

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARINGEY

OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

“A space for everyone”

Open Space Strategy

Table of contents

1. Introduction to the Open Space Strategy.....	1
What is an open space strategy.....	1
Scope of the Open Space Strategy	1
How has the Strategy been developed?	2
Structure of the Strategy document	2
2. Legislative and Policy Context.....	2
Introduction	2
National and Regional legislation and policy	3
The London Plan.....	3
Land Use Policy	3
Education and Health.....	3
Parks, Play & Open Space specific policies & initiatives	4
The Local Framework	5
Key agencies with an interest in open spaces	6
3. An overview of open space within Haringey	6
Supply and distribution of open space	6
Quality of open space	8
Non recreational value of open spaces.....	9
Social and cultural value	9
Ecology, nature reserves & sites of conservation value	10
Structural and amenity role of open space	10
Educational role	11
Playing pitches.....	11
Play facilities	12
Allotments	12
4. Findings from user surveys and current best practice	13
Introduction	13
Examples of good practice.....	14
Pavilion sports – alternative service providers.....	14
Finsbury Park Restoration Plan – management planning.....	14
Lordship Recreation Ground – community involvement	15
Railway Fields – creating new open space.....	15
Chestnuts Festival – partnership working	16
5. Key Issues	16
Introduction	16
Enhancing the quantity and quality of provision.....	16
Developing greater intensity and diversity of use	17
Improving quality	18
Co-ordination of planning for open space	18
Creating Safer Open Space Environments.....	18
Improved Safety through design	19
Improved Safety through staffing.....	19
Developing additional usage of open space	19
Developing safer routes to enable access	20
Extending community involvement	20
Friends of Parks groups.....	20
Marketing	21

Developing the educational role of open space	21
Developing closer relationships with schools.....	21
Developing the role of open space for improved health.....	22
Promoting social inclusion	23
Developing the role of open space for cultural experiences	23
Promoting biodiversity and nature conservation	24
Development of a tree strategy	24
6. Open Space Strategy Vision.....	25
Strategic objectives for the Open Space Strategy	25

OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

1. Introduction to the Open Space Strategy

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.

What is an open space strategy?

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

This study has looked in detail at the supply and demand of various types of open space provision within the borough and has made recommendations as to how existing deficiencies in provision might be addressed in the future. The Haringey Open Space Strategy builds on this work and seeks to integrate it within a local, regional and national context which defines the value and role of open space within Haringey and sets out a framework for the borough's future approach to the management and development of open space.

Scope of the Open Space Strategy

- 1.2 Though a wider definition of open space can encompass both land and water, the focus of the strategy will be on green space and will include the following:

- Parks
- Sports pitches
- Allotments
- Nature Conservation sites
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- School Playing Fields
- Ecological corridors including river and railway corridors
- Green chains
- Public squares and streetscapes
- Children's play areas
- Housing open land

How has the Strategy been developed?

1.3 Information from a wide variety of sources has been used in the development of the Strategy. These include:

- Haringey Unitary Development Plan Revised Deposit Consultation Draft September 2004
- Haringey Open Space and Sports Assessment (Atkins 2003) which included telephone interviews with 500 residents
- User Satisfaction Survey of Haringey Parks and Open Spaces (KMC Consultants 2003)
- Haringey's Community Strategy April 2003-2007
- Sport England Playing Pitch Quality Assessments
- Evidence presented to the Environment Scrutiny Panel's Reviews of Open Space and Cemeteries and Crematorium 2004-5
- Case studies of existing good practice both within and external to Haringey.
- Pre Business Plan Reviews 2005-6, Haringey Council 2005.

Structure of the Strategy document

1.4 Chapter 2 presents the planning policy framework at a national, regional and local level against which the Open Space Strategy is set. It also identifies the key agencies and organisations with an interest in open space.

Chapter 3 presents an overview of open space within Haringey, including the key findings arising out of the Atkins assessment.

Chapter 4 examines the findings of user surveys and examples of best practice.

Chapter 5 identifies and provides analysis on key issues facing the Borough in relation to the future management and development of open space.

Chapter 6 sets out the vision and the 8 key strategic objectives for the Open Space Strategy.

Attached as an appendix to the draft Strategy is a proposed action plan which sets out how the Strategy objectives will be delivered. It is proposed that the action plan would form the basis of an annual review to monitor progress on the implementation of the Strategy.

CHAPTER 2

Legislative and Policy Context

Introduction

2.1 The legislative and policy context affecting open space has three levels - national, regional, and local. 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.

In the past, it has often been the case that a too narrow view has been adopted towards open space with a concentration on the overall quantity and quality of open space provision rather than on the contribution and outcomes that open space can offer in achieving wider societal goals.

Within this chapter, the Strategy will seek, briefly, to identify the major relevant legislative and policy areas that identify and shape both of these positions.

National and Regional legislation and policy

2.2 Sustainable Communities

Central Government has taken a strong and increasing interest in parks and open spaces which it views as an integral part of an overall quality living environment. The initial vision for Government's approach was set out in the Urban White Paper "Our Towns and Cities : The Future", and further developed in the Action Programme publication "Sustainable Communities : Building for the future" (ODPM 2003), which set out a range of policies, resources and partnerships designed to achieve a joined up approach to local living environments. At the core of this publication were a series of policies to address the severe housing shortage affecting parts of the country and in particular, London and the South East. These policies were set within a context of a wider Government drive to raise the quality of life in communities via a holistic approach which identified that quality of life is influenced by many factors, of which access to and enjoyment of parks and open spaces is a vital ingredient.

The London Plan

2.3 At a regional level, The London Plan, the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy for London (2004), promotes an integrated social, economic and environmental framework for the future development of London over the next 15 years which seeks to balance the needs for new job and housing opportunities with the need to protect and enhance open space.

Land Use Policy

2.4 Central Government provides an overall national framework to enable effective planning for future land use and development via Planning Policy Guidance Notes which set out a framework for all local types of land use. For open space, the relevant Planning Policy Guidance note is PPG17 which covers Sport, Open Space and Recreation, and recommends that local authorities undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities and then set locally derived standards for provision within their areas.

This assessment has been undertaken for the Council by W.S. Atkins and many of its recommendations are incorporated into the Haringey Open Space Strategy.

2.5 Sport England is the agency responsible for advising the Government on sports, and acts as a statutory consultee on certain developments relating to sports pitches. It has previously published a guide to assist in the production of playing pitch strategies "Towards a Level Playing Field (2003)". The methodology contained within this guide was used by Atkins in their Open Space assessment for the Borough.

2.6 At a regional level, the Greater London Authority (GLA) Spatial Development Strategy provides the framework for consideration of open space by London boroughs in relation to their Unitary Development Plans (UDPs).

2.7 Additionally, the London Biodiversity Strategy (GLA, 2002) provides the London-wide framework for the conservation and future development of the capital's wildlife and natural spaces.

Education and Health

2.8 Improvements in education and health outcomes have been a key priority for Central Government since its election in 1997 and both of these policy areas have benefited from

significantly increased funding. In relation to education, Government has targeted funding directly to schools, further and higher education as well as seeking to expand on nursery provision and improve the life chances of under 5s in more deprived areas via the Surestart Initiative.

2.9 Following publication of the Children's Bill (2004), the educational sector will play an increasingly important role in the quality of life of local communities both through an expansion of the range of services and facilities offered to school pupils and for the wider community with an extension of school facilities to provide health, welfare, community, and recreational opportunities for the whole community. This bill envisages that, in the future, schools will be at the heart of local communities.

2.10 Government has been increasingly concerned in recent years with the effects of decreasing levels of physical activity amongst the general population acting as a primary contributor to a range of chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes and some cancers as well as leading to a rise in obesity levels.

In 2004, the Department of Health issued a consultation document, Choosing Health, to seek stakeholders' views on what action could be taken to improve public health. This was followed soon after by a report from the Chief Medical Officer "At least five a week" (Department of Health 2004) which set out targets for participation in physical activity for young people and adults.

Parks and Open Spaces are identified in the Choosing Health consultation document as contributing towards the achievement of the physical activity targets.

2.11 The London Plan for Sport and Physical Activity (2004) identifies that 1 in 5 Londoners is now considered obese, a figure which directly correlates to the number of Londoners currently meeting the Department of Health guidelines for physical activity.

Parks, Play, and Open Space specific policies and initiatives

2.12 The Urban Green Spaces Task Force (UGSTF) was established in 2001 in response to Government concern over the historical decline in the quality of urban parks.

The UGSTG report "Green Spaces, Better Places" (2002) recognised the value of good quality green space and its potential contribution to wider quality of life issues including:

- Urban renaissance
- Health and wellbeing
- Social inclusion and community development
- Education and lifelong learning
- Environment and ecology
- Heritage and culture
- Promoting more sustainable development

2.13 In April 2003, a new unit, CABE Space was established with the existing Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) to champion high quality planning, design and the management and care of parks and public spaces.

2.14 The Green Flag Parks Award Scheme was launched in 1996 designed to recognise and encourage good quality public parks. Eight criteria are used to evaluate whether a park should receive an award. These are:

- That it is welcoming, accessible and has good signage
- That it offers a healthy safe and secure environment
- That it is clean and well maintained

- That it is maintained using sustainable and environmentally sound methods
- That where applicable, it promotes the value of conservation and care of historic heritage
- That it promotes community involvement in the management of the site and involves the community in the provision of recreational or conservation activity
- That the site is marketed effectively
- That there is a coherent management plan for the site.

2.15 In 2004, the GLA published a Draft Guide to preparing play strategies following the publication of the GLA Children and Young People's Strategy (Jan 2004). This recognises that open space, both within parks and on housing estates, provides major opportunities for both fixed play and informal play provision and that visiting a playground is one of the principal reasons for visiting a park.

The Local Framework

2.16 The Community Strategy 2003-2007 produced by the Haringey Strategic Partnership sets out a vision and five key priorities for people living, working, learning and investing in Haringey. The Partnership, which aims to represent the interests of all sections of our community, has representatives from the Council, Police, Primary Care Trust, local businesses, educational organisations, community and voluntary organisations, faith communities and other partners.

The Partnership's vision for the future of Haringey is:

“To measurably improve the quality of life for the people of Haringey by tackling some of our biggest problems and making it a borough we can all be proud of”.

The Strategy identifies five themes as the major priorities for achieving the vision. These are:

- Improve services
- Narrow the gap between the east and west of Haringey
- Create safer communities
- Improve the environment
- Raise achievement in education and create opportunities for lifelong success.

The Haringey Open Space Strategy contributes to achieving all of these priorities. However, open space is specifically referred to within the Environment theme. The Haringey Strategic Partnership is currently considering new arrangements to assist in improving open space based on the theme of liveability - making Haringey a better place to live and work.

2.17 The second key document that has major implications for open space provision is the Haringey Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which sets out policies for all future land use within the Borough. Policies for open space are set out in chapter 8 of the UDP. The guiding principle for open space is:

“Everybody in the borough should have good access to well maintained, good quality, sustainable open space”.

The key UDP objectives for open space are:

- To maintain a satisfactory level of easily accessed open space in the borough with a variety of uses
- Ensure that the flora and fauna in the borough is protected and encouraged, and that the provision helps to meet the aims of the Biodiversity Action Plan.

The guiding principle and key objectives are supported by a number of specific policies which relate to land designation, site specific policy and policy to inform the various types of open space usage such as allotments and playing fields.

- 2.18 As was referred to earlier, Atkins Consultants were previously commissioned to undertake a Strategic Open Space Assessment in order to assess local open space needs. This in depth study, which was completed in 2003, makes a series of recommendations to guide the future planning and management for open space provision within the borough and acts as supplementary planning guidance informing the UDP.

Key agencies with an interest in open space

- 2.19 A number of agencies whose policies have established the overall framework against which open space in Haringey is provided have already been referred to previously in this chapter.

However, there are many more at the national, regional and local level whose policy and work can also impact on our open space provision. These include:

National Level

Environment Agency, English Heritage, Urban Parks Forum, English Nature, Groundwork, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, English Partnerships, British Waterways Board.

Regional Level

London Parks and Open Spaces Forum, London Wildlife Trust, London Biodiversity Partnership, Government Office for London, Thames Water, London Playing Fields Association, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

Local Level

Alexandra Park and Palace, Friends of Parks groups, allotment site management committees, local sports clubs and organisations, local regeneration initiatives, local schools and other educational institutions, community organisations and faith groups.

The need to have engagement with stakeholders in developing an appropriate approach towards the management and development of open space will be discussed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 3

An overview of open space within Haringey

- 3.1 Atkins were commissioned by Haringey Council in 2002 to undertake an assessment of open space and sports provision in accordance with PPG17 Sport and Recreation and the related companion guide, Assessing Needs and Opportunities which sets out an approach and methodology for undertaking the assessment. This approach incorporated a desktop study, a qualitative analysis of the major function and condition of each site and telephone interviews with 500 residents.

In their approach to the assessment, they used the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standard and the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) Open Space Hierarchy, as recommended by the draft GLA guide to the production of open space strategies.

Supply and Distribution of Open Space

- 3.2 The NPFA standard relates open space provision to population, and recommends that there should be a minimum of 2.43 hectares of outdoor playing/recreational space per 1000 people. Though relatively easy to apply, the standard takes little account of the distribution of open space, people's access to it or non recreational roles and uses of open space.

- 3.3 The LPAC hierarchy considers the size and distribution of open space in relation to its catchment area and the principal characteristics of each type of space in terms of physical form, function and range of facilities. The hierarchy classifies open space into six types, these being: Regional Parks, Metropolitan Parks, District Parks, Linear Open Space, Local Parks, and small local parks and open spaces.
- 3.4 In assessing the amount and type of open space, Atkins included the following areas:
- Public parks
 - Commons
 - Heaths and Woodland
 - Other open space with established and unrestricted public access which was capable of being classified according to the LPAC open space hierarchy.
- 3.5 The study, in its definition of open space, excluded green amenity areas which form part of housing estates as well as allotments. Cemeteries, nature reserves, green rail corridors and private open space (with restricted public access) were mapped and included in the definition of open space, to provide a comprehensive overview of green spaces in the borough.
- 3.6 The study identified 382.87 hectares of open space which represents 12.8% of the total area of the Borough and makes Haringey a relatively 'green' borough in comparison with London as a whole. However, the borough falls below the NPFA standard as there is 1.7 hectares of public space compared with the NPFA standard of 2.43 hectares.
- 3.7 In 2001, the London average was 363 persons per hectare of open space. This compares with a figure for Haringey of 590 persons per hectare.
- 3.8 Atkins classified the number and varieties of different spaces in the Borough based on the LPAC /GLA typology. This is illustrated in the following table:

Table 1 – Amount and Type of Public Open Space in Haringey

Type	Number of open spaces	Total hectares
Regional Park	1	12.29
Metropolitan Park	3	141.83
District Park	3	68.92
Linear Open Space	2	15.72
Local Park	20	113.48
Small Local Park and Open Space	32	30.63
Total	61	382.87

A map showing the distribution of open space is included as an appendix to the Open Space Strategy

- 3.9 The spaces identified are principally owned and managed by Haringey Council. Major exceptions to this are:
- The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority which manages the one regional park, Lee Valley, part of which is located in the east of the Borough;
 - Alexandra Park, one of the three metropolitan parks, which is managed by the Trustees of Alexandra Palace;
 - Highgate Woods, a district park, which is managed by the Corporation of London;

3.10 Though not included in the total for open space, Haringey has a variety of other green spaces administered by various Council Services. These are:

Schools and Educational Open Space	17.61 ha
Allotments	42.38 ha
Housing Open Land	54.72 ha
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Total	114.71 ha

3.11 Distribution of open space across the borough is uneven. In order to identify which areas of the borough were deficient in any forms of open space, Atkins applied the two approaches recommended by the GLA which use a standard 400m pedestrian catchment as well as a reduced 280m catchment which can take account of severance factors such as railway lines and roads.

The areas of the borough which are deficient in public open space (in order of size and deficiency) include:

- 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.

3.12 Atkins further analysed areas of the borough deficient in local parks and small local parks, which provide the majority of access for day to day usage by local people and also access to district parks. Wards with the poorest access to small local parks were identified as: Fortis Green, Highgate, Muswell Hill, Alexandra, St. Ann's, Bruce Grove and Northumberland Park.

Wards with the poorest access to local parks included: Highgate, Crouch End, Muswell Hill, Stroud Green, Harringay, Seven Sisters, Tottenham Green, Bruce Grove and White Hart Lane.

Most areas of the borough are served by district parks, however small areas of Crouch End, Fortis Green, Woodside, Northumberland Park, Seven Sisters and Tottenham Green wards are not well served by the distribution of district parks.

Maps illustrating which areas of the borough are deficient in the various types of open space provision are included as appendices to this document.

Quality of Open Space

3.13 Atkins undertook an assessment of the range and condition of each open space using scoring criteria derived from PPG17. This was combined with data obtained from the residents' survey which provides an indication of resident's perceptions of quality as well as their reasons for using open space and the frequency of use. The final element in the assessment of quality of supply was based on data from the Council's Safety Communities Partnership which identified crime hotspots within the borough as part of the crime and disorder audit.

3.14 The qualitative assessment identified the facilities and features found within each type of open space and developed a score for the site which enabled each space to be classified as

above average, average, or below average condition. 56% of sites were scored as below average, 31% average and 13% above average.

- 3.15 The findings of the residents' survey contradicted the above assessment as respondents rated 72% of parks and playing fields as 'good quality'. However, it is difficult to make conclusive comparisons between the two sets of results as the residents' survey is based on perception whereas the Atkins study was based on a structured method to analyse the provision and quality of facilities.
- 3.16 A further issue arising from the Atkins study is that it used a single methodology to assess different types of open space. Where this methodology is applied to sites of mainly ecological or nature conservation value, which would have limited facilities available because of this designation, it would not be appropriate to have the range of facilities available which would be found in open space where the predominant use is active recreation.
- 3.17 From the residents' survey, for which respondents had to be over 16 to take part, the most popular activities identified in residents' use of open space were:
- Walking 42% of respondents
 - Children's play 23%
 - Sport 13%

Different sites are used predominantly for different activities with Alexandra Park, Finsbury Park and Highgate Woods used predominantly for walking and Bruce Castle, Downhills and Priory Parks attracting significant visitors for children's play facilities.

- 3.18 An analysis was made of the potential relationship between crime hotspots and the provision and quality of open space within the area.

A correlation was found between crime hotspot areas and open spaces classified as being below average. Crime hotspots were also concentrated in areas lacking open space.

Non Recreational value of open spaces

- 3.19 Six categories describing the non-recreational roles of open space have been identified by LPAC /GLA. These roles reflect the wider contribution that open spaces make to overall quality of life within a community.

These roles are: social, cultural, ecological, structural and amenity and educational. These are fundamental to identifying the inter-relationship between the borough's many open spaces and the communities who use them.

Social and Cultural value

- 3.20 Haringey is a densely populated, 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 or play sports together.

At a period in history where, particularly within more urban environments, there has been a gradual breakdown in any sense of a cohesive community, parks and open spaces can generate and provide a focus for community cohesion and coming together.

In fact, the condition and usage of local spaces is a pretty clear barometer of the healthiness of the sense of community that exists within an area with better kept and better used spaces providing an indication of an overall high quality of community cohesion, and source of local identity and pride.

- 3.21 Parks and open spaces are important for bringing together people from different cultures. They provide a venue for religious services, festivals and charity events. Again, where different communities can be brought together, this provides opportunities for both social inclusion and greater community cohesion.
- 3.22 Open spaces are increasingly being recognised as providing benefits for physical and mental health. They are favourite places for walking, for taking part in informal and organised physical activity and as a preferred route for cyclists.
- 3.23 A number of open spaces in the borough offer historic value and provide opportunities for people to engage with and interpret their historic environment.

Finsbury Park and Alexandra Park are identified by English Heritage on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens as being of special historic interest.

Ecology, Nature Reserves and sites of Nature Conservation value

- 3.24 Protecting biodiversity is an international, national and regional policy objective. Within Haringey it is a central element of the UDP policies for open space and an issue of high importance for many Borough residents.
- 3.25 The Atkins study assessed current sites within the Borough which contribute to ecology and provide access to areas of nature conservation value.
- 3.26 It identified 70 sites within the Borough which offered ecological value which were graded, based on definitions provided by the former London Ecology Unit (LEU) as being of either Metropolitan, Borough or Local Importance. The LEU identified as deficient, areas more than 1km from an accessible site of at least Borough importance. This identified an area in the centre of the Borough as being deficient which includes part of Woodside, White Hart Lane and West Green wards.
- 3.27 Three sites are currently classified by English Nature as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) with a further seven sites under consideration for this status. The ratio proposed by English Nature is 1 hectare of LNR for every 1,000 population. Even if the further seven sites were all to be classified as nature reserves, this would still leave a deficiency area in the central part of the Borough.
- 3.28 Access to areas of nature conservation value was assessed based on the recommended LPAC /GLA standard of a 280m catchment. Whilst this demonstrated that there was extensive coverage of areas having nature conservation interest throughout the Borough, there are significant parts of the Borough without access. This could potentially be addressed by creating additional habitats on sites where none currently exist.
- 3.29 Within Haringey, the key reference point for the Council's future approach towards ecological management is the Haringey Biodiversity Action Plan. Adoption of the objectives of this Plan is recommended by the Open Space Strategy.

Structural and Amenity role of Open Space

- 3.30 The structural and amenity role of open space refers to its value in terms of how it contributes to creating a specific identity for different areas and communities.
- 3.31 At the regional level, the Metropolitan Green Belt provides a definition for London's internal and external boundaries. Within London, the structural role of open space is recognised through the concept of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). The purpose of designating certain areas of land in this way is to ensure it has a very high level of protection because of its importance.

- 3.32 At a local level, Haringey has recognised the key role played by open space in breaking up the urban area and providing a sense of scale for the built environment and has designated a number of open space sites as Significant Local Open Lane (SLOL) to reflect this role.
- 3.33 Within Haringey, 23 sites either have or are proposed to have the SLOL designation, 18 are classified as MOL and one, the Lee Valley Regional Park, is classified as Green Belt.
- 3.34 Amenity value refers to the contribution made by open space to the visual amenity of the area in which it is situated. This contribution to visual amenity was assessed based on whether sites were visible from parts of the surrounding area, whether they were visually attractive, whether they had a clearly definable landscape value and the extent to which they provided relief from the surrounding built up area. 93 sites comprising 70% of all open space within Haringey were considered to be offering significant amenity value.

Educational role

3.35 Open space offers 3 principal learning opportunities. These are:

- To learn about nature and the environment
- To learn about and participate in recreational activities as part of a healthier lifestyle
- As an environment to develop socialisation skills both with peers and with other members of the community.

3.36 Through the Atkins study, sites were assessed to ascertain signs of usage by schools and the study identified that more than half of all spaces were performing an educational role.

3.37 Based on information provided by the Parks Service, the majority of usage of open space by local schools takes place on a casual basis with schools not booking facilities.

Playing pitches

3.38 The Atkins Open Space study included an assessment of sports pitches provision. The study identified 46 full size pitches, 23 cricket pitches, 2 rugby pitches and 2 hockey pitches. There was also provision for junior play with 19 junior (6-a-side) football pitches, 36 5-a-side pitches and 2 junior cricket pitches.

3.39 The majority of full sized and 5-a-side football pitches, the rugby and the hockey pitches have general public access. However more than half of the junior football and cricket pitches are located on sites which have restricted or no public access. This reflects the relatively large number of junior pitches located on school sites and the large proportion of cricket pitches on private sports grounds.

3.40 Overall provision of pitches per person is below the London and the national average. Provision is particularly poor for rugby in comparison with national averages and senior football pitch provision is approximately 50% of the national rate.

3.41 Utilising the GLA hierarchy to assess catchment areas, the area identified as most deficient in access to playing pitches is in the east of the borough in parts of Northumberland Park, White Hart Lane, Tottenham Hale, Tottenham Green and Bruce Grove wards.

3.42 A survey was undertaken with local sports clubs which sought to identify clubs perceptions of the quality of pitch conditions. This identified that Muswell Hill Playing Fields, White Hart Lane Recreation Ground, Coles Park, Perth Road and Finsbury Park were identified as having very poor pitch conditions (Perth Road has subsequently been improved).

3.43 As well as recommending that consideration be given to improving the sites listed above, the study recommended that the following facilities be provided by 2016:

- 7 full size football pitches
- 1 full size cricket pitch
- 1 full size rugby pitch

3.44 Subsequent to the Atkins study, the Council has participated in the production of a playing pitches strategy in conjunction with Barnet, Enfield and Waltham Forest Councils, the “North London Sub-Regional Playing Field Strategy”. The majority of the recommendations are incorporated within the draft action plan for the Open Spaces Strategy, albeit often taking a broader approach to the overall use and development of open space rather than limited specifically to playing fields.

Play facilities

3.45 The Council, principally through its Recreation and Housing Services, provides a range of play facilities in parks, open spaces and on housing estates. These include, playgrounds, ball courts and skateboard facilities. Adventurous playgrounds are provided by the Haringey Play Association who also offer staffed sessions, funded by the “Play People in Parks” initiative offering opportunities for structured play activity during school holiday periods.

An audit has been undertaken of the quality of existing play provision which has identified the need for considerable further investment in play facilities.

There is also a need to assess the adequacy and extent of existing play provision in accordance with National Playing Fields Association recommended standards.

Allotments

3.46 The 1908 Small Holdings and Allotments Act placed a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments to meet demand. This was at a time when it was seen as important to provide access to land for the less well off to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Subsequent to this, although society as a whole has changed substantially, there has been no new legislation enacted and it is widely recognised that the existing legislation is now out of date.

3.47 There are currently some 42 hectares of actively managed allotment land in Haringey providing 1819 plots. The Atkins study estimated that there would be further demand, up to 2016, for an additional 1552 plots.

3.48 Within the context of overall demand for use of land within Haringey, it is considered wholly unrealistic to try and provide these additional plots.

As an alternative, the Council needs to develop a strategy for the more effective management of the allotment service, the terms of reference for which should include:

- Identifying more accurately current levels of demand for allotments
- Reviewing existing management policy for the letting of allotment plots
- Development of more effective measures to manage underused plots
- Addressing how key issues for existing plot holders such as improving site security and preventing unauthorised access to sites can be improved
- Promoting the health value of allotments and working with the Primary Care Trust and other partners to develop this role
- Promoting biodiversity on allotment sites

CHAPTER 4. - Findings from user surveys and current identified best practice

Introduction

4.1 This section identifies the findings from market research studies and consultation recently undertaken within the borough and then goes on to identify elements of current good practice within the borough.

Four research studies are drawn from. These are:

- A MORI survey carried out on behalf of the Improvement and Performance team
- The annual residents survey undertaken by TNS
- A survey specific to usage of parks undertaken by Ken Macanespie Associates
- Atkins telephone questionnaire and postal survey.

Additionally, the Atkins study included a telephone questionnaire to obtain information on open space issues and a postal survey of sports clubs. The MORI and TNS surveys were based on quotas whereas the parks survey was self selected with no specific quotas set in terms of age, gender, socio economic group and ethnicity

4.2 The key findings from these surveys are presented below:

- 85% of residents had visited a park or open space within the past year, 82% within the past six months and 70% within the past month
- Females were more likely to use parks than males with 64% of users identified as female in the parks user survey and 36% male
- On the basis of ethnicity, the Asian communities are the least likely to have visited parks. Usage by the Black Caribbean communities are also below the borough average
- White British, White Other and Black African users are identified as most likely to have used parks.
- From the Atkins survey, the most used parks are Alexandra Park (21%) of survey respondents, Finsbury Park (14%) and Highgate Woods (10%)
- 44% of respondents in the Atkins study visited public spaces at least once a week with Bruce Castle Park, Priory Park and Highgate Woods receiving the most frequent visits.
- In relation to housing tenure, residents who own their own homes are more likely to visit parks than either those living in Council accommodation or in other forms of rented accommodation
- Residents living in the N15 area use parks less frequently than those from other postcodes. Residents with an N17 postcode are also below the borough average.
- Postcode was identified by MORI as an important determining factor on whether residents visit parks on a regular basis and showed more disparities than any other factor.
- The reason given most frequently for visiting parks was “to relax” identified by 19% of respondents in the MORI survey. 17% identified “taking children to play” and 13% “to exercise”
- Walking is identified as the most frequently cited reason for use of open space in the Atkins survey followed by taking children to play
- Respondents to the parks survey who indicated that visiting parks for the sole reason of taking children are most likely to visit parks on a regular basis
- The Atkins survey identified safety and security issues as being the most common reason for non use of open spaces, specifically the presence of undesirable characters and feelings of vulnerability. Nearly a third of all non users (31%) avoid public open spaces due to perceptions associated with the fear of crime.
- In the parks survey, the presence of youths perceived as a threat by those older than them was the key safety issue

- Cleaning up park environments (25% of respondents) and increasing security through the presence of park rangers or wardens were the measures identified in the Atkins study as being required to improve perceptions of safety and security
- 20% of allotment plot holders responding to the Atkins survey identified the need to improve boundary fencing and gates to deter trespassing, vandalism and theft whilst 14% felt there was a need to improve the sense of safety on site
- Walking was identified as the dominant mode of transport to access open space with car and bus use increasing for usage of the larger parks such as Alexandra and Finsbury.
- Travel times are shortest to the smaller parks. Travel time increases as the size of park the user visits increases.
- Between 1pm and dusk was identified as the most popular time for visiting parks in the parks survey with 62% of visits occurring during these times
- Overall satisfaction with parks and open spaces was 67% in the 2004 residents survey

Examples of good practice within parks and open space

4.3 The following are examples of good practice occurring within open space. They have been included in the strategy as positive examples of what is occurring in different parts of the borough and which might be replicated elsewhere.

Pavilion Sports – Developing improved services through alternative service providers

4.4 **The Pavilion Sports & Café Limited** was established 2 years ago and operates out of Albert Recreation Ground in Bounds Green using a former changing pavilion as a base. The organisation has a 25-year lease from the council and has provided significant investment to develop a new café and tennis facilities in order to develop a community club structure for children, young people and adults. Public toilets are also made available as part of the lease conditions. Concentrating on tennis development, 4 coaches are employed providing sessional activities throughout the spring and summer periods. Last year around 600 children and young people took part in activities and around 100 adults undertook summer coaching courses. The demand that has been created through this grass roots development work has prompted local tennis clubs to establish junior tennis programmes.

Finsbury Park Restoration Plan – Management Planning

4.5 A suite of management documents was developed to support the submission for £4.8m to the HLF in November 2002, for the restoration of Finsbury Park. The two principal documents were a new Management plan, focusing upon operational practice and a Master plan to review key policy issues. Additionally a Business Plan allowed the project team to apportion costs to existing operational practice and generate projected costs post improvement. The associated revenue generation strategy, developed at that time, has allowed the Council to support the cost of improvement programme.

Operational staff were involved in the formulation of the management plan and have adopted many of its recommendations, such as the creation of management zones within the Park to help categorise and quantify specific management resources, the purchase of smaller, more energy efficient vehicles and improved recycling practices.

The Management Plan is informed by the Master Plan, thus any shift in development policy will flag up variations in cost or resource allocation within the Management Plan. The wider community was involved in setting the Master Plan's aims and objectives and the creation of the resulting Action Plan. To retain interest and active involvement stakeholders receive regular updates on the programme of physical and strategic change as the works progress. There are currently well over 200 names of stakeholder groups and individuals in the consultation database for the project.

As the physical works enter their final year, a review of the strategy laid out within the Master Plan, focusing upon sport development, crime prevention, user access and community involvement demonstrates both a consistent approach and very successful record of achievement. The Master Plan will continue to deliver sustainable improvement beyond the life of the physical restoration programme, through the work of the developing local stakeholder network, supported by the Community Warden until 2008.

Lordship Recreation Ground – Community involvement and community management

4.6 In 2003, the Council's Neighbourhood Management Service commissioned a study to identify why Lordship Recreation Ground was so poorly used and how the site might be improved. The study included widespread consultation with the local community. The key finding from the study was that local residents were being deterred from using the site because of concerns for personal safety and security and that related to this was the perceived poor condition of many of the site facilities.

Following the study, the Lordship Rec Users Forum was established to bring together local residents, voluntary and statutory agencies. Representation includes the Friends of Lordship Recreation Ground, Broadwater Community Centre, BTCV, Surestart, Haringey Play Association and the Council through Recreation Services and Neighbourhood Management.

In December 2003, a one off funding stream, Active England, was announced and the Forum agreed to make an application to this fund, submitting the application through Recreation Services in March 2004.

In June 2004, the Forum was notified that it had been successful and was to be awarded £400,000 to develop new facilities for skateboarding, adventurous play and ball games. Additionally an award of £80,000 in revenue was agreed to enable the facilities to be developed for community use. This funding has been used to create a new voluntary organisation, Sporting and Education Solutions, who will be based at the Broadwater Community Centre.

Subsequent to this, and largely because of the earlier success, Haringey Council agreed to award £620,000 to enable more improvements to be made at Lordship. This money will be used to generate further external funding with Sporting and Education Solutions taking on an increased role in the management of the site.

Railway Fields – Creating new open space

4.7 Railway Fields is located off Green Lanes on the opposite side of the road to Sainsburys.

Until 1982, it operated as a coal yard and when the site was first opened by the Council in 1986, it had no trees and the bare minimum of vegetation.

Since then it has been developed to exemplify habitat creation and the site now offers a pond, meadow, woodland, marsh and scrubland habitats.

Declared a local nature reserve in 1990 the site has since developed to become one of London's best loved nature reserves with 1500 local nursery and primary school children visiting each year to explore and learn more about the natural environment.

Awarded the prestigious Green Flag award in 2004, the site offers escape into a green oasis in what is one of the busiest parts of the borough.

Chestnuts Festival – partnership working

4.8 The Friends of Chestnuts Park were established in 1999 and were keen to organise events in their park that were open to the local community. The first event was a small park's birthday celebration in 2000 organised by the group and Haringey Council Parks Service, followed by a small community "Festival of Light" which was jointly organised by the Friends of Chestnuts Park (FOCP) and BTCV, Conservation Charity's community Greenspace Outreach Officer. This involved various arts and crafts, workshops, a park procession by local children and one marquee with a little music and refreshments from the local parks café. A few hundred people attended and the event cost around £2,000 to put on.

This gave the group a taste for a community buzz in their park and so at the Friends meetings it was decided that Festival 2003 was going to be bigger and better. To do this it was established that BTCV and the FOCP would need to engage more volunteers and agencies in the organisation of the event and what better place to look than to the following: Local residents Associations, Local Primary Care Trust, Local Community Groups, Surestart, Local Schools, Local funders, Local talent.

With all of the above on board, the 2003 Chestnuts Park Festival attracted over 5,000 people and raised £15,000 in local funding. Applications were made by local community groups with support from BTCV. This helped to provide musical entertainment from diverse ethnic groups, six marquees with activities for all ages, sports tournaments, food stalls, over fifty local market stalls, five giant bouncy castles, clowns, environmental workshops, multicultural cuisine and educational information.

The groups involved prided themselves with staffing the event with over fifty volunteers on the day and stacks of volunteer input in the lead up. This event is now firmly marked on the area's yearly activities and this year will see a new improved Autumn "Festival of Light" on the scale of their Summer Festivals.

CHAPTER 5. Key Issues

Introduction

5.1 This chapter will seek to identify the key issues facing the Borough for the future management and development of open space under the following headings:

- Enhancing the quantity and quality of provision
- Creating safer open space environments
- Extending community involvement
- Developing the educational role of open space
- Developing the role and contribution of open space to achieving improved mental and physical health
- Promoting social inclusion
- Developing the role and contribution of open space for cultural experiences and activities
- Promoting biodiversity and nature conservation

Enhancing the quantity and quality of provision

5.2 The strategic assessment of open space undertaken by Atkins has identified deficiencies in the supply of all open space types within Haringey. This deficiency, if not addressed, will be exacerbated by the projected increase in population of 34186 by 2016.

Land in general is a scarce and finite resource and the Borough faces considerable pressures, arising from the population increase, to identify land for a variety of additional uses including housing, education and community purposes.

It is apparent, based on consultation undertaken both for the emerging Unitary Development Plan and in the development of the Open Space Strategy, that there is a strong body of resident support within the Borough for a policy which ensures that, as a minimum, there is no net loss of open space and that would, ideally, wish to have new open space created both to address existing deficiencies and to provide for the needs of an increased population. In overall terms, the Open Space Strategy supports these views. This is based on two key perspectives.

- i) That in overall quality of life terms, that the relative importance of providing access to open space will increase in conditions of greater housing density and
- ii) That the ability to access open space produces more sustainable living conditions for the community as a whole providing a necessary balance to and relief from the stresses of urban life.

However the challenges facing Haringey Council in accommodating the needs and requirements of a growing population will be considerable and it will be essential to adopt a flexible approach that acknowledges that there will be some loss of open space in areas of the Borough where the wider needs of the community cannot otherwise be provided for, which can be balanced by the development of new open space provision in areas of deficiency.

Developing greater intensity and diversity of use

5.3 Given the situation referred to above which notes the pressures facing the Borough on the future usage of land, the focus of future open space development and improvement should be to seek to achieve greater usage of existing open space via increased diversity of usage. It is therefore recommended that contributions be sought from developers through Section 106 agreements in order to achieve both increased diversity and greater intensity of usage.

Developer contributions can also be sought where there is a loss of open space in order to pay for the development of alternative, replacement provision. Contributions could further be sought to address deficiencies in existing types of provision such as nature conservation areas or playing pitches, to provide new facilities for the enjoyment of recreational or cultural activity or to develop new public convenience or cafe provision.

Contributions could either be for one off capital expenditure or be used to create an endowment fund for the provision of ongoing activity funded by accrued interest.

Enabling greater access to existing open space can help to achieve greater intensity and diversity of usage. Measures which should be considered include:

- Assessing barriers to usage such as the presence of busy roads which may deter visitors from accessing open space and considering the introduction of suitable measures to overcome these barriers such as new pedestrian crossing or vehicle speed reduction initiatives.
- Developing new entrances to open space to make access easier for local communities.
- Reviewing existing policy for parks opening hours and the need to lock parks with a view to extending opening hours. This measure would need to be considered in conjunction with an examination of the safety implications of introducing extended opening hours.
- Developing the amenity value of sites such as Tottenham Cemetery.
- Exploring the potential to achieve greater public access to housing and educational open space where current access is restricted.

Improving quality

- 5.4 The condition of the public realm, incorporating the streetscene, open space and housing open land, is a key barometer for local people in forming a view of overall quality of life within the Borough. The Council has recognised this through the introduction of the Better Haringey initiative and by its financial support for those services which impact on the public realm such as rubbish and graffiti removal, street cleansing and parks maintenance budgets.

Specifically in relation to open space, there is a direct correlation between site quality and levels of usage with better-maintained sites attracting higher levels of usage.

The Council has been successful in obtaining 'Green Flag' status, a national benchmark of quality, for four of its parks, Bruce Castle, Priory, Stationers and Railway Fields. From the 31 London Boroughs, Haringey has the second highest number of awards, a position for which the Borough can justifiably be proud.

Through the Open Space Strategy, it is recommended that the criteria for award of Green Flag status be adopted as the quality standard to which all open spaces in the Borough should aspire and that a number of sites be prioritised as potential future Green Flag sites.

Additionally, the Parks Service should seek to build on the existing nationally recognised quality standards it utilises by seeking to obtain further quality accreditation standards.

Opportunity exists for further enhancement of the public realm by achieving higher standards of maintenance for housing open land and roadside verges within the streetscene. Consideration should be given to increasing existing budgetary provision in order to raise standards. First impressions are critical both for residents and visitors in shaping their views concerning the quality of the environment within the Borough. These first impressions are principally obtained from key transport access nodes either by road, rail, underground or bus. It is recommended that an assessment be undertaken of the costs and potential benefits of adopting a Gateways Greening policy which would develop new and attractive displays of flowers and shrubs at a number of the busier transport access points. This will help to promote a more positive view of Haringey for visitors entering the Borough and promote feelings of civic pride amongst the resident community.

Co-ordination of planning for open space

- 5.5 A key issue to have emerged during the development of the Open Space Strategy is the need for improved levels of co-ordination and communication between those Council departments with responsibilities for open space planning and provision.

Recent events, in particular the emerging Unitary Development Plan and the unsuccessful planning application for development of a new artificial turf pitch at White Hart Lane Recreation Ground, have highlighted deficiencies in inter departmental planning which have in turn caused unnecessary distress amongst certain sections of the wider community.

Open Space has the potential to contribute to all aspects of the Haringey Community Strategy and particularly to enhancing environmental quality, improving health and promoting local involvement in the management of spaces. This needs to be reflected through the development of more effective structures and it is recommended that a new inter-departmental forum is established to co-ordinate planning.

Creating Safer Open Space Environments

- 5.6 Visitor perceptions of personal safety and security have been identified both in national market research commissioned by CABE and in local research undertaken by Recreation Services as the key factor affecting usage levels and enjoyment of open space. In order to address this

issue, it will be important to make improvements on a range of inter-related measures which collectively influence the overall perception of safety and security experienced by visitors.

The Atkins study has demonstrated a potential link between sites where the overall quality of provision has been assessed as low, and users perceived and actual experience of levels of safety and security. Because of the high importance of safety for visitors, it is recommended that expenditure be prioritised for sites identified as being of low quality and with high levels of concern for personal safety and security.

Improved Safety through Design

5.7 Open Space design is a fundamental ingredient affecting visitor perceptions. Locations with overgrown plant and shrub planting, poor sight lines, inadequate lighting, poorly located buildings and run down entrances serve to heighten perceptions of poor safety.

Some of these features such as overgrown planting and poor sight lines can be addressed on an ongoing basis via revenue budgets. More fundamental design changes will need to be addressed through the development of improvement plans for individual sites.

Improved Safety through Staffing

5.8 Historical reductions in levels of funding have reduced the ability of local authorities including Haringey to locate a member of staff fixed to a specific location. This trend would now be difficult to reverse as heightened awareness of health and safety issues developed through more effective techniques of identifying and managing risk would likely preclude re-establishing the former "parkie", allocated on their own to a particular site.

Parks are open 7 days a week, 365 days per year and the financial implications are prohibitive.

As an alternative approach, Haringey has now established a Parks Constabulary service whose role is to patrol the Borough's parks and open spaces to prevent incidents occurring and to act as an emergency response team when called and to provide an outreach/ educational role concerning responsible usage of open space.

The Constabulary service works well in fulfilling these roles but is currently limited in the extent to which it is able to offer the patrolling service because of staffing levels. It is recommended that the Council assess the potential to attract further funding to expand the Parks Constabulary as it is clear that an expanded and more regular presence would help to address safety concerns for the majority of users.

Though it is recognised that it is not realistic for the Council to provide a permanent presence, two further measures are recommended to address safety concerns through staffing.

Firstly, that Parks staff are often present within open spaces to undertake maintenance works and other duties. Where this presence follows a pattern that can be adhered to on a regular basis, it should be publicised to visitors.

Secondly, though the Council cannot access external funding for this purpose, there is a greater potential for Friends of Parks groups to obtain funding for park rangers with the assistance of Council officers. This should be further assessed with priority accorded to sites of low quality and high levels of safety and security concerns.

Developing additional usage of open space through greater community involvement

5.9 Well used sites with stronger levels of community involvement and ownership act to reduce opportunities for anti social and criminal behaviour.

Recreation Services has recognised this in its support of Friends of Parks groups, to BTCV and in identifying a new officer appointment with responsibility for developing events and activity within open spaces.

A key site which will influence future policy in this area is Lordship Recreation Ground where Recreation Services are seeking to work very closely with the local community both in respect of planning for the future improvement of the site to improve safety, and by involving local organisations in a wider management role. This pilot approach, if successful, should be extended to other sites.

Developing safer routes to enable access to open space

5.10 There are a number of parks and open space sites within Haringey whose current access routes to gain entry to the open space raise safety concerns amongst visitors. These sites, which include Down Lane and Markfield Park, are predominantly in the east of the Borough, very often in areas which are overall deficient in open space.

For these and other sites where the safety of access routes is identified as an issue, Recreation Services should seek the assistance of the Streetscene Service to enable measures to be taken to improve safety.

Extending community involvement

5.11 The 2003 survey of parks usage indicated that 85% of Borough residents use parks on a regular or occasional basis. This indicates that parks and open spaces have an impact on the quality of life for the overwhelming majority of Borough residents. This can be seen at its best in summer when parks and open spaces are filled with visitors.

Parks offer a unique opportunity for the large scale coming together of local communities and as such, can play a vital role in contributing to local quality of life, community cohesion and sustainability. For this reason, it is recommended that Recreation Services seeks to broaden the extent of community involvement in the preparation and implementation of individual parks management plans which will increasingly become the central vehicle guiding future provision.

As planning policy for local authorities changes its emphasis with the introduction of Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) to provide a framework at the more localised level, parks management plans, developed via a comprehensive process of involvement, can be used as the basis for input to LDFs.

The Haringey Strategic Partnership is evolving a new structure to better achieve the key Community Plan themes. The Partnership recognises the importance of open space in contributing to the attractiveness of the borough as a place to live and work and the role it plays in improving the quality of life. The new structure for open space should be developed to ensure effective representation for the various open space stakeholders.

Friends of Parks Groups

5.12 There are now 26 Friends of Parks groups operating within Haringey. These groups are composed of local people who, out of a sense of wishing to improve their local park, are prepared to give up some of their free time towards making this happen.

Across the Borough, Friends groups fulfil a number of important roles including acting as the 'eyes and ears' of the park on a day to day basis, organising a wide range of events and activities, volunteering to undertake projects to improve the park and either fundraising directly or supporting Council and other agency funding applications.

The contribution made by Friends groups is of ever increasing importance in working with Recreation Services to improve the quality of facilities and levels of activity offered within parks. This contribution should be encouraged and, if practical, further developed. However, in order to work more effectively with Friends of Parks and other voluntary and community sector organisations, it is recommended that Recreation Services undertake an assessment of the current levels of expertise, skills and knowledge held by officers with responsibility for working directly with Friends groups with a view to undertaking training in order to enhance their effectiveness in this area of work.

Supported by Recreation Services, the individual Friends of Parks groups have established a Borough Friends Forum. The Forum has previously had a voice in the Environment theme group of the Haringey Strategic Partnership. It is recommended that this relationship be strengthened as the Forum represents the interests of a significant number of parks users.

Marketing

- 5.13 Recreation Services has recently appointed a permanent Press and Publicity Officer in order to improve communication. However there is a need to develop a more comprehensive approach towards the marketing of the Service, in particular with improved information on the profiles and needs of different user groups, the identity of non user groups and their needs.

There is also considerable potential to develop usage of the internet as a tool for providing information about and facilitating access to services.

Developing the educational role of open space

- 5.14 Environmental Education

Railway Fields is the principal site in the Borough for the delivery of environmental education. It attracts approximately 1,500 pupils per year offering a curriculum linked to key stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum for Science. Based on feedback from teachers, the quality of the learning experience offered and levels of enjoyment experienced by the children attending are both consistently rated as very good.

A new nature conservation officer has recently been recruited. Environmental education will now be delivered through a dedicated BTCV officer based at the Council's Railway Fields environmental education centre and we will continue to market this valuable resource to schools within the Borough. We will also seek opportunities to expand the provision of environmental education across the Borough.

- 5.15 Under 5's provision

Parks and open spaces provide the setting for the delivery of under 5's services in a number of locations across the borough including Down Lane, White Hart Lane and Noel Park.

Over the last 2 years there has been a requirement to increase the level of provision in order to meet Central Government targets for the Sure Start programme and this has resulted in pressures to expand the size of existing buildings and to incorporate external play areas by developing on the surrounding open space. Where this development on open space is requested, it is important to ensure that any loss of open space is mitigated by providing tangible benefits to the wider community.

Developing closer relationships with schools

- 5.16 The majority of schools within the Borough do not have adequate levels of provision to external recreational space and playing fields and therefore very often make use of nearby parks and open spaces to provide elements of the PE curriculum. Currently this appears to take place on an informal basis. It is therefore recommended that Recreation Services seek

to develop a closer working relationship with schools so that schools needs for access to and use of open space can be better planned and provided for. Conversely, there are a limited number of schools who have their own playing fields in parts of the borough which are deficient in this type of provision. Where this is the case, it is recommended that the potential for community access be explored.

On a number of open spaces within the borough , the close location of a local school is perceived as giving rise to problems of anti social behaviour arising from the school children's use of the space during break times and before and after school. Where these problems are perceived, it is important that they are managed effectively, both by Recreation Services and the individual schools. As a longer term solution, it will be essential to ensure that school needs are taken into account in the development of open space management and improvement plans.

A possible approach towards achieving this is to seek greater involvement by schools in the consultation an planning process for improving open space or specific elements within it. An example of this is the new playground in Woodside park which was developed on the design ideas of local primary school children.

Active involvement in the development of new open space features offers a valuable learning experience for young people as well as creating a sense of ownership which can help to reduce future anti-social behaviour. It is therefore recommended that this approach be developed in the future.

Developing the role and contribution of open space to achieving improved mental and physical health. Providing opportunities for physical activity

5.17 There is now conclusive evidence demonstrating the link between low levels of physical activity and the prevalence of major and life threatening health conditions such as coronary heart disease and diabetes.

In order to reduce the incidences of these conditions, Central Government has set new targets for participation in physical activity, aiming by 2020 for 50% of the population to take at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity such as brisk walking. Currently only 1 person in 5, resident in London is achieving this level of activity. For this level of change to occur, existing lifestyles will need to be adopted so that exercise can be incorporated as part of a daily routine.

Open space offers considerable potential for contributing towards the achievement of the physical activity target as it can offer an attractive setting for a range of activity which can be participated in either on a casual or more organised basis.

Examples of this include play facilities, walking, cycling, trim trails, sports pitches and skateboard arenas.

A number of recommendations are made in order to support this role. These include:

- The co-ordination of access to playing fields and sports pitches in co-operation with neighbouring local authorities.
- Promoting opportunities for walking and cycling.
- Improved publicity and marketing of opportunities for walking, cycling and physical activity.
- The development of multi sport hubs within open space.
- Developing the use of volunteers.
- A more targeted approach towards the usage of allotments.

5.18 A key requirement will be to ensure that any plans to promote physical activity within open space are developed in conjunction with the Primary Care Trust in order to ensure that there

is an alignment between the 2 services in the setting of objectives for increasing physical activity and the actions being taken to achieve these objectives.

- 5.19 Increased use of open space for physical activity will also require capital investment for the development of new provision. This investment can, in part, be achieved by the use of section 206 agreements and it is recommended that a formula be developed by the Planning Service to implement this. Subject to this being agreed, monies generated through section 106 agreements can attract further investment by providing matching funding for external funding bids.
- 5.20 Dog ownership can be beneficial in promoting both mental and physical health with ownership evident as being conducive to lowering stress levels and to ensuring that both the dog and the owner get a regular physical activity.

However, dog ownership can be problematic where it impairs the enjoyment of other parks users, either because of dog fouling or through the failure of owners to control boisterous behaviour.

In order to address this issue, it is recommended that further consideration be given by Recreation Services to existing arrangements within open space for dog walking with a view to developing further dog free and/ or dog exercise areas.

Promoting social inclusion

- 5.21 In comparison with other elements of local authority cultural services provision such as sport and the arts, the development of policy to promote social inclusion and equal opportunities within open space has been relatively limited. Yet as a publicity funded service, there is an implicit duty for local authorities to ensure that services are both accessible to and used by all sections of the community and in particular by those residents whose physical and mental health needs are more acute but who experience barriers in being able to obtain the benefits that usage of open space offers.

A series of measures to develop more effective systems for the promotion of social inclusion on the usage of open space are therefore recommended.

These are:

- To incorporate specific objectives for the promotion of social inclusion in parks management and improvement plans
- To develop user and non user profiles for open space as a whole and for individual sites
- To identify barriers to use and produce plans to overcome these barriers
- To develop an access policy for open space
- To encourage Friends of Parks groups to broaden membership in order to achieve increased levels of diversity amongst Friends groups
- To develop new activities in open space targeted at under represented groups
- To develop peer consultation in an effort to engage more effectively with low participant groups
- Where feasible, to seek to provide additional toilet provision within open space in order to overcome barriers to usage

Developing the role of open space for cultural experiences and activities

- 5.22 Promoting community cohesion
Parks and open spaces provide an opportunity for all sections of the community to come together to enjoy festivals and events in an environment that is generally relaxed and hence a positive one for promoting tolerance and empathy. This role should be encouraged and developed with Recreation Services seeking to develop events where the promotion of enhanced community cohesion is an explicit objective.

- 5.23 There is a variety of different types of cultural activity currently occurring within open space; festivals, pop concerts, theatre and fun fairs being amongst these. Whilst there is generally support for community organised events, commercially driven activity such as pop concerts and fun fairs is sometimes more controversial with concerns over its environmental impact.

Both in order to develop assess the existing quality of infrastructure available to support cultural activity and to re-examine the environmental impact, it is recommended that an audit be undertaken to ascertain those open spaces best suited to hosting different types of cultural activity.

- 5.24 Following completion of the audit, Recreation Services should then proceed to develop a strategy to provide clear direction for future provision of arts and events and festivals within open space.
- 5.25 Much existing activity is developed by Friends of Parks groups, often with the assistance of BTCV and targeted at their immediate local communities. This activity is popular and should attract support from Recreation Services via the new Activities Officer post.
- 5.26 A number of open space sites within Haringey offer opportunities for local people to engage with and interpret the historic environment. Of these the most high profile is Finsbury Park which is currently undergoing a £4.9m improvement to restore and celebrate its heritage features thanks to funding principally provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

There are other open spaces and specific elements within open spaces that also appear to be eligible for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is recommended that all of these sites be identified and prioritised with a view to making future applications for funding to the Heritage Lottery fund.

Promoting biodiversity and nature conservation

- 5.27 LBH enjoys an excellent reputation across London for the work it undertakes to promote biodiversity and nature conservation. This is principally due to the efforts of the previous conservation officer whose knowledge and passion made him such an effective ambassador and champion for the natural environment.

We will be working to further integrate nature conservation within the management of parks and other Council-owned land. We will also work with allotment site associations to encourage biodiversity on allotments. Work will also be undertaken through the Local Biodiversity action Plan partnership to enhance the wildlife of Haringey. We have submitted proposals as part of a pan-London 'Capital Woodlands' bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enhance Coldfall Wood.

Development of a tree strategy

- 5.27 Management and maintenance of the trees within the public realm is a core function of Recreation Services and one which makes an important contribution to biodiversity. This is an area which the Council as a whole has been keen to encourage in recent years through section 106 and other sources of funding. In order to further develop this role, It is recommended that a tree strategy be produced to protect, enhance and promote the planting, management and diversity of tree species.

CHAPTER 6

Open Space Strategy Vision

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 within the previous chapter. 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.**

An action plan to secure the objectives is attached as an appendix to the Open Space Strategy

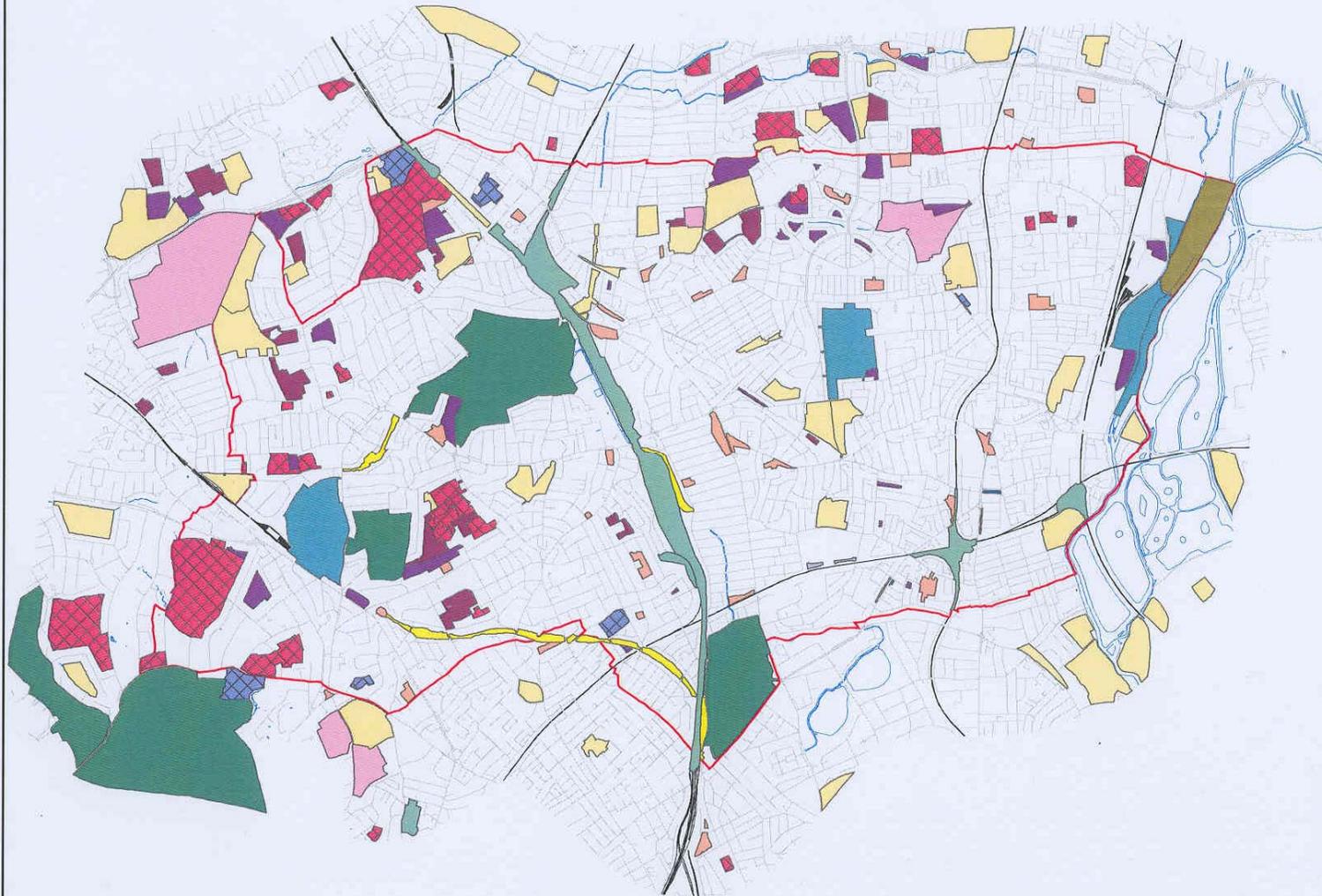
LEGEND

- Open Spaces
- OS Road Features
- Haringey Borough Boundary
- OS Water Features
- OS Rail Features

SPACE ID NAME	SPACE ID NAME
001 Lee Valley Park	059 Highgate School Playing Field
002 Finsbury Park	060 Fortismere School
003 Alexandra Park	061 Scout Park
004 Highgate Wood	062 St Aloysius School
005 Longhills Recreation Ground	063 Highgate School Sports Ground
006 Queens Wood	064 Springfield Community Park
007 Tottenham Marshes	065 The Paddock
008 Parkland Walk Finsbury Highgate	066 Town Gardens
009 Parkland Walk Highgate - Alexandra	067 Northumberland Park Sports Centre
010 Albert Road Recreation Ground	068 Frederick Knight Sports Ground
011 Avenue/Finsbury/Nightingale/Frisky Gardens/Commerce Road POIS	069 Muswell Hill Golf Course
012 Belmont Recreation Ground	070 Greengate Common
013 Bruce Castle Park	071 Haringey School for Girls
014 Chestnuts Park	072 Coalfield School
015 Cockfai Wood	073 Kings Road POIS
016 Crouch End Playing Fields	074 Durnford Road
016a North Middlesex Sports Club	075 Coolham Tennis and Squash Club
016b Colthorpe Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club	076 Elmrose Close
016c Brookside Lawn Tennis Club	078 West Junction, Markfield Railway Triangle
016d Hanley Lawn Tennis Club	079 Ashmount Road POIS
016e Georgiana Park	080 THFC
016f North London Cricket Club	081 Central Foundation School Playing Fields
016g Highgate Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club	082 Alexandra Park School
016h Homsey Club	083 Wolves Lane AG
016i Highgate Wood School	084 Highgate AG
016j Wood Vale	085 Fortis Green AG
017 Downhills Park	086 Shepherds Hill Allotment Gardens
018 Downhills Recreation Ground	087 Creighton Avenue AG
019 Down Lane Recreation Ground	088 Golf Course AG
020 Markfield Recreation Ground	089 Friern Barnet Sewage Works
021 Muswell Hill Playing Fields	090 White Hart Lane AG
022 New River Sports Centre	091 Park View Academy
023 Noel Park Recreation Ground	092 Holtfield Park
024 Perth Road	093 Shepherds Hill Open Space
025 Friary Park	094 The Kent Lane Covered Reservoir
026 Tottenham Cemetery	095 St Thomas More School Playing Field
027 Tunnel Gardens	096 Wolves Lane Cemetery
028 White Hart Lane Recreation Ground	097 Courfman Road AG
029 Woodside Park	098 Stockton Road AG
030 Bluebell Woods	099 Gospitcock Road AG
031 Brunswick Open Space	100 Marsh Lane AG
032 Chapmans Green	101 Rockley Farm AG
033 One Centre Gardens	102 Alexandra Park AG
034 Duckkitts Common	103 Grove Lodge
035 Faulklands airfax POIS	104 Cranford Way
036 Granville POIS	105 Former Highgate Lawn Tennis Club
037 Harrington Park	106 Railway Line
038 Manchester Gardens	162 Aynier Road Open Space
039 Page Green Common	163 Former Aynier Road AG
040 Pagnier Park	164 De Quincey Road AG
041 Railway Fields	165 Highgate Road AG
042 Rokasley Gardens	166 Rowal Road AG
043 Rowland Hill Playing Fields	167 Elmer Road AG
044 Shepherds Hill Gardens	168 Marnock Road AG
045 Somerford Grove POIS	169 Ranleigh Road AG
046 Stanley/Culross POIS	170 Creighton Road AG
047 St Mary's Churchyard	171 The Grove and Railway Bank AG
048 Stationers Park	172 South Grove AG
049 Station Road (Parkland Walk)	173 Devonshire Road AG
050 Teakensbury Close	174 Franklin Street AG
051 Tottenham Green	175 Quenmore Road AG
052 War Hill Road	176 Shepherds Hill Railway Gardens
053 Woodhall House	177 St Ann's Hospital Grounds
054 Wood Green Common	178 Our Lady of Muswell Lawn Tennis Club
055 Colles Park	179 Muswell Hill LURC Lawn Tennis Club
056 Crouch Hill Reservoir	180 Muswell Hill Bowling Club
057 Finsley Green Covered Reservoir	182 Pages Lane Tennis Club
058 Highgate Golf Course	183 Turnford House
	190 Mill Mead Road AG

PROJECT	Haringey Open Space Study
TITLE	Figure 1.0 - Open Space Sites
SCALE	1:40,000 at A3
DATE	07/04/2003





LEGEND

- Regional Park
- Metropolitan Park
- District Park
- Local Park
- Small Local Park and Open Space
- Pocket Park
- Linear open space

- School playing field
- Private playing field / sports ground
- Private recreational open space
- Allotment
- Cemetery
- Rail / road embankment
- Private Sites

- OS Road Features
- OS Water Features
- OS Rail Features
- Borough Boundary

PROJECT

Haringey Open Space Study

TITLE

Figure 4.0 - Open Space by Type

SCALE

1:50,000 at A4

DATE

9th April 2003



LEGEND

- Open Spaces
- OS Rail Features
- OS Road Features
- OS Water Features
- Ward Boundaries



PROJECT
Haringey Open Space Study

TITLE
Figure 1.2 - Ward Boundaries

SCALE
1:50,000 at A4

DATE
27th January 2003

