



Executive Summary Open Space Strategy

March 2006

Foreword

I am delighted to be able to launch this Executive Summary of the Haringey Open Space Strategy.

Open space is highly valued by the residents of Haringey with 85% of our community visiting open space at least once a year. Open space is used for a variety of purposes: walking, using play facilities, meeting friends, festivals and events, enjoying and learning about nature, tending an allotment, discovering local history and playing sport being just some of these.

The council and external partners have invested significantly in recent years with over £5 million being invested in the last 12 months to improve the quality of our open spaces and make them safer and more accessible to local people.

This has enabled us to win 4 'Green Flags', awarded for the best managed parks, which is the second highest of all the London boroughs.

In Haringey, we want our communities to feel proud of their local parks and our Open Space Strategy sets out how we hope to achieve this. Improving the quality and distribution of open space across the borough and ensuring that our spaces can be enjoyed by all of the communities living in Haringey are at the heart of the Strategy.

We are particularly fortunate in Haringey to be living in a borough where local people clearly value their parks. We currently have 27 'Friends' of parks groups – local residents who meet on a regular basis to advise on the management of their local green spaces and organise a variety of activities within those spaces.

Ultimately, open space belongs to all of us and I believe that Haringey can, through the Open Space Strategy, look forward with confidence to a positive future for open space within the borough.



Councillor Peter Hillman, Executive Member for Environment and Conservation.

Introduction

Open space makes an important contribution to our overall quality of life. It provides a sense of freedom and relief from our built environment, somewhere to relax and leave behind the strains and pressures of day to day life, somewhere to play, to enjoy flora and fauna, to meet with our friends and family, to exercise and to learn about our natural environment.

The existence of quality open spaces also improves the visual attractiveness of where we live and work, helps to define the character of our borough and its unique identity and can improve the economic performance of the borough by attracting and retaining employment.

In developing the Open Space Strategy, Haringey Council is seeking to provide a framework for the future management and development of open space within the borough which will enable the whole community – residents, community organisations, voluntary and statutory agencies and businesses – to work in partnership in order to obtain the maximum benefit from our open spaces. The basis of this framework is contained within an overall vision statement for open space, 8 strategic objectives which set out the key areas of improvement we will be seeking to prioritise, and an action plan, arising out of the strategic objectives, that will provide the detailed route map to enable the objectives to be achieved.

In setting out our Strategy, we want particularly to stress the importance we will place on our desire to involve the whole community in shaping the future of our open space. This is because we recognise that open space affects the lives of almost everyone who lives and works in the borough and because we believe that the combination of effective management and community involvement of our open spaces offers considerable potential for helping to make Haringey a thriving and more cohesive community.



Scope of the Open Space Strategy

The following types of space have been included within the scope of the Strategy:

Parks and Recreation Grounds, small local open spaces, sports pitches, allotments, nature conservation sites and local nature reserves, cemeteries and churchyards, school playing fields, ecological corridors including river and railway corridors, green chains, public squares and streetscapes, children's play areas and housing open land.

How the Strategy was developed

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance note 17 (Planning for Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation), the council has previously commissioned an assessment of supply and demand for open space within Haringey which was undertaken by Atkins consultants in 2003.

This study looked in detail at open space within the borough and made recommendations as to how quality, quantity and access to open space could be improved.

Additionally, the Strategy has also examined the legislative and policy context affecting open space at the national, regional and policy level. Within this context, there are different types of legislation and policy: those that are directly concerned with open space provision and those where open space makes a contribution but is not the principal subject of a wider policy initiative.

This included documents about land use, education and health, building sustainable communities, play, sports pitches, biodiversity, playing fields, the environment and heritage.

Research and consultation in the development of the Strategy

Information about the needs and demands of local people for open space within the borough was obtained from a number of sources. These included:



- From a postal survey of sports clubs
- Via a telephone survey undertaken by Atkins
- From research carried out on behalf of the council by MORI and TNS
- From park users surveys
- From responses by agencies, local groups and individuals to the draft Strategy and Action Plan.

Key facts about Haringey's Open Space

- There are 382.86 hectares of public open space in Haringey; 12.87% of the total area of the borough, which makes it relatively green compared with other parts of London.
- However, in terms of population there is 590 people per hectare of open space in Haringey compared with the London average of 363 persons per hectare (2001 census data).
- There are 1.7 hectares per 1000 population which is below the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standard of 2.43 hectares per 1000.
- There are 61 parks and open spaces in the borough.
- There are 42 hectares of managed allotments in the borough providing 1,819 individual plots.
- There is an additional 72.33 hectares of open space which are classified either as housing open land or schools and educational open space.
- The majority of open space is managed by Haringey Council. However, three of the larger spaces in the borough – Lee Valley Regional Park, Alexandra Park and Highgate Woods – are managed by other organisations.
- There are 70 identified sites of ecological value within Haringey and 3 sites classified as local nature reserves.
- There are 46 full size football pitches, 23 cricket pitches, 2 rugby pitches, 2 hockey pitches, 19 junior (6-a-side) football pitches, 36 5-a-side football pitches and 2 junior cricket pitches.
- There are more than 100 play facilities in the borough. This includes playgrounds, ball courts, skateboard arenas and adventure play facilities.



Key findings on the provision of open space

The Strategy analysed the existing quantity and quality of open space provision within Haringey. In terms of overall open space provision, it identified that the distribution of open space is uneven. The areas of the borough identified as deficient (in order of extent of deficiency) were:

- Northumberland Park
- Parts of White Hart Lane Ward
- Parts of Bounds Green Ward
- Parts of Fortis Green and Alexandra Wards
- Part of Highgate Ward
- Part of Crouch End Ward
- Parts of St. Ann's, Harringay and Seven Sisters Wards
- Parts of Bruce Grove and Tottenham Green Wards
- East of Seven Sisters Ward.

Further key findings included:

- A deficiency in access to sports pitches in the east of the borough
- A projected shortfall of allotment plots with up to 1,552 additional plots needed by 2016
- The centre of the borough being deficient in sites which have ecological value.

Key findings concerning the use and condition of open space

- 85% of residents had visited a park or open space in the last year, 82% within the last six months, 70% in the last month and 44% in the last week.
- People from the Asian and black Caribbean communities use open space less than other ethnic groups.
- Walking is the most frequently cited reason for use of open space.
- Taking children to play is also a major reason and people who take children to play use parks more frequently than any other type of user.



- Concerns for safety and security are the most frequently cited reasons for not using open space.
- Walking is the dominant mode of transport to access open space.
- Usage of open space would increase if residents felt safer. Improving the condition of open space and increasing perceptions of safety and security through the presence of rangers or wardens were the measures most frequently identified to address concerns for safety and security.
- Vandalism, trespassing and safety were the major concerns of allotment holders.

The Value of open space

The Strategy identified a number of roles which are important in describing the contribution that open spaces can make to the overall quality of life within a community. These are:

Social and cultural Value

Haringey is a wonderfully diverse but also densely populated and highly urban environment. Parks and open spaces provide an opportunity for communities to organise and enjoy large and small events, meet people, enjoy family and group outings, visit play facilities, walk and cycle, and play sport together. This can generate and provide a focus for community cohesion.

A number of our open spaces also have historic value and provide opportunities for people to learn about and interpret their historic environment.

Ecological Value

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is an international, national, regional and local policy objective. Within Haringey it is a central element of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies for open space and an issue of major importance for borough residents. Through the Open Space Strategy, the council will seek to improve sites which currently have identified ecological value and to create additional sites.

Providing local area identity

Parks and open spaces help to create a specific identity for different areas and communities by acting as key local landmarks for the area. Within Haringey, 23 sites



have been designated as sites of Significant Local Open Land (SLOL), 18 are classified as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and one, the Lee Valley Regional Park, is classified as green belt.

These sites are afforded the highest level of protection from development because of their importance; however, we recognise that all open space is valuable in helping to create a local area identity.

The educational role of open space

Open space offers a variety of learning opportunities including:

- Learning about nature and the environment
- Learning about and participating in recreation as part of a healthier lifestyle
- As an environment where socialisation skills with peers and other members of the community can be developed
- Developing new skills through volunteering
- Learning about how to work with other local community members and the council by becoming involved in the management of a local park.

Contributing to healthier, happier lifestyles

Enjoying good mental and physical health is an essential part of having a good overall quality of life. Parks and open spaces offer a variety of opportunities for both informal and formal recreation and physical activity including walking, cycling, play and team sports. They can also provide a place to relax or de-stress from the strains and tensions of living within an urban environment.

Key issues which the Strategy will seek to address in the future management and development of open space

From the auditing, research and consultation work undertaken, a range of key issues were identified which will need to be addressed in order to improve local people's ability to obtain a greater level of enjoyment and benefit from open space.

These issues are:

- **Enhancing the quantity of and access to open space, particularly taking into account deficiencies in the east of the borough where the quality and amount of provision is poorer.**



- **Developing greater intensity and diversity of use by improving existing open space, and developing new facilities and amenities.**
- **Improving the quality of open space by obtaining Green Flag and Green Pennant status for more sites within the borough and using these quality standards as a benchmark for all open space management to aspire to.**
- **Improving the co-ordination of planning for open space, particularly amongst council services but also between the council and other organisations which manage open space in the borough.**
- **Creating safer open space environments through improved design, additional usage, greater community involvement and the presence of staff.**
- **Seeking to extend local community involvement in the management of parks by developing the already large number of Friends of Parks groups operating in the borough.**
- **Developing a more comprehensive approach towards the marketing of open space, understanding who our users and non users are and greater publicising and promoting of the service.**
- **Developing the educational role of open space both formally through developing increased opportunities for environmental education and through closer links with schools, nurseries and colleges to better provide for their needs.**
- **Developing the role that open space can play in achieving improved mental and physical health with improved opportunities for walking, cycling and more organised sports activity.**
- **Promoting social inclusion in order to ensure that open space is provided in a way that meets the needs of all sections of the community.**
- **Developing the role of open space for cultural experiences and activities including events, festivals and as spaces to engage with and interpret the historic environment.**
- **Promoting biodiversity and nature conservation by creating new nature conservation areas and habitats, implementing the Haringey Biodiversity Action Plan and developing a tree strategy for the borough.**



Implementing the Strategy

A comprehensive action plan to implement the Strategy has been produced which sets out what will happen and when.

This will be updated on an annual basis by the council's Recreation Services who will report on progress to the Better Places theme group, part of the Haringey Strategic Partnership.

The Haringey Open Space Strategy

Our vision is:

To enrich the quality of life for everyone in Haringey by working in partnership to provide safe, attractively designed, well used, well maintained open spaces for the benefit and enjoyment of the whole community.

In order to take forward the Open Space Strategy, 8 strategic objectives have been identified as the pivotal areas in which action should be taken to improve the quality, range, usage and management of provision. These strategic objectives arise from the key issues for the future provision of open space identified on the previous page. They will contribute directly towards meeting the borough's key priorities for meeting the quality of life as identified within the Haringey Community Strategy.



Strategic Objectives for the Open Space Strategy

1. To address deficiencies in open space provision across the borough in order to improve opportunities for local people to access a variety of open space environments.
2. To create safe open space environments which can be enjoyed by all sections of the community.
3. To involve the whole community: residents, public, private and voluntary organisations, in the preparation and implementation of individual parks management plans in order to ensure that parks and open spaces contribute fully to the development of sustainable and cohesive local communities.
4. To develop the educational role of open space, particularly for young people, in order to promote greater knowledge and understanding of the importance of the natural environment.
5. To provide a range of opportunities and facilities for active and passive recreation which can contribute to improved mental and physical health and wellbeing.
6. To manage and develop parks and open spaces in order to promote social inclusion and usage by all of Haringey's diverse communities.
7. To develop and promote an increased range of opportunities for people to enjoy cultural experiences and activities.
8. To promote biodiversity and the conservation, protection and enrichment of species and habitats.

The full copy of the Strategy together with the action plan to secure the above objectives can be obtained either from the council website www.haringey.gov.uk or by contacting Recreation Services: Policy & Development Manager, Recreation Services, Contract House, Park View Road, London N17 9AY. 020 8489 5690.



For a copy of this booklet summarising our Strategy for Open Spaces in Haringey, in your own language, please tick the box, complete and return the Freepost address below

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Kurdish

Ev broşur Stratejîya me ya Cîhên Servekirî li Haringey bi kurtî dide. Heke hun kopîyeke wê bi zimanê xwe dixwazin, ji kerema xwe qutîkê îşaret bikin, formê tije bikin û bişînin bo navnîşana posta bêpere ya jêrîn:

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Somali

Si aad u heshid nuqul qoraalkan soo koobi Istiraatiijiyada Kawnsalka ee Ku Aadan Goobaha Banaan ee Haringey, asaga oo ku qoran afkaaga hooyo, fadlan calaamadee sanduuqa, foomkana buuxi kadibna kusoo hagaaji cinwaanka hoos kuxusan. Dib usoo dirista foomku waa bilaash:

French

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