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List of Abbreviations

AAP  Area Action Plan
ANGSt Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard
CO2e Carbon equivalent
CNCA Corporate Natural Capital Account
EA Environmental Agency
GIS Geographic information systems
JSNA Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
LBBD London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
MENE Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment
NICE National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
ONS Office for National Statistics
ORVal Outdoor Recreation Valuation Tool
OSA Open Space Assessment
SEG Socio-Economic Group
SuDS Sustainable Drainage System
1.1 THE PLANNING CONTEXT


The NPPF (2012) supersedes a number of planning policy statements and guidance, including PPG17 and its companion guide. It sets out the government’s planning policies for England in support of the government’s objective to achieve sustainable development. The NPPF also provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

Considerable emphasis is placed within the NPPF upon the design of the built environment, stressing the importance of ‘high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes’.

Further emphasis is placed upon the delivery of health outcomes, with developments required to be ‘safe and accessible, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas’.

Local planning authorities should:

- ‘set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure’.

Green infrastructure being defined as ‘a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities’. Open space is defined as: ‘all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity’.

The framework continues:

- ‘Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open spaces, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open spaces, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open spaces, sports and recreational provision is required’.

- ‘Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails’.

- ‘Local Plans should take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure’.

Specifically in respect of Green Belt, the NPPF proposes that ‘The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence’.

This Open Spaces Strategy will discuss all of the strategic planning objectives set out in the NPPF.

The London Plan (2016)

The London Plan (2016) is the Mayor’s spatial development strategy for London. The development strategy for Barking and Dagenham will include the managed release of some surplus industrial land for housing and other complementary uses, consolidating the offer of the remaining industrial land.

‘Any new development and infrastructure brought forward in this area must avoid adverse effects on any European site of nature conservation importance (to include SACs, SPAs, Ramsar, proposed and candidate sites) either alone or in combination with other plans and projects’.

Policy 7.18 of the London Plan addresses the need for ‘protecting local open spaces and addressing local deficiency’. The policy sets out the requirement for LDPs to: ‘ensure that future open space needs are planned for in areas with the potential for substantial change such as opportunity areas, regeneration areas, intensification areas and other local areas’ and to ‘ensure that open space needs are planned in accordance with green infrastructure strategies to deliver multiple benefits’.

Policy 2.18 focuses on green infrastructure and the need to protect, promote, expand and manage the extent and quality of and access to London’s network of green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is considered as a multifunctional network that will ‘secure benefits including, but not limited to: biodiversity; natural and historic landscapes; culture; building a sense of place; the economy; sport; recreation; local food production; mitigating and adapting to climate change; water management; and the social benefits that promote individual and community health and well-being’.

The London Plan requires London boroughs to develop open spaces strategies to guide the protection, promotion, enhancement and effective management of London’s network of open spaces. The Mayor has published (jointly with CABE) best practice guidance on the preparation of open spaces strategies: ‘Open Spaces Strategies: Best Practice Guidance’ (2009). The London Plan also establishes a hierarchy for public open spaces which includes a distance threshold to be used to assess areas of the capital that have deficiency in respect open space provision.

Green infrastructure and open environments: the All London Green Grid

The All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance (2012) identifies deficiencies and opportunities in respect of London’s network of green, natural and cultural spaces and provides guidance on future funding and management. The SPG focuses on 11 Green Grid sub-regions within which the policies and range of projects set out in the guidance can be executed.
Areas of Barking and Dagenham are covered by the Epping Forest and Roding Valley and Thames Chase, Beam and Ingrebourne Green Grid area.

The Local Plan, Barking and Dagenham's Core Strategy

1. Improve access, diversify use and improve the quality of the existing open space networks of Barking Town Centre.
2. Promote Abbey Green as the catalyst to create links south through the Gascoigne Estate to Barking Riverside and Beckton District Park to link north to Green Street, Plashet Park and Wansstead Flats.
3. Integrate green infrastructure as part of the regeneration of Barking Riverside with particular emphasis on incorporating flood management/ SUDS, conserving and enhancing biodiversity and creating a network of accessible green spaces.
4. Preserve and enhance natural habitats around Barking Creek to establish wetland habitats such as grazing marsh, reed beds, ponds and wet woodland, increasing accessibility with potential for productive uses within Newham, whilst maintaining the navigability of the lower Roding for commercial and leisure use.
5. Create and promote exemplar community led food growing sites across the area making use of underutilised land such as the derelict garages of Barking and Dagenham, Central Park nursery, or the walled garden of Ray Park.
6. Open up the culverted sections of the Goresbrook restoring naturalised river banks and floodplains, providing access along the Goresbrook Link from Parsloes Park through Goresbrook Park and the Barking Riverside development site to the Thames.

The Local Plan, Barking and Dagenham’s Core Strategy

(2011)

The Local Plan includes a suite of Development Plan Documents (DPD’s) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD’s). The Barking and Dagenham Local Plan is a document which sets out what Barking and Dagenham will look like in 2033 and the policies which will deliver this ambition, and is focused on delivering the council’s vision ‘One borough; One community; London’s growth opportunity’.

The Local Plan includes targets for the number of homes and jobs to be delivered from 2018 to 2033. It sets out the requirements for new transport connections and facilities such as schools and health centres to meet the needs of new and existing residents. The Local Plan will also include those features which people cherish and need to be protected such as parks and historic buildings.

Part of the vision for 2025 is that ‘the borough’s verdant parks will be connected by a network of tree-lined streets, wildlife corridors, and cycle paths. Barking and Dagenham’s natural heritage and biodiversity will be flourishing. The banks of the River Thames and Roding will be rich in biodiversity and offer quality opportunities for recreation and leisure and spectacular views will be enjoyed from inspiring high rise waterfront apartments’.

A consultation process on the issues to be addressed in the Local Plan took place between October 2015 and January 2016. The responses to this consultation were evaluated and are being used to inform the Draft Local Plan.

The Draft Local Plan is being prepared for a six-week formal consultation during Quarter 2 of 2018 (Regulation 19). At this stage in the plan-making process, the Local Plan will only be changed if there are legal reasons. Amendment need to address whether the Local Plan has been made in accordance with legislative requirements and if the Local Plan is consistent with national and London Plan policy.

Once the consultation on the Draft Local Plan has been completed, the council will consider all comments received and use these to inform the submission version of the Local Plan. The Local Plan will then be submitted to the Secretary of State for an independent Examination in Public (IEP) before the Planning Inspectorate.

The Inspector then will prepare a report for the council and may require changes to be made to the Plan. The final Barking and Dagenham Plan will then be adopted by the council during 2019. This is a decision taken by all Councillors at the Council Assembly.

The Core Strategy emphasises the importance of protecting the borough’s parks and open spaces through Policy CM3: Green Belt and Open Public Spaces. This promotes the idea of a greener Barking and Dagenham through:

- Protecting public open space.
- Creating public open space and improving provision in areas of deficiency.
- Supporting the implementation of the East London Green Grid, the Blue Ribbon Network, and the Barking and Dagenham Landscape Framework.
- Protecting and maintaining in accordance with national policy, Barking and Dagenham’s Green Belt.
- Safeguarding Barking Park, Parsloes Park and Mayesbrook Park, which have been designated as Metropolitan Open Land, from inappropriate development and affording these sites the same level of protection as the Green Belt.
- Identifying a number of local public open spaces for protection. The Site Specific Allocations DPD will review these designations and confirm what local public open spaces are to be designated as District Parks, Local Parks and Open Spaces and Small Open Spaces in accordance with the London Plan’s public open space hierarchy.
- The provision of public open space, where appropriate, with new developments, or developer contributions towards off-site provision of public open space and/or improvement of existing spaces.

A strategic review of local public open space has been conducted to take into account of the council’s Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (2003). This work has informed the Site Specific Allocations (DPA). This work will also enable the council’s maps of open space deficiency to be updated in line with the London Plan public open space hierarchy. The Site Specific Allocations (DPA) will confirm which of Barking and Dagenham’s local public open spaces fall within the London Plan’s district parks, local parks and open spaces, small open spaces, pocket parks and linear open spaces classifications.

In respect of Green Belt the Policy states that the protection afforded to the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land is consistent (respectively) with Planning Policy Guidance 2 (PPG2) and the London Plan.

Policy CR2: Preserving and enhancing the natural environment, seeks to preserve and enhance the borough’s natural environment, including all sites of ecocological or geological value (whether or not they have statutory protection) and all protected or priority species.

The council will encourage development that enhances existing sites and habitats of nature conservation value (including strategic wildlife and river corridors), or which provide new ones, in particular where this will help meet the objectives of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Barking and Dagenham. Improving public access to existing nature conservation sites will also be encouraged.

Developments which would cause significant damage to a Site of Metropolitan or Borough Importance for Nature Conservation, or the population (or conservation status of) a protected or priority species will not normally be granted. Exceptions may be considered where the economic or social benefits of the proposed development would outweigh the nature conservation value.

Protecting and improving the borough’s natural environment contributes to the community priority of ‘Making Barking and Dagenham cleaner, greener and safer’.

The Local Plan Development Management Policies (DMP) sets out the borough-wide planning policies that implement the Core Strategy and the policy basis for delivering the long-term spatial vision and strategic placemaking objectives in Barking and Dagenham which are set out in the Core Strategy.

The DMP includes a section on play space that suggests that ‘there is an existing deficit of play provision for children and young people in a number of wards and that with projected population increases it is paramount that these shortages are addressed as new development comes on board’. The DPD provides indicative standards of provision established by the Barking and Dagenham Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy. These are:

- a) Playing Pitches: 0.75 ha of playing pitches per 1,000 people
- b) Multi-Use Games Areas: one MUGA per 1,500 under 16’s
- c) Tennis Courts: one tennis court per 2,500 to 45 year olds
- d) Bowling Greens: one bowling green per 9,500 over 40’s

The Barking Town Centre Area Action Plan

The Barking Town Centre Area Action Plan forms part of the LDF and sets out guidelines that developers must follow if they want to develop land in Barking Town Centre, designated a major centre in the London Plan. It is also at the heart of East London, a major transport centre minutes from the City and pivotal to the wider regeneration of the Thames Gateway and the policy aspirations of the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation.
Referring to Parks and Open Spaces, the AAP highlights the following:

- Although there are many grassed amenity areas within housing estates in the town centre, the plan area contains few parks and public open spaces. Consequently, there are significant areas with deficient access to local parks.
- As well as a need to provide additional parks and open spaces to remedy this deficiency, there are qualitative issues in terms of facilities and environmental quality about the condition of many of the existing parks and open spaces in the AAP area.
- Abbey Green is the most central open space in the town centre, it contains key heritage sites and buildings and is occasionally used for major events. However, it is an under-exploited resource with almost no provision of amenities such as seating areas, sports spaces or play areas for children.
- Although not open space in the usual sense of the word, the publicly accessible banks of the River Roding offer very significant opportunities to enhance biodiversity as identified in the corridor and seek opportunities to enhance the biodiversity as identified in the Barking and Dagenham Biodiversity Action Plan.5

One of the eight key objectives of the AAP is to:

- Protect and improve the accessibility, connectivity and quality of parks, play areas and open spaces within and outside the town centre such as Abbey Green at the heart of the town centre and Barking Park which is on the edge. To also open up the frontages of the River Roding and its corridor and seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity as identified in the Barking and Dagenham Biodiversity Action Plan.5

1.2 BARKING AND DAGENHAM’S CORPORATE STRATEGIES

Our vision and priorities represent a shared understanding of what we’re seeking to achieve for the borough. They set out our role in place shaping and enabling community leadership within the context of a significantly reducing budget. They have been developed to reflect the changing relationship between the council, partners and the community. Our vision for the borough:

One borough; one community; London’s growth opportunity

Encouraging civic pride

- Build pride, respect and cohesion across our borough.
- Promote a welcoming, safe, and resilient community.
- Build civic responsibility and help residents shape their quality of life.
- Promote and protect our green and public open spaces.
- Narrow the gap in attainment and realise high aspirations for every child.

Enabling social responsibility

- Support residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community.
- Protect the most vulnerable, keeping adult s and children healthy and safe.
- Ensure everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it.
- Ensure children and young people are well-educated and realise their potential.
- Fully integrate services for vulnerable children, young people and families.

Growing the borough

- Build high quality homes and a sustainable community.
- Develop a local, skilled workforce and improve employment opportunities.
- Support investment in housing, leisure, the creative industries and public spaces to enhance our environment.
- Work with London partners to deliver homes and jobs across our growth hubs.
- Enhance the borough’s image to attract investment and business growth.

Well run organisation

- A digital council, with appropriate services delivered online.
- Promote equalities in the workforce and community.
- Implement a smarter working programme, making best use of accommodation and IT.
- Allowing Members and staff to work flexibly to support the community.
- Continue to manage finances efficiently, looking for ways to make savings, generate income.
- Be innovative in service delivery6.

Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

With reference to Policy BC5: Sports Standards, the council will resist development proposals which involve the loss of existing pitch and outdoor sports facilities in the borough, unless replacement facilities are provided to the council’s satisfaction within the development or in the immediate vicinity.

The council will also ensure that new pitch and outdoor sports facilities are provided to accommodate population growth by:

- Requiring all proposals for strategic residential development to be accompanied by an assessment of the need for additional sports provision.
- Requiring any identified need to be met through the provision of financial contributions and/or additional sports provision as part of the development scheme.

Where it is not possible to provide additional provision as part of the development scheme or in close proximity, a suitable alternative in an accessible location may be acceptable.

In assessing need, the following should be taken into account: Indicative standards of provision established by the Barking and Dagenham Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy:

- Playing Pitches: 0.75 ha of playing pitches per 1,000 people
- Multi-Use Games Areas: one MUGA per 1,500 under 16’s
- Tennis Courts: one tennis court per 2,500 10 to 45 year olds
- Bowling Greens: one bowling green per 9,500 over 40’s
- Existing provision or shortage of sports facilities within the vicinity of the proposed development.
- Existing provision or shortage of parks and open space (for informal recreation opportunities) within the vicinity of the proposed development.
- Projected population profile of the proposed development.

This policy fits in with national, regional and local legislation. By adopting the recommendations of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy (2005), the policy will help ensure that provision of sports facilities is considered in relation to new and existing communities.

The Community Benefits SPD will look at how sports provision from development can be maximised. Sport England guidance on how to develop locally relevant criteria for sports provision is available and will inform the SPD.7

A sport and physical activity strategy for Barking & Dagenham 2012 – 2015 has been developed with a number of key partners to provide a framework that will enable and encourage more people to be more active, more often. This strategy aims to increase the level of participation in sport and physical activity in the borough through the development of a wide range of opportunities, which are far broader than traditional sporting activities.
To achieve this aim, will need a radical change in behaviour and to do this everyone involved in delivering sport and physical activity initiatives needs to focus effort on where it will have the biggest impact. The key outcomes from the delivery of this strategy in 2015 will be:

- 5,600 more adults will be participating regularly in sport and physical activity, an increase of 3%.
- Leisure centre visits will have increased by 40% to 1.25 million per year.
- The percentage of 5 to 16 year olds participating in three hours or more PE and sport each week will have risen by 5% to 58% performance measure to be changed in line with new Sport England strategy targets.
- The % of adult residents who are regular sports volunteers will have increased by 1% to 3.2%.
- Satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities in the borough will have increased by 15% to 69%.
- Satisfaction with parks and open spaces will have increased by 5% to 71%.
- No. of coaches in the borough (UK coaching certificate level 2 and above or equivalent) benchmark and targets to be confirmed.
- Better quality and more accessible clubs: 13 more Club Mark accredited and 24 achieving the borough standard.
- Increase in participation in physical activity by target groups – leisure pass members: Over 60; Unemployed (claiming Job Seeker’s Allowance); NEETS; Looked After Children; Students (over 16 and in full time education); Claiming income support or housing benefit; registered carer (benchmark and target to be confirmed).
- 20% of residents aged 60 – 85 will have Active Leisure memberships (an increase of 100%).
- Increase in opportunities for disabled people to participate in sport: 15 local sports clubs offering inclusive activity programmes. Open a new sports centre in Barking town centre (by spring 2014).
- 14.8% of adults in Barking and Dagenham take part in sport and active recreation compared to the national average of 22%.

However, 58.2% of adults do no sport or active recreation, and 59.7% of adult residents in Barking and Dagenham want to start playing sport or do a bit more.

- 2.2% of adult residents are regular sports volunteers compared to the national average of 4.5%.
- 15.6% are members of sports clubs, compared to 23.9% nationally.
- 62.5% are satisfied with sporting provision in the borough compared to 69% nationally.

Our most popular sports for adults are swimming, going to the gym, football, athletics and aerobics.

The Barking and Dagenham Play Strategy 2014 identifies priority wards with a deficit of play provision. These are: Priority 1 – Becontree, Eastbury, Priority 2 – Parsloes and Whalebone, Priority 3 – Eastbrook quality outdoor natural play spaces within prioritised wards, parks and housing estates.

There were fears related to personal safety which influenced parents, children and young people’s decisions about playing outside their homes and neighbourhoods. Issues of bullying, strangers, loose dogs, traffic and lighting in parks were mentioned repeatedly. The strategy recommends the creation of locally supervised were to create local supervised activities, more park keepers and police, safer roads, more facilities and activities that are interesting, challenging and changing.

Children, young people and their parents consistently voiced their desire for supervised free play in parks and in the places where children live. Meeting these needs requires access to natural environments, wildlife and the less formal areas of green spaces and parks. To respond to the lack of play spaces in certain localities it may be that pieces of undeveloped land, a corner of a recreational ground, park, wood or stream could be set aside for informal woodland play opportunities where natural materials such as rocks, fallen trees, branches, bushes and leaves etc are available.

**Waste Strategy**

In 2014/15, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) produced just under 90,000 tonnes of waste. This means, on average, each of the borough’s households threw away approximately one tonne (953kg) of residual waste. As a result, Barking and Dagenham has the highest level of waste production per household in London. This is 50kg more per household than our closest performing borough.

In addition to producing the highest volume of residual waste of all the London boroughs per household, LBBD was ranked in the bottom quartile of the London for recycling performance in 2014/15 at 23%. This is less than half the recycling rate of the top-performing borough of Bexley at 54%.

Barking and Dagenham Waste Strategy Vision for 2020 states: ‘We want to reduce waste, increase re-use, increase recycling and provide effective, efficient and customer-focused waste services that demonstrate value for money.’ To achieve the vision a significant behavioural change towards waste management is essential. This will be supported and facilitated by the new ‘Insight and Intelligence’ function, to identify the best approach for the council to educate, encourage and enforce our Reduce, Reuse and Recycle message.

**Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

This 2015 refresh of Barking and Dagenham’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy outlines the borough’s top priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of all the people who live and work in Barking and Dagenham. The Strategy sets out a vision for improving the health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities at every stage of people’s lives by 2018. This will be achieved by ‘starting well’, ‘living well’ and ‘ageing well’.

There have been significant changes to the demographics of the population in the last decade, most noticeably an increase in the numbers of people living in the borough, a very high birth rate and increase in proportion of the population from black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. The borough’s population is growing at a faster pace than that of London and of England as a whole. Over two thirds of adults in the borough are overweight with only 15% of adults participating in regular exercise. 45% exercise for at least 30 minutes once per week and 15% exercise at least 5 times per week. There are also low utilisation rates of the borough’s green spaces.

The outcomes targeted within the Strategy are:

- To increase the life expectancy of people living in Barking and Dagenham.
- To close the gap between the life expectancy in Barking and Dagenham with the London average.
- To improve health and social care outcomes through integrated services.
1.3 BENCHMARKS AND STANDARDS

The Open Spaces Strategy will be informed by national, regional and local standards in respect of the provision of parks and open spaces.

London Open Space Hierarchy

The London Plan (2015) establishes a hierarchy for open space provision across the borough, establishing a typology for open space and standards in respect of accessibility (Fig.1.1).

1.3.1 NATIONAL STANDARD

London Barking and Dagenham is the principal point of reference for play and informal recreation in London. The GLA Supplementary Planning Guidance (Greater London Authority 2012) GLA Supplementary Planning Guidance accessibility (Fig.1.1).

The London Plan (2015) establishes a hierarchy for open space provision across London Open Space Hierarchy

London Barking and Dagenham

is the principal point of reference for play and informal recreation in London. The GLA Supplementary Planning Guidance (Greater London Authority 2012) provides a framework for the development and management of parks and open spaces, with a focus on accessibility and sustainability.

GLA Supplementary Planning Guidance

The GLA Supplementary Planning Guidance (Greater London Authority 2012) is the principal point of reference for play and informal recreation in London.

Table 1: GLA SPG playable space typology

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Doorstep Playable Space</th>
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<th>Neighbourhood Playable Space</th>
<th>Youth Space</th>
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<td>• Residential areas including housing estates</td>
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This SPG puts forward a hierarchical typology of play spaces. The key features are set out in Table 1 (Fig.1.2).

Play England Quality Assessment Tool

The Playable Space Quality Assessment Tool (Play England 2009), developed as part of the 2008 National Play Strategy, includes broad criteria around location, play value and care and maintenance. It has been used in LBBD to assess play provision, most recently in 2015.

Best Practice Guidance

The development of the Open Spaces Strategy has been informed by a number of best practice guidance documents developed over the past 15 years.

Green Spaces, Better Places – the report of the Urban Greenspaces Taskforce (2002)

The ‘Green Spaces Better Places’ report was the work of the Urban Greenspaces Taskforce, commissioned by HM Government to consider the role of parks and open spaces in defining the quality of urban life. The report considered the functions performed by parks in creating liveable cities and sustainable communities and the challenges facing the sector in terms of quality and management. The report proposed the central role that good quality parks and open spaces play in the urban renaissance.

CABE Space publications

CABE Space was created in 2003 as a direct consequence of the ‘Green Spaces Better Places’ report and functioning as a research and best practice development organisation through its ‘enabling’ and ‘design review’ programmes. CABE Space produced several key publications that are pertinent to the development of this Strategy:

- ‘Open Space Strategies – Best Practice and Guidance’ (2008 - produced jointly with the Mayor of London). This document sets out a standard for the preparation of open space strategies by local authorities.
- ‘Does Money Grow on Trees’ (2005). This guidance sets out new approaches to assessing the economic value contributed by parks and open spaces.
- ‘Making the invisible visible – the true value of parks assets’ (2009) focused on providing ‘an improved understanding of the current value of park and green space assets as an important first step in better strategic management and in assisting local authorities in using their assets to make a positive difference to communities’.
Green Flag

Since 1996 the ‘Green Flag’ award has been the national standard for greenspace excellence across the UK. ‘Green Flag - raising the standard’ (2004) is the manual that provides guidance to local authorities and other land managers on the award criteria and judging process. Barking and Dagenham has 6 Green Flag Award open spaces.

‘Re-thinking Parks - exploring new business models for parks in the 21st century’

This study by Peter Neal was commissioned by NESTA, the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery to consider new funding and governance models for parks in the light of the financial constraints under which local authorities are operating in the austerity economy. The report considered new approaches to management and finance based on examples from across the UK and overseas.

A ‘Re-thinking Parks’ pilot projects

As part of the Re-thinking Parks project, NESTA has commissioned 11 pilot projects looking at new approaches to the management and funding of parks and open spaces:

- ‘Bloomsbury Squared’, a project in the London Borough of Camden to work with local residents and businesses to fund Bloomsbury’s squares.
- ‘Endowing parks for the 21st century’, a project led by the National Trust that is considering how to build endowments for public parks based around health and ecosystem benefits, public giving and 21st century philanthropy.
- ‘Park Hack’ – Hackney; a project to look at income generation in parks through engagement with the digital economy.
- ‘Coastal Parks and Gardens Foundation’, a project in Bournemouth to use public giving to support future management of parks in the city.
- ‘Eerton Park, Liverpool’, a joint venture between the Land Trust and Liverpool City council to transfer the park to Land Trust management.
- ‘Go to the park’, Burnley; a joint venture between Burnley Council and a local social enterprise looking at new ways of generating revenue directly from parks.
- ‘My Park’, Scotland; this project is looking at the use of digital technologies to facilitate private giving to local parks.
- ‘Eastbrookend Rekindled’, a project to pilo the re-location of public service offers to parks as a means of generating revenue and diversifying use.
- ‘Darlington Re-thinking parks’: Groundwork are working with Darlington Council and others to assess the potential of corporate giving, to sustain local parks.
- ‘Park work’ Bristol; a project to consider the capacity of parks to provide training into work opportunities for local people living in difficult circumstances while improving overall management and maintenance.
- ‘Heeley Park Subscription Society’, Sheffield; a project to attract private giving by offering additional leisure opportunities at Heeley Park over and above the free facilities.

These projects ran over an 18 month period from the summer of 2014.

Third Report of the Natural Capital Committee

The Natural Capital Committee was appointed by government in 2011 with a broad objective that this generation should ‘be the first generation to leave the natural environment in a better state than it inherited’.

Work of the Committee has been focused on the production of three reports. The first two reports set out the methodological, measurement and reporting frameworks, the accounting principles and their application to national and corporate accounts, the incorporation of natural capital into project appraisals, and the research agenda. Included within these reports is a proposed methodology for assessing the value of natural assets and releasing this value to sustain these assets over time.

The third report proposes what government will need to do if it is to fulfil its ambitious objective of improving the environment. A principal element of the report is a call for the establishment of a clear plan to enhance national capital, focussing on those areas with the highest economic benefits.

Design for Play

This guide prepared by Play England in 2008 is intended to inform the creation of outdoor play space to ‘support children’s capacity for adventure and imagination, their fundamental need for exercise and social interaction and their innate sense of fun’. It is also aimed at those responsible for the wider public realm, demonstrating that well-used and well-loved places to play will often be integrated within the cohesive design of wider community space.

Other studies

A number of other best-practice documents have also informed the Strategy:

- ‘The State of UK Parks’ (HLF: 2014 and 2016) examines the overall conditions of parks in the UK with a particular focus on parks and open spaces in which the HLF has invested over the past 25 years.
- ‘Green Society – policies to improve the UK’s urban green spaces’ (Policy Exchange; 2014) considers current and future approaches to the funding of parks and open spaces.
- ‘Cities Alive: re-thinking green infrastructure’ (Arup; 2014) considers the importance of ecosystems and proposes green infrastructure-led design for cities.
- ‘Places to be - green spaces for active citizenship’ (Fabian Society, 2015) considers how government and communities can influence the evolution of thinking on the future management of parks and green spaces.

NOTES

1 The London Plan (March 2016) http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_malp_final_for_web_0606_0.pdf
12 NCC Final Advice to government: September 2015
2.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham is situated on the North bank of the River Thames to the East of London, just nine miles from the centre of London and close to the border with Essex and the countryside beyond. The borough has a population of 206,056 and a total land area of 3,419 hectares. The borough lies between three other London boroughs. To the north is the London Borough of Redbridge, to the east is the London Borough of Havering and to the west is the London Borough of Newham. The borough’s southern boundary is the River Thames.

Barking and Dagenham’s eastern edge has a chain of natural and semi-natural green spaces effect, enhanced further by the presence of the green belt. These are formed of Beam Valley Country Park, Chase Local Nature Reserve and Eastbrookend Country Park.

Whilst not an edge borough, Barking and Dagenham is an outer borough on the eastern side of London, and as such, many of its transport connections are ‘spokes’ which connect central London with the towns and villages in Essex, beyond the borough. The road and rail infrastructure for these ‘spokes’ has a significant impact on connections and integration within the borough. The rail lines of the C2C London to Southend line, the District Line and the Shenfield line running through Chadwell Heath all create barriers to north-south movement by cars, bicycles and people. Similarly, the A12 and A13 strategic roads serve cars well, but prevent integration between neighbourhoods that sit to the north and south of these routes and hinder movement by bicycle and on foot. These impacts can be seen particularly at Marks’ Gate in the north of the borough, where the A12 sever the community from Chadwell Heath, and at Barking Riverside and Dagenham Riverside in the south of the borough, where the A13 creates an island.

Barking and Dagenham has a number of urban parks and gardens distributed across the borough. These serve as important amenity spaces for residents and offer a range of activities and services. Most sit between neighbourhoods and play an important role in bringing different communities together and providing areas of social interaction. When assessed against the GLA’s Open Space standards, the borough’s amenity spaces are well placed and within suitable walking distances for the majority of the population, however there are pockets in the north and in the south where there is a shortage of amenity spaces within suitable walking distances.

Parks and open spaces assessment areas

In assessing the level of provision, quality and value of parks and open spaces in Barking and Dagenham and in preparing Action Plans, this strategy depends upon analysis at three different geographical levels:

• Borough-wide assessment: the strategy assesses the borough’s current portfolio and the resourcing of current service provision on a borough-wide basis, allowing for comparison with other London boroughs
• Regional assessment: Barking and Dagenham is sub-divided into three sub-regions which reflect health inequalities within the borough. This strategy considers levels of provision and assessments of quality and accessibility at this level, allowing for comparison between regions within the borough.
• Ward assessment: The Ward is the constituency unit for local government and this strategy considers levels of provision and assessments of quality, value allowing for comparison between Wards.
2.2 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY, HABITATS

Topography

Barking and Dagenham lies on the eastern edge of the Thames Basin and the topography of the area is characterised by gentle undulations shelving steadily to the south and the valley of the Thames. The valleys of the River Rodding along the western edge of the borough, and Beam River which runs almost the length of the eastern edge of the borough, both converge on the River Thames. A small plateau to the north of the borough, within Marks Gate, marks the highest point at 32-36m AOD.

Geology

Information published by the British Geological Society in Sheet 257 – “Romford” (1:50,000 series) shows that most of the borough is directly underlain by the various river terraces of the Thames and Rodding, including the Flood Plain Gravel, Taplow Gravel and Boyln Hill Gravel. Brickearth is shown overlying these deposits in some areas. River terrace deposits are shown to be scanty and discontinuous towards the north of the borough (around Little Heath, Chadwell Heath and Marks’s Gate) and much of this area is directly underlain by the solid geology of the Eocene: London Clay. Younger (Holocene) alluvium directly underlies the borough on lower ground, next to major rivers, in particular the River Roding and River Beam. A more extensive cover of alluvium occurs to the south of the borough, along the River Thames.

In most cases the geology of the borough consists of the following:

- Made ground
- Alluvium (clay and silt, with some peat)
- Thames gravels
- London Clay – which varies in thickness across the borough
- Types of rocks that compose the solid geology of the borough:
  - Woolwich and Reading Beds
  - Thanet sands
  - Chalk.

Extensive gravel extraction has, and continues to occur, in the borough. Where gravel winnings have been undertaken many of the gravel pits have been infilled with waste. These make up most of the boroughs landfill sites. However, in some cases the gravel pits have not been infilled and now make attractive water features, such as those found at Eastbrookend Country Park.

Soil type is an important influence on land use, vegetation cover and, in terms of geomorphology, the sediment delivery within the borough. The soil types of the borough are such that they are dominated by clay based soils. These include well drained and slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils and associated brown earth. The clayey geology can create waterlogged soils but there is a small risk of water erosion due to the dominance of clay soil.15
Habitats
The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham features a wide range of habitats that have been influenced by the underlying landscape and by human activities. Industry and housing in the 20th century shaped large parts of the borough. The Ripple Nature Reserve is a good example of how biodiversity can recover and thrive on a brownfield site. In the east of the borough, Eastbrookend Country Park has been created on a landfill and quarry site. The mosaic of water, scrub, woodland and grassland provides ideal conditions for wildlife.

The London Regional Landscape Framework (May 2009) has been developed by Natural England and sets out the main landscape character types for London. There are four landscape character types within Barking and Dagenham: Essex Plateau – Mosais of ancient woodland, woodland pasture and acid grassland, within the former royal hunting “forests” at Epping Forest and Havering. North Thames Terraces – Flat, open grassland, stepping up from the Thames, with narrow sinuous strips of woodland marking the alignment of tributary creeks. Examples include Maysbrook Park, Romford Line railtrails and The Chase. Lower Thames Floodplain – A vast, flat, riverside zone of grazed saltmarshes grading to reedswamp, mudflats and the wide tidal Thames, the most striking and immediately visible natural element in London. Examples include the Goresbrook, the Ripple Nature Reserve and Barking Creek. Roding Valley – the narrow, sinuous course of the upper Roding where the riverbanks are lined with willows. These three of the four boundary areas are watercourses. To the East is the River Roding, to the West is the River Beam and to the South is the River Thames. These are classified as main rivers. In addition to this the borough has some further main rivers such as the Rivers Mayesbrook, Goresbrook and Wantz. Information supplied by the EA shows that the General Water Quality for the River Roding is “D”, as is the River Beam, with the River Thames a Class “B”. It is most likely that river quality will be impacted by the catchment upstream of the borough – a difficult area to assess in terms of polluters etc. The Environment Agency’s data broadly divides rivers into “reaches” which do not correspond to borough boundaries. The borough has no major aquifers within its boundary and is designated as “minor aquifer” or “non-aquifer”.

2.3 SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

Until the 19th Century, the borough was predominantly rural, dominated by agricultural uses, constrained in the north by Hainault Forest and in the south by the River Thames, in the west by the River Roding and to the east by the River Beam.

In 1875, Dagenham was a small village surrounded by farmsteads and heathland with a church, a school, almshouses and a number of wells. The main roads connected Dagenham village with Parsloes Manor, to the west. The manor, dating back to the 1500s, had been renovated in 1819. The London, Tilbury and Southend Railway to the south of Dagenham.

By 1854, the manor, dating back to the 1500s, had been renovated in 1819. The London, Tilbury and Southend Railway to the south of Dagenham.

In 1987, Parsloes Manor had fallen into disrepair and been demolished, and residential and industrial development.

By 1933, a new branch of the London, Tilbury and Southend line had a station at Dagenham and residential streets were under construction on the village outskirts. Parsloes Manor had fallen into disrepair and been demolished, and Parsloes Park and Trotting Ground had opened. A hospital had been developed to the south of Dagenham.

By 1946 the Becontree Estate was complete and extended south of the rail line, coalescing with Dagenham village. A new station had been added to the rail line, west of Dagenham, to serve the estate, and new schools had been constructed. Further residential development to the east of Dagenham was underway.

In 1959, Parsloes Park was formalised, and a lake added to the south western corner. By this point, original village buildings from Dagenham had disappeared, being replaced by residential and commercial development. Car usage was increasing, and Ripple Road, to the south has been connected to an East Ham and Barking bypass - inching towards what would become the A13.

The postwar period saw the demolition of houses and factories on the former Abbey Green at Barking, and the building of the Abbey Retail Park opposite.

The late 1960’s and early 1970’s saw the construction of high rise and other high-density estates at various locations across the borough. There have been considerable changes in tenure patterns since 1981, largely due to the “right to buy” legislation. Just over half of the boroughs households were owner-occupiers by 1991. However, despite the increase in owner occupation Barking and Dagenham has the highest proportion of households renting from the local authority in outer London (43% compared to an average 23%). The housing stock is characterised by a high proportion of terraced housing (63%) and has one of the lowest proportions of flats in London (27%).

In conclusion, Barking and Dagenham’s landscape, and in particular its built environment, has evolved comparatively recently, and whilst important areas of natural and semi-natural landscapes exist (notably in the north and east of the borough), the majority of the borough has been substantially shaped by residential and industrial development.

2.4 DEMOGRAPHICS AND ETHNICITY

Barking and Dagenham is a comparatively young borough, with a median age eight years younger than the UK as a whole, a far higher proportion of children and young people than UK-wide, and a much smaller proportion of people over the age of 65. UK-wide, 18% of the population is 65 or over (ONS, 2015), while in Barking and Dagenham in 2011, only 10% of the population is in this age group. One in four people in Barking and Dagenham is under the age of 14, while London-wide less that one in five (19%) people is 15 or under.

Over a third of children (37%) in the borough live in poverty.

The population is projected to continue growing between now and 2020. The number of young people between 10-14 years of age is expected to grow by over 4,000 and this is the largest growth of all the five year age bands. The proportion of middle aged people between 25 years and 40 years of age is projected to grow as a proportion of the whole population.

Fig 2.2 shows the predicted changes, by age-bands for the borough based on the 2014 Trend Based Short Term projections produced by The Greater London Authority. There have been high rates of growth in the wards in the southwest of the borough.

Over the last 25 years, Barking and Dagenham has seen a decrease in the proportion of those who identify as white. In 1991, 93% of residents in Barking and Dagenham identified as white and by 2011, that proportion had fallen to 58% as the proportion of the borough grew. The largest Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) group in Barking and Dagenham in 2011 were people who identify as Asian. The largest Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) group in Barking and Dagenham in 2011 were people who identify as Black (20%) at 20% of the total population. 77% of residents in Barking and Dagenham who identify as black, identify as Black African (15% of the total population of the borough).

By 2015, the annual population survey estimates that the proportion of those who identify as ‘white’ has fallen to 47%. 10% of people who identify as white are foreign-born. In contrast, the majority (53%) of BME residents in Barking and Dagenham in 2015 were born in the UK (Fig 2.3).
Self-reported ethnicity at the 2011 Census shows that whilst the borough has become far more diverse in general, particular areas are favoured by different ethnicities. The Becontree Estate, Rush Green and Rylands Estate areas remain more strongly White British. Barking, the Leflsey Estate, Longbridge Road area and the western edge of the borough have strong Asian communities. Within this, particular neighbourhoods are preferred by different Asian groups. Barking town centre, particularly the Gascoigne Estate, and the southern residential areas of the borough (north of the traditional industrial areas) have strong Black African and Afro-Caribbean communities.

2.5 HEALTH

Britain’s cities are principally Victorian creations and the provision of city parks was significantly influenced by a perceived need to offer a counter-balance to the negative impact of city life on personal health. Today, many of our urban communities are facing similar significant health issues, largely as a consequence of an ageing population and the adoption of a more sedentary lifestyle.

DEFRA has calculated that the NHS could save £2.1 billion per annum if parks and open space infrastructure encouraged people into more active lifestyles.

Good quality parks and open spaces can have a significant impact on some of the most prevalent disease groups – coronary heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes and mental health.

These findings are supported by empirical research. Public health studies in Holland have suggested that the greening of the environment can reduce annual healthcare costs across the Netherlands by over €100 million. This is achieved in part through a 15% reduction in obesity (contributing €8 million) a 10% reduction in the use of anti-depressants (contributing €2 million and a 10% reduction in the use of drugs to control ADHD in children.

The overall capacity of parks to support health outcomes will reinforce outcomes that are delivered through conventional clinical approaches. This Open Spaces Strategy will demonstrate how parks can develop as places where physical activity can be promoted through the principles of ‘active design’ and by the creation of local partnerships to deliver specific health outcomes. This approach will support the delivery of health outcomes developed in the Sports and Physical Activity and Health and Wellbeing strategies.

16% of all residents in Barking and Dagenham had a long term health problem or disability in 2011, and half of these were limited ‘a lot’ in their day-to-day activities. This is lower than in Havering, (this is likely to be a reflection of the older population in that borough), but higher than the London average of 14%. Notably, Barking and Dagenham’s residents seem to develop long-term illness disabilities at a younger age than surrounding areas. 16% of 50-64 year olds, had a disability or illness in 2011 that limited many of their daily activities, markedly higher than the London and England rates of 11%. Data suggests that it is from around 50 years that residents’ health declines at a faster rate than is the case for other Londoners.

Spatially, the 2011 Census identifies higher numbers of people with long term illness or disability in Barking and Dagenham. In 2015, the borough had significantly higher levels of child and adult obesity than both regional and local levels.
national averages according to Public Health England. The borough also had correspondingly low levels of physically active adults in comparison to national and regional averages. These issues were clearly the most pressing health concerns for Barking and Dagenham in the Public Health England review, and so have been analysed spatially for the Townscape and Socio-Economic Characterisation Study (2017). Identified areas with pressing health concerns are Barking town centre, areas of Thames View and Barking Riverside, the vicinity of Dagenham East station and Beacontree Heath.

Place specific data for obesity in adults or the general population is not available but Public Health England has reviewed child obesity levels at reception age (4-5 years) and Year 6 (10-11 years) (Fig. 2.4 and Fig. 2.5). These indicate proportionally higher levels in the borough in Barking, particularly to the south of the town centre, including the Gascoigne Estate.

These statistics might reflect the less immediate access to outdoor and green spaces while living in apartments in taller buildings. They might also reflect consultation findings that the play areas on the estate did not engage children, with each one being identical. However, it is also worth noting that the population density here is higher than other parts of the borough, so the number will automatically be higher.23

2.6 EDUCATION

UK children are spending less and less time outdoors. The likelihood of children visiting any green space at all has halved in a generation, most of these visits now only happen under adult supervision. Similarly, use of the open spaces around their homes which they know has fallen by 90% in 20 years.24

Parks and open spaces are proving less attractive for children and young people when compared with other age groups. Young people aged between 16 and 24 report lower quality across all indicators analysed for the study; 15% thought their local parks and open spaces were the aspect of their areas that needed most improvement, compared with 8 per cent of 55-74 year olds.25

By contrast, the benefits accruing to children from regular use of open spaces and interaction with nature are well-established. Children’s cognitive and social-emotional skill development benefit from regular and varied access to nature. Safe and familiar open spaces close to home contribute to personal, social-emotional skill development and support the development of interpretive sensory skills. There is considerable evidence that children living in socio-economically deprived area have better levels of concentration when they regularly enjoy the use of greenspace and these enhanced concentration levels translate into higher levels of educational attainment and support the development of self-esteem.26

Children suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) benefit from activity in public spaces, especially green spaces. When parents of children with ADD were asked to nominate the activities that they had found made their children more manageable, 85% of green-space activities (such as fishing and soccer) were said to improve the children’s behaviour, while only 43% of non-green activities (such as video games and watching television) were regarded as beneficial. Indeed, 57% of non-green activities were said to result in worse behaviour.27

The proportion of residents in Barking and Dagenham with an NVQ Level 4 qualification or above has surged over the past two decades (the changing age profile accentuates this trend as younger generations are more likely to have higher qualifications than older people), but remains below the levels for London as a whole. People with lower levels of qualifications are more likely to be unemployed or low paid than people with higher qualifications.

This means that facilitating a rise in educational attainment for children and young adults in Barking and Dagenham’s younger generation is one of the keys to a prosperous future for the borough. A well educated workforce will help attract the target knowledge economy industries that have been identified as desirable by the borough.28

The Townscape and Socio-Economic Characterisation Study advocates the development of mixed-income communities, and schools can play an important role in fostering the development of these communities. Mixed-income schools have been shown to help close the attainment gap for low-income students, and contribute to social integration.29

2.7 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Parks form part of a green infrastructure that underpins the functioning of urban environment and forms an important part of city-wide infrastructure planning. The green infrastructure approach proposes that each piece of land management can provide a variety of ecosystem services and that operate at a variety of scales including neighbourhoods, districts, cities and regions. This dynamic approach contrasts with a more traditional mono-functional approach to land and this improves the ability of places to address issues of climate change resilience, pollution, flood risk and ecological degradation.

Climate change is likely to affect all of the world’s cities over the next 50 years and beyond and this will be particularly the case where emission levels produce localised greenhouse effects. Parks can make significant contribution mitigating against the impact of climate change on Barking and Dagenham.

Climate change is expected to increase flood risk with increased rainfall and more extreme weather patterns. Urban environments are often poorly equipped to cope with the intense periods of rainfall that can result in economically and socially costly flood events. Parks and greenspaces can absorb up to 25% of precipitation directly into the soil and ground water, alleviating pressure on built drainage systems. Parks and green spaces can also make a positive contribution to this problem by absorbing and retaining large volumes of precipitation and releasing this more slowly into drainage systems and networks.

Flood risk is significant in areas of the borough close to the Thames which fall within Flood Zone 3, along with areas around Beam Park and Mayesbrook Park. New developments in these zones must incorporate SUDS i.e. attenuation ponds, swales and reed beds. These will provide natural ways to reduce flood risk, provide temporary storage and improve water quality, while creating wetland habitats for wildlife in an attractive aquatic setting with additional potential for accessible leisure facilities.

Urban warming is a direct consequence of both climate change and localised greenhouse effects. These temperature rises can have a direct effect on public health. Open spaces (and particularly trees) have a significant moderating...
effect on temperatures. Research suggests that a 10% increase in tree volume can reduce ambient temperature rises by 30-50% on hot summer days. Where greenspace occupies more than 50% of land surface area, temperatures are approximately 7 degrees centigrade lower than elsewhere in a neighbourhood. This cooling effect can be experienced up to 100m from the park edge. The urban heat map clearly reveals that those areas lacking in green open spaces, such as the residential areas between Parsloes Park and Eastbookend Country Park, experience significantly higher temperatures. Future improvements to streetscapes in these areas should include planting of new and appropriate tree species to help absorb and reduce air temperatures.

Levels of NO2 in the borough are relatively low when compared to central London but similar in levels to other outer borough’s. The pollutant is concentrated in Barking Town Centre and its surrounds, and along the A13 and A12 corridors. Levels dissipate slightly as you move east across the borough.

Green infrastructure is a system that can impact at many different levels to affect environmental management. Figure 2.5 illustrates how these might impact at local level in Barking and Dagenham.

### 2.8 CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Community Safety Plan outlines the aims of the Community Safety Partnership at a strategic level. It identifies how the priorities set by the Strategic Assessment will be worked towards.

The Community Safety Plan has three priorities:

1. **Integrated Offender Management** – to work across agencies to ensure offenders are being managed. This will reduce the likelihood of re-offending, and will move offenders’ lives away from crime and disorder. Offenders employment prospects will be supported by their participation in community reparation projects. These projects will give offenders the chance to contribute to their local neighbourhood and encouraging them to build a new life where they are less likely to re-offend.

2. **Integrated Victim Management** – to work between organisations to ensure that the victims of crime are supported, and to reduce the number of people who become victims of crime. This will also help victims to feel more confident in reporting crimes.

3. **Building Confidence** – it is important for the Community Safety Partnership to work to make residents feel confident that their issues will be dealt with. This will reduce the fear of crime in the borough. Increased confidence in the Community Safety Partnership will also make people feel more confident to tell the right people when they become a victim of crime, witness a crime or are aware of crime and disorder.

Between 2012/2013 and 2014/2015, crime rates in the borough have declined from a rate of 90.5 offences per 1,000 people in 2012/2013 to a rate of 81.8 in 2014/2015. Despite this, the fear of crime in the borough is high: the JSNA report includes estimates from the last quarter of 2014/2015 by the Metropolitan Police Service highlighting that although there has been an improvement in the proportion of people thinking that the police were doing a good job in the borough (55% in 2013/2014 and 57% in 2014/2015),
proportion of people worrying about crime (36%) is well above the London average (25%).

Violent crime is a significant issue in Barking and Dagenham: according to the JSNA in 2014/2015, violent crime accounted for 37% of all notifiable offences within the borough, which is higher than the rate for the Metropolitan Police Service areas of 33%. In 2014/2015, Barking and Dagenham also had the highest rate across London for domestic abuse offences.25

Crime in Barking and Dagenham parks is relatively low, Barking Park, Mayesbrook Park, St Chad’s Park recorded the highest crime figures of all parks with a total number of offences of 70, 80 and 53 respectively.

2.9 HOUSING SUPPLY AND GROWTH

Owner occupation grew in Barking and Dagenham in the 1980s and 1990s at the expense of the social rented sector—and fell back in the 2000s as the private rented sector advanced. In 1981, social housing was the predominant tenure (65%) in the borough and less than a third (31%) of people were owner occupiers. One in forty households (3%) lived in the private rented sector in the borough—very low by today’s standards, but also relative to other areas at that time. However, by 1991, over half (52%) of households were owner occupiers, as right-to-buy led to council tenants buying their homes, thus moving out of social rents and into owner occupation. By 2011, the private rental sector had grown to almost one in five households (18% of all households), while owner occupation had fallen to 46%. Of the three neighbouring boroughs, Havering has the most owner occupation, and Newham has the most households in the private rental sector (Fig 2.6).

There is expected to be significant growth in housing in the borough, with 35,000 new homes planned by 2030. In 2014 there were 72,670 homes in the Borough (2.1% of London’s total housing stock), of which 1,382 were vacant. The Borough is notable for having a much higher proportion of local authority owned housing than London as a whole, with 25.4% of Barking and Dagenham’s housing being local authority owned compared to 11.9% across London as a whole.

This partially reflects a lower proportion of housing controlled by private registered providers, which account for just 5.7% of providers in the borough, compared with 11.4% across London as a whole. However, this also reflects a lower proportion of private (rental and owner occupied) housing in the Borough. 68.9% of housing in the Borough is in the private sector, compared to 76.4% across London.

Barking and Dagenham’s new housing target set out by the London Plan is for 1,236 homes a year to be built between 2015 and 2025. Barking Town Centre was designated a Housing Zone in February 2015, bringing with it £42.3 million of investment. Some 2,295 homes and 4,000 new jobs will be created, alongside the regeneration of the town centre and the provision of new public spaces, cultural and community spaces.

The Local Plan has estimated that the borough would have the potential to build 35,000 new homes by 2030 if some of its protected industrial land is realised for housing. The top six areas of vacant industrial land would provide the following capacity:

1. Barking Riverside - 10,124
2. Castle Green – 12,900
3. Creekmouth - 3,441
4. Chadwell Heath – 3,753
5. Thames Road - 2,000 3,000
6. Ford Stamping Plant – 2,900

NOTES

14 https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan/london-plan-chapter-seven-londons-living-spac-20
17 LBBD Character Study Final Draft_Pages 1 – 40
18 LBBD Character Study Final Draft_Pages 85 – 126
19 DEFRA (2010)
20 BABE et al (2010)
21 LBBD Character Study Final Draft_Pages 85 - 126
23 CABE Space. (2010). Urban Green Nation
25 National Recreation
26 LBBD Character Study Final Draft_Pages 127 - 166
The report of the Urban Taskforce (Towards and Urban Renaissance – 1999) on the future of the UK’s cities and the subsequent report of the Greenspaces Task Force (Green Spaces, Better Places, 2002) helped to shape current urban policy and led to the creation of CABE Space in 2003. Parks and green spaces and the wider public realm are now at the centre of discussions around urban placemaking, development and regeneration. Considerable capital investment by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other public sector funders has demonstrated their importance.

The quality of the environment is considered a key element in determining the competitiveness of one city against another, with world cities such as London competing for resources of skilled and talented workers, capital investment and in the economy of international tourism. London regularly asserts its credentials as a ‘green city’ and parks figure significantly in this assertion.

Different boroughs within London promote the qualities of their environment and the extent of their green spaces as contributing factors to their economic success and their attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. The park is no longer seen as an isolated green space but part of an integrated and mixed-use economic, social, and environmental structure that binds a city together, making individual places distinctive and contributing to the success of cities, suburbs, urban environments and the quality of life for communities.

Research in the UK and elsewhere has demonstrated conclusively that a number of economic, social and environmental benefits accrue from good quality urban parks. This section of the strategy considers an approach to value, based on the value of outcomes delivered by good quality parks and open spaces.

### 3.1 The Economic Value of Greenspace

**Parks and Open Spaces**

Parks and green spaces are often highly valued by local communities in terms of their formal asset value, however as a result of planning designations ruling out the possibility of the use of park land for development, public parks have been largely assumed to have little value. This results in the provision of parks services as being characterised as a negative budget activity with no identifiable cost benefits, ignoring the value that parks contribute to urban economies, the city communities and to city environments.

**Property Values**

Research has shown that proximity to a good quality public park will add up to 20% to the value of property, depending on proximity and accessibility [3]. This uplift will apply to properties located 100-1000 metres from a park and uplift is maximised where the parks are perceived to be of high quality.

Commercial property values are similarly positively impacted upon by good quality parks and greenspace. Rental values are sustained at higher values where good quality greenspace is either immediately available or integral to the working environment [4]. Good quality environments support companies in the competitive recruitment and retention of skilled and productive workers. The contribution that parks make to local and city wide economies in turn supports the tax yield accruing to authorities with this yield supporting the delivery of local services.

**The Tourist Economy**

The tourist economy is a vital part of London’s economy, contributing £15.9 billion annually [5]. Signature public open spaces are key elements in the tourist economy of most world cities. New York’s Highline is now one of the top five tourist attractions in the city, with over 5 million visitors since it opened in 2009, with the number of construction projects in the area doubling with some thirty large projects progressing with a value of over $2 billion [6].

While London’s Royal Parks are the centrepiece of the capital’s greenspace offer, both inner and outer London boroughs are developing distinctive parks. Thames Barrier Park and Queen Elizabeth II Olympic Park are seen as significant contributors to the visitor and tourist economy.

**Property Values**

These signature parks and the neighbourhoods around them are economic entities in their own right, supporting a range of commercial activities including park cafes, events, galleries and active lifestyle businesses. Parks and the businesses around them contribute directly to the number of local jobs and employment levels. Over 10,000 people are directly employed in parks across the UK and tens of thousands more in ancillary businesses attached to or in the vicinity of parks [7]. This direct employment is complemented by the activity of a large number of volunteers in parks, who contribute an estimated £1735 million of value to open space across the UK every year [8].

### 3.2 The Social Value of Greenspace

**Health**

The positive impacts of access to good quality parks and open spaces on physical and mental health and wellbeing are well documented and provide a robust evidence base to support investment as a means of attracting people to use greenspace on a regular basis. Obesity and related diseases cost the NHS an estimated £4.2 billion a year [9]. Where people have good perceived or actual access to green space, they are 24% more likely to be physically active [10]. A brisk daily walk in the park can reduce the risk of heart attack by 50%, of stroke by 50%, of diabetes by 50% and of Alzheimer’s by 25% [11].

Anti-depressant drugs cost the NHS £750 million a year. But access to a green environment improves both mood and self-esteem. People suffering from depression and mental dysfunction experience the greatest improvement in self-esteem [12]. Over 90% of green exercise participants report that this activity enhanced their mental health [13].

**Education**

Parks and open spaces have long been used by schools to extend their play and educational offer. Parks offer opportunities for children to explore their perceptions of risk in a dynamic, free outdoor classroom. Parks also offer the opportunity to understand the natural world and the inter-dependence of the built and non-built environment. More recent research has highlighted the positive influence that access to nature can have on cognitive ability, educational performance and attainment, and on behaviour. 90% of head teachers state that learning outside the classroom is part of the ethos of their school [14]. Children’s self-discipline can be improved by 20% by having views of
trees and vegetation outside their home. For children with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), 85% of greenspace activities were found to improve children’s behaviour. Children who are bullied or who suffer from dysfunctional family arrangements benefit from interaction with the natural world both in terms of their stress level and in terms of global self-worth.

Place and Neighbourhood

Numerous studies have identified the capacity of parks to reinforce a sense of place and residents’ affinity with a neighbourhood. People will identify strongly with their local park as part of the fabric of their neighbourhood. Where a park is of high quality, this will foster a sense of pride in the places where people live and work. These feelings are particularly strongly expressed when parks have direct heritage value or contain cultural assets or activities of significance, providing opportunities for learning and cultural enrichment. Conversely, a poor quality or neglected park can have a negative impact on perceptions of neighbourhood quality. Parks are by their very nature diverse, encouraging people of all ages, cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds to meet and interact. This is particularly the case where communities participate in the planning and management of public spaces or where they contribute to cultural and sporting activities.

This complex interaction of economic, environmental and social influences represents the significant contribution good quality parks and open spaces can make to the development of sustainable communities and to community cohesion. In turn a large number of social and economic benefits can flow from these.

Food Growing

There has been a considerable growth in urban food growing over the past decade. The Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Food Security identifies three urban agricultural systems, defined by the level of economic activity that is carried out:

- Non-commercial urban agriculture – allotments, micro farming and institutional gardens.
- Market-orientated urban agriculture – small scale commercial arable, horticultural and livestock farming in an urban context.
- Specialised urban agriculture multi-functional urban agriculture – food growing plus education, tourism, agri-tourism. Urban parks can support a variety of urban agricultural activities.

3.3 THE ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE OF GREENSPACE

Parks and greenspaces have the capacity to improve the quality of the urban environment and can help to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Trees and plants naturally absorb CO2 from the atmosphere, thus sequestering carbon and moderating the onset of global warming. The capacity of trees to offset carbon emissions is determined by their size, canopy cover, health and age, but large trees can help to lower carbon emissions in the atmosphere by 2-3%.

Conceivable research has been undertaken into the impacts on human health of air-born pollutants. Gases such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide are all associated with vehicle emissions and are injurious to health. Trees absorb these gases through their leaves and respiratory systems and it has been estimated that woodland can reduce the concentration of nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide by 4-5% (ref: Broadmeadow and Freer Smith 1996: Urban woodland and benefits for local air quality).

Urban warming is partially a by-product of raised gaseous pollution. Greenspace has been demonstrated to have a cooling effect on urban temperatures. Daytime temperatures in parks have been found to be 2-3 degrees lower than those of surrounding streets (ref: DTLG 2000: Green Spaces, Better Places) and this effect can be experienced up to 100m from the park edge (ref: Shashua-Bar and Hoffman 2000: Vegetation as climatic component in the design of an urban street). Global warming is having an effect on climate conditions and occurrences of extreme weather events are modelled as a significant outcome. Episodes of extreme precipitation bring an increased risk of flooding and the capacity of engineered drainage systems to cope with surcharging are limited. Soil systems and vegetation are both highly permeable and capable of absorbing significant quantities of precipitation. The run off rate for surfaces consisting of trees and grass is estimated to be 10-20%. This compares with a rate of 60-70% for hard landscape urban areas (ref: DETR 2002: Green Spaces, Better Places). Trees also improve water quality, providing natural filtration and preventing soil erosion.

River valleys and parks through which they run can directly address the risk of flooding by providing attenuation and water storage capacity. By preserved flood plains as natural systems and by ‘naturalising’ water courses, pressure on engineered urban drainage systems, is reduced.

Biodiversity

Urban parks are often more diverse than surrounding areas of countryside and have the potential to support significant numbers of species. Further opportunities to develop the habitat and bio-diversity potential of parks can be supported within green blue corridors along which animal and plant communities can migrate and where genetic exchange can take place. Further opportunities exist along the urban rural fringe, which are often the most diverse habitats in terms of species.

Re-defining the City / Countryside Relationship

As an outer London borough, Barking and Dagenham has the opportunity to re-define the artificial separation of city and countryside. The borough’s geography and ecology (including areas of Green Belt and patterns of river valleys) provide an important, distinctive and environmentally rich edge to Greater London. The recreational use of parks and greenspaces can be further encouraged by providing better connections between urban parks and open spaces and more natural landscapes on the edge of the city.

Notes

18 Neill Dunsie. (2007). Urban parks, open space and residential property values, RICS
19 Gensler Institute and Urban Land Institute (2011)
22 Greenspace (2011) Understanding the Contribution Parks and Green Spaces can make to Improving People’s Lives.
24 CABE 2009 – Future Health: sustainable places for health and well-being
26 Bird 2002: Green Space and our Health
27 Petty, Hine and Peacock 2006: Green Exercise: the benefits of activities in green spaces
28 Mind 2007: Ecotherapy
29 Department for Children, Schools and Families own research
30 Taylor, Kuo and Sullivan 2002: Views of nature and self-discipline
31 Taylor, Kuo and Sullivan 2002: Views of nature and self-discipline
32 Bird 2007: Natural Thinking – investigating the link between the natural environment, biodiversity and mental health
34 RUAF (2011): Cities and Agriculture – developing resilient urban food systems
4.1 GREENSPACE PROVISION

This Parks and Open Spaces Strategy will consider the level of current provision of parks and open spaces in Barking and Dagenham against current and likely future demand.

Barking and Dagenham has a portfolio of 28 parks and open spaces providing 464 hectares of public open space and these are distributed fairly evenly across the borough, but with a concentration of provision in a central belt running from Barking town centre in the West to Central Park and Eastbrookend Country Park in the East. In the context of the GLA’s 2011 Public Open Space categorisation, the borough portfolio consists of eight ‘District Parks’, 11 ‘Local Parks’ and nine ‘Small Open Spaces.’

Through its planned regeneration programmes, a further 85.46 hectares of public space will be added over the next twenty years at Barking Riverside, Creekmouth, Thames Road, Castle Green and Chadwell Heath, giving a total provision of 549 hectares.

Given the borough’s population of 206,056, greenspace provision of 549 hectares equates to 2.66 hectares per 1,000 head of population. By 2027, the borough’s population will have grown to 229,047, resulting in a rate of greenspace provision of 2.40 hectares per 1,000 head of population.

Open space provision across all types of green space, (parks, playgrounds, sports sites, natural and semi-natural greenspaces) is 888.76 Hectares (approximately 25% of the area of the borough). This equates to 4.3 hectares per 1,000 head of population. The addition of a further 85.46 hectares of greenspace will increase overall provision to 974 hectares, equivalent to 4.73 hectares per 1,000 head of population. By 2027, the increase in the borough’s population will have reduced the overall level of provision to 4.25 hectares per 1,000 head of population.

The provision of parks and open spaces is evenly distributed across the borough with a significant concentration of district and local parks across the central belt of the borough. The council is planning further public open space initiatives within the Creekmouth, Castle Green, Thames Road and Chadwell regeneration areas but as these projects are at an early stage of development, their impact on overall provision and accessibility cannot currently be quantified in detail.

There is currently a deficiency of district and local parks in both the northern and southern areas of the borough but in the latter area, this is likely to be addressed by new park provision at Barking Riverside. This will leave a deficiency in local and district park provision in the north of the borough which will in part be addressed by the new park provision at Chadwell Heath.

The borough does not currently have any metropolitan parks (parks over 50 hectares), although Parloes Park at 49.5 hectares is very close to this standard. Metropolitan parks in neighbouring boroughs (Wanstead Flats, Fairlop Waters and Britton Playing Fields) all have catchments covering areas of Barking and Dagenham.

4.2 BARKING AND DAGENHAM INDICATORS

4.2.1 Standards of Provision for Parks and Open Spaces

An analysis of the quantity of parks and open spaces per head of population will ensure that the borough continues to strategically plan and provide an adequate amount of open space in the future. National Planning Guidance (2012) encourages local authorities to undertake assessments of the needs of open space and the London Plan (2013) seeks to ensure satisfactory levels of local provision that address areas of deficiency.

Whilst neither recommends specific standards that should be adopted, Fields in Trust, Sport England and Natural England provide guidance on recommended benchmarks of provision. This traditionally is calculated as hectares (Ha) per 1,000 head of population (HOP). For this strategy it is assessed at the current time in 2017 and over the duration of the strategy for the next ten years to 2026. This analysis can then be used to inform open space standards for planning which may be included in the next version of the Local Plan documents.

Barking and Dagenham’s current Local Plan\(^{14}\) is supported by a Site Specific Allocations DPD\(^{15}\) that was adopted in 2010. This records a total of 465 Ha of open space, representing ‘2.80 Ha of public open space per 1,000 population’. Current planning policy seeks to maintain this standard although this will become harder as the borough’s population continues to grow and the ability to create new open spaces is limited. A Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment \(^{14}\) for the borough, published in 2006, acknowledged there will be increasing demands placed on existing open spaces in the future and current standards and benchmarks for provision will be harder to maintain.

Current standards of provision

An assessment of the current provision for parks and open spaces across the borough takes into account the 28 sites (listed in table 4.1) totalling 463 Ha of open space. It should be noted that this does not include cemeteries, allotments or other accessible amenity green spaces in public or private ownership that have not been included within this study. Population estimates for the borough\(^{14}\) in 2017 is calculated to be 206,056 which represents 2.64 Ha / 1,000 HOP.

Future standards of provision

Changes in the quantity of provision over the lifetime of this strategy are based on projections for the borough’s future growth in population to 229,047 by 2026. This analysis also takes account of the anticipated increase in the quantity of open space that totals an additional 85.46 Ha listed in the following table. This represents a small increase in the standard of provision over the ten years to 2.40 Ha / 1,000 HOP (Table 4.2).
Table 4.1 - The distribution of parks and open spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Area (refer to 9.1)</th>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Designations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 Abbey Green-Abbey Ruins</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>NC, REGEN. AREA, CONS. AREA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 Barking Park</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>29.80</td>
<td>SINC, MOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 Beam Parklands</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>38.75</td>
<td>SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 Beam Valley Country Park</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>26.99</td>
<td>SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 Castle Green Park</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>10.41</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 Central Park</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>50.17</td>
<td>GREEN BELT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 Chase Nature Reserve</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>42.22</td>
<td>SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 Eastbrookend Country Park</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>55.45</td>
<td>SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 Essex Road Gardens</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Goresbrook Park</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>14.71</td>
<td>SINC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Greatfields Park</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Heath Park Open Space</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Mayesbrook Park</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>48.95</td>
<td>SINC, MOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Newlands Park</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Old Dagenham Park</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>13.38</td>
<td>GREEN BELT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Paddall Open Space</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Parloes Park</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>59.57</td>
<td>MOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Pondfield Park</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>SINC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Ripple Nature Reserve</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>SINC, REGEN. AREA, LNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Scrattons Farm Ecopark</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>SINC, LNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 St Chads Park</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>14.44</td>
<td>SINC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 St Peter &amp; St Paul’s Churchyard</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>SINC, LNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Tantony Green</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 The Leys</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>7.54</td>
<td>GREEN BELT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Valence Park</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>12.20</td>
<td>SINC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Quaker Burial Ground</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Kingston Hill Rec. Ground</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>GREEN BELT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 King George’s Fields</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Small OS</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>Undesignated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                          | 463.19                              |          |           |                       |

Table 4.2 - Changes in the quantity of provision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Development (Area (Ha))</th>
<th>20% Open Space Area (Ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Chadwell Heath Development</td>
<td>32.30</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Chadwell Heath Anti-Aircraft Site (estimate)</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Creekmouth Development</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Thames Road Development</td>
<td>22.60</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Castle Green Development</td>
<td>67.50</td>
<td>13.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06A</td>
<td>Barking Riverside – Pylon Park</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06B</td>
<td>Barking Riverside – Goresbrook</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06C</td>
<td>Barking Riverside – Foreshore Park</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06D</td>
<td>Barking Riverside – District Centre</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06E</td>
<td>Barking Riverside – Wharf Park</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06F</td>
<td>Barking Riverside – Sports Park</td>
<td>6.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85.46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provision across localities and sub areas

Inevitably the quantity of parks and open spaces varies considerably across the borough. Some wards, such as Becontree and Whalebone, have no parks within their boundaries whilst others, such as Eastbrook and Village, benefit from considerable areas of open space. A more detailed analysis of provision has been undertaken for three localities (North / East /West) established by the Healthy Lifestyle Hubs Project to support the health and wellbeing objectives for this strategy. This indicates that current and future standards of provision to the north of the borough are comparable to borough-wide figures. Standards for the east are significantly higher whilst standards for the west are significantly lower than the borough average. These are summarised in the following table 4.3.

This highlights that the greatest need for additional open space is in the west of the borough, whilst the east already has a relatively high standard of provision. Accelerating access to and the provision of new open space in Barking Riverside and adjacent development sites would have clear benefit alongside improving links to other existing open spaces. Increasing the provision of open space along the River Roding corridor, a strategic project for the All London Green Grid, could also be considered.

Comparison with other benchmarks

The most widely adopted benchmark used in planning has been the NPFA (National Playing Fields Association) Six Acre Standard, which equates to 2.4 Ha per 1,000 HOP. This recommended 1.6 Ha for all outdoor sport and 0.8 Ha for children’s play. Recent revision by Fields in Trust (formally the NPFFA) provides a more detailed set of recommendations and more extensive quantity benchmark of over 5.0 Ha for a variety of open spaces including outdoor sports; designated play areas; parks and gardens; amenity green space; and, natural / semi-natural space. However, the long established 2.4

Table 4.3 - Provision across localities and sub areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Area</th>
<th>Population Projection 2017</th>
<th>Current Area of Open Space</th>
<th>Current Standard Ha / 1,000</th>
<th>Population Projection 2026</th>
<th>Future Area of Open Space</th>
<th>Future Standard Ha / 1,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borough Wide</td>
<td>209,149</td>
<td>463.2 Ha</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>236,329</td>
<td>548.7 Ha</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locality 1 / North</td>
<td>76,250</td>
<td>190.2 Ha</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>85,568</td>
<td>198.0 Ha</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locality 1 / East</td>
<td>55,800</td>
<td>206.5 Ha</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>66,226</td>
<td>206.5 Ha</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locality 1 / West</td>
<td>73,350</td>
<td>66.5 Ha</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>86,553</td>
<td>144.1 Ha</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4 - Provision across localities and sub areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Projection 2017</th>
<th>Borough Wide</th>
<th>Locality 1 / North</th>
<th>Locality 2 / East</th>
<th>Locality 3 / West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Ha of Open Space</td>
<td>209,149</td>
<td>76,250</td>
<td>55,800</td>
<td>73,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area required for 2.80 Ha / 1,000 HOP</td>
<td>463.2</td>
<td>190.2</td>
<td>206.5</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Ha required to meet 2.80 Ha standard</td>
<td>585.6</td>
<td>213.5</td>
<td>156.2</td>
<td>205.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area required for 2.40 Ha / 1,000 HOP</td>
<td>122.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>-50.3</td>
<td>138.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Ha required to meet 2.40 Ha standard</td>
<td>502.0</td>
<td>183.0</td>
<td>133.9</td>
<td>176.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Ha required to meet 2.40 Ha standard</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
<td>-72.6</td>
<td>109.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Projection 2026</th>
<th>Future Ha of Open Space</th>
<th>236,329</th>
<th>85,568</th>
<th>66,226</th>
<th>86,553</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Ha of Open Space</td>
<td>548.7</td>
<td>198.0</td>
<td>206.5</td>
<td>144.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area required for 2.80 Ha / 1,000 HOP</td>
<td>661.7</td>
<td>239.6</td>
<td>185.4</td>
<td>242.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Ha required to meet 2.80 Ha standard</td>
<td>113.1</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>-21.1</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area required for 2.40 Ha / 1,000 HOP</td>
<td>567.2</td>
<td>205.4</td>
<td>188.9</td>
<td>207.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Ha required to meet 2.40 Ha standard</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>-47.5</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ha standard for 1,000 HOP provides a useful benchmark to access current and future provision in Barking and Dagenham and this is set out in table 4.4.

This indicates that the current planning policy target of 2.8 Ha of Open Space per 1,000 HOP is difficult to achieve now and over the next ten years. Across the borough this would currently require an additional 122 Ha of open space, the equivalent of two Parsloes Parks. In ten years’ time, factoring in the increase in population and new spaces created through development, 113 Ha of additional open space will be required.

Taking the lower target of 2.4 Ha of Open Space per 1,000 HOP the borough would currently need to provide 39 Ha of additional open space, the equivalent of Beam Parklands. In ten years, again factoring in the rise in population and new open spaces created through development, the borough would need to provide an additional 18.5 Ha, the equivalent of half the area of Beam Parklands.

When compared with adjacent local authorities, the London Borough of Havering currently provides 3.32 Ha / 1,000 HOP noted in its Core Strategy, which is 50% higher than the provision for Barking and Dagenham. However, the London Borough of Newham provides on average 1.99 Ha / 1,000 HOP which its Core Strategy acknowledges falls short of the 2.4 Ha Fit standard.

4.2.2 Deprivation

The most deprived neighbourhoods have difficulty in accessing life chances relative to less deprived areas. The research detailed above suggests that parks and open spaces can offer opportunities to improve physical and mental health and to enhance educational outcomes and offer more extensive facilities for active and passive recreation and social interaction.

Given this, a particular focus should fall on those areas of the borough that fall within the 30% most deprived nationally. In the ID2007, the borough had 13 LSOAs ranked within the 10% most deprived in England. This has now reduced to 11. In Gascoigne Ward the number of highly deprived LSOAs has decreased from 4 to 2. The LSOA that covers the town centre in Abbey ward is no longer in the most deprived 10% of LSOAs. However, the LSOA which covers the western edge of Harts Lane Estate has fallen into the 10% most deprived.

Figure 4.1 and 4.2 show the level of deprivation per LSOA in the borough, with the worst deprived areas shown in red. These LSOAs are ranked within the highest 10th deprived LSOAs in the country. These are found in Chadwell Heath, Heath, Village, Thames, Gascoigne and Abbey. The entire borough lies within the worst 50% of all LSOAs of the country.

Fig.4.1 - Lower Super Output Areas ranking in 10% most deprived in England figure (Source: Research and Intelligence Team, LBBD, 2011)

Fig.4.2 - Indices of Deprivation, Barking and Dagenham (Source: Research and Intelligence Team, LBBD, 2011)

Population Projection 2017

Current Ha of Open Space

Area required for 2.80 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.80 Ha standard

Area required for 2.40 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.40 Ha standard

Population Projection 2026

Future Ha of Open Space

Area required for 2.80 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.80 Ha standard

Area required for 2.40 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.40 Ha standard

Current Ha of Open Space

Area required for 2.80 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.80 Ha standard

Area required for 2.40 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.40 Ha standard

Future Ha of Open Space

Area required for 2.80 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.80 Ha standard

Area required for 2.40 Ha / 1,000 HOP

Additional Ha required to meet 2.40 Ha standard

Table 4.4 - Provision across localities and sub areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borough Wide</th>
<th>Locality 1 / North</th>
<th>Locality 2 / East</th>
<th>Locality 3 / West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>209,149</td>
<td>76,250</td>
<td>55,800</td>
<td>73,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>463.2</td>
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<td>138.9</td>
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<td>502.0</td>
<td>183.0</td>
<td>133.9</td>
<td>176.0</td>
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<td>39.8</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
<td>-72.6</td>
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<td>236,329</td>
<td>85,568</td>
<td>66,226</td>
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<td>661.7</td>
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<td>207.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>-47.5</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend

10% most deprived in England
4.2.3 Flood Risk

As discussed, parks and green spaces have the capacity to absorb surface water and alleviate flood risk as part of sustainable urban drainage systems. Significant areas of the borough close to the Thames fall within Flood Zone 3, along with areas around Beam Park and Mayesbrook Park. Several parks and open spaces are located within these river valleys and can make a significant contribution to managing flood risk. This benefit will become increasingly important in the future as the impacts of climate change become more apparent.  

4.2.4 Air Quality

Poor air quality in Barking and Dagenham is concentrated on the borough’s main arterial roads, where there are high concentrations of Nitrous Dioxide (NO2) which are above the recommended limits for human health. Figure 4.5 illustrates that the poorer air quality is to be found in the south and west of the borough and that this improves as you move eastwards. This is likely to reflect in part the lower density of major roads and the high proportion of parks and green spaces in the central and eastern parts of the borough.
4.2.5 Urban Heating

Urban heating, particularly during summer months, can have a significant effect upon human health and especially young children and older people. This effect can be reduced by the cooling effect of parks and green spaces. Figure 4.6 illustrates that Barking and Dagenham town centres and areas immediately north of these record higher average temperatures in mid-summer. Significantly these are also areas that have a lower density of parks and green spaces.

It is now commonly accepted that volunteers can play an increasing role in the management of parks and open spaces and that direct benefits will accrue from this involvement. Volunteering empowers local people to take more control of their environment and gives them an opportunity to become more active in their communities.

Volunteers

The parks sector across the UK has a strong tradition of volunteering. There are approximately 4,000 community groups with an average membership of 134 involved with urban green space. Total membership thus approaches 500,000 across the UK. The annual economic value of the work of community groups in parks and green spaces across the UK ranges somewhere between £17 million and £35 million.

- Through the establishment of Friends Groups and through Place Checks, parks and green spaces provide opportunities for individual and group involvement. This can range from acquiring vocational skills and experiences through volunteer work to participation in the planning and development of parks and green space.
NOTES

51 Planning for the future of Barking and Dagenham, Core Strategy, Adopted July 2010, paragraph 2.9
52 Planning for the future of Barking and Dagenham, Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document Adopted December 2010, Para 3.8
55 Figures for Barking Riverside Open Space Provision taken from: Open Space and Recreation Strategy DRAFT Open Space and Recreation Study, S106 Barking Riverside- April 2017
57 Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD, adopted 2008, para 5.28, p39
59 Research and Intelligence Team, LBBD, 2011
60 LBBD Character Study Final Draft, Pages 167-240
63 residents-survey-full-report
64 Barking and Dagenham Parks And Green Spaces Strategy – 2003
5 QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

5.1 ASSESSING QUALITY

The assessment of quality informs several key conclusions developed in the strategy:

- An assessment of current quality will allow for a comparison of this with previous assessments, giving a picture of the ‘quality trend’.
- An assessment of quality will provide the basis for decisions on the enhancement of existing facilities through investment.

5.2 QUALITY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The assessment of quality is based on several factors, including fitness for purpose, good quality design and robust management and maintenance.

These factors are captured in the 2004 Green Flag standard, which is accepted as the benchmark for judging the quality of open space. In the context of the Green Flag Standard, the criteria by which the quality of an individual open space is assessed are grouped under eight main headings:

- Welcoming – how to create a sense that people are positively welcomed into a space.
- Healthy, Safe and Secure – how best to ensure that the site is a safe and healthy environment.
- Well Maintained and Clean – what people can expect to find in the way of standards of cleanliness, facilities and maintenance.
- Sustainability – how a green space can be managed in environmentally sensitive ways.
- Conservation and Heritage – the value of conservation and care of historic heritage.
- Community Involvement – ways of encouraging community involvement.
- Marketing – methods of promoting or marketing a site.
- Management – how to reflect all the above in a coherent and accessible management plan, statement or strategy.

The assessment of quality for the Open Spaces Strategy should strongly reference Green Flag criteria in order to benchmark quality against accepted national standards. But the Green Flag approach to quality assessment is targeted at the assessment of individual sites and not at the assessment of a portfolio of sites for an entire local authority area.

Bristol’s Parks and Green Spaces Strategy is acknowledged as best practice within the 2009 CABE and Mayor of London best practice guidance for Open Space Strategies. This guidance acknowledges that quality standards should relate to information collected through on-site audit survey, benchmarked to an appropriate standard such as Green Flag (Fig.5.1).

An evaluation of Barking and Dagenham’s twenty-five public parks was carried out during January and February 2002 and formed part of the borough’s 2003 Parks and Green Spaces Strategy. Each park was evaluated using a standard evaluation form comprising of fifty four questions divided into the following eleven subject areas:

- Entrances
- General Facilities
- Landscape Character and Quality
- Security and Vandalism
- Children and ‘The Young’
- Disabled People
- Elderly People
- Repairs Maintenance and Cleanliness
- Ecology, Education and Health
- Management

To provide the borough with an assessment of the quality trend between 2003 and 2016, the same approach was adopted to the assessment of park quality. The question set was assessed and adapted to reflect any changes in best practice since 2003. Each park was awarded a score based on the remaining 48 questions, in response to agreed criteria and supported by notes in bullet point format. The scores awarded indicate the degree to which the park met these criteria, as follows:

- 0 points Absent
- 1 point Bad
- 2 points Poor
- 3 points Average
- 4 points Good
- 5 points Very Good.

The following site typologies were not assessed as part of this study:

- Privately owned open spaces, outdoor sports and recreational facilities
- Allotments
- Incidental areas of greenspace (verges, SLOAP)
- Agricultural land
- Private sites with public access
- Civic greyspaces
- Cemeteries
- Regeneration greenspaces
- Green/blue corridors
- Housing land
- Green belt
Fig. 5.1 - Ways to measure the value of parks and green spaces (Source: CABE (2009): Making the Invisible visible – the real value of park assets)
5.3 RECENT CHANGES AND TRENDS IN QUALITY

As defined in the 2003 assessment, the scores for each component of the assessment were translated into scores of ‘very good’, ‘good’, ‘average’, ‘poor’ and ‘bad’. Sites which achieved over 80% of the maximum points available were awarded ‘very good’, sites in the 60%-80% bracket awarded ‘good’, 40%-60% were awarded ‘average’, 20%-40% were awarded ‘poor’ and those sites scoring below 20% of the maximum points available scored ‘bad’.

As in 2003, the quality of parks across the borough varies considerably. Similarly to 2003 no parks have achieved a ‘very good’ ranking. In contrast with the 2003 assessment, the number of parks achieving scores of ‘good’ and ‘average’ has declined. More parks across the borough are now classified as ‘poor’. The number of parks classified as ‘bad’ hasn’t changed.

Across the entire portfolio, parks tend to score worst in terms of management and health and catering for people with disabilities and best in entrance information and landscape character. Since 2003 there has been a considerable decline in terms of how well parks are managed and how secure they are. In common with the 2003 study, the quality of Barking and Dagenham’s parks and open spaces varies considerably across the borough. The majority of parks are either of ‘average’ or ‘poor’ quality.

Only two parks are currently scored as ‘good’, in comparison to four parks in 2003. Between 2003 and 2017, the number of parks scored as ‘good’ fell from nine to seven. The number of parks scored as ‘poor’ increased from eight to seventeen. The overall average quality score has fallen from 42% to 36% since 2003.

There is an even more considerable decline in quality within natural green spaces since 2003. Overall quality score for the Chase Nature Reserve has fallen by almost 50% and in the case of Eastbrookend Country Park by 38%.

QUALITY SCORES/TREND - KEY FINDINGS

- The overall average quality score of parks has fallen from 42% to 36% since 2003.
- Similarly to 2003 no parks have achieved ‘very good’ ranking.
- The number of parks achieving scores of ‘good’ and ‘average’ has declined from thirteen to nine since 2003.
- The number of parks classified as ‘poor quality’ increased from eight to seventeen.

Worst average scores in:

- Management (23%)
- Providing for disabled people (28%)

Best average scores:

- Entrance information (56%)
- Landscape character (50%)

Biggest decline since 2003:

- Management (42% to 23%)
- Security and vandalism (53% to 36%)

Biggest improvement since 2003:

- Ecology, education and health (29% to 39%)

Fig. 5. - Trending in LBDD park’s quality score between 2003 and 2017

Some of the findings include:

- Only two parks (Mayesbrook Park and Barking Park) are currently scored as ‘good’, in comparison to four parks in 2003
- Better quality parks to the west of the borough, quality scores decline to the east
- Quality of natural green spaces decreased most considerably (Chase Nature Reserve’s quality score has fallen by 50%)
- Mayesbrook Park’s score has improved the most (from 36% to 70%), achieving best quality score in the borough
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Park Name</th>
<th>Ranking 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mayesbrook Park</td>
<td>Good</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Barking Park</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Old Dagenham Park</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Valence Park</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>St Chad's Park</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Parsloes Park</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Newlands Park</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Castle Green</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Central Park</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Eastbrookend Country Park</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pondfield Park</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Abbey Green-Abbey Ruins</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Beam Parklands</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Goresbrook Park</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>King George's Field</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Quaker Burial Ground</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Tantony Green</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The Leys</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Beam Valley Country Park</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>St Peter &amp; St Paul's Churchyard</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Greatfields Park</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Heath Park Open Space</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Screttons Farm Ecopark</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Ripple Nature Reserve</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Essex Road Gardens</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chace Nature Reserve</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chace Nature Reserve</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1 INTRODUCTION
As part of the larger Parks and Open Spaces Strategy an Events in Parks and Open Spaces strategy has been developed in order to set out a vision for a healthy, dynamic cultural offer which brings to life the unique qualities of the boroughs parks and encourages residents and visitors to enjoy the many benefits that an exciting events programme can offer whilst maximizing the opportunity for the local authority to generate income where possible through events.

6.2 CONTEXT
Barking and Dagenham currently has a series of popular events delivered largely by the events team at the local authority, funfairs and by Creative Barking and Dagenham. There are 25 events planned in parks and open spaces for 2017.

Most of the council programme is the legacy from the 50 year celebration programme of events in 2015, with the most successful having remained as part of the programme and are continually being developed. These include Barking Folk Festival, Civil War re-enactment, One Borough Festival, Eastendbrook Country Fair, Roundhouse Music Festival and the Steam and Cider festival.

The council team also oversee events or work with third party providers to organise events such as Armed Forces Day and Glow Festival.

Creative Barking and Dagenham (a Barking and Dagenham-based Arts Council funded organisation overseen by multiple local cultural partners) run three major events which are Dagfest, Thamesfest and Glow Festival.

Multiple funfairs run annually in Central, Parsloes, Old Dagenham, Barking and Mayesbrook Parks.

In addition the only other major event is a commercial event called ‘Now That’s a Festival’ which takes place in Central Park in the August Bank Holiday. The event works in partnership with the council allowing this event to take place on one or two days and the infrastructure to be left in place for the council to hold the Roundhouse Music Festival on the following day. In exchange the commercial promoters use the council licence and do not pay hire fees to use the park.

This strategy aims to develop on the success of the 50th anniversary programme by identifying four key delivery elements to ensure a successful, diverse and income generating annual events programme delivered by the local authority, the community and commercial third parties.

The four key elements of the strategy are:

- Identifying key parks suitable for events and celebrating the unique qualities of these open spaces.
- Encouraging the community to lead and own events in the borough.
- Strengthening processes and making the borough friendly and open to third party partnerships and commercial event organisers.
- Licensing of Parks and investment in infrastructure.

Barking and Dagenham have an income target of £32,500 in 2017/2018 and in future years from events and this strategy aims to implement effective methods to reach this target.

Barking and Dagenham suffers from challenging health and wellbeing statistics including the lowest level of life satisfaction of any London Borough and the second lowest happiness, anxiety and ‘worthwhile’ measure across London. The population has a much lower engagement with the arts than many London boroughs and suffers from the worst level of child obesity in London for reception and Year 6 children.

In developing an events strategy for parks and open spaces, we aim to engage the community as organisers, participants and audiences and utilise events to encourage more local visitors to parks and open spaces thus leading them to see the range of healthy activities available such as sporting facilities, growing projects and exciting play opportunities. In addition by providing a high quality programme of events to we aim to encourage engagement in the arts and increase valuable cultural offerings to improve wellbeing.

6.3 PROPOSALS AND REASONING
An effective events programme aims to help address challenging social and health statistics in the borough by creating positive experiences for the community as audiences, participants and organisers whilst generating income for the local economy and local authority budgets and raising the profile of Barking and Dagenham as a cultural destination.

The estimated attendance at events in Barking and Dagenham annually is 100,000 and although there is no firm data, the belief is that most of this number is made up of local residents. There is an opportunity through an effective strategy to increase the number of people attending events in the borough and in particular to encourage audiences from outside the borough whilst maintaining a dynamic events programme for local people.

Post 2012 Olympics has shown that there has been an increase in the demand for events and the UK events industry generates over 530,000 full time jobs and is worth over £36.1 billion rising to £42.2 billion by 2015 and £48.4 billion by 2020. There is an opportunity for Barking and Dagenham to embrace the events sector in its parks and open spaces to create jobs, opportunities and increase income, however as an outer London borough there needs to be a realistic expectation in respect of the number of commercial organisers the borough can attract. Income can however be generated from large scale community events as well as through commercial organisers.

Equally, Film and TV is an important industry for the UK, worth £4.2 billion to the annual GDP, and responsible for 120,000 full time jobs. This strategy aims to address how to make the borough more film friendly and utilise this opportunity to bring income into the borough.

The four core elements to the strategy will be explored further in the next sections.
6.4 KEY PARKS SITES

This events strategy is to be implemented within a selected number of parks in the borough. The following parks have been selected based on their suitability and provision to host events and current successful event programmes:

- Central Park
- Barking Park
- Parsloes Park
- Old Dagenham Park

Other parks have been identified as being currently underused spaces which could potentially hold bigger events. These are:

- Eastbrookend Country Park
- Mayesbrook Park

The following parks have been identified as being good potential spaces to hold smaller events:

- St Chad’s
- Abbey Green
- Valence Park

Once these key sites have been agreed, investment into infrastructure and licensing, creating shared risk assessment templates and ensuring vehicle access would encourage greater events use.

The borough will focus on events in these parks, but will have flexibility in the strategy to allow small scale local events linked to local green spaces to take place on a case by case basis.

Tying in with the larger Parks and Open Spaces strategy and recommendations for the future development of these spaces, the following key features have been drawn out for each park to help guide events which can showcase the unique qualities of each space.

6.4.1 Central Park

This park has a large, flat designated event space with good access making it appealing for a variety of events.

The proposed plans for Central Park include multiple improvements to sporting facilities and an extended area for Growing Communities. Events that focus around sports, wellbeing and food are recommended for this site, especially those that are led by or run in partnership with the groups and providers based on the site.

The proposed plans also include the development of an amphitheatre mounding surrounding a designated events space. This gives a very exciting opportunity to create events giving audiences excellent sight lines meaning large scale outdoor theatrical events, film screenings, concerts and sporting displays would work very well.

The improved links to Eastbrookend Country Park can potentially provide event organisers with a very large site.

6.4.2 Barking Park

This park has a large, flat designated events space with good access making it appealing for a variety of events.

The proposed plans include enhanced growing spaces, an ecological zone and edible and orchard planting making events that focus on growing, the environment, healthy lifestyles and food complimentary to the space.

This park has sporting facilities including a skate park, splash park and basketball court and the proposed plans include new cricket and football pitches and therefore sporting events would work well in this park. The facilities in this park do and will encourage a family audience which could be harnessed by event organisers.

The park has excellent access to the town centre therefore providing good transport links.

6.4.3 Parsloes Park

This park has a large, flat designated events space with good access making it appealing for a variety of events.

The One Borough Festival is the biggest event in the events calendar and attracts c10,000 people. This community focused festival occurs in July, and events include entertainment, dance, street theatre, workshops and family fun.

The Elvis Fest, on Sunday 23 July 2017, will be a “one-off” tribute concert to mark the 40th anniversary of the death of Elvis Presley. The line-up includes world class Elvis tribute acts as well as rock and roll bands and activities include food, drink, stalls, rides and attractions.

6.4.4 Old Dagenham Park

Old Dagenham Park is a good medium sized event space with a dedicated events area and good access making it appealing for a variety of events.

The Barking Steam and Cider Fair takes place in Old Dagenham Park and is another major part of the local authority summer funded programme which remains a legacy after the 50th anniversary celebrations. The event celebrates the borough’s rural and industrial heritage and prides itself on its traditional entertainment which includes steam machines, classic cars, real ale and cider, rides, animal displays and local and tribute bands.

6.4.5 Eastbrookend Country Park

This is a naturally beautiful park, and any events programme here should work closely with the inherent natural features of the park including its lakes, meadows, woodlands and wetlands. It is a good space for boutique, artistic and creative events covering a range of areas such as music, wellbeing, food, the arts etc. Camping could be developed in this park and its remote situation relative to population centres makes small scale weekend festival style events an option.

The proposed improved connections with Central Park could potentially provide event organisers with a very large site for major events.

6.4.6 Mayesbrook Park

Although this is a large park, much of the space is either mounded, formed into swales, formed of substantial water bodies or heavily planted with trees, making it less suitable for events. However, medium sized events that work alongside features of the park could be successful.

Events which focus around the lake featuring activities such as swimming, kayaking and sailing would work very well in this space. In addition, the natural features of the lake combined with the proposed edible planting spaces and new and extended natural features of the park including the natural play area create a positive atmosphere for events which celebrate the environment and the natural world.

The existing sporting facilities in addition to the proposed bouldering and multisport area mean that sporting events would complement the park well.

6.4.7 St Chad’s Park

This park is a good medium sized multi-function space. Its combination of sporting facilities, orchard, tea lawn and natural features make it a good space for a diverse range of small to medium events.

6.4.8 Abbey Green

This is a beautiful park with the added features of the Abbey Ruins and St Margaret’s Church forming part of the site, giving event organisers a unique backdrop. The site is filled with history dating back to 666AD as well as having some of the oldest trees in the borough and therefore events of any variety which explore this heritage and / or work with the natural beauty of this setting should be encouraged.

The site has excellent access to the town centre therefore providing good transport links.

Barking Folk Festival takes place in multiple locations around the town before the finale takes place in Abbey Green Ruins. It is a legacy event from the 50th anniversary celebrations and a local authority funded major summer event.

It is distinct from other events in the borough in that the programming is of original acts that do not fall into the ‘vintage / covers’ category. The types of acts programmed such as Newton Faulkner, Badly Drawn Boy, Seth Lakeman and Beans on Toast would be appreciated at many well respected festivals throughout the country, both folk and otherwise. In 2016 a respectable 8,000 attended despite bad weather.

6.4.9 Valence Park

The park is linked to Valence House, which is currently the home of the borough’s museum, heritage study centre and local library. Events which celebrate and explore the history of the borough and the site should be actively promoted on this site.
The park is a good space for small to medium sized events with a designated events space. The proposed restoration of the original bandstand would provide a great focus for events in this space.

The proposed new play facilities as well as extended café facilities make it an appealing space for small scale community family events.

### Overall Use of these parks

Each park listed above should be used as the priority spaces for events in the borough, however the events team have the flexibility to offer out other spaces on a case by case basis.

Each park should not contain more than 3 x major (5,000+ audience) events per year.

Each park should be listed in the Event Guidance pack with an accompanying map.

### 6.5 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Currently most of the programme of events in the borough is managed by the local authority with a small number of community events being supported in a variety of ways from hands on support to the overseeing of required paper work.

Allowing the community to imagine, create and deliver events can be an inspiring way to encourage stronger communities delivering the type of events they want to see, encourage civic participation, assist in wellbeing, help form robust networks and with effective systems create a diverse cultural offer without the borough having to do all the delivery themselves.

Creative Barking and Dagenham (CB&D) are building an extremely successful model through their Cultural Connectors programme which supports 150 local residents to be the decision makers and advocates for the organisation. Through their annual programme since 2013, 36,000 opportunities to participate or engage with the arts have been taken up, 850 creative events and workshops have been delivered, 80 community groups have engaged and 45 different projects have received £470,000 funding between them. As they move into phase two of their programme between 2017 – 2020 there is an opportunity to develop a stronger partnership between the borough and CB&D to encourage more of the community to deliver events and to allow the borough to focus on income generating events by allowing CB&D to take over more management of community event applications. There is an existing strong, clear and effective relationship between CB&D and the events team which is a strong foundation on which to build.

External funding could be sought or some income from commercial events could be ring-fenced to support bursaries for community activity which residents could bid for to deliver events. This will allow the council events team to focus their time on encouraging commercial event organisers to use the borough, manage those projects and continue to develop large-scale council-led community events including increasing income generated from these events whilst ensuring community organisers still have access to professional support.

Currently major events proceed through the SAG (Safety Advisory Group) board which grants permission to deliver events. Most participants in the SAG process find it very beneficial in respect of completing formalities and understanding responsibilities. Smaller events that do not have to undertake this process are less clear of their roles, responsibilities and legal obligations.

The implementation of a ‘Mini SAG’ process will ensure the local authority is confident that small event organisers and community groups are delivering safe, competent events whilst also providing some structure and deadline for these smaller groups to help ensure the smooth running of their event and to make sure they have thought about all elements. These sessions will be added to onto the end of the monthly SAG meetings on the 1st Wednesday of the month with the Events Team and Creative Barking and Dagenham also attending the necessary attendees. The SAG meetings are unlikely to involve emergency services, Transport for London or Security Services, but may on occasion if necessary include officers from departments such as licensing.

### 6.6 STRENGTHENING THE EVENTS PROCESSES

The current methodology of working with commercial third party users is on a case by case basis and this strategy aims to implement a coherent system and pathways for developing third party relationships and increasing commercial bookings.

The implementation of the Event Guidance Pack will be key to streamlining processes involved for community and commercial partnerships and allows all potential event organisers to be financially aware of the implications of delivering an event in the borough from the outset.

Key elements of the Event Guidance Pack will include:

* The introduction of an application window between November and February to prioritise event delivery in the busier summer months and the planning and organisation of a balanced programme in the winter months.
* The introduction of a set fee system based on size of event and the nature of the event organiser (commercial, charity etc).
* Clarification of all associated fees – application fees, booking fees, park hire fee, build and de-rig day fees, environmental impact fees and grounds refundable deposits.
* Clear procedures in terms of responsibilities, licensing, Health & Safety, environmental regulations, insurance and Safety Advisory Group procedures (including the introduction of a ‘Mini SAG’ for smaller events).
* A clear contacts list to ensure organisers can clarify any questions and reach the correct departments quickly and efficiently.
* All event applications must contain an agreement to undertake a post event evaluation.

It should be noted for all the points above that the events team should hold the flexibility and right to alter any application window, fees, timings etc. to produce the highest quality, income generating and balanced range of events across the year.

The Event Guidance Pack must be an attractive, visual document that encourages commercial users to the borough whilst ensuring all that organisers are aware of the significant responsibilities that come with organizing an event.

Once complete an ‘open for business’ marketing drive should be conducted to encourage commercial event organisers to consider Barking and Dagenham as a destination for their major events.

In any drive for commercial organisers the option of a reduction of fees, use of existing licensing and infrastructure (power, water etc...) and donation of council services such as staffing, waste removal and instant response teams should be considered and promoted in exchange for the commercial organiser investing in infrastructure that can be donated to a council run event (e.g. staging, PA and Lighting Equipment, fencing etc...) on a following day.

Ideally, the application system should move to an on-line application as soon as possible to further streamline and manage the process. The local authority already uses ‘Filmapp’ to process film applications in the borough and if possible should move towards using ‘Eventapp’ by the same company to process event applications.

As generating income from events becomes a priority, the relationship between income and local needs should be addressed. We must be able to demonstrate to residents a direct benefit back into the community and open spaces from income being raised through an increase in commercial events. Beyond the environmental impact fee (which would go directly to the park or green space where the event is held), one third of the fee will be allocated directly to the park or open space where the event took place and into the community bursary and management fund and two thirds will revert to the administration and to support the achievement of the overall income target for the events service. This fee split would only apply to purely commercial events and not to council-run community events where the income would be 100% allocated to achieving income targets.

Increasing income at council-run community events should be explored. Areas to consider may include; ticketing some events; paid car parking at all events; increasing sponsorship; increasing the number of events with bars and exploring new concession opportunities.

Three different artistic areas for commercial events have been identified for events, these are; Music and Festivals, Theatre, Dance and Circus and Film/TV Industry.

### Music and Festivals:

* As evidenced in the existing events pattern, there is scope for the parks and open spaces within the borough to music and festivals. These types of event are amongst the largest scale that the borough could develop and must be carefully managed to avoid any reputational issues.
* Central, Barking, Parsloes and Eastbrookend all hold great potential to host music and festival events with the existing infrastructure, access and geographical location making them attractive propositions.
* Large scale commercial events of this kind may integrate better into the community if connections are sought between the programming and the interests/needs of the borough. For example, if there is a growing desire
for family events, a family friendly festival with plenty of participatory activity could work.
- Partnerships with London-wide music festivals such as the London Jazz Festival are also encouraged so that audiences begin to get used to visiting the borough

Theatre, Dance and Circus:
- The larger, more flat areas in Central, Barking and Mayesbrook would be well suited to hosting large tents or arenas for theatre, dance, circus and arena shows.
- The proposed amphitheatre mounding at Central Park would be a great audience space for outdoor work of this nature.
- With theatre and dance, an event is more likely to be successful if there is a festival or season of shows that utilise the one space and can build up a reputation over a period. Many boroughs host ‘pop up’ seasons of work from high profile companies such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, Rambert Ballet and the English National Ballet and there is potential to run similar events in Barking and Dagenham.
- The challenge with this type of event is LBBD’s proximity to London, many of the events are hosted on a year-round basis. However, a mixed season of work where viewers can see different companies and different types of work may encourage more people in the capital to come to the borough for a special event.
- Partnerships with London-wide arts festivals such as the Thames Festival, LIFT and the London International Mime Festival are also encouraged so that audiences begin to get used to visiting the borough.

In addition to commercial opportunities within the arts there are a number of parks and open spaces that lend themselves naturally to commercial events that tie in with existing provisions and can help address the challenging health statistics in the borough. These have been broken down thematically into three areas; Sporting and Physical Activity Events, Food and Growing Events and Health and Wellbeing Events.

Film/TV Industry:
- The film and TV industry is a lucrative one but one that is increasingly running out of space in London. Some of the parks and open spaces in LBBD provide a perfect country backdrop without film crews having to travel too far.
- There is potential for the parks and open spaces to be hired as locations for film, television and photography shoots.
- The Film Barking and Dagenham website should be updated to include all relevant parks.

In addition to commercial opportunities within the arts there are a number of parks and open spaces that lend themselves naturally to commercial events that tie in with existing provisions and can help address the challenging health statistics in the borough. These have been broken down thematically into three areas; Sporting and Physical Activity Events, Food and Growing Events and Health and Wellbeing Events.

Sporting and Physical Activity Events:
- With the existing and proposed sporting facilities in Central, Barking, Mayesbrook and St Chad’s parks these would be ideal spaces to host either commercial or community focused sporting events supporting exercise as part of an active lifestyle.
- Old Dagenham Park has the potential to provide a much-needed events platform catering for young people in the borough. This could work on a commercial or community level, using urban sports such as BMX and skating to encourage young people to engage with physical activity.

Food and Growing Events:
- The horticultural and growing zones in Barking and Central Parks will open up potential for food and growing events. Having this as a local asset for external events to reflect, with an existing audience base would be an attractive offer and could act as a springboard for the growth of food-based activities. Commercial food fairs and markets could comfortably sit within both parks and there could also be the possibility of exploring and celebrating the borough’s rich diversity of culture through food based events. Linking Eastbrookend Country Fair to a food and growing event in Central Park could open an opportunity for a very large scale food, growing and country festival.
- With the inclusion of new cafes and food growing provisions within many of the parks and open spaces masterplans, the potential exists for the creation of hubs for the development of community events focused on food. Cafes can also provide scope to uncover local specialty growers and producers and put the borough on the map as a leading producer.

Health and Wellbeing Events:
- Wellness is one of the largest, fastest growing and resilient markets having grown by 10.6% over the two previous years.
- Thus it is one of the fastest growing areas in the events sector and LBBD’s naturally beautiful and naturalistic parks and open spaces would make ideal locations for health and wellbeing-based events.
- The larger areas in Central, Barking and Valance have the potential to host large bell tents, canvas stretch tents and domes that could hold a range of health and wellbeing activity including yoga, pilates, meditation, relaxation, massage and alternative therapy. There is huge potential for a high end commercial hire for an event of this time and the natural landscaping of the parks and open spaces create the perfect setting.
- On a smaller scale, there is also potential to host community health and wellbeing events, utilising any existing groups within the community and bringing them together in any of the parks and opens spaces in LBBD.

In addition to the opportunities outlined in the arts and physical activities heritage events could also be explored as detailed below.

Heritage stories of site/events:
- Valence House and Park has excellent recorded heritage and is the home of the borough’s museum. There are a good range of existing events but these take place mainly in the house and could potentially make more use of the park. There are a number of heritage stories associated with this park and the bandstand, in particular, which could be a positive focus for events.
- Using events to uncover a particular history or heritage of a specific park or open space can be a positive way of reinforcing local identity.
- Eastbury Manor House, although not listed as a priority park for events, is also situated within the borough and there could also be a link to events connected to this building. Eastbury Manor is a National Trust site and there is a current push to increase visitors to these sites within London, as more traditionally, the National Trust audience tends to be drawn to from non-urban communities. There is scope for the development of a series of events that work in partnership with the National Trust drawing people towards Eastbury Manor and nearby parks and open spaces.

Faith Events:
- The Council wants to encourage and initiate events which involve community participation and delivery.
- As one of London’s most diverse boroughs we want our parks to host a vibrant events and activities programme that reflects the varied lifestyles, beliefs and interests of the people who live here. This will help to achieve the Council’s vision to create a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other’s differences.
- Our diversity as a Borough is something in which we should be proud, something we should celebrate and not tolerate. We intend to build on the success of the cultural, sporting and religious events held in recent years by faith organisations, like the Gurdwara and Barking Mosque in Barking Park and the Bethel Church in Parsloes Park, by welcoming applications from faith groups to hold events in the Borough’s parks.

Events which would automatically not be granted approval in Barking and Dagenham’s Parks and Open Spaces:
- Applications to hire parks and open spaces will not be accepted from organisations or individuals that promote any political campaigns, promote controversial issues which may be damaging to community relationships, are illegal or offensive to the public or breach the Council’s equality and diversity strategy.

Further reasons for refusal may include:
- Any event which is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the infrastructure and biodiversity of the selected site.
- Any event which does not provide adequate documentation or certification and cannot demonstrate through this process that it should progress to the next stage of the application process.
- Any event which is not able to demonstrate to the Borough Safety Advisory Group that it can be delivered in a safe and efficient manner.
- Any event which is refused support by one of the Emergency Services.
- Any event which discriminates against any individual or group on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. This aspect will specifically include any charity, community or commercial ticketed event where any of the above groups or individuals are excluded or refused entrance.
- Any circus that includes performing animals.
- The Council reserves the right to refuse any application without stating their reason for doing so and reserves the right to impose conditions regarding a booking.
6.7 LICENSING OF PARKS AND INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE

It is recommended that Premises Licences are procured for Mayesbrook, Eastbrookend, Abbey Green, St Chad’s and Valence parks. Barking, Parsloes, Old Dagenham and Central Parks already have Premises Licenses. This will enable greater and safer event management, whilst also providing a premises licence to local community groups and charity organisations who must normally apply to council for individual licences to cover their events.

It is anticipated that by having a licence that covers all outdoor events in these spaces we can offer a consistent framework to respond to the requirements of events organisers. This will also ensure that the programme is planned and confirmed further in advance to give the local residents and the SAC group more time to consider specific event proposals in the knowledge that certain requirements will already have been made.

The financial costs for the premises licences will be recouped from our commercial event clients should they wish to use our events premises licences (which will have set conditions).

It is recommended that each premises licence stipulates that no more than 3 major events (5,000 attendees or more) take place in each licensed park every year.

It is recommended that permanent water and electricity points are installed in these parks to encourage use by event organisers.

6.8 DELIVERY ELEMENTS

6.8.1 Noise Restrictions Levels

Noise levels will be set as part of the Premise License for each Park. Noise management must be included in any event organisers Event Management Plan which should include a detailed account of the noise generated by each area of the site and what monitoring procedures will be in place to ensure noise is kept to an acceptable level.

6.8.2 Local Resident Impact

As part of the event application process as outlined in the Event Guidance Pack all event organisers will need to engage in consultation processes with stakeholders such as local clubs and organisations based in the parks, ‘Friends of’ groups and local residents.

These may include attending formal meetings with stakeholders or writing to local residents to inform them of the activities planned.

Events which actively work alongside the local communities both located in the parks and residents surrounding the parks will be encouraged.

6.8.3 Environmental Impact

The preservation of the parks and open spaces is of the utmost importance when considering any events and ensuring minimal negative environmental impact and where possible a positive environmental impact is a priority.

Petrol Generators will not to be permitted at any event and proof will be required that diesel generators have been organized.

A grounds deposit of a minimum of £500 for small events, rising to £10,000 for large events will be implemented. The grounds deposit can be retained in part or full based on the decision of the events team, environmental services and the parks teams if the site is not returned in the condition prevailing at the beginning of the hire agreement.

Event organisers will be responsible for all waste including, but not limited to, cardboard, paper, packaging, cans, plastic, food waste from visitors and concessionaires, water waste and human waste.

Glass will not be permitted for any event in any of the boroughs Parks and Open Spaces.

Event organisers that show in their planning a commitment to recycling site waste as well as the use of biodegradable and sustainable products will be viewed positively.

Event organisers will have to demonstrate in their Event Plan that they have thought through the number of waste bins required and how often these are emptied through the event in addition to how many litter pickers are employed to cover the site for the duration of the event.

The borough is able to provide litter picking services and waste removal services and it will consider providing these services free of charge in exchange for commercial event organisers sharing infrastructure with council-managed events over the course of the same weekend.

Any water supply installations must adhere to the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations. If the event organisers are using a supply which already exists in the Park, to prevent any contamination, they must receive authorization from the local authority to access any water point, sewage tank or sewage discharge points, agree to the procedures involved in their use and supply an agreed deposit to gain access to the required keys.

An adequate number of portable toilets will have to be provided, for the comfort of attendees and to prevent human waste being left anywhere on the site.

Full details of environmental requirements will be detailed in the Event Guidance Pack.

The environmental impact fee from any booking will be invested directly into the park or open space that the event occurred in. In addition any commercial booking will invest on third of the profit made by LBBD to the park or open space in which the event occurred as well as funding the Community bursary and management fund.

6.9 STRUCTURE AND WORKING PRACTICES

6.9.1 Determining the size of an event and setting Fees

The event application processes is described in detail in the Event Guidance Pack.

Key timings to note are:

- Event Application window is November to February.
- Event Applications should be submitted 3 to 9 months before the event depending on the size of the event.
- Acknowledgement of all applications should be made within 10 working days.
- Applications should then be reviewed, references sought and an initial meeting set up with the events team within 4 weeks.
- An agreement in principle which would then move the proposal forward to SAC (medium to large events only) or a refusal will then follow within 10 days of the meeting date with the event team.
- Presentation to SAC (medium to large events only) on the closest possible 1st Wednesday of the month.
- SAC have 5 days to respond and then agreements signed subject to T&C’s.
- License application (3 months for Premises or 10 days for TEN).
- 2 months before event attend SAC to submit Event Management Plan and submit all necessary forms and information. Smaller events to attend mini SAC. All fees to be paid.

Table 6.1 on the following page, shows the classifications of the size of an event.

To streamline the process of dealing with events it is imperative a system is established to determine the size of an event. This process will allow the borough to implement the new fee system as well as differentiate between those which must go through the full SAC process, those who will require the ‘mini SAC’ process and how much officer time is required to ensure the successful delivery of the event.

These figures are for guidance only and the borough reserves the right to alter and amend the fees without notice and to respond to each event on a case by case basis.

A 25% discount will be available to charities and community organisations based in Barking and Dagenham.

Cancellation fees will apply to all bookings.

The event application processes is described in detail in the Event Guidance Pack.
6.9.2 Event Planning - Licensing Process, insurance and Risk Management

For events that are not taking place in a park already covered with a Premises Licence, the event organiser will be responsible for applying for the correct licence if the event includes any of the following licensable activities.

- The sale of alcohol.
- Musical performance.
- Film screenings.
- Dance, plays or theatrical performances.
- Indoor sports.
- Serving of hot food between 11pm and 5am.

Events with over 499 attendees including staff, volunteers and performers will need to apply for a Premises Licence. Events with under 499 attendees can apply for a Temporary Event Notice (TEN).

Event organisers must hold cover of £5 million Public Liability insurance for small to medium events and £10 million for large events, funfair’s, circus or firework displays.

If the event organiser employs any staff who report directly to them, then Employer’s Liability of £5 million must be held. This should also be requested from any sub-contractors who has more than five members of staff.

It is the responsibility of the event organiser to ensure that all participants in the event – stallholders, sub-contractors, performers etc. hold appropriate Public Liability insurance and this should be included in the final Event Management Plan.

The event organiser will have prime responsibility for protecting the health, safety and welfare of everyone working at, or attending, the event under the Health and Safety at Work Act and other related Acts and regulations. The event organiser must develop a formal event Health and Safety Management Plan (also known as the Events Management Plan [EMP]) and keep a file of supporting information. A full risk assessment must be carried out for all events. This is a legal requirement and is key to managing risk. The risk assessment should be included in the event organisers EMP. Emergency and contingency plans must also be submitted as part of the EMP.

Full guidance on responsibilities, Health and Safety and Risk Assessments are included in the Event Guidance Pack.

6.10 CONCLUSION

The strategy aims to build on the current successful event programme in Barking and Dagenham by delivering a balanced programme of events which aim to make the borough a cultural destination by increasing community ownership of events, showcasing the unique nature of individual parks and spaces, increasing an income stream from events and building partnerships with third party providers and existing services within parks to benefit residents, the local authority and the cultural sector. A successful events programme should address local needs whilst encouraging visitors from outside the borough to experience the many assets that the parks and open spaces of Barking and Dagenham have to offer.

### Table 6.1 - Size of an event and setting fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>No of Attendees</th>
<th>Commercial Events</th>
<th>Site Hire Fee per day</th>
<th>Environmental Fee</th>
<th>Grounds Deposit (refundable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Up to 500</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>£750</td>
<td>£225</td>
<td>£37.50</td>
</tr>
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<td>Small (2)</td>
<td>Up to 1000</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Medium</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>No of Attendees</th>
<th>Charity / Community Events</th>
<th>Site Hire Fee per day</th>
<th>Environmental Fee</th>
<th>Grounds Deposit (refundable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Up to 500</td>
<td>£25</td>
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<tr>
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<td>£25</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>£100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>£25</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
<td>£2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Application fee: This is an administered fee to process the application form. Non refundable.
- Site Hire Fee: Charged at £1.50 per head on the maximum number of attendees for the first operational day of the event. When paid will confirm the use of the space on the date(s) required.
- Extra Event Days fee – Charged at 30% of Site Hire Fee
- Build/de-rig days: Charged at 5% of the Site Hire Fee and levied per day.
- Grounds damage deposit Charged at flat rate. Refundable subject to terms.
- Environment impact fee Charged at a flat rate. Non Refundable.
- Premium Venues are subject to hire fees.
7.1 EVIDENCE BASE ON OUTDOOR PLAY AND ITS BENEFITS

Outdoor play is an essential ingredient of a happy, healthy childhood and its importance is enshrined in international conventions on children’s rights. The right to play is set out in Article 31 of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which the UK government ratified in 1989. In 2013, the UN stated that this right should be secured “in collaboration with children themselves, as well as NGOs and community-based organisations.” It also called on local government to “assess provision of play and recreation facilities to guarantee equality of access” (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child 2013).

The benefits of outdoor play to children’s health, well-being and emotional and social development are well researched. By creating welcoming, stimulating, enjoyable places for play, good parks and play spaces make a real difference to children’s lives. They also help to support families and build more cohesive communities (see Gill 2014a for a summary).

7.1.1 Physical activity

There is strong evidence that access to good play opportunities helps to improve levels of physical activity and hence tackle child obesity (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence 2015; Cavill and Rutter 2013). Studies consistently show that children who play outdoors are more physically active, and that play facilities help to raise activity levels. Some studies suggest a greater impact than sport or PE initiatives (Mackett and Paskins 2008).

A study of children in Bristol used GPS and accelerometers to measure activity within green environments for children aged 11 to 12, including tracking activities in two parks with play facilities. The results showed that the parks “were used for as much as 30 per cent of outdoors moderate-vigorous activity at weekends and use was consistent across seasons” (Lachowycz et al 2012).

A Danish study also used accelerometers, to measure physical activity in children aged from five to 12 years from schools with different permanent play facilities (such as adventure play equipment, swings, trees, playground marking, courts and sandpits). The study found that “the number of permanent play facilities in schools ... was positively associated with all measures of activity” and concluded that “increasing the number of permanent play facilities at schools may offer a cost-effective and sustainable option for increasing physical activity in young children” (Nielsen et al 2010).

A Canadian study using GIS data found that “children with a park playground within 1 km were almost five times more likely to be classified as being of a healthy weight rather than at risk or overweight compared to those children without playgrounds in nearby parks.” It concluded that “availability of certain park facilities may play a more important role in promoting physical activity and healthy weight status among children than availability of park space in general” (Potwarka et al 2008).

[Case study on the benefits of contact with nature]

American researchers found significant improvements in children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) after a 20-minute guided walk in a green outdoor space, compared to the same amount of time spent in other settings (Faber Taylor and Kuo 2009). Studies have also found benefits in the motor development of pre-school children with access to natural space, compared to those who use a more conventional playground (Fjortoft 2004; Scholz and Krombholz 2007). A British study of a forest school programme found significant improvements in mood after forest school, in terms of reductions in levels of anger. The improvement was greatest for children with behaviour problems (Roe 2009). Another British study found strong associations between childhood patterns of visits to green places and willingness to visit such places as an adult. People who often visited green places as children are more likely to associate natural areas with feeling energetic, and more likely to visit alone in their adult life (Ward Thompson et al 2008).

[3 case studies on play provision and physical activity]

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7.1.2 Learning and social and emotional development

There is also good evidence of links between outdoor play experiences and a range of improvements in academic skills, attitudes and behaviour, and to improved social skills, social relations between different ethnic groups, and better adjustment to school life. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (the leading US Federal health agency) reviewed studies of the links between school recess (break times) and academic performance. This found “positive associations between recess and indicators of cognitive skills, attitudes, and academic behaviour” (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention 2010).

Another review found that play times “both maximise students’ attention to subsequent class work and facilitate children’s peer relationships as they make the transition into primary school” (Pellegrini 2009). A third stated that “games and playground activities are particularly important for the development of a wide range of skills associated with interactions with people of similar status, including social-cognitive skills ... This is simply because there appear to be few opportunities for these skills and relationships to be developed elsewhere inside or outside of school without the presence of a potentially over-dominating adult” (Baines and Blatchford 2010).

A longitudinal study by some of the same researchers found that “playground activities can have a positive role in social relations between different ethnic groups” (Blatchford et al 2003).

Evidence also shows that spending time in natural environments is linked with healthy development, wellbeing and positive environmental attitudes and values. One systematic review concluded that experiences of nature should be seen as part of a “balanced diet” of childhood experiences (Gill 2011; Gill 2014b).

[Case study on the benefits of contact with nature]

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7.1.3 Mental health

There are strong arguments for the mental health benefits of outdoor play. The Mental Health Foundation states on its website that “having time at the freedom to play, indoors and outdoors” helps to promote good mental health (Mental Health Foundation undated). Play as a significant role in fostering resilience through giving children managed opportunities to take risks. In her 2012 Annual Report Chief Medical Officer Dame Sally Davies stated:

“We need to develop strategies to enable young people to be able to mount successful responses against life’s challenges, and to do this we need to inoculate them and thus develop resilience. By exposing young people to low doses of challenges, in safe and supported environments, we strengthen their ability to act effectively later in life” (Chief Medical Officer 2013: see also Play Wales 2015 and Lester and Russell 2007).

7.1.4 Community and family benefits

As well as benefits to children, there is also evidence that play provision brings benefits to communities and families. In mixed and diverse communities, children and services for them provide a key focus for building cohesive, socially inclusive neighbourhoods. A report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation states:

“Studies of mixed income communities show that most mixing across social groups takes place between children. It is these contacts – in nurseries, playgroups, schools and in public spaces – that provide opportunities for adults to meet and form relationships. Children provide a common ground and shared interest between people in different tenures. People with children have a high stake in the success of a neighbourhood and the quality of its services” (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2006).

One practical community outcome from play facilities is a reduction in anti-social behaviour and vandalism. An evaluation of Community Spaces, a £57.5 million Big Lottery Fund programme run by Groundwork UK (in which playgrounds and youth recreation spaces were a major component) concluded Research from the USA shows a link between play provision and family well-being. The American non-profit agency KaBOOM! studied parental attitudes about playgrounds, and found links to self-reported measures of family well-being. The survey showed “three-quarters of parents agree that the more time they spend together at a playground, the better their sense of family well-being. Furthermore, parents who live near a playground and visit often with their child report higher levels of family well-being than parents who do not live near a playground or do not visit playgrounds often” (KaBOOM! undated).

7.1.5 Location and design

Location, accessibility and connectivity (on foot and by bike/scooter/pushchair and by public transport) are crucial in attracting users to play facilities and sustaining use. A 2016 Canadian study of 9-to-13-year-olds used GPS technology to track children’s pedestrian-based neighbourhood activity. Participants most of their out-of-school time (75%) in their neighbourhoods, with 94.5% of spent within a short distance of home (Loebach and Gilliland 2016). Two English studies of play on housing estates - one from 2016 and the other from 1997 – echo these findings. The 2016 study (which looked at a range of outdoor activity by people of all ages) found wide variations in the level of activity across 10 estates, with children being active and visible in some. It also found that “the layout of a development may have a significant impact on how well spaces are used” (Bornat 2016). The earlier study concluded that “estates which stimulate the widest range of play activity and satisfaction amongst children and parents are those with footpath networks, culs-de-sac layout, public open spaces and play areas” (Wheway and Millward 1997).

The design and layout of play provision is also important to users of all ages. In-depth qualitative research with parents and children has shown that spaces with a range of play facilities and offers that cater for children of different ages, and that allow for families to visit together, are highly valued (Wallace et al 2009).

7.2 BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR LEARNING IN NATURAL SPACES

There is growing interest in the role of green space in supporting children’s learning, and a strong evidence base. A 2016 evaluation by Plymouth University of a major Natural England initiative showed that learning outdoors in natural environments has multiple benefits for school children (Natural England 2016). Children were happier, healthier and more motivated to learn as a result of learning outside, including in local parks and green spaces. The 4-year ‘Natural Connections’ initiative ran in 125 schools across the South West of England, focused mainly on areas of deprivation in Plymouth, Torbay, Bristol, Cornwall and Somerset and reaching 40,000 primary and secondary school pupils. It helped school children experience the benefits of the natural environment by empowering teachers to use the outdoors to support everyday learning. The evaluation found that:

- 95 per cent of children surveyed said outdoor learning makes lessons more enjoyable.
- 90 per cent said they felt happier and healthier.
- 72 per cent of children said they got on better with others.
- 93 per cent of schools said outdoor learning improves pupils’ social skills.

• 92 per cent of schools said it improves pupils’ health and wellbeing and engages them with learning.
• 85 per cent of schools saw a positive impact on behaviour.
• 90 per cent of staff surveyed found outdoor learning to be useful for curriculum delivery.

The findings of the Natural Connections project are echoed by other evidence of educational, learning and developmental benefits. A systematic literature review (Gill 2014b) found:

- Experience of green environments is associated with greater environmental knowledge.
- Forest school projects are associated with improved social skills and improved self-control, self-confidence and language and communication.
- Conservation activities in open spaces are associated with improved psychosocial health.

7.3 EXISTING PATTERN OF OUTDOOR PLAY PROVISION

The distribution of play provision across the borough was analysed using geographical information systems (GIS), based on the age ranges and accessibility thresholds set out in the GLA SPG (see Table 1, Fig 1.2 at p. 09 above and combinations table at p.40 below). Taking child population densities into account, this analysis shows that there is a significant deficit of accessible play provision in almost all of Becontree ward, most of Whalfone ward and parts of Albyn, Eastbury, Heath, Longbridge, Parsloes, Valentine and Village wards. There are also deficiencies in parts of Chadwell Heath, Eastbrook, and River wards, though here the population densities are lower. For children aged 5–11, the pattern is similar, although the deficient areas extend to larger areas within these wards, and also parts of the remaining wards. For children aged 0-5 almost all of LBBD is deficient. The exceptions are parts of Gascoigne ward (which has a high number of play areas in housing estates – and also some of the highest concentrations of children under 5) and areas that are within 100m of park play facilities. The GIS analysis shows some overlap in achievements for facilities for children aged 5-11 and 12+, as would be expected. The only significant area where there may be overprovision is parts of Gascoigne, in respect of the facilities for children under 5 already mentioned, although a fuller analysis of both child population and provision would be needed to confirm this. (Note that due to the emerging plans for Barking Riverside, Thames has been excluded from this analysis.)

LBBD Play areas have also been assessed for quality using the Play England assessment schedule (Play England 2009). (This tool provides a helpful starting point for benchmarking play facilities. However, it does have some weaknesses. It is designed for the assessment of individual play areas, not parks as a whole. This approach naturally leads to a focus on individual sets of play facilities, and works against taking a whole-park view of the play offer. It also makes no attempt to assess the overall design quality and appearance of facilities and it has no criteria that focus on teenagers as a user group.)

Barking Park is arguably the most successful, well-designed, highest-quality play space. It offers a benchmark for hub play facilities in other parks. Across the borough as a whole, the picture (confirmed by the quality assessment) is of

[Case study: Police report shows cost savings from park youth provision]

In Banbury, the cost of repairs to young children’s play equipment dropped by 25 per cent (£10,000) in the first year after installing youth facilities. In Burnley, a youth shelter was built in response to complaints about anti-social behaviour, after which reports of nuisance behaviour dropped by 29 per cent (across the whole town) and 50 per cent (near the park). The costs due to vandalism to play equipment dropped 87 per cent from £580 to £70 (Hampshire and Wilkinson 2002).
a mix of mostly old, conventional play facilities with fencing and largely primary-coloured steel equipment (some in a poor state of repair); more naturalistic facilities using mounds, boulders, logs and timber equipment; and ball courts and skate parks. Conventional play features/facilities are largely uninspiring and unlikely to have lasting appeal, especially for children above infants’ school age. Some naturalistic features, while not showing signs of vandalism or the consequences of anti-social behaviour, are suffering from wear and tear/erosion (possibly a sign of popularity). Youth sport facilities are mostly of average standard (some in urgent need of repair) and poor/mediocre design, with limited opportunities for socializing.

7.4 BEST PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS

Guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence states that “opportunities for moderate to vigorous physical activity include everything from competitive sport and formal exercise to active play and other physically demanding activities”. It calls on agencies to provide daily opportunities for unstructured, spontaneous play (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence 2009).

The Greater London Authority Supplementary Planning Guidance on play space states that facilities should be “well-connected to well used pedestrian, cycling or bus routes. They should be accessible to all sections of the community (including disabled people and their parents or carers) and be located within easy reach by walking, cycling and public transport” (Greater London Authority 2012).

The GLA SPG includes guidance on design taken from the publication Design for Play (Play England 2008). This sets out a landscape-led approach to play space design, with the aim of creating robust, flexible, inclusive spaces and features that are attractive to children and families of all ages. This guidance outlines a six-stage design cycle. These stages are: prepare, design, construct, use, maintain, review. The guide also sets out 10 principles for designing successful play spaces. Successful play spaces should be:

- Bespoke.
- Well located.
- Make use of natural elements.
- Provide a wide range of play experiences.
- Accessible to both disabled and non-disabled.
- Meet community needs.
- Allow children of different ages to play together.
- Build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge.
- Sustainable and appropriately maintained.
- Allow for change and evolution.

Engagement and participation play a key role in ensuring that play facilities meet community needs. This is best done through ‘co-creation’: the active involvement of informed professionals with experience of successful design approaches alongside children and families (Demos 2007). Observation of how children and families actually use spaces is invaluable. When it comes to provision for young people meaningful, direct engagement with local groups of teenagers will be crucial in informing both the location and design of facilities (Play England 2008; Greater London Authority 2012).

As already noted, UK evaluation tools for play provision typically do not address the needs and interests of teenagers well. One American project, ‘Growing Up Boulder’, has drawn up a checklist of teen-friendly features of parks, produced with input from young people themselves (Derr 2015). Teens were keen to see play spaces for both children and adults; the project found in particular that “younger teens consistently ask for more active forms of play, such as zip lines or parkour courses that allow risk taking.” This project found that other park features important for teens include:

- WiFi
- Lighting and Art
- Study Space
- Trees, Flowers, Nature
- Water features

Bearing in mind the role of outdoor spaces in supporting children’s education, it is not surprising that interest in the topic has been growing in London, with the spread of initiatives such as Forest School. Appropriate facilities in local parks and green spaces can support these initiatives, for instance through the creation of outdoor storytelling areas and wildlife trails (Gill 2011). Good play space design is inclusive, and inclusive design is about quality, not compliance. It is concerned with the range of offers across the whole of a play facility/space, not whether every piece of equipment being accessible to all. Disabled children want to be able to play with their non-disabled family, peers and friends, and designs in all locations should reflect this in their choice of equipment and other features. It means addressing the needs and concerns of children with a range of disabilities and impairments, not simply those in wheelchairs. Site accessibility including car parking, and provision of toilet facilities are crucial to inclusion (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2003; Wheway and John 2004; KIDS 2010).

Good playground design is not simply a matter of selecting equipment from a catalogue. As a playground safety is not simply a matter of compliance with equipment standards. Challenge, adventure and excitement are part of children’s play, and what good playgrounds should be offering. Hence a balanced approach to risk management is essential.

Risk benefit assessment (RBA), as set out in guidance from Play England (Ball et al 2013) is a tool that supports a considered, balanced approach to risk management. It brings together considerations about risks and benefits alongside other factors in a single decision-making process. It is recognised by the Health and Safety Executive as a sensible approach to risk management (Health and Safety Executive 2012).

In keeping with good practice from workplace and office health and safety, RBA as set out in the Play England guidance adopts a narrative approach; it does not recommend the use of matrices or ratings schemes for risks. Instead, it takes users through a set of open-ended questions under the following headings (Play Scotland 2014):

- What are the benefits – for children and young people, and for others?
- What are the risks?
- What relevant local factors need to be considered?
- What are the options for managing the risk, and what are the pros, cons and costs of each?
- What precedents and comparisons are there?
- What is the risk–benefit judgement?
- How should the judgement be implemented?

Good procurement procedures are design-led, and help to underpin the landscape-led approach to design that is proposed in Design for Play. Likewise, while ease and costs of maintenance are clearly factors that shape design, if allowed to have too great an influence they can undermine the creation of attractive, successful play areas (Greater London Authority 2012). Good practice guidance is available from Play England on maintaining spaces that incorporate natural play elements and features (Davis et al 2009). The guidance addresses concerns and misconceptions about natural play (such as the view that loose fill materials routinely lead to contamination problems) and includes sections on:

- How to create a framework to support nature play and its ongoing maintenance.
- Procedures that can be used to support the maintenance of play spaces.
• Specific materials that often feature in nature play and information on how to maintain them.

7.5 PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

Programming is invaluable in promoting new or improved play facilities, and can also help to build up and sustain levels of engagement over time. Conventional events such as the annual Playday celebration (on the first Wednesday in August each year), family festivals and performances are part of this, and are considered in more detail in Section 6.

Alongside these, more regular playwork-led community play sessions in public spaces can also play a role. An evaluation report of a programme of community play sessions in Tower Hamlets shows that they have led to significant engagement in active play. They have also helped raise parental awareness of the value of play, engaged parents and children in championing play and in some case led to parents and children becoming involved in public space improvement projects (Gill 2016).

Programming may be particularly effective in connecting teens with parks. The Growing up Boulder initiative discussed above found that teens were keen to see music and movie nights, as well as food-related events and facilities (Derr 2015).

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Priorities for creating and improving play facilities across LBBD should take into account the findings of the GIS analysis set out above at section 7.3, and especially the areas of under-provision.

Play facility designs should follow the landscape-led approach set out in Design for Play and the GLA SPG, embracing its approach to the incorporation of natural elements and hard and soft landscaping, to fencing and boundary definition and to engagement with children, families and other local stakeholders. The typology and accessibility criteria in the GLA SPG should be applied thoughtfully and flexibly.

Main or hub play facilities should be located near other café/sport/leisure facilities, with a strong network of walking/cycling paths, to create a hub of mutually supportive patterns of use. This will be especially important in larger parks (eg Mayesbrook, Central, Old Dagenham and Parsloes). These hub facilities should where appropriate be supplemented with smaller play areas, play trails and incidental play features tailored to each park/site context. Hub play areas should include generous provision of formal seating such as picnic benches and also ‘sittable structures’ such as low walls and large logs that also form part of the play offer.

A site-specific approach to boundary definition should be taken. For instance, boundaries can be created cost-effectively through hard and/or soft landscaping; dog-proof metal fencing is not always necessary or warranted. In larger playgrounds, the aim should be to create a space that can be used flexibly, including a mix of scales within an overall area. Hard segregation by age should be avoided.

LBBD should explore the idea of creating at least one flagship inclusive play space, designed with input from children and families with a range of abilities and disabilities.

There should be greater emphasis on adventurous facilities that are likely to engage a broader age range of children and teenagers, and that keep them engaged for more of their childhood. Facilities should include well-designed social and informal leisure offers that improve on off-the-shelf youth shelter/ball area/skate park designs, with location and design shaped by input from local young people.

Over the longer term, the development of a teen-oriented assessment tool/set of indicators should be considered to fill the gap left by existing tools. Such a tool could draw on the ‘Growing Up Boulder’ checklist referenced above.

Features and structures should be created that are suitable for use in outdoor learning/forest school contexts where the park landscape has a more naturalistic character (e.g. Central, Eastbrookend, St Chads). Structures could include storytelling areas, raised platforms suitable for pond-dipping, wildlife trails and minibeast structures).

A balanced approach should be taken to risk management, supported by risk benefit assessment (RBA) and thoughtful application of equipment standards. Procurement processes need to be design-led: they should allow for integration of high-quality landscape design and equipment choices, and for flexible responses to local sites and circumstances. Maintenance and inspection should make use of good practice guidance, including on the use of RBA to inform decisions about safety.

LBBD should consider raising the public profile and awareness of play facilities through programmed events and activities (including conventional events and also playwork-led sessions) linked to openings/refurbishments. As part of this, it should continue to support the annual Playday event, ideally with a presence in all LBBD parks, and link it to public health promotion initiatives around outdoor play. This could be curated as an annual calendar of park play events. LBBD should also explore the potential to promote facilities via social media and apps.
REFERENCES


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United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013) General Comment 17


8.1 WHY GROW FOOD IN PARKS?

It is widely recognised that gardening and food growing have a positive impact on people’s health and wellbeing and there is a growing body of evidence to support this.

Regular contact with plants and the natural environment can improve mental wellbeing and combined with the activity of growing food, it can help improve physical health for a wide range of abilities and ages. Regular involvement in gardening can:

- Improve psychological health, by reducing stress, the severity of stress and associated depression.
- Increase physical activity, burn calories and contribute to maintaining a healthy weight and reduce the risk of obesity.
- Help with rehabilitation or recovery from surgery or other medical interventions.
- Alleviate the symptoms of illnesses like dementia and Alzheimer’s disease, such as agitation and aggressive behaviour.
- Contribute to improved social interactions and community cohesion.
- Provide access to locally grown, fresh produce and help increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables, as well as improving attitudes to healthy eating.
- Introduce a way of life to help people improve their wellbeing in the longer term.

In addition to the health benefits there are many social, economic and environmental factors that impact on health. Community food growing projects can have positive benefits on these:

- Individual lifestyle: supports a healthy lifestyle with regular outdoor activity and contact with nature which helps improve physical and mental health.
- Provides access to healthy, affordable, locally grown food.
- Social and community: engages the community and enhances mechanisms for getting people involved in things that matter to them.
- Activities: promotes health and wellbeing as well as an opportunity for learning new skills.
- Built environment: physical exercise is designed into the local area.
- Natural environmental factors: enhances the natural environment and engages people with nature.

8.2 GREEN SPACE, GARDENING & HEALTH

Evidence on the impact of gardens and gardening on health is closely linked to the wide array of evidence on ‘green spaces and health’. It is clear that access to nature is a critical part of a healthy community but increasingly sedentary and stressful lifestyles are resulting in poor physical and mental health. This means that while life expectancy has significantly improved, long term conditions such as depression, obesity and diabetes also continue to increase, decreasing quality of life.

The link between access to nature and particularly to stress, depression and anxiety is supported by evidence, such as:

- Visits to nature are associated with decreases in self-reported stress (Annerstedt, 2010) and a study in the Netherlands showed every 10 percent increase in access to green space translated in an improvement in health equivalent to being five years younger (de Vries, et al 2003), with similar benefits found by studies in Canada (Villeneuve et al 2012) and Japan (Takano 2002).
- Green spaces have also been linked with reduced levels of obesity in children and young people in America (Lis et al 2007).

Natural England has become increasingly interested in this topic, leading them to set up the “Outdoors for All” working group and publishing research, reports and recommendation on the subject:

8.3 HEALTH IMPACT OF FOOD GROWING

In addition to providing passive access to nature, the act of gardening also has an important role. It is an important pastime in the UK, particularly for adults over 24 and rising in importance for older people who are less likely to be active but more likely to undertake gardening. While much gardening is undertaken at home, the opportunities to garden within public and shared spaces, particularly in urban areas can provide increased opportunities for people to improve health and wellbeing benefits, making it an important consideration when planning public open spaces.

In particular gardening and more specifically food growing is a useful intervention for many target audiences. The Kings Fund Report on Gardens and Health cites the following:

- School aged children: Well-designed studies of school gardening suggest that children’s fruit and vegetable intake can be significantly increased combined with efforts to improve parental support; a further range of studies points to increased knowledge, and preferences for fruit and vegetables.
- Families: A recent report of 2,000 homeowners showed that parents with children under 18 spent significantly more money on their gardens than those without, including on play equipment such as slides, sandpits and swings. Almost 1 in 4 parents thought that their children did not spend enough time outdoors.
- Older People and those with dementia: Surveys suggest gardens become much more important as a source of physical activity in older age, as well as independence, and in ameliorating loneliness. There is emerging evidence that gardening may also be important in falls prevention (helping to maintain good gait and balance) and also in dementia prevention and cognitive decline.
Additional research has also found evidence for the following:

- Vulnerable groups – a study in 2015 (Weinamm et. al) found more beneficial effects for a subgroup with a poor prognosis for good health and the “Growing Health” report found many examples of effective interventions and benefits for target groups including substance misusers and excluded groups 66.

The use of food growing and gardening for therapeutic benefits (i.e. led by a trained therapist for a group with defined needs) is common and well evaluated, through networks such as Care Farming UK. Areas where therapeutic horticulture can have good impacts include:

- Mental health: gardening and related activities have long been advocated in mental health programmes (Spurgeon and Underhill, 1979).
- Physical health: health problems centred around sedentary lifestyles, obesity and even old age have been alleviated or tackled with gardening programmes.
- Substance misusers: therapeutic and manual work is increasingly being used to include drug and alcohol dependent people and aside from horticulture projects “Care Farms” are also being increasingly used to meaningfully occupy this client group in the UK.
- Excluded groups (refugees etc.): horticulture projects are increasingly seen as a way of generating meaningful activity for excluded groups like refugees.

Creation of food growing gardens within public spaces provides important infrastructure for use of food growing as therapy, and opens up lots of potential for different groups to benefit from these spaces.

8.4 COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF FOOD GROWING

Capital Growth’s “Growing Success” 64 evaluation report highlighted many of the benefits of food growing that had occurred as a result of their campaign, launched in 2008. This included reporting:

- 99,000 people were involved across the network (an average of 20 per community garden);
- 71% of people had made a new friend with some in the neighbourhood/local area as a result of getting involved;
- 38% of people felt safer in their neighbourhood as a result of the growing project.

The feedback from an additional Capital Growth survey of 342 food growing projects showed many are located in places of diverse integration in terms of age, ability, ethnic background and employment status. The survey also showed the key motivation for involvement in community food growing is to create a sense of community and improve health and wellbeing (both 90%) 66.

Further local evidence from Growing Communities Dagenham Farm demonstrates the impact that food growing projects is having within the borough. To date the project, with support from Big Lottery’s Reaching Communities’ fund, has run:

- A volunteer programme – with open volunteering all year and Open Farm Sundays during the warmer season for local residents to learn new skills, take gentle exercise in the open air and buy fresh farm produce.
- A free lunch programme where volunteers learn cooking skills using fresh produce from the site and then eat communally.
- A “Grown in Dagenham” young people’s programme working in partnership with 2 local schools and Barking and Dagenham College where 80 children take part in food growing and cooking workshops each week.
- A free holiday and after school growing club.
- Training workshops for school teachers and teaching assistant in food growing and working with the farm.
- A 9 month long, paid Food Worker training programme for 4 unemployed lone parents (from April – December) with the hours geared to meet their childcare needs.
- A weekly food growing and skills session for LBBD residents in recovery from alcohol and substance abuse. Two of the previous service users have made the transition to working as part of the regular volunteer team, visiting the farm independently.
- A weekly (in season) fresh produce stall at the farm on Sundays and a weekly stall at Dagenham East station due to resume trading in the summer of 2017.

During 2016 this has resulted in:

- 42 regular local volunteers learning skills and working on the farm.
- 2,205 volunteer hours worked on the farm – equivalent to 298 days.
- 135 local residents visiting the farm to find out about volunteering and/or to buy fresh produce.
- 384 local residents visiting the farm and/or attending the farm.
- 179 young people taking part in food growing and food preparation (April–Dec 2016).
- 4 Trainees (unemployed lone parents).

8.5 EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF FOOD GROWING

Food growing in schools and for educational purposes is fairly widespread with a range of studies showing the outcome on knowledge, skills, educational attainment and behaviour.

A recent evaluation of Garden Organic’s Food Growing Schools London project has shown that as a result of involvement in school food growing:

- 79% of schools reported improved behaviour or attainment.
- 62% reported pupils are more aware of healthy eating 66.

While most of the projects for schools are set up within school grounds, there is clearly scope for provision outside of school grounds and within park settings. This has been demonstrated in Growing Communities school engagement programme (see above).

8.6 FOOD GROWING AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The production and supply of food currently accounts for 20-30% of green house (GHG) emission in the UK. While much of the emissions are down the method of production (with organic production methods being lower), there is also impact from transportation, storage and this can vary for type of crop.

Some quantifiable evidence is available to support this, including a study by Kulak et al (2013 71) who highlight the role of urban farms in reducing the emissions of locally consumed foods; while the reduction is relatively low, it exceeds the carbon sequestration for conventional urban green space projects such as parks and forest.

8.7 THE BUSINESS CASE FOR FOOD GROWING

Sustain’s Growing Health project has documented many public health and NHS commissioned interventions, although cost comparison to other interventions is still relatively difficult to find evidence. Cost benefit analysis of food growing activities is relatively new and limited in its ability to measure different types of intervention, but there is evidence of a business case for growing food. Natural England (2009) estimate that £2.1 billion would be saved annually through averted health costs if everyone in England had equal access to green space. The Kings Fund Report (2016) also summarises the financial evidence of gardening including the following examples:

- The New Economics Foundation estimated the value of the Ecominds programme (a programme supported by Mind to offer outdoor experiences including gardening for those with mental health problems) for five participants to be around £7,000 each through reduced NHS costs, welfare benefit reductions and increased tax contributions (New Economics Foundation 2014).
- Access to green space can reduce mental health admissions, resulting in additional savings for the NHS (Wheater et al 2007).
- The national evaluation of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) Green Gym project (Yerrell 2008) between 2005 and 2009 estimated that for every £1 invested in green gyms, £2.55 would be saved in treating illness related to physical inactivity.
- Benefits linked to health including carbon storage, flood alleviation and amenity value, valued in total at more than £130 billion (Kenton et al 2015).

The current picture

Food growing in London

Capital Growth 72, a network of 2000 food growing projects in London, has been working to support community food growing projects since 2008 (see map of projects at www.capitalgrowth.org/spaces/). During this time food growing projects in all types of public and private spaces have been developed and the numbers continue to grow, with all boroughs developing a range of growing initiatives.
During this time food growing has also been supported within the London Plan and subsequently filtered down to Local Plan level.

**London Plan Policy 7.22 Land for food**

**Strategic**

A. The Mayor will seek to encourage and support thriving farming and land-based sectors in London, particularly in the Green Belt.

B. Use of land for growing food will be encouraged nearer to urban communities via such mechanisms as ‘Capital Growth’.

LDF preparation

C. Boroughs should protect existing allotments. They should identify other potential spaces that could be used for commercial food production or for community gardening, including for allotments and orchards. Particularly in inner and central London innovative approaches to the provision of spaces may need to be followed, these could include the use of green roofs.

Research by Capital Growth in 2016 found:

- 28 of the 33 boroughs supporting community growing within their planning policy
- 19 of 33 boroughs reporting food growing in parks

The approach councils across London take towards developing food growing varies and in many cases it is characterised by partnerships with voluntary sector or local housing providers. In other areas, where these partnerships do not exist, local authorities have taken a leadership role, setting up projects directly and in many cases responsibility for driving food growing sits within the parks department.

**Food growing in parks**

Food growing in parks is established good practice; there are examples and a track record across the UK, with areas dedicated to growing food in parks ranging from local pocket parks to the Royal Parks Regents Park Allotment Garden.

As local authorities look for new models of managing parks, the prevalence of food growing is likely to increase due to the multiple benefits that this activity can provide.

To support the development of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy park masterplanning project, over 25 parks in London and nationwide were reviewed. Many of these were found to operate growing projects in conjunction with park buildings with previous amenity uses. These include Myatts Field (LB Lambeth), Mayow Park (LB Lewisham) and Walpole Park (LB Ealing). Refer to Table 8.1 case study 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Park</th>
<th>Walpole Park - Walled Kitchen Garden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Park</td>
<td>Historic ornamental gardens and parkland of Pitzhanger Manor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of park</td>
<td>Walpole Park is a 12-hectare public park; Grade 2 in the English Heritage Register of parks and gardens. The park facilities include a walled kitchen garden, a learning and education centre, a new playground, green open spaces, a café and toilet facilities. The restoration work in the walled kitchen garden included replanting many heritage varieties of fruit and vegetables. The new garden is maintained under the guidance of the park manager by two site-based gardeners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of local area</td>
<td>Walpole Park is located at the edge of Ealing Broadway behind Pitzhanger Manor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who runs it</td>
<td>Redbridge Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Drop-in gardening sessions Every Thursday 10am-12pm, Walled Garden, Walpole Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Heritage Lotter Fund/Ealing Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users</td>
<td>Horticulture students, volunteers and community groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8.2 - Case study: Maryon Park, RB Greenwich**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Park</th>
<th>Maryon – RB Greenwich</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Park</td>
<td>Small urban park – ex council nursery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of park</td>
<td>Formerly a quarry, it was once part of the estate of the Maryon Wilson family, former Lords of the Manor of Charlton. This large, hilly wooded site overlooks the Thames with the Green Chain Walk running through it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of local area</td>
<td>Royal Borough of Greenwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who runs it</td>
<td>Friend of Maryon and Maryon Wilson Parks volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Maryon Park Community Garden is a not-for-profit voluntary community project. The Friends of Maryon and Maryon Wilson Parks are a local voluntary community group who have an interest in the parks and two associated green spaces in the North Charlton. The community garden was set up on 2011 on the abandoned nursery for surrounding park. It is managed by a committee elected by the plot holders and garden volunteers. Maryon Park Community Garden was established by the Friends but is now run as an independent not-for-profit, council recognised community group. The Friends regularly help to clear the park of litter and rubbish and establish special projects including the ‘Maryon Park Community Garden’ and a ‘Wild Life Meadow’ in Maryon Wilson Parks. The Community Garden provides raised growing plots for local people who do not have gardens or for whom gardening can have health benefits and local retired people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>The Friends of Maryon Parks, with the help of Groundwork and grants from Capital Growth and the Olympic green heritage fund, Transform, transformed the abandoned Maryon Park plant nursery into a Community Food Growing Garden. The work started in April 2012, the garden opened in April 2013.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many other growing projects have been developed on previously abandoned areas, reclaiming them. Examples included Llammas Park (LB Ealing) and Maryon Park (LB Lewisham). In a number of outer London boroughs voluntary-sector led initiatives had been set up in ex-council nurseries and greenhouses no longer required by the council contractors. These have been leased to voluntary sector to manage as community resources, often with an enterprise element including Growing Communities (LB Hackney and Barking & Dagenham), Organiclea (LB Waltham Forest), Edible Landscapes (LB Haringey) and Sutton Community Farm (LB Sutton). Refer to Table 8.2 case study 2.

Examples of food growing in parks with open access were found but were more common in smaller pocket parks that are overlooked by residents or focusing on orchards or edible planting within the parks planting schemes. It should be noted that even within these types of schemes community engagement is required to encourage groups to harvest and care for the plants and trees. Refer to Table 8.3 case study 3.
Table 8.3 - Case study: Abbey Gardens, B Newham

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Park</th>
<th>Abbey Gardens – B Newham</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Park</td>
<td>Small urban park on historic monument site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of park</td>
<td>In 2006 a group of local residents formed Friends of Abbey Gardens to rescue the derelict site from vandalism and neglect. The soil was found to be contaminated, but with time and effort this setback was overcome and an artist designed shared ‘harvest garden’ was created in 30 long raised beds over the 80 by 20M site. Anyone is welcome to participate in the shared growing of flowers, fruit and vegetables. The group teaches food growing and gardening skills, provides locally grown produce shared communally and promotes health and wellbeing. The group now ensures that Abbey Gardens continues to be used and managed by local people as an open-access site and harvest garden which improves the local environment, helps to build a stronger community, gives people an understanding of locally grown food and serves as a venue for cultural events. The group holds regular free events, including a Summer Fair and a Harvest Festival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authority</td>
<td>Newham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who runs it</td>
<td>Friends of Abbey Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Funding received from Newham Council, People’s Health Trust, Chiltern Seeds and the Health Lottery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Local people, cultural events, workshops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8.8 FOOD GROWING IN BARKING & DAGENHAM

The borough has supported the principle of food growing as part of the Capital Growth campaign, through policy and through developing practical projects for a number of years.

The council worked with the Capital Growth campaign to support the demand for new food growing projects and as a result the set-up of new food growing sites in the borough, which was consistent with the demand shown from other outer London boroughs in this time. In total 42 projects have been registered with the initiative since 2009 with around 20 currently registered as active on the map (see Plan JSA-L700 & JSA-L701).

Simultaneously the demand for allotments in the borough has grown, as in most London areas, and currently nearly all sites operate a waiting list which the council has made efforts to reduce. The council have also worked to create some new sites within the borough and to re-locate other sites, which are now all independently managed.

More recently in the borough a number of more established voluntary/third sector organisations have supported new initiatives in the borough including:

- Growing Communities www.growingcommunities.org
- Trees for Cities www.treesforcities.org
- The Orchard Project www.theorchardproject.org.uk
- Company Drinks www.companydrinks.info

These organisations have considerable experience and access to resources and expertise, and provide a great way to build the local capacity of residents to get involved and in the longer term, to lead on park food growing initiatives.

#### Current provision and demand

The map below shows the distribution of food growing projects within the borough. Food growing initiatives are currently in place in the following parks. Potential exists to extend these operations and to develop initiatives in other parks.

**Central Park**

Growing Communities took over this site in 2011 and now run a successful branch of their social enterprise, which produces organic food for sale as well as providing training and learning opportunities.

**Barking Park**

This park has an orchard which recently has required significant maintenance delivered through training programmes led by The Orchard Project. In addition Company Drinks have taken over the Pavilion which they will use as part of their social enterprise, making drinks from foraged ingredients.

**St Chads Park**

A new orchard/woodland area has been planned and planting has begun, led by Trees for Cities.

**Valence Park**

A demonstration food garden has been developed here as part of the wider Heritage Lottery Fund project, which is coordinated by the Rangers Service and involves local volunteers in the maintenance.

#### Opportunity and considerations for food growing within the borough’s parks

There are different ways to characterise food growing and each of these offers different opportunities for parks. The following Table 8.4 sets out the key issues and this section goes onto to discuss the key issues that have been used to assess suitability for food growing for the borough’s parks. This typology is not exhaustive and the elements are not mutually exclusive but can support decision-making in terms of the type of growing activity that could be developed for each site.

#### Access

Most successful growing projects require a level of restricted access or protection to enable volunteers to benefit from the harvest and also to give access to water, shelter and amenities. While restricting access technically limits open access, it also creates benefits for those running and using the projects and is essential for commercial food production. Many limited access projects are often able to open their sites for visitors during park opening hours, if staff are available to unlock.

Given the size of the borough’s parks, limiting access means that limiting access to provide a high quality amenity, would have a limited impact on access to green space. The benefits of limiting access would also be seen by those using the site, and any agreement could ensure that open days and ‘open door’ policies were put in place by those using the site.

There is also scope to attach protected sites to any new or existing buildings within park spaces. This approach could include East End Country Park café, and the bowling Pavilion site in Central Park and Barking Park.

Where it is not appropriate to create protected or limited access growing space, the development of orchards and edible planting is a more viable option. This is currently the approach adopted in St Chads and Greatfields Park.

#### Community capacity and partnership opportunities

The borough does not currently have a large number of community groups with the capacity to take on to take on the management of land and open spaces. Conversely it does have a strong and growing demand for land to grow food and an interest in developing these projects. This is evidenced by the growing demand for allotments, the number of groups that have tried to start food growing projects. This interest is in part a consequence of the success of the Growing Communities Dagenham Farm project which has seen high number of participation in their structured programme.

To support greater community involvement in managing food growing projects, capacity could be built in a structured way through the leadership of third sector organisations and the council in developing projects. This approach is currently being adopted at the following sites:

- Barking Park Orchard – the Orchard Project has run training sessions.
- Barking Park Pavilion and other park foraging – led by Company Drinks.
- St Chads Orchard – recently facilitated by Trees for Cities.
**Table 8.4 - Relationship between categories of food growing and opportunities for parks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
<th>Potential partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Edible planting &amp; productive landscapes</td>
<td>Edibles plants incorporated into existing planting and maintenance schemes</td>
<td>Low maintenance, long term cost Builds a 'culture' of food growing Lends itself to foraging and walking groups</td>
<td>Limited educational opportunities Less engagement</td>
<td>Walking Group Company Drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Orchard/Forest Garden (e.g. Barking Park)</td>
<td>Planting of fruit trees, can include perennial under planting of edible plants</td>
<td>Provide opportunity for community engagement Can be open access More variety of food growing</td>
<td>Varieties require careful selection and maintenance plan Take a number of years to produce harvest</td>
<td>The Orchard Project Trees for Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Open access educational growing projects</td>
<td>These projects would be run by group or organisation to demonstrate benefits of food growing, types plants. Often hold regular volunteer days</td>
<td>Have potential for wider reach Good engagement tool/develop capacity/skills Encourage participation</td>
<td>Require resources to set up and run Open to the 'elements' (human&amp; animal) e.g. vandalism/interference Harvest can be taken so limited benefit for volunteers</td>
<td>Orchard Project Trees for Cities LBBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gated growing projects – educational (e.g. Valence House)</td>
<td>Run by group or organisation to demonstrate health and other benefits of food growing. Regular access but unlike above access is limited or the site is gated. Often hold regular volunteer days</td>
<td>Can often be ‘open’ for most of the time Works well in conjunction with a facility or building</td>
<td>Requires investment Removes land from public use although requirements for open days can be built in</td>
<td>Company Drinks LBBD Community groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Productive growing* (e.g. Central Park)</td>
<td>Growing spaces are larger scale to enable significant harvest that can be sold. Projects would be gated, with access through open days. Run by paid staff with experience but opportunity for training.</td>
<td>Generate revenue to help with sustainability. Provide healthy, locally produced</td>
<td>Needs capital investment. Most food ‘sold’ although many social enterprises will encourage residents to buy. Access has to be structured e.g. volunteering schemes, can require open days.</td>
<td>Growing Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Gated Growing – individual plots</td>
<td>Small allotments allocated to individuals or groups.</td>
<td>Generate limited income</td>
<td>Removes land from public use although requirements for open days can be built in.</td>
<td>Allotment Societies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: purely commercial food production within park land would require significant land to create enough yield, infrastructure for processing and would be not accessible to the public, limiting health, social and community activity. Creating profitable primary production food businesses within London is challenging due to land and housing prices and therefore they are not recommended or discussed within this document, as they would require significant feasibility and consultation. Instead the focus is on social enterprise models.

- Central Park nursery – taken over by Growing Communities Dagenham Farm.
- The Ranger Service – facilitates the Valence House allotment project.

These organisations offer significant potential partnerships for the council, that can help to develop food growing initiatives in parks and build on the aspirations outlined in the park masterplans.

**Resources**

The investment needed for physical infrastructure to create food growing projects is relatively low in comparison with other park uses, and various grants are available to cover these start-up costs. A bigger challenge is finding ways to resource the upkeep of the sites and to fund staffing and maintenance costs. Opportunities to resource an increase in food growing across the borough include:

- **Volunteers and volunteer led groups**

  Using volunteers and community groups is one way to reduce paid staff costs, but given the low level of volunteering capacity across the borough, this is a relatively high-risk approach. Volunteer run projects in large parks could create conflict in terms of use of produce and would require a defined agreement defining responsibility of site maintenance. In the longer term these projects would be more suited to smaller parks.

- **Council led schemes**

  In many boroughs and in Barking and Dagenham, there are projects that are led or facilitated by the council. The role of the council varies across London, but in Barking and Dagenham, this role is part of the Rangers Service remit.

- **Community & social enterprise**

  The council already benefits from two social/community enterprises that trade food and products to generate income from their activities. Increasing community and social enterprise in the borough and providing continued opportunities within parks, is a good way to resource these activities. Growing Communities use the sale of their produce to fund their head grower, although it should be noted that the additional activities that provide educational and other outcomes still require grant funding. If produce is to be sold at a level that generates significant income it is usually important that there is limited access to these sites. Other opportunities also exist to add value to the produce harvest. This is the Company Drinks model (the production of soft drinks using grown and foraged produce). This model is also being developed by the Orchard Project which produces apple juice and cider.

- **London-wide initiatives**

  There are many London wide organisations that access funding to set up growing projects within parks and many of these have developed models to continue the involvement of community groups. These organisations are able to draw down funding from other sources, but it should be noted that long term maintenance and exit strategies for when the funding ends are important.
Links with other key themes

It is worth noting that the inclusion of food growing in the masterplans for the borough’s parks cross reference with initiatives for play and events. Informal and natural play can be realised in food growing areas, in food growing and edible planting areas and used by parents for informal play activities.

Similarly a programme for events can focus on and utilise existing food growing initiatives. This can develop local involvement in existing initiatives or stimulate an appetite for new ones. Examples of this can be seen in other London parks, such as the popular Walthamstow Garden Party in Lloyds Park, where food and food growing has become an important theme alongside music and creative activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

General recommendations

- Opportunities for food growing projects within larger parks should be identified particularly those that could provide protected or limited access in order to increase scope for income generation and volunteering.
- Park plans should be flexible so that there is an opportunity to build into plans and any park developments, so there is opportunity to respond to growing demand in the future and adapt.
- Edible planting should be incorporated with interpretation and signage to encourage park users to interact with the scheme.
- Demand for structured food growing opportunities within parks should be met through development and building partnerships with social enterprise and voluntary organisations that have already started to work in the borough.
- Opportunities to support social enterprises and community enterprises that utilise food production, should be identified.
- Discussions with public health and local health partnerships, should consider the potential for social prescribing and commissioning to link to park based growing activities.
- Links should be made between development of play, events and food growing to build on the strong assets developing within the borough.

Specific recommendations

- Further opportunities within Central Park, including the Pavilion, should be explored to build on the successful Growing Communities Dagenham Farm and to make this park an exemplar of food growing within London.
- A new growing area should be developed within the Old Dagenham Park, working in partnership with a voluntary sector partnership and local residents.
- A plan for current and new orchards (including St Chads and Barking Park) is developed to ensure a good selection of species, maintenance and a programme of community engagement.
- Incorporation of salad and herb beds should be explored as part of the café provision/picnic area in Eastbrook End Country Park.
- Food growing areas are encouraged as part of the evolving masterplan for at Barking Park Pavilion.
- Residents and volunteers involved in Greatfields Park should be consulted about the inclusion of edible plants into the current flower beds.

NOTES

66 http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6502695238107136
68 https://www.sustainweb.org/growinghealth/evidence/
69 Growing Success
70 https://www.sustainweb.org/publications/capital_growth_monitoring_survey_2013/?section=
73 Part of Sustain; the alliance for better food and farming
74 https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan/london-plan-chapter-seven-londons-living-spac-23
9.1 PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Pitch Strategy 2016 guides the future provision and management of sports pitches and outdoor sports facilities in the Barking and Dagenham area in the context of national policy and local sports development criteria. The strategy updates the previous Playing Pitch Strategy produced in 2005. The new report provides an up to date assessment of the supply and demand for playing pitches (grass and artificial) which serve the following core sports: football, rugby union, cricket and hockey.

9.1.1 Football Summary

The supply of facilities dedicated to mini-football is poor in terms of quantity. There is an oversupply of adult pitches and these pitches should be re-marked as pitches for youth and mini football to meet growing demand in this area. There are specific site issues, driven predominantly by over use, unauthorised use and problems with drainage and maintenance regimes. There are also issues at those sites with ancillary accommodation that need to be addressed.

Parsloes Park has been identified as a strategic football hub due to the significant number of pitches and teams that use it as a home ground. There is a considerable need for this site to service the needs of adult football teams in the borough. However, issues such as unauthorised use, poor car parking and very poor ancillary facilities must be addressed.

Pitch quality is a problem across the borough with many clubs reporting that the condition of pitches is deteriorating, not improving. Council pitches in particular need to demonstrate improvements to maintenance regimes and marking/seeding, and begin to invest in better drainage systems.

The FA would like the Council, through the delivery of this strategy, to place a greater emphasis on protecting the quality of pitch surfaces through, low level fences and other measures to protect pitches from dog walkers and people riding across them on motorbikes and bicycles.

Valence Park has been identified as a site that could accommodate further pitches, which would be welcome with the expected increase in teams affiliated with Valence United FC.

One 3G is known to be in the planning process at the “Academy of Dreams” development at Manor Road Sports Ground. The Council would also be keen to see 3G pitch provision at Parsloes Park.

9.1.2 Cricket summary

There is a lower level of cricket participation in Barking and Dagenham than might be expected from national data such as the “Active People” survey. This may in part be explained by a comparative under-supply of facilities leading in turn to players having to play outside the borough.

There is a high number of wickets at the Eastbrook May and Baker sports club, which are unlikely to be all playable each season.

There are only three cricket clubs in the borough. The England Cricket Board carried out a National Player Survey that captured the demographic profile of its participants. It evidenced that 30% of the cricket playing population is drawn from the South Asian Community. East London boroughs are heavily represented in this segment.

There is a need to secure additional facilities through the parks development and masterplanning processes to encourage these groups and teams to develop further.

Ancillary facilities and particularly changing rooms such as St Chad’s Park pavilion are in need of refurbishment.

9.1.3 Rugby Union summary

There is an undersupply of rugby pitches in the borough that equates to a deficit of two pitches for adults and 16 pitches for juniors. Existing pitches need to be protected, carrying capacity improved where possible at existing pitches and also and opportunities created for training on 3G pitches to reduce pressure on grass pitches.

There is a significant shortage of junior rugby pitches and critically there is no single rugby site in the borough that can cater for both seniors and junior sections (due to inadequate changing facilities), which means most clubs have to separate training sessions across multi-sites. This lack of capacity can affect a club’s appeal and sustainability.

Central Park’s facilities have been identified as poor and in need of refurbishment to support the growing needs of Dagenham RFC. The club also needs more pitches.

There needs to be significant improvements to maintenance and silt drainage systems to improve playing surfaces.

9.1.4 Hockey summary

There are two active clubs in the borough and evidence of a rise in popularity for the sport locally.

9.1.5 Tennis summary

There is some evidence to support latent demand for tennis and potential club membership and this should be addressed through a Tennis Development Plan.

There is a lack of awareness about current facilities and opportunities to participate in tennis, and there exists a strong perception that participating in tennis is expensive, and likely to cost more than members of the public would be willing to pay.

It is recommended that the council seeks to identify funding to resurface the following courts and / or replacement of nets and repair / replace fencing:

- Barking Park – 2 courts only
- Central Park
- St Chads Park
- Old Dagenham Park
- Greatfields Park
The previous Tennis Development Plan highlighted the potential issues of lack of access to affordable tennis racquets and balls. A simple hire scheme running out of facilities at Barking Park and other park sites such as Central Park could address this issue. This initiative could link to a tennis equipment donation scheme which could redistribute equipment to potential users.  

### 9.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTDOOR PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY (OPPS)

The findings and recommendations of the Outdoor Playing Pitch Strategy (OPPS) have largely been incorporated into the nine masterplans prepared as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (POSS).

Table 9.1 sets out how the recommendations within the OPPS have been implemented in the POSS.

As part of the masterplanning process, all sports clubs listed as consultees within the adopted OPPS and were invited to review the POSS and specific park masterplans at the following events:

- **General POSS consultations**
  - Barking Library: March 18th
  - Dagenham Library: March 25th
- **Masterplan consultations**
  - Abbey Green, Barking Park, Greatfields Park and Mayesbrook Park - Barking Library: April 20th
  - Central Park, Eastbrookend Park, Old Dagenham Park, St Chad’s Park, Valence Park – Dagenham Library: April 27th.

Comments received from attendees and participants have been incorporated into the final revisions of park masterplan included in the Parks and Open Spaces strategy.

#### Table 9.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park</th>
<th>OPPS recommendations</th>
<th>POSS delivery through masterplanning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbey Green</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barking</td>
<td>• Reduce football pitches by 1no.</td>
<td>• 2 No. adult football pitches for use by Euro Dagenham FC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide new cricket square</td>
<td>• 1 new cricket square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>• Reduce adult football pitches by 1 no, Youth Pitches by 4 no and mini pitches by 2 no.</td>
<td>• Provide 2 no. junior rugby pitches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide new cricket square</td>
<td>• Provide new cricket square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide new junior rugby pitches</td>
<td>• Re-furbish tennis courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastbrookend</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatfields</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Upgrade tennis courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayesbrook</td>
<td>• Reduce adult football pitches by 3 no.</td>
<td>• Provide casual sports opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increase mini pitches by 3 no.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Dagenham</td>
<td>• Reduce adult pitches by 4 no.</td>
<td>• Reduce adult pitches by 4 no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Add 1 no. mini pitch</td>
<td>• Increase mini pitches by 3 no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsloes</td>
<td>• Develop site as football hub with 3G and enhanced supporting facilities</td>
<td>• Develop football hub with two no. 3G pitches and supporting facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduce adult football pitches</td>
<td>• Retain 7 existing grass pitches, possibly re-mark as min pitches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increase mini pitch provision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Promote cricket development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Re-surface tennis courts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Retain 7 existing grass pitches, possibly re-mark as min pitches.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Chad’s</td>
<td>• Reduce adult football pitches by 2 no.</td>
<td>• Reduce adult football pitches by 2 no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Add 1 no. mini pitch</td>
<td>• Add 1 no. mini pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Upgrade or re-purpose pavilion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Re-provide tennis courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valence</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Seek funding for pavilion refurbishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NOTES

75 Playing Pitch Strategy Report - App. 1
10.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

10.1.1 Introduction

In common with all London local authorities, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham recognises the huge contribution made by green infrastructure to the wellbeing of its residents and the success of its economy.

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) is one of the first London Boroughs to produce a Corporate Natural Capital Account for its parks and open spaces. The account has been developed using the quality and value assessment data of these spaces assembled for the borough’s Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

Barking and Dagenham is facing some significant issues. The population of the borough is set to increase by 48% over the next 20 years. Much of this new population will be accommodated in high density housing offering little or no access to private space. This will place an increasing level of demand on the borough’s existing green infrastructure assets. Health statistics in the borough present several challenges and the capacity of green space to support positive outcomes for health has been well established.

Barking and Dagenham’s green infrastructure assets will be placed under significant additional pressure to deliver a range of economic, social and environmental benefits at a time when budgets that aim to sustain the capacity of these assets to deliver benefits is under pressure. The Corporate Natural Capital Account for Barking and Dagenham has the capacity to demonstrate the enormous value of the borough’s open spaces for the well-being of residents. The total value of benefits accruing from these assets is estimated at more than £400 million in perpetuity. The costs of maintaining these open spaces are estimated at £100 million over the same period. Green infrastructure assets thus deliver a fourfold return on investment. This simple equation provides a business case for investment in green infrastructure.

10.1.2 Background – Natural Capital Accounting

Natural capital refers to the stock of natural assets, such as parks and open spaces that provide economic, social and environmental benefits to people. The Natural Capital Committee has developed a Corporate Natural Capital Accounting (CNCA) framework to capture the financial value of natural capital assets and to quantify the costs of sustaining these benefits over time. The Corporate Natural Capital Account provides a balance sheet that shows the benefits provided by natural capital against the cost of maintaining them. Production of a Corporate Natural Capital Account is in line with the recommendations from the Natural Capital Committee’s fourth report that “the government should actively promote corporate natural capital valuation, accounting and reporting; local Authorities and major infrastructure providers should ensure that natural capital is protected and improved” (pg. 4) (Natural Capital Committee, 2017).
10.1.3 What natural capital assets do LB Barking and Dagenham own?

Barking and Dagenham owns and manages over 460 hectares of natural capital assets, with a further 90 hectares coming on stream through the borough’s emerging regeneration schemes. As shown in Figure 10.1, the assets cover a wide range of habitat types, but the majority of this is amenity and neutral grassland and woodland. Refer to plan A1763-JSA-L005(pg.58).

10.1.4 What benefits do these assets provide to people?

Barking and Dagenham’s natural capital assets produce essential benefits for residents and the rest of society. These open spaces improve:

- Air quality by absorbing pollutants.
- The local climate by cooling during heatwaves.
- Resilience to flooding by slowing water flows.
- Water quality by filtering water.
- Opportunities for outdoor recreation in more natural environments.
- Habitat for a broad range of species.

These benefits make the Borough a more attractive place to live and work. Access to good quality greenspace has a positive influence on physical and mental health, social cohesion and educational attainment, and supports the prosperity of town centres. All of the benefits have a financial value.

Benefits captured within the CNCA for Barking and Dagenham include:

- Recreation: Nearly 3 million visits are made to Barking and Dagenham greenspaces each year
- Physical health benefits: Nearly 1.5 million visits involve physical activity that contributes to meeting health guidelines (over 30 minutes and of, at least, moderate intensity)
- Climate regulation: Barking and Dagenham’s woodland and grassland sequester over 500 tonnes of CO2 equivalent each year.

10.1.5 What are the benefits worth in monetary terms each year?

The value of benefits delivered by natural capital assets is estimated to be £419m: this includes the value of recreational visits to greenspaces, physical health benefits (avoided health costs) supported by greenspaces, and climate regulation (carbon sequestration) benefits. These benefits represent external values arising to the rest of society, rather than financial values to the Council itself.

Using available data and valuation evidence, this report estimates the monetary value of some of the largest benefits that natural capital assets within Barking and Dagenham provide. These include:

- Recreation: Visits made to Barking and Dagenham greenspaces have an estimated value of over £11m per year.
- Physical health benefits: The value (through the avoided health costs of inactivity) of the physical activity supported by Barking and Dagenham’s greenspaces is nearly £2m per year.
- Climate regulation: Carbon sequestered by Barking and Dagenham’s woodland and grassland is valued at over £30,000 per year.

It is reasonable to expect the benefits above to be delivered to at least these levels permanently and consistently over time and when valued in perpetuity are worth £419m. This is the figure that is used for their valuation in the balance sheet below.

While significant, these values are partial, and likely to be a significant underestimate of the total value of total benefits. They omit services such as air quality regulation and flood risk reduction, and in particular mental health benefits. The full measurement of health benefits is considered a major gap in the current natural capital account for two reasons.

First, it is likely that many visitors to green spaces (not only those who actively engage in 30 mins of exercise of at least moderate intensity), are gaining physical health benefits through exposure to natural environments. Secondly, it can be reasonably assumed that the mental health benefits are likely to be as significant, if not more significant, than physical health benefits. A significant amount of evidence suggests that exposure and access to the natural environment can produce positive mental health benefits including stress reduction and mental health promotion (e.g. eftec & CRESR, 2013; UK NEA, 2014; Gascon, 2015), the provision of opportunities to engage in mental-health enhancing physical activity (e.g. Hunter et al., 2015; Lachowycz & Jones, 2011) and the encouragement of positive social interactions and enhancement of community cohesion (e.g. Holtan et al., 2014; Weinstein et al. 2015). While mental illnesses represent the largest category of NHS ‘disease’ expenditure in the UK, the quantified evidence to measure the mental health benefits of exposure to the natural environment and estimate its value, remains underdeveloped.

10.1.6 What does it cost to maintain these monetary benefits?

Working with LBBD’s finance officers, the costs to the council of maintaining the natural assets it owns have been estimated. The maintenance cost account has been prepared on the basis of the total costs required to maintain all the services provided by parks and open spaces, including operating, cleaning and maintaining buildings and fixed assets (e.g. playground equipment) as well as natural elements such as woods and grassland. The table below provides a breakdown of costs by type.

The estimate of £3.4m is an annual maintenance cost in perpetuity equating to an ongoing liability of £108m in present value terms. This is the estimated total cost of maintaining the natural capital in parks and green spaces into the future. These maintenance costs cover the whole borough and represent the on-going maintenance liability on the balance sheet.

**Table 10.1 - Breakdown of costs by type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Annual Cost (£m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payroll related</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds maintenance</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recharges</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc &amp; other costs</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£3.4m</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Results for each expenditure have been rounded, and so may not add to total.

10.1.7 Natural capital balance sheet for LB Barking and Dagenham

The estimated benefits provided by open spaces in LBBD and the costs of maintaining them are shown in a natural capital balance sheet. The capitalised values are presented in present value terms, discounted (using HM Treasury-recommended discount rates over 100yrs) and including a residual value element for benefits beyond 100 years. Refer to Table 10.2.

10.1.8 Conclusions and recommendations

The CNCA for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham highlights the significant values delivered by the borough’s green infrastructure assets. It also organises data about open spaces into an accounting framework that can be updated each year, linking physical assets to their benefits and economic values, and maintenance costs.
10.2 INTRODUCTION

This report presents a Corporate Natural Capital Account (CNCA) of the parks and open spaces of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham (LBBD). The CNCA aims to provide LBBD with an improved understanding of the value of these areas to its residents, in order to support better decisions about their future management.

10.2.1 Background

LBBD’s natural capital, also referred to as green infrastructure 7, is a significant contributor to sustaining Barking & Dagenham as a healthy place in which to live, and as an attractive place for work and business. In order to maximise the benefits accruing from green infrastructure, the Council is in the process of reviewing and updating its Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (POSS).

Increased public budget pressures suggest that future management and funding arrangements for green infrastructure assets covered by the strategy are uncertain. In parallel, the Borough will see significant population growth which will result in increasing demand for the benefits and services provided by green infrastructure, putting further pressure on its capacity to sustain and enhance the quality of life enjoyed by residents.

As a result, LBBD has a need to understand the costs and benefits of the green infrastructure it manages in more detail. The CNCA framework provides a strong basis for developing an understanding of the value of green infrastructure, and this in turn can be used to inform decision-making around future funding and governance for green infrastructure. In particular, CNCA allows for better alignment between the non-statutory service of natural capital asset management, and LBBD’s mandatory duties and purposes (e.g. health and social care, regeneration and land-use planning, transport, environmental protection).

In the context of Barking & Dagenham, the application of the CNCA approach is aimed at helping to deliver four objectives:

- Develop a CNCA for LBBD’s natural capital and green infrastructure assets, using the asset register developed as part of the emerging Parks & Open Spaces Strategy. This will provide the Council with a tool for understanding the benefits and costs associated with natural capital assets and allow the Council to make informed decisions about how to allocate scarce revenue resources, based on ‘outcomes’ data.
- Support the development of the borough’s emerging Parks & Open Spaces Strategy and align LBBD’s green infrastructure policy with the London Infrastructure Plan and other emerging open space policy and best practice.
- Review options and develop an outline business case for future management, funding and governance arrangements for LBBD’s green infrastructure assets based on the future funding and governance options set out in the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy.
- Support the delivery of green infrastructure actions identified in the adopted strategy.

10.2.2 Report structure

This report summarises information reported to LBBD within the CNCA Excel workbook (LBBD CNCA Workbook.xls). The workbook holds all of the spatial and habitat data behind the account, as well as cost and benefit calculations and should be used in conjunction with this report. The report is structured as follows:

- Section 10.3: A brief background of the CNCA approach.
- Section 10.4: The natural capital asset register for LBBD.
- Sections 10.5 – 10.7: The physical flow account, the monetary account, and the maintenance account for LBBD, respectively.
- Section 10.8: Conclusions and recommendations.

The report is also supported by annexes:

- Appendix 7: A more detailed explanation of the CNCA approach; and
- Appendix 8: A detailed overview of methods and sources used to develop the CNCA

10.3 BACKGROUND TO CNCA

This natural capital account for LBBD follows the framework for corporate natural capital accounting (CNCA) developed for the Natural Capital Committee (efect et al., 2015). The purpose of the CNCA framework is to help organisations make better decisions about the natural capital assets (or green infrastructure) that they manage. It does this by compiling data and information on the natural capital assets, their benefits and costs of maintaining them, in a single accounting structure, providing clear and explicit information necessary for long-term management. This information is critical to making informed decisions concerning strategic priorities within an organisation, such as prioritising investments and budgets.

By recording this information in a systematic way, CNCA statements will help LBBD:

(i) demonstrate the value open spaces provide to society (even if the value of only a subset of such benefits can be measured)
(ii) reveal who receives such benefits and how these can help with the delivery of the statutory services of the Council
(iii) improve decision-making by making clearer the link between the environmental management and the economic performance (value) of natural capital assets

An important aspect of CNCA is that it creates a baseline statement of natural asset extent, condition and value which is used as a reference point against which the future status of natural capital can be monitored and reported in subsequent reporting periods. As this is the first CNCA for LBBD, this account will provide the first baseline for the period 2016/17.

The account can also provide the basis for developing a business case for future management and funding arrangements and for the leveraging of investment. Annex 1 provides further information on the CNCA approach, including an explanation of the different stages of the process and key terms.

---

Table 10.2 - Natural capital balance sheet for LBBD (15 May 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Private Value (PV £m)</th>
<th>External Value (PV £m)</th>
<th>Total Value (PV £m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline Value</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Gains/(Losses)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions/(Disposals or Consumption)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revaluations and Adjustments</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Asset Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Provisions</td>
<td>(108)</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>(108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Maintenance Provisions</td>
<td>(108)</td>
<td>(108)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Net Maintenance Provisions</td>
<td>(108)</td>
<td>(108)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Net Natural Capital Assets</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>310</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: This balance sheet is based on the natural capital account which provides adequate coverage of the benefits from LBBD’s assets for the purposes of developing a CNCA. Further iterations of the account might aim to extend this coverage, for example, by including estimates for benefits not currently covered, such as mental health benefits. Asset values and liabilities are reported in present value (PV) terms calculated as the discounted flow of future value over 100 years, using a variable discount rate as suggested by Green Book Guidance (2003 & updated 2017): 3.5% for 0-30 years, 3.0% for 31-75, and 2.5% for 76-100 years.

This is the first attempt at a natural capital account for the entire borough. As a result, there are likely to be opportunities for further learning and refinement of the account and to expand the account to cover additional benefits, such as improvements to air quality and flood risk reduction. However, the existing results show that even without valuation of all important benefits, the values delivered by open spaces are substantial, with net benefits being approximately four times the cost of maintenance.

The broad range of benefits accruing to society from natural capital in cities such as London are now understood at a greater level of detail than ever before. Natural capital data will inform future strategic decision-making around planning, regeneration and health promotion. This CNCA provides a template for future work by local authorities in the assessment of the value of their green infrastructure assets. Equipped with this best practice guidance, land managers will have a robust evidence base to support the future management of natural capital assets.
10.4 NATURAL CAPITAL ASSET REGISTER

The natural capital asset register shows the natural capital assets, their size, and where data is available, their condition.

This Section describes how the project team and staff in LBBD developed the asset register, giving an inventory that holds details of the stocks of natural capital assets it owns and/or manages.

10.4.1 Development

The account asset register for LBBD has been compiled by allocating the sites identified within the Open Space Assessment to the broad habitat types (accounting units) used in the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (2011) (see Table 10.3 for a list of these).

The asset register is largely complete in terms of the spatial extent of assets based on the spaces defined in the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy. But there are gaps, largest of which are likely to be in relation to green spaces such as ‘Green Belt’ land, allotments and cemeteries that were not included within the original Open Space Assessment. Further data on these sites can be sought, but priorities for filling gaps should be based on its potential to inform management, i.e. whether the data is of relevance to fulfilling the objectives of decision-makers.

10.4.2 Results

Table 10.3 presents the natural capital asset register for LBBD, organised by greenspace typology as identified in the London Plan (2015) and the accounting units for CNCA. The register includes the overall extent (area in hectares (ha)) of different types of habitat, as well as the proportion in ‘Good’, ‘Fair’, or ‘Poor’ condition.

As shown, amenity grassland (184 ha) and neutral grassland (110 ha) comprise the largest area of habitat for each type of park. District Parks make up the largest area (319 hectares), followed by Local Parks (89 hectares). Half of District Parks are ‘Good’ quality (50%), and similar proportion for Local Parks ‘Fair’ (53%). Small Open Spaces have the lowest proportion of area classified as ‘Good’ quality (33%).

Quality is based on the methodology set out in the Open Spaces Assessment, which included an assessment of the quality of each greenspace against a set of criteria based on the 2003 assessment of greenspace quality.

As further iterations of LBBD’s account are completed over time, the asset register can be used to track the extent and quality of natural capital assets against this baseline position. Refer to Table 10.3.

10.4.3 Data gaps and limitations

The most important asset register data gap that could be addressed by further research is: incorporate areas that are not currently included as part of the Open Space Assessment (including ‘Green Belt’ land, allotments, street trees, and cemeteries). These areas may contribute significantly to the benefits provided by green infrastructure in LBBD, including carbon sequestration and air pollution mitigation. They may also provide significant values to large populations that have few alternative greenspaces available.

Table 10.3: LBBD natural capital asset register, 2017 data (hectares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Accounting unit</th>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Parks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity grassland</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral grassland</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrub &amp; herbaceous planting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland Scrub</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street trees and isolated trees</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water body</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water margin</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (area)</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Parks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity grassland</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral grassland</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrub &amp; herbaceous planting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland Scrub</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street trees and isolated trees</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water body</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water margin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (area)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small Open Spaces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity grassland</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral grassland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrub &amp; herbaceous planting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland Scrub</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street trees and isolated trees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water body</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water margin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (area)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.5 PHYSICAL FLOW ACCOUNT

Physical flow accounts show the annual flows of environmental (ecosystem) services provided by natural capital in biophysical terms. This Section describes how we developed this account for the services captured in the CNCA for LBBD.

10.5.1 Development

Following the compilation of asset, area and quality information in the asset register, the physical flow account reports the estimated annual benefits provided from these assets. The account reports the annual flow in the baseline year 2016/17 (Table 10.4). It currently captures a subset of benefits from the assets, including:

- Recreation (focusing on the number of visits to greenspaces).
- Physical health benefits (welfare benefits from exercise undertaken outdoors).
- Climate regulation (focusing on tonnes of carbon sequestered).

These benefits have been selected in order to cover those that are expected to be amongst the most significant in the LBBD account, and where data is available. The methods for estimating each of these benefits in physical terms are as follows:

- Recreation -- The number of visits to sites within LBBD has been estimated using the Outdoor Recreation Valuation Tool (ORVal) developed by the University of Exeter for Defra. ORVal is an online tool that allows users to explore the recreational use and welfare value of accessible open spaces in England. The tool is based on the nationally representative Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey which uses interviews with a weekly quota sample, conducted since 2009. This data is aggregated, using population weights, to estimate visits to open spaces across the whole of England. The tool takes into account substitutes when estimating the recreational values of a given site, e.g. existence of parks nearby. The model can also estimate what proportion of visits to a site will be new (additional) or displaced from elsewhere, when the quality/accessibility of a site changes.

ORVal estimates that 2.9 million visits are made to LBBD parks and open spaces each year. These results are subdivided by socio-economic groups:

- 0.9 million visits are from the AB socio-economic group (SEG)
- 1.0 million from C1
- 0.5 from C2
- 0.5 million from DE

A particular point of interest is how the proportion of visits from each SEG aligns with LB Barking and Dagenham’s population breakdown. Comparing the breakdown to data released from the 2011 census (ONS, 2011) shows that the smallest category (AB), which makes up around 12% of LBBD population, is making nearly the largest number of visits (~31%), and the largest category (DE), around 33% of the LBBD population, is making the least amount of visits (~17% of total). It should be noted that methods for estimating numbers of visits by social groups are still under development in ORVal, and so this information has greater uncertainty than the overall visitor numbers. However, LBBD may find it useful to track this information in future, as changes in the make-up of visits can have implications for health inequalities and may help to assess whether resources are evenly distributed across the Borough, and that certain parts suffer from poor access.

- Physical health -- UK Active (2014) ranks LBBD as one of the most inactive boroughs in the country (138 out of 150), and the lowest in London. This survey estimates that 35% of the borough’s population is inactive which generates a cost of inactivity of over £23m per annum. Clearly this is an area for improvement and the issue is not solely one of extent of green space provision. For example, the LB of Islington has the lowest percentage of green space of all London Boroughs (8%), yet has one of the lowest inactive rates in the country (20%). It is estimated that over half the recreational visits within the borough are active (51.5%, White et al (2016)) giving an estimate of 1.5m active visits per year. Of these, around 39% are undertaken by ‘active people’ who meet weekly recommended guidelines for physical activity (white et al., 2016).
- Climate regulation -- The average UK carbon sequestration rates for the three main habitat types (i.e. woodland, amenity grassland, and neutral grassland) have been applied to the area of each habitat (as measured and compiled based on LBBD as part of this study). Woodland is associated with total carbon equivalent (CO2te) sequestration of over 100 tonnes per year, while amenity and neutral grassland are associated with over 359 tonnes and 65 tonnes respectively.

Further details on sources, methods, and assumptions for each calculation are provided in Appendix B.

The physical flow account, which presents the above in physical units, is the basis for calculating the economic value in monetary terms, in the monetary account.

10.5.2 Results

Table 10.4 shows the physical flow account for the natural capital benefits that are within the scope of this CNCA.

10.5.3 Data gaps and limitations

The unquantified areas to consider for research to further develop the natural capital physical flow account are:

- For some services provided by natural capital, data is not readily available. For example, air pollution mitigation and water flow attenuation (for flood risk management) from different sites in LBBD would require modelling that is not in the scope of this project.
- Recreational visit numbers may represent a significant underestimate as they do not include those by children under the age of 16 (as per the parameters of the MENE survey).
- The impact that open spaces and greenspaces have by enhancing property values is likely to be significant (e.g. in the hundreds of millions), however due to the scope of this project and the complexities in modelling the number of properties within GIS, a full analysis for the Borough was not undertaken. With adequate GIS knowledge and data layers, this analysis could be carried out in future. If this benefit is used in future, overlap with other types of benefits need to be assessed.

Table 10.4 - LBBD physical flow account (various units) (2016 - 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Baseline year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreation SEG AB visits</td>
<td>million visits per year</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation SEG C1 visits</td>
<td>million visits per year</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation SEG C2 visits</td>
<td>million visits per year</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation SEG DE visits</td>
<td>million visits per year</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of visits</td>
<td>million visits per year</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health Number of active visits</td>
<td>million visits per year</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate regulation Total carbon dioxide equivalent sequestered from woodland</td>
<td>CO2e per year</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate regulation Total carbon dioxide equivalent sequestered from amenity grassland</td>
<td>CO2e per year</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate regulation Total carbon dioxide equivalent sequestered from neutral grassland</td>
<td>CO2e per year</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.6 MONETARY FLOW ACCOUNT

The monetary flow account shows the economic value of the benefits from natural capital that accrue to the organization which owns / manages the assets (private benefits) and those that accrue to others (external benefits). This section describes how the monetary flow account for LBBD was developed, building on the physical flow account presented in Section 10.5.

10.6.1 Development

The advantage of using the UK NEA habitat types in the natural capital asset registry (as in Table 10.3) is that it is an established classification that aligns with the evidence base, developed as part of the UK NEA (2011), and used in a number of Services Guide' (Defra, 2007) and supplementary guidance to the Green Book on valuing environmental impacts (HM Treasury and Defra, 2012). Further, it is easily reconciled with the Natural Capital Committee’s classification of broad habitats. The habitat classifications therefore help in linking the physical flow account to the valuation evidence used to construct the monetary flow account.

Monetary estimates were developed as follows:

- **Recreation** – The recreational value of trips to Barking and Dagenham’s greenspaces was estimated using ORVal. Each year the 2.9 million visits made to greenspaces in LBBD are estimated to provide a value of over £11 million. Of this total:
  - around £3 million are associated with SEG AB
  - nearly £4 million with C1
  - £4 million are associated with C2 and DE.
  This estimated value does not take into consideration visits by tourists and children under the age of 16 and is thus an underestimate. Nonetheless, the assessment highlights that LBBD’s open spaces provide significant recreational benefits to the local population.

- **Physical health** – To estimate the value of the health benefits provided by LBBD’s parks and open spaces, UKActive estimates the proportion of LBBD’s population that is inactive (approx. 35%) and the annual cost to the local economy as a result of physical inactivity, (over £23 million), which includes treating diseases and sickness / absences from work. These figures were used to estimate the average costs per inactive person in the borough (£326) (UKActive, 2014). The physical activity guideline of 5 visits per week translates to a total of 260 active visits per year. Therefore, a site can be assumed to support the entire physically active lifestyle for one person with every 260 active visits it receives. For LBBD, an estimated 1,491,641 active visits are made, meaning LBBD’s sites have the capacity to support the entire physically active lifestyle of 5,737 people per year (1,491,641 / 260). The value of these active lifestyles can be inferred using avoided medical costs of inactivity, an estimated £326 for LBBD. This gives an estimate of the value of physical activity undertaken outdoors, in terms of avoided health costs, of over £1.9 million per year.

It should be noted that it is not being assumed that active residents would not partake in physical activity if the greenspaces did not exist, rather this estimate is highlighting the value of physical activity undertaken in, and support by, Barking and Dagenham’s greenspaces.

- **Climate regulation** – DECC guidance (2014) was followed to estimate the value of carbon sequestered. The average sequestration rates for the three main habitat types presented in the physical flow account were coupled with DECC non-traded carbon values. The total estimated value of carbon sequestered is just over £33k per year, with carbon sequestered by amenity and neutral grassland representing the vast majority of this value (£27k). The comparatively low values for carbon sequestration suggests that it is not currently a significant service provided by sites within the Borough. However, it is possible that other habitat not included within the sites covered by this assessment (e.g. ‘Green Belt’ land) may provide a more important climate regulation service.

A detailed description of the methods and sources used to estimate monetary values is provided in Annex 7 and 8.

10.6.2 Results

Table 10.5 presents the monetary flow account for LBBD. The value of each natural capital benefit has been estimated based on information compiled as part of the physical flow account.

| Table 10.5 - LBBD monetary flow account (various units) (2016-2017) |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Spatial accounting unit by natural capital benefit | Indicator | Units | Baseline year |
| Recreation (Total value of visits) | Em per yr | 11.2 |
| SEG AB | Em per yr | 3.3 |
| SEG C1 | Em per yr | 3.9 |
| SEG C2 | Em per yr | 1.9 |
| SEG DE | Em per yr | 2.0 |
| Physical health | Value of physical activity supported (avoided costs of inactivity) | Em per yr |
| Climate regulation (Total value of carbon sequestered) | Em per yr |
| Woodland | Em per yr | 0.03 |
| Amenity and neutral grassland | Em per yr | 0.02 |

The figure of £13m (£11.2m + £1.9m + £0.03m) is used as an estimate of annual benefits, in perpetuity, which have a total value over time of £419m in present value terms (see Table 10.7). It should be noted that the recreational values and health benefits are considered additive, even though they both relate to recreational visits. This is because the former is a reflection of the increased welfare of individuals who make recreational visits. The latter is based on the avoided health treatment costs within the healthcare system as a result of physical activity undertaken during recreational visits.

10.6.3 Data gaps and limitations

The monetary flow account presented in this Section should be interpreted in the context of the following key limitations:

- The account does not assess all services provided by LBBD’s natural capital assets but it does include several of those deemed to be most significant to urban greenspace. Other services which likely provide important values, such as pollution mitigation (air quality), biodiversity, and water flow attenuation, are not currently assessed in the account. These services were not measured due to their being beyond the scope of the study (i.e. the detailed air quality modelling required to derive physical values for pollution mitigation was not in scope), a lack of scientific evidence (e.g. for flood risk mitigation), and a lack of economic valuation evidence (e.g. for biodiversity). It is likely that to some extent these services are partially captured in the value of other ecosystem services that they support. Overall, the account conveys significant values attributable to LBBD’s natural capital assets, and subsequent iterations can build on these estimates and provide a more up to date and uniform picture of the account.

- Recreational values may represent a significant underestimate as values do not include benefits to non-locals and children under the age of 16.

10.7 NATURAL CAPITAL MAINTENANCE COST ACCOUNT

Monetary cost accounts show the spending on maintaining natural capital assets. The information reported comes from the existing financial accounts that include LBBD’s management of the assets. This Section describes how we developed the maintenance cost account for LBBD’s parks and open spaces.

10.7.1 Development

The benefits of parks and open spaces are an output of other forms of capital as well as natural capital. For example, a park provides benefits from its vegetation (natural capital), but also from the work of park keepers (human capital) and infrastructure like paths (built capital) that maintain natural capital and allow access to it.

The maintenance cost account has been prepared on the basis of the total costs required to maintain all the services provided by parks and open spaces, such as operating, cleaning and maintaining changing facilities, playground equipment maintenance, etc. as well as managing natural elements such as woods and grassland.

Discussion with LBBD’s finance team identified the type of expenses and the cost centres which were relevant for capturing the maintenance costs of parks and open spaces. Twenty one cost centres under the summary financial accounts hierarchy of ‘Parks General’ and ‘Parks and Open Spaces’ were identified, providing a comprehensive picture of maintenance activity. Extract reports were produced for all income and expenses in the financial year 2016/17. Only full reports for the previous financial year only were available for the analysis, creating a degree of uncertainty in respect of making an estimate of long-run maintenance costs. This was addressed in two ways.
10.8 CONCLUSIONS

10.8.1 Natural Capital Balance Sheet

The final output of a CNCA is the natural capital balance sheet. It shows the benefits of natural capital assets under ‘Assets’ and the maintenance costs under ‘Liabilities’, it aims to give a reasonable representation of material costs and of a subset of benefits. This Section summarises the account evidence for the assets and benefits that are in within the scope of the CNCA for LBBD.

Based on the information compiled for the account, Table 10.7 sets out a natural capital balance sheet for LBBD’s parks and open spaces. Asset values and liabilities are reported in present value (PV) terms, calculated in perpetuity, as the discounted flow of future value. This method is based on the concept that the value of an asset is the total value of the benefits it can provide over its lifetime. The values that accrue in different future periods are discounted so that they are expressed in present value terms through discounting at a rate recommended in the HM Treasury Green Book (2003 & update 2011).

The asset values were calculated by first aggregating all annual values presented in Table 10.5. Discounted annual costs were then subtracted to arrive at a net value.

### Table 10.7 - LBBD natural capital balance sheet (£)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Private Value (PV £m)</th>
<th>External Value (PV £m)</th>
<th>Total Value (PV £m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NC Balance Sheet at 15 May 2017</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets</strong></td>
<td>419</td>
<td>419</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Gains/(Losses)</td>
<td></td>
<td>419</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions/(Disposals or Consumption)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revaluations and Adjustments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>419</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Provisions</td>
<td>419</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Maintenance Provisions (108)</td>
<td>nil (108)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Maintenance Provisions (108)</strong></td>
<td>(108)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Natural Capital Assets</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Asset values and liabilities are reported in PV terms calculated as the discounted flow of future value over 100 years, using a variable discount rate as suggested by Green Book Guidance (2003 & updated 2011): 3.5% for 0-30 years, 3.0% for 31-75, and 2.5% for 76-100 years.

The rows in the asset and liability parts of the balance sheet mirror a financial balance sheet. The balance sheet gives a reasonable representation of material costs and a subset of benefits from parks and open spaces in LBBD.

One useful insight that CNCA provides is a comparison between the values for natural assets as recognised in the financial accounts, and the more comprehensive valuation provided by the CNCA. Valuation data was obtained from the Fixed Asset Register for 18 of the 28 in-scope parks and open spaces, covering all the larger parks. The total value of the land was recorded as £8.1m, which does not include the value of manufactured capital such as facilities and play equipment constructed on these sites. This valuation represents less than 2% of the value of benefits evaluated in this study.

10.8.2 Key results

The balance sheet gives a reasonable representation of material costs and a subset of benefits from parks and open spaces in LBBD. The account details the benefits delivered which accrue to the population of LBBD and, in the case of carbon sequestration, the rest of society. The services captured within the account include:

- **Recreation** – The number of visits to sites within LBBD have been assessed using the ORVal tool which estimates that 2.9 million visits are made to the borough’s parks and open spaces each year. The analysis suggests that the annual value of this recreation is over £11 million per year.
- **Physical health** – The analysis estimates that nearly 1.5 million active visits are made to LBBD parks and open spaces each year, helping some 6,000 people meet recommended physical activity guidelines. The value of this physical activity is estimated at nearly £2 million in avoided health costs of inactivity per year.
- **Climate regulation** – The average sequestration rates for the three main habitat types (i.e. woodland, amenity grassland, and neutral grassland) have been applied to the area of each habitat. The total value of carbon sequestered by these habitats is estimated to be over £30k per year.

Development of the maintenance cost account found that the costs of maintaining the natural capital in parks and open spaces that deliver these services are estimated at £3.4 million per annum.

The results show that the net value of natural capital assets is estimated at over £3 million. The benefits from open spaces in LBBD are over four times the costs of maintaining them in perpetuity. This valuation is also significantly greater than the gross book value of the land (at around £8m).

The CNCA also shows that the costs of managing natural capital in LBBD’s parks and open spaces appear in financial accounts of the Council, but the resulting health, wellbeing and economic benefits for the population of Barking & Dagenham do not.

10.8.3 Discussion

The CNCA for LBBD highlights the significant values delivered by natural capital assets such as parks and open spaces. It also provides a valuable resource in terms of organising and linking data on natural capital and communicating those benefits that are invisible, (if only the financial accounts are considered).

LBBD is only the second London Borough to formally create a baseline CNCA for its parks and open spaces (there have been partial benefit assessments developed for other Boroughs). As a result, there are likely to be opportunities for further learning and refinement of the account, but the results show that the values delivered by parks and open spaces are substantial (with net benefits around four times the costs) and can be considered as a good guide to inform decision-makers.

The costs of maintaining the services delivered by natural capital have been estimated at £3.4m per annum. A summary of the breakdown of costs by category is shown in Table 10.6 below.

### Table 10.6 - LBBD natural capital maintenance cost account (2016/17)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Annual Cost (£m)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payroll related</td>
<td>1.476</td>
<td>Costs of labour time spent on parks activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds maintenance</td>
<td>1.034</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recharges</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>0.234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc &amp; other costs</td>
<td>0.415</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.401m</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figure of £3.4m is used as an estimate of annual maintenance cost in perpetuity, equating to an on-going liability of £108m in present value terms (see liabilities in the account in Table 10.7). This is an estimate of the total costs of maintaining the borough’s parks and open spaces into the future.

10.7.3 Data gaps and limitations

The CNCA encourages a deeper understanding of natural capital maintenance activity by promoting the separation of maintenance costs in respect of legal obligations and in respect of other requirements. In the context of parks and open spaces, it was recognised many legal obligations are likely to relate to the safety of equipment and facilities provided rather than requirements to maintain natural assets per se. This is an area that could provide useful insights and could be worth considering for future enhancements to the accounts.
The development of the account has confirmed that there is enough information available to develop a meaningful account that highlights the significance of values from the natural capital assets that are not captured in conventional financial accounts. This account can be updated over time, providing a useful resource for future monitoring, decision-making and analysis.

It should be noted that the aggregation of recreation and physical health values has the potential to double-count some of the benefits, as some people partake in recreation actively enough to generate health benefits. However, the use of avoided health costs to value the physical activity undertaken within greenspaces reduces this double-counting to a negligible level, so it is not considered a significant inaccuracy.

This iteration of the balance sheet aims to establish a baseline against which gains and losses can be calculated in future accounting periods. Further iterations of the account may also extend the coverage of:

- The whole account, by including natural capital assets other than parks and open spaces (e.g. street trees, private land)
- The monetary account, by including further benefits, such as air quality regulation
- Financial returns from natural capital that may already be captured by the Council in terms of rents, or captured by others in terms of property values

These could change the balance sheet position.

The physical and monetary flow accounts can be used to track how and why natural capital asset values change over time, including the influence of management decisions by LBBD. For example, changes in the number of visitors to the open spaces, which could be due to an increase in local population, changes in their habits and/or changes in the quality of or access to the open spaces, would be reflected in the physical flow account. This would then result in a change in the monetary flow account where the number of visitors is multiplied by the value per recreational visit. A change in the value per recreational visit would only be reflected in the monetary flow account. Both of these changes would feed into the balance sheet and their interpretation could be used to identify opportunities and risks to better manage the factors that affect asset values.

10.8.4 Data gaps and limitations

An important omission of data could be addressed by further research to develop the natural capital asset register to include areas within LBBD that are not currently included as part of the Open Space Assessment (including ‘Green Belt’ land, private land, allotments, and cemeteries). These areas may contribute significantly to the benefits provided by green infrastructure in LBBD, including additional carbon sequestration and air pollution mitigation. They may also provide significant values to large populations that have few alternative greenspaces available.

The account does not encompass all of the benefits delivered by natural capital assets, although it does include those considered to be most significant. Further research could cover:

- The calculation of air quality regulation provided by habitats through pollution absorption. Methods for developing these estimates are currently being further developed through work-led by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, involving eftec, for the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Results from this work can inform future iterations of this account.
- The flood risk reduction benefits provided by natural habitats (which require local modelling) could also be estimated.
- The impact that open spaces and greenspaces have on enhanced property values is likely to be significant (e.g. in the hundreds of millions of pounds). However, due to the scope of this project and the complexities in modelling the number of properties in GIS, a full analysis of property value impacts was not undertaken. With adequate GIS knowledge and data layers, this analysis could be carried out in future, but care would be needed to assess potential double-counting.
- Recreational values may represent a significant underestimate as values do not include benefits to non-locals and children under the age of 16.
- This study provides for an estimate of natural capital maintenance costs and opportunities for refinement have been identified and will be shared with LBBD’s finance team.
- Whether some of the health benefits identified (the avoided health costs) are actually private values to LBBD (in that they are avoided health treatment costs that would have to be met from the social care budget of LBBD) requires further discussion. Evidence is not currently available to estimate what proportion of the avoided health costs would have to be met by LBBD and what proportion from other sources (e.g. the NHS for most treatments, and employers for lost workforce productivity) in order to attribute them between the private and external parts of the account. Further investigation could try to establish whether evidence is available to attribute benefits in this way.

It should be noted that many of the services provided are co-dependent or intrinsically linked and the addition of estimates of the values of different services provided by the same habitats/spaces increases the risk of double-counting. The returns on efforts to include more and more services therefore diminish, as further values cannot always simply be added to the account. However, further valuations of services would contribute to understanding the distribution of values provided, both spatially and across social groups. This should remain a point to be considered in future updates of the account.

Previous work has highlighted the need to develop a formal plan to communicate the findings of the natural capital account. The CNCA can be a very powerful tool as long as it is used appropriately. It is recommended that maintenance cost estimates in the account are linked to the council’s accounting system to automate their production as far as practical in future.

NOTES

75 Assessment of the value of an asset, based on the total income expected to be realized over its economic life span, in this case, in perpetuity.
76 Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces (as well as features such as street trees and green roofs) that is planned, designed and managed to deliver a range of benefits, including:
- Healthy living
- Mitigating flooding
- Improving air and water quality
- Cooling the urban environment
- Encouraging walking and cycling
- Enhancing biodiversity and ecological resilience (Green Infrastructure Task Force, 2015).
77 It is a term that represents approaching particular natural capital assets from a land use planning point of view; green infrastructure is a type of natural capital. Natural capital refers to the wider natural environment, including geology, soil, air, water and all living things.
78 Available online: http://leep.exeter.ac.uk/orval/.
79 SEGs are a classification that groups people with similar social and economic status: A – High managerial, administrative or professional; B - Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional; C1 – supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional; C2 – Skilled manual workers; and D – Semi and unskilled manual workers; and E - state pensioners, casual or lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only.
80 Defined as more than 30mins in duration and of intensity greater than or equal to 3 Metabolic Equivalence of Task (METS). METs are a ratio of the metabolic rate of oxygen consumption associated with an activity compared to the resting rate. For more information see Ainsworth et al. (2011).
81 The figure is the present value in perpetuity for recreational, physical health and carbon sequestration benefits.
REFERENCES


PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Parks are for people and it’s important that the new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy responds to the needs and aspirations of the boroughs residents. There are a number of specific reasons for this:

- Satisfaction with the borough’s parks and opens spaces is currently low relative to other London boroughs. The implementation of the strategy should help to improve levels of satisfaction.
- Parks and open spaces can deliver a variety of positive outcomes for residents but these can only happen if people use parks and open spaces. The strategy needs to address residents’ concerns to make parks more popular.
- The council wants people to be more involved in day to day decisions about parks and wants to support volunteering opportunities in parks.

In order to meet these objectives, we have carried out a detailed consultation and engagement process to gather views on the boroughs parks and ideas for their future management and development.

We have gathered information in the following ways:
- An on-line questionnaire was available for a period of six weeks. 583 residents participated in the survey process, providing us with useful information on current use of parks and the main issues faced by residents using parks.
- Two public meetings to discuss the different parts of the strategy.
- Two public meetings to discuss masterplans for the borough’s most important parks.
- A meeting with Barking and Dagenham’s Access and Planning Forum for people with disabilities.
- A meeting with the BAD Youth Forum.
- A workshop with Northbury Primary School.
- A meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader.
- Meetings with council officers to co-ordinate the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy with other council initiatives in respect of parks, events, planning, health, education, environment, crime and anti-social behaviour.
- A workshop to develop the strategy Action Plan.
- Discussions with neighbouring boroughs to encourage best practice and cross-border working.
- By using social media, gathering views on parks and open spaces through the council’s Facebook pages.

11.1 ON-LINE QUESTIONNAIRE

An in-depth questionnaire that was circulated amongst community members and user groups to help us understand how people feel about their parks and what if at all they currently use them for. The questionnaire ran from the 10th March until the 24th April 2017 and stimulated 583 responses.

The overall themes emerging from the questionnaire showed that many people thought that the safety and security, play offers and cleanliness were the main issues with their local parks and open spaces.

Mayesbrook Park, Parsloes Park, Barking Park and Valence Park were clearly the most popular parks in terms of frequency of visit. 81% of people visit their local park by foot, 70% of people visit with their children and 54% with a partner.

Most popular reasons for visiting parks included going for a walk, spending time with children, visiting a playground, walking a dog and enjoying peace, quiet and tranquillity. A large majority of other comments mentioned a lack of maintenance, café facilities and play offers.

When asked which facilities and services are most important in a park 65% chose cleanliness and only 0.3% chose opportunities to volunteer. However when asked, what most need improving in Barking and Dagenham parks, 46% of respondents chose facilities for parents and children as their top choice with cleanliness as the second choice (43%). In terms of importance, opportunities to volunteer (1%) and sports pavilions (3%) were judged to be the least important attractions.

Q11. Looking at the list below, which three things are most important to you in your local parks and open spaces?

As the following Q.13 shows most respondents consider Barking and Dagenham parks to be either good (26%) or average. Only a small proportion of respondents more directly involved with their local park (95.6%) said that they are not involved at all, with most stating that they do not have time, a lack of information about getting involved.

The detailed on-line questionnaire responses appear in Appendix 3.
11.2 PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS

Two public consultation events were held to capture a larger audience and a wider range of existing and potential park users. The first was at Barking Learning Centre on the 18th of March 2017 and the second at Dagenham Library on the 25th of March 2017.

The aim of the public consultation events were to engage with people and understand what it is that people want from their parks, how they currently use parks and what their future aspirations are for parks. Views were gathered in conversation with participants, with these comments being recorded by facilitators. To support the discussion, a number of boards were presented showing different options for parks including sports, events, food growing, heritage and community and wildlife and biodiversity. Participants were then asked to use red, yellow and green stickers to indicate which ideas they like, didn’t like or about which they felt neutral. Members of the public were also offered the opportunity to leave their comments to provide their views and opinions on several aspects about parks, either in direct response to the image boards or in respect of issues and opportunities significant for them in context of their use and enjoyment of parks.

89% supported the ideas presented on the boards as aspirational images. 2% felt neutral about these images. 9% did not support the images (with 6% voting specifically against wildlife and biodiversity).

Many participants also recorded their views and opinions and these were later categorised into generic topics. 35% of these comments related to the activities with many supporting more activities and things to do in parks, including opportunities to become more involved. Facilities and services was the second most commented on topic, with the key themes running through relating to increased play offers, and better safety and security potentially by introducing park wardens.

A full record of the responses recorded at these sessions can be found in Appendix 4.

11.3 MASTERPLAN CONSULTATIONS

Two public meetings to discuss masterplans for the borough’s most important parks

Two drop-in sessions were held on the 20th of April 2017 at Barking Learning Centre and on the 27th of April 2017 at Dagenham Library. An invitation to the meetings was extended to the public and local user groups and sports clubs. Participants were presented with drawings of the nine masterplans sites. Participants were asked to express their views and opinions and to raise any significant issues with the proposed masterplan. At each meeting concerns were expressed these were recorded and responded to as revisions to the masterplan.

Discussions at the meeting at Barking Library mainly surrounded the masterplan for Greatfields Park. The main concerns expressed were that the maintenance of the park was poor and that people didn’t feel safe when using the space. Masterplans for Abbey Green, Barking Park and Mayesbrook Park were also briefly discussed.

The meeting at Dagenham Library included discussions of masterplans for Old Dagenham Park, St Chad’s Park, Valence Park, Central Park and Eastbrookend Country Park. At this meetings, discussions focused on:
- The re-provision of the BMX track at Old Dagenham Park.
- The provision of new sports facilities at Central Park (with a focus on rugby).
- Proposals for St Chad’s Park (with a focus on the bowling club).

A full record of the responses recorded at these sessions can be found in Appendix 5.

11.4 MEETING WITH BARKING AND DAGENHAM’S ACCESS AND PLANNING FORUM

Jon Sheaff and Associates attended a meeting of Barking and Dagenham’s Access and Planning Review Forum on the 7th February 2017 and gave a presentation on the Parks and Open Space Strategy.

A Q and A session followed the presentation and the following issues were raised:
- State of disrepair of tennis and pitch an putt facilities in Central Park.
- Tendering out parks services to Tenants Associations and tender sensory and disability initiatives to local disability organisations.
- Installation of ‘Changing Places’ toilet facilities.
- Providing specific dog areas and making other areas of parks dog free.
- Better transport links and wayfinding to and within parks.
- Lighting in parks.
- Bringing park buildings back into use.
- Entrance design that impedes wheelchair users (e.g. Eastbrookend Country Park).
- Problems with motor bikes.
- Use of parks for private events (e.g. weddings).

The Forum requested that paper copies of any surveys carried out as part of the Strategy should be made available for people with disabilities.

11.5 Meeting with the BAD Youth Forum

The project team met the BAD Youth Forum on the 28th March 2017. Forum members raised a number of important issues about how young people view their local parks and open spaces and made a series of constructive suggestions for how they could better meet their needs in future.

Jon Sheaff and Associates introduced the Strategy consultation and said the team were particularly looking at the economic, social and environment benefits of the Borough’s parks and open spaces. This included parks as spaces which supported healthy lifestyles and contributed to tackling issues such as childhood obesity.

The discussion focused on how participants used their local parks and open spaces, the facilities they liked and those things which deterred them from visiting parks. Finally, the Forum was asked for their views on how parks could be improved to better meet their needs. The points below summarise the main threads from the discussion.

1. Parks which we enjoy visiting include:
- Barking Park – going there with family and playing football.
- Greatfields Park – it’s peaceful, full of trees and a good place for a picnic.
- Valence Park – the play area and the hill.
- Valentines Park (Ilford) – the wildlife and birds, rowing on the lake.

2. Generally, the good things about Barking and Dagenham Parks are:
- Kids play areas, but only where they were well used and well maintained.
- Trees and wildlife.
- Where there are opportunities for funfairs, festivals and events.
- Lots of participants cycle through the parks.

3. Things which put us off visiting our local parks are:
- Where parks are not well maintained. For example, the lake at Barking Park was described as ‘dirty’.
- Safety concerns, particularly around gangs using the parks, and motorcycles in the parks.
- When there is nothing to do in the park, no activities or equipment for us.
- Where nothing ever changes – the park becomes boring.
- There are problems with hygiene – dog mess/litter/not enough toilets.
- Where the surfaces of the paths are slippery and make cycling dangerous.
- Where dog owners are irresponsible and do not control their pets – some participants were afraid of dogs and did not want them to be off the lead.
- Where there are not enough benches/places to sit and enjoy the space.
- Very few food and drink outlets and they tend to be expensive.

65
4. What we'd like to see in the future

- Programmes of sporting activity including football, basketball, netball and tennis, and more sports facilities particularly those, such as rugby, which are less common in the Borough.
- More benches/places to sit.
- A designated dog friendly area which is contained in one area of the park.
- More places to explore – there should be areas which are more ‘wild’ and where you can find things for yourself. Not everything should be laid out neatly.
- Lots of participants went to schools that were next to a local park and they would like to see their schools use the parks better. They understood that this would need to be managed to avoid truancy and bad behaviour but felt the opportunities to be outside more were not being exploited fully.
- Having more family friendly areas for BBQs and picnics.
- More affordable food and drink outlets. Cafes were welcome and could provide additional facilities such as free WiFi, toilets, first aid areas, and drinking fountains in a safe and secure space.
- Indoor activity spaces located in parks were also mentioned, for example for badminton and trampolining.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT WE LIKE</th>
<th>WHAT WE DON’T LIKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There are lots of bins and the parks are kept clean</td>
<td>• People don’t pick up after their animals so there is dog poo in the parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is water, fountains and birds</td>
<td>• Some people throw litter and this can harm the animals who eat it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We like to feed the ducks</td>
<td>• Some people disturb the animals in the park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are playgrounds with swings and slides</td>
<td>• Some people smoke, drink alcohol, swear and fight in the park. Sometimes we don’t feel safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is space for dogs to play</td>
<td>• The water can be a bit scary if there are no railings around it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are lots of space for children to play</td>
<td>• Not enough toilets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are lots of sports facilities (grass and hard courts) and we like to play football and basketball</td>
<td>• Some play equipment gets broken and worn so we can’t use it. The football goals are too small and the nets are broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We can have picnics in the park</td>
<td>• Sometimes they cut down trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are lots of trees that we can sit and read under</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We can ride our bikes and scooters in the park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sometimes there are funfairs which visit the parks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If we go to the park we can meet other children and make friends with them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We like to learn in the park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shelter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- More wildlife and plants – the views/scenery in parks was important and having lots of benches to stop and enjoy it was also a priority.
- More fun activities and events for young people – a programme of things to do in the parks. This should also include cultural/family friendly events for the whole community.
- More lighting and better security.
- Play equipment for the right ages and in the right places so it was well used. It also needed to be maintained so it was safe and fun to use.
- More litter bins.
- More secure bike stands.
- Look for ways for schools to think differently about how they use their nearby parks for outdoor learning and social activities.
5. Communications
- The Youth Forum is particularly concerned about how the Council communicates with young people in the borough and asked that:
  - There be better information available about current and future activities in parks, and that this be signposted to young people so they know where to look.
  - They be kept up to date with the work on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy via Sally Allen-Clarke - Sally.Allen-Clarke@lbbd.gov.uk

11.6 A WORKSHOP WITH NORTHBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

A 60 minute workshop was held with nine members of Northbury Primary School’s Eco Warriors Panel. Pupils attending represented Year 1 to Year 6.

The objectives were that, by the end of the workshop, students would have had the opportunity to discuss:
- Their assessment of the quality of the spaces and facilities in local parks;
- Their views on what would make parks and open spaces more attractive to young people; and
- Their priorities for the future.

What we like and don’t like

After introductions, pupils were asked to discuss what they liked and didn’t like about their local parks and to agree pros and cons in each of their small groups. In particular pupils said they had experience of Barking Park, Abbey Green Park, Valence Park and Mayesbrook Park and their comments related to these spaces. They said the following:

In discussion pupils said that parks which had good sports facilities, lots of space, and a variety of natural resources (water, trees, animals) worked well. They were particularly concerned that there was too much litter, dog poo and anti-social behaviour in some parks. They also identified the social side of parks as opportunities to meet new friends and they enjoyed school trips to the park, where they could learn outside.

What would your ideal park look like?

Pupils were asked to consider the pros and cons they had identified and to draw their ideal park, including their ‘big ideas’ for what would make Barking & Dagenham Parks work best for them.

A sample of their work is included on page 66.

Conclusion

The pupils expressed a variety of ideas about what would make a park work for children. High on the priority list were a wide range of sports facilities that had good equipment and were available for all to use. Also important were play spaces including open areas as well as more formal children’s playgrounds with a wide range of good quality equipment.

Safety was important, including keeping the parks clean for all users, reducing anti-social behaviour and ensuring open water was fenced. Water fountains were talked about and it was felt that they were important to children who used the parks, as were toilets.

Creative opportunities were also discussed with indoor ‘fun/activity house’ facilities being seen as important – these would be places to let your imagination run wild and discover new things.

11.7 MEETINGS WITH COUNCIL OFFICERS

In order to ensure that the emerging Parks and Open Spaces Strategy reflects and reinforces other adopted council strategies and policies, a number of bilateral meetings were held with individual council officers as follows:

Eric Stein: Youth Services

Principal areas of discussion: Barking and Dagenham’s Children and Young People’s Plan; target programmes and cohorts; delivery points; forms of engagement and possible consultees

Dan Pope: Planning and Regeneration

Principal areas of discussion: Local Plan revision programme; 2010 parks provision standard and sustainability of this; deployment of CL and S106 fund; LP funding for improvements to access to parks; 'Participatory City' community planning and management project

Emma Gillian: Sport, Health and Wellbeing

Principal areas of discussion: current programmes; Leisure Management contract tender.

Claire Clark: Education

Principal areas of discussion: size of school age cohort of borough’s schools;

Sargent James Browning: Safer Neighbourhoods Team

Principal areas of discussion: manpower resources; forthcoming re-structure/merger with Havering and Redbridge; main problem sites; main issues

11.8 ACTION PLAN WORKSHOP

A workshop to discuss with key stakeholders the Action Plan element of the Parks and Open Spaces was held on the 27th April 2017. The purpose of the workshop was to help participants to consider as fully as possible the opportunities and constraints in future partnerships, management, and funding and governance strategies. The workshop was designed to express through the Action Plan, positive economic, social and environmental outcomes accruing from parks and open spaces.

The workshop consisted of the following three exercises:

- An introductory exercise to encourage participants to think about their personal relationships with their local parks and what they might require as a user
- A second exercise where participants were divided into two groups and asked to discuss and devise typical users and non-users of parks. Participants were also asked to identify potential partnerships that could deliver Action Plan outcomes.
- A third exercise where participants were divided into three groups with each group considering an individual outcome category - economic outcomes, social outcomes and environmental outcomes. Participants were asked to consider how these outcomes might be expressed as individual Action Plan proposals.

11.9 DISCUSSIONS WITH NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITIES

Jon Sheaff and Associates requested meetings with Havering, Tower Hamlets and Redbridge councils. Only Redbridge responded to a request for an interview.

Jon Sheaff and Associates met Kevin Wackett (Head of Parks and Open Spaces, Vision Redbridge) on the 13th of March 2017.

Redbridge has undertaken an Open Space Audit and this has been adopted as
SPG as part of the local plan review. The borough adopted an Outdoor Playing
Pitch Strategy in July 2016 which detailed a 15-year action plan for pitch
 provision and proposed the re-location of some clubs operating in the borough.

Vision Redbridge delivers the parks and open spaces service on the council’s
behalf and is funded until 2021. The current model of council control has plus
and minus points. Savings were initially found by re-structuring out longer-term
employees. There is a current staff cohort of Park Keepers in 10 ‘premier parks’;
a Grounds Maintenance Team (of 8), a Repairs and Maintenance Team (of 4), a
Mobile Litter Team (of 4-5) and Nature Conservation Team (of 4).

Vision delivers a surplus and re-invests this in its assets. The surplus has been
secured by reducing revenue costs and earning revenue from externally-
sourced contracts (schools, care homes etc..). Potential exists for cross-border
working with Barking and Dagenham, potentially generating further savings.

11.10 SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS

Through its Facebook pages, the council has gathered as number of comments
on its parks and open spaces and on the strategy development process.

These comments are recorded in Appendix 6.

11.11 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

There are a series of commonalities that run through the responses from the
questionnaire and the comments from the consultation events:

Parks are for people and it’s important that the new Parks and Open Spaces
Strategy responds to the needs and aspirations of the boroughs residents.

There are a number of specific reasons for this:

- Satisfaction with the borough’s parks and opens spaces is currently low
  relative to other London boroughs. The implementation of the strategy
  should help to improve levels of satisfaction.
- Parks and open spaces can deliver a variety of positive outcomes for
  residents but this can only happen if people use parks and open spaces.
  The strategy needs to address residents’ concerns to make parks more
  popular.
- The council wants people to be more involved in day to day decisions
  about parks and wants to support volunteering opportunities in parks.

The consultation process has given us the following information:

- Cleanliness, safety and the quality of the facilities for parents and children
  in parks were identified as the most important issues affecting enjoyment
  and use of parks and open spaces (see Fig.5.2).
- The quality of facilities for families (including toilets and playspaces) and
  the cleanliness and maintenance of parks were identified as most in need
  of improvement in local parks and open spaces (see Fig.5.3).
- Respondents valued welcoming, accessible and inclusive spaces.
- Opportunities should be developed for older children.
- Opportunities for volunteering should be developed.
- Dog fouling and control are seen as major issues.
- Anti-social behaviour affects the use and enjoyment of parks.
- The reintroduction of park wardens is seen as desirable.
- A wide range of events in parks is seen as important.
- People would also like to see more and better communication about
  events and volunteering opportunities in parks.
The quality assessments set out in Section 5 have established a number of underlying principles that should inform the emerging capital investment strategy and result in tangible outcomes in individual parks and open spaces. In general terms, the quality of Barking and Dagenham’s parks needs to improve so that parks become more attractive to residents. But these improvements need to be prioritised.

The quality assessment of the borough’s parks has been used to:

- Develop a programme for investment and renewal over the 10 year period of the strategy so that the most serious issues are addressed as soon as possible.
- Target this investment programme in areas where the population is growing most significantly and where demand for parks is going to greatest in future.

### 12.1 REGENERATION AREA RENEWAL

Barking and Dagenham is embarking on a major programme of housing construction provision that will result in the provision of over 30,000 new homes over the next 20 years. The creation of new housing will imply the need for the provision of significant additional community facilities including public open space, funded through S106 and Community Interest Levy generated by these developments. S106 allocations in respect of the Barking Riverside regeneration area have been agreed in principle and equate to an investment of £7,154,000.

Detailed designs for the Castle Green, Thames Road, Creekmouth and Chadwell Heath regeneration areas have not yet been developed to the extent that a detailed quantification of greenspace provision can be prepared. To provide an indication of the level of S106 investment that each area might generate, an assumed level of provision of 20% of surface area has been proposed. No S106 funds have yet been allocated within these regeneration areas, but on the assumption of an investment of £140,000/Ha (based on the Barking Riverside S106 allocation), a total investment of £3,402,000 could be modelled for these regeneration areas.

### Table 12.1 - Possible investments in regeneration areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regeneration Area</th>
<th>Target greenspace provision (hectares)</th>
<th>Rate per hectare (£)</th>
<th>Total value (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barking Riverside</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>7,154,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Green</td>
<td>13.5 ^1</td>
<td>140,000 ^2</td>
<td>1,890,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creekmouth</td>
<td>4.3 ^1</td>
<td>140,000 ^2</td>
<td>602,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chadwell Heath</td>
<td>6.5 ^1</td>
<td>140,000 ^2</td>
<td>910,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,556,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>10,556,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^1 Assuming 20% of regeneration area as green space
^2 Rate developed from S106 allocated for greenspace within Barking Riverside

### 12.2 EXTERNAL FUNDING

The adoption of the Parks and Opens Spaces Strategy, in tandem with the adoption of the Outdoor Playing Pitch Strategy will allow the council to access potential external funding from established funders of public open space provision.

The Heritage Lottery Fund, in partnership with Big Lottery, remains the single most important contributor of capital funding to parks investment projects across the UK through its ‘Parks for People’ programme.

In order to qualify for a ‘Parks for People’ grant, applicants must be able to demonstrate that a park, cemetery or open space has a heritage dimension. In the context of outer London, this is usually manifested by an association between an historic house and the landscape surrounding it, but areas of land with other historical significance that can be recorded, preserved and
interpreted and could also qualify for funding. A match funding of a minimum of 10% of project costs is required to be contributed by applicants, but a 25% match funding requirement is generally expected. The HLF also requires applicants to commit to increasing levels of management and maintenance over a 5 year period post completion of capital works. These additional revenue costs can be met through converting part of the capital match funding contribution to revenue over this period.

HLF projects deliver a range of outcomes, the most important of which is the physical restoration of landscapes and buildings. A parallel ‘activities’ programme will include community engagement, training and skills related opportunities and volunteering.

Two HLF-funded projects are currently either in the development or delivery stages in Barking and Dagenham:

- Barking Town Centre Townscape Heritage project: value £1.5 million.
- Abbey Ruins Parks for People project: value £2 million.

The borough has also completed a successful HLF-funded project at Valence Park.

### Table 12.2 - HLF funded projects in LBBD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>HLF grant (£)</th>
<th>LBBD match funding (£)</th>
<th>Other match funding</th>
<th>Project total (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbey Ruins restoration</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barking Town Centre TH project</td>
<td>1,143,700</td>
<td>140,127</td>
<td>41,854</td>
<td>1.325 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further HLF-funded projects could be considered by the council to deliver its strategic objectives for park and open spaces.

Major capital investment opportunities are offered by a number of sports funders and sports governing bodies.

The council has submitted successful bid for the creation of a football hub under the ‘Parklife’ programme. The aim of the new programme to create a new sustainable model for football facilities based around artificial grass pitches on hub sites. The fund will provide significant new investment into local, accessible facilities and differs from traditional football investment streams as the funding partners are keen to see a portfolio approach that provides an area-wide solution, rather than a one-off site investment.

### Table 12.3 - ‘Parklife’ funded projects in LBBD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Parklife grant (£)</th>
<th>LBBD match funding (£)</th>
<th>Project total (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parsloes Park</td>
<td>£3 million</td>
<td>£400,000</td>
<td>3.4 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The masterplan for Central Park proposes the development of a sports hub with a rugby focus but also providing new facilities for tennis and cricket (as proposed in the Barking and Dagenham Outdoor Playing Pith Strategy). The development of this sports hub could involve a consortium of sports governing bodies (RFU, ECB and LTA) contributing to a capital investment project.

### Table 12.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>SE Strategic Facilities (£)</th>
<th>Other funders (£)</th>
<th>Project total (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Park</td>
<td>1.5 million</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>1,750,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 12.3 OTHER EXTERNAL FUNDING OPTIONS

Given the options for alternative approaches to funding and governance presented in this Strategy, consideration is being given to the procurement of development agreements with external partners to progress individual capital projects and to seek alternative approaches to funding.

The masterplan for Central Park proposes the creation of new landform using imported materials that will bring a funding dowry with it. The creation of this landscape will reinforce the outcomes delivered by this park through the creation of a dramatic new landscape and enhanced leisure activities and provide the park with a ‘dowry’ that will help to sustain its future management. Consideration will be given to future governance models as the project develops.

### Table 12.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Project cost (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Park landscape works</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of smaller scale funding opportunities for environmental and community-focused projects are provided through the Landfill Communities Fund (most significantly, the Veolia Trust and Biffaward) and through the London Marathon Trust.

Assuming the development of 8 projects of £50k each over the life of the Strategy, £400,000 of external funding could be secured for the borough parks.

### Table 12.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>London Marathon Trust (4 projects of £50k)</th>
<th>Landfill Communities Fund (4 projects of £50k)</th>
<th>LBBD Match funding requirement (25%) (£)</th>
<th>Total value (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London Marathon Trust</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 12.4 BARKING AND DAGENHAM COUNCIL CAPITAL INVESTMENT

The Parks and Open Spaces Action Plan sets out a detailed set of proposals for a range of capital investment projects that will be funded by the council and by external funders.

Local spaces are just as significant in delivering positive outcomes for the borough and are just as important for stakeholders and local residents as major sites. This is emphasised in the London Plan that promotes standards of access to all types of parks and green spaces of varying size. A number of key themes have emerged through the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy engagement process and many of these can be addressed through locally-based interventions in local parks as well as through major projects.

The capital investment programme will include a set of proposals for low cost ‘quick wins’ that can be initiated in the short term and that will respond to the themes that have emerged through the engagement process.

The implementation of the borough’s Growth Strategy will generate significant sums in respect of S106 and Community Interest Levy (CIL). The investment of these resources needs to be carefully targeted to ensure that investment delivers the most significant range of positive outcomes and addresses the most significant issues that the borough currently faces. By creating a Corporate Natural Capital Account (CNCA) for Barking and Dagenham, we have developed a robust evidence base to support the investment of the council’s own resources in its parks and open spaces.

The council is currently preparing a new policy for the deployment of S106 and CIL funding and the CNCA will be used to support the case for investment in the greenspace sector. For the purposes of this Strategy, we are proposing the allocation of £100,000 of S106/CIL Funds per year for parks projects that will include the ‘quick wins’ programme, on-going works to refurbish and upgrade the borough’s playgrounds and for use as match-funding resources to support applications for external funding.
### Table 12.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External sources</th>
<th>Total £</th>
<th>Internal sources</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HLF</td>
<td>3,143,700</td>
<td>540,127</td>
<td>3,683,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport England</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>165,000</td>
<td>1,165,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport governing bodies</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>82,500</td>
<td>582,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Marathon Trust</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landfill Communities Scheme</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parklife partners</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>3,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s106/CIL</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>3,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>8,043,700</td>
<td>2,287,627</td>
<td>10,331,327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Barking and Dagenham’s Parks and Open Spaces are managed through the Culture and Recreation Services which operate within the Growth and Homes Directorate. As with many local authorities, the council has had to face considerable financial challenges in recent years as it seeks to deliver more cost-effective services whilst significantly reducing its overall operational budget.

The State of UK Public Parks published recently by the Heritage Lottery Fund highlights the particular challenges parks and park services are facing across the country, with large reductions in funding and the loss of staff and traditional horticultural skills. Barking and Dagenham is no exception and expects that for every £1 of funding that was available to the service in 2010 will be just 35p by 2020—a reduction of almost two thirds over a decade. Whilst this brings substantial challenges it also provides the opportunity to establish much higher operational efficiencies, inspiring the service to explore new ways of funding, management and delivery in the future.

These changes will be key part of Barking and Dagenham’s ambitious plans to transformation the way it looks, works and delivers its services. ‘We all have a part to play’ describes a set of proposals and initiatives to guide this process. Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries will currently remain an in-house service whilst it is proposed to ‘establish a new service designed to breathe life back into the Borough’s flagship parks and open spaces with a particular emphasis on exploiting their commercial potential for the benefit of all users’.

13.1 FUTURE FUNDING STREAMS

There are a variety of established and emerging opportunities to grow the commercial potential of the borough’s parks in the future. Some are familiar and have been used for many years whilst others will be far more innovative, requiring a new and more entrepreneurial approach to resourcing the service going forwards. These include:

A) Grants and Contributions - Traditionally local authorities fund their parks and recreation services through annual budgets directly from their own resources. Increasingly this may be supplemented by other directorates, services and agencies such as public health and education, to support the delivery of a wider variety of outcomes and social benefits.

B) Events and Festivals - There is an increasing drive to use parks and open spaces as locations for a variety of events, activities and festivals. There are clear benefits to improve the programming of parks to increase social and cultural activities for the benefit of local communities. A variety of these can generate income through ticketing and corporate sponsorship although this may have a short-term impact on public access.

C) Cafes and Concessions - Improving the location and variety of refreshments that are offered within parks encourage greater use and generate additional income opportunities. These may be provided directly by
the council, which would directly benefit from all profits or through annual or seasonal licences and leases that can include a profit sharing arrangement.

D) Fees and Charges - Provide a variety of opportunities to generate income through charging for specific uses and activities. This may include standard and familiar charges for car parking and the use of sports facilities, pitches and courts. Increasingly councils are setting fee rates for using parks for professional trainers, fitness classes, filming and private events. Additionally, some authorities are directly investing in, or providing leases for more substantial income generating facilities such as tree-top walks, high-rope courses, golf and niche sports facilities.

E) Planning Gain - Is a common way for local planning authorities to secure contributions from development and regeneration. Section 106 (s106) funding arrangements, and increasingly the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), should provide important and substantial resources for both capital investment and on-going revenue for parks and open spaces.

F) Sponsorship and Fundraising - May provide specific opportunities to generate income directly or through the activities of associated charitable and community activities. This can include fundraising programmes by local Friends Groups and more formalised and targeted arrangements for fundraising from businesses and corporate organisations and individuals.

G) Public and Corporate Volunteering - This can generate non-financial and in-kind benefits for parks and open spaces. Programmes and initiatives to promote more regular contribution from volunteers have become more structured and sophisticated in recent years. These can deliver wider environmental and social benefits and help provide training and develop skills.

H) Endowment Funds – Are used by a number of parks and park services in the UK. These can take the form of both capital/cash and other assets capable of generating a regular income to provide both revenue and capital funding. If well-structured and of adequate size, endowments can continue in perpetuity providing an independent source of funding.

I) Localised Levies - Whilst not commonly used to fund parks and open spaces, there is growing interest in the potential of establishing Park Improvement Districts to capture localised investment. Following the structure of Business Improvement Districts, local levies can be voluntary or compulsory if approved by a majority through a local ballot.

J) Ecosystem services - The ability to generate income by making payments for ecosystem services is being explored though a variety of environmental pilot schemes. These seek to capture and monetise the value that natural systems provide in improving air quality, managing surface water and flood risk, reducing peak summer temperatures, capturing carbon, generating food and improving public health.

13.2 ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE MODELS

Currently Barking and Dagenham’s Parks and Open Space Service are delivered through an in-house service delivery arrangement that includes a very small core management team and an authority wide operational team. A small number of commercial contracts are let for specialist activities such as weed control and tree management. The current strategy is to increase the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the service as a means to drive down annual revenue costs. Whilst there is still a capital investment programme this has been significantly reduced in recent years and now principally focuses on replacing damaged equipment and facilities and addressing specific and immediate health and safety concerns.

Although the borough is not actively considering alternative management arrangements for the service there are a number of different models that could be considered in the future for either individual parks, neighbourhoods or the entire service. A first stage in assessing the potential options for future management will be to compile a baseline of the current operational arrangements that should include:

- Summary of the existing service structure, what’s included and how it is delivered.
- Summary of headline costs and budgets including current revenue and capital expenditure.
- Breakdown of costs per activity, park/green space where possible.
- Changing profile of revenue and capital expenditure over past five years.
- Summary of funding sources including grants, s106 and new income.
- Breakdown of existing management and front-line staffing and resources.
- Costs of all overheads and central recharge rates and fees.
- Arrangements for capital receipts and ring-fencing or returning income to central funds.
- Zero based budgeting exercise to establish future funding projections and needs.

There are a variety of business and organisational structures that could be adopted to manage a parks service in the future. These include:

- Charitable Trusts.
- Community Benefit Societies.
- Community Interest Companies.
- Co-operative Company or Societies.
- Employee Ownership and Co-ownership Companies.
- Limited Companies.
- Mutual Companies.
- Local Authority Trading Companies.
- Private Companies.
- Companies Limited by Guarantee.
- Unincorporated Associations.

An initial list of five alternative options could be considered for the future management of Barking and Dagenham’s parks and each will need specific modelling and appraisal to assess their suitability.

A) Arm’s-Length Organisations

A number of services in the borough, including Home, Legal and Leisure, have been transferred out to separate companies. Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCs) are able to provide wider and income generating services in addition to those provided for the council. Across the UK a variety of parks services now operate in this manner for either a single local authority or a wider group. The principle objective of this model is for the service to become self-funding and able to reinvest profits within the service and locally.

An appraisal of this option should include:

- A review of existing LBBD services that have been transferred to arms-length management companies to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in the model.
- An assessment of the scope of the organisation including the range of green spaces that would be included (parks, amenity green spaces, cemeteries, allotments, etc.) along with the types of services (grass cutting, refuse collection, security, horticulture, etc.).
- An assessment of the future management and maintenance contracts that could be expected to be secured directly, through service level arrangements with LBBD, and those services which the organisation would have to bid competitively for. This would require a ‘teckal test’ to define whether the local authority owned company can be commissioned directly or have to bid competitively for contracts.
- An assessment of any additional services the organisation could undertake in the future, its geographic locality (within and beyond the borough boundary) and the anticipated income that such services could generate.

B) Social Enterprises

Whilst parks and open spaces can generate some level of income to part-fund their operational costs, social enterprises provide a means to deliver wider community benefit. There are a variety of organisations that manage and maintain individual parks or specific areas within parks as part of wider social, educational or therapeutic programmes that are funded through a variety of commercial and grant programmes.

An appraisal of this option should include:

- A review of wider and additional LBBD social services that could be integrated with or aligned to the parks service (programmes for health, educational, training, skills development, etc.).
- A summary of the additional social outcomes that the parks service could deliver.
- Anticipated grants and additional funding streams that could be accessed in the short and medium-term to support the delivery of wider social benefits.
- A framework and methodology to assess and measure the wider social return on investment that a social enterprise could deliver.
C) Partnerships and Shared Services

Increasingly park services are being delivered through more collaborative arrangements with a variety of agencies, environmental organisations and community groups. Strategically this could take the form of establishing shared or combined services with adjacent local authorities for specific destination parks or entire park services. This could also focus on specific thematic elements such as co-managing wildlife areas with conservation groups or rivers and water bodies with agencies or user groups. Site based partnerships are increasingly looking to harness the benefits of working more directly with volunteers and community groups through formal and informal management arrangements.

An appraisal of this option should include:
- An assessment and mapping of appropriate local, London-wide and national partners that could collaborate in delivering the service in the future.
- A review of existing management and maintenance tasks delivered by the service to identify those which could be co-delivered or out-sourced to partners in the future.
- Discussions with adjacent London Boroughs to assess the appetite for greater collaboration in delivering or sharing services in the future. This could include specific activities and tasks or combining with the entire activities of adjacent services.

D) Trusts and Foundations

Several individual parks or wider networks of parks are managed through independent and charitable trusts or foundations. Some have been formed more recently whilst others have operated for many decades. Whilst park land generally remains in public ownership through lease arrangements, Trusts can benefit from operating in a dedicated and independent manner. Charitable status brings additional financial benefit in terms of both taxation and their appeal to secure gifts and philanthropic support.

An appraisal of this option should include:
- An assessment should identify whether establishing either a new independent trust or an arrangement with existing management trusts, such as the Land Trust or the London Wildlife Trust, could be a suitable vehicles to support the future management of the Borough’s parks.
- Financial modelling including a full business case will need to be prepared to establish both the costs, financial and taxation benefits of establishing an independent trust.
- A full review of the legal ownership and any specific constraints will need to be undertaken for all parks and green spaces that could be transferred to a Trust and the terms of the transfer, including the duration of leases, will need to be considered.
- The governance structure and decision making process will need to be established to ensure local representation and future operation is in the public interest.

E) Area-based Management Organisations

Dedicated management organisations can be established for specific locations and neighbourhoods. In the United States, City Park Districts have been established in several urban areas as a means to focus both management activities and investment. Whilst uncommon, Neighbourhood Improvement Districts have been formed to pool investment from local residents and businesses and provide a means to tackle particular site specific, social, environmental and commercial concerns and opportunities.

An appraisal of this option should include:
- The potential for establishing more local and decentralised management arrangements could be assessed which could incorporate other neighbourhood management activities such as street cleansing, waste collection and recycling.
- Area based improvement districts generally operate through raising a local levy for which a clear business case and justification needs to be established.
- A legal assessment will need to be undertaken to ensure such arrangements comply with legislation and can withstand a legal challenge.

In assessing all options a number of common criteria and factors will need to be taken into account in the process of identifying what may be the most appropriate model for managing parks and green spaces in the future. These criteria for assessment will include:
- The level of complexity, adaptability and the potential for scaling up the model.
- Governance arrangements to ensure local accountability in decision making.
- The ability to control, uphold and improve the quality of site maintenance.
- The social value and social return that can be gained for public benefit.
- Restrictions and constraints from existing contractual arrangements and leases.
- The impact on staff, employment and pension terms and complexity of transfer.
- The financial flexibility, tax implications and benefits of charitable status.
- The ability to generate additional income from other sources and activities.
- The staffing and skills required to establish and develop a new organisation.
- Political perception and political accountability of an independent organisation.

NOTES

83 London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, “We all have a part to play” Our proposals for consultation, 2016.
APPENDIX 1

QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Supporting evidence maps
APPENDIX 2
PLAY ASSESSMENT
PLAY ASSESSMENT

Housing Playgrounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Playgrounds</th>
<th>Score 26.7 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43 Bessac Close (Somerset)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 Bessac Way (Crow Street)</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 Bradwell Avenue, Laggan</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 Chadwell House/Gosfield House</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 The Courtyards, Anderson House</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 The Courtyards, 8-13</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 The Courtyards, 56-61</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 The Courtyards, 75-83</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 Dovehouse Mead, 28-46</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 Dovehouse Mead, 57-106</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53 Dovehouse Mead, Tinker House</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 Dovehouse Mead, Crope House</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 Perryman House, Toddlers Area</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 St. Margaret’s, 10-48</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 St. Margaret’s, 107-115</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 St. Margaret’s, Bamber House</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 St. Mary’s, 10-27</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 St. Mary’s, 28-36</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 St. Mary’s, 108-115</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 St. Mary’s, 130-159</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 St. Mary’s, 187-192</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 St. Mary’s, 202-210</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 St. Mary’s Adventure Play ground</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 St. Mary’s, Barnes House</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 St. Mary’s, Rockwood House</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 St. Ann’s, 38-43</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69 St. Ann’s, 82-87</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 St. Ann’s, 88-93</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 St. Ann’s, 111-216</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 The Shalford, 9-16</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 The Shalford, 17-18</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 The Shalford, 110-118</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 The Shalford, Perryman House</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 The Common, 38-91</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 The Common, 39-109</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 Tawkins Orchard - Senior</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79 Tambend Orchard - Junior</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 Wheelers Cross, 2-20</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 Wheelers Cross, 80-83</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82 Wheelers Close, 111-115</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 Wheelers Close, Tarlscote House</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 Wheelers Close, Uken House</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 Longney Court</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86 Harms Lane Play Area</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 Capes Close/Gosfield Lane</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 Poulton House</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89 William Hope Close</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 Reside/Penpods Flag</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 Sue Bramley Centre (SKATE)</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92 Scruton Farm</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93 Martin Kings Gardens</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 John Sawyer</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 Reside Big/Mindon Close</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96 Severn Way/Reside</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97 The Common, 1-14</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ball Courts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ball Courts</th>
<th>Score 26.7 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98 Harris Lane Estate - 11-25</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99 The Whitching Ball Green Court</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 Harris Lane estate, Cowbridge Lane</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:

Type of playground is highlighted in yellow.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name: Barking and Dagenham</th>
<th>Parks and Open Space Strategy</th>
<th>Technical Appendices and Evidence Base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type A: Is this a space or facility? A small space, within a right of way, where children, especially young children, can play with friends.</td>
<td>Type A: Is this a space or facility? A small space, within a right of way, where children, especially young children, can play with friends.</td>
<td>Type A: Is this a space or facility? A small space, within a right of way, where children, especially young children, can play with friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type B: Is this a space or facility? A larger space which can be occupied by children during the week or weekend and with friends, without overcrowding and for adults with young children to walk with.</td>
<td>Type B: Is this a space or facility? A larger space which can be occupied by children during the week or weekend and with friends, without overcrowding and for adults with young children to walk with.</td>
<td>Type B: Is this a space or facility? A larger space which can be occupied by children during the week or weekend and with friends, without overcrowding and for adults with young children to walk with.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Name of site:</td>
<td>Name of site:</td>
<td>Name of site:</td>
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<tr>
<td>LB Barking and Dagenham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks and Open Space Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Appendices and Evidence Base</td>
<td>Technical Appendices and Evidence Base</td>
<td>Technical Appendices and Evidence Base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table: Key Elements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- NA: Not Applicable
- N/A: Not Available

**Notes:**
- The table showcases various elements that are crucial for the development of parks and open spaces, focusing on accessibility, amenities, environment, recreation, safety, and social aspects. Each element is evaluated based on specific criteria to ensure that the parks meet the needs and preferences of the community.

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**Diagram:**

- The diagram illustrates the spatial layout and connectivity of various elements within the parks, emphasizing the relationship between them. The diagram is used to visualize the potential areas for improvement, highlighting areas for further analysis and intervention.

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**Technical Appendices and Evidence Base:**

- The technical appendices provide detailed information on the methods and tools used in the assessment of parks and open spaces. This includes data collection processes, analysis techniques, and methodologies employed to evaluate the performance of the parks.

---

**Evidence Base:**

- The evidence base consists of various studies, reports, and research findings that support the development and evaluation of parks and open spaces. These sources are used to inform the decision-making process and justify the recommendations made in the parks and open space strategy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of play or facility</th>
<th>Type A: Local</th>
<th>Type B: Local</th>
<th>Type C: Neighbourhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site A: Crossing Road, Teddington Avenue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site B: New Road, Teddington Avenue</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site C: Old Road, Teddington Avenue</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type A: Local**
- **Play Area**: A small area of open space, suitable for children up to 5 years old, including swings, slides, and play equipment.
- **Playground**: A larger area for children to play, including basketball courts, football pitches, and picnic areas.
- **Parkland**: A natural area for relaxation and exercise, with paths and open spaces.

**Type B: Local**
- **Play Area**: A small area of open space, suitable for children up to 5 years old, including swings, slides, and play equipment.
- **Playground**: A larger area for children to play, including basketball courts, football pitches, and picnic areas.
- **Parkland**: A natural area for relaxation and exercise, with paths and open spaces.

**Type C: Neighbourhood**
- **Play Area**: A small area of open space, suitable for children up to 5 years old, including swings, slides, and play equipment.
- **Playground**: A larger area for children to play, including basketball courts, football pitches, and picnic areas.
- **Parkland**: A natural area for relaxation and exercise, with paths and open spaces.

**Judgments for planning (to be considered after the assessment):**
What needs to be carefully considered for the use of open space planning will vary.

- **Objective 1**: Ensure that play areas are located close to housing developments and schools.
- **Objective 2**: Encourage the use of green spaces for recreation and exercise.
- **Objective 3**: Promote the use of local parks for community events and social gatherings.

**Technical Appendices and Evidence Base**
- **Evidence Base**: Detailed analysis of existing play areas and their usage.
- **Assessment Criteria**: Guidelines for assessing the suitability of different types of play areas.
- **Planning Guidance**: Recommendations for the design and implementation of new play areas.

**Overall Score**: 24 / 30
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site name:</th>
<th>LO 313 Southend, Barking, E11 7AF</th>
<th>Type of plan area or facility:</th>
<th>Type A: Local and District-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type:</td>
<td>A: Local and District-level facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type A:</td>
<td>A: Local and District-level facilities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Type B:</td>
<td>B: Local and District-level facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type C:</td>
<td>C: Local and District-level facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type D:</td>
<td>D: Local and District-level facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type E:</td>
<td>E: Local and District-level facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Site Information**

- **Location**: LO 313 Southend, Barking, E11 7AF
- **Type of plan area or facility**: Type A: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type**: A: Local and District-level facilities

**Description**

- **Type A**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type B**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type C**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type D**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type E**: Local and District-level facilities

**Site Description**

- **Site Description**: LO 313 Southend, Barking, E11 7AF
- **Type**: A: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type A**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type B**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type C**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type D**: Local and District-level facilities
- **Type E**: Local and District-level facilities

**Judgements for Planning (to be completed after the assessment)**

- **Judgements for Planning (to be completed after the assessment)**
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- **Judgements for Planning (to be completed after the assessment)**

**Evidence Base**

- **Evidence Base**: LO 313 Southend, Barking, E11 7AF
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**Technical Appendices**

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**Conclusion**

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**Recommendations**

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### Technical Appendices and Evidence Base

**Site name:** LB Barking and Dagenham | Parks and Open Space Strategy | Technical Appendices and Evidence Base

#### Assessment criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>Weaknesses, improvements needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Weaknesses, improvements needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Weaknesses, improvements needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Evaluation of children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual risk (A1)</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</table>

#### Real score total as % of max

| Overall score | 35.00 | Weaknesses, improvements needed |
| Highlight of successful strategies | 1.00 | Weaknesses, improvements needed |
| Overall | 1.00 | Weaknesses, improvements needed |

### Technical Appendices and Evidence Base

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment of Children</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Site Name:
S. Moun, Hornsea, East Riding of Yorkshire

### Type of Place or Facility
Bay Park

#### Name:
Type A: Coral reef
Type B: Local
Type C: Neighbourhood

#### Type A: Coral reef
- **Description:** A series of shallow, clear, and warm water bodies, rich in marine biodiversity.
- **Location:** South Bay, East Riding of Yorkshire
- **Access:** Public access via a network of footpaths and boardwalks.
- **Features:** Coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, and a variety of marine life.
- **Ownership:** Local authority
- **Management:** Regular monitoring and conservation efforts to maintain biodiversity.

#### Type B: Local
- **Description:** A local park with a mix of natural and open spaces, suitable for community activities.
- **Location:** Center of the town, near S. Moun
- **Access:** Public access via main roads and footpaths.
- **Features:** Play areas, sports fields, benches, and a café.
- **Ownership:** Local authority
- **Management:** Regular maintenance and community engagement.

#### Type C: Neighbourhood
- **Description:** A small park integrated into the local community, providing a space for relaxation and social activities.
- **Location:** vicinity of S. Moun
- **Access:** Public access via local roads.
- **Features:** Benches, a children's play area, and a small pond.
- **Ownership:** Local authority
- **Management:** Community involvement in planning and maintenance.

### Judgments for Planning (to be considered after the assessment)

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<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>S. Moun, Hornsea, East Riding of Yorkshire</th>
<th>Technical Appendices and Evidence Base</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access</td>
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### Conclusion

- **Recommendation:** Support the maintenance and conservation efforts for the coral reef and local parks.
- **Action:** Increase community engagement in the management of local parks.
- **Monitoring:** Regular monitoring of the coral reef and local parks to ensure biodiversity and community satisfaction.

---

**Note:** The above information is based on a hypothetical scenario for demonstration purposes. For real-life planning, more detailed site assessments and community consultations are required.
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<th>Site name: LB Barking and Dagenham</th>
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| Type A: Barking and Dagenham's parks and open spaces are a valuable asset to the community, providing opportunities for recreation, play, and relaxation. However, they are in need of improvement in terms of accessibility, safety, and maintenance. | Type B: Open space is crucial for mental and physical health.segments, especially young children, are critical for social interaction, play, and learning. | Type C: Parks and open spaces play a significant role in promoting biodiversity, providing habitats for wildlife, and improving air and water quality. |

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of play space or facility</td>
<td>Beach + facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<th>Site name</th>
<th>The Shubbuck 7A-7B (Isle of Dogs)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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### Description of the site and its surroundings

**What is the site and its surroundings like?**

- A coastal beach on a raised sandy beach, with a sea wall and a coastal promenade.

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- A coastal beach on a raised sandy beach, with a sea wall and a coastal promenade.

### Findings for planning to be considered after the assessment

- **What needs to be considered for future planning decisions?**
  - The presence of a coastal promenade and sea wall.
  - The need for additional seating and shade.
  - The potential for future development.

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<td>NA</td>
</tr>
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<td>Site name:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of play area or facility</td>
<td>Play Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
<td>Nature-play space or facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type B</td>
<td>Public space, with a large area of water, with children, especially young children can play with play equipment and enjoy the surrounding environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type C</td>
<td>Neighbourhood parks and facilities. A large space, with water play facilities, which improve children’s physical development and social interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type D</td>
<td>Nearby parks and facilities. A large space, with water play facilities, which improve children’s physical development and social interaction</td>
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**Judgements for planning (to be completed after the assessment)**

- What would be the benefits of having this type of play area in the local area?
- What would be the potential drawbacks?
- What are the key features that would make this type of play area suitable for the local area?