding <i>force majeure</i>). 	Twelve monthly	90%
Biodiversity	Habitats and populations of species listed in section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and any of local importance listed within the Southampton Biodiversity Action Plan will be maintained and enhanced wherever possible.	Five Yearly	90%

In addition to these local service promises the Civic Trust run a national scheme called the Green Flag Award scheme which gives a nationally recognised approach for providing parks and green spaces to a high level of quality. Their guidelines can be used as a basis for a quality standard which could be split into eight categories which added together give an overall assessment of the quality of a green space. The criteria are as follows:

1. A Welcoming Place
2. Healthy, Safe, and Secure
3. Clean and Well Maintained
4. Sustainable
5. Managed for its Conservation and Heritage
6. Managed with Community Involvement
7. Marketed well
8. Managed appropriately

Although not currently adopted as local standards for green spaces, these eight principles are used when management plans are written for any green spaces. They could therefore be used to set local standards for green space as they are applicable to all green spaces.

Survey Data

Essentially the survey data showed that there is a diverse range of green spaces each with its own level of quality. This is not useful when trying to develop standards and it was decided to carry out a quick exercise to assess the quality of our parks at this point in time.

In order to quantify the current quality of the formal parks a desk top exercise was carried out. The purpose of the exercise was to consider the general quality of the green space by considering what facilities were there, what condition they were in and how well they served the local community. Green Flag Award criteria were used as a basis to rate each of the parks. Under

each of the criteria the park was given a score of 0 to 5, 0 being non-existent, 1 being very poor through to 5 being very good.

The scoring was made by a panel made up of a long standing member of the Neighbourhood Services Team, Southampton's own green flag judge and the Parks and Green Space Development Officer. All members of the panel were well acquainted with the green flag criteria and the parks they were assessing.

The scoring table can be found below:

Site	A Welcoming Place	Healthy, Safe, and Secure	Clean and Well Maintained	Sustainable	Managed for its Conservation and Heritage	Managed with Community Involvement	Marketed well	Managed appropriately	Total
Bitterne Manor Open Space	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	6
Freemantle Lake Park	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	6
Mount Pleasant Open Space	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	6
Hum Hole	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	7
Redbridge Wharf	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	7
Blechynden Park	0	1	3	3	0	0	0	1	8
Aldermoor Road Open Space	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	9
Bakers Drove	1	1	1	1	3	0	0	2	9
Sport Zone Local Park	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	9
Test Playing Fields Area	1	2	2	3	0	0	0	2	10
Northam Bridge	1	3	3	1	0	0	0	3	11
Freemantle Common	1	1	2	3	1	2	0	2	12
Olive Road Recreation Ground	2	1	2	3	2	0	0	2	12
Deep Dene	2	2	2	3	2	0	0	2	13
Freshfield Road Open Space	1	3	3	3	0	0	0	3	13
Lawn Road Open Space	1	3	3	3	0	0	0	3	13
Sullivan Road	1	2	4	3	0	0	0	3	13
Town Quay and Cuckoo Lane	2	1	2	3	3	0	0	2	13
Butts Road Rec	1	2	4	3	0	2	0	2	14
Donkey Common	1	2	2	3	3	0	0	3	14
Mansbridge recreation ground	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	14
Platform Park	1	4	3	3	0	0	0	3	14
Sports Centre	2	2	2	1	0	0	5	2	14

Site	A Welcoming Place	Healthy, Safe, and Secure	Clean and Well Maintained	Sustainable	Managed for its Conservation and Heritage	Managed with Community Involvement	Marketed well	Managed appropriately	Total
Abbey Hill	2	2	4	3	2	0	0	2	15
Queens Park	3	3	3	3	2	0	0	1	15
Archery Rec	2	2	4	2	1	3	0	2	16
Frogs Copse	1	2	2	3	3	3	0	2	16
Octavia Road Open Space	2	2	3	3	3	0	0	3	16
Portswood Rec	2	2	3	3	1	3	0	2	16
Shirley Ponds	2	2	3	3	3	0	0	3	16
Daisy Dip	2	2	2	3	3	3	0	2	17
Chessel bay	2	2	1	3	3	2	1	4	18
Mayflower Park	1	4	3	3	0	0	5	2	18
Millbrook Recreation Ground	3	3	3	3	0	0	2	4	18
Veracity Recreation Ground	3	2	3	3	0	3	0	4	18
Little Mongers Park	3	3	4	3	0	2	0	4	19
Lordshill Rec	3	3	3	3	0	0	3	4	19
Riverside Park	3	3	2	4	4	0	0	3	19
Thornhill Park	3	3	3	3	2	2	0	3	19
Cedar Lodge Park	3	4	4	3	3	0	0	4	21
Peartree Green	3	3	2	3	4	3	0	3	21
Rope Walk Community Garden	3	4	3	3	0	5	0	3	21
Weston Shore	3	3	2	3	4	2	3	2	22
Mansel Park	3	3	4	3	3	3	1	4	24
St. James Park	3	3	4	3	2	4	2	4	25
Hinkler Green	5	4	4	2	0	4	3	4	26

Site	A Welcoming Place	Healthy, Safe, and Secure	Clean and Well Maintained	Sustainable	Managed for its Conservation and Heritage	Managed with Community Involvement	Marketed well	Managed appropriately	Total
Northam Doorstep Green	4	3	4	3	0	4	4	4	26
The Common	4	3	4	4	5	3	3	5	31
Central Parks	4	4	4	3	4	3	5	5	32
Mayfield Park	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	33
	103	119	135	132	79	61	42	133	

The scores for the criteria were added up and the park was categorised into one of the following:

Score	
0-8	= Very Poor
9-16	= Poor
17-24	= Adequate
25-32	= Good
33-40	= Very Good

This exercise showed that of the 50 parks looked at for quality; 12% were considered very poor, 48% were considered to be poor, 28% were considered to be adequate, 10% were considered to be good and 2% were considered very good.

This quick exercise showed that, in the opinion of the panel, 60% of Southampton's parks fall below adequate quality, with only 12% considered good or very good. The area where the parks consistently fell down was with marketing, but many parks also scored poorly under the Managed with Community Involvement and Managed for Conservation and Heritage criteria.

What Do You Think About Our Green Spaces?

As part assessing how well Local Authorities (LA) are doing the government provide a range of performance indicators (PI). One of these indicators is Best Value Performance Indicator 119e. This particular PI assess how satisfied local residents are with the LA Parks and Open Spaces Service. The surveys are carried out every three years and the results since the year 2000 are summarised as follows:

Percentage of residents satisfied with Local Authority parks and open spaces Service	Year
68%	2000/2001
82%	2003/2004
84%	2006/2007

In addition to these results Southampton City Council also carried out a BVPI tracker survey in 2005. This asked a slightly different question to that of the MORI survey, in as much as it asked what resident's opinions were of their Local Park, rather than of the parks and open spaces service. This showed that 75% of people were satisfied with their Local Park, a drop from the 2003/04 figures and less than the 2006/07 figures. The Audit showed that there was general satisfaction with the maintenance of the parks with 66% rating general cleanliness as good or very good.

This shows that although residents may be satisfied with the overall service given by the Neighbourhood Services Team, they are not always satisfied with their Local Park. This view is supported by the Audit data which showed that 70% of those surveyed considered that local provision of parks to be good or very good and 86% rated the provision in Southampton overall to be good or very good.

This discrepancy between opinions of Local Parks and overall provision in the city shows that there needs to be a system in place which can manage both major attraction parks and local doorstep greens. A hierarchy of parks could be developed so that provision at a local level can be given standards separately from provision at a city wide level. For example the Centre of Southampton has a group of Green Flag award winning parks collectively known as Central Parks. These are likely to require a very different management and improvement regime than a small local park such as Lawn Road.

This view is supported by the Audit which notes in its general comments that:

- Green flag awards show the disparity of open space as they have only been awarded for formal parks in the centre of the city and for Mayfield Park. It indicates that improvements are needed for open spaces in the outer area of the city in order for them to be of the same standard as those in the city centre.
- There was a significant difference between open spaces across the city with many, especially in more deprived areas, having poor standards of facilities and maintenance.

The Audit also showed up some areas where users thought parks were lacking:

- 54% thought that provision for young people aged 12 to 17 was not adequate.
- 66% considered that there should be more organised activities in sports.
- 64% were aware of nuisance of the parks with 78% citing vandalism as a problem.
- Improvements were requested in specific parks with regards to:
 - Maintenance of the pathways
 - The provision of benches
 - The provision of litter bins
 - The provision of dog bins

The Audit schools consultation also showed that:

- Provision for older children needs to be improved.
- Issue of underage consumption of alcohol in the parks should be addressed
- Play equipment needs to be refurbished in some parks.
- Some parks have a problem with litter and broken glass and require more frequent cleansing.
- More organised activities involving children and young people should be encouraged.

It should be noted that the Audit survey work was carried out in late 2004 / early 2005. The survey of the quality provides a snapshot of the conditions found at the time. Improvement works have taken place in some of the parks since then, for instance Southampton now has 3 Green Flag Award winning parks rather than 2.

By developing a hierarchy resources can be effectively targeted to ensure that all Southampton's green spaces are providing an appropriate service to their local community.

Where Is It?

The majority of the green space under the control of SCC has been plotted onto a map. The only exception to this is amenity space, as there is a large amount of very small plots, the decision was made to only plot those areas larger than 0.1ha.

This plan can be split down into its separate PPG17 categories and these show the distribution of each category across the city.

How Is It Protected?

Land Holding Powers

Southampton City Council is the custodian of its publicly owned green spaces and does have to abide by certain rules when dealing with these spaces. These rules are contained in Acts of parliament and applied to the land as holding powers.

The holding powers often give the reason for the existence of green space as well as being generally what is called permissive powers, telling us what we can do on the land, subject often to conditions.

It is therefore important to know what holding powers each of our parks is subject to as this tells us what we can and can't do there.

The key holding powers for the majority of Southampton's parks are the Public Health Acts 1875-1925. They contain the legal framework for modern (in 1925) parks management. The primary act is the 1875 Public Health Act which gave Local Authorities the power to "layout, plant, improve and maintain parks". There are a further 4 acts in this period which need to be read in conjunction to give an overall picture of the powers the Council has.

Byelaws

In addition to the holding powers the Council also have a number of byelaws relating to green space, and in particular what used to be known as pleasure grounds (parks). These are called the Pleasure Ground byelaws of 1967.

Byelaws are a normal and recognised form of control of public spaces by the management. The byelaws set out restrictions to the use of certain parks and give a level of fine for infringement of the byelaw.

Southampton's byelaws do not currently reflect the modern use of its green spaces.

The Hampshire Act

The Hampshire Act was brought into force in 1983 and is on the whole a permissive act. It largely repealed already existing old local legislation but saved certain relevant sections and created new sections, primarily relating to the City's common land. Of most interest are the powers given to the Council to close Southampton Common for events, subject to certain conditions. This act gives the Council its power to licence Mayflower Park for the use of the International Boat Show each year.

Registered Common Land

Certain green spaces in Southampton are registered as either Common Land or Village Greens and in general terms are governed by the Commons Act 2006, although there are numerous other Acts and court rulings that also contribute to what can and can not be done on a common.

Registered Common Land and Village Greens can be considered to have a high level of protection under law. Generally the law prohibits enclosure of and building on Common Land without the consent from the appropriate national authority (in Southampton's case The Secretary of State). There is provision for events to be held on this land and different rules apply to different land, depending on the holding powers of the land and whether it is separately catered for by separate legislation.

There are 6 pieces of land Registered as Commons in Southampton. These are as follows:

- Southampton Common
- Queens Park (AKA Porters Meadow)
- Central Parks (AKA West [Watts] Park, East [Andrews] Park, Palmerston Park, Houndwell Park and Hoglands Park)
- Freemantle Common
- Sholing Common (AKA Donkey Common)
- Avenue Lands (AKA Cavendish Grove and Asylum Green)

There are also 3 pieces of land registered as a Village or Town Green. These are as follows:

- Bassett Green
- Peartree Green
- The Itchen river bed from Woodmill bridge to beyond the White Swan

For full details on the exact boundaries of each piece of land the Common Land Register, held by Southampton City Council, must be interrogated.

Local Plan Review

The Local Plan Review (LPR) is the adopted development plan for the city and applies national and regional planning guidance to Southampton. It shows how land should be developed and its policies are used to determine

applications for planning permission. The policies in the Local Plan Review address the following relevant issues:

Protecting open space

The LPR includes policies to protect open space and the natural environment.

Policy CLT3 (and Appendix 5) of the LPR identifies areas of open space where development will not be permitted unless it meets one of a set of criteria;

- The open space falls within an area where there is an over provision of accessible public open space or it is clearly surplus to requirements and cannot reasonably be used to meet identified needs; or
- Provision is made for the relocation or replacement of the open space of equivalent community benefit; or
- The development is required for a sports facility that is of sufficient benefit to the development of sport to justify the loss of playing field land.

Currently 893.1 ha of open space is protected by policy CLT 3. These are long standing designations and comprise the Central Parks, Southampton Common, the Sports Centre, other playing fields, sites of importance for nature conservation, allotments, local parks and informal recreation areas.

Policy CLT4 states when proposals to develop or incorporate amenity open spaces into gardens will be permitted. This will only be possible where it can be demonstrated that the site has no overall landscape or nature conservation value and no recreational value and where it is possible to impose specific conditions on the development. There is a specific policy (CLT8) on the type of development which would be permitted in order to improve the sporting and visitor facilities at the Sports Centre.

Providing new open space

The Local Plan Review contains policies to provide new open space and children's play areas (policies CLT5 - 6). These policies recognise that residents of new development will need these facilities. It therefore sets a minimum standard for provision of open space based on population size and the requirements to provide children's play areas depending on the size of the proposed development.

There is also a policy (CLT7) that allocates specific sites for the provision of public open space. These sites include land identified for playing pitches, extensions to existing open spaces, open space to act as a buffer for a local nature reserve and to serve new development.

Addressing waterfront open space

Southampton's open spaces include Weston Shore, Mayflower Park and Riverside Park which are on the waterfront. Policies in CLT10 - 13 set out the criteria for waterside development including house boats and development supporting water-based recreation. There is a requirement to incorporate and

enhance public access to the water, to ensure that there is no adverse effect on nature conservation and no conflict with other river users.

Provision of infrastructure

Policy IMP1 states that development will only be permitted if the necessary infrastructure, services, facilities and amenities to meet the needs of the development are available or alternatively will be provided with contributions sought from developers towards its cost. This is in addition to specific requirements in policy CLT5 on open space in new residential developments and policy CLT6 for children's play areas.

Other policies

There are also policies to restrict developments on parks and gardens of special historic interest (HE5), protect habitats (NE1 - 5), address the redevelopment of surplus or redundant school buildings (L3) and demand high quality housing design and layout (H7).

Chapter 3

Are All Our Parks The Same?

- **Standards**
 - **Why Do We Need Standards?**
 - **Accessibility**
 - **Quantity**
 - **Size**
 - **Quality**
 - **Green Flag Criteria**
 - **Protection**
- **Southampton's Parks Classification**
 - **City/Regional Parks**
 - **District Parks**
 - **Local/Pocket Parks**
 - **Amenity Spaces**
 - **Other Green Spaces**
- **Planning Obligations**
- **Other Targets**
 - **LAA Targets for Biodiversity**
 - **LAA Targets for Green Flags**
 - **BVPI**

Standards

Why Do We Need Standards?

Prioritising Budgets

Standards will be used for prioritising budgets and targeting areas for funding. Parks in Southampton will have minimum criteria that designates them a park. Parks that should reach the criteria but currently do not can be targeted for funding to ensure they do in the future. Where green space does not meet the standard, budgets/funding can be prioritised to ensure that it is brought up to a minimal standard.

Quality Parks Evenly Distributed

Each type of green space in the city will have a set of basic level standards to which it will be measured against. In the case of parks this will be a base level of Local Park. If the local park then gets improved it may then fall into the standards for a District park or City park.

Working Towards A Southampton Local Standard

They will help to work towards a local standard for all Southampton's parks. The standards proposed are not written in stone and public consultation will enable a truly local set of standards to evolve. These can then be applied to green spaces throughout the city.

Protection and Enhancement

They will provide important data to ensure appropriate green space is protected and enhanced. By assessing each green space against the standards, and certain other criteria, such as the amount of use an area gets and its distribution throughout the city, it will be possible to get a greater understanding of the importance of that green space in the area. This will enable us to set protection levels on the space and therefore ensure that the appropriate spaces are being fully protected.

The objectives of this Strategy and its commitment that there be no net loss of the amount of protected green spaces, will strengthen the existing protection given to open space already in the Development Plan. The baseline amount of green space will be taken as that which existed on 1 January 2008.

The Council will continue to, where possible, add to the stock of accessible green space. However, it is recognised that opportunities for new green space outside of development sites is extremely limited. Where creation or conversion of new areas, eg using derelict land or turning amenity green space into a local park, can be accomplished, applying the appropriate standards for the type of space that is being created will ensure good quality parks are provided.

Informing the Planning Process

Standards will be used to inform the planning process both in the provision of new spaces and for calculating developer planning obligations (currently under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). We may ask developers to provide a base level park, ie a local park, and to do this we have to have criteria for that type of park, such as it must be at least 0.4 hectares in size per 1000 people. If the development is particularly large then it may mean that a District park needs to be provided. This can similarly be applied to allotments. Amenity Green Space, although important is unlikely to figure in calculations for open space provision in developments. Where a park can not be provided equivalent funds will need to be made available, possibly based on cost for SCC to provide such a space, ie cost of land and construction of park.

Alternative methods of providing green space, such as green roofs would be considered on a case by case basis.

Proposed Local Standards for Southampton

The standards presented on the next few pages have been proposed following detailed mapping of all our green spaces. They are recommendations that could be adopted and put forward to become Council policy in the future. But before this happens it is important that residents of Southampton understand them and agree to them. The alternative is to rely on more broad brush national standards that do not consider the uniqueness of Southampton.

Standards for Southampton's green spaces have been split into five categories:

- Accessibility
- Quantity
- Size
- Quality
- Protection

Accessibility

There are three themes to accessibility; ease of access when travelling to the green space, physical access onto the green space and a more general aspiration to provide an equality of use for all members of society.

As a standard has to be measurable it is only appropriate to set standards for travelling to and physical access to green spaces. These standards are:

Travel Access

Accessibility standards for Southampton have been set in the Local Plan Review March 2006 and although essentially developed for use in car parking provision policy, do provide a useful tool to assess how accessible green spaces are in the City.

The accessibility areas are defined as follows:

- High accessibility (including the city centre and principal transport corridors),
- Medium accessibility (other transport corridors and specific points),
- Low accessibility (rest of the city).

An area of high accessibility is determined by the provision of 20 or more buses per hour (weekday-daytime) within a 400-metre radius along a principal transport corridor. Medium accessibility refers to provision of 10-19 buses per hour along either a transport corridor or a specific point served. Medium accessibility (trains) refers to any areas within an 800- metre radius of a national rail station other than Southampton Central, which is defined as high accessibility due to the enhanced service. Low accessibility refers to the rest of the city.

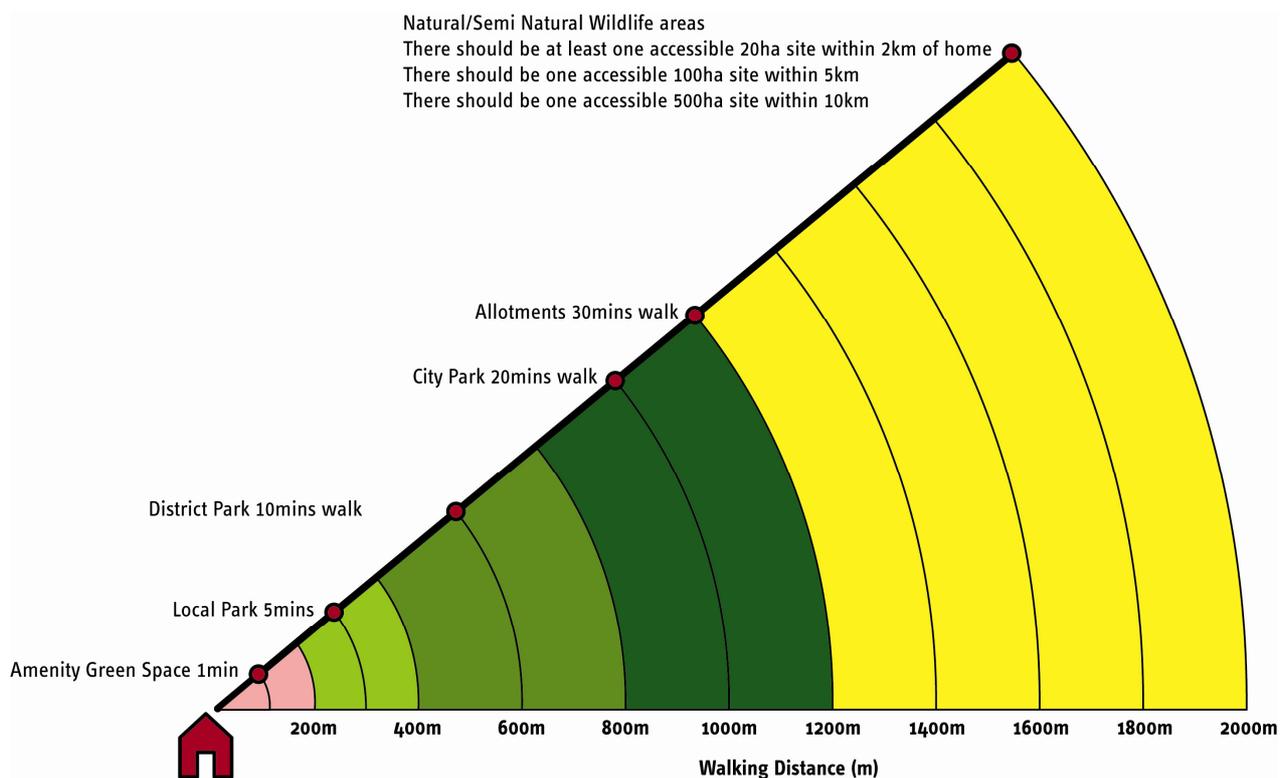
It is proposed to adopt these as the standards for ease of getting to green spaces and apply them to the emerging green space typologies.

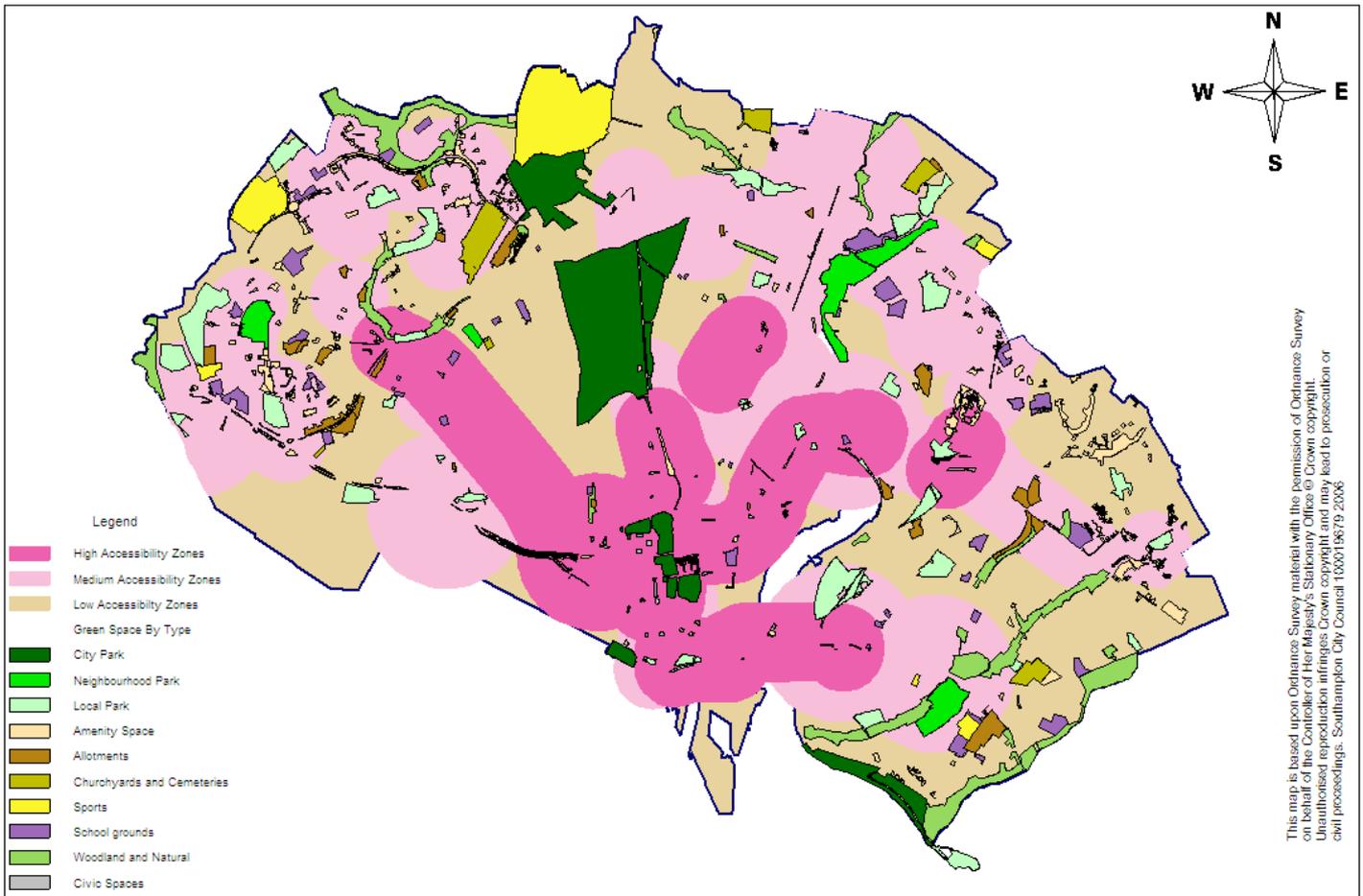
In addition to accessibility by public transport green space is also accessible by walking. A local park, or amenity area should only be a short distance from the local community, whereas a city

wide/regional park may be used by people further away and therefore people are prepared to travel for longer to get there.

The following table gives the proposed standard for distance travelled on foot to each green space type and what its expected accessibility would be on public transport.

Green Space Type	Distance People may be Prepared to Walk Based on average walking speed of 2-3mph or 3-5km per Hour	Expected Accessibility
City Park	20 min a distance ranging from 800m to 1.2km	High
District Park	10 min a distance ranging from 400m to 800m	Medium
Local Park	5 min a distance ranging from 200m to 400m	Low
Amenity Green Space	1 min approximately 60m	Low
Allotments	20 to 30min a distance greater than 1.2km	Medium/High
Woodlands and Natural	5 min approximately 300m	Low
Cemeteries	N/A	Medium
All Outdoor Sports Provision	15 min approximately 900m walk 10 min approximately 4km drive	Medium
Equipped Children's Play Space	LEAP: within 5 min	Low
	NEAP: within 20 min	High





Plan Showing Accessibility Zones as Per SDP5 of the Local Plan with SCC Owned Green Space by Type

Physical Access

This describes the level of access available to a site, it does not include getting to the site, but does include ease of travel around the site. It is one of the aims of this strategy to ensure the needs of different sections of the community are clearly recognised. This includes the ability of the community to physically access a site.

Physical access to and within a site is important and has been based on the Sensory Trust guideline “By all reasonable means: inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people”. These guidelines deal principally with paths and routes and are defined primarily in terms of physical access, and predominantly in relation to people with mobility impairments. The overriding principle is one of “Least Restrictive Access” to outdoor spaces which helps raise the standard of access overtime. Green space access will be categorised following the principles set down in Appendix 1 of the Sensory Trust document. Where full accessibility is not available over a whole site it is generally accepted that fully accessible “honey pot” areas are appropriate to enable an appreciation of the site.

Table 2 of the Sensory Trust guideline “By all reasonable means: inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people” gives standards for accessibility to green spaces and is reproduced below:

	IDEAL	ZONE A	ZONE B	ZONE C
Barriers	No physical barriers	No steps higher than 15mm or stiles, fences or hedges and walls to restrict access	No steps higher than 40mm, or stiles, fences or hedges and walls to restrict access	No steps higher than 100mm, or stiles, fences or hedges and walls to restrict access
Path surfaces	Hard and firm with no loose material, non-slip surface and well draining	Hard and firm with some loose stones (no bigger than 10mm) not covering the whole surface	Path possibly modified (preferably hard and firm in all weathers) with some stones up to 40mm and occasional tree roots, potholes and short stretches (<10m) of rutting up to 100mm	Path possibly modified (not necessarily hard and firm in all weathers) with some stones up to 100mm. Occasional tree roots, potholes and short stretches (<10m) of rutting up to 100mm
Path widths	2,000mm or 1,500mm with passing places	At least 1,000mm	At least 900mm	At least 900mm
Width restrictions	As Zone A	At least 900mm for no more than 1,600mm along path and any gate at least 1,000mm	Any gap at least 900mm and any gate at least 1,000mm	Any gap at least 900mm and any gate at least 1,000mm
Surface breaks	No surface breaks	No more than 12mm measured across the line of the path	No more than 12mm measured across the line of the path	No more than 75mm measured across the line of the path
Path gradients	Maximum of 1:20	Maximum of 1:10 for natural and built gradients	Maximum of 1:10 for natural gradients. Maximum of 1:8 for built gradients	Natural gradients not limited. Maximum of 1:8 for built gradients
Height rise between landings on built ramps steeper than 1:20	As Zone A	Maximum of 950mm	Maximum of 950mm where feasible and information is provided	Maximum of 950mm where feasible and information is provided
Cross slopes	Maximum of 1:50, level where possible	Maximum of 1:50	Maximum of 1:35	Maximum of 1:25 but cross slopes caused by tree roots/potholes/ruts may be greater

	IDEAL	ZONE A	ZONE B	ZONE C
Clear walking tunnel	As Zone A	At least 1,000mm wide and 2,100mm high	Cut vegetation to at least 1,000mm wide and 2,100mm high	Cut vegetation to at least 1,000mm wide and 2,100mm high
Passing places	At least every 50m unless path width exceeds 2,000mm	At least every 150m	Not formalised or surfaced, but at least one passing opportunity (2m x 2m) every 150m	Not formalised or surfaced, but at least one passing opportunity (2m x 2m) every 150m
Rest areas	At least every 100m	At least every 300m	At least every 1,000m	Not formalised
Edges	Clearly visible	N/A	N/A	N/A
Platforms	At least every 950mm of vertical rise in any slope	N/A	N/A	N/A

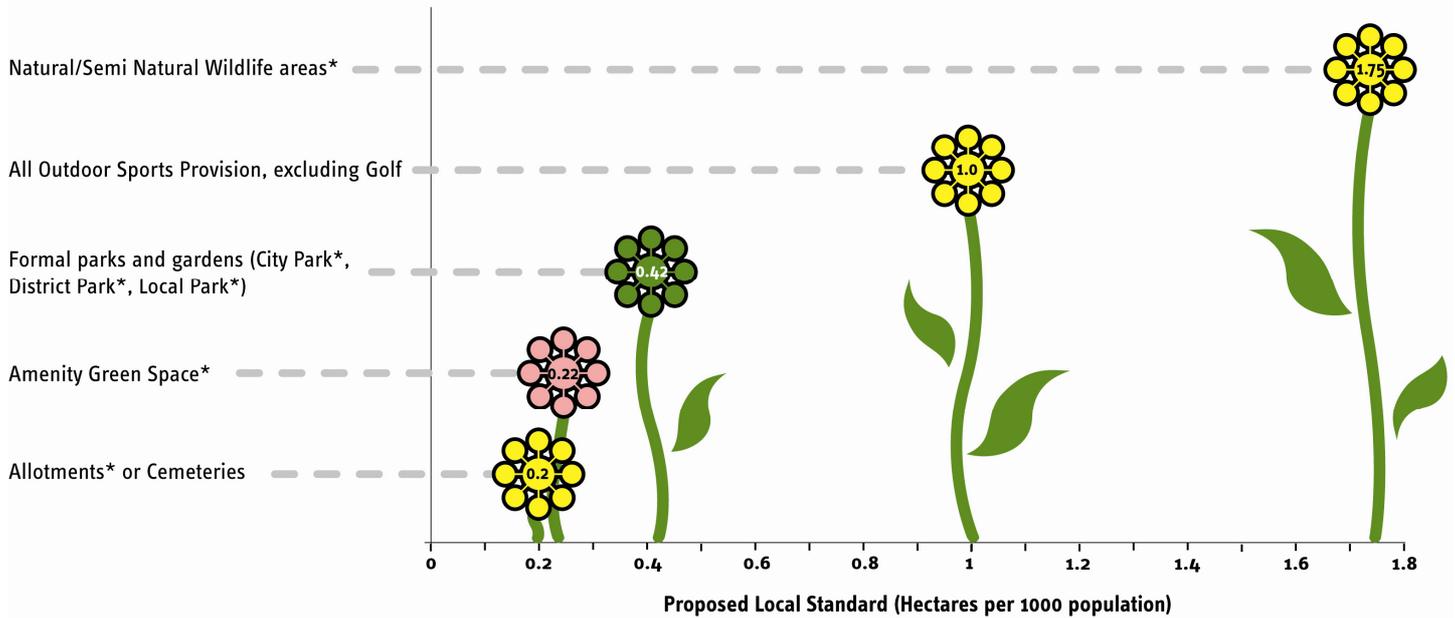
It is recommended that the above standards are adopted for green spaces in Southampton.

Quantity

The opportunity for new green space in Southampton is very limited. However, it is useful to set some quantity standards as a benchmark to ensure that there is no significant loss of any one type of green space. They can also be set as an aspiration should government housing policy suddenly radically change.

The table below summarises the standards proposed in Chapter 3.

Green Space Type	Proposed Local Standard (Quantity in Hectares per 1000 population)
Formal Parks (City, District or Local)	0.42
Amenity Green Space	0.22
Allotments	0.22
Woodlands and Natural	1.75
Cemeteries	0.22
All Outdoor Sports Provision, excluding Golf	1.00
Equipped Children's Play Space	0.2 – Formal Play with equipment Informal play incorporated into the rest of the green space



Size

The size of certain types of provision can be very important. In order to provide certain facilities for the public parks will need to be of a certain size. With increased size and facilities the park will be able to support a greater number of visitors and will more than likely support visitors not just from the local community but from out of the city as well. When defining types of green space, it is therefore important to consider their overall size.

Another aspect of size is the economics of managing the space. If a green space is too small or fragmented then management costs will increase. It is more expensive to maintain many small pieces of grass than it is to maintain a single larger piece. Wherever achievable green space should be unified to make it as continuous as possible.

With regards to the planning process, including a minimum acceptable size within adoption criteria provides a transparent policy based way of deciding whether to require a developer to make on site or contribute to off site provision. This can help to prevent provision which will be too small to be of benefit to local communities, or unnecessarily expensive to maintain.

The following minimum sizes of green space types are summarised here:

Green Space Type*	Minimum Expected Size in Hectares
City Park	10
District Park	6
Local Park	0.1
Amenity Green Space	0.1
Allotments	0.2
Woodlands and Natural	ANGST standards give minimum sizes for different provision of natural/semi-natural wildlife areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km of home • There should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km • There should be one accessible 500ha site within 10km
Cemeteries	N/A
All Outdoor Sports Provision, excluding Golf	0.2 – size of mini-soccer pitch OR 0.07 = size of tennis court.
Equipped Children’s Play Space	0.04 – LEAP
	0.1 – NEAP
Children’s Play Space informal	N/A

Quality

Quality although difficult to measure is an important criteria for providing green spaces that are used and respected. Low quality areas are often seen as poorly managed and are quickly underused. It is considered important therefore to have some base level quality standards that can be applied to all green spaces. The following standards are based on the Green Flag criteria.

* See Section below for definitions of green space types.

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
1	A Welcoming Place	All users can expect a local green space which is easy to find, with a defined access, and in the case of parks a sign giving the name of the park.	No Sign, but features in Open Spaces leaflet or web site showing where green spaces are in Southampton	One sign at the most used entrance to the green space	All main entrances signed with a clear sign giving the parks name	All entrances are signed with a clear sign giving the parks name. Sign posted from local roads.	All entrances signed with a clear sign giving the parks name and a map showing where you are and the main features on site. Sign posted from major routes into city.
2		All users can expect to find basic details for enquiries and complaints within formal parks. Other interpretation boards can be expected as necessary in all green spaces.	No interpretation only information available is in the Open Spaces leaflet.	Contact details on main entrance signs. No on site interpretation.	Clear contact details on entrance signs. Entrance sign incorporates Byelaw information. Interpretation boards for main features of site	Clear contact details throughout site. Interpretation boards adding to the overall user's experience of the area.	Full details of contact numbers for relevant teams to deal with enquiries integrated into the on site interpretation . Fully interactive interpretation facilities and activities.
3		All users can expect to be able to access green spaces in Southampton.	In a low accessibility area with no or only remote access.	In a low accessibility area with only proximate access.	In low or medium accessibility area with restricted access	In medium accessibility area with restricted or full access.	In high accessibility area with full access.
4		All users can expect appropriate buildings on site to provide enhanced use of the green space.	No facilities	Shelter provided to get out of the rain	Mobile catering units, shelter from the rain, toilets opened during staff working hours	Toilets open 7 days a week, catering facilities or changing rooms or performance areas also available. All facilities DDA compliant.	Fully integrated café, toilets, performance area and changing facilities fully DDA compliant open 7 days a week

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
5	Healthy, Safe, and Secure	All users can expect free use of a green space at any time for the pursuit of healthy activities such as walking and running.	Other management priorities make area inaccessible for recreational use.	Footpaths or mowed grass area for informal recreation	Designated trails of specific distance, marked on site where appropriate, for running and walking. Permanent facilities available for informal sport.	Permanent facilities available for informal sport with programmed events. Trim trails available for a wide range of ages and abilities.	Fully integrated trim trails for all ages and abilities. Sports trainers available on site for instruction and advice.
6		All users can expect to find play opportunities throughout the green space	Uneven grass area	Basic play equipment, areas of natural features that encourage play.	Managed with play in mind. Incidental play can be found throughout the space. Small play areas contain up to date stimulating equipment that is appropriate for its user base.	Management of the green space looks to increase the range of play opportunities for all ages and abilities. Well equipped play areas can be found within the green space. There is a program of replacement equipment and enhancing natural features to encourage and stimulate play	Actively managed to provide a diverse range of play opportunities for all ages and all abilities. A large equipped play area is on site that attracts people from across the city. There is a wide range of natural features, such as woodlands, water, playing pitches, areas for solitude, etc that encourages and stimulates play,

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
7		All users can expect to feel safe when using green spaces.	City Patrol and Police only react to 101 or 999 calls	Occasional visits from City Patrol or the Police	Designing out antisocial behaviour considered as part of any new improvements to the green space. Regular visits from City Patrol or the Police	Designed or managed to reduce the opportunity for antisocial behaviour. Parkforce in place, regular visits by City Patrol and the Police. Drink and Drugs litter reported to police to identify ASB hot spots	Fully designed and constructed to minimise the opportunity for antisocial behaviour. CCTV and lighting provided where appropriate. Fully operational Parkforce members scheme, daily visits by City Patrol, regular visits by Police.
8		All users can expect that formal parks have had a regular inspection of the infrastructure and any faults have been corrected	Elements of the green space may fall below the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act. Infrequent inspections, health and safety faults only are corrected within 12 weeks	Complying with the basic level of safety to satisfy the Health and Safety at Work etc act. Six monthly inspections health and safety faults corrected within 8 weeks other faults corrected within 3 months	Monthly inspections all faults corrected within 8 weeks	Weekly inspections all faults corrected within 4 weeks	Daily inspection by on site staff and Parkforce members who correct faults immediately they are found

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
9		In parks all users can expect to find someone on site who can answer basic enquiries	Different staff members visiting site only when maintenance work is necessary, who are available for only short periods of time to answer questions	Dedicated staff visiting site only when maintenance work is necessary, who are available for only short periods of time to answer questions, backed up by a regular visit from the parks ranger service	Staff visiting site only when maintenance work is necessary, who are available to answer questions, backed up by a regular visit from the parks ranger service	On site staff available to answer questions when asked by the public. Walks and talks by the Park Ranger Service	Fully trained onsite staff who actively seek users opinions. Regular walks and talks by the Park Ranger Service
10	Clean and Well Maintained	All users can expect to find green spaces clean and maintained.	Maintenance only carried out when service promises are exceeded, bins emptied when full and litter removed when reported. Graffiti and fly posting removed when reported	Area maintained as part of the Neighbourhood Services annual program of works. The area will receive an appropriate amount of horticultural and cleansing visits as is necessary for its upkeep.	Maintenance carried out weekly or more often if needed, following horticultural best practice. Litter, graffiti and flyposting cleared within 48 hours.	Maintenance carried out 2 or 3 times a week to a high level of horticultural excellence, service promises rarely exceeded. Bins emptied daily, only small amounts of litter not older than 24 hours, graffiti and flyposting removed within 24 hours of being reported.	Maintenance carried out daily to high levels of horticultural excellence, service promises never exceeded. Bins emptied twice daily or more frequently as use dictates. Only very small amounts of new litter visible, area proactively inspected for graffiti and flyposting which is removed as soon as it is discovered.

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
11	Sustainable	Materials used within parks will be environmentally friendly.	Little or no use of environmentally friendly materials.	When existing materials are worn out they are replaced where economically possible by recycled/ environmentally friendly materials.	When existing materials are worn out they are replaced by recycled/ environmentally friendly materials.	As part of improvements a program of replacement is undertaken to use environmentally friendly materials. Recycled materials are used to renovate other parks.	All materials used are locally sourced. Recycled or environmentally friendly materials are used for all features of the green space, including bins, benches, boundary treatment, footpaths, play equipment. Buildings designed and built using eco-friendly/recycled materials.
12		Green waste will be recycled.	No recycling of green waste	All green waste is recycled off site.	Some green waste is recycled on site but most goes off site to be recycled and reused throughout the City.	Most green waste is recycled on site and reused throughout the site. Larger woody material is recycled off site.	All green waste is recycled on site and reused throughout the site.

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
13		Chemical use will be kept to a minimum.	Current health and safety guidelines adhered to, but otherwise free use of chemicals	Spot spraying where weeds are hard to reach and therefore difficult to remove manually. Also of footpaths and hard surface areas. Pests sprayed as and when necessary.	Spot spraying of footpaths and hard surfaces only, otherwise manual weeding carried out. Spraying of pests where they are an infestation and could affect the growth of key shrubs and trees. No residual Chemicals used	Chemicals rarely used, only in the event of noxious pests and weeds that if not controlled could become a health and safety risk, ie Brown Tail Moth Caterpillars or giant hogweed. Manual weeding undertaken and biological controls used for pests.	No chemicals used, fully integrated pest management system in place. Management of green space based on organic horticulture systems.

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
14		All users can expect the green spaces to take consideration of mitigation for climate change	High amounts of hard surfacing with few or no trees and only limited areas of meadow/grass for carbon sequestration.	The area provides space for run off water and either trees for shading and cooling or meadow land for carbon sequestration.	Porous hard surfacing is used when ever old hard surfacing is replaced, ponds are provided, trees are existing on site, meadow areas are large enough to aid carbon sequestration, when shrub beds are upgraded replacement planting has low water requirements	Water storage areas such as ponds are actively provided for collection and reuse, designated areas are for flood reduction, program of replacing existing hard surfaces with porous hard surfaces, program of replacement planting with low water demand species, trees actively planted to provide shading, low carbon footprint fossil fuel use is kept to a minimum.	The green space is fully integrated into flood risk management. There is water storage on site, both for run off and for reuse in irrigation. Any grey water generated is fully utilised for irrigation. Buildings have green roofs. Trees are provided for shade and their cooling effect. Planting is designed and established that requires reduced amounts of water and is hardy to extremes of weather. Any lighting is powered by purely environmentally friendly sources, such as solar power, Maintenance vehicles and all other activities are carbon neutral.

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
15	Managed for its Conservation and Heritage	All users can expect that green spaces are managed with wildlife conservation in mind.	Conservation not priority object of management	Area managed to ensure biodiversity remains stable	Biodiversity is improving year on year through changes in management of the space	Enhancing existing habitats to increase their biodiversity. Base line surveys and continued monitoring of species types undertaken	Actively creating habitats to enable the widest range of biodiversity possible for the space. Base line surveys and continued monitoring of species types undertaken.
16		All users can expect that heritage will be respected, preserved and enhanced.	Heritage is not a priority object of management, either there is no heritage, it is a recently developed space or the heritage is not considered important enough to preserve.	Heritage recorded and maintained if necessary	Heritage important to local community, maintained and renovated when necessary.	Locally recognised within Hampshire, well maintained and renovated as part of a management plan, Interpretation on site. Information available through web site.	Nationally recognised/ listed. Inspected and actively maintained to ensure they do not degrade. Researched, enhanced, sympathetically improved and appropriately renovated as part of a long term development plan. Interpretation on site, information readily available with regular guided walks,

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
17	Managed with Community Involvement	All residents can expect to be given the opportunity to get involved with the management of their local green space.	Community consultation on key/significant improvements to the green space	Community consultation on management plans and key improvements to the green space	Active Friends of group working closely with LA to write management plans	Partnerships between the LA and the local community are set up to produce management plans and enable joint management and maintenance of the green space	Devolved service, area under lease/licence to local community with full responsibility for management of the green space
18	Marketed well	All users can expect to easily find information on the Open Space service, its events and its key parks and green spaces	Information on the green space can be found as part of the overall Open Space leaflet, that shows all key green spaces in the city	The green space has its own leaflet that is available from local libraries and public buildings	Information available on line. Interpretation boards at key features. Notice boards supplied at key entrances for display of local information.	Interactive maps on line giving information about key features. All information about the green space available on line. wide-ranging interpretation boards on site. Self guided walk leaflets on areas of interest (such as tree or heritage walks)	Interactive walk through on line. Regular guided walks. Staff on site to give information. Hearing loops and self guided walks available. Listening posts and televisual displays showing most up to date information. Study centres with library facilities and knowledge bases.
19		All users can expect their green spaces to be marketed effectively to encourage greater use.	No marketing strategy	Promoted within the local community by leaflet word of mouth and posting information on notice boards	Promoted throughout the city on line and in local papers and magazines.	Integrated into the Council's Marketing Strategy, promoted through regional papers and television.	National marketing campaigns. Features in national publications and the television. Part of international tourist advertising.

	Standard	Description	Criteria from Poor to Good				
			(1) Poor	(2) Satisfactory	(3) Good	(4) Excellent	(5) Outstanding
20	Managed appropriately	All residents can expect that Southampton's green spaces are managed appropriately to their function and the needs of the community.	Follows service level promises	Follows BAP and service level promises	Five year action plan consulted on with the community	5 year management plan following Green Flag Award format, fully integrated ecological plan co-written with the Friends of group	50 year management and development plan, co-written with the friends of group and widely consulted with the general public. Integrated into Council Policy.



Protection

In order to maintain Southampton's vision of continuing its status as a "Green City" it is important to ensure that a similar amount of green space is retained in the future. This does, however, need to be balanced with the pressures of increased housing in the city. In order to do this it will be necessary to give some assurance of protection of green spaces. The following protection levels can be used to ensure that appropriate green spaces are protected into the future.

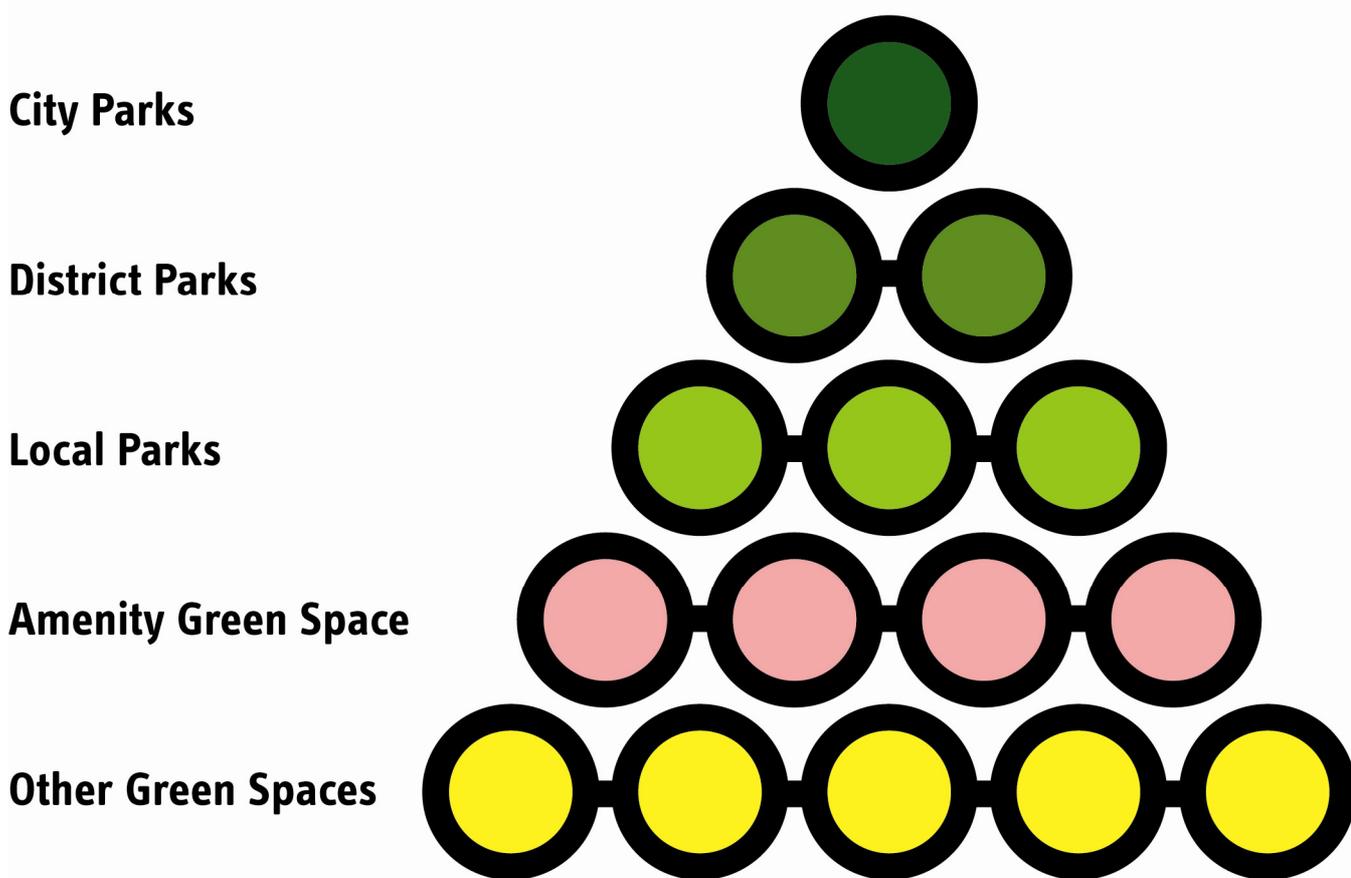
Level	Definition
Protect	This is green space that is viewed as so vital to the life of the town's residents that it should be protected from all development, except where the proposal is for the direct improvement of the site for its management (ie operational buildings) or community use (ie interpretation centre, toilets). For example City, District and Local Parks, woodlands and nature areas, some sports, most allotments
Replace	The total area currently set aside as this green space type is desirable to keep, but its distribution across the city or area is not optimised. Development of this type of green space (either to provide a different type of green space or in some cases as built development) would be allowed where it is over provided. Where built development is allowed it would be with the condition that the green space is replaced (by the developer) by similar provision in an area where it is underprovided. For example some amenity green space, some sports, some allotments
Reconfigure	This is green space which is currently fragmented, for example in housing estates. These could be built on where redevelopment or regeneration of the area would enable this type of green space to be reconfigured to give larger areas of continuous land and improve its quality for recreational purposes and ease of management. There could be some loss of total area to ensure the quality of the retained green space. For example some amenity green space
Convert	Green Space which has low quality and low use and therefore is of little amenity value. This type of green space could be considered for alternative uses such as a different green space type or could be developed to generate income to improve other nearby green spaces following public consultation. For example some highways verges

Southampton's Green Space Classification

There is a requirement from the government that all planning authorities undertake an audit of open space following Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17). Southampton City Council carried out an audit of open spaces in 2005 following PPG17 guidelines, and categorised Southampton's parks and green spaces into their predominant use. However, as spaces are often used for more than one purpose, prioritising resources based on their predominant use is difficult. In accordance with PPG 17, Southampton has developed some local standards. One of these is a categorisation of the green spaces in the city which reflects each of the space's multifunctional use. PPG17 provides 10 categories for open spaces, however it is proposed in this strategy to use only 5 categories. There are 3 park types (City, District, Local), Amenity Green Space and then all Other Green Space. This simplified hierarchy enables standards to be established that are relevant to the size and catchment area of the different types of green space as well as giving a structure for management plans and an ability to upgrade spaces to ensure each type is appropriately distributed across the city.

In Chapter 2 the quantities of different types of green spaces was explored following PPG17 criteria. However, in the case of parks these criteria are considered too broad. For the standards, set out above, the green spaces have been classified into similar types so that resources can be applied appropriately and standards monitored.

The Following diagram shows the proposed hierarchy for Southampton's green spaces.



The typology is generally hierarchical, with the levels of criteria increasing from Amenity Space through to City Parks. The Other green spaces type includes woodlands, allotments, cemeteries, churchyards, civic spaces, school playing fields, sports pitches and privately owned green space, which do not fall easily into a hierarchy, but do need to be considered as part of Southampton's overall green space provision. Below is a more detailed look at the typologies and the criteria that makes up each level. The criteria are made up of a mixture of the facilities, use and standards that would be expected for the type of green space at that level. There is manoeuvrability within each level (ie there will be poor examples and good examples) and it is possible for green space to become a higher level if it is improved (ie an appropriate amenity space could be improved to make it into a local park).

How do you tell the difference between the different types?

The Table below sets out the criteria for each of the green space types with the proposed local standards for Southampton applied:

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
City / Regional Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will have features that attract People from across the city and from outside Southampton's boundary • People are prepared to walk for 20 minutes to get to the park (approximately 1km) or they will drive. • Major events will be held there • There are facilities and enough interesting things to do for people to spend half days or more • The park is within a HIGH accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE A access to site • A site usually over 10 hectares in size • The expected quality standard score is in excess of 80 • The park would have FULL protection 	<p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National recognition (SSSI / Heritage Site) • Formal/Informal Children's play, at least 1 area provided that follows a District equipped area for play (NEAP) model. • Specialist features (e.g. fountains, monuments, specialist horticulture) • Welcome signs at all entrances • Very good transport links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On a public transport route ○ On a preferred Cycle route (see City Bike Guide) • Car parking available • Catering • Permanent Toilets • Large areas for events • High quality formal sporting facilities • Good Biodiversity • On site staff • 10 year management plans • High quality network of formal footpaths • Extensive interpretation of site 	<p>Central Parks (Grade II Listed park) Southampton Common (SSSI) Sports Centre Mayflower Park Weston Shore (SSSI)</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
District Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will have features that attract people from all areas of Southampton • People will be prepared to walk for 10 minutes to get to the park (approximately 600m) • Smaller scale city and community events will be held there • People are likely to stay for several hours • The park is within a MEDIUM accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE A or B access to site • A site usually over 6 hectares in size • The expected quality standard score is in excess of 60 • The park would have FULL protection 	<p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal/Informal Children’s play, at least 1 area provided that follows a local equipped area for play (LEAP) model. • Some specialist features (e.g. fountains, monuments, specialist horticulture) • Welcome signs at main entrances • 5 year management plan • Good transport links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Within 100m of a bus stop ○ Within 5 minutes of a preferred cycle route (see City Bike Guide) • Car park available • Catering (basic) • Permanent Toilets • Areas for events • Some sporting facilities, both formal and informal • Good biodiversity • On site staff • Good network of quality footpaths • Good interpretation boards 	<p>Mayfield Park Riverside Park St James’ Park Mansel Park</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space	
Local Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used by the local community as they are within walking distance of their homes • People will be prepared to walk for 5 minutes to get to the park (approximately 300m) • Local community events • People may spend a few hours or less (longer for events) • The park is within a LOW accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE B or C access to site • A site usually over 0.1 hectares in size • The expected quality standard score is in excess of 40 • The park would most likely have FULL protection under the Green Space Strategy and currently has protection under CLT3 of the Local Plan Review 	<p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area for small events • Areas for informal sport • Play areas formal and informal at least one that follows a local area for play (LAP) model. • Limited specialist features (e.g. fountains, monuments, specialist horticulture) • Welcome sign on site • Managed with biodiversity in mind • Management plan for the park produced • Regularly visited by staff • Network of paths • Areas to keep fit in • 	<p>Queens Park Town Quay and Cuckoo Lane Olive Road Rec Aldermoor Road Bakers Drove Millbrook Rec Green Park Redbridge Wharf Cedar Lodge Shirley Pond Freshfield Road Freemantle Lake Park Little Mongers Park Mount Pleasant Lawn Road Portswood Rec Daisy Dip Mansbridge Octavia Road Frogs Copse</p>	<p>Deep Dene Bitterne Manor Northam Bridge Park Hum Hole Sports Zone Local Park Freemantle Common Veracity Ground Peartree Green Archery Rec Butts Road Rec Sullivan Road Rec Hinkler Green Abbey Hill Northam Doorstep Green Blechynden Park Platform Park Chessel Bay Thornhill Park</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
Amenity Green Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used by very local community. • This green space usually connects to or is adjacent to the homes of the residents using it. • Within 1 minutes walk for users (approximately 100m) • Provides an amenity for the local area • The space is within a LOW accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE C access to site • A site usually over 0.1 hectares in size • Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. • The area is most likely to have RELOCATE or RECONFIGURE protection level 	<p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually grass, shrubs and trees. • Informal play is an integral part of the area • Links to other green spaces • Opportunity to keep fit • Managed following the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) <p>May also include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways provision such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grass verges ○ Roundabouts ○ Traffic islands 	<p>Major areas of Amenity Green Space include</p> <p>Harefield Estate Thornhill Estate Weston Estate Millbrook Estate Lordswood Estate Asylum Green Romsey Road Roundabout</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
Woodlands and Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed principally for biodiversity • People will be prepared to walk for 5 minutes to get to a natural area (approximately 300m) • The space is within a LOW accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE C access to site • Meets with appropriate ANGST standard to give provision across city. • Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. • The area is most likely to have a FULL protection level 	<p>Should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with good access and representative features of the main green area • Natural habitats managed appropriately • Informal footpaths • Interpretation boards <p>May also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas where public are excluded to allow for management of sensitive habitats • Links between parks and green spaces • Green corridors 	<p>The Greenways:</p> <p>Shoreburs Westwood Rollesbrook Lordsdale Bassett Wood Broadlands Valley Monks Brook</p> <p>Other major sites include:</p> <p>Test Lane Marshes Dumbleton Copse Harefield Woodland Netley Common</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed principally for sports. • People will be prepared to walk for 15 minutes to get to the sports area (approximately 900m), or will drive • Will usually be larger than 0.07 ha (the size of a tennis court) • The space can be within a LOW accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE A or B access to site • Size is based on provision but typically 0.2ha = size of mini-soccer pitch OR 0.07 = size of tennis court • Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. • The area is most likely to have FULL or RELOCATE protection level 	<p>Should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports pitches • Bowling greens • Tennis Courts • Multi use games areas (MUGA) • Changing facilities • Car parking available 	<p>Major sites include:</p> <p>Golf Course Stoneham Lane Test Playing Fields Lordshill Rec</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
Allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed principally to provide local residents with areas to cultivate. • Plots provided are usually 10 rods in size (approximately 0.02 ha) although smaller plots are available • People will be prepared to walk for 20 minutes to reach an allotment or to drive • A site will usually be over 0.2ha in size (approximately 10 allotment plots) • The space can be within a LOW accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE C access to site • A site usually over 0.2ha or 10 allotments. • Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. • The area is most likely to have FULL or RELOCATE protection level 	<p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An on site allotments representative • A site produce Shed • Secure fencing and a lockable gate to the site • Fully accessible plots • Parking available <p>May include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets • Benches • Allotment association on site 	<p>Allotments as per plan</p> <p>Aldermoor Leisure Gardens Athelstan Road Bangor Road Bitterne Borrowdale Broadlands Road Coxford Hollybrook Langhorn Road Muddy Bottom Oakley Road Paignton Road Radcliffe Road Rownhams Road Sandhurst Road Shirley Ponds Southwells Farm Studland Road Swaythling Sydney House Vinery Gardens Weston Witts Hill</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
Cemeteries and Churchyards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The space can be within a LOW accessibility area Users can expect ZONE B or C access to site Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. 	<p>Should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas with good access and representative features of the main green area Natural habitats managed appropriately Formal footpaths Interpretation boards <p>May also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas where public are excluded to allow for management of sensitive habitats Links between parks and green spaces 	<p>Millbrook Hollybrook South Stoneham St Marys' Extra St James Church yard Highfield Church Crematorium</p>
Civic Spaces/Precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually in MEDIUM to HIGH accessibility zone Users can expect ZONE A access to site Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. The area is most likely to have FULL or RECONFIGURE protection level 	<p>Should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of hard standing with good access and representative features of the main area <p>May also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of shrub planting Trees Benches and bins 	<p>City Centre Guildhall Square Weston Shopping Parade Bitterne</p>
School Grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The space can be within a LOW accessibility area Users can expect ZONE A or B access to site Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. The area is most likely to have FULL or RELOCATE protection level 	<p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas for informal play Sports pitches <p>May also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community buildings Trees Shrub planting Areas of biodiversity 	<p>There are currently around 80 schools in Southampton</p>

Type	Principle Criteria	Facilities/features	Park/Green Space
Privately Owned Space with Public Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The space can be within a LOW accessibility area • Users can expect ZONE B or C access to site • Meets with basic quality standards typically a score of 20 or over. • The area is most likely to have FULL protection level 	<p>Should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of interest to look at from a distance • Some amenity value <p>May Also include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity value • Trees • Shrubs • Permissive access 	University Grounds Dumbletons Copse Marlhill Copse

Summary of proposed Standards for green spaces.

Green Space Type		Distance People may be Prepared to Walk Based on average walking speed of 2-3mph or 3-5km per Hour	Expected Accessibility	Lowest Level of Physical Access Expected	Quantity in Hectares per 1000 population	Minimum Expected Size in Hectares	Quality Score	Expected protection level
Formal Parks	City Park	20 min approximately 1.2km	High	Zone A	0.42	10	≥ 80	Protected
	District Park	10 min approximately 600m	Medium	Zone A or B		6	≥ 60	Protected
	Local Park	5 min approximately 300m	Low	Zone B or C		0.1	≥ 40	Protected
Amenity Green Space		1 min approximately 60m	Low	Zone C	0.22	0.1	≥ 20	Replace or Reconfigure
Allotments		20 min approximately 1.2km	Medium/High	Zone C	0.22	0.2	≥ 20	Protected or Replace
Woodlands and Natural		5 min approximately 300m	Low	Zone C	1.75	N/A	≥ 20	Protected
Cemeteries		N/A	Medium	Zone B or C	0.22	N/A	≥ 20	Protected
All Outdoor Sports Provision, excluding Golf		15 min approximately 900m walk 10 min approximately 4km drive	Medium	Zone A or B	1.00	0.2 – size of mini-soccer pitch OR 0.07 = size of tennis court.	≥ 20	Replace or Reconfigure
Formal Equipped Children's Play Space	LEAP	5 min	Low	Zone B or C	0.2 – Formal Play with equipment Informal play incorporated into the rest of the green space	0.04	N/A	Replace or Reconfigure
	NEAP	20 min	High	Zone B or C		0.1	N/A	Replace or Reconfigure

Planning Obligations

Part of the vision for Southampton is that it is recognised as a green city. In order to do this it is important that new development does not significantly impact on the green space. Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements*, provide a means to secure developer contributions towards the provision of infrastructure and services to enable proposed development to proceed. Currently guidance on planning obligations for green space is held within the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Planning Obligations document, last updated in November 2006. Section 4.0 gives advice on expected levels of provision for Open Space and Leisure when residential development of greater than 5 dwellings is proposed. Provision standards per thousand population are based on the National Playing Field Association (NPFA) guidance. Actual area of provision required is then based on multiplying the NPFA standard by the number of expected people living in the dwellings. Through planning obligations developers may contribute towards off-site provision or enhancement of green spaces where it is not possible to provide them on site.

Where new developments are going to increase population size or generate larger work forces they will have an impact on the use of green spaces in the city. Where possible this impact should be mitigated by providing new space, however, on site provision is often of small size, fragmented and therefore comparatively a high maintenance cost making it undesirable for the developer and unadoptable for the City Council. Off-site provision of new green space, although more desirable, is unlikely to be able to be provided, given the density of building in the city. If it is not possible to supply new provision of green space then it will be necessary to enhance/improve existing green space. This will ensure that the increased use is not to the detriment of the green space and the rest of the cities residents.

The planning obligations guidance was first adopted in August 2005 and with the exception of a small increase in the price per metre squared in November 2006, has not been reviewed. It was therefore decided to review it as part of the Green Space Strategy, to ensure that the planning process was being fully informed by this document.

The review looked at two elements of the current process.

- 1 The current provision levels, in light of the work done in this strategy
- 2 The current contribution rate per metre squared

Provision

The present planning obligations are based on two sets of standards. The first is a standard that was set in the Hampshire Structure Plan 1994 and adopted into the Southampton Local Plan 1991 – 2001. The second is from the National Playing Fields Association.

They are summarised in table 4A of the planning obligations document as follows:

Type of Open Space (Local Plan Review Policy CLT 5)	NPFA Standard (2.4ha per 1000 population or 24m² per person)
Amenity Open Space	12m ² per person
Children's Play Space	2m ² per person
Playing Fields	10m ² per person

* So called as the basis for the legislation is contained within Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

The rationale behind the provision levels is that overall there is a standard set by the NPFA that 2.4ha of land should be provided for every 1000 population. Of this provision there should be 1.6ha for playing pitches, 0.6ha for informal play and 0.2ha for formal/equipped play. There is no provision for amenity open space in the NPFA standard, however, the HSP and SLP of the time stated that there should be 1.2ha per 1000 population. It was decided that as parks (amenity open space) provide both playing pitches and informal play that the playing pitches provision could be reduced by 0.6ha and this could be added to the 0.6ha of informal play to make the HSP standard.

The HSP and SLP have both since been reviewed and the 1.2ha per 1000 population no longer features in either. In the light of this and the fact that we now have accurate figures for provision in Southampton, which support local standards, it is proposed to update this section of the planning obligation.

The main change will be to the Amenity Open Space provision. The results of mapping exercise show that both the Children's Play Space and Playing Fields provision has not significantly changed from previous audits. It is therefore proposed to leave these at the same level. The amenity open space has now been much more accurately mapped. For the purposes of this exercise the types of green space provision that is included as making up amenity open space is formal parks (City, District and local), woodlands and natural, amenity green space and cemeteries. When including these types they give a local standard of 2.59ha per 1000 population as the current provision. As the aim is to ensure that development does not significantly impact on green space provision in Southampton it is proposed that this level of amenity open space provision is taken forward as part of the planning obligation guidelines either to be provided on site, or as an offsite contribution equivalent to providing it.

With regards to the offsite contribution this is currently only paid towards the park that is closest to the development. However, people will also use the City and District parks and an increase in population will produce greater pressure on these facilities. As part of the 2004 audit people were asked how they usually travelled to parks. 57% of visitors stated they walked to the park and given that most people will not walk a distance greater than 400m, this would suggest that most people are travelling to their local/nearest park. 32% of visitors said they travelled by car and their destinations tended towards the City and District parks. This suggests that even though people do use their local/nearest park they do also use larger parks with more facilities further from their home. It is proposed therefore that the use of offsite contributions reflect this and that in future 60% of the contribution is used for the nearest park and 40% is used for City/District parks. It is already possible to do this within the current expenditure framework within the planning obligations guidance and therefore no change to the document is proposed.

One aspect that is not currently covered in the planning obligations guidance is the pressure new non-residential development can have on green space. Where a new non-residential development occurs and the work force is anticipated to increase it can be reasonably expected that there will be an increased use of local green space, in particular at lunch times and break times. It is unlikely that such developments will have any increased impact on more city wide parks. It would not, therefore be unreasonable to expect such developments to either provide green space for their workers to use or to provide a contribution towards enhancement/improvement of the nearest green space. It is therefore proposed to take forward an amendment to the planning obligation guidance that includes contributions from non-residential as well as residential developments.

Where on site provision is proposed it currently only counts towards amenity open space where it is of a suitable size and nature for its intended purpose, safely accessible and available to the general public and capable of adoption by the City Council. The Council will only be looking to adopt areas that are of a size that is economic to maintain. It is therefore proposed that a clarification of this will be included in future planning obligation guidelines that will state that only green space over 0.1ha will be acceptable as adoptable land unless in the Council's interest to take on smaller areas, such as in home zone schemes.

Contribution Levels

Contribution levels in the planning obligations guidance were set by using the amount per square metre that it had cost to improve/renovate one of the cities parks. The original figure presented in year 2000 was based on improvements to Central Parks. This had at the time been the only park to have any significant improvement and therefore a price per metre squared was worked out at £7.50. In November 2006 this price was increased by the rate of inflation and a new figure of £9.00 was included within table 4c of the Planning Obligations SPG. Unfortunately it is not clear how the original price was worked out, as a figure of £21.00 per square metre is reached when the area of the park is divided by the amount paid for the improvements. It is most likely that the price proposed for the planning obligation document was excluding the cost of improving the buildings in the park. However, as buildings make up an integral part of all parks their improvement should also be included when asking for contributions.

Since the improvements to Central Parks a further 4 improvement projects have either been carried out or are about to be carried out to different parks. This has given a much clearer picture of the true cost of improving parks.

The table below summarises the costs of recent improvements to parks that have been or are about to be carried out.

Park Name	Area in Ha	Cost of Improvements	Cost per Metre Squared
St James Park	2.3	£1.15m	£50
Central Parks	21	£4.4m	£21
Portswood Park	2	£360k	£18
Weston Shore	21	£2.52m	£12
Mayflower Park	4.2	£378k	£9
		Average Cost	£22.00

It should be noted that recently a new park was formed at Northam, called Northam Doorstep Green. This was a 0.1 ha site and cost in excess of £1m to design and build¹. This park has not been included in the calculation as it was new and not just an improvement of an existing park. However, it is worth noting that if we were asking for new provision it could easily be in excess of £100 per square metre, plus the cost to buy the land in the first place.

It is therefore proposed that in light of the evidence of the cost of improving parks that the contribution price per square metre is increased from £9.00 to £22.00.

¹ Grant of £561,000 from the DfT Home Zone Challenge and £385,000 other grants and section 106 funds

Procedure For Changing Planning Obligation Guidance

The Planning Obligations SPG was first approved by cabinet in 2005 with the following resolution:

Resolution - To allow the Head of Planning & Sustainability following consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport delegated powers to regularly review the financial information to ensure it remains current.

This means that unless there is a material change to the principles behind what is being collected there are delegated powers to enable changes to pricings and costings to reflect the current economic situation. Therefore changes to the contribution level as described above can be done under delegated powers, with a report sent to the Planning and Rights of Way Panel (PRWP) for approval. The proposed new contribution level of £22.00 will therefore be included within the next review to go to the PRWP, which should be decided in March 2008.

With regards to the provision standards, these can be considered as a material change to the principles of the SPG and therefore will need to go through a process of adoption as part of the Development Plan Document. Work on this document is due to commence in early 2009 and is likely to take 2 to 3 years to complete. It is a formal process based on consultation and examination in a similar vein to other Local Development Framework documents. Neighbourhood Services Team will be feeding in the results of this strategy to that process and ensuring the Planning Obligations SPG is amended appropriately at the end of the process.

Other Targets/Responsibilities

There are other targets outside of the standards that will have an effect on budget allocation. Some of the targets will generate funding in their own rights and others are set by the Government.

The Government uses 'floor targets' as one way of tackling deprivation at a national and local level. One of these floor targets is:-

Liveability – By 2008 measurable improvement in cleaner, safer, greener public spaces and improvement in the quality of the built environment.

This target is being addressed through the Local Area Agreement. It sets out performance targets which include increasing the number of Green Flags and Pennants in the city and improving biodiversity by reducing the number of sites in decline and increasing the number in a stable or improving condition.

LAA Targets

Southampton's Local Area Agreement contains stretch targets relating to the Cleaner, Safer, Greener theme.

One is to increase the number of biodiversity sites that are stable or improving within the city from 18 (25%) to 41 (55%) by 2010.

A Second stretch target is to increase the number of Green Flags and Green Pennants awarded from 2 Green Flags in 2007 to 5 in 2010 plus 2 Green Pennants. One of the Green Flags must be within an area of deprivation.

Achieving these stretch targets will result in a financial reward for the Council that can be reinvested to continue to improve green spaces throughout the city.

Chapter 4

People In Parks

- **Community Involvement**
 - **Volunteers/Friends Of Groups**
 - **Management of Parks**
 - **Allotments and Community Gardens**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
 - **Green Gyms**
 - **Trails**
- **Events and Activities**
 - **Free**
 - **Fun**
 - **Catering**
 - **Southampton In Bloom**
- **Equality and Diversity of Use**
 - **Reaching All Of Southampton's Residents**
 - **Balancing the uses**
- **Promoting Positive Behaviour**
 - **Designing out Antisocial Behaviour**
- **Play and Young People**
 - **Formal Play**
 - **Informal Play**

Community Involvement

Green spaces are provided for use by all and therefore should reflect how the community wants to use them. It is very important to get communities involved with how green spaces are developed and managed. Working together it should be possible to take Southampton's green spaces forward into the future in a way that means they will be exciting and attractive to all who use them.

A balance does need to be struck between the many different user groups and the practical management of green spaces. People like to get involved in different ways. Green spaces therefore have to provide a continuum from the simple process of people reporting problems through friends helping with managing green spaces to areas which could have trust status or lease agreements that give the local community a high level of control over the management of the green space.

Volunteers/Friends Of Groups

There are over 280 different community based groups in Southampton many of which are supported by Southampton City Council. These include residents associations, volunteer groups, tenants groups, friends of groups and ecology groups. Many of these will have green spaces within the area they are active in and their input into the management of them needs to be engaged.

Neighbourhood Services Division give active support and advice to around eighteen groups which are specifically interested in green spaces at the current time. These groups include:

Friends of Mayfield Park
Friends of St James Park
Friends of Riverside Park
Friends of Hinkler Green
Hawthorns Wildlife Association
Sholing Environment Group
Sholing Doorstep Green
Sholing Valley Study Centre Association
Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery
Friends of Mansel Park
SCAPPS
City of Southampton Society
Ropewalk Community Garden
Friends of Mayfield Nursery
Friends of Woodmill
Friends of Chessel Bay
Peartree 21
Southampton in Bloom

The Neighbourhood Services Team is also keen to facilitate new groups.

Potential groups include:
Friends of Weston Shore

Friends of West Wood
Friends of Daisy Dip
Friends of Dumbleton's Copse
Friends of Hum Hole
Friends of Frog's Copse

Friends groups are generally groups of people who are interested in a particular area or green space. They are usually a constituted group with a committee, and a bank account.

The groups will focus specifically on a park or green space with a view to improving it for local people and local needs. They provide invaluable user feedback on park improvements and can apply for extra money to make park improvements that the Council can't normally access. They may hold community events in the green space and are often the 'eyes and ears' of the area.

Being a member of a friends group helps to encourage a sense of ownership in the green space and can bring young, old and families together to share ideas as part of an action group, not just a talking shop.

An example of a successful group in Southampton is the Friends of St James' Park (FOSJP). They formed in January 2006 and now have a membership of over 450 people. They have held a very successful regional event - Park 100 with approximately 10,000 visitors turning up. They have secured over £50,000 of extra funding for the park so far and are key to applying for a grant of in the region of £900k from the Heritage Lottery Fund in March 2008. They have a very successful website which is updated regularly with news and events. If you would like to visit the web site it can be found at www.fosjp.org.uk.

Another example of a successful group in Southampton is the Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery (FoSOC). Their members have spent in the region of 180 volunteer hours on delivering guided walks with, in the region of, 700 people attending the walks. They are also monitoring and recording the wildlife of the Old Cemetery and documenting the species found there. They also carry out grave searches and carried out, in the region of, 300 in 2007. They held over 10 maintenance activity days, contributing to over 620 voluntary hours in 2007 and they either hosted or attended over 70 events to promote the FoSOC. If you would like to find out more they have a regular newsletter that can be obtained through the Hawthorns Centre.

These two examples show what can be achieved by a Friends Group. All of our existing groups are carrying out similar projects on a weekly and often daily basis.

Management of Green Spaces

Community involvement is a key part of managing green spaces. There needs to be a balance between the needs of different users and good horticultural practice.

In principle the Council fully supports the input of local communities and residents and where appropriate will encourage local groups to develop a constitution to work by. There needs to be some rationale over what green spaces people can expect to get involved in and what spaces need specific management for other reasons, i.e. biodiversity, woodland management. This type of decision would need to be undertaken on a site by site basis.

Although the Neighbourhood Services Team does fully support community involvement it does have limited resources for providing such a service. Supporting groups can involve everything from simple advice on the telephone to organising major events, attending meetings, supplying training and experts for volunteer days and keeping the momentum going and spirits up when there is fluctuation in the group. The team does not have specialists in community involvement and does not have specific budgets for dealing with community groups.

Community groups are eligible to apply for several external funding streams that can bring money into their local green space to make improvements. By holding events and applying for certain grants they are able to use funding streams that the Council is not. The Neighbourhood Services Team should be able to support groups with making bids and helping them to realise improvements to their green space.

Allotments and Community Gardens

Allotments are areas where local residents can rent a piece of land to grow their own produce or flowers. Currently there are waiting lists for allotments on many of the sites and with the future population increases predicted, their demand is also likely to increase. There may be a justification therefore to increase the amount of allotments in Southampton in the near future.

The following table gives a summary of the waiting lists as of 28th January 2008. An approximate waiting time to get an allotment has been given for each site. This is based on the transiency of the allotment holders and not just the amount of people on the waiting list. Certain sites go through times where there is a lot of movement of allotment holders, also some of the sites are much larger than others and therefore waiting lists are generally shorter.

Site Details	Vacancies Y/N	Waiting list	Comments
Aldermoor Leisure Gdns	N	16	Minimum wait 6 months
Athelstan Road	N	74	Minimum wait 2 years
Bangor Road	N	46	Minimum wait 5 years
Bitterne Road East	N	66	Minimum wait 18 months
Bitterne Road West	N	50	Minimum wait 15 months
Borrowdale Road East	Y	-	

Site Details	Vacancies Y/N	Waiting list	Comments
Borrowdale Road West	Y	-	
Broadlands Road	N	50	Minimum wait 2 years
Coxford Road	N	14	Minimum wait 9 months
Hollybrook	N	30	Minimum wait 1 year
Langhorn Road	N	59	Minimum wait 6 years
Muddy Bottom East	N	51	Minimum wait 18 months
Muddy Bottom South	N	0	Let as grazing land and is unlikely to be released as allotments at present
Muddy Bottom West	N	29	Minimum wait 6 months
Oakley Road North	N	11	Minimum wait 4 months
Oakley Road South	N	14	Minimum wait 4 months
Paignton Road	Y	-	
Radcliffe Road	N	50	Minimum wait 5 years
Rownhams Road	N	17	Minimum wait 3 years
Sandhurst Road	N	64	Minimum wait 3 years
Shirley Ponds	N	8	Minimum wait 4 months
Southwells Farm	Y	-	
Studland Road	Y	-	
Swaythling	N	22	Minimum wait 1 year
Sydney House	N	19	Minimum wait 15 months
Vinery Leisure Gardens	N	21	Minimum wait 2 years
Weston	Y		
Witts Hill	N	53	Minimum wait 18 months

There is a current trend of removing family houses, with gardens, in Southampton and replacing them with apartment blocks, with little community green space provided, allotments are therefore likely to become very important in the near future as they will provide those who wish to have a garden with a space in which they can grow flowers and vegetables.

Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing in Southampton is being looked at closely by a number of different partnerships. One of the main partnerships is between Southampton City Primary Care Trust and Southampton City Council who are currently undertaking a joint strategic needs assessment. This will help to gain a better understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of the City, whilst getting ideas about how we can change Southampton for the better.

Green Spaces provide free, accessible areas where people of all ages, cultures and income groups can take exercise. They often have facilities and infrastructure that helps to satisfy the health and well being strategy goals of:

- A. Tackling Health and Social Inequality
- B. Promoting Independence and Choice
- C. Choosing Health

(Broad programme areas from Health and Wellbeing Strategy Stage 2)

Active

All of Southampton's City and District parks have footpaths within them. These can be used for walking, running and in some cases cycling. Many of the Local Parks have space to play informal sports, play games and walk the dog.

Some parks have dedicated trim trails. Currently parks that include trim trails are Riverside Park and Veracity Recreation Ground, with more informal trails in spaces like The Common.

Play areas and incidental play throughout green spaces provide an excellent resource for children and young adults to exercise and keep healthy.

The Neighbourhood Services Team also provide numerous healthy walks and talks throughout the year which people of any ability can attend. They include everything from a gentle stroll around central parks to hiking around the Common.

The extensive network of Greenways throughout the city provide an excellent place to ramble. Some can take you from the city outskirts almost to the centre of town. Others are shorter, but still provide quieter places to walk and run away from the busy city traffic.

Allotments are available, although many sites currently have waiting lists. They are a very popular way of getting fit and healthy. They provide exercise through vigorous work like digging and can produce vegetables which helps people to eat more healthily.

Many of the parks and in particular the recreation grounds also support formal pitches, such as football, cricket, rugby and even American football and multi-use games areas (MUGA). There are tennis courts in at least four of the parks and numerous bowling greens. There is also at least five skateboard parks in parks across the city. All of these facilities provide opportunities for direct active exercise, helping to improve the health of the Cities residents.

Passive

Green space not only provides areas for people to be active in, it also provides areas for people to be passive in. Numerous studies across the world have shown that peoples health and wellbeing improves when they are

in contact with green space and in particular where they are in contact with nature. Providing a small grass area will give a small amount of pleasure, but if you instead provide the same area as a flowering meadow it will provide a much greater pleasure. It is the pleasure people get from seeing the area that then helps their wellbeing. It is important therefore, when considering mental health and wellbeing, not to just provide people with green space, but to provide them with something that will captivate and invigorate them.

Amenity is another area where green spaces provide passive pleasure. Many of the green spaces have trees within them that in turn shelter, screen and break up what would otherwise be a concrete jungle. There are not many areas of Southampton that do not benefit from trees and one of the recommendations of this strategy is to provide more tree lined streets as part of a green grid network. Ultimately all Southampton's green spaces will link together providing much more pleasant routes throughout the city. Tree lined roads have been proven to help reduce road rage and slow traffic helping reduce accidents and making walking much more enjoyable.

Green Gyms/Trails

The concept of Green Gyms introduced by the British Trust of Conservation Volunteers encourages physical activity in green spaces through participation in conservation tasks. The physical nature of these practical tasks can improve general health and fitness but in a pleasant environment.

Neighbourhood Services Team hold regular walks, talks and tasks which help people to take exercise whilst engaging with the parks and nature.

Events and Activities

A wide range of events and activities take place in parks and green spaces all year round. These are often free to the public and range from small local activities such as litter picks to major international events such as the Boat Show.

In addition to larger organised events there are many walks, talks and tasks throughout the year. These are mainly held on the Common and in Central Parks, but they do need to be more widely distributed amongst the City and District parks

Under licence, parks can be used by anyone thinking of hosting an event. Most event licensing outside the Council is carried out through the SCC Events Team, which is not part of the Neighbourhood Services Team. A greater communication between these two teams needs to be developed to ensure venues do not become double booked and to ensure full knowledge of events is made available.

The public has become far more sophisticated in its taste when it comes to the organisation, management and quality of events. The Neighbourhood Services Team recognises that it is imperative that events are perceived to be safe, capture the imagination, involve the community, increase awareness of environmental issues and help improve the image of the organisation.

Catering

A common request for Southampton's parks is to provide on site catering. With the exception of Central Parks, St James Park and Mayflower Park there is no other catering within a building in Southampton's parks. The most common form of catering is for ice-cream/warm food type concessions. There are currently 12 concession pitches around the city. On the whole these are let by Neighbourhood Services, although some are let by the Property Services Department. All are within parks.

The ice cream/warm food concessions are currently let on a twelve monthly basis. This was put in place whilst a full study of the catering situation is undertaken. Once this study is complete there will be a better picture of the most appropriate places for this type of concession. It is then envisaged that the concessions will be provided on a longer contract. Short contracts make it difficult for vendors to get financial backing and therefore they are unable to provide high quality up to date ice cream vans and trailers. This reflects poorly on the parks they vend from.

With regards to the three parks that do have catering facilities in buildings, Central Parks pavilion was recently upgraded as part of an HLF grant and was purpose built to provide a small café type facility. The concession for this facility is let on a five yearly basis through a sealed tender process, to private companies. The concession in Mayflower Park consists of a small purpose built kiosk, with no seating inside. The concession for this is also let by sealed tender process, but only on a twelve monthly basis to private companies. St James Park has a small kiosk developed in an existing parks building by the Friends of St James Park group.

There is an aspiration to provide café type catering facilities in a number of other parks. Those parks highlighted as having potential are Mayfield Park, St James Park, Southampton Common, Weston Shore, Queens Park. However, the majority of these parks would require a purpose built facility before such an aspiration could be achieved.

The catering study is looking at the feasibility of getting larger companies to lease a number of parks and recreation buildings and to possibly build new ones where feasible, to provide high quality café and possibly restaurant facilities. The outcome of this study will be fed back into the Green Space Strategy and will make up part of the future action plan.

Granting catering concessions provides the Council with an opportunity to influence menus and thereby to address the issue of healthy eating, locally produced and sourced ingredients and in a more general way address national and local obesity issues.

Southampton In Bloom

Southampton City Council currently supports the Southampton in Bloom volunteer group to help provide a competition to find the best gardens in Southampton each year. Residents of Southampton are able to enter the

Southampton in Bloom competition under a number of categories and can win prizes for getting Gold, Silver or Bronze awards.

The competition is free to enter and open to all members of society. There are specific criteria for community gardens as well as the more traditional private gardens.

Aim of Southampton in Bloom is:-

A free competition open to residents, businesses and those responsible for various premises in Southampton. The competition encourages colourful summer displays in gardens, balconies, containers and public open spaces.

Southampton in Bloom does:

- Help create a better and more enjoyable environment.
- Generate pride in our city.
- Promote individual and community benefit and pleasure.
- Give a sense of achievement for those entering.
- Encourage people to take part in a healthy outdoor activity.
- Help to beautify our city with summer displays

Equality and Diversity of Use

Reaching All Of Southampton's Residents

It is recognised that green spaces are used by an enormous range of people. In order to improve these spaces in the future and ensure that all users needs are met, it will be imperative to get the views of as many users as possible. It is also important to get the views of people who do not use the green spaces and to find out why.

Future consultation will need to be carried out in such a way that all groups are represented and a plan for this to happen will need to be developed.

A balance must be struck between all the different uses taking into consideration, health and safety, DDA, equality standards and available finance.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Fear of crime and, to a much lesser extent crime itself, can deter people, not just vulnerable groups, from using even good-quality public spaces. Children and young people, for example, are often prevented from using our parks, squares and streets because of their parents' fears about crime, whilst women often also face particular concerns. Physical changes to, and the better management of, public space can help to allay these fears. Such changes can help everyone to make the most of public spaces.

How Safe Are Green Spaces?

There is often a perception that green spaces are dangerous. 64% of people were aware of nuisance in the parks with 78% citing vandalism as a problem in the Audit.

In order to get some idea of how many crimes are committed in Southampton's green spaces, the Safe City Partnership with Hampshire Constabulary were asked to provide data on crimes committed in key parks. Their report is summarised as follows:

A total of 35160 offences were recorded across Southampton for the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007. Tables 1 and 2 below provide crime figures for each of the main parks in Southampton for this period of time. Whilst these figures are indicative, they can not be taken as a definitive figure as reporting and recording methods do not always accurately locate a park.

A total of 385 offences were linked to the parks listed in the report. Crime occurring within these parks therefore accounts for 1.1% of the total crime recorded within Southampton.

Table 1

Central Parks		
Park	No. of Offences	Percentage of Total Offences within Southampton Parks
Hoglands Park	37	37.8
East Park	20	20.4
Houndwell Park	19	19.4
Palmerston Park	12	12.2
Watts Park	10	10.2
Queens Park	0	0
Total	98	100

Table 2

Park	No. of Offences	Percentage of Total Offences within Southampton Parks
The Common	124	43.2
Mansel Park ¹	55	19.2
Riverside Park	37	12.9
Mayflower Park	26	9.1
Sports Centre	25	8.7
Mayfield Park	17	5.9
Lordshill Recreation	3	1.0
St James Park	0	0
Woodland Park (Weston Shore)	0	0
Total	287	100

¹ Millbrook Towers is located in this area, as such the high figure here is attributed to the high density housing.

This shows that although crime in Southampton's parks is a very small percentage in the city, it should not be ignored. Increased use brings with it increased safety through self policing by the green space users. This enables society to take back its green spaces from those who wish to misuse them. Increased involvement also brings with it increased ownership and responsibility which helps to reduce other types of antisocial behaviour such as vandalism.

One of the recommendations of this strategy is to increase use and involvement of the local community in the management of their local green space.

Community Use of School Grounds

There is a large resource of green space within many of the schools in Southampton. However, the threat of increasing anti-social behaviour around school sites has caused the reaction of locking the grounds and increasing security. It is therefore rare that the grounds are opened up for the local community to use.

Where school grounds are found to be the only provision of green space and where it is not possible to create new open spaces to satisfy local needs, in an area the use of school playing fields for wider community benefit will be pursued. It should always be ensured that the school buildings themselves are secure and allowance for increased maintenance cost may have to be budgeted for, outside the schools own budgets. Strict times of access, outside of school opening hours only, will have to be enforced with lockable gates to prevent unwanted visitors during school hours.

There are successful examples of such use in Hampshire, such as Warren Park Primary School situated in Lea Park. These, and other schools, permit community recreational use of their grounds. A more proactive approach to schools may help to relieve some of the excess demand for public open space in poorly provided areas. Schools may be more willing to allow public use of grounds in return for capital injections, funded from planning gain such as Section 106.

Play and Young People

Every Child Matters, the Government agenda for improving services for children and young people, published in 2003, identified five outcomes that are important for every child and young person. These outcomes have been taken up in the Southampton Partnership document "Children and Young Peoples Plan for Southampton".

The Southampton play strategy reflects the growing national trend to recognise and develop more natural playful spaces with higher overall play value rather than the traditional fixed play equipment areas. Integrating play into the parks and green space landscapes also encourages more mixed age play and provides a seamless link into the wider parks and green spaces. Work is underway to develop a play area improvement action plan that mirrors the three parks categories (City, District and Local Park), so that joint play/park improvements can be delivered. Green Spaces support the aims and aspirations of the Children and Young Peoples Plan for Southampton and the Play Strategy in the following ways.

To be healthy.

Green spaces provide a wide range of free and accessible places for children and young people within Southampton to take part in formal and informal sports and fitness activities.

To stay safe.

In addition to the traditional equipped play areas parks and green spaces also provide a wide range of natural features, such as undulating grassland, woodlands, water / wet areas, playing pitches, areas for solitude, areas for meeting friends which encourage and stimulates play in a safe and natural environment.

To enjoy and achieve.

Green spaces can provide opportunities for young people to experience learning beyond a formal setting which stimulates their interest in the natural environment and encourages their curiosity.

To make a positive contribution.

Young people are encouraged to get involved and express their views when changes to parks and green spaces are being considered. However this is a challenging user group to obtain feedback from and a future action in the strategy seeks to improve how engagement with young people in planning our green spaces can be more effectively delivered. Young people can also get involved practically through schemes like the Junior Neighbourhood Wardens, friends of the parks groups and specific users groups which help build self esteem and confidence.

To achieve economic well being.

Parks and green spaces contribute to achieving a vibrant and prosperous city, which in turn helps create more local work opportunities for Southampton residents. There are direct work placement opportunities and training schemes for young people to experience work in the parks service. These provide specific opportunities as a career starting point for a number of Southampton students.

Formal Play

Many of the parks have formal play areas with numerous pieces of equipment for children of all ages to use. These areas are extremely popular, often close to neighbouring communities and are so well used that they are becoming worn out. Many are also dated and are considered to be of medium to low quality compared with today's expectations. This situation is being rectified and several sites throughout the city have had their play areas upgraded in recent years.

Informal Play

There is currently a national movement towards providing good quality informal play. Over the years much of the informal play in green spaces has slowly been eroded through a number of reasons. Health and Safety has been regularly cited as a reason for preventing people using such things as trees to swing on or climb. Parent fear of injury and kidnapping has reduced numbers of children using natural play areas such as hiding in bushes or going near to water. Higher maintenance costs for the upkeep of site features is often quoted as a justification for their removal, such as the removal of shrub beds in favour of grass or banks/land forms in favour of flat ground.

Neighbourhood Services is committed to providing a good quality informal play environment within its green spaces and will be working closely with Play Services to ensure that this happens.

Chapter 5

Biodiversity, Climate Change and Sustainability

- **What is Biodiversity?**
 - **Southampton's biodiversity – Something to treasure**
 - **Biodiversity Conservation**
 - **Southampton Biodiversity Action Plan**
 - **Green Spaces**
 - **Development**
- **Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)**
- **Connections with other Green Spaces**
 - **Greenways**
- **Climate Change**
 - **Weather Fluctuations**
 - **Affects of Climate Change on the City**
 - **Surface Water Flooding**
 - **Sea Level/River Level Rise**
 - **Effects on Green Space**
- **The Role of Green Spaces in Mitigating the Affects of Climate Change**
 - **Tree Planting**
 - **Ponds/water storage**
 - **Green Roofs**
 - **Green Walls**
 - **Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)**
- **Other Strategies**

What is Biodiversity?

'Biodiversity' refers to the variety of life. This is not only all the plants and animals but also the habitats that support them and the complicated interactions between these and the wider environment.

Southampton's biodiversity – Something to treasure

Southampton's climate, geology and the variety of open spaces that have been retained amongst the city development, support a wealth of wildlife that adds greatly to public enjoyment. Coast, mudflats, rivers, streams, ponds, wet and dry meadows, heathland, scrub, hedgerows, woodland and parkland are all present, some so important that they have national and international status. Likewise for the wildlife they support, with such notable creatures as great crested newts, sparrowhawks, barn owls, water shrews, dormice and otters. As well as these resident animals, there are also important passers-through on migration such as salmon, sea trout, clouded yellow and painted lady butterflies, and birds such as divers, flycatchers and a whole range of coastal waders.

Biodiversity Conservation

Biodiversity has experienced steady decline in relation to both habitats and species throughout the city. Development of back land sites, more intensive management of buildings and gardens and increasing pressure on the use of green spaces by an increasing population have all contributed to this decline.

Biodiversity decline is a national and international problem and as a result Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) have been developed as a tool to address this issue.

Southampton Biodiversity Action Plan

The Southampton BAP, which was adopted in 2006, sets out the Council's approach to conserving the biodiversity of the City. The BAP lists the important species and habitats found within the City and identifies the issues that affect them. It then sets out a series of measures designed to conserve this biodiversity. These measures are listed under the following 5 themes:

- Protection of Southampton's biodiversity
- Enhancement of the environment: habitat management and creation
- Information and education
- Involvement, access and health
- Monitoring and links with other strategies

A large proportion of the semi-natural habitat found within the City is located on open spaces. The management of these areas is therefore critical to achieving the objectives of the BAP.

Green Spaces

All the green spaces in the city support some level of biodiversity the most significant have been designated within the Local Plan as Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC). There are currently 35 SINC's designated in the City and totalling 290Ha. There are also 4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

(SSSI), 3 on the water front/riverbanks and Southampton Common. Some sections of the riverbank and estuary are also designated under European and international legislation, these areas are termed Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites.

Development

Over the next 20 years Southampton will need to accommodate over 16,000 new dwellings as well as commercial and leisure facilities. This development will put pressure on the City's infrastructure, including the green spaces, and has the potential to damage the natural environment.

This damage could occur through direct physical impacts on green spaces, for example damage to boundary trees or fly tipping over fences, or indirectly through higher levels of use.

Development proposals will need to be monitored to ensure that mitigation measures, including suitable fencing and landscape schemes, are incorporated into the design. Resources will also need to be sought to fund appropriate levels of management

On some occasions wildlife mitigation measures, for example species translocation, may need to occur on green space land. In these circumstances it is important that adequate resources are secured to ensure that the mitigation is implemented effectively and does not place a burden on Open Space budgets

The effectiveness of landscaping schemes will depend upon selection of appropriate species. Native habitats such as grassland, woodland or wetlands support distinct communities of well adapted native species. Within urban areas many exotic and non-native species do well and provide some support to wildlife. However, in general native vegetation will sustain the greatest biodiversity. Use of locally native species in planting schemes on green spaces will therefore create the greatest opportunities for biodiversity.

The City Council will seek to enhance provision for local BAP priority species through biological community planting schemes that provide appropriate habitats for wildlife. These will use native species or other wildlife-friendly species of trees and shrubs and will discourage the use of non-native invasive species.

A list of appropriate native species for Southampton, will be produced to give guidance to landscape architects when designing schemes for new development.

Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)

Southampton is one of a number of authorities throughout the country that will experience high levels of growth over the next twenty years. To deal with the potential impacts of this growth many of the Local Authorities are working together on joint initiatives.

South Hampshire is the largest urban area in the South of England outside London and is home to over 1 million people. The sub region has some outstanding natural and physical assets but its economy has been under performing over the last two decades compared to south east average growth rates. The eleven local authorities in the area have formed a partnership known as PUSH with a common vision and a clear agenda to progress an economic growth-led strategy for the sub region, with growth rising to at least the South East average by 2026.

Critical priorities for PUSH include:

- Promoting a buoyant and diverse economy
- Securing sustainable communities
- Safeguarding a quality environment
- Reducing inequalities and developing skills
- Providing quality housing for all
- Improving accessibility
- Providing quality recreational and leisure facilities
- Improving health
- A desire to maintain the separation of settlements

In supporting PUSH as a New Growth Point, the Government is entering into a long-term partnership with PUSH, recognising their ambitions for growth, subject to the statutory regional and local planning process. In planning for this growth PUSH will be developing a range of tools including an Economic Action Plan (including reducing economic inactivity, skills development and enterprise and innovation), common policies on affordable housing and sustainability, a Sub Regional Housing Strategy and co-ordination of Local Development Frameworks across South Hampshire. These documents will support partners' local ambitions which include:

- A programme of regeneration focussed on the two cities and adjoining urban areas
- Redevelopment of a number of significant brownfield sites
- Planning for the provision of 2 million square metres of new employment floor space
- Planning for 80,000 new homes over the period up to 2026 of which 40,425 will be provided by 2016 providing critical infrastructure to deal with current deficits as well as newly arising needs
- Two new strategic development areas, one linked to Southampton and the other linked to Portsmouth
- A strategic employment area at Eastleigh close to Southampton airport

Levels of growth will be subject to comprehensive testing and public consultation through the regional and local planning processes to ensure that individual proposals are sustainable, acceptable environmentally and realistic in terms of infrastructure. For PUSH future work will include carrying out a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to inform locations of growth; developing an Integrated Water Management Plan which will be used to inform levels and locations of growth to ensure that water quality impacts are managed and

adequate infrastructure is provided; working closely with the Environment Agency and relevant water companies on development and implementation of measures to achieve water saving and efficiency; assessing and mitigating the impacts of growth on local habitats; devising a Green Infrastructure Strategy for South Hampshire and ensuring that greenspace considerations are integrated with development and adverse impacts are mitigated; and further examination of the transport infrastructure needed to support growth, including work on investment priorities and delivery structures. This strategy will set out measures to develop and safeguard an interconnected network of sites providing a range of social benefits. Functions likely to be supported by green infrastructure include recreation, biodiversity conservation, landscape protection and flood amelioration.

Achieving these ambitions will depend on a range of public and private funding programmes, including developer contributions. Government is committing to work with local partners to achieve sustainable growth to get the best outcomes from this investment and to help overcome obstacles to delivery. In support of PUSH's growth ambitions Government is allocating around £3.66m in 2007-08 from the first year's funding pot, subject to detailed negotiation and appraisal. Future funding is dependent upon the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007.

Southampton is actively participating in development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Issues of particular concern are maintenance of links to the wider countryside, that can be used by both wildlife and people, and improvement of the quality of the existing green space given that it is generally accepted that there is no new areas, other than on development sites, to provide green space in the city. Green spaces provided by new development are usually too small, fragmented and too expensive to maintain at a high quality for wildlife and recreation.

Connections with other Green Spaces

Within Southampton the open spaces form a local green infrastructure network. The level of connections within this local network varies widely. Some sites, in particular the Greenways, are highly connected forming green corridors linking residential areas. Whilst many others, especially the more formal green spaces, are isolated green 'islands'.

Within the City work is being carried out to improve the connections between different elements of the local network. This would include incorporating features such as, road verges, cemeteries, street trees and, where no public space is available, private land. This will be supported by the PUSH work which will identify opportunities for connections between Southampton's local network and the surrounding countryside.

These connections will allow wildlife and people to move between the heart of the city and the countryside beyond Southampton's boundaries.

Extensive work on active travel in the city has already been undertaken through cycling initiatives, walking to work initiatives and the introduction of

the national cycle routes. Neighbourhood Services is committed to working closely with the transport team to ensure that green spaces play their part in the active travel agenda.

Cycling in green spaces is recognised as a major area where issues can occur. The main issue appears to be with the conflicts between those walking, those wishing to use green space to commute on bicycle, those wishing to use the green space for leisure cycling with their families, and the local byelaws. In order to address these issues it is recommended that a wider public consultation is undertaken, with the aim of providing clarification on the legality of, and solutions to cycling in green spaces. First steps would need to include updating byelaws to allow cycling where there are currently official cycle routes. There also needs to be some consultation carried out on the best areas for cyclists and where there is minimal conflict between cyclists and walkers.

Greenways

The Greenways are ribbons of open space which follow stream valleys through the city. They form important breaks within the urban area and in some cases make connections with the countryside beyond the City boundaries.

Greenways support a range of wildlife and provide opportunities for informal recreation. Their terrain gives a feeling of being in the countryside whilst still in the heart of the city. Due to the nature of the greenways it is not practicable to give access to all sections of the community. However, wherever possible the Council is committed to providing at least one area in each greenway that is accessible to all. The aim being to provide all the experiences of that greenway in one showcase area.

Climate Change

Climate refers to the average weather experienced in a region over a long period, typically 30 years. This includes not just temperature, but also wind and rainfall patterns. The climate of the Earth is not static, and has changed many times in the past in response to a variety of natural causes. The term "climate change" usually refers to recent changes in climate that have been observed since the early 1900's. United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)

Weather Fluctuations

There is an increasing body of scientific evidence that the global climate is changing as a result of human activity. Past, present and future emissions of greenhouse gases are expected to cause significant global climate change during this century. The nature of climate change at a regional level will vary: for the UK, projections of future climate change indicate that more frequent short-duration, high-intensity rainfall and more frequent periods of long-duration rainfall of the type responsible for the 2000 floods could be expected. Sea levels will continue to rise. These kinds of changes will have implications for river flooding and also for local flash flooding. There are several indications that the climate in the UK is already changing. Central England's temperature

rose by almost 1 °C during the twentieth century. Heat waves have become more frequent in summer and there are now fewer frosts and winter cold spells. Winters over the last 200 years have become wetter relative to summers; a larger proportion of winter precipitation in all regions now falls on heavy rainfall days than was the case 50 years ago.

Affects of Climate Change on the City

All cities experience the urban heat island effect where hard surfaces absorb heat which is then emitted at night raising the temperature of the urban area above that of the surrounding countryside. This is uncomfortable for people living in the cities and leads to increased use of air conditioning, which uses energy and potentially increases global warming.

The difference in temperatures of the built and natural areas can be used to monitor the effects of the changing climate. Thermal images of the city should be able to show the extent of the hot spots in the city and the effect of the green spaces. This information could be used to develop mitigation proposals, such as green roofs and walls, and give a strong evidence base to encourage developers to incorporate these feature in their schemes.

Surface Water Flooding

One of the predicted effects of climate change is that we will experience more intense burst of rainfall. Where this water falls on hard/impermeable surfaces the water quickly travels over the surface to the drains, however, as many of the drains were developed in the Victorian era, they do not have the capacity to deal with large amounts of rain over very short periods of time. This can then result in flash flooding.

Where rain falls onto green space the vegetation intercepts the water allowing it to soak into the ground and slows its travel to the drains. This allows the water to drain at a speed that reduces the risk of flooding.

Sea Level/River Level Rise

Climate change is also predicted to have an effect on coastlines as sea levels rise. These impacts are often described as coastal 'squeeze'; ecosystems along the coastline will be lost and change in vegetation types will be experienced.

The areas most likely to be affected are lower lying areas of the River Itchen shore at Crosshouse, Northam, St. Denys and Woodmill although, with the exception of the latter, defences are in place to deal with all but the most exceptional of situations. Mayflower Park would also come under pressure and Weston Shore is already subject to increased erosion.

Effects on Green Space

Although green spaces are a key tool in managing the effects of climate change, they will be affected themselves. The character of parks and gardens may change through the need to alter plant species in response to more extremes in weather and to provide good design principles for mitigating other adverse effects of climate change.

The Role of Green Spaces in Mitigating the Affects of Climate Change

Tree Planting

Green spaces provide ample areas for replacement and new tree planting. Trees help to mitigate against the two main threats of climate change; rainwater management and temperature regulation. They intercept and slow down rain fall helping to prevent flash flooding and they shade and reflect heat, helping to cool the city. Larger trees provide larger areas of interception and larger areas of shading and cooling. It is therefore very important to maintain and increase the numbers of large trees so that their full benefit can be gained.

Southampton does appear to have a fair canopy cover already, but no detailed research has as yet been undertaken to establish the full extent of this. Southampton should buck the national trend of reducing tree canopy and encourage less tree removal and more appropriate tree planting throughout the city. Where possible trees should be chosen that will fill the space they are to grow into, rather than using small ornamentals.

Ponds/water storage

Unfortunately many of Southampton's green spaces have formerly been land fill sites. This often makes it uneconomical to provide ponds as there are issues with digging into old rubbish tips. However, water storage is extremely important and where possible solutions within green spaces should be found.

Further investigation into the following needs to be undertaken:

- The storage and use of grey water
- Appropriate planting scheme/design
- Changes in management of water use
- Becoming Carbon Neutral
- Transport management using satellite work stations to cut down travelling
- Recycling on site
- Reducing hard surface areas

Green Roofs

A green roof consists of vegetation and soil, or a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing membrane. Additional layers, such as a root barrier and drainage and irrigation systems can also be included. Green roofs, whether extensive or intensive, provide wildlife habitats, reduce storm water runoff, absorb CO₂, air pollutants and dust, reduce the urban 'heat-island' effect. Green roofs are an attractive roofing option that can reduce urban heat islands. They also:

- Reduce sewage system loads by assimilating large amounts of rainwater
- Absorb air pollution, collect airborne particulates, and store carbon.
- Protect underlying roof material by eliminating exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation and extreme daily temperature fluctuations.

- Serve as living environments that provide habitats for birds and other small animals.
- Offer an attractive alternative to traditional roofs, addressing growing concerns about urban quality of life.
- Reduce noise transfer from the outdoors.
- Insulate a building from extreme temperatures, mainly by keeping the building interior cool in the summer.

Green Walls

Green walls provide the opportunity to extend the natural environment into urban areas by encouraging plants to grow on and up walls. There are opportunities to establish plants in the joints between brick or fascia work or specially built ledges and terraces. Vegetation placed directly on the surfaces of buildings protects the building shell. Extra short term capital costs are usually more than cancelled by long term savings.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Sustainable Drainage Systems use a range of techniques to manage surface water as close to its source as possible. By moderating flows and filtering run-off, Sustainable Drainage Systems can deliver reductions in impacts on our water resources, and improve the quality of our built environment. SDS are designed to:

- Control the quantity of run-off from a development;
- Improve the quality of the run-off;
- Enhance the nature conservation, landscape and amenity value of the site and its surroundings.

There are various different types of sustainable drainage systems:

- Permeable Pavements
- Swales & basins
- Infiltration trenches and filter drains
- Ponds & wetlands

Other Strategies

The Council is committed to providing good quality advice and management proposals for the more specialist areas of green spaces.

In order to do this an allotments strategy, trees strategy and greenways strategy will be developed. These will give clear intentions for the way forward in the management of these specialist areas.

Chapter 6

Paying For Parks

- **Low Cost – High Quality Services**
 - **Value For money**
 - **Limited Resources**
- **An Outline of the Funding for Southampton’s Green Spaces**
 - **Revenue**
 - **Invest to Save**
 - **Capital**
- **External Funding**
 - **Short bidding times & match funding**
 - **Resources to bid & partnerships**
 - **Revenue commitment**
- **Typical Costs of Capital Green Space Items**
- **Benefits of Investing Southampton’s Green Spaces**
 - **Economic Value**
- **Marketing & Promoting the Green Spaces**

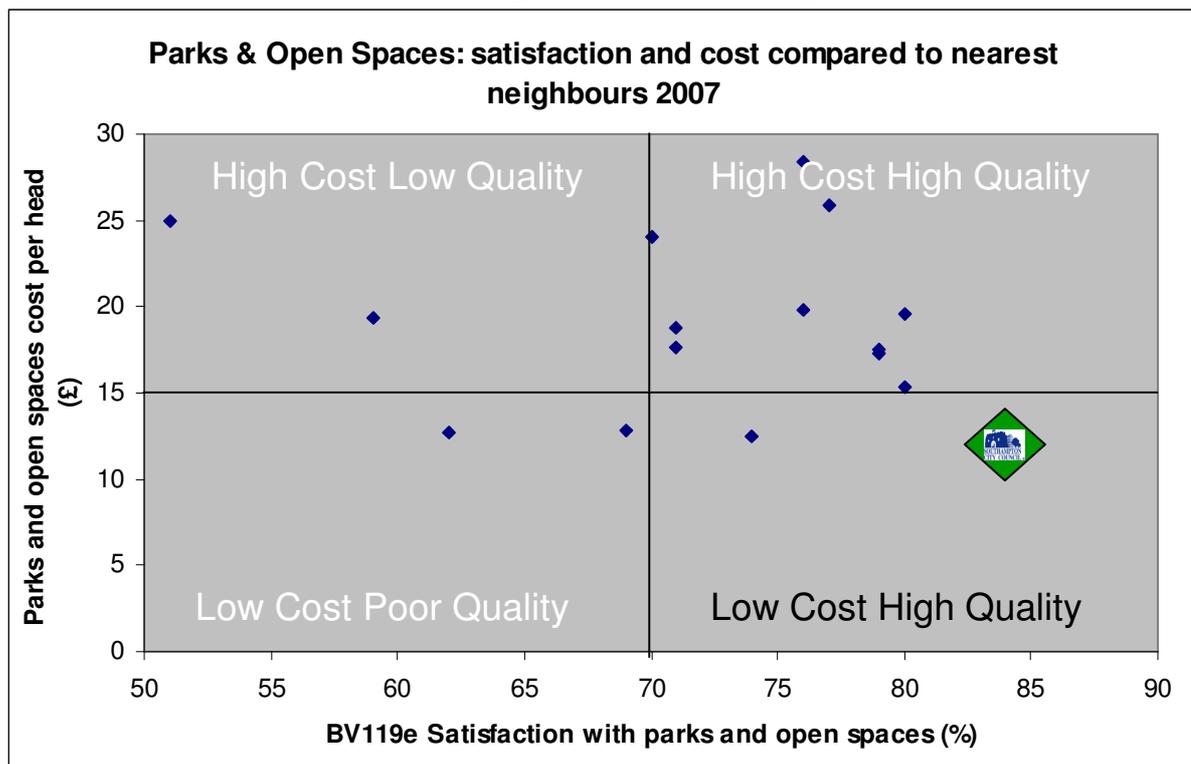
Low Cost High Quality Services

The management and maintenance of the majority of Southampton's parks and green spaces is currently undertaken by the Neighbourhood Services Division. Southampton City Council has been required to submit financial information on the cost of the services and the surveyed satisfaction levels with the quality of the parks and green spaces and consistently it has resulted in a low cost high quality rating when compared to the cities near neighbour authorities. The most recent figures showed a cost per head of around £13¹ and a satisfaction rating of 84%.

Are Southampton's Parks Good Value For Money?

With an approximate total budget for maintaining the parks & sports fields elements of the service of around £2.1 million for approximately 230,000 residents who made an estimated 17 million visits to the parks in 2007 each visit cost about **12.3p**.

Compared to our "nearest neighbour" Local Authorities Southampton's green space service is considered to be a good value for money.



Southampton has been following a process of integrating the various green and clean elements of the services into one division and where possible into area based teams. A consequence of this close integration however is that identifying detailed and fully accurate costs of specific elements of the service are not as clearly defined into single line budget figures that encapsulate the whole of the Green Spaces resources. Further work is underway to extrapolate the accurate costing of the service from the 2007/8 financial year

¹ Figure covers specific elements of the overall service not the whole service.

however at the time of writing these figures were not yet fully available. The following financial information will be updated in late June / July once the 2007/8 financial information has been closed down and published.

Southampton has worked hard to increase green space usage and satisfaction with reducing resources where nationally this reduction in resources was having a greater adverse impact and leading to seriously declining green spaces.

However, the provision of green spaces is not a statutory service and this often means that the service is more vulnerable to resource cuts or greater than sustainable efficiency targets being set. Nationally, parks budgets are thought to have reduced by up to 35% in 15 years and the resource level in Southampton has significantly decreased over the same time period – leaving the challenge of delivering the same or better service with less resources on an annual basis.

The independent audit undertaken by Global to Local in 2003/4 highlighted that there were a number of green spaces showing significant signs of under investment. The results showed up weaknesses which often surface when services operate with only revenue resources to maintain sites to a minimum level and no capital infrastructure investment. These key indicators of reducing quality in the green spaces included:

- There was a need for apparent and clear entrances for the majority of open spaces across the city – many were and still have out of date contact details.
- Access for more major open spaces and recreation grounds was poor; in particular the condition of surfaces and lack of footpath routes.
- There were problems of uneven safety surfacing of some play areas which could be a potential hazard.
- There was a need for more exciting provision of play equipment for older age groups in playgrounds.
- Risk assessment of playgrounds, including equipment and surfacing, should be carried out – the replacement of equipment may be necessary for a number of open spaces.
- Lighting (where present and appropriate) was felt to be deficient in many of the city's key parks.
- Information available about open spaces was a weakness, particularly for smaller open spaces and recreation grounds.
- There were problems of broken glass in some parks and obvious graffiti in a number of places.
- Planted areas lacked landscape variety; interest; and biodiversity. Many had become over mature & needed replacing.
- Toilet provision was very poor in all open spaces across the city.
- The cleanliness of open spaces was generally good across the city however it recognised the need to ensure effective management and maintenance was in place to keep it this way.

The green spaces development programme reduced until it was only able to undertake works that addressed urgent public health and safety issues, leaving planted areas to become over mature and infrastructure interventions delayed until a critical stage was reached.

At the same time the economic development of the city has resulted in an increased population / homes (many of which do not have separate gardens) which in turn adds pressure to the limited areas of green spaces, even more with less is required.

During the past 10 years there has also been a trend of additional external funding being available through the lottery and other funding bodies to supplement the core service funding from the council, however, the amount of resources required to successfully win and deliver an externally funded green spaces improvement are very staff intense and can distract officers from delivering the core service or prove too difficult to apply for.

Southampton has been encouraging local people and resident groups to form Friends of groups and become actively involved in the management and maintenance of the green spaces for many years. The formation of partnerships with charitable trusts and similar bodies is also an important way of meeting funding criteria and it is increasingly evident that partnership working and community led projects are becoming a vital part of attracting external funding.

Southampton has however, been quite successful in attracting external funding and where this has been achieved a series of legacy improvements have been made, such as the 3.4 million Heritage Lottery Grant for the Central Parks, lottery grant for the Hawthorns, breathing places grants for sites across the city in 2007. There is an active partnership with Groundwork Solent in addressing issues on many of the Southampton green spaces and these are all part of the overall resources employed in keeping Southampton's green spaces clean, safe, attractive and accessible.

For any successful external funding application they require two key elements in addition to a well thought proposal, full community involvement / ownership.

Match funding and ongoing revenue commitment. A lack of upfront capital or clarity over the future maintenance cost can result in significant funding streams being out of reach and the result is that crumbling infrastructures are patched up.

An Outline of the Funding for Southampton's Green Spaces

Revenue

Revenue is used for the day to day maintenance of green spaces. Changes in revenue budgets directly affect how well green spaces can be managed and maintained. Many of Southampton's green spaces have declined in recent years and the current revenue levels are targeted at reactive maintenance rather proactive service developments that would improve the green spaces.

Revenue budgets are set on an annual basis in February each year. A review of the incomplete costs of green spaces in 2007-2008 highlights how the money is allocated for green space management and maintenance.

Budget	Description
Budget for the Management and Maintenance of the Green Spaces in Southampton is circa £4.19 million	This is the overall budget for maintaining green spaces throughout the city. However, it is difficult to identify exact costs as much of the service is integrated as “clean and green” teams. These teams carry out both grounds cleansing and grounds maintenance functions. The budget for linked cleansing functions is not included in the green space budget shown. This overall budget equates to having 36p ² per square metre of green space each year.
Cost of the City Parks is circa £778K (Central, The Common, Mayflower, Weston)	This is the cost expenditure to maintain the City Parks category of green space. City Parks are Southampton’s largest parks and provide the greatest number of facilities and interest to people from beyond the City. This category includes 5 parks which equal around 230 hectares of land. The cost of city park is circa 34p per square metre.
District Parks is circa £455K (Riverside, Mayfield, St James’, Mansel)	This is the cost to expenditure to maintain the District Parks category of green space. These are important parks that provide facilities for people all over Southampton. This category includes 4 parks which equals around 60 hectares of land. The cost of district parks is circa 74p per square metre
Local Parks is circa £215K (approx 40 sites see list in Chapter 3)	This is the total cost expenditure to maintain the Local Park category of green space. These are important places for the local community and often where people will walk to. This category includes 40 parks which equals around 125 hectares of land. The cost of local parks is circa 17p per square metre

² 4.1 million divided by 1140 hectares divided by 10000 to get to per metre cost.

Budget	Description
Other Green Spaces	This is the cost to maintain all the other areas of green space. It includes Housing space, Greenways, Highways space and recreation space not within specific parks. This category equals around 676ha of land. The cost of the other green spaces is around 29p per square metre.
Trees and Allotments	This is the cost for maintaining Southampton's extensive tree stock and the allotment sites. There is in the region of 100000 individual and groups of trees in Southampton, as well as in the region of 15 woodlands. There are 23 Allotments across the city (covering 49ha). As these service are city wide the cost is circa 0.05p per meter or £564 / hectare.

The revenue budget are finely balanced currently delivering a services that are basically meeting the needs of the community according to the satisfaction feedback but it is recognised that there are increasing pressures building regarding the infrastructure refurbishments (paths fences gates bins signs seats planted areas and features).

Priority is given to maintaining Southampton's green spaces to a minimum health and safety standard. However, costs for labour, fuel and materials are all increasing and efficiencies are becoming increasing difficult to identify.

Invest to Save

In this current trend of reducing budgets ways to save money are often being explored. One way to do this is to invest extra capital in a scheme to ensure that revenue costs later on are reduced.

An example of this would be to replace a traditional shrub border with more contemporary planting that is drought tolerant. Spending extra capital money on good quality stone mulch and more expensive plant material means that in the long run costs are cut as maintenance is lower.

Similarly it may be that the Council invests in developing or building a café in a popular park which will then bring in a rent. Once the cost of the building is paid off the money received can be used to improve and maintain the rest of the park.

In order to realise these schemes it is necessary to resource their conception, design, development and delivery. There is a capacity limitation currently within the council reducing the ability to undertake so of this type of work and increasing this work is being managed through external partnerships or

delayed. A review of how this could be resourced in the future should therefore be undertaken.

Capital for Development / Improvement of Green Spaces

Capital money does become available from time to time to allow for one off investment in green spaces. This can come from a number of sources, both from the Council and from external organisations. However, as stated care must be taken when investing capital into green spaces that there is ongoing revenue available to maintain the space after the improvements. Securing revenue contribution is not simply more direct funding, several schemes have met potential future ongoing maintenance requirements through joint working with Friends groups and volunteers so that the council service teams can maximise their skills and resources and the local community undertake key elements of the grounds maintenance that otherwise would be un-affordable.

A review of capital funding in year 2007-2008 highlighted the following allocations of money that were available for green space improvements

Budget	Description
Park Development/Repairs Development = circa £65k Repairs = £92k	The annual budget for the development of parks and green spaces is reliant on the receipts from the rent of land and catering concessions and therefore is not static. It is mainly used for urgent replacement infrastructure where health and safety dictates, but should be used for events and park improvements. Works may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairing/replacing worn out facilities • Supporting friends groups • Improving infrastructure • Hosting events A separate budget is used expressly for the running repairs on a day to day basis of worn out and vandalised/damaged facilities and infrastructure items. This is called the stewardship budget. Vandalism alone cost in the region of £23k in 07/08.
Capital (Other) £300k This is made up of the following: £50k 2007/8 £190k St James' Park Parks for people match funding £40K 2008/9 £20k 2009/10	This is a one off Southampton City Council investment budget held for specific projects and to match fund external grant applications. It is only available over the next 3 years. Typical projects could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match funding for St James Park Lottery Application • Green Flag improvements for Weston Shore, Hinkler Green, The Common, Riverside Park and Portswood Rec (park).

Budget	Description
Developer Contributions (Section 106 money) £34k as at March 2008	<p>Provided as part of a legal agreement between the Council and a Developer of Land. The figure given is made up of numerous smaller amounts earmarked for specific green spaces and is therefore the sum of all money received and available to be spent. This funding can only be used for the improvement and/or expansion of specific parks and green spaces. The works may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New signage/interpretation • New infrastructure i.e. seats, paths, bins • Acquiring new land
Local Area Agreement pump priming £45k spread over 3 years	<p>Local Area Agreement funding is pump priming money to enable LAA targeted projects to be realised.</p> <p>It can be used for such things as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park improvements to aid Green Flag status • Biodiversity audits • Improvement of biodiversity areas to reverse their decline • Promotion <p>If the targets are met then there is a reward for the Council of £550k. This figure could be ring fenced to ensure there is match funding to attract significantly larger bids to improve green spaces.</p>
<p>External Grants and Partnerships</p> <p>Breathing Places £33k</p> <p>Heritage Lottery Project Planning Grant for SJP £33k</p> <p>Groundwork £30k</p> <p>Various Friends groups additional funding - £75k</p>	<p>This type of funding needs to be bid for. Applications usually require strong arguments for the money. When bids are won they must be used for the purpose they were applied for, but this can be anything from a small community event or planting up to renovating a major green space. Grants exist for anything from £250 up to more than £5million.</p> <p>Partnerships enable certain areas of funding to become available for green space improvement that may not otherwise been accessible. They also provide an important link to local communities and can facilitate the bidding process.</p>

External Funding

There are various sources of external funding available for green spaces. They can be broadly broken down into two categories; those that can be applied for by the Local Authority and those that can be applied for by local community groups. There are some organisations that are also able to apply for grants which the Local Authority is not. These organisations include the Hampshire Wildlife Trust, Groundwork and BTCV, however, these

organisations usually work closely with local community groups and the Local Authority to ensure money received is spent in the best way for the local community. Where possible Neighbourhood Services encourages partnership working with these groups.

External funding can range from small awards such as breathing places (up to £10k) to major HLF bids such as the £3.5m awarded to Southampton for renovating Central Parks in 2000. These type of grants often need to be match funded in some way. Some are only available to voluntary groups such as Friends of groups. They are normally one off payments for specific projects. A bid for circa £1.1million has been made to the Parks for People scheme this year (2008), this will be match funded using the Capital shown above for St James Park (SJP).

Through a partnership with Groundwork Solent some unique funding opportunities will become available for paying for parks and green spaces.

One of the main grant funding bodies for Local Authorities is the Heritage Lottery Fund. This funding body uses money received from the National Lottery to give awards for various heritage based schemes. It offers grants from as little as £3000 to over £5m. Southampton has benefited from one of these grants in the past. £3.5m was secured to renovate the Central Parks in 2000.

Another major contributor to funding through grants is the Big Lottery Fund. Their Changing Spaces grant scheme of £234m has recently been launched. Seven separate organisations will be delivering the awards. Many of these will go towards schemes that improve community involvement whilst also improving the green space and the natural environment.

For community groups there are a number of project grants available. Grant schemes such as the BBC Breathing Places and the Awards for All schemes are available to fund projects up to £10k. The landfill waste companies such as Biffa and Veolia also offer grants of anything from £250 to £500k. On a smaller scale local businesses are often willing to provide services for free.

The Neighbourhood Services team have produced a matrix of possible improvements required for each of the key green spaces and identified potential future funding opportunities in partnership with Groundwork Solent. As new external funding streams or city council budgets become available the matrix is updated and resources prioritised in working up applications / bids in partnership with the local green space community groups.

Short bidding times and Match Funding

Many of the grants available require matched funding and securing the match funding can often exclude a good idea from ever being applied for. There is usually a percentage of this that can be put down as time in kind (ie the time spent by people working on the project – including volunteers and friends) however, there nearly always a minimum percentage as an actual capital sum. Before applying for grants there needs to be a direct mechanism and commitment from the Council to quickly consider match funding requests

wherever possible for projects that meet pre-identified match funding criteria. Possible reward grant money from achieving elements of the Local Area Agreement Stretch targets could be used to establish a match funding budget and developer contributions (Section 106) are also be use to match fund partnership working with Groundwork Solent.

Resource to Bid & Partnerships

Partnerships between the Council and external agencies such as Groundwork Solent, BTCV and the Wildlife Trust can bring important specialist expertise to Council projects. As most of these agencies are externally funded they can provide good value for money when providing consultancy advice.

Some of the partnership agencies also bring expertise in finding additional funding to enable schemes to be delivered.

Volunteers are a vitally important part of the funding process. All the hard work they put into projects can be counted as part of the match funding for many of the grants. Also there are many specific grants available to volunteer groups that are not available to the Council itself. These grants can be used on smaller projects within green spaces to help improve the area for the community as a whole. Suggestion for such projects does need to come from the community in order for them to be sustainable. The Council is committed to helping such groups and will provide professional advice wherever possible.

Revenue Commitment

As stated previously the ongoing revenue support is also a key requirements and the ability to ring fence certain elements of the general parks budget would assist in ensuring the investment in parks and green space infrastructure is sustainable.

Typical Costs of Capital Items to Install

In order to get some perspective of what you get for your money the table below shows some typical costs for replacing items in green spaces. The cost includes purchasing and installing the item. Unless otherwise stated no cost for maintenance has been included. It can be seen that with the small capital budgets available it is not possible to wholesale improve green spaces. The budget only covers urgent, health and safety requirements. If surplus budget becomes available then green spaces will be targeted in line with the hierarchy and recommendations set out in this document.

The figures are based on whole life costs and there is a life expectancy column to give some idea of how long between replacing items. The life expectancy is based on the items being regularly maintained. Where items are not maintained then it can be expected that their life expectancy will drop.

Item	Cost	Life Expectancy
2m x 10m of traditional tarmac path	£1000	20+ years
2m x 10m tarmac path built to prevent damage to tree roots	£2200	20+ years
Welcome Sign	£2000	10+ years
Minor Entrance Sign	£750	10+ years
Interpretation Boards	£1500	5+ years
Warning Signs	£50	5+ years
Notice Boards	£1500	10+ years
10m Top Quality Bespoke Railings	£7000	30+ years
Dual use bin	£500	10+ years
High Quality Bench	£1000	20+ years
Standard Bench	£400	15+ years
Complete refurbishment of Bench including metalwork and wooden slats	£300 - £420	15+ years
Bench Sand down and re-oiled/varnished	£30.00	Every 3-5 years
Replacement Slats for Bench	£15.00 - £35.00	As necessary
Tree Planted	£200	50+ years
Equipped LEAP	£35000+	10+ years refresh
Equipped NEAP	£100000+	10+ years refresh
Vehicle Access Gate	£1500	20+ years
Pedestrian Gate	£500	10+ years
Street Lighting Column	£1000	10+ years
Toilet – Self contained unit	£150,000 + £20,000/year to maintain	25 years
Toilet block new build	£250,000plus + £20,000/year to maintain	25 years
Semi-automatic toilet in existing building	£100,000 + £10,000/year to maintain	25 years

A detailed analysis of what is needed in our green spaces will be undertaken as part of an over all quality audit. This will give us a clear indication of what needs to be spent on green spaces over the next 5 to 20 years to bring them back to a basic standard in line with those proposed in this document.

What are the benefits of Investing in Southampton's Green Spaces?

Examples

Southampton Boat show – estimated £10m to region - £4m to Southampton

Hotels around central parks – bring people into city

Destination for cruise liners also attraction to people outside city, spend money in city

Health and Wellbeing = Healthy/happy workforce – businesses want to stay and expand

People want to live and work in Southampton – good for Southampton's economy

Economic Value

Further work needs to be undertaken to fully assess how green spaces in Southampton are influencing businesses to set up here. National and international research shows that businesses prefer to go to cities where well managed and maintained green spaces exist. It also shows that people want to live in such places and work there too.

Part of the marketing plan will be to market test this theory in Southampton and therefore to be able to target the best investment for Southampton in the future.

Marketing and Promoting the Green Spaces

Research has shown that although Southampton residents love their parks and often include them in the top 3 best things about Southampton, they are not widely known about outside of the city. The parks could become an attraction, bringing people into the city however, they will need to be marketed correctly.

Currently there is very little marketing or promotion of Southampton's green spaces. It is generally left up to the visitor or tourist to find them for themselves.

At a basic level each significant green space should be part of a city map showing their location and some of their features. These maps would be available from local libraries and public buildings, such as Tourist Information, as well as online.

At a much higher level the city could be promoting its green spaces through international magazines and television advertising. Southampton is the home of the cruise liner and is missing an opportunity to show the world some of the best green spaces there are.

Such campaigns cannot be undertaken in a haphazard manner. They need to be planned and coordinated so that they reach the maximum amount of people. A marketing communications plan needs to be developed to ensure that green space promotion fits in with the overall strategy for marketing in the city.

The plan will explore how to promote green spaces, not only for tourism, but also as an economic engine to ensure that people want to invest in the city and bring their businesses here.

Chapter 7

Recommendations and Actions

- **Parks Improvement Plan**

- **Recommendations**
 - **Consultation Priority Actions**
 - **Full List of Actions**

Parks Improvement Plan (short term 1 – 5 years)

Part of the actions over the next 5 years will be to prioritise 5 Key Parks and 15 Other Parks and green spaces for improvement. The following tables give an indication of the how these 20 parks can be prioritised from the 49 parks in the city. This is a dynamic improvement plan and should funding become available the priority of the park or green space will be reassessed.

The following table shows the 5 key parks considered to be top priority for improvements, in alphabetical order, these are likely to be completed within the next 1-3 years

Park	Potential improvements	Time Frame (Years)	Funding Available (Yes/No)	Funding Opportunities
Portswood Park	Infrastructure upgrade Establish dog walking route Establish pitches and area for use by the School Upgrade tennis courts	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £120k Capital £50k S106 - £21k Grants £10k	S106 Grants Groundwork Solent
Riverside Park	Maintain Green Flag Infrastructure improvements Working practices review Play area upgrade	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £75k S106 £5k	Grants
Southampton Common	Maintain Green Flag Work with Natural England	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £15k S106 £19k	S106
St James Park	Infrastructure upgrade Building upgrade Play area upgrade	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £190k	HLF Bid £1m
Weston Shore	Establish salt water marsh area Street furniture, information boards, manage ecological areas with improved public access, remove fencing establish protective ditch. Increase community involvement	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £10k	S106 Grants Groundwork Solent

The following table shows the proposed 15 priority parks targeted for improvement over the next 1 to 5 years in alphabetical order.

Park	Potential improvements	Time Frame (Years)	Funding Available (Yes/No)	Funding Opportunities
Cedar Lodge	Infrastructure upgrade Actions generated from quality audit	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £6k	Grants
Central Parks	Maintain Green Flag Award Establish events space in East Park Integrate sports in East Park by moving grass tennis courts to old bowling green area Further safety improvements	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £46k	Grants
Daisy Dip	Upgrade infrastructure Upgrade footpaths and bridges Upgrade play area Look into feasibility of on site toilets	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £30k S106 £4.5k	Grants Groundwork Solent
Freemantle Common	Work with community action group to re-establish play within the common.	1 – 3	Yes - Capital £10k	S106 from Play Services £4.4k Grants
Freemantle Lake Park	Infrastructure upgrade Actions generated from quality audit	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £25k	Grants
Frogs Copse	Re-establish old boundaries for the copse Establish grass/meadow wildlife area	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £15k	S106 Grants Groundwork Solent
Hinkler Green	Green Flag Award application Upgrade infrastructure	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £10k	S106 Grants
Mansbridge	Establish grass/meadow wildlife area Work with Hampshire Wildlife Trust to develop DDA compliant access to reservoir along line of Itchen navigation Work with Inland Waterways to clear historic lock	1 – 3	Yes – HLF Grant awarded to Hampshire Wildlife Trust	Capital S106

Park	Potential improvements	Time Frame (Years)	Funding Available (Yes/No)	Funding Opportunities
Mayflower Park	Develop master plan for design of park encompassing Boat Show and possible expansion, moving play area, integrating north area into park. Implement current landscape proposals as per Cabinet decision.	2 – 5	Yes – Capital £500k S106 £75k	Grants S106
Millers Pond Area	Improvements to pond area to provide disabled access swims and disabled access. Work by Sholing Valleys towards Local Nature Reserve status for area. Development of and installation of interpretation signs.	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £1.8k	Grants Environment Agency investment for disabled access swims
Peartree Green	Establish play area and youth facilities	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £7.5k	Capital Grants
Queens Park	Footpath upgrade Infrastructure upgrade Feasibility of onsite catering Feasibility study of integrating the two areas of the park to include cost of removing the decommissioned road Feasibility, design and implementation of sensory garden to commemorate Southampton's links with ocean going liners	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £130k	Grants S106
Redbridge Wharf	Establish a play area Establish a friends of group Engage young people for art and play designs.	1 – 3	Yes – Capital £20k	S106 Grants Groundwork Solent
Shirley Pond	Work with EA on making pond sustainable Work with EA on naturalising Tanners Brook	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £16k	Grants
Thornhill Park	Facilitate second phase of improvements to include upgrading and enlarging the play area.	1 – 3	Yes - Grant £??k Thornhill Plus You funding	Grants S106 Groundwork Solent

The following table shows the remaining parks where funding is available, in alphabetical order, and which can be improved over the longer term.

Park	Potential improvements	Time Frame (Years)	Funding Available (Yes/No)	Funding Opportunities
Archery Rec	Improve grass areas for games use Develop area for informal football	5+	Yes – S106 £2k	S106
Butts Road	Establish youth facilities including shelter Upgrade infrastructure Upgrade play area	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £4.5k	Grants Capital from City Safety and Youth Services S106 from Play Services
Deep Dene	Woodland management and infrastructure upgrade Actions generated from quality audit	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £5.5k	Grants
Donkey Common	Woodland management Heathland management	2 – 5	Yes S106 £1.2k	S106
Freshfield Road	New signs Develop play equipment in whole area	5+	Yes – S106 £2.2k	S106 from Play Services
Green Park	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	Yes – S106 £1k	S106
Greenways	Audit and cut back vegetation as necessary to bring back to original path widths. Re-apply for woodland grants Role out access audit across city	5+	Yes – Grant £??k Forestry Commission WIGs S106 £38k Various sites	Environment Agency With regard to ponds and waterways e.g. Millers Pond and Tanners Brook Grants Groundwork Solent
Hum Hole	Re-establish woodland edge Clear drainage ditches Investigate best footpath surfacing to reduce slips and trips Renovate ponds	5+	Yes – S106 £1.5k	S106 Grants

Park	Potential improvements	Time Frame (Years)	Funding Available (Yes/No)	Funding Opportunities
Lawn Road	Infrastructure upgrade Improve play area Actions generated from quality audit	5+	Yes – S106 £6.7K	S106 from Play Services
Mansel Park	Green Flag Award application Planting of Boggy Play Area ,new play area, Spring 2008	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £1.9k	Grants S106
Mount Pleasant	Upgrade play area Establish green link as part of green grid	5+	Yes – S106 £3.3k	S106 from Play Services
Sullivan Road Rec	Upgrade infrastructure Establish informal pitch	2 – 5	Yes – S106 £3.7k	Grants
Town Quay and Cuckoo Lane	Actions generated from quality audit Consider proposal and offsite alternative improvements	5+	Yes – S106 £1k	S106 Capital Receipt
Veracity Ground	Plant Scots Pine along Spring Road to ensure feature is maintained	5+	Yes – S106 £1.2k	S106

The following table show the rest of the parks where no funding is currently available, in alphabetical order, but which there is an aspiration to improve over the longer term.

Park	Potential improvements	Time Frame	Funding Available (Yes/No)	Funding Opportunities
Abbey Hill	Facilitate installation of National Cycleway Network path Establish picnic areas	5+	No	S106 Grants
Aldermoor Road	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106
Bakers Drove	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106
Bitterne Manor	Establish amenity area adjacent to river Develop woodland management plan	5+	No	S106 Grants
Blechynden Park	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106
Chessel Bay	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106
Little Mongers Park	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106

Park	Potential improvements	Time Frame	Funding Available (Yes/No)	Funding Opportunities
Mayfield Park	Maintain Green Flag Establish use for Lodge Improve access, linking rec. area with formal park.	5+	No	S106 Grants
Millbrook Rec	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106
Northam Bridge Park	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106
Northam Doorstep Green	Green Flag Award application Establish friends of group	5+	No	
Octavia Road	Establish level football pitch Establish grass/meadow wildlife area Carry out appropriate management of SSSI	5+	No	
Olive Road Rec	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106
Platform Park	Facilitate proposals for Highways improvements	5+	No	Capital S106
Sports Centre	Audit provision and use developer obligation contributions to upgrade	5+	No	S106 from Leisure Services
Sports Zone Local Park	Actions generated from quality audit	5+	No	S106

Recommendations

Many recommendations have come out of the strategy and the full list has been itemised under each of the aims they relate to later in this chapter. Some were prioritised and included for further consultation within the Green Space Strategy Summary Consultation Draft. As part of the consultation people were asked to prioritise their top five recommendations from a list of twenty. As a result the twenty recommendations within the consultation draft have been refined into the following action plan, giving 10 objectives, each with detailed actions. The objectives reflect the five aims of this strategy and ensure their implementation over the next 5 years.

i. To provide a network of high quality green spaces contributing to a unique sense of place				
1 Quality audit all parks to identify gaps and highlight areas for improvement				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
1.1	Develop and carry out a quality audit of all parks and green spaces based on Green Flag criteria	Gaps in provision will be identified and areas in need of improvement highlighted. Information will feed into individual management plans	49 parks complete by 2010 All other green space complete by 2012	Funding required to employ consultant to carry out audits. Project management,
1.2	Use audit data to assess what investment will be required over the next 15 to 20 years in order to sustain and improve green spaces	Clear understanding of what resources will be required in order to sustain and improve green space.	Detailed breakdown of funding required to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustain green spaces for the next 20 years by 2013 • improve green spaces over the next 20 years by 2013 	
1.3	Use audit data to prioritise parks and green space for allocation of future funds.	When funds are made available we know where they can be most effectively spent to achieve improvement in quality	A parks prioritisation list is developed by 2011 A green space prioritisation list is developed by 2013	
1.4	Produce a map identifying potential green space for alternative land use, based on its quantity and quality. (Alternative use as green space will be top priority, built development will be considered where it will improve an area and/or can generate funds for reinvestment/maintenance of other green space. Public consultation will be undertaken before any green space is used for alternative purposes.)	We will have a clear indication of where there is surplus, low quality green space that can be changed to a different land use. Green space will be fully utilised.	First draft by 2009 Final map on the corporate geographical information system (GIS) by 2013	

i. To provide a network of high quality green spaces contributing to a unique sense of place

2 Target 5 key parks and green spaces to improve over the next 1-3 years to improve distribution of higher quality spaces				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
2.1	St James' Park will be improved through capital funding, increased community involvement and Parks for People Lottery funding grant (if successful)	Greatly improved park for local residents and visitors in an area of the city with otherwise limited park facilities.	Parks for People lottery bid result in October 2008. If successful implemented improvements by 2011 Obtain Green Flag by 2011	Parks for People bid for £1.1m (total project £1.5m with £190k + match funding)
2.2	Riverside Park, Portswood Park (recreation ground), and Weston Shore will be improved through capital funding, increased community involvement and other external grants.	Local residents and visitors to the north and east of the city will have much improved facilities to use	Riverside Park will maintain its Green Flag Award status annually Portswood Park will obtain Green Flag Award status by 2011 Weston Shore will obtain Green Flag Award status by 2010	Riverside, Section 106 – tennis court and capital for Cafe Portswood, Sita - Grant £10k Weston Shore – Local Area Agreement capital
2.3	The Southampton Common will be improved through capital funding; joint working with Natural England will be undertaken to enhance the SSSI.	Local residents and visitors to the centre of the city will have much improved facilities to use	Maintain Green Flag Award status annually Obtain Favourable Status for SSSI by 2012	Section 106 Forestry Grant LAA Grant

i. To provide a network of high quality green spaces contributing to a unique sense of place

3 To Improve 15 parks and green spaces through targeted use of developer contributions.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
3.1	Compile list of 15 top priority green spaces for improvement based on funding availability and need.	Ensure that improvements are targeted to areas with funding allocated.	List is produced by 2009	Officer Time
3.2	Carry out improvements to 15 green spaces by instigating projects for each.	Residents will have better green space facilities within close walking distance to them	15 green spaces will have improved facilities by 2011	Section 106 Capital money

i. To provide a network of high quality green spaces contributing to a unique sense of place

4 To produce management plans for key parks and green spaces.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
4.1	Produce management plans for 5 City Parks and 4 District parks plus 20% of the local parks, (This includes the re-writing of the 20 year Common Management and Maintenance Plan.)	The aims and objectives for the parks will be outlined and actions identified for the next 5-10 years. Will also assist in Green Flag applications	Publish management plans by 2010	Possibly outsource to consultancy

ii. To promote active community involvement and improved access for citizens and visitors

5 To ensure people continue to feel safe in our parks.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
5.1	Develop a range of safety improvements for example park watch schemes (council staff, police, community support officers and friends groups sign up to increase visibility in the parks)	Improve perception of safety in parks and encourage more people to use parks	Two park watch schemes set up by 2012	Staff to support park watch groups for administration and attending meetings.
5.2	Implement 'safer by design' modifications to shrub beds, borders and lighting where appropriate.	More people use and feel safe in the parks.	Perception of safety improves (on site user surveys)	Capital for shrub bed modifications and lighting improvements Staff or consultants to carry out site user surveys

ii. To promote active community involvement and improved access for citizens and visitors

6 To improve the quality of green spaces by getting local communities actively involved.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
6.1	Increase the number of Friends groups across Southampton	Local people involved in shaping the future of their green space, promoting a sense of ownership and pride in the area, making them more sustainable.	Friends group in place for at least 15 green spaces by 2012.	Staff time to support friends groups. Financial and staff support for friends groups to hold events.
6.2	Establish and adopt a methodology for consulting with all user groups including young people, older people, access groups and minority groups	Green space improvement projects will be better informed and designed by consulting with a wide range of groups.	A methodology is produced and adopted by 2013	
6.3	Promote the use of GreenSTAT to encourage more online feedback	Improve customer feedback on the parks service and individual parks.	Increased use of GreenSTAT by 2009	Ongoing funding for GreenSTAT licence (approx. £4,000 pa).

ii. To promote active community involvement and improved access for citizens and visitors

7 To clarify certain legal issues relating to green spaces.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
7.1	To produce proposals for public consultation following the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 on areas within green spaces where it is appropriate to promote greater control of dogs	This will make the position with regards to dog control clear to park users. On the spot enforcement where owners act irresponsibly and/or allow their dogs to become out of control.	A proposal following The Dog Control Orders (Procedures) Regulations 2006 is ready for public consultation by 2010	
7.2	To produce proposals for public consultation to clarify areas within green spaces where it is appropriate to allow cycling for leisure and cycling for commuting.	Clarify the situation with regards to cycling in green spaces and ensure that the public are aware of where it is appropriate to cycle.	Proposals produced by 2010	
7.3	To clarify and register all green spaces owned by SCC and to enforce, where appropriate, where adjacent property boundaries have encroached.	It will clarify SCC ownership of green space and ensure it is retained in public ownership.	All green space is registered by 2013 Encroachments are successfully enforced and green space is returned to public use.	Capital available

ii. To promote active community involvement and improved access for citizens and visitors

7 To clarify certain legal issues relating to green spaces.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
7.4	To investigate and provide solutions to reduce the ability of people to take motorbikes onto green spaces.	Reduce damage to green spaces and its biodiversity and make users feel safer.	Viable solutions to restrict motorcycle use are trialled by 2012	
7.5	To investigate and provide solutions to reduce fly-tipping on green spaces.	Green spaces become cleaner, increased satisfaction with cleanliness. Possible financial reward if LAA stretch targets are met.	Reduce number of incidents city wide by 20% by 2010	LAA funding
7.6	To prepare proposals for public consultation identifying which local byelaws, for green spaces, need updating.	This will clarify to the public what restrictions there are in green spaces and will provide a realistic fine for enforcement purposes.	Proposals are produced by 2013	
7.7	To review the green spaces which are most at risk from traveller encampments, and implement on site solutions	This will reduce the risk of travellers using public open space for encampments. It will reduce public spending on getting such encampments evicted.	Solutions are implemented on 5 sites by 2011	Capital funding
7.8	Use the evidence gathered above to produce a "Respect Southampton's Green Spaces" guide.	This will be an easy to read document clarifying what restrictions there are in green spaces and giving clear guidance for users on responsible use of green space.	Booklet in general circulation by 2013	

iii. To establish the contribution parks make in developing the city economy and cultural opportunities

8 To inform future planning policy on the provision of green space.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
8.1	Update Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance to reflect the evidence shown within the Green Space Strategy.	Developers will have a clear indication of the amount of green space they need to provide or the financial contribution they will need to make in its place. Planners will have robust evidence to base section 106 agreements on. New developments in the city should impact less on the existing green space.	Commence process in 2009, and the amenity Open Space section of the Planning Obligations SPG is re-written by 2012	
8.2	The Green Space Strategy is aligned with and maintained as an evidence base which feeds into the Local Development Framework (LDF) guiding policy.	It will provide robust evidence for the LDF and provide more accurate data to base policy on.	Evidence incorporated into the LDF by 2013	

iv. To achieve attractive and sustainable green spaces in the city

9 To establish a Green Grid network linking key green spaces and providing 'green routes' for people and wildlife.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
9.1	Produce a map showing all the existing green links between strategic green spaces, for wildlife, walking and cycling. (Taking into consideration the green travel plan, the ROWIP, the active travel plan, cycle routes plan, etc.)	The map will be used to identify gaps and routes that need to be developed to ensure a green grid within the city and into wider region	Map produced in GIS by 2011	Surveys, rerouting services, highways input, Section 106 planning obligations
9.2	Prioritise the key routes to develop/ improve e.g. Itchen Navigation, Monks Brook, Weston to Thornhill.	Enables effective spending of funds when available	A priority list of key routes, highlighted on the map, produced by 2012	Surveys, rerouting services, highways input, Section 106 planning obligations
9.3	Create Green Grid Implementation Plan to include funding, highways issues, private land use, tree planting, tree protection etc in order to fully establish green grid	Having established existing routes the implementation plan will focus on reducing gaps	Green grid implementation plan is produced by 2013	Surveys, rerouting services, highways input, Section 106 planning obligations

v. To maximise value for money and resources available

10 To ensure that high quality green spaces continue to be well maintained in the future.				
Ref	Actions	Benefits	Measures of Success and Timescales	Financial and Other Resources
10.1	Invest in ongoing horticultural training for Open Spaces staff and explore new ways of attracting young people to a career in horticulture.	A highly trained, more motivated and knowledgeable work force. Retain more quality staff, more trainees interested in working at Southampton	Improved age profile of workforce by 2011 Increase number of NVQ's and work placements	Project management Training budget
10.2	Review service promises and apply them across the City green space provision, with a view to improving grounds maintenance, focussing on the basics of grass cutting, litter, fly tipping and dog fouling.	Cleaner, safer, greener green spaces.	Service promises document available by end 2009.	

The table below gives the full list of recommendations/actions that have come out of the evidence gathering that makes up this document. However, the recommendations are not set in stone and it is expected that as this technical document evolves they will be continually reviewed and amended to meet any new challenges set. The recommendations in bold print are those that were taken forward for consultation.

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
i. To provide a network of high quality green spaces contributing to a unique sense of place				
<p>Target 5 key parks and green spaces to improve over the next 1-3 years to improve the distribution of higher quality spaces.</p> <p>Achieved by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> St James' Park through capital funding, increased community involvement and Heritage Lottery funding grant (if successful) Riverside Park, Portswood Park (Recreation ground), Weston Shore through capital funding, increased community involvement and other external grants. 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>FoSJP</p> <p>FoRP</p>	<p>HLF application c. £1mil</p>	<p>Complete park improvement by 2011</p> <p>2011</p>

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade some areas of informal green spaces to allow for safe informal play and sport, including enclosing them and making them dog free. 	Neighbourhood Services			2028
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising the quality of all parks and green spaces to a minimum quality level in line with the GSS Standards within the next 20 years, firstly prioritising the most deprived areas of the city which often have the lowest quality green space 	Neighbourhood Services			2028
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restore, enhance and safeguard key historic features of parks, respecting historical features whilst responding to modern day needs Reviewing, restoring and developing park buildings for a range of alternative uses. Continuing to provide tennis courts in green spaces as satellite sites in support of the Sports Centre. 	Neighbourhood Services	Neighbourhood Services/ Heritage Conservation Unit		Ongoing
<p>Ensure that new building development in the city is contributing to the overall provision of green space and not becoming a burden.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revising cost of providing open space in order to better calculate developer contributions Seeking contributions from business developments especially for nearest/ city centre parks Revising quantity standards and including quality standard in Supplementary Planning Guidance and adopting a Section 106 process that allows for greater negotiation on where contributions will be spent in relation to the location of the development. 	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy		2008
	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy		2011
	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy/ Development Control		

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exploring the following potential means of adding to and improving green space provision and distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creating new green space through the development process ● Providing areas for play in places of deficiency as land and resources allow ● Taking opportunities to reorganise space through land swaps or housing redevelopment ● Making community access to school grounds possible in areas of high deficiency where practicable ● Using surplus land to fund the improvement of more valued green space ● Using contributions to upgrade facilities in larger parks to benefit the wider population ● Using contributions towards the improvement in quality of the existing sports facilities within green spaces ● Negotiating formal access to key strategic sites currently under private ownership 	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy/ Development Control		2028
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve 15 local parks and green spaces through targeted use of developer contributions by 2011 including developing Queens Park as a potential Titanic memorial park. 	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy/ Development Control		2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investing over £3 million in improving the green spaces around council housing areas as part of the Decent Homes : Decent Neighbourhoods policy 	Neighbourhood Services	Decent Homes		2011

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<p>Improve the quality of green spaces through a process of providing each with a management or action plan appropriate to the use of the green space and managing spaces in accordance with Southampton's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Producing management plans for each City and District parks plus 20% of all Local parks by December 2009, outlining the aims and objectives for the park and giving actions for the next 5- 10 years. This includes rewriting the 20 year Common Management and maintenance plan ● Producing, as a minimum, an action plan for each Local Park giving a prioritised list of actions, activities and works for a period of five years. Where there is an aspiration to attain a Green Flag Award for the park a full management plan will be developed. ● Producing action plans for all other green space, only where and when appropriate to the size and use of the land. 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>			<p>Within next 18 months</p> <p>Within next 5 years</p> <p>Within next 10 years</p>
<p>To clarify the policies for Neighbourhood Services day to day management through to Councillor approval on a number of key issues including use of the byelaws, land ownership, cycling routes through green spaces, action to prevent motorbikes and fly-tipping in green spaces.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewing and clarifying existing Land Holding powers and Byelaws and working with Legal Services to assess which require updating ● Applying most appropriate Holding Powers and Byelaws to each green space 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>Legal Services, Building Services</p> <p>Legal Service</p>		<p>2013</p> <p>2028</p>

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
ii. To promote active community involvement and improved access for citizens and visitors				
<p>Ensuring people continue to feel safe in our parks by developing a range of safety improvements</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increasing the visible presence of people in parks and green spaces. ● Establishing a park watch scheme where local residents, Neighbourhood Services staff, Neighbourhood Wardens, City patrol, PCSO and police sign up to increase visibility ● Expanding the Park Ranger role to other areas of Southampton through integration of roles and increased community involvement focussing on education, prevention and greater responsiveness to incidents ● Refining and updating policies on general anti-social behaviour in green spaces including dog fouling, motorbike misuse, tethered horses / animals, encroachments and addressing general safety issues in parks that have been highlighted through the consultation. ● Put measures in place to reduce motorbike access to green space. ● Implementing 'safer by design' modifications to shrub beds, borders and lighting improvements where appropriate. ● Enhance the wider park environment for play and work with children and young people to explore and use green spaces positively. 	Neighbourhood Services			2028
	Neighbourhood Services	Friends Groups/City Patrol/ Hampshire Police		2013
	Neighbourhood Services			2013
	Neighbourhood Services	City Patrol		2013
	Neighbourhood Services			2013
	Neighbourhood Services	Youth Services		2018

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<p>Dog free spaces will be created whilst ensuring dog walkers have a varied choice of green space to visit.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Auditing and mapping all parks and major green spaces, as per recent legislation to allocate the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dog free ○ Dogs on leads ○ Dogs off leads ● Developing the role of on-site parks staff and dog wardens to tackle problems of dog's mess and uncontrolled dogs through education, encouragement and enforcement. 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>Dog Wardens</p> <p>City Patrol/Dog Wardens</p>		<p>2011</p> <p>2011</p>
<p>Improve access to green space for a wider range of people concentrating on equality of access</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revise Equality Impact Assessment for parks and green spaces in line with the Equality Standard and carry out access audits for key parks. ● Enhancing entry points and boundaries to improve the welcome to the space and reinforce the designed landscape within. ● Reviewing locations and types of facilities within sites to ensure easy access ● Improving the quality of riverside routes and cycle/walkways through the city for recreation and biodiversity. 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p>Sustainable Transport</p>		<p>2018</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2018</p>

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<p>Seek to increase community use of School grounds, in particular where there is under provision of other green space in an area.</p> <p>Achieved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working closely with schools to identify where access would be available Ensuring that school grounds are managed and maintained in line with the GSS and service promises 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>Children's Services</p> <p>Children's Services</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Provide diverse, exciting and challenging green spaces for children and young people.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing the natural play spaces through active design using both the natural landscape and the introduction of natural play materials. Providing high quality informal and formal equipped play space. Rationalising the number and location of play spaces as part of the Play Area Strategy to provide larger, better quality spaces well distributed across the city. Clarifying the provision of good quality skate parks throughout the City, ensuring there is a good variety of ramps designed in conjunction with the local users. Reviewing and mapping the current provision of multi-use games areas and proposing distance standards 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Play Services</p> <p>Play Services</p> <p>Play Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>Play Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Play Services</p>		<p>2018</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2013</p>

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing, where possible, teenage areas on sites where children’s playgrounds are located including seating areas and a range of challenging equipment. • Maintaining and enhancing two high quality major play spaces which attract citywide and regional users. These are likely to be located at Southampton Common and Central Parks 	Neighbourhood Services	Play Services		2018
	Play Services	Neighbourhood Services		2018
<p>Improve the quality of green spaces by getting local communities actively involved in shaping the future of their green space.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the number of Friends groups across Southampton with an aim of having a Friends group in place for at least 15 green spaces by 2012 • Producing guidance on how local people might be able to get more involved in their local green spaces, highlighting what the range of possibilities might be and what examples exist in Southampton. • Establishing and adopting an approved methodology for consulting with specific users groups including young people, older people, access groups and minority groups for green space improvement projects • Promote the use of GreenSTAT to encourage more online feedback on a site specific basis and using the data gained to inform the park improvement process • Supporting individuals and sports clubs by providing the right facilities and encouraging participation in outdoor sport 	Neighbourhood Services			2010/2011
	Neighbourhood Services			2013
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating relevant services to provide a single focus for customers in relation to all park and green space enquiries (including the maintenance of play areas and sports fields) 	Neighbourhood Services			2008
<p>Actively explore the most effective ways of engaging young people in the park improvement process.</p> <p>Achieved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing new consultation mechanisms Working more closely with other services such as Youth Services Learning from examples from other Local Authorities 	Neighbourhood Services Neighbourhood Services Neighbourhood Services			2013 Ongoing Ongoing
<p>iii. To establish the contribution parks make in developing the city economy and cultural opportunities</p>				
<p>Enhance City parks fitting Southampton's status as a major city with international and national profile.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritising key parks where high quality horticultural maintenance is paramount and keeping it to the highest standard Providing high amenity, annual and herbaceous planting schemes in key City parks 	Neighbourhood Services Neighbourhood Services			2009 Ongoing
<p>Recognising the importance of quality green spaces in attracting new development to the city and develop the cultural links of the parks through the emerging arts, heritage and cultural projects in the City Centre.</p> <p>Achieved by</p>				

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting the local standards for green space adopted through the Local Development Framework process. Reducing the impact of higher density development by allocating developer contributions across Local, District and City parks, recognising the public need for good quality green spaces. Ensuring developer contributions are up to date and adequate for providing improvements to green spaces. 	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy		2013
	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy		2013
	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Policy		2013
<p>Promoting Southampton's green spaces to show the value and benefit of them on the economy and cultural experience.</p> <p>Achieved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a marketing communication plan to promote Southampton's green spaces regionally, nationally and internationally. Marketing the green spaces more effectively to local people through City View, Tenants Link, web pages, events information, road shows Work in a coordinated manner with Leisure Services to provide high quality events in high quality event spaces. 	Neighbourhood Services			2013
	Neighbourhood Services			2011
iv. To achieve attractive and sustainable green spaces in the city.				
<p>Improve biodiversity and access to wildlife in at least 20 locations across the city.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p>				

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving maintenance and management regimes, as part of the service promises review, ensuring optimum conditions for wildlife alongside attractive, welcoming and easily accessible places for people to enjoy. Developing a skilled and dedicated workforce specialising in management of nature conservation sites, with suitable specialist equipment. Improving access to and routes through natural green space to improve welcome and perception of safety. Safeguarding and enhancing rich and diverse habitats and important urban species within green spaces by following advice laid out in the Southampton Biodiversity Action Plan. Reaching targets set out in the Local Area Agreement for biodiversity sites, increasing the number that are stable or improving. Improve biodiversity and access to wildlife in at least 20 locations across the city – through LAA pump priming funds, increased local volunteering and accessing other external grants Creating new habitats for wildlife where shortfalls have been identified. Increasing local volunteer networks and involvement in conservation tasks Accessing external grants to enhance biodiversity 	Neighbourhood Services			2008
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services			2010
	Neighbourhood Services			2008
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services	FOG, Groundwork Solent		Ongoing
<p>Develop a series of green space based measures that could reduce the impact of climate change</p> <p>Achieved by</p>				

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering measures to reduce the impact of climate change when planning green spaces, including trees for shade, drought resistant planting and water recycling systems to enable irrigation to occur to retain the green vegetation cover. • Providing guidance and advice to Development Control to encourage carbon neutral solutions to mitigate the impacts of new buildings, ie green roofs, meadows and trees • Recycling all green waste produced by our parks and green spaces 	Neighbourhood Services	Planning Sustainability		Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services	Development Control		Ongoing
	Neighbourhood Services			Ongoing
<p>Establish a Green Grid network linking key green spaces and providing 'green routes' through the city for people and wildlife</p> <p>Achieved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and mapping current links between key green spaces • Identifying gaps and where new links need to be developed • Seeking developer contributions to acquire and fund where possible new links to expand the Green Grid system. • By 2010 provide clarification and propose solutions to issues surrounding cycling in green spaces. 	Neighbourhood Services	Highways/ Sustainable Transport		2011
	Neighbourhood Services	Highways/ Sustainable Transport		2011
	Neighbourhood Services	Development Control		2013
	Neighbourhood Services	Sustainable Transport		2010
<p>Ensure that high quality green spaces continue to be well maintained in the future.</p> <p>Achieved by:</p>				

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investing in ongoing horticultural training for Neighbourhood Services staff and exploring new ways of attracting young people to a career in horticulture. ● Continuing to provide walks, talks and tasks for volunteer and visitor groups. ● Reviewing service promises and applying them across the City provision, with a view to improving grounds maintenance, focussing on the basics of grass cutting, litter, fly tipping and dog fouling. 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>			<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2013</p>
<p>Develop management plans for remaining green space types to ensure priorities and issues are recognised</p> <p>Achieved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing plans for the following areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allotments plan ○ Woodlands and trees plan ○ Urban Canopy Action Plan ○ Play Areas Action Plan ○ Housing Green Space Plan ● Existing plans are reviewed and updated, these include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Play Strategy ○ Playing Pitch Strategy ○ Biodiversity Action Plan ○ Management Strategy for Greenways 	<p>Neighbourhood Services/ Play Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services/ Leisure Services/ Play Services</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p>		<p>2018</p> <p>2018</p>

Recommendations/ Actions	Lead Service	Key partners/ stakeholders to delivery	Estimated resource	Completion date
v. To maximise value for money and resources available				
<p>Green Spaces continue to be core funded by the Council, with additional funding for green space improvements to be sourced externally</p> <p>Achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out a service review, revisiting current working practices and investing to save where possible. • Exploring and maximising external funding opportunities such as lottery schemes, EU funds, landfill credits. • Continue involvement in the councils Funding Opportunities Group to identify new sources of funding. • Working with and encouraging key partners and friends groups to make successful applications for external funding • Make resources available for key bids in priority green spaces, both in terms of match funding and Officer time 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>FOG</p>		<p>Service review in 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Where there is a large extent of low quality, low use green space, some will be considered for alternative purposes, either changing its use to another type or for built development in order to generate the funds for reinvestment.</p> <p>Achieved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out an audit of all green spaces to assess their quality and protection status as recommended by this document • Carrying out consultation with local residents to assess usage and value of the areas 	<p>Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Neighbourhood Services</p>			<p>2018</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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