

**An Open Spaces Strategy for the  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
2006 – 2016**

**Mid-point update  
December 2011**

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## **SECTION 1: THE NEED FOR AN UPDATED OPEN SPACE STRATEGY**

### *The Case for an Open Space Strategy*

- 1.1 Parks and open spaces offer many benefits for people and communities, the environment, wildlife and the local economy. The overall provision of publicly accessible open space is low in Tower Hamlets compared to most other London Boroughs and national standards, and some parts of the borough are acutely deficient. The borough has a growing population which combined with plans for additional housing presents a changing picture of need over the coming years.
- 1.2 A strategic approach is required to protect existing spaces and to ensure that the most effective use is made of resources for improvements to access, quality and availability of publicly accessible open space. A key function of the Strategy is to identify the measures required to mitigate the impacts of a growing population based on an assessment of future need relative to current provision.
- 1.3 Updating the Strategy focuses on refreshing the quantitative and qualitative assessment of open space in Tower Hamlets to guide future investment in new and existing open space. The update also ensures that the Strategy remains consistent with the refreshed Community Plan. The Strategy is not intended as a day to day guide to service management but as a tool for safeguarding the benefits of open space for future residents.
- 1.4 Tower Hamlets covers an area of less than 8 square miles. It has an estimated population of over 250,000, which is growing rapidly with an increase of over 60,000 since 2001. Tower Hamlets now has one of the highest population densities in London and one of the highest levels of high-rise housing. These two facts have a profound implication for the provision, role and quality of open space in the borough.
- 1.5 At the same time as seeing significant job growth in the financial sector, Tower Hamlets remains one of the most deprived areas in the country. About three-quarters of children living in Tower Hamlets are in low-income families. Unemployment rates are significantly above London and national rates. The percentage of claimants who are long-term unemployed (over 6 months) is significantly higher than for both Greater London and England.
- 1.6 Open spaces, and particularly parks, are playing an increasingly important role for tourism by providing some of the most striking images of the borough and an important infrastructure to support some of the largest festivals and events in the UK. The potential for open spaces to contribute to economic regeneration must continue to be developed, but increased event usage needs to be managed carefully.
- 1.7 Tower Hamlets' population is ethnically diverse. The GLA 2010 Round Ethnic Group Projections identify that in 2011 almost half (46.6%) of the population is made up of minority ethnic groups. The largest of these groups is the Bangladeshi community, comprising 29.6% of the population. It is the largest

single minority ethnic population of any London borough. There are also sizeable Chinese and African groups, including a growing Somali community.

- 1.8 A significant number of young people live in Tower Hamlets. 19.3% of the population is under 15 years old, compared to 19.1% for Greater London. The 20 - 39 year old age group represents 46.7% of the total population compared to 35.2% for Greater London.
- 1.9 With such a young and very diverse population in place, parks and open spaces must be developed and improved to provide for a wide range of uses and needs. In particular, the social, educational and recreational needs of young people need to be addressed.
- 1.10 Of the 19 Tower Hamlets wards, 13 are amongst the 3% most deprived wards in England and Wales. The population has relatively high levels of adult and infant mortality compared to Greater London, and England and Wales. The percentage of the working age population receiving incapacity benefit is also higher than national and regional figures. There are a relatively high number of children and young people with multiple disabilities.
- 1.11 The health benefits of regular exercise and access to green spaces is well established. Poor health and inequality in the Borough can in part be ameliorated by increased and better use of its open spaces.
- 1.12 Overcrowded housing is a problem in Tower Hamlets. 29% of households are registered as overcrowded compared to 24.6% for inner London and 7% nationally; consequently demand for housing significantly exceeds supply. The high proportion of households on housing benefit is indicative of the relative levels of poverty.
- 1.13 As a densely populated Borough with large numbers of residents without access to a private garden and a rapidly increasing daytime workforce those open spaces that exist need to be of the highest quality and support an increasing range of demands. The speed and scale of regeneration and development in the borough presents both opportunities and challenges in relation to the provision of adequate, good quality, sustainable open spaces.

#### *Parks and Open Spaces and the Community Plan*

- 1.14 The Council's vision is to improve the lives of all those living and working in Tower Hamlets. It is a vision that is shared by all partners in the Tower Hamlets Partnership, which comprises residents, the Council and other public service providers, businesses, faith communities and the voluntary and community sector.
- 1.15 Parks and open spaces play a significant role in delivering this vision and they contribute to the four interdependent themes of the borough's Community Plan.
- 1.16 A great place to live: Tower Hamlets will be a place where people live in quality affordable housing, located in clean and safe neighbourhoods served by well connected and easy to access services and community facilities.

1.17 Parks and open spaces:

- enhance the visual appearance of the Borough
- are the places that help people define and connect with their local community and are valuable cultural assets in their own right
- are in some cases the remaining fragments of the medieval landscape of the area, or are important designed landscapes or contain historic features of great heritage significance, such as the Commonwealth Memorial at Trinity Square Gardens (see Appendix F)
- offer peace and quiet and the opportunity to enjoy semi-natural landscapes and contact with nature
- are the only places that offer significant wildlife habitats in Tower Hamlets
- improve air quality by removing dust and adding oxygen, they reduce summer temperatures, and reduce the run-off into drainage systems during storms
- provide attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists as alternatives to busy roads.

1.18 A prosperous community: Tower Hamlets will be a place where everyone, regardless of their background and circumstances, has the aspiration and opportunity to achieve their full potential.

1.19 Parks and open spaces:

- are used for educational activities by schools, universities, volunteer groups and individuals monitoring wildlife or taking part in guided walks and talks
- encourage tourism as well as inward investment to benefit the local economy.

1.20 A safe and cohesive community: Tower Hamlets will be a safer place where people feel safer, get on better together and difference is not seen as a threat but a core strength of the Borough.

1.21 Parks and open spaces:

- are freely accessible to everyone in the community at the point of access
- promote community cohesion (by providing meeting spaces and events and festivals) and social inclusion.

1.22 A healthy and supportive community: Tower Hamlets will be a place where people are supported to live healthier, more independent lives and the risk of harm and neglect to vulnerable children and adults is reduced.

1.23 Parks and open spaces:

- improve the health and well being of individuals, supporting active, healthy lifestyles

- offer the chance for children to run and play freely in natural surroundings or to have fun in formal play facilities
- provide the principal opportunities for a wide range of formal and informal outdoor sports.

### *An Open Space Strategy that Supports Sustainable Growth*

- 1.24 National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17 and the emerging National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identify that Planning Authorities like Tower Hamlets Council should make provision for open space. PPG 17 establishes principles and guidelines that include assessment of need, the setting of local standards, maintenance of adequate supply and the planning for new spaces to meet local demand. The emerging NPPF takes a lighter touch approach, suggesting that planning policies should include assessments of quality and quantity of open space.
- 1.25 The Mayor for London's London Plan states that boroughs should:
- Follow the guidance in PPG 17 and undertake audits of all forms of open space and assessments of need. These should be both qualitative and quantitative, and have regard to the cross-borough nature and use of many open spaces.
  - Produce Open Space Strategies that cover all forms of open space. These should identify priorities for addressing deficiencies and should set out positive measures for the management of open space. These strategies and their action plans need to be kept under review.
- 1.26 The refreshed Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy meets the recommendations of PPG17 and the draft NPPF and will enable the Council to effectively plan for open space provision in an area that is expected to see significant housing, employment and population growth.
- 1.27 The 2006 Open Space Strategy was prepared to provide a policy and structural framework for the provision, protection and improvement of publicly accessible open space in the borough. Through the 2011 review process it is being updated so as to be consistent with the Council's 2011 Community Plan review and the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Core Strategy), which will guide the spatial development of the Borough over the coming decade.

### *Key Points*

- 1.28 The quality, amount, and access to open space are key issues that impact on the ability of the Council and its partners to deliver the Community Plan vision.
- 1.29 The revised Strategy directly addresses planning guidance requirements and sets out clear strategic approaches that underpin the Council's Local Development Framework and forms part of the related evidence base.

- 1.30 Existing open space is a scarce and already overstretched resource that will come under much more demand in the next decade and beyond to 2025 due to significantly increased residential and daytime densities.
- 1.31 As a result of this, the open spaces that do exist must be upgraded to cope with often competing demands and in particular to take account of the following :
- The need to use these spaces much more effectively to directly address the boroughs significant health inequalities and encourage healthier, lifestyles including sport.
  - The needs of a growing population of young people
  - The demands of the festival programme (fundamental to community cohesion and important to tourism) on the open spaces that provide many of the venues.
  - Biodiversity and sustainability.



## Section 2: Scope and purpose of the Open Space Strategy

### *Purpose*

- 2.1 The purpose of the updated Open Space Strategy 2011 is to enable the Council and its partners to:
- have a better understanding of current and future open space demand
  - map the supply of open space in terms of its quantity and distribution, its quality and its accessibility
  - provide a framework to inform planning and development for new publicly accessible open space provision
  - inform the targeting of investment to where it is most needed
  - protect open space with effective policies
  - comply with the requirements of the Government policy guidance, the London Plan and with good practice
  - deliver improved parks and open space provision for the residents, workers and visitors of Tower Hamlets

### *Defining Open Space*

- 2.2 The London Plan provides a definition of 'Open Space', and this has been used in the preparation of this Strategy to capture the quantum of all open space available.

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

- 2.3 For the purpose of producing an Open Space Strategy, the definition does not include private residential gardens or incidental areas, such as road verges, or streets (unless these form part of a link in the open space network).

- 2.4 In line with the London Plan the Core Strategy establishes two local definitions<sup>1</sup> in relation to open space. A broad definition which includes areas of green space such as housing amenity greens and water bodies (Blue Space):

*All open space that offers opportunity for play, recreation and sport or is of amenity value including land, as well as areas of water such as rivers,*

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<sup>1</sup> Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2025, page 131

*canals, lakes and docks. This wider definition covers all open space, whether in public or private ownership, where public access is unrestricted, partially restricted or restricted.*

- 2.5 The second definition identifies the criteria for Publicly Accessible Open Space:

*Open space will be considered to be publicly accessible, where access for the public is secured by virtue of legal agreements and formal arrangement; whether it is in public or private ownership. Publicly accessible open space will not include areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes, docks or incidental spaces.*

- 2.6 In preparing an updated Strategy, the emphasis is placed upon the quality and availability of publicly accessible open space as it is such space which provides for the needs of residents. However, other types of open space are also relevant, in particular where there is an opportunity to achieve the criteria of publicly accessible open space, and especially where this can address areas that are currently deficient or which might become deficient in provision due to population increase or planned developments. A table of open space typologies is attached as Appendix B.

*Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 17 on Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation & the Mayor's Guidance on Open Space Strategies*

- 2.7 The Strategy conforms with national and regional policy guidance and provides:

- an assessment of current needs and future demographic trends
- an assessment of the quantity, quality, availability and accessibility of the spaces and their capacity and suitability to meet both current and future local community needs

- 2.8 The Government published PPG 17 in 2002 and will in due course be replaced by the emerging National Planning Policy Framework. The policy guidance stresses the role of open space in supporting an urban renaissance, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion and promoting sustainable development. The policy guidance requires robust assessments of need as well as audits of the number, quality and use of existing open spaces to be undertaken. Open spaces cannot be disposed of or have planning permission granted without such assessments having been carried out.

- 2.9 PPG 17 requires Local Authorities to set local open space standards, including quantitative, qualitative and accessibility thresholds. It states that Local Planning Authorities should formulate effective planning policies to protect open space and ensure adequate provision of high quality open spaces, and that Local Planning Authorities should seek opportunities to remedy deficiencies in provision in terms of quantity, quality or accessibility.

- 2.10 Other PPG and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) that affect the planning context for open space include Housing (PPG3), Biodiversity and Geological

Conservation (PPS9), Transport (PPG13) and Flood Risk (PPG25). Government has announced its intention to provide streamlined policy guidance, bringing various existing guidance documents together. However, for the time being PPG 17 remains valid.

- 2.11 The Mayor of London's Best Practice Guidance on Preparing Open Space Strategies was followed in the preparation of the 2006 Strategy and the 2011 update. All open space has a value to the community and contributes to the environmental quality of an area, therefore all open space in Tower Hamlets was identified and assessed, regardless of its public access or defined recreational role. In addition, public open spaces within 1.2 km of the boundary in neighbouring boroughs were assessed, in accordance with the guidance.
- 2.12 For the purpose of identifying overall provision of open space the Council has used the Mayor of London's recommended typologies, where appropriate.
- 2.13 For the purpose of assessing access to open space the Council has used the Mayor of London's recommended pedestrian and public transport user measures for time and distance from the various open space typologies.
- 2.14 For the 2011 review the impact of the Open Space Strategy to date has been evaluated in terms of quality, accessibility and quantum, and the strategic approach and assessment has been adapted to reflect developments in regional and council policy and strategy since 2006.

#### *The Open Space Strategy and the Local Development Framework*

- 2.15 The Open Space Strategy is a key document informing local spatial planning policy as expressed in the suite of policy documents making up the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy identified the Open Space Strategy as one of the mechanisms for identifying sites for new publicly accessible open space. It also identified the Open Space Strategy as the delivery mechanism for improvements to existing publicly accessible open space.
- 2.16 The Core Strategy was formally adopted by Full Council on 15th September 2010. It presents a new emphasis on planning at a local level and establishes the concept of 'Place-making' through a spatial arrangement of 24 places (the Hamlets) across the Borough. In reviewing provision of open space, the 'Places' provide a new focus for local provision and a reference for defining and tackling deficiencies through improvement and development opportunities (see 'Places' map Appendix A) at a local level. Unlike administrative boundaries like wards, the 'Places' are more aligned to people's daily experience of the area in which they live.
- 2.17 Supporting the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy and localised neighbourhood level planning, the 2011 Open Space Strategy includes an evaluation of provision at 'Place' level.
- 2.18 Recognising the deficiency of open space as identified in the 2006 Open Space Strategy, the Core Strategy establishes access to nature and open

space as a key principle underpinning the spatial vision for Tower Hamlets. It sets out a four themed approach to delivering a network of open spaces:

- Protect - Protecting and safeguarding all existing open space such that there is no net loss.
- Create - Maximising opportunities for new publicly accessible open space.
- Enhance - Improving the quality, usability and accessibility of existing publicly accessible open spaces.
- Connect - Creating new green corridors and enhancing existing ones to connect publicly accessible open spaces to main destination points.

These high level Core Strategy policies are underpinned by detailed guidance and policy statements contained in the Managing Development Plan Document (DPD).

- 2.19 The DPD sets out the detailed place based approach to development and improvement. It identifies site allocations for different key uses, including strategically important new publicly accessible open space, spatial policy areas, guidance for placemaking elements and how these will contribute to achieve the visions for each of the 24 places. The DPD will contain a detailed spatial vision for each place and the Core Strategy recognises the need to ensure that places have a range and mix of high quality, publicly accessible green spaces that promote biodiversity, health and well-being.
- 2.20 The DPD also sets out guidance for the planning application process and detailed policies to inform the process of assessing planning applications. The function of the DPD is to provide clear criteria-based policies to inform planning decisions and manage sustainable development. The DPD will set clear policies on how individual developments must conform to the Core Strategy principles of Protect, Create, Enhance and Connect.
- 2.21 The Open Space Strategy supports the DPD by identifying areas of search to deliver new *strategic publicly accessible open space*, meaning those spaces of circa 1.2ha to 2ha or greater in size that are designed to cater for active recreation in areas of population growth. Areas of search will be evidenced through an updated spatial analysis which takes account of the projected population growth through residential development to 2025. The evidence will support the identification of specific sites, and their designation as publicly accessible open space.
- 2.22 The Open Space Strategy provides the quantitative needs assessment that will underpin DPD policies to protect existing open space. The Strategy also informs DPD policies to enhance and create new open space by providing an analysis of future development and population growth on existing open space.

#### *The Green Grid Strategy and the Local Development Framework*

- 2.23 The Tower Hamlets Green Grid (THGG) forms part of the Local Development Framework evidence base and has informed the Core Strategy approach to connecting publicly accessible open space. The THGG has been developed in

response to the Borough's deficiency in open space, and seeks to improve access to existing open spaces and create a network of new open spaces.

- 2.24 The THGG provides the guidance and objectives for improving connections between green spaces to create green corridors across the Borough. It informs the justification and allocation of open space contributions to connectivity projects as identified through the THGG.
- 2.25 The THGG will inform the DPD in relation to the delivery of new local publicly accessible open space provision and development of a greener public realm. Projects to connect existing spaces and opportunities to create new smaller spaces as identified in the THGG will inform the placemaking elements contained in the place plans.
- 2.26 Proximity of development sites to routes and locations along a route will inform the focus of applying DPD policies to individual developments. It is anticipated that developments along routes will address the THGG by providing on site open space onto the route frontages.
- 2.27 In order to clarify the relationship between and functions of the THGG and the Open Space Strategy a diagram showing the defined purposes of these documents is attached at Appendix C.

## Section 3: Regional and Sub Regional Policy Context

### *The London Plan*

- 3.1 The London Plan sets out a Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, and specifically identifies the role for public open spaces. It sets out an open space hierarchy by size and accessibility standards. The London Plan states that every Londoner should be able to access a Local Park within 400 m of their home (about 5 minutes' walk) and a District Park within 1.2 km (about 15 to 20 minutes walk). It stresses:
- the value of open space
  - the need to protect metropolitan open land, locally important open space, green chains and important wildlife habitats
  - its support for improved access to and connections between spaces
  - the need to create new open spaces and improvements in existing provision where there are deficiencies
  - the need to ensure equal access
  - the need for boroughs to prepare open space strategies
  - the value of the Blue Ribbon Network (the rivers, canals, docks and other water links and spaces in London) for linkages, biodiversity and recreation

### *The East London Green Grid Framework*

- 3.2 The East London Green Grid Framework exists to guide the implementation of the aims of the Mayor's London Plan by providing the sub-regional framework for open space enhancement. It identifies where stakeholders will be able to shape their policies and actions to deliver projects to the strategic network as an integral part of achieving social and economic regeneration.
- 3.3 The East London Green Grid is an inter-linked network of multi-functional green spaces and public rights of way, which contribute to the environmental enhancement of East London and enable the creation of sustainable communities within the Thames Gateway. Delivering the East London Green Grid will involve the creation of new public areas and the enhancement of existing parks and green spaces. The East London Green Grid concept is not designed to displace current open space projects or programmes, but to strengthen the awareness and support for their delivery and management under a single strategic banner.
- 3.4 The Vision for the East London Green Grid is:

*'A living network of parks, green spaces, river and other corridors connecting urban areas to the river Thames, the green belt and beyond.'*

The objectives of the East London Green Grid are to:

- Deliver new and enhance existing public spaces that promote vibrant, sustainable landscapes for East London communities
- Provide high-quality strategic public areas along the river tributaries and green areas
- Provide a diversity of leisure, recreational uses and landscapes for people to escape, relax, learn, play and enjoy, and promote healthy living
- Manage water collection and flood risk with multi-functional spaces
- Provide beautiful, diverse and managed green infrastructure to the highest standards for people and wildlife

#### *Lea Valley and the Olympic Park*

- 3.5 The Lee Valley Park Authority owns 20 per cent of the Olympic Park and will provide long term management of four venues and associated open space after the London 2012 Games as part of the Games' legacy. An additional two miles of open space will be added to the park, improving the green link through the Olympic Park to the Thames.
- 3.6 The Olympic Park is designed to provide a green backdrop for the Games and a new green space after 2012 for people and wildlife living in and around the area. The southern part of the Olympic Park includes riverside gardens whilst the northern area will use green techniques to manage flood and rain water, while providing quieter public space and a range of wildlife habitats. The Olympic Park will be the UK's largest ever urban river and wetland planting scheme. Around 2,000 semi-mature British-grown trees will be planted in the green spaces, and a further 2,000 trees will be planted on the Olympic Village site.

#### *Key Points*

- 3.7 The Council's Open Space Strategy must link effectively with other regional strategies including the East London Green Grid, Lee Valley and Olympic Park legacy plans, and with related local strategies already established for the borough.
- 3.8 Close working with the Olympic authorities and Lea Valley Park Trust must continue to ensure that residents of Tower Hamlets benefit from the opportunities for new open space that this brings particularly in the Lea Valley.

## Section 4: Methodology and Open Space Hierarchy

### *Methodology*

- 4.1 In 2005 external open space assessors were appointed to develop and implement a research programme to support the development of an Open Space Strategy for the Borough. They undertook the following tasks to understand the supply of open space in Tower Hamlets:
- Review of current site information on parks and open spaces
  - Desk-top study to identify all parcels of open land<sup>2</sup> from existing sources of information, cross checked from aerial photos and ground verified
  - Classification of all open spaces identified (typology)
  - Site verification
  - Identification of degree of public accessibility
  - Consideration of size threshold for quality audit
  - Quality audit of sites with public access
  - Refinement of PPG17 typology to take local characteristics into account
- 4.2 For the 2011 review this research has been updated to take account of:
- Loss and gains in open space provision since 2005
  - Changes to the recommended typologies and classifications of land (GLA)
  - Additional analytical requirements arising from the Core Strategy, in particular analysis at 'Place' level
  - More detailed information on access points to sites
  - The 2011 Quality Audit undertaken based upon the widely used and accepted Green Flag criteria.
- 4.3 Recent developments in GIS systems also support more sophisticated analysis. The mapping supplement that accompanies the Strategy is being updated to support more detailed Place level analysis and local neighbourhood planning.

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<sup>2</sup> For this purpose, open space does not include private gardens or most areas of housing open space, except where it is obviously publicly accessible and in effect serves as a local park. It includes all open land, including rivers, basins and canals whether in public or private ownership, in use or derelict. School sports grounds that exceed 0.3 ha were included in 2005 but these have not been re-assessed for the 2011 update.



## Open Space Hierarchy: Classification and Typology

- 4.4 The Strategy considers all open land in Tower Hamlets whether in public or private ownership, in use or derelict. The “Borough Framework Map”, shows all of the borough’s open space, including rivers, docks, canals and burial grounds. In accordance with the Mayor’s Guidance on Preparing Open Space Strategies, private gardens are not included. An assessment of some housing amenity land was carried out to identify land that currently provides a publicly accessible open space or play ground function. However, the Open Space Strategy should not be considered a definitive guide to open space in planning policy terms. Spaces which perform functions in line with the Core Strategy definition of open space will be considered open space for the purpose of planning decisions.
- 4.5 The Open Space Strategy groups open space based on the Open Spaces Typology set out in PPG 17, and as advocated by the Mayor’s Guidance on preparing Open Space Strategies. This means that the Tower Hamlets’ data is compatible with national and regional data collection and monitoring. Some categories have been sub-divided to suit local circumstances, again as the PPG 17 and the Mayor’s guidance permits.
- 4.6 The classification of sites by typology has been undertaken in accordance with their primary purpose, although many sites are multi-functional in practice. For the Strategy update the typologies for individual sites have been re-evaluated. This has led to minor changes to the designated typology in a small number of cases. For example, Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park was identified as a burial ground in 2005, but the Council acknowledged that it is also a public park and a local nature reserve / woodland, and in view of this the site has been re-designated as a ‘Natural and semi-natural urban green space’.
- 4.7 The table below presents a breakdown of the Borough’s open spaces by typology:

PPG 17 & GLA Typology	Local Typology	Number of sites
Parks and gardens	Metropolitan Park***	1
	District Parks***	1
	Local Parks & Gardens***	9
	Small Local Parks & Gdns.***	47
	Pocket Parks***	52
Provision for children and teenagers	Playground***	7
Natural and semi-natural urban green space	Ecological (equating to semi-natural spaces), where a site’s primary function is wildlife habitat; none of these sites in Tower Hamlets is publicly accessible ***	1
Amenity green space	Housing open space	8
Green corridors	The canals function as green corridors but are classified	Nil

	here as civic / water front (see below) since these are particularly important in Tower Hamlets	
Accessible countryside	None in Tower Hamlets	Nil
Outdoor sports facilities	Outdoor sports facilities (all in school grounds, therefore not fully accessible to the public without specific agreement)	Nil
Brownfield land	Brownfield land (note no sites >0.3 ha. were found; there are operational open spaces such as car parks and gas works which have not been included)	Nil
Churchyards and cemeteries	Burial grounds***	9
Allotments, community gardens and city farms	Allotments / city farms***	6
Civic space	Civic space / water front	17
	<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>

Note \*\*\* = sites that have been counted towards the Tower Hamlets open space provision standard.

## **Section 5: The Quantity of Open Space**

### *Open Space Standards*

- 5.1 The adequacy of open space provision has traditionally been assessed by comparing the area of open space to the total population within a given geographic area. PPG 17 states that local authorities should set local standards for open space provision and that these should be incorporated into development plans.
- 5.2 A key issue for this strategy to consider is an appropriate standard for an inner London Borough like Tower Hamlets. In order to understand the adequacy of overall provision, the Council compared actual provision with the Field in Trust Standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population. This standard has long been used as the national benchmark for open space provision and is still used for comparison purposes. The standard was developed to quantify the amount of open land required for the sports and play needs of local communities and it therefore focuses on green space that is fully accessible to the public and that can be used for these purposes. It follows that not all types of open space can be counted as contributing towards this type of provision.
- 5.3 Certain types of open space have been excluded from the calculation of quantum for publicly accessible open space, specifically; canals, docks and river spaces, most housing amenity areas, privately owned closed grounds, and other such land. This is consistent with the definitions set out in the Core Strategy.
- 5.4 The 2006 Open Space Strategy established a local standard of 1.2 hectares (ha) per 1,000 head of population. This standard was based upon the open space provision that existed in the borough in 2005. The local standard was just half of the minimum provision recommended by Fields in Trust.
- 5.5 The Core Strategy identifies that in order to deliver the local standard, and against a background of rising population numbers, the council would need to provide an additional 99ha of publicly accessible open space by 2025 (approximately the area of Victoria Park and Mile End Park combined). The Core Strategy recognises that in the context of acute housing need in the Borough such quantities are not achievable.
- 5.6 At the same time the Core Strategy confirms the need for high quality and accessible open space to support sustainable growth. It confirms that the 1.2ha standard will continue to be used as a monitoring standard to justify local need and identify the impact of new development on existing open space.

### *Borough-wide Open Space Quantity*

- 5.7 Using 2001 census data it was determined that the overall provision of open space across the Borough in 2005 was 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population, or just half of the national guidance standard of 2.4 hectares.

- 5.8 Since 2001 the population of the borough has increased significantly. Over this period there has been some new provision of open space but this has not been sufficient to keep pace with the growth in population. The results of the 2011 census are not yet available to confirm current population levels. However, the Council has developed a population model underpinning the Core Strategy and the Open Space Strategy draws on this model to project future open space requirements. The model identifies 2010 population levels to be 253,019, and that by 2025 there will be 346,502 people living in Tower Hamlets.
- 5.9 Based on the current amount of open space there is an average provision of 0.98ha per 1,000 residents at 2010 levels. If there is no additional open space provision by 2025 this will have dropped to 0.72ha per 1,000 residents.
- 5.10 The assessment of hectares per thousand residents does not take into account the transient populations of workers, students and visitors who also use Tower Hamlets' open spaces. For example, the Council knows that workers from Canary Wharf make use of local sports facilities such as ball games areas and grass pitches, adding to demand and to wear. This is an issue for consideration when planning for future provision and when considering the impact of all development, including commercial development.

#### *Local Open Space Quantity*

- 5.11 Detailed maps have been developed that indicate levels of deficiency in publicly accessible open space in specific parts of the Borough (see Supplement Maps). It is evident that some parts of the Borough have exceptionally low provision of open space for residents.
- 5.12 For the 2011 review of the Strategy, mapping has been refined to enable planning for open space at 'Place' levels. Using population density modelling from the Tower Hamlets Planning for Population Change and Growth Model, it is possible to estimate the current level of provision per head of population for any given 'Place'. The model serves to further highlight the imbalance of open space provision that exists across the Borough. It is also a useful tool to assess and evaluate the impact of projected population change and to plan for the provision of new publicly accessible open space needs. The mapping identifies the imbalance that currently exists. 20 of the 24 places currently fall below the 1.2ha LDF monitoring standard for publicly accessible open space provision.
- 5.13 The Tower Hamlets Planning for Population Change and Growth Model also makes it possible to estimate the future level of provision per head of population taking into account projected population growth. Further mapping for the 2025 scenario shows the relative deficiency in quantity (area) of public open space that would exist in 2025 if no additional open space is provided. Mile End and Victoria Park are the only Place areas that do not have a deficiency at that time. In some places the level of open space provision may be further reduced by major infrastructure projects such as the proposed Thames Tideway Tunnel construction site affecting King Edward Memorial Park.

- 5.14 Map 15 shows the projected level of deficiency in 2025. This demonstrates that unless further space is provided, some areas of the Borough, in particular those with the highest level of population growth, would see ever greater levels of deficiency when compared with the monitoring standard.

*Key Points & Strategic Outcome*

- 5.15 Compared to the national guidance standard of 2.4ha of publicly accessible open space, Tower Hamlets as a whole is significantly deficient in open space meaning existing open space will need to be protected adequately through planning policies.
- 5.16 The distribution of spaces across the borough is unequal with particularly low levels of provision in the West, East and South edges of the borough.
- 5.17 Given the projected population growth in all areas of the Borough, pressure on existing open space will increase over the coming decade. All new development will place additional strain on open space and this strain will need to be mitigated through appropriate measures in the planning application process to allow investment in upgrade and provision of new open space.
- 5.18 **Strategic Outcome:** To create wherever possible new publicly accessible open space by effective use of planning powers and obligations, especially in areas identified as deficient in open space.

## Section 6: The Accessibility of Open Space

### Access Standards

- 6.1 The quantity of open space is only a limited measure of determining the level of open space accessible to residents. It is even more important to consider the distance to the nearest open space, in particular in relation to children and young people as users of open space.
- 6.2 The Council has followed the London Plan Open Space hierarchy approach to analyse accessibility to Local Parks. The Plan states that residents should have access to a Local Park within 400 m of their front door (about 5 minutes' walk) and to major parks within 1.2 km (about 15 minutes' walk). Being within the catchment area of a major park does not mitigate for any lack of easy access to a local park within close proximity of the home.

Open Space category	Size guideline (hectares / hectares)	Distances from homes to open spaces
Regional	Over 400 ha.	8 km
Metropolitan	60-400 ha.	3.2 km
District / major parks	20-60 ha.	1.2 km
Local parks	2-20	400 m
Small local parks	0.4-2 ha.	400 m
Pocket parks	Under 0.4ha.	400 m
Linear open spaces	Variable	Where feasible

- 6.3 The London Plan deems district/major parks to be 20 hectares or more in size. The distribution of parks of this size is particularly uneven in Tower Hamlets. Only two of the Borough's parks actually meet this threshold; Victoria Park and Mile End Park. Millwall Park and the Mudchute Park and Farm can also be counted as a district park since they are adjacent sites and together they provide a large number of facilities and wide range of landscapes for people to enjoy. These three areas are the borough's major parks provision.
- 6.4 Accessibility to the major parks is restricted from some areas due to significant physical barriers. The 2006 strategy used 1.2 km catchment areas, as set out in the London Plan's open space hierarchy to identify the parts of the borough where residents were within reasonable walking distance (15 minutes) of a major park. This mapping was refined to take account of some of the major boundaries such as canals, major roads and rail lines to calculate the zone of influence from the entrance points to the sites. This indicated that only about half (50%) of the Borough's residents had adequate access to the Borough's major parks. Residents in the west and the east of the borough live well outside the standard 15 minutes walking time to a major park.
- 6.5 More sophisticated GIS analysis tools have been developed over the last five years. This resource has been used to update the access zone mapping to provide more detailed analysis of access at Place level across the Borough. The information that this provides will be used to evidence the need for new

spaces, highway and footway improvements, bridge installation, additional site entrances and the like as developments arise and resources become available. It will also be used to identify the most appropriate locations for new spaces so as to optimise additional open space access for local people and new resident populations.

- 6.6 Revised more detailed mapping has shown that access to Local Parks (2ha in line with the GLA typology) is also very limited as can be seen from Map 11. The map shows 400m catchment areas for all parks that take the role of Local Parks for everyday visits. For the purpose of Local Park modelling, Major and Metropolitan Parks take on this role.
- 6.7 It has been recognised that due to the urban nature of Tower Hamlets, parks smaller than 2ha may also need to act as Local Parks. The role of Local Parks is to provide a space for active play and active recreation. As such spaces will need to be at least 1ha in size (0.75ha being the approximate size of a standard football pitch) to fulfil this role. Map 11 also shows catchment areas for all spaces within this category, which will be referred to as the Tower Hamlets Local Park.
- 6.8 Map 11 shows some clear areas of restricted accessibility along the entire eastern edge of the Borough, to the South of Canary Wharf, and in the Whitechapel, Shoreditch, Spitalfields, northern Bethnal Green areas. Other areas with better existing accessibility levels may see these declining due to proposed major infrastructure projects. One such area is Wapping where the Thames Tideway Tunnel project may significantly reduce access to local parks.
- 6.9 A number and variety of obstacles limit or prevent access to Local Parks and Tower Hamlets Local Parks. These include major roads, railways, rivers and canals. Many of the publicly accessible open spaces are small and awkwardly sited without reference to where residents live, a factor that tends to aggravate inequality of access. This is particularly significant in areas of projected growth to the east of the A12.
- 6.10 Map 13 “Public Transport Accessibility Levels” demonstrates that parts of the Borough have relatively low public transport accessibility. The Council has therefore mapped the borough’s parks and open spaces against Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL). This highlighted the poor public transport accessibility for the east of Victoria Park. The Stratford City and Olympic Park developments may offer medium term solutions on public transport accessibility.
- 6.11 Maps 3 to 7 show the Borough’s open spaces, access arrangements and their type. Map 3 “Borough Framework Map” shows the Borough’s Open Spaces and Maps 4 –7 show the same information in more detail at Place level.

#### *Access to Housing Amenity Land*

- 6.12 Access to Housing amenity land is often restricted to use by estate residents either by virtue of being gated or as a consequence of the perceptions created by signage, fencing, walls and other design aspects. Much of this space is fragmented and laid to grass, limiting its practical use by residents. The future remodelling of these estates offers opportunities for improving the quantity and quality of open space provision and public access to it. The Tower Hamlets Green Grid includes an assessment of Housing Amenity Land and is the strategic driver for delivering better access and use of these assets.
- 6.13 Some areas of Housing Amenity land are already managed, maintained and developed by RSLs for public access. RSLs are accountable to the Housing Corporation for their general performance, and to the local authority in respect of the contractual offer made to tenants about what they will deliver. The Council oversees that they meet these commitments.
- 6.14 These mechanisms play a part in ensuring that RSLs perform well on a range of indicators including the quality of housing amenity land. The Council will, through the Local Development Framework, Green Grid approach and this strategy, seek to ensure that Housing Amenity spaces are managed and developed to meet local needs, and compliment and enhance open space and play provision.

#### *Key Points & Strategic Outcome*

- 6.15 Significant areas of Tower Hamlets are not within easy reach of a Local Park as defined in the London Plan or Tower Hamlets Local Park as defined in this strategy. Physical barriers compound the general deficiency by further preventing access. Lack of access within reasonable proximity has a more profound impact than the volume of open space as it can exclude entire communities from a valuable resource.
- 6.16 More sophisticated analysis tools than were available in 2006 allow for more effective planning for access routes or space locations at a local level. This information will inform future investment priorities and provide key evidence to the Local Development Framework.
- 6.17 Improved access to housing amenity for the wider community can assist in meeting demand for space at a local level. The Tower Hamlets Green Grid can be an important tool in determining preferred areas for widening access to housing amenity land.
- 6.18 **Strategic Outcome:** To improve accessibility to existing and new open spaces.



## **Section 7: The Quality of Open Space**

### *Site selection*

- 7.1 The Mayor's Guidance suggests that the condition and quality audit of open spaces should be applied to sites over 0.4 hectares whilst PPG 17 suggests 0.2 hectares. A large number of sites in Tower Hamlets fall between 0.3 and 0.4 hectares, some of which the Council considers to have significant facilities. The Council has therefore quality audited all its own public open spaces and other spaces that exceed 0.3 hectares in size. In addition to the qualitative aspects of each space, the audits also collate management information on use, roles and facilities.

### *2006 Quality Audit*

- 7.2 For the 2006 strategy a quality and management audit was carried out. The physical, visual, psychological and functional aspects of each site were assessed and scored against pre-determined evaluation criteria. The physical qualities of the sites were assessed by looking at the access, signage, lighting, vegetation, site furniture, boundaries, footpaths, architectural features, maintenance, biodiversity and play facilities. Other factors such as convenience, condition, usefulness, and appropriateness also contributed to a sites quality score. Where no feature was present, a score of zero was recorded. The better the quality of the site, the higher the score achieved.
- 7.3 Social features such as sense of personal security and evidence of vandalism were also considered. Personal security was assessed in relation to visibility, degree of isolation, exit options, hidden corners, visual links and accessibility. A summary assessment was made using a five-point scale ranging from threatening to comfortable. Vandalism was assessed on a similar scale with a score of 5 going to a site with no obvious vandalism and a score of 1 for generally extensive vandalism.
- 7.4 Aesthetic qualities were judged by reference to scale, enclosure, texture, colour, diversity, unity, stimulus and pleasure. Again, evaluation criteria were developed to guide scoring for each quality.
- 7.5 The 2006 audit provided a record of standards and needs at that time, and the information and analysis was a key element of the data used to identify the improvement priorities for the Strategy.

### *Summary of 2006 audit findings*

- 7.6 Overall quality scores were derived for each space assessed. The quality assessments showed that there was a marked variation in quality of open space across the borough, and this did not appear to be related to type of site, with most types represented amongst the best and worst performing sites. Nor was quality related to size, location or management of the site. The study concluded, however, that there was a strong link between quality and investment.

## *2011 Quality Audit*

7.7 For the 2011 review and update of the Open Space Strategy, the Council commissioned a fresh external quality audit. The main purpose of this was four:

- To evaluate the impact of c.£12m investment in parks over the last 5 years (see Appendix I).
- To provide analysis of quality and value that took account of the Green Flag Award criteria in a format that could be readily repeated and updated
- To identify priorities for future investment as and when resources become available
- To provide an assessment of accessibility on a site by site basis.: accessibility criteria were used to score each site in order to provide a robust base for analysis of deficiency and to inform targeting of future investment in access improvements.

The audit also captured and assessed a number of new sites created since 2005 which met the criteria for publicly accessible open space over 0.3ha in size.

### *Summary of 2011 audit findings*

7.8 The audit provided a scoring system for open spaces with traffic light indicators to highlight sites that were at or above an acceptable standard (Dark Green or Green) based on the Green Flag criteria and those which need further improvement (Amber and Red).

7.9 In 2006 a total of 51 sites were identified as high priority for investment. Since then, these sites have received improvement funding ranging between £50k and £1.2m. Of these, the 2011 survey rated 10 sites as Very Good and a further 35 as Good. Overall this means that 72% of the Council parks and open spaces are now considered to be of a Good or Very Good standard. Open Space priorities were identified in each LAP area, which means that the improvements have taken place right across the borough.

### *Key Points & Strategic Outcomes*

7.10 The quality of open space varies across the Borough. The Open Space Strategy provides a consistent approach to investment which has improved the overall quality of Council owned spaces and the distribution of good quality spaces across the borough.

7.11 Further investment is needed to bring more sites up to an acceptable standard. The 2011 review of the Strategy establishes new quality measures based upon Green Flag standards which will prioritise and guide future investment.

- 7.12 **Strategic Outcome:** To improve the overall quality of current provision of open space within the Borough by having no poor quality sites
- 7.13 **Strategic Outcome:** To prioritise public safety in parks.

## Section 8: Community views and needs assessment

### *Parks and Open Spaces Annual Survey*

- 8.1 When adopting the strategy in 2006 the Council undertook to continue to engage with the local community and regularly monitor public opinion. To this end the views of residents on the provision of public parks and open spaces have been collected through an annual survey. The results of those surveys have been used to inform the mid-point review and this analysis is described in more detail in Sections 8 and 9.
- 8.2 The Council uses a national methodology for market research that provides a standardised approach for local authorities to obtain a range of customer views in relation to the provision of parks and open spaces. The Council now has six years of data which can be used to track satisfaction in parks and open spaces since the adoption of the Open Space Strategy in 2006.
- 8.3 An independent agency polled a representative sample of 1,000 residents for the Council. Overall satisfaction levels provide a general indicator of performance that can be used to check improvement over time and to benchmark with other local authorities. The survey scoring system rates satisfaction scores as follows:
- 8 - 10 = Very Good
  - 6 - 8 = Good
  - 4 - 6 = Fair
  - 2 - 4 = Poor
  - 0 - 2 = Very Poor
- 8.4 In addition to providing borough wide measures of satisfaction, the data can be analysed in relation to specific parks where respondents have identified the park that they most use. This analysis has been used to help target resources to improve poorly performing parks and open space so that they are better equipped to meet the needs of local people.
- 8.5 The 2005 survey revealed that the overall satisfaction level compared favourably against other authorities, whilst the 2010 survey showed that the borough parks satisfaction scores have improved by 8.3% on average.

### ***Parks and Open Spaces Annual Survey: Results received for the larger individual parks and open spaces (Major & Key Parks) showing change from 2005 to 2010***

Key Parks	Satisfaction Score 2005	Satisfaction Score 2010	% Change	Direction
Bartlett Park	6.24 - Good	6.56 - Good	5.13%	Better
Bethnal Green Gardens	7.02 - Good	6.79 - Good	-3.28%	Worse*
King Edward Memorial Park	6.78- Good	7.26 - Good	7.08%	Better
Meath Gardens	7.13 - Good	8.10 – Very Good	13.60%	Better
Mile End Park	6.86 - Good	7.42 - Good	8.16%	Better
Millwall Park	6.37 - Good	7.17 - Good	12.56%	Better

Mudchute Park & Farm	6.58 - Good	7.50 - Good	13.98%	Better
Stepney Green Park	6.47 - Good	7.16 - Good	10.66%	Better
T.H. Cemetery Park	7.13 - Good	7.83 - Good	9.82%	Better
Victoria Park	6.8 - Good	7.22 - Good	5.25%	Better*
Weavers Fields	6.42 - Good	6.96 - Good	8.41%	Better
			8.31%	Better

\* Significant capital improvement works were taking place at these sites in the period immediately prior to and during the 2010 survey period.

8.6 The survey data from 2005 provided a useful guide for the effective targeting of resources to aid improvements. The detailed data obtained from the survey has helped to inform parks and open space management and improvement plans including the development of site specific management plans that support Green Flag Award entries and provide evidence to support successful funding bids for Heritage Lottery, Play Pathfinder and other funding streams.

8.7 In addition to overall satisfaction, the survey also tracks satisfaction with key factors influencing overall satisfaction. The survey has revealed an improving trend over the period against all factors.

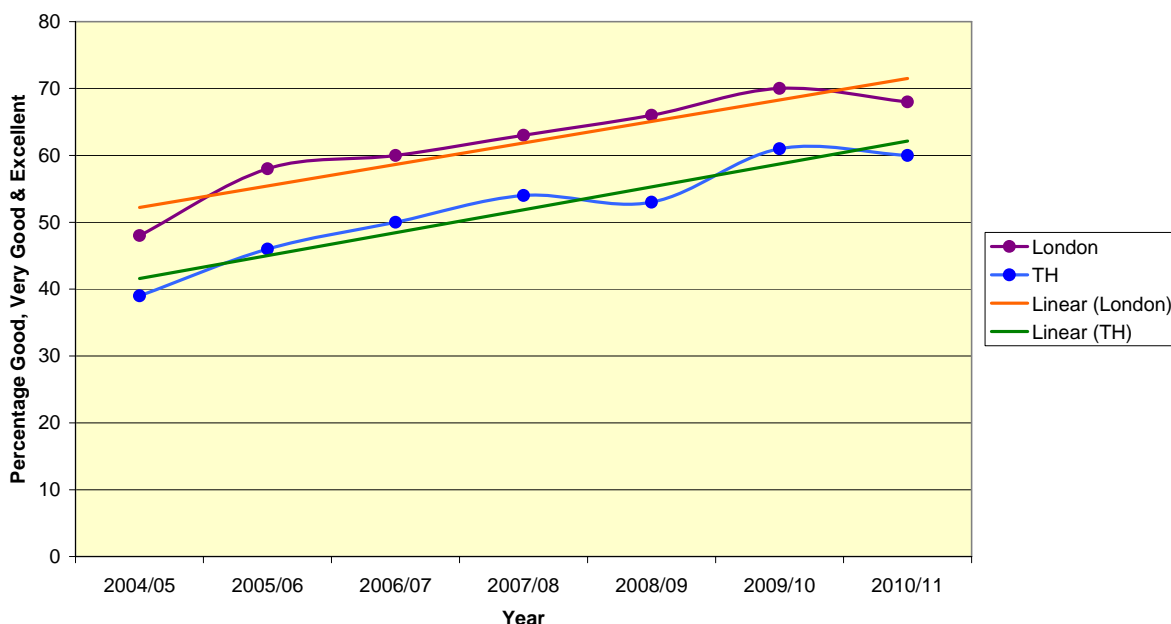
Measure	2005 Score	2010 Score	% Improvement	Current Rating
Cleanliness	7.57	8.03	6.1%	Very Good
Ease of Getting to	8.12	8.82	8.6%	Very Good
Information	6.38	7.11	11.6%	Good
General Appearance	7.77	8.07	3.9%	Very Good
Facilities	6.31	6.95	10.2%	Good
Wildlife	6.51	7.01	7.6%	Good
Toilets	4.65	5.51	18.3%	Fair
Pitches	6.92	7.51	8.5%	Good
Pavilions	6.54	7.19	10.0%	Good
Catering	5.79	6.94	19.9%	Good
Car parking	5.20	5.71	9.7%	Fair
Play area	7.31	7.80	6.6%	Good
Disabled provision	6.37	7.14	12.1%	Good
Seats & Bins	6.78	7.42	9.5%	Good
Grass cutting	7.75	8.07	4.1%	Very Good
Flowers & shrubs	7.56	7.90	4.5%	Good
Lighting	6.78	6.96	2.7%	Good
Signage	6.78	7.12	5.1%	Good
Control of Dogs	6.24	6.39	2.3%	Good
Youth provision	6.40	7.14	11.6%	Good
<b>Overall rating</b>	<b>6.69</b>	<b>7.24</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>Good</b>

### *Annual Residents Survey*

8.8 Resident satisfaction with parks and open spaces has also been measured through the Annual Residents Survey of Council services. This indicates that satisfaction in Tower Hamlets parks and open spaces is improving broadly in line with the London average, though satisfaction levels are lower compared

to other London authorities. The following table tracks the changes since 2005:

**Parks & Open Spaces Satisfaction Trend vs London**



### *Consultation on the Open Space Strategy 2011*

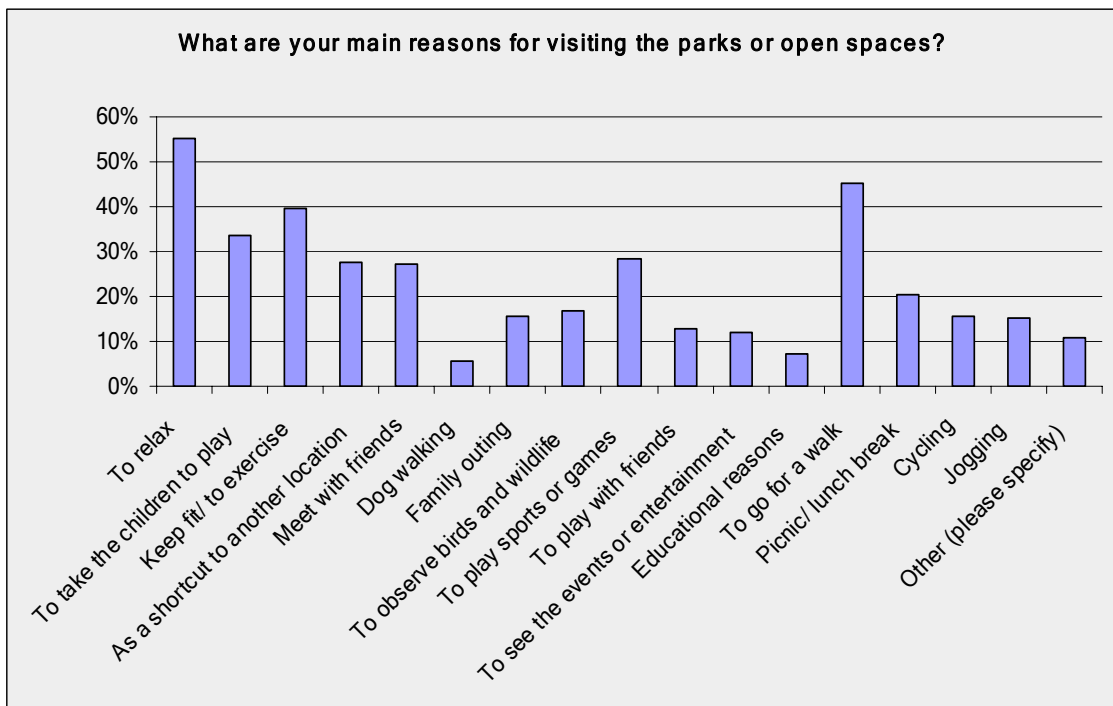
8.9 A consultation into the updated Open Space Strategy was held from 19<sup>th</sup> September - 28<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Residents had the opportunity to have their say on how they wanted to shape investment into parks and open spaces in Tower Hamlets. A number of drop-in sessions were held across the borough at the four Idea Stores (Whitechapel, Bow, Canary Wharf and Chrisp Street) as well as Watney Market library. Separate workshops were held specifically aimed at stakeholders and young people, and there were two Members drop-in sessions. Residents could also complete an online survey or request a hard copy by post. The feedback from the consultation as outlined below has been used to inform the strategy.

8.10 The survey was designed to understand the views of residents with regards to how they wanted to prioritise resources in those existing parks and open spaces that have been identified as needing further investment, as well as what characteristics or elements they wanted to see in new parks and open spaces. In particular the survey set out to identify and establish the following:

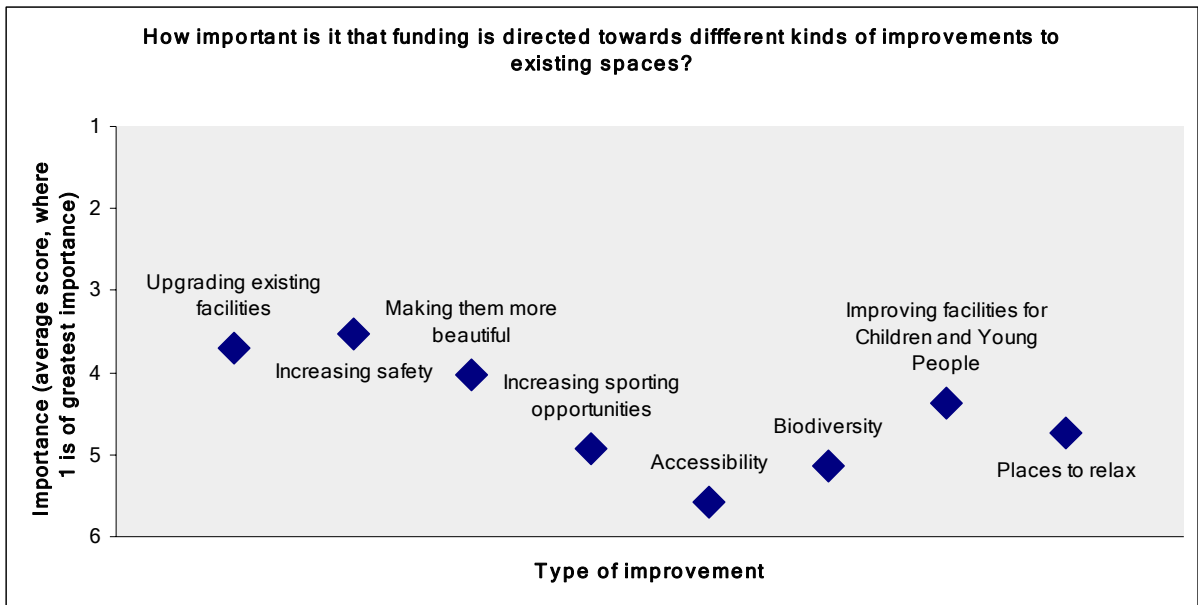
- How residents wanted to prioritise resources in existing open spaces that needed further investment
- What residents believed makes a good park
- The usage of open space by residents within the borough
- The main reasons residents visited open spaces differing by types of provision
- Views of residents in how they wanted the Council to balance the various uses when thinking about the design of new local parks and open spaces

8.11 241 surveys were completed during the consultation period. 70% of the respondents either visited open spaces daily or several times a week. The parks visited most frequently included Millwall Park, Victoria Park and Mile End Park. Most of the parks identified were large parks with a wide range of facilities and easily accessible by public transport.

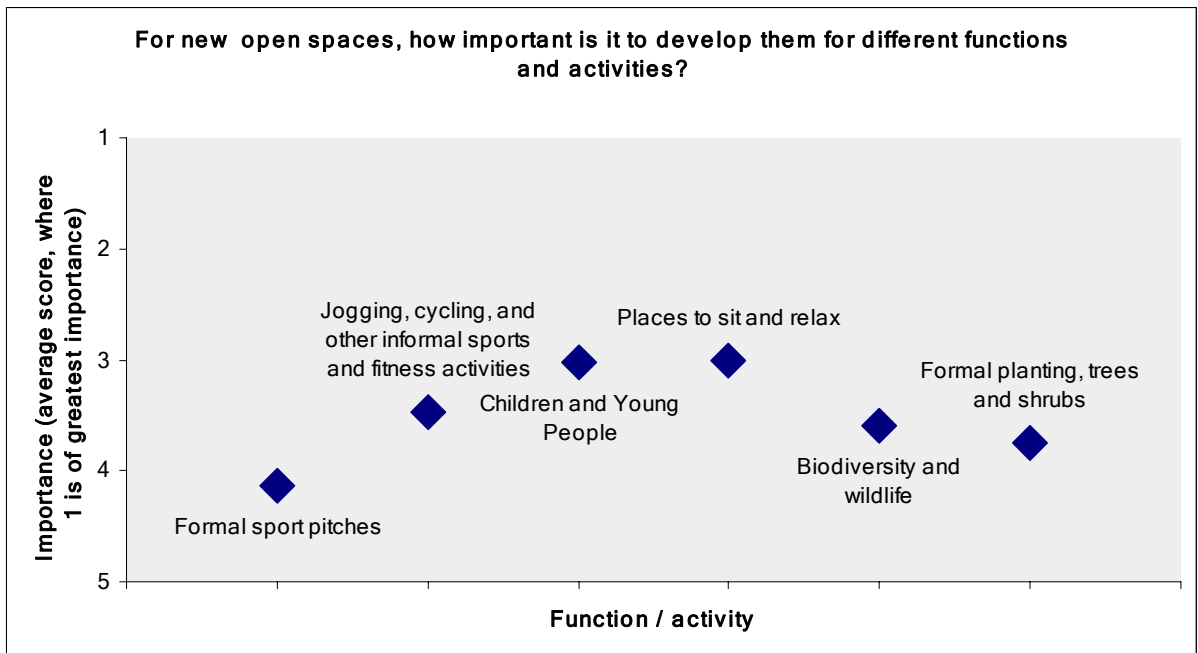
8.12 The top five reasons given for visiting open spaces were: to relax (55.2%), to go for a walk (45.2%), to keep fit/exercise (39.8%), for children’s play (33.6%) and to play sports or games (28.6%). This result was similar to that of the Parks & Open Spaces Annual Survey responses which indicated that the most significant levels of usage are for relaxation, exercise, and children’s play. The wide range of activities selected indicates how important it is for open spaces to have a variety of different functions that appeal to people of all ages.



8.13 In terms of future improvements to the areas identified by the strategy as priority investment areas, respondents were asked to rank which issues they thought were most important, with regard to: increasing enjoyment of open spaces, making them more useful, and encouraging more visits to them. Results indicated that increasing safety was of most importance, followed by upgrading existing facilities and making open spaces more beautiful.



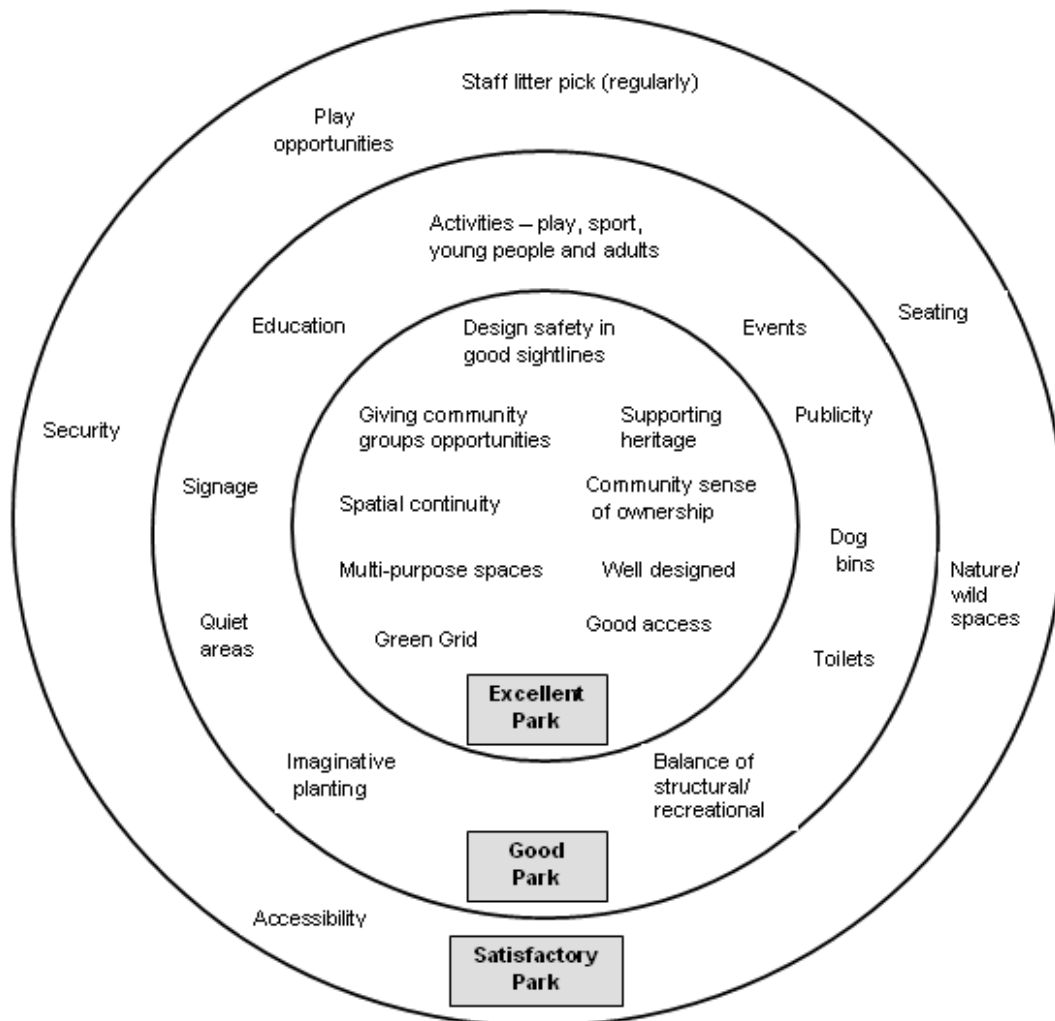
8.14 In terms of functions or uses of proposed new open spaces as identified by the strategy, respondents were asked to rank which functions or uses were most needed. The rating average revealed that respondents felt having places to sit and relax was the most important, followed by having areas set aside for children and young people. Formal sports pitches were ranked as being the least important characteristic to have in new open spaces.



8.15 A stakeholder workshop took place on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011 with key groups and organisations that use the parks and open spaces, such as representatives from Friends of Parks groups, city farms, sports clubs, and sports governing bodies. The stakeholders were all people who have an influence or involvement in the provision, maintenance or public use of open space across the borough.



- 8.16 The participants were asked to consider the key elements any park or open space should include, including agreeing on what elements make an 'excellent', 'good' or 'satisfactory' park.
- 8.17 The results of the group discussion are outlined below:



- 8.18 There was general consensus that open spaces should be accessible, safe, with a good mix of biodiversity, play opportunities and seating areas. It was felt that an 'excellent' open space was one that was well designed with multi-purpose spaces, enhancing safety and 'spatial continuity' within and between parks. It was also important to link up existing open spaces through the use of the Green Grid, encouraging a network of open spaces that serve people of all ages and interests. Supporting heritage and more wildlife and biodiversity were also key attributes to making it an excellent park.
- 8.19 Participants at the workshop also explored what groups and organisations can do to encourage people to make more use of open spaces. The key themes that emerged were around the **communication and sharing of information**, the development and delivery of **events**, promoting a **sense of community ownership**, and increasing **accessibility**.
- 8.20 A consultation event with young people was held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011 as part of the Youth Council meeting. There were 9 young people in attendance

(7 female participants and 2 male, of which one was a Deputy Young Mayor). As part of a role play exercise, Youth Council members were tasked with creating a new open space. Each member was assigned a character role and asked to advocate for their particular item, whilst working together as a group.

8.21 The young people were asked to think about how they would balance out the requirements of different groups and individuals. They were asked to choose from a list of ten possible different items which could be purchased.

8.22 The group prioritised the following items:

- Children's Play Area
- Wildlife Area (x2)
- Multi-Use Games Area
- Plants and Flowers
- Outdoor Gym
- Water feature / lake

There was as strong emphasis on having a multi-use games area, with much consideration also given to other requirements such as encouraging biodiversity and creating places to relax and play.

### *Key Points*

8.23 Formal consultation findings were broadly line with survey results from the Parks & Open Spaces Annual Survey, in particular around the desire to see:

- existing facilities upgraded
- improved safety and security
- more areas set aside for relaxation
- more areas set aside for children and young people

## **Section 9: Understanding and managing demand**

### *Overall demand*

- 9.1 A general assessment of the level of demand can be made on the basis of projected population growth. Growth will place additional demands on the limited amount of open space as a whole. Local demand for open space is likely to soar by 2016. The London Plan indicates that the population of Tower Hamlets will increase by at least one third between 2001 and 2016 (to roughly 270,000 people) and that employment will increase by some 80% over the same period (to 273,000 jobs).
- 9.2 The projected rise in population is not evenly distributed across the borough. Population will grow more quickly in areas where major housing development and regeneration is planned. Housing development densities have been highlighted in the Core Strategy.
- 9.3 The Parks & Open Spaces Annual Survey indicates that approximately 83% of the borough's residents currently use parks, with 71% specifically identifying a Tower Hamlets park or open space as the one they most use. The number of users, and the frequency at which they use the parks and open spaces translates to more than 12 million visits each year.
- 9.4 The proportion of respondents to the Annual Residents Survey who identify as being park users is lower at 61% (09/10 survey) but this is an increase from 49% (04/05 survey) to 2010. Using the lower Annual Resident Survey figures and based upon GLA projected population figures this represents an additional 41,675 resident park users in 2010 compared to 2005. This figure takes no account of any increase in the non-resident worker population of the borough
- 9.5 Around 80% of visits to the parks and open spaces are made on foot and a significant number of residents do not live within reasonable walking distance of a Local Park sized open space. For this reason, the focus for new strategic provision will need to be on addressing areas where accessibility is worst (rather than quantity).
- 9.6 If the Council continues to improve accessibility across the Borough, there will be a corresponding and significant increase in the level of usage. Whilst this is desirable, it will add further pressure on spaces in terms of wear and tear and may increase the potential for conflicts of use.
- 9.7 Parks and open spaces fulfil a variety of functions and managing these sometimes competing functions will become increasingly important. The following paragraphs set out the key functions as they arise from the Parks & Open Spaces Annual Survey, the changing demographics of the Borough, and the environmental context.

### *Main reasons for visiting parks and open spaces*

- 9.8 Parks and open spaces provide opportunities for a rich variety of formal and informal types of outdoor recreation. These opportunities include active and

passive use of all varieties, from organised sports, ball games, play, sitting, walking, running, water sports, exercising, informal games to picnicking. The Parks & Open Spaces Annual Survey responses demonstrate the wide ranging demand and needs that these spaces provide for. The following table provides a summary of responses.

<b>Reason for visit</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
To relax	27.5
To take children to play	23.7
To exercise	16.1
As a shortcut	6.8
To meet with friends	6.1
To walk the dog	4.6
Family outing	4.4
To observe wildlife	3.1
To play sport or games	2.9
To play with friends	2.4
To see the events or entertainment	2.2
Educational reasons	0.2

- 9.9 This table demonstrates that the most significant levels of usage are for relaxation, exercise and children’s play. The list also highlights the areas of conflicting needs that the Council manages on a day to day basis. Clearly the parks and open spaces must be laid out and equipped to support the key uses, whilst also maintaining provision to meet the more diverse and specialised needs of the community.

*Demand for play for children and young people*

- 9.10 The Borough has the third highest density of people living in Inner London and a high child population. Many children live in flats without gardens and above the ground floor. Catering for this large section of the population in parks and open spaces is a key priority and is reflected in the ongoing commitment to providing excellent play facilities.
- 9.11 Some of the largest and best equipped play facilities in Tower Hamlets are located within parks and open spaces - from babies, toddlers and young children at the Children’s Park and teenagers at the Adventure Park both in Mile End Park. There are 38 equipped play areas, 20 multi-use games areas, 6 One O’Clock Clubs (operated by the Children, Schools & Families Directorate) and 5 Adventure Playgrounds (including voluntary sector provision). In addition, all parks and open spaces offer space for free play.
- 9.12 The Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH) developed the guidance document "Strategic Approaches to Planning for Play in Tower Hamlets". This document sets out the benefits of play and identifies how provision can be improved through the Planning framework and open space improvements. All of the Borough's play sites were audited and quantity, quality and access issues as well as demand issues are described in the guidance.

- 9.13 Since the establishment of this guidance there have been significant changes in the approach to play provision in public spaces. A far greater emphasis is now placed upon developing whole sites to support play and adventurous challenge, using some items of formal play equipment but within a wider environmental layout which includes playable features such as mounds, log structures, slides incorporated into the landscape and, where practical, sand and water play opportunities.
- 9.14 This new approach to providing for play balances the need of children and young people against the needs of adult users by creating multi-functional landscapes that can be used for a variety of activities including play and relaxation.

*Demand for formal outdoor sports facilities*

- 9.15 The Council is the principal pitch provider for formal field based sports in Tower Hamlets. In addition to provision in parks and open spaces, there are pitch facilities at Mile End Stadium and at the Whitechapel and John Orwell Sports Centres. The Borough's leisure management contractor manages these facilities. There is a limited number of pitches within schools, namely at Langdon Park and St Paul's Way schools.
- 9.16 Local demand for outdoor sports and recreational use of parks and open spaces is known to be high, given the young population. National guidance suggests that 1.2 hectares of the 2.4 hectares recommended open space per 1,000 residents should be allocated to organised team sports. To come close to meeting this standard would require all open space in the borough to be dedicated to team sport areas.
- 9.17 In practice a high proportion of the open spaces in the borough are not large enough to support formal team sport provision. Tower Hamlets has a large number of small open spaces scattered over the borough. Three quarters of the Borough's parks and gardens are less than 1.0 hectare in size. A full size football pitch takes up roughly three-quarters of a hectare not taking into account changing facilities. Parks this small can only offer a limited range of facilities with no provision for field sports. Those parks and open spaces which are of a reasonable size are required to provide for all community open space and environmental needs as well as team sports. Map 11 shows all parks and of open spaces of 1ha and above, the minimum required to provide for active recreation.
- 9.18 Demand for sports pitches in Tower Hamlets can never be fully met due to the site constraints. By far the greatest demand for sport in parks and open spaces is for football played on grass. Between 70 and 80 teams book grass football pitches in parks every year. Through booking records and public feedback, the Council understands that the borough has insufficient playing pitches to meet demand. This is particularly the case for grass-based football, where demand is rising and already exceeds pitch availability at peak times.
- 9.19 A relatively recent phenomenon is the growth in popularity of summer football. There are now established summer football leagues with some 30

teams playing a summer league in Victoria Park across 4 pitches (up from 3 in 2005) every Sunday, placing increased strain on grass surfaces which may in the long term be unsustainable.

- 9.20 The parks and open spaces support a range of other sports and recreation activities. Demand for provision for rugby, cricket and school games use remains strong. Three artificial cricket wickets in Victoria Park support intensive school and club use through the summer providing for around 48 matches per week.
- 9.21 Where it is practicable, the Council has identified open land that is suitable for team sport provision and it provides team sport areas for football, cricket and rugby as well as some small sided sports areas. These areas are generally open, flat and level spaces where sporting activities can exist alongside other park usage. The overall provision of pitches has increased over the term of the Strategy as new areas have been identified within existing parks which can support this use. Such developments help to address the demand from local teams, but this is at some expense to the fabric of the parks and has consequential management and maintenance costs over time.
- 9.22 The Council has undertaken a review of the quality of sporting facilities in parks and open spaces. This identified the need to invest in better facilities on the ground and in associated infrastructure for sports including new and improved changing facilities, and better access for women, children and for people with disabilities.
- 9.23 In the context of lack of space to provide further pitches other than on sites already offering some formal team sport provision, improvements to some existing parks pitches would support increased use, such as the current tarmac pitch at King Edward Memorial Park. The Council will continue to review pitch alignment across parks and open spaces to ensure best use is made of limited land.
- 9.24 An alternative to grass pitches is the potential to create artificial turf pitches (ATP). Facilities of this type have been created in the borough, including those at Mile End Stadium and Stepney Green Park. These pitches support more intensive use and can generally be available for use throughout the year. With organisations such as FIFA supporting the use of artificial grass pitches for international football usage, there are good precedents to extend this type of provision to a wider audience. This could also help relieve the pressure on other existing open spaces.
- 9.25 Unlike grass pitches, artificial surfaces are generally located within high fenced areas so as to prevent contamination of the surface from mud and other detritus and help contain play and prevent balls and players from conflicting with adjacent areas and users. The downside of this arrangement is that these areas no longer contribute to the open aspect of parks and open spaces, an attribute that consultation has identified as being of great value to inner-city residents. The potential for ATP development must be considered within the broader context of open space and sports pitch needs.

## *Sustainability and Environmental Demands*

- 9.26 Open spaces, and in particular ‘green’ areas and the blue spaces, provide specific benefits in relation to the health of the population and the protection of the area from environmental changes. The LDF Core Strategy recognises the important function that such spaces have in reducing rain water run off (flood control) and in cooling the local ‘heat island’ created by buildings, industry, transport and other human activity in the inner-city. Trees and other plants help to reduce pollution and improve air quality. More recently local food growing has moved up the agenda as a means of improving sustainability and reducing food transport impacts: It is generally not considered appropriate for the scarce publicly open space resource to be set aside for food growing areas, but there is potential for underused housing amenity land to be developed in this way.
- 9.27 ‘Demand’ for sustainability and biodiversity is not easy to measure in specific terms (though a small proportion of park users do identify observing wildlife as the main reason that they visit parks), however there is a significant body of evidence that confirms the need for humans to have contact with nature in their everyday lives and the health benefits that are derived from such contact.
- 9.28 Perception is the key factor in preference for or against particular landscapes. Our cultural background strongly influences our view on the relationship between man and nature and the value that we put on ‘natural landscapes’. In the inner city context ‘natural’ planting can seem a little obscure, unkempt or even unsafe, however diverse habitats are desirable from the point of view of establishing and maintaining a healthy environment in which to live. They have an additional benefit of providing an educational resource in an area where many schools have limited or no outdoor space of their own.
- 9.29 Through careful design and management, the associated ‘risk’ perceptions can be addressed. Diverse planting can offer increased seasonal variety and colour and support a wider variety of insects, birds and other animals. Target species and habitats are identified within the Tower Habitats Partnerships Biodiversity Action Plan and the parks and open spaces are the principle spaces where habitats can be provided, protected and improved.

## *Preferred locations and typology of new strategic open spaces*

- 9.30 The modelling carried out for the open space strategy has demonstrated that Tower Hamlets is highly deficient in publicly accessible open space and that this deficiency is going to further increase as the population grows.
- 9.31 Modelling has also demonstrated that levels of accessibility differ from Place to Place, with some Places lacking access to publicly accessible open space completely and being cut off by significant lines of severance.

- 9.32 Whilst overall levels of deficiency are important in determining the future locations for new open space to meet future demand, ensuring accessible within easy reach of new homes is even more important.
- 9.33 The following table sets out the rationale for preferred locations for new open space starting by short listing those Places with areas of restricted accessibility to Local Parks or Tower Hamlets Local Parks (as demonstrated by MAP 11).



Place	Projected level of deficiency 2025	Very strong lines of severance	Proposed typology of new space	Rationale & purpose	Location within Place	Other measures	Delivery Mechanism for new space
Fish Island	Very High	Yes	Tower Hamlets Local Park	Provide active recreation space for significant new community east of A12	Fish Island North & Fish Island East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved access to Victoria Park as part of the Fish Island Area Action Plan projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Suggested Sites</li> </ul>
Bow	Low	No	Pocket Park through Green Grid Strategy	Provide connectivity to existing spaces in neighbouring Places, limited ability to create new space	Along Green Grid		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Bromley-by-Bow (east of the A12)	Very High	Yes	Tower Hamlets Local Park	Provide active recreation space for significant new community east of A12	Tesco site in line with Bromley-by-Bow Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved connectivity across the A12 in line with Bromley-by-Bow Masterplan projects</li> <li>Improved connectivity north-south as part of the Lea River Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Suggested Sites</li> </ul>
Poplar Riverside (east of the A12)	Very High	Yes	Tower Hamlets Local Park	Provide active recreation space for significant new community east of A12	Leven Road gasholder site to provide best coverage for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved connectivity north-south as part of the Lea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Suggested Sites</li> </ul>

					existing and new communities east of the A12 and north of the A13	River Park	
Blackwall	Low	Yes	Pocket Park through Green Grid Strategy	Provide connectivity to existing spaces in neighbouring Places	Along Green Grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved access to Robin Hood Gardens</li> <li>Improved layout of Robin Hood Gardens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>Blackwall Reach Development Framework</li> <li>Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Cubitt Town (north of Crossharbour)	Very Low	Yes	Pocket Park through Green Grid Strategy	Provide connectivity to existing spaces	Marshwall East Masterplan area along Green Grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved connectivity through Crossharbour site to Mudchute Farm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Canary Wharf (east)	Very High	Yes	Significant new open space (close to size of Tower Hamlets Local Park)	Provide active recreation space for significant new communities on a site with strong lines of severance	Wood Wharf East in line with Wood Wharf planning permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved connectivity to existing sites in line with Wood Wharf Masterplan and emerging Marshwall East Masterplan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wood Wharf Masterplan</li> <li>Wood Wharf planning application process</li> <li>Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Shadwell	Very High	No	Pocket Park	Provide connectivity to existing spaces, limited	Along Green Grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved connectivity to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Grid Strategy</li> </ul>

			through Green Grid Strategy	ability to create new space		existing sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Aldgate	Very High	No	Pocket Park through Green Grid Strategy	Provide connectivity to existing spaces, limited ability to create new space	Along Green Grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved connectivity to existing sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>• Aldgate Masterplan</li> <li>• Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Tower & St Katharine's Dock	High	No	Pocket Park through Green Grid Strategy	Provide connectivity to existing spaces, limited ability to create new space	Along Green Grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved connectivity to existing sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>• Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Whitechapel	Very High	No	Pocket through Green Grid Strategy	Provide connectivity to existing spaces, limited ability to create new space	Along Green Grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved connectivity to existing sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>• Whitechapel Masterplan</li> </ul>
Spitalfields	Very High	No	Pocket through Green Grid Strategy	Provide connectivity to existing spaces and proposed new space in Shoreditch, limited ability to create new space	Along Green Grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved connectivity to existing sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>• Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Placemaking Elements</li> </ul>
Shoreditch	Very High	No	Tower Hamlets Local Park	Provide active recreation space on border of Spitalfields to overcome lack of	Bishops Gate Goodsyard to provide coverage for Spitalfields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved connectivity to existing sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Suggested Sites</li> </ul>

				access for both Places	and Shoreditch		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Grid Strategy</li> <li>• Bishopsgate Goods Yard Interim Planning Guidance</li> </ul>
Bethnal Green (north)	Low	Yes	Tower Hamlets Local Park	Provide active recreation space for residents limited by strong lines of severance	Oval and gasworks site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved connectivity to existing sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Suggested Sites</li> <li>• Green Grid Strategy</li> </ul>
Millwall	Very High	Yes	Tower Hamlets Local Park	Provide active recreation space for residents limited by strong lines of severance	Westferry Print Works to provide greatest level of access for communities separated by line of severance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved connectivity to existing sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Millennium Quarter Masterplan</li> <li>• Sites &amp; Placemaking DPD: Suggested Sites</li> <li>• Green Grid Strategy</li> </ul>

## *Key Points*

- 9.34 New housing developments are set to increase further the number of residents living in the borough, but this increase will not be evenly distributed and may have a disproportionate impact on some areas of the borough that are already more deficient in open space provision than other locations.
- 9.35 New strategic spaces (Tower Hamlets Local Park) will be required to meet demand in areas of low accessibility. These are: Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, Fish Island, Poplar Riverside, Millwall and Bromley-by-Bow.
- 9.36 These new spaces will need to cater, like existing sites, for a range of competing uses:
- 9.37 Tower Hamlets parks provide some of the largest and best-equipped play areas in the Borough and are the major provider of informal play space and opportunities in the Borough. Children's play provision is a vital component of the public open spaces. A new approach to design and risk is supporting the development of playable landscapes, extending play opportunities and reducing installation, improvement and maintenance costs.
- 9.38 Three quarters of the borough's parks are less than the size of a single football pitch. The small size of a high proportion of the borough's open spaces limits the ability of the Council to increase provision for the more popular field sports. Those sites that can accommodate grass pitches are heavily used, allowing no recovery time for the pitch surfaces. Synthetic pitches can tolerate heavier use but have a negative impact on biodiversity and sustainability, detract from openness and are not appropriate for some field sports. The Council is reviewing all sites of an appropriate size to identify locations for improved sports pitch provision. Wherever possible new strategic spaces should be of sufficient size to support field sport facilities.
- 9.39 There is significant unsatisfied demand for allotments and other food growing spaces. Publicly accessible open space is scarce and needs to cater for many uses in a densely populated borough. It is not generally the most suitable land for providing allotments or other food growing as it takes valuable open space out of general use for the benefit of small groups or individuals. Housing amenity land presents the best potential for developing quality food growing areas but due cognisance of land contamination risk factors is required.
- 9.40 The publicly accessible open spaces make an essential contribution towards the environmental sustainability of the borough. They provide access to nature that is essential to resident health and wellbeing. Bio-diverse habitats are desirable for many reasons, but they need to be carefully designed and managed if their values are to be recognised by local people.

## **Section 10: Implementation & Monitoring**

### *Leading local placemaking and monitoring impact*

- 10.1 The Council has a key role in ensuring that all the organisations involved in the provision and management of public open space are brought together and work towards common and agreed outcomes. This will help to ensure that the best progress is made towards meeting local community needs.
- 10.2 The Council will continue to encourage and support the development of parks 'Friends' groups and similar community parks groups. It will build upon its localised approach to service delivery to improve the understanding of local needs, target resource more effectively, and maximise the resources that can be applied to addressing local concerns and issues and improving open space provision. The Council will carry out specific consultation in relation to all major improvement projects in parks and open spaces.
- 10.3 In order to ensure effective partnership working the Council will play a lead role engaging with the Tower Hamlets Local Strategic Partnership and associated infrastructure. Responsibility for delivery of most of the strategic outputs rests with the Council and as such progress will be monitored and reported via the Council's Performance Management and Accountability Framework.
- 10.4 The measurement of performance and achievement is essential in order to ensure that the Council is providing effective and efficient services that meet the needs of the community. At 2006 when the Strategy was approved two key measures existed - these were:
- The number of parks and open spaces with Green Flag Awards
  - The level of public satisfaction in parks and open spaces
- The Council has been one of the best performing authorities in London in terms of its success in gaining and retaining Green Flag Awards.
- 10.5 The Council will carry out an annual survey of views on the provision of public parks and open spaces and will publish findings on the Council web site.
- 10.6 Site specific management plans help to ensure effective and efficient use of resources, support development planning, funding bids and long term sustainability. Detailed management plans have already been prepared for 11 parks. Where major improvements to parks and open spaces are planned, the Council will, as part of the design process, commission the preparation of further Management Plans. Management plans are an essential requirement for Green Flag Award applications.

### *Attracting investment & ensuring local government efficiency*

- 10.7 Parks and open spaces attract funding from a number of sources. The Council provides revenue funding for general upkeep and maintenance, and

capital funding for the provision of new or replacement facilities in the longer term.

- 10.8 The Council has been very successful at attracting grant aid from a range of external sources. Where possible it seeks match funding from other sources to boost the value of its own investments. Major parks improvement projects such as those at Mile End Park, Trinity Square Gardens, Island Gardens, Millwall Park, Meath Gardens, and Weavers Fields have all benefited from such funding. The Council will continue to seek partnership funding and will develop and maintain a funding plan in relation to external funding sources.
- 10.9 The Council faces significant resource constraints as the second phase of the Strategy is being implemented. This will impact upon resources for parks in terms of ongoing revenue and capital for improvement works. The Council will continue to source funds and to ensure that developments in the borough provide for new and better open spaces through the planning process.
- 10.10 The parks and open spaces support an estimated 12 million visits per year, supported through a Council Parks & Open Spaces budget of £5.2m. At £0.43 pence per visit (down from £0.58 pence per visit in 2005).
- 10.11 The revenue budgets for Parks for 2011/12 is £5.2m compared to a budget of £6.1m for 2010/11. Reductions in revenue for parks can place additional pressure on capital works.
- 10.12 As a consequence of changes to capital funding made by the Chancellor in the October 2010 Spending Review, Council's will have less capital available to spend, and borrowing will be more expensive. In the current financial climate some charitable sources of funds are also being squeezed.
- 10.13 The Council is currently preparing a new Supplementary Planning Document for planning obligations which will set out the approach to be taken for calculating Planning Obligations arising from development. The Open Space Strategy has contributed to the development of this document through the evidence it has provided.
- 10.14 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force on 6 April 2010 under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. The CIL was originally intended to help finance the infrastructure needed to increase the supply of housing, particularly in areas of high demand like the South East.
- 10.15 The Coalition Government is in the process of enacting its Localism Bill. This legislation would retain the CIL but gives the Secretary of State the power to make regulations to amend it so that a significant proportion of the revenue goes to neighbourhood projects to fund development.
- 10.16 The devolving of a 'significant' proportion of the CIL to local neighbourhoods could place a constraint on the ability of the Council to apply resources, arising from development, to tackle areas of need and deficiency strategically.

## *Prioritising Investment*

- 10.17 In the context of limited resources it is even more important that the resources the Council secures are targeted effectively both in terms of the location and the type of improvement. The Core Strategy identifies the Place model as the local strategic approach to planning and this presents an opportunity to evaluate need at a very local level. Mapping techniques have improved and the Council will use this to inform the prioritisation process to local level. The 2011 quality audit provides a detailed and accessible reference of the improvement needs for individual sites and the relative need between sites which will be used to inform project scoping and design briefs.
- 10.18 The Parks and Open Spaces Annual Survey and the 2006 and 2011 quality audits demonstrate a direct correlation between the quality of open spaces and associated services, and the level of customer satisfaction and usage. Parks and open spaces have achieved significantly better quality scores where they have been the recipients of capital and revenue investment. These spaces also achieve better public approval ratings and usage levels as measured in the satisfaction surveys. The criteria for identifying those sites with most urgent need for investment are:
- The number of users likely to benefit from the improvement.
  - Poor quality score as identified in the parks and open spaces audit (2011).
  - Proximity of alternative high quality parks and open spaces within the catchment area of the park proposed for investment.
  - Poor public satisfaction score as identified in the KMC Parks Performance survey.
  - The index of multiple deprivation within the catchment area of the park proposed for investment.
  - Level of overall deficiency of open space, compared to population, of the Place area in which the open space is located.
  - The need to conserve natural and cultural heritage and improve biodiversity.

In addition, the Council will continue to take advantage of funding opportunities where these may give rise to parks and open space improvements that would not have arisen through the application of the above criteria.

- 10.19 The annual survey results together with the consultation have highlighted what features are most important to residents in parks and open spaces. In the context of limited capital resources, the Council will primarily direct investment towards enhancing those elements deemed most important. Those elements were:
- Improvements to existing facilities on site
  - Improvements to site safety
  - General enhancements to the landscape and horticultural features
- 10.20 Space in new parks secured through the planning system will be limited and will need to cater for a range of demands. The annual user survey and the



consultation again serve as a guide to directing investment. Residents have prioritised spaces that:

- Provide space to relax informally
- Offer wildlife habitats
- Provide facilities for children and young people
- Bring all sections of the community together
- Allow for informal recreation

The Council will take these principles into account when designing new spaces. It is recognised that new spaces may also have a role in providing facilities for formal sport and recreation. The Council will need to consider on a site by site basis whether new spaces will be able, based on site constraints, to provide such facilities.

### *Strategic Outcome*

- 10.21 **Strategic Outcome:** To maximise funding opportunities in order to support the action plan.

## Section 11: Action Plan Update

### *Overarching Outcomes*

- 11.1 The 2006 Open Space Strategy set out the strategic vision and policy recommendations for open space provision arising from the needs assessment and open space audits, providing a clear framework for open space provision and improvement. The 2011 mid-point review updates the audit and assessment information and ensures that the Strategy remains relevant and consistent with recent policy and economic developments. The full action plan can be found at Appendix K.
- 11.2 The Council and its partners have a commitment to improving the overall quality of life for borough residents, as outlined in the Community Plan. The aim of the Open Space Strategy is to deliver real benefits to local people and based on the findings of the strategy the following key overarching outcomes have been identified:
- 11.3 ***To improve the overall quality of current provision of open space within the Borough by having no poor quality sites***
- 11.4 The Council has invested over £12m in improving the quality of open space in the Borough since 2006 (see Appendix I). The recent quality survey has confirmed that as a result more open spaces are of a good or very good standard than in 2005. Further investment is required to maintain the quality of provision in those sites. There remain a number of spaces that have not yet received investment and which have been identified as needing improvement. The updated quality data in combination with updated spatial mapping will be used to prioritise further investment over the remaining term of the Strategy.
- 11.5 ***To create wherever possible new publicly accessible open space by effective use of planning powers and obligations, especially in areas identified as deficient in open space***
- 11.6 The Strategy has provided an essential reference for the identification of locations for new open space provision and has informed the negotiations for publicly accessible open space provision through the development and planning process. Several new spaces have been created or extended, including Braham Street, Allen Gardens, and in the Millennium Quarter. Further locations for new spaces are identified in the Core Strategy and it is essential that these are of a suitable size and design to meet the needs of new residents in those development areas.
- 11.7 ***To improve accessibility to existing and new open spaces***
- 11.8 Access to parks has improved significantly according to resident surveys. Strategic interventions, such as the installation of the bridge at Meath Gardens/Mile End Park, enable more people to use parks. The overall number of park users has increased since 2006 and this is predicted to be a continuing trend. The Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy provides the driver for further improvement and greening of the routes between open spaces, and for the

delivery of local open space, through the development process, along key walking routes.

11.9 ***To prioritise public safety in parks***

11.10 Resident surveys suggest that the fear of crime in parks is low compared to more general community crime concerns. However, the level of concern in park users has not significantly fallen since 2006. More targeted activity might reduce safety fears in parks and open spaces, but this must be balanced with the need to address crime concerns in all areas of the borough.

11.11 ***To maximise funding opportunities in order to support the action plan***

11.12 The Strategy has been an important reference document and has been a key element to obtaining both internal and external funding over the last five years. As a result more than £12m has been secured and invested on the ground, and this investment continues with the major improvements that are currently taking place at Victoria Park. Looking forward, the Strategy will support Place level planning and targeting of resources. Improved monitoring of development and regeneration projects in the borough will help to secure further funding from planning obligations.

*Objectives and Actions*

11.13 In 2006 a set of objectives and actions were drawn from the overarching outcomes listed above. These have short, mid-term (MT) 2009/10 or Plan Term (PT) 20015/16 delivery periods. The fully updated action plan is attached at Appendix K.

## Appendix A: Outline LDF Core Strategy 'Place' Map



## **Appendix B: Open space definition, designations and typologies**

### DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE

The following definition is used in the London Plan and this Open Space Strategy:

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

The Mayor’s Best Practice Guidance requires boroughs to identify and analyse ALL open space, whether or not it is publicly accessible or has a defined recreational role. All open space has a value to the community and contributes to the environmental quality of an area.

For the purpose of producing an Open Space Strategy, the definition does not include private residential gardens or incidental areas, such as road verges, or streets (unless these form part of a link in the open space network).

### TYPES OF OPEN SPACE

#### Public Open Space

The Mayor’s ‘Best Practice Guidance on Preparing Open Space Strategies’ defines Public Open Space as public parks, commons, heaths and woodlands and other open spaces with established and unrestricted public access and capable of being classified according to the open space hierarchy, which meets recreational and non-recreational needs. Public Open Spaces are usually but not always managed by local authorities.

#### Publicly Accessible Open Space

This term is somewhat broader than Public Open Space as it embraces sites owned and managed by agencies other than the Council, including sites that are managed primarily for amenity to which the public has traditionally had access.

#### Private Open Space

This is defined in the GLA Guidance as open space to which public access is restricted or not formally established but which contributes to local amenity or wildlife habitat or meets or is capable of meeting recreational or non-recreational needs. Includes company, school and club sports-grounds as well as private or restricted access gardens and housing amenity open space.

#### Green Chains

The London Plan defines these as areas of linked but separate open spaces and the footpaths between them. They are accessible to the public and provide way-marked paths and other pedestrian and cycle routes. It is reasonable to think of these as being like beads on a necklace. It is not necessary for the routes to have continuous wildlife habitats along them.

## Green Corridors

These are relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment, which may be linked and may not be publicly accessible. They allow animals and plants to be found further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension to the habitats of the sites they join.

## DESIGNATIONS OF OPEN SPACE

### Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

This designation is unique to London and protects strategically important open spaces within the built environment. MOL is the same as Green Belt in terms of protection from development and serves a similar purpose. A number of criteria are used in the designation of areas of MOL:

Land that contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area

Land that includes open-air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport arts and cultural activities and tourism, which serve the whole or significant parts of London

Land that contains features or landscape of historic, recreational, nature conservation or habitat interest, of value at a metropolitan or national level

Land that forms part of a Green Chain and meets one of the above criteria

MOL covers the full range of open spaces and both public and private ownership.

### Local Open Space (LOS)

The GLA advises that this designation should cover all types of locally important open space and Boroughs should identify which spaces this designation applies to. The LOS designation is considered to continue the MOL designation at the local level.

## PROVISION STANDARD FOR OPEN SPACE

### National Playing Fields Association (Fields in Trust) Six Acre Standard

This is a planner's guide to ensure that sufficient land is set aside in appropriate locations to enable people of all ages, especially the young, to participate in outdoor play, games, sports and other physical recreation. The FIT regards it as a minimum standard at 2.4 hectares (6 acres) per 1000 people. It comprises 1.6 hectares (4 acres) for outdoor sport and 0.8 hectares (2 acres) for children's play space. Blue ribbon spaces such as docks, canals and basins cannot therefore contribute to the standard.

It has long been recognised that the 2.4 hectare standard is unachievable within inner London, but allows boroughs to be compared across London and nationally. Both PPG 17 and the Mayor's Guidance recognise this by encouraging boroughs to establish their own local standard. In addition Boroughs must consider access standards to both local and major parks.

## LONDON PLAN HIERARCHY OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

### Draft London Plan 2009 Extract: Table 7.2 Public Open Space Hierarchy

#### Regional Parks

Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. Offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.

Size guideline: 400 hectares

Distances from homes: 3.2 to 8 kilometres

#### Metropolitan Parks

Large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities and features at the sub-regional level, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.

Size guideline: 60 hectares

Distances from homes: 3.2 kilometres

#### District Parks

Large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing for a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.

Size guideline: 20 hectares

Distances from homes: 1.2 kilometres

#### Local Parks and Open Spaces

Providing for court games, children's play, sitting-out areas and nature conservation areas.

Size guideline: 2 hectares

Distances from homes: 400 metres

#### Small Open Spaces

Gardens, sitting-out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.

Size guideline: Under 2 hectares

Distances from homes: Less than 400 metres

#### Pocket Parks

Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.

Size guideline: Under 0.4ha

Distances from homes: Less than 400 metres

## Linear Open Spaces

Open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, canals and other waterways; paths; disused railways; nature conservation areas; and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. Often characterised by features or attractive areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.

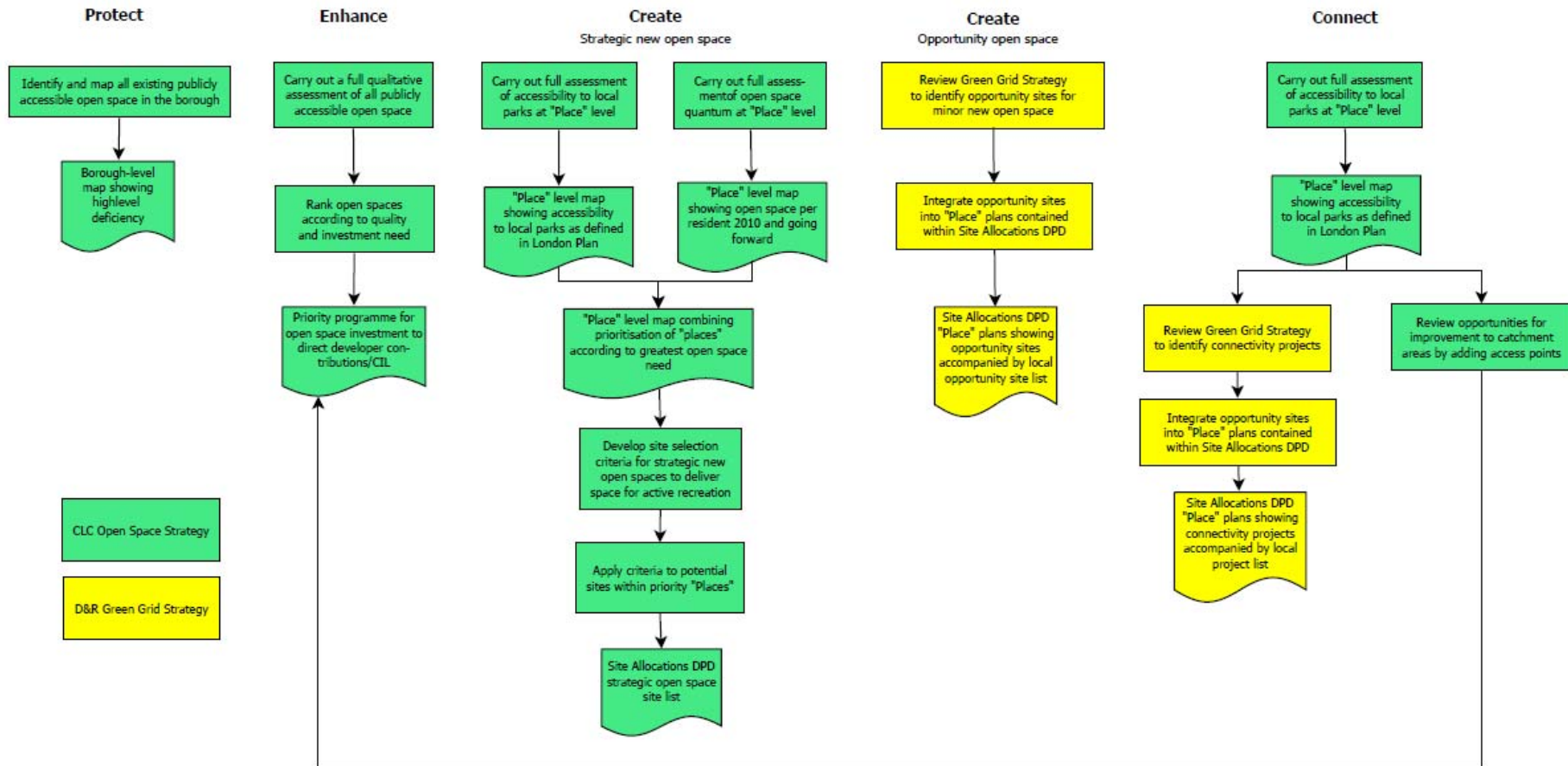
Size guideline: Variable

Distances from homes: Wherever feasible



# Appendix C: Evidence methodology for the TH Green Grid and Open Space Strategies

## Evidence Methodology for Open Space Policies



## Appendix D: Open Space Audit 2011 - Open space provision and quality by 'Place'

Note: sites indicated in green (+) or dark green (++) are above average and performing well, sites in light (-) and dark orange (- -) are below standard and will have a higher priority weighting for future investment.

Place	Site	Typology	Hierarchy	Above/below combined Q/V standard		Score	Area
Aldgate	Aldgate Park, Braham St	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	67	0.31
	Altab Ali Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	67	0.48
	Gower's Walk Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	63	0.33
	Mallon Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	39	0.08
Total area							1.19
Total sites							4
Bethnal Green	Bethnal Green Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	++	137	3.53
	Ion Square Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	72	1.03
	Mansford Street Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	70	0.24
	Middleton Green	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	71	0.67
	Museum Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	64	1.07
	Paradise Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	53	0.16
	Pollard Square	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	-	46	0.47
	St Jude's Nature Park, Middleton St., E2	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	--	28	0.25
	St. Matthews & St James	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	71	0.83
	St. Peter's Churchyard	Cemeteries, disused		Below	-	39	0.42

		churchyards and other burial grounds					
	Warner Green	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	46	0.30
	Weavers Fields	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	+	114	6.34
Total area							15.32
Total sites							12
Blackwall	All Saints Churchyard	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds		Above	++	57	0.94
	Cotton Street / Bazeley Street	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	44	0.19
	East India Dock Square	Civic Space		Above	+	68	0.83
	Ming Street Open Space	Amenity Green Space		Above	+	49	0.27
	New Brunswick Wharf	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	59	0.70
	Pennyfields Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	81	0.61
	Poplar Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	98	1.57
	Robin Hood Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	65	0.92
	St. Matthias' Old Church Ground	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds		Above	++	53	0.63
	Stoneyard Lane	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	--	34	0.15
	Virginia Quay	Amenity Green Space		Above	++	79	0.29
Total Area							7.10

Total Sites							11
Bow	OS at Garrison Road / Legion Terrace, Bow E3	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	++	81	0.32
	Selwyn Park / Green	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	64	0.19
	St Stephen's Road OS, Bow E3	Amenity Green Space		Below	--	11	0.31
Total Area							0.83
Total Sites							3
Bow Common	Ackroyd Drive Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms		Above	+	33	0.15
	Ackroyd Drive Extension	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	-	43	0.73
	Chiltern Green, Bromley by Bow	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	69	0.30
	Fern Street Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	52	0.17
	Furze Green Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	78	1.14
	Old Railway at Fairfoot Road	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	--	26	0.74
	Rounton Road Public Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	63	0.56
Total Area							3.79
Total sites							8
Bromley by Bow	Bromley-by-Bow Centre	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	98	0.52
	Former St Leonard's Church Yard	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds		Below	--	22	0.25
	Grove Hall Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	97	1.20
	Prospect Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	64	0.42

	Reeves Road Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms		Below	-	28	0.36
	St Andrew's Hospital construction site will include public open spaces			Site not completed	Site not completed	Site not completed	1.47
	St. Mary Bow	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	61	0.27
Total area							4.48
Total Sites							6 complete
Canary Wharf	Blackwall Basin & Poplar Dock	Civic Space		Above	+	41	5.30
	Cabot Square	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	68	0.47
	Canada Square	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	71	0.64
	Canary Riverside	Civic Space		Below	--	5	0.21
	Jubilee Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	68	1.13
	Westferry Circus	Amenity Green Space		Above	++	76	0.31
Total Area							8.06
Total Sites							6
Cubitt Town	Island Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	82	1.24
	Millwall Dock Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	-	51	0.45
	Millwall Park	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	++	145	8.75
	Mudchute City Farm	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	++	126	13.57
	St. Johns Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	83	0.95
Total Area							24.96
Total Sites							5
Fish Island	Greenway	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	42	0.22
Total Area							0.22
Total Sites							1

Globe Town	Globe Road OS	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	--	34	0.03
	Meath Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	+	107	3.93
	Meath Gardens Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms		Below	--	25	0.37
Total area							4.33
Total sites							3
Leamouth	East India Dock Basin	Civic Space		Above	+	68	3.94
Leamouth Total							3.94
							1
Limehouse	Albert Square Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	66	0.28
	Kings Wharf	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	44	0.18
	Limehouse Basin	Civic Space		Above	++	71	3.06
	Rectory Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	39	0.24
	Ropemakers Fields	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	103	1.80
	School House Kickabout	Provision for children and teenagers		Below	--	30	0.07
	St. Annes Churchyard	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds		Below	-	31	0.90
	St. James's Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	68	0.59
Total area							7.11
Total sites							8
Mile end	Archibald Public Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	++	85	0.34
	Bancroft Road Jewish Burial Ground	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	--	21	0.04

	Carlton Square	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	48	0.13
	Carlton Square Extension	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	--	34	0.66
	Four Seasons Green	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	62	0.34
	Harley Grove Open Space	Amenity Green Space		Below	-	42	0.14
	Mile End Park	Parks and Gardens	District Park	Above	Above (only one space in typology hence no banding)	183	30.66
	Queen Mary University of London Burial Ground 1	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds		Below	--	24	0.39
	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park	Natural and semi-natural urban green space		Above	Above (only one space in typology hence no banding)	47	11.50
	Tredegar Square Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	56	0.51
Total area							44.71
Total sites							10
Millwall	Great Eastern Slipway	Civic Space		Below	-	34	0.41
	Lighterman's Gardens	Amenity Green Space		Above	+	48	0.49
	Millwall Dock	Civic Space		Above	+	40	13.99
	Queen Mother's Garden, Westferry Road	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	60	0.12
	Sir John McDougal Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	+	93	2.18
	St. Andrews Wharf Youth Project	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	52	0.34

Total area							17.52
Total sites							6
Poplar	Alton St Public Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	-	52	0.84
	Bartlett Park	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Below	-	67	4.95
	Chrisp Street Market Area 1	Civic Space		Above	-	37	0.18
	Chrisp Street Market Area 2	Civic Space		Above	++	91	0.64
	Trinity Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	57	0.42
Total area							7.02
Total sites							5
Poplar Riverside	Aberfeldy Millennium Green	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	+	57	0.38
	Aberfeldy MUGA	Provision for children and teenagers		Above	+	61	0.13
	Braithewaite Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	+	67	0.44
	Jolly's Green	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	--	25	0.83
	Langdon Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	88	1.70
	Levens Road Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	--	33	0.51
	Wyvis Street Open space	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	49	0.38
Total area							4.37
Total sites							7
Shadwell	Arbour Square	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	62	0.27
	Bigland Green Open Space	Playground		Above	+	56	0.20
	Cable Street Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms		Above	+	34	0.56
	Cavell Street Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	44	0.11



	Ford Square	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	57	0.17	
	Glamis Road Adventure Playground	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	72	0.16	
	Gosling Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	74	0.25	
	Jubilee Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	68	0.30	
	Ropewalk Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	81	0.82	
	Sidney Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	51	0.14	
	St. George in the East	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	82	1.61	
Total area							4.58	
Total sites							11	
Shoreditch	Arnold Circus	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	69	0.25	
	Jesus Green	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	45	0.37	
	Ravenscroft Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	84	0.97	
	Shacklewell (1 o'clock club)	Provision for children and teenagers		Below	-	45	0.06	
	Virginia Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	41	0.11	
Total area							1.77	
Total sites							5	
Spitalfields	Allen Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	63	1.60	
	Attlee Youth and Community Centre	Provision for children and teenagers		Above	++	67	0.29	
	Chicksand Ghat	Playground		Above	++	74	0.23	
	Christchurch Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	60	0.19	
	Spitalfields Farm	Allotments, Community		Above	++	84	0.50	

		Gardens and City Farms					
Total area							2.80
Total sites							5
Stepney	Beaumont Square	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	79	0.40
	Belgrave Street Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	62	0.65
	Clocktower, Stepney	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	--	33	0.05
	Mercers Burial Ground	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	46	0.10
	Shandy Park	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	77	1.46
	St. Dunstans Church	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds		Above	++	61	1.82
	Stepney Green Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Below	+	58	0.51
	Stepney Green Park	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	+	93	4.63
	Stepping Stones Farm	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms		Above	++	75	1.44
	Stonebridge Wharf	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	45	0.14
	Trafalgar Square Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	75	0.25
	Whitehorse Park	Amenity Green Space		Above	++	99	1.38
York Square	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	51	0.09	
Total area							12.92
Total sites							13
Tower of London	Carron Continental Wharf	Civic Space		Above	+	45	0.11

	St. Katherine Docks	Civic Space		Above	++	78	3.70
	Tower Hill Terrace	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	-	37	0.11
	Tower of London (Inner)	Civic Space		Above	+	66	2.16
	Tower of London (Outer)	Civic Space		Above	++	93	1.38
	Tower of London Gardens	Amenity Green Space		Above	+	58	0.30
	Trinity Square Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	68	0.49
	Wakefield Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	64	0.09
Total area							8.35
Total sites							8
Victoria Park	Victoria Park	Parks and Gardens	Metropolitan Park	Above	Above (only one space in hierarchy hence no banding)	217	86.99
Total area							86.99
Total sites							1
Wapping	Hellings Street Play Area	Provision for children and teenagers		Above	+	56	0.15
	Hermitage Basin	Civic Space		Above	+	66	0.32
	Hermitage Riverside Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	71	0.39
	King Edward Memorial Garden	Parks and Gardens	Local Park	Above	++	120	3.31
	Raine's Mansions	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	41	0.17
	Royal Mint Green	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	+	58	0.17
	Shadwell Basin	Civic Space		Above	+	54	4.28
	St Paul's Churchyard	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial		Above	++	60	0.35

		grounds					
	St. Johns Churchyard	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	60	0.25
	Swedenborg Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	78	1.56
	Wapping Canal / Tobacco Dock / Spirit Quay	Civic Space		Above	+	56	1.75
	Wapping Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	104	1.27
	Wapping Green	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Below	-	45	0.25
	Wapping Rose Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	56	0.61
	Wapping Woods	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	63	1.59
	Waterside Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Pocket Parks	Above	+	67	0.14
Total area							16.56
Total sites							16
Whitechapel	Jewish Burial Ground Brady Street	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds		Above	-	30	1.09
	Mile End Waste	Civic Space		Below	-	26	0.19
	Open Spaces around redeveloped Royal London Hospital (not constructed yet)			Site not completed	Site not completed	Site not completed	0.91
	St. Bartholomews	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	++	89	0.45
	Vallance Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Small Local Parks	Above	+	81	0.55
Total area							3.20
Total sites							4 complete
<b>Grand Total Area (ha)</b>							<b>292.12</b>
<b>Grand total no. sites</b>							<b>158</b>

## Appendix E: Sports facilities in parks and open spaces

PARK OR OPEN SPACE NAME	AP	BB	BG	CP	FS G	FT	HS	JG	MS	MU GA	RP	T	TM
ABBOTT ROAD OPEN SPACE										1			
BARTLETT PARK					2								
BETHNAL GREEN GARDENS		3										4	1
CANROBERT ST. OPEN SPACE										1			
GROVE HALL PARK										1			
HELLING ST OPEN SPACE										1			
KING EDWARD MEMORIAL PARK			1				1					4	
LANGDON PARK								1					
MEATH GARDENS					1					1			
MILLWALL PARK			1		3				3	1	1		
POPLAR PARK			1							1		2	
RAVENSCROFT PARK										1			
ROPEMAKERS FIELDS												2	
ROPEWALK GARDENS							1						
ST ANDREWS WHARF										1			
ST JOHNS PARK										1		2	
SCHOOLHOUSE LANE										1			
SHANDY PARK										1			
STEPNEY GREEN PARK	1				1								
TRAFALGAR GARDENS										1			
VICTORIA PARK			1	3	13			1	3			4	
WAPPING GARDENS										1		1	
WEAVERS FIELDS					2	1		1					

### KEY

AP = ARTIFICIAL PITCH  
 BB = BASKETBALL PITCH  
 BG = BOWLING GREEN  
 CP = CRICKET PITCH

FSG = FULL SIZE GRASS PITCH  
 FT = FITNESS TRAIL  
 HS = HARD SURFACE PITCH  
 JG = JUNIOR GRASS PITCH

MS = MINI SOCCER PITCH  
 MUGA = MULTI-USE GAMES AREA  
 RP = RUGBY PITCH  
 T = TENNIS COURTS

TM = TARMAC PITCH

## **Pitch Quality Assessment**

The quality of the pitches and associated ancillary facilities were assessed using the Sport England Playing Pitch Quality Assessment.

### **Grass Pitches**

#### **Victoria Park**

- The pitches are all on flat land but are variable in quality.
- Pitch 1 is very heavily used. This is because of its proximity to the changing facilities. School users tend to not want to use other pitches that are further away from the pavilion.
- There was insufficient margin between Pitches 1 and 2. The gap between the pitches was approximately two metres rather than the recommended three metres.
- Pitch 7, which sits on the site of an old Redgra pitch, is in an unplayable condition. The ground appears to have been graded and seeded but the surface is full of stones.
- Pitch 8 is in a poor condition. It does not get a break because it is used for winter and summer play. It is the lowest quality pitch in Victoria Park.
- There are no intermediate size pitches for school or girls use.
- The three artificial cricket wickets are very well used.
- There is a cinder athletics track.
- The changing rooms do not meet Sport England or FA standards in that:
  - two teams share one changing room
  - there are communal showers
  - there are communal toilets.

#### **Meath Gardens**

- The pitch had been subjected to a vandal attack at the time of assessment. This had badly scarred the surface and the pitch was not playable when inspected. It is understood that similar incidents have taken place in the past.
- The pitch is floodlit, with what appears to be a modern installation. If used they may lead to over play on the pitch.
- The changing rooms are housed in a modular building and are of excellent quality.

#### **Weavers Fields**

- This is a pleasant, well-used open space. Although it is listed as having three pitches only two were set up at the time of inspection, the third being rested.
- Pitch 2 is on the very minimum width for adult use.
- The changing facilities are located across a quiet road. The changing rooms are small and there are communal wash/ toilet facilities. They do not meet Sport England or FA standards.

#### **Stepney Green**

- The single pitch, used for summer league football, was not set up as it was being rested. However, it was clearly very worn with no grass in places.
- The changing accommodation was of the "container" type but was adequate if small though it did not reach Sport England or FA standards. There were no toilet facilities. The match officials changing room was unused.

**Bartlett Park**

- The two adult football pitches were in good condition. The mini-soccer pitch was unused and was full of weed.
- The changing rooms were small but adequate. They did not meet FA or Sport England standards.

**Millwall Park**

- All the pitches at Millwall Park were in very good condition.
- Areas of the park were being renovated so Pitch 3 and the Touch Rugby area were not evident.
- There was an artificial cricket wicket.
- The changing rooms are excellent, fully meeting Sport England and FA standards.

**Artificial Pitches****John Orwell Sports Centre**

- Full size, sand filled, floodlit artificial pitch
- Nearing the end of its serviceable life

**Mile End (full size artificial pitch)**

- Hockey size, sand filled, floodlit artificial pitch
- Good condition

**Stepney Green Park**

- Full size, sand filled, floodlit artificial pitch
- Signs of fire damage and rippling
- Nearing the end of its serviceable life

**The Workhouse**

- Two training size, floodlit, sand filled artificial pitches
- Good condition

**Whitechapel Sports Centre**

- Training size, sand filled, floodlit artificial pitch
- Concrete wall surround
- Some damage to the carpet

## Changing Accommodation

Site ID	Overall Quality	Vandalism	Showers	Toilets	Car Parking	Public Transport Links	Security	Segregated Changing	Score for Changing Accommodation (out of 41)	Score as a %
Bartlett Park	6	5	3	3	0	5	5	3	30	<b>73%</b>
Meath Gardens	10	2	5	5	0	5	2	3	32	<b>78%</b>
Millwall Park	10	5	5	5	2	5	5	3	40	<b>98%</b>
Stepney Green	4	5	3	0	0	5	5	0	22	<b>54%</b>
Victoria Park	6	2	3	3	2	5	2	0	23	<b>56%</b>
Weavers Field	6	5	3	3	0	5	2	0	24	<b>59%</b>

**Key:** Over 90% Excellent    60-89% Good    40-59% Average    30-39% Poor    0-30% Very Poor

### Site visit comments

The site visits were undertaken during the winter football season therefore it was not possible to assess the three summer football pitches at Victoria Park. One adult football pitch at Millwall Park was being seeded and the two mini pitches were not marked out, therefore they were omitted from the assessment.



## Grass Pitch Assessment

Site ID	Pitch Number (ID)	Pitch Type & Sport	Games Played in season	% Games Cancelled	Score for cancellations	Grass cover	Length of grass	Size	Adequate safety margins	Slope	Evenness	Problem Areas: Evidence dog fouling	Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/ stones/ litter	Problem Areas: Evidence of unofficial use	Problem Areas: Evidence of damage to surface	Training - Hours per week on pitch	Changing Accommodation	Winter Sports - Goals, corner flags, nets	Crickets - Wicket protected	Line markings	Training areas	Pitch Score (out of 67)	Score as a %
BP	BP1	Football	114	5%	4	3	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	0	5	5	2	0	2	0	53	79%
BP	BP2	Football	142	1%	4	5	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	2	5	5	2	0	2	0	57	85%
BP	BPM	Mini-Soccer	-	-	-	0	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	5	5	2	0	2	0	-	-
MG	MG1	Football	-	-	-	3	2	3	3	5	0	3	3	2	0	5	5	3	0	2	0	-	-
MP	MP1	Football	76	5%	4	5	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	5	5	2	0	2	0	58	87%
	MP2	Football	71	4%	4	5	9	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	5	5	2	0	2	0	63	94%
	Stebfs	Football	-	-	-	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	5	5	2	0	2	0	-	-
SG	SG1	Football	144	1%	4	0	0	3	3	4	4	3	3	0	2	0	5	2	0	2	0	40	60%
VP	VP1	Football	241	1%	4	3	4	3	0	5	4	3	3	2	3	0	5	2	0	2	0	48	72%
	VP2	Football	157	3%	4	2	4	3	0	5	4	3	3	2	3	0	5	2	0	2	0	47	70%
	VP3	Football	123	2%	4	2	4	3	0	5	4	3	3	2	3	0	0	2	0	2	0	47	70%
	VP4	Football	89	3%	4	3	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	0	5	2	0	2	0	51	76%
	VP5	Football	79	3%	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	0	5	2	0	2	0	52	78%
	VP6	Football	112	1%	4	3	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	0	5	2	0	2	0	51	76%
	VP7	Football	57	4%	4	0	4	3	3	5	4	3	0	3	3	0	5	2	0	2	0	46	69%
	VP8	Football	55	5%	4	0	0	3	3	5	2	3	3	2	3	0	5	0	0	2	0	40	60%
	VP9	Football	-	-	-	2	2	3	3	5	2	3	3	2	3	0	5	3	0	2	0	-	-
	VPM1	Football	33	3%	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	0	5	3	0	2	0	54	81%
	VPM2	Football	-	-	-	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	0	5	3	0	2	0	-	-
	VPR	Rugby	112	0%	5	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	0	5	2	0	2	0	54	81%
WF	WF1	Football	116	3%	4	3	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	5	5	3	0	2	0	57	85%
	WF2	Football	117	3%	4	3	4	2	3	2	4	3	3	2	3	5	5	3	0	2	0	53	79%
	WF3	Football	177	0%	5	4	2	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	5	0	3	0	2	0	47	70%

**Key:**                    90+                    64-90%                    55-64%                    30-54%                    0-30%

                                 An excellent pitch                    A good pitch                    An average pitch                    A below average pitch                    A poor pitch

## **Appendix F: History of parks and open spaces in Tower Hamlets and their heritage significance**

### The History of Parks and Open Space in Tower Hamlets

The parks and open spaces of Tower Hamlets have come about through a variety of processes. Some public open spaces were the result of deliberate design or policy, while others are the result of historic accident or expedience. There were broadly three periods during which public open space was created in Tower Hamlets. These moves were primarily to benefit people, rather than improve land or rental values. The first was the deliberate creation of Victoria Park in the mid 19th century, the late 19th century saw the conversion of churchyards to public gardens and the most recent was in the mid 20th century after World War 2.

Various open spaces are the result of late 18th and 19th century urban design, being planned formal gardens set in London Squares. As such they are protected by the London Squares Preservation Act, 1931. These sites include Trinity Square Gardens, Arbour Square, Albert Gardens and the little known Oval in Bethnal Green. See full list of protected London Squares below.

Many churchyards, particularly in the west of borough became public open spaces managed by the local authority. Having been closed to further burial use because they were overflowing, they were converted in the second half of the 19th century into public gardens. In some parts of the borough these are the only open spaces. This process gave rise to Christchurch Gardens, Altab Ali Park (formerly St Mary's Churchyard, the original White Chapel) and St George's Gardens, amongst others.

The City of London and Tower Hamlets Cemetery was laid out in 1841 to relieve local pressure on burial space. The former Greater London Council obtained a by special Act of Parliament to close and turn it into open space in 1966. It was already neglected by the late 19th Century, with over a quarter of a million bodies by 1889 and thousands more after that. The last 20 years has seen its unique character increasingly valued and the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park now manage it as a wooded park and local nature reserve. It also has a unique cultural and historical heritage.

Parliament passed an Act in 1841 to create Victoria Park, following an outcry about the lack of parks in the East End and fears that disease would spread from the stinking industries and slum population of 400,000. The Government bought poor quality land that had been used for market gardens, grazing and gravel digging. The land was flat, with poor soil and little water but was cheaper than the alternative site near the Thames. Local people started to use the Park in 1843, before works were complete. The park never had a formal opening but was an instant success. The Metropolitan Board of Works took over the management of the park in 1887, followed by the London County Council in 1888, by the Greater London Council in 1965 and by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in 1986 (until 1994 with L.B. Hackney).

Some of the most curious spaces are the remnants of commons and greens. Stepney Green Gardens and the Stepney Clock Tower site are the last fragments of Mile End Green. The Metropolitan Gardens Association formally created the Gardens in 1872, the ground having been originally enclosed some time after 1669. Mile End Waste, the open spaces to the north of Mile End Road, was originally also

part of Mile End common land. Bethnal Green Gardens, Paradise Row Gardens and Museum Gardens comprise the remnants of the medieval Green or Poor's Land. The London County Council preserved Bethnal Green Gardens as a recreation ground in 1895 and the Government purchased the land for Museum Gardens for the Bethnal Green Museum in 1868. The Gardens, "laid out and for ever to be maintained as an ornamental garden" as required by the Act to permit its purchase, were opened in 1875.

The Greenwich Royal Hospital Commissioners acquired the site of Island Gardens in 1850 to protect the view from the rapid industrialisation and development of the Isle of Dogs in the second half of the 19th century. The LCC laid the site out as a park in 1895.

Mudchute Park and City Farm was created in 1977 from a landscape of low mounds and former world war two gun emplacements. Much of the site had been used between 1875-1910 as the receptacle for mud dredged by pneumatic pipe from the Millwall Docks. By contrast Millwall Park seems never to have been built on except around the edges and was marsh land until converted to playing fields and a recreation ground by the LCC by 1919. It was the home of the original Millwall Football Club from 1889-1910.

Mile End Park, Langdon Park, Jolly's Green, Bartlett Park, Allen Gardens, Weavers Fields and sites such as Ravenscroft Park were conceived after the end of the second world war in 1945 to provide parks of various scales. Small parcels of land to create these parks were still being laid out with grass for the first time in 2005.

The gardens and squares of Canary Wharf set in a formal master plan show that even land developers can show an enlightened self-interest. Their open spaces set off the buildings, add both capital and rental value to the estate and give enjoyment to those who visit, live or work there.

## References

- Philip Mernick and Doreen Kendall, "A pictorial history of Victoria Park, London E3" 1996, East London History Society  
Bridget Cherry, Charles O'Brien and Nicholas Pevsner, "The Buildings of England: London 5: East" 2005, Yale University Press  
Sally Williams, "The Inventory of Green Spaces – Tower Hamlets", London Parks and Gardens Trust in association with English Heritage, 2003

## Heritage significance of parks and open spaces in Tower Hamlets

London Squares in Tower Hamlets:  
(Information taken from adopted borough plan 1986)  
Albert Gardens (formerly Albert Square)  
Arbour Square  
Beaumont Square  
Carlton Square  
Ford Square  
Ion Square  
Mile End Green (Mile End Waste)  
Swedenborg Square (formerly Prince's Square)

Rectory Square  
 Sidney Square  
 Stepney Green Gardens  
 The Oval  
 Trafalgar Gardens (formerly Trafalgar Square)  
 Tredegar Square  
 Trinity Square Gardens  
 York Square

English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest in England and Wales:

English Heritage has entered four Tower Hamlets' parks and gardens on this register:

Victoria Park  
 Island Gardens  
 Boundary Gardens  
 Museum Gardens

Listed structures in Tower Hamlets Parks and Open Spaces:

Many sites also have listed buildings and structures and war memorials (such as Victoria Park and Boundary Gardens). Trinity Square Gardens contain the Commonwealth's war memorials to the Merchant Navy war dead of both world wars and the commemoration of the traitors executed at the Tower Hill scaffold.

The London Inventory of Historic Green Spaces - Tower Hamlets:

This inventory was published in 2003 by the London Parks and Gardens Trust and supported by English Heritage. It lists 52 publicly accessible open spaces of historic interest in the Borough.

Park or open space	Brief history notes
Albert Gardens	Built 1840s; opened to public by LCC 1906
All Saints Churchyard	Built 1821-23; opened 1893 as public gardens by the MPGA
Altab Ali Park	Formerly the churchyard of St Mary's Church, the White Chapel.
Arbour Square	Built 1820s; opened to public by LCC 1904
Bartlett Park	Laid out 1950s as part of Festival of Britain's Lansbury Estate
Beaumont Square Gardens	Laid out c.1840; opened to public late 19th century
Bethnal Green Gardens	Part of Bethnal Green "Poor's Land" trust; LCC opened site up to public 1895
Museum Gardens	ditto; EH register Grade II
Boundary Gardens	Laid out as centrepiece of Boundary Estate by LCC in early 1900s; EH register site Grade II

Bow Churchyard	Opened to public as garden by MPGA in late 19th century
Brickfield Gardens	Former brickfield purchased compulsorily 1899 and opened to public 1904
Carlton Square Gardens	Laid out mid 19th century, opened to public by MPGA 1885
Christ Church Gardens	Church built 1714-1729; small part opened to public as garden late 19th century
Ford Square Gardens	Laid out 1820s; opened to public 1904
Globe Road Open Space	Remnant of former burial ground of 19th century chapel; opened as garden late 19th century by borough council
Grove Hall Park	Site of former asylum established c.1820; opened to public 1909 and extended 1930 with a convent garden
Ion Square Gardens	Original square c.1845; opened to public 1895 by MPGA; extension agreed with LCC 1953
Island Gardens	Opened in 1895 on land that the Admiralty saved from development to preserve the view of Greenwich; EH register Grade II
Jesus Green	Opened in 20th century on site of cleared dwellings
King Edward Memorial Park	Opened 1922 on land bought by public subscription on the river frontage. It contains important historical features, such as the Grade II listed Rotherhithe Tunnel ventilation shaft rotunda.
Meath Gardens	Former burial ground laid out 1842 and opened as garden 1894 by MPGA and LCC
Mercers Burial Ground	Also known as Stepney Meeting House Burial Ground, laid out 1779 and opened to public as garden 1976
Mile End Park	First planned 1943 and included in Abercrombie Plan for Greater London 1944. Parts laid out as King George's Fields in 1952 on cleared bomb sites; LCC and later GLC continued to clear and lay out sites as open space until 1985. Millennium Commission landscape and building works 1995- to date
Mile End Waste / Green	Remnant of former medieval green

Museum Gardens	ditto and as Bethnal Green Gardens; EH register Grade II
Paradise Gardens	ditto and as Bethnal Green Gardens; EH register Grade II
Poplar Recreation Ground	Former burial ground opened as garden 1867 by MPGA
Shandy Park	Former burial ground opened as garden 1885 by MPGA
Sidney Square Gardens	Laid out 1820s; opened to public by LCC 1904
St Anne's Churchyard	Laid out 1730; opened as garden 1887 by MPGA
St Bartholomew's Gardens	Former burial ground opened as garden 1885 by MPGA
St Dunstan's Churchyard	Church built by 1232, probably dating from 7th century; former burial ground opened as garden
St George's Gardens	Church opened 1729; opened to public as gardens in 1875 via vestry and Metropolitan Board of Works
St James' Gardens	Former burial ground; laid out partly on land left over following construction of Rotherhithe Tunnel.
St John's Churchyard	Chapel of ease 1617; site bombed during WW2
St Leonard's Play Ground	Church built 12th century, rebuilt 1842 and bombed in WW2; much of churchyard cleared for road
St Matthew's Churchyard	Church consecrated 1746, churchyard closed mid 1850s; opened as garden 1896
St Matthias Old Church	Former church of East India Company built 1776; churchyard open to public; abuts Poplar Recreation Ground
St Paul's Churchyard	Established 1656 as chapel of ease, parish created 1669, church rebuilt 1820; laid out as garden 1886 by MPGA; churchyard accessible only to school
Stepney Green Gardens	Remnants of Stepney Green, enclosed between 1669-1684; used for public hustings mid 19th century; opened to public 1872 by Metropolitan Board of Works
Stepney Green Park	Formerly part of Mile End Green where Stepney Fair held late 17th to 19th century; enclosed 1694; built over as part of Clare Hall estate; site cleared of

	housing by GLC following WW2
Tower Gardens	Part of the Tower Liberties, governed by Tower until 1855; taken into care of local authority as gardens, managed by Historic Royal Palaces 1990s
Wakefield Gardens	Laid out 1992 over new London Underground station entrance; land originally donated as public open space for benefit of local people by the Wakefield Trust 1930s
Tower Hamlets Cemetery (Park)	Open fields until land consecrated for commercial burial ground 1841; was noted as containing 247,000 graves and neglected by 1889; many common public graves; bombed WW2; closed to burials by special Act of Parliament for GLC as public open space. Transferred to Tower Hamlets 1986 and became Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park 1990.
Trafalgar Gardens	Created as square late 18th century, renamed Trafalgar Square 1809; central garden bought by Vestry of Mile End Old Town and opened to public 1885
Tredegar Square Gardens	Laid out 1828; original simple rectilinear layout replaced by former Bow Neighbourhood with circular forms in late 1980s.
Trinity Square Gardens	Laid out to designs by Samuel Wyatt for Trinity House at top of Tower Hill by private enclosure act in 1795. Contains Commonwealth War Graves Commission war memorials to merchant navy war dead of both world wars and memorial to Falklands merchant navy war dead (2005); also contains commemoration of executions at Tower Hill scaffold; restored 2002 with funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and Tower Hill Improvement Trust.
Vallance Gardens	Part is former Society of Friends burial ground; laid out 1880 as public garden; gardens reconstructed 2003
Victoria Park	Designed by James Pennethorne; opened 1845; site extended 1872; managed by Metropolitan Board of Works in 1887, transferred to LCC in 1889, then GLC in 1965 then Tower Hamlets in 1986; site much bombed in WW2 and not restored. EH register Grade II*
Wapping Gardens	Opened 1891 by Metropolitan Board of Works from cleared slum dwellings under "Artisans' and Labourers' Dwelling Improvement Act 1875;

refurbished late 1980s.

Weavers Fields	Laid out in 1960s on land acquired and cleared of housing by GLC following bomb damage; site intended to be much larger; extensive works to turn grassland into park during 1990s and early years of 20th century.
York Square Gardens	Site developed by Mercers Company in early 19th century; garden opened to public in LCC 1904; GLC bought site 1969.

Notes

GLC	Greater London Council
LCC	London County Council
MPGA	Metropolitan Public Gardens Association



## Appendix G: Sites of importance for nature conservation

This schedule lists the sites assessed by the London Wildlife Trust for the GLA during summer 2004. This schedule of sites has the support of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and will be adopted as part of the Local Development Framework. The list is currently under review and will be revised shortly.

See Map 20

### Sites of Metropolitan Importance

M006	London's Canals
M031	River Thames and Bow Creek
M071	The Lea Valley
M117	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and The Soane's Centre
M133	Mudchute Park and Farm

### Sites of Borough Importance, Grade I

THBI01	The Greenway in Tower Hamlets
THBI02	Victoria Park
THBI03	Mile End Park
THBI04	East India Dock Basin
THBI08	Poplar Dock and Blackwall Basin

### Sites of Borough Importance, Grade II

THBII01	Millwall and West India Docks
THBII03	St Jude's Nature Park
THBII04	Cable Street Community Garden
THBII05	Stepping Stones Farm
THBII06	Spitalfields Farm and Allen Gardens
THBII07	The London Wall and walls of the Tower of London
THBII08	Spitalfields Viaduct
THBII11	Pinchin Street Disused Railway (proposed new designation)

### Sites of Local Importance

THL01	St George in the East Church Gardens
THL02	Wapping Park
THL03	Old Railway at Fairfoot Road
THL04	Ion Square Gardens
THL05	Weavers Fields
THL06	Stoneyard Lane
THL07	Shadwell Basin
THL08	Swedenborg Gardens
THL09	Bancroft Road Nature Garden
THL10	St Leonard's Adventurous Playspace
THL12	Perring Community Garden

Sites of Local Importance continued

THL13	Disused railway, Bow
THL14	Hermitage Basin
THL15	St Katherine's Dock
THL16	St Dunstan's Churchyard
THL17	St Anne's Churchyard, Limehouse
THL18	Wellclose Street Rough
THL19	St Paul's Churchyard, Shadwell (proposed new designation)
THL20	All Saints Churchyard, Poplar (proposed new designation)
THL21	Poplar Park and St Matthias Old Churchyard (proposed new designation)
THL22	Millwall Park (proposed new designation)
THL23	Cyril Jackson School Nature Area (proposed new designation)
THL24	St Luke's C of E Primary School Wild Area (proposed new designation)
THL25	Aberfeldy Millennium Green (proposed new designation)
THL26	Robin Hood Gardens (proposed new designation)
THL27	Meath Gardens (proposed new designation)
THL28	Ropemakers Field (proposed new designation)
THL29	St Bartholomew's Gardens (proposed new designation)

## Appendix H: Analysis of Council owned parks and open spaces by size

(Council owned Metropolitan Open Land and Local Open Spaces)

LAP Area	Name of Park or Open Space	Address	Total Area In Hectares
	Over 10 Hectares		
4	Victoria Park	Grove Rd.	86.18
4	Mile End Park	Grove Rd/Burdett Rd.	29.36
8	Mudchute Park & Farm	Pier Street.	13.24
5	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park	Southern Grove	10.93
	5 to 10 Hectares		
8	Millwall Park	Stebondale Street	8.64
2	Weavers Fields	Viaduct Street	6.17
	1 to 5 Hectares		
2	Stepney Green Park	Stepney Way	4.62
6	Bartlett Park	Lindfield Street	4.62
4	Meath Gardens	Smart Street	3.92
2	Bethnal Green Gardens	Cambridge Heath Rd.	3.51
3	King Edward Memorial Park	Glamis Road	3.30
3	Wapping Canal System	Wapping	3.06
8	Sir John McDougal Park	Westferry Road	2.15
1	Allen Gardens	Buxton Street	1.97
2	St.Dunstans Churchyard	Stepney High Street	1.82
3	Ropemakers Fields	Narrow Street	1.80
6	Langdon Park	Bright Street	1.70
6	Poplar Recreation Ground	Hale Street	1.59
3	Wapping Woods	John Rennie Walk	1.58
4	Shandy Park	Harford Street	1.46
1	Vallance Road Gardens	Vallance Road	1.36
3	Wapping Gardens	Tench Street	1.26
1	Swedenborg Gardens	Wellclose Street	1.24
1	St.Georges in the East Churchyard	Cannon Street Road	1.19
5	Grove Hall Park	Fairfield Road	1.19
4	Furze Green Open Space	Furze Green Road	1.14
8	Island Gardens	Saunders Ness Road	1.12
2	Museum Gardens	Cambridge Heath Rd.	1.05
2	Ion Square Gardens	Warner Place	1.03

LAP Area	Name of Park or Open Space	Address	Total Area In Hectares
	Under 1 Hectare		
2	Ravenscroft Park	Ravenscroft Street	0.97
2	Belgrave Street Open Space	Belgrave Street	0.95
8	St. John's Park	Manchester Road	0.95
6	All Saints Churchyard	Bazely Street	0.94
3	St. Anne's Churchyard	Three Colt Street	0.90
2	Whitehorse Road Park	Whitehorse Road	0.89
2	St. Matthew's Church Gardens	St. Matthews Row	0.83
6	Alton Street Open Space	Alton Street	0.83
6	Jolly's Green	Joshua Street	0.83
1	Rope Walk Gardens	Golding Street	0.82
2	Carlton Square Gardens	Carlton Square	0.78
7	Silvocea Wharf	Leamouth	0.77
4	Ackroyd Drive Open Spaces	Ackroyd Drive	0.70
3	Wapping Rose Gardens	Green Bank	0.63
5	Bromley Recreation Ground	St. Leonards Street	0.62
6	Pennyfields Open Space	Pennyfields	0.62
5	Rounton Road Open Space	Rounton Road	0.58
3	St. James' Gardens	Ratcliffe Lane	0.56
2	Stepney Green Gardens	Stepney Green	0.53
5	Tredegar Square Gardens	Tredegar Square	0.51
1	Altab Ali Park	Adler Street	0.50
3	Trinity Square Gardens	Tower Hill	0.49
2	Pollard Square	Pollard Row	0.47
2	St. Bartholomew's Gardens	Buckhurst Street	0.46
6	Abbott Road Recreation Ground	Abbott Road	0.42
6	Trinity Gardens	Upper North Street	0.42
4	Prospect Park	Devons Road	0.41
8	Great Eastern Slipway	Napier Avenue	0.41
2	Beaumont Square Gardens	Beaumont Square	0.40
2	Jesus Green	Quilter Street	0.37
2	Mansford Street Open Space	Mansford Street	0.37
4	Wyvis Street Open Space	Wyvis Street	0.37
2	Middleton Green (including the former Canrobert Street Open Space)	Middleton Street & Canrobert Street	0.78
6	Poplar Parkway	Castor Lane	0.32
2	Warner Green Open Space	Warner Place	0.30
2	Albert Gardens	Albert Gardens	0.28
2	Arbour Square Gardens	Arbour Square	0.27
5	Bow Churchyard (St. Mary's)	Bow Road	0.27
3	St. Johns Gardens	Scandrett Street	0.26
2	Boundary Gardens	Arnold Circus	0.25
2	Trafalgar Gardens	White Horse Lane	0.25
3	Wapping Green	Wapping Lane	0.25

LAP Area	Name of Park or Open Space	Address	Total Area In Hectares
1	Gosling Gardens	Bigland Street	0.24
3	Rectory Gardens	Commercial Road	0.24
2	Chicksand Street Open Space	Chicksand Street	0.23
8	London Yard	Amsterdam Road	0.22
1	Christchurch Gardens	Commercial Street	0.19
2	Mile End Road Verges	Mile End Road	0.19
5	Selwyn Green	Selwyn Road	0.19
3	Kings Wharf	Newell Street	0.18
8	Maconochies Wharf	Blasker Walk	0.18
2	Ford Square Gardens	Ford Square	0.17
3	Raines Mansions	Raine Street	0.17
4	Fern Street Open Space	Fern Street	0.17
2	Paradise Gardens	Paradise Row	0.16
3	Glamis Road Playground	Glamis Road	0.16
4	Twelve Trees Crescent	Devas Street	0.16
3	Hellings Street Playpark	Hellings Street	0.15
6	Stoneyard Lane Gardens	Stoneyard Lane	0.15
3	Waterside Gardens	Wapping High Street	0.14
4	Stonebridge Wharf	Carr Street	0.14
8	Caledonian Wharf	Caledonian Wharf Rd.	0.14
2	Sidney Square Gardens	Sidney Street	0.13
3	Carron & Continental Wharf	St.Katharines Way	0.13
8	Newcastle Drawdock	Saunders Ness Road	0.13
3	Vaughan Way Open Space	Vaughan Way	0.12
4	Bonner Hall Gate	Approach Road	0.12
1	Cavell Street Gardens	Cavell Street	0.11
2	Virginia Gardens	Virginia Road	0.11
1	Library Place	Cable Street	0.10
2	Mercers Burial Ground	Whithorse Road	0.10
3	Tower Hill Approach	Tower Hill	0.10
4	Hancock Road Open Space	Hancock Road	0.10
8	Compass Point	Mariners Mews	0.10
2	York Square Gardens	York Square	0.09
6	Cotton Street Open Space	Cotton Street	0.09
8	Castle Wharf	Orchard Place	0.09
3	Schoolhouse Lane Pitch	Cable Street	0.08
1	Mallon Gardens	Commercial Street	0.07
8	Johnsons Drawdock	Ferry Street	0.07
2	Stepney Clocktower	Stepney Green	0.06
6	Prestons Road Open Space	Prestons Road	0.05
7	Dockers Tanner Open Space	Dockers Tanner Road	0.05
2	White Horse Lane Open Space	White Horse Lane	0.04
8	Friars Mead Open Space	Friars Mead	0.04
8	Masthouse Terrace	Masthouse Terrace	0.04

LAP Area	Name of Park or Open Space	Address	Total Area In Hectares
2	Baxendale Street Gardens	Baxendale Street	0.03
2	Globe Road Open Space	Globe Road	0.03
2	Mile End Road Open Space	Mile End Road	0.02
3	London Wall	Tower Hill	0.02
7	Baffin Way Shrub Bed	Baffin Way	0.01
	Total Area of Parks in Hectares		232.11

## Appendix I: 2011 Audit - Quality & Value scores for Council owned parks and open spaces including capital investment details from 2006 to 2011

Note: sites indicated in green (+) or dark green (++) are above average and performing well, sites in light (-) and dark orange (- -) are below standard and will have a higher priority weighting for future investment.

Site ref.	Site Name	Typology	Place	Area (ha)	Investment 2006 to 2011 in £,000's	LUC Audit 2011 Q & V Score	Q & V compared to standards
<b>Major Parks - £687,000 invested</b>							
3	Mile End Park	District Park	Mile end	30.66	115	183	Above
2	Victoria Park	Metropolitan Park	Victoria Park	86.99	572	217	Above
<b>Local Parks - £1,989,000 invested</b>							
42	Bethnal Green Gardens	Local Park	Bethnal Green	3.53	575	136	++
22	Meath Gardens	Local Park	Globe Town	3.93	454	107	+
1	Millwall Park	Local Park	Cubitt Town	8.75	310	145	++
107	Tower Hamlets Cemetery	Local Park	Mile end	11.5	300	47	- -
39	Sir John McDougal Gardens	Local Park	Millwall	2.18	240	93	+
41	Weavers Fields	Local Park	Bethnal Green	6.34	110	114	+
44	Bartlett Park	Local Park	Poplar	4.95		67	-
50	King Edward Memorial Park	Local Park	Wapping	3.31		120	++
23	Stepney Green Park	Local Park	Stepney	4.63		93	+
<b>Pocket Parks - £4,003,000 invested</b>							

127	Gosling Gardens	Pocket Park	Shadwell	0.25	182.5	74	+
72	Arnold Circus	Pocket Parks	Shoreditch	0.25	650	69	+
100	St. Andrews Wharf Youth Project	Pocket Parks	Millwall	0.34	470	52	+
11	Archibald Public Open Space	Pocket Parks	Mile end	0.34	323	85	++
TH037	Royal Mint Green	Pocket Parks	Wapping	0.17	300	58	+
18	Cotton Street / Bazeley Street	Pocket Parks	Blackwall	0.19	140	44	-
10	Selwyn Park / Green	Pocket Parks	Bow	0.19	120	64	+
99	Glamis Road Adventure Playground	Pocket Parks	Shadwell	0.16	50	72	+
13	Stonebridge Wharf	Pocket Parks	Stepney	0.14	50	45	-
128	Wyvis Street Open space	Pocket Parks	Poplar Riverside	0.38	50	49	+
62	Cavell Street Gardens	Pocket Parks	Shadwell	0.11	20	44	-
94	Ford Square	Pocket Parks	Shadwell	0.17	5	57	+
73	Albert Square Gardens	Pocket Parks	Limehouse	0.28		66	+
70	Arbour Square	Pocket Parks	Shadwell	0.27		62	+
64	Carlton Square	Pocket Parks	Mile end	0.13		48	+
116	Christchurch Gardens	Pocket Parks	Spitalfields	0.19		60	+
61	Clocktower, Stepney	Pocket Parks	Stepney	0.05		33	--
45	Fern Street Open Space	Pocket Parks	Bow Common	0.17		52	+
59	Globe Road OS	Pocket Parks	Globe Town	0.03		34	--
126	Greenway	Pocket Parks	Fish Island	0.22		42	-
35	Jesus Green	Pocket Parks	Shoreditch	0.37		45	-
77	Kings Wharf	Pocket Parks	Limehouse	0.18		44	-
57	Mallon Gardens	Pocket Parks	Aldgate	0.08		39	-
54	Mansford Street Open Space	Pocket Parks	Bethnal Green	0.24		70	+



119	Mercers Burial Ground	Pocket Parks	Stepney	0.1		46	-
88	Paradise Gardens	Pocket Parks	Bethnal Green	0.16		53	+
49	Raine's Mansions	Pocket Parks	Wapping	0.17		41	-
78	Rectory Gardens	Pocket Parks	Limehouse	0.24		39	-
81	Sidney Gardens	Pocket Parks	Shadwell	0.14		51	+
114	St. Johns Churchyard	Pocket Parks	Wapping	0.25		60	+
108	St. Mary Bow	Pocket Parks	Bromley by Bow	0.27		61	+
38	Stoneyard Lane	Pocket Parks	Blackwall	0.15		34	--
58	Trafalgar Square Gardens	Pocket Parks	Stepney	0.25		75	+
96	Virginia Gardens	Pocket Parks	Shoreditch	0.11		41	-
27	Wapping Green	Pocket Parks	Wapping	0.25		45	-
29	Warner Green	Pocket Parks	Bethnal Green	0.3		46	-
69	Waterside Gardens	Pocket Parks	Wapping	0.14		67	+
92	York Square	Pocket Parks	Stepney	0.09		51	+
<b>Provision for children and teenagers - £60,000 invested</b>							
105	School House Kickabout	Provision for children and teenagers	Limehouse	0.07	60	30	--
106	Aberfeldy MUGA	Provision for children and teenagers	Poplar Riverside	0.13		61	+
101	Hellings Street Play Area	Provision for children and teenagers	Wapping	0.15		56	+
104	Shacklewell (1 o'clock club)	Provision for children and teenagers	Shoreditch	0.06		45	-

<b>Small Local Parks &amp; Amenity Greenspace - £5,539,000 invested</b>							
111	St. George in the East	Small Local Parks	Shadwell	1.61	1250	82	+
46	Whitehorse Park	Amenity Green Space	Stepney	1.38	235	99	++
9	Poplar Park	Small Local Parks	Blackwall	1.57	454	98	++
37	Furze Green Open Space	Small Local Parks	Bow Common	1.14	345	78	+
25	Middleton Green	Small Local Parks	Bethnal Green	0.67	280	71	+
12	Pennyfields Park	Small Local Parks	Blackwall	0.61	230	81	+
15	Grove Hall Park	Small Local Parks	Bromley by Bow	1.2	210	97	++
20	Ravenscroft Park	Small Local Parks	Shoreditch	0.97	190	84	++
19	Prospect Park	Small Local Parks	Bromley by Bow	0.42	180	64	+
75	St. James's Gardens	Small Local Parks	Limehouse	0.59	180	68	+
115	Altab Ali Park	Small Local Parks	Aldgate	0.48	150	67	+
TH007	Braithwaite Park	Small Local Parks	Poplar Riverside	0.44	150	67	+
85	Trinity Gardens	Small Local Parks	Poplar	0.42	150	57	+
26	Wapping Gardens	Small Local Parks	Wapping	1.27	150	104	++
28	Allen Gardens	Small Local Parks	Spitalfields	1.6	141	63	+
30	Rounton Road Public Open Space	Small Local Parks	Bow Common	0.56	140	63	+
43	Swedenborg Gardens	Small Local Parks	Wapping	1.56	136	78	+
74	Belgrave Street Open Space	Small Local Parks	Stepney	0.65	120	62	+
32	Langdon Park	Small Local Parks	Poplar Riverside	1.7	120	88	++
113	St. Bartholomews	Small Local Parks	Whitechapel	0.45	120	89	++

34	St. Johns Park	Small Local Parks	Cubitt Town	0.95	108	83	+
83	Stepney Green Gardens	Small Local Parks	Stepney	0.51	80	58	+
84	Beaumont Square	Small Local Parks	Stepney	0.4	60	79	+
16	Shandy Park	Small Local Parks	Stepney	1.46	60	77	+
31	Ion Square Gardens	Small Local Parks	Bethnal Green	1.03	50	72	+
76	Island Gardens	Small Local Parks	Cubitt Town	1.24	50	82	+
33	Jolly's Green	Small Local Parks	Poplar Riverside	0.83	50	25	--
56	Museum Gardens	Small Local Parks	Bethnal Green	1.07	50	64	+
53	Ropewalk Gardens	Small Local Parks	Shadwell	0.82	50	81	+
91	Tredegar Square Gardens	Small Local Parks	Mile end	0.51	50	56	+
125	Ackroyd Drive Extension	Small Local Parks	Bow Common	0.73		43	-
36	Alton St Public Open Space	Small Local Parks	Poplar	0.84		52	-
14	Carlton Square Extension	Small Local Parks	Mile end	0.66		34	--
51	Levens Road Park	Small Local Parks	Poplar Riverside	0.51		33	--
48	Millwall Dock Open Space	Small Local Parks	Cubitt Town	0.45		51	-
8	Pollard Square	Small Local Parks	Bethnal Green	0.47		46	-
47	Ropemakers Fields	Small Local Parks	Limehouse	1.8		103	++
121	St. Matthews & St James	Small Local Parks	Bethnal Green	0.83		71	+
65	Trinity Square Gardens	Small Local Parks	Tower of London	0.49		68	+
24	Vallance Gardens	Small Local Parks	Whitechapel	0.55		81	+
52	Wapping Rose Gardens	Small Local Parks	Wapping	0.61		56	+
40	Wapping Woods	Small Local Parks	Wapping	1.59		63	+
<b><i>Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds</i></b>							

120	All Saints Churchyard	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Blackwall	0.94		57	++
117	St. Annes Churchyard	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Limehouse	0.9		31	-
122	St. Dunstons Church	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Stepney	1.82		61	++
<b>Civic Space</b>							
163	Carron Continental Wharf	Civic Space	Tower of London	0.11		45	+
146	Great Eastern Slipway	Civic Space	Millwall	0.41		34	-
164	Shadwell Basin	Civic Space	Wapping	4.28		54	+
161	Wapping Canal System	Civic Space	Wapping	1.75		56	+

## Appendix J: Maps 1 to 17 (2011)

See separate map pack.

<b>Map Number</b>	<b>Title</b>
Map 1	Indices of multiple deprivation 2010
Map 2	Distribution of Open Spaces (including rivers, docks, and canals)
Map 3	Borough Framework Map
Map 4	Places North Framework Map
Map 5	Places East Framework Map
Map 6	Places South Framework Map
Map 7	Places West Framework Map
Map 8	Lines of Severance (waterways, railways, roads)
Map 9	Publicly Accessible Open Space (excluding water spaces)
Map 10	Accessibility to all parks above 0.4ha (small local parks and above)
Map 11	Accessibility to all parks above 1ha (LBTH local park) and 2ha (GLA local park)
Map 12	Accessibility to Major Parks
Map 13	Public Transport Accessibility Levels (2010)
Map 14	Publicly accessible open space area projections per 1,000 residents rear 2010
Map 15	Publicly accessible open space area projections per 1,000 residents rear 2025
Map 16	Site Quality Score
Map 17	Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

## Appendix K: Action Plan

Original actions (2006)	Delivery phase	Achievements to date	Future actions (2011)	Due date
<b>Outcome</b>				
To improve the overall quality of current provision of open space within the Borough				
<b>Objective</b>				
To increase sustainability of open spaces within the Borough				
Implement the project to achieve Green Flag Awards for all major parks and key local parks	Medium term	Achieved Green Flag status for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Island Gardens</li> <li>• King Edward Memorial Park</li> <li>• Mile End Park</li> <li>• Millwall Park</li> <li>• Trinity Square Gardens</li> <li>• Weavers Fields</li> <li>• Victoria Park</li> </ul>	Submit Green Flag status submission for St George's in the East Gardens  Resubmit applications for Green Flag status for all existing Green Flag sites	June 2012  June 2012
Improve the biodiversity of the Council's parks networks	Medium term	Introduction of bird and bat boxes and the creation of new habitat areas at locations such as Mile End Park, Millwall Park, King Edward Memorial Park, Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, Weavers Fields, Ion Square Gardens, Rounton Road Park  Adopted the Tower Hamlets Biodiversity Action Plan	Include recommendations from bio-diversity action plan into capital investment programme  Work with volunteers and communities to implement habitat improvement projects in key parks	Annual capital programme subject to funding  Ongoing volunteering and corporate social responsibility programme

Develop and implement a Borough Tree Management Plan	Medium term	Tree Management Plan has been prepared Extensive programme of tree planting in parks and on highways completed	Carry out annual tree planting and maintenance programme subject to funding  Ensure tree planting is incorporated into the implementation of Green Grid Strategy projects	Annual capital programme subject to funding  Annual Green Grid Strategy implementation programme
<b>Objective</b> To maximise the use of parks and open spaces as a resource to improve the health of the Community				
Increase the level of proactive healthy lifestyle activities into parks and open spaces  &  Promote the use of parks and open spaces as a way to improve health and well being	Medium term	Implemented a wide ranging programme as part of the Healthy Borough initiative, which ran from 2008 to 2011. The programme promoted physical activity in parks and open spaces and through active play.	Work with public health services and community groups to promote existing facilities such as skate parks, playgrounds and walking trails.  Promote volunteering in parks and open spaces as a way of engaging in physical exercise.	August 2013  August 2012

**Objective**

To continue to represent the interests of local residents regarding the impact of various infrastructure initiatives, (Crossrail, DLR station proposals, East London Line extension, Thames Tideway Tunnel)

<p>Ensure adequate re provision of open space and sports capacity during construction</p> <p>&amp;</p> <p>Ensure adequate reinstatement of same or replacement of land lost</p>	<p>Plan term</p>	<p><u>Crossrail</u></p> <p>Secured compensation and mitigation measures for Stepping Stones Farm.</p> <p>Minimised the impact of construction on football pitches in the park.</p> <p><u>DLR</u></p> <p>Delivered integrated design scheme to enhance access to Langdon Park from the new DLR station.</p> <p>Ensured that land taken during construction of three car running was returned to use as open space and fully reinstated.</p> <p><u>East London Line Extension</u></p> <p>Secured extension to Allen Gardens.</p>	<p><u>Crossrail</u></p> <p>Ensure that construction sites at Mile End Park and Stepney Green are managed to minimise impact on park users</p> <p>Ensure that sites are reinstated fully and any permanent structures are of appropriate design</p> <p><u>Thames Tideway Tunnel</u></p> <p>Continue to robustly respond to Thames Water consultation and the formal planning application process</p>	<p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2014</p>
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<b>Objective</b>				
To fully exploit the potential of parks and open spaces to support education and children's services.				
More young people encouraged to integrate with the parks user community	Medium term	The Community Park Ranger Service has prepared and delivered an annual programme of events and activities in the parks. Some of these have been specifically aimed at children and young people while others have been inter-generational activities.	Implementation of the Victoria Park Audience Development Plan for children and young people	March 2015
Implement the findings of the Planning for Play Report	Medium term	Planning for play report has informed design of payable landscapes and play areas as part of the capital programme.	Continue to use design guide to direct capital project development	Annual capital programme subject to funding
Engage key stakeholders to explore how parks can assist with curriculum and social support & Develop school services at both Tower Hamlets ecology centres	Medium term	The Mile End Park Ecology Centre and the Soanes Centre in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park have supported an extensive range of events and educational activities for school age children.	Using the Mile End Park experience to roll out a programme of environmental activities for children and young people as part of the Victoria Park Audience Development Plan	March 2015

Carry out further research into the use of parks and open spaces by young people	Medium term	Consultation on landscape improvement projects has included activities targeted at young people to ensure that their views were captured. In particular this has influenced the design of play improvement elements.	Integrate consultation with children and young people into capital project development	Annual capital programme subject to funding
<b>Objective</b>				
Improve access to sport by developing new avenues of delivery				
Promote greater public access to school outdoor sports facilities	Plan term	Worked with Building Schools for the Future team to consider public access requirements at design stage for new and improved schools.	N/A	
Carry out a playing pitch assessment	Medium term	Information has been collected and analysed on the level and quality of existing provision using Sport England criteria for evaluation purposes.	Completed.	
Engage key stake holders to further open up access to water based leisure and sports activities	Medium term		Develop and implement a major landscape improvement project at Bartlett Park, including the extension of the park to the canal edge  Implement the Victoria Park Audience Development Plan, including more active use of water areas	March 2015 (phased)  March 2015

<b>Objective</b>				
Improve the quality of existing open spaces				
Reduce the number of poor quality open spaces across the Borough	Plan term	Implemented an annual rolling programme of capital projects as set out in the Strategy.	Implement a programme of capital investment projects based on investment criteria	Annual capital programme subject to funding
Improve facilities in line with Disability Discrimination Act requirements	Plan term	Landscape improvement projects incorporated a range of design elements to improve accessibility within parks and open spaces, including the introduction of inclusive play equipment.	Continue to improve access for all as parks improvement projects are implemented.	Annual capital programme subject to funding
Programme detailed resident feedback on an annual basis	Plan term	Carried out Annual Parks Survey during first five years of Strategy implementation.	Seek annual feedback through the Annual Residents Survey to ensure benchmarking ability as other authorities have withdraw from the dedicated parks survey.	Annually as part of Council wide Residents Survey
<b>Objective</b>				
To increase opportunities for festivals and events in parks and open spaces				
Develop a Festivals & Events toolkit for Third Sector organisations	Medium term	The Events Toolkit was developed in 2008.	Completed.	
Ensure harmonisation of use of open space for events and sports	Medium term	Adopted the Events in Parks Policy 2011.	Develop a Sports Strategy	June 2012

<b>Objective</b>				
To increase community and third sector involvement in the management of open space				
Improve the management of allotment and garden societies on Council owned sites.	Medium term		Work with societies and groups based on Council managed open space to improve site management	March 2014
Support community representation in the management of parks and open spaces	Plan term		Establish a forum of Friends Groups	May 2012
			Work with Friends Groups to establish a co-ordinated and Borough-wide events programme to mark national Love Parks Week	June 2012
<b>Outcome</b>				
To create wherever possible new publicly accessible open space by effective use of planning powers and obligations, especially in areas identified as deficient in open space.				
<b>Objective</b>				
To address open space deficiencies through the planning process				
Local Development Framework to address the need for open space	Medium term	Adoption of Core Strategy in September 2010  Core Strategy includes policies to protect, connect, enhance and create open space.	Completed.	

Draft policy to encourage developers to provide new public open space	Medium term	Adoption of Green Grid Strategy in February 2011	Ensure that planning decisions officers are aware of the Green Grid Strategy aims and routes to deliver new open space on development adjoining routes	Annual Green Grid Strategy implementation programme
Develop planning guidance as necessary	Plan term		Adoption of Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document  Submission of Managing Development Plan Document to Secretary of State  Submission of Fish Island Area Action Plan Development Plan Document to Secretary of State  Adoption of Bromley-by-Bow masterplan	April 2012  April 2012  April 2012  April 2012
<b>Outcome</b> To improve accessibility to existing and new open spaces				
<b>Objective</b> To improve accessibility to parks and open spaces				
Ensure safe cycling and walking routes to and through parks and open spaces	Medium term	Development of the Connect 2 cycle route from Bethnal Green to Victoria Park  Installation of new Mile End Park /	Implement a rolling programme of Green Grid Strategy projects to connect parks and open spaces	Annual Green Grid Strategy implementation programme subject to funding

		<p>Meath Gardens footbridge to provide continuous traffic free route. Amendments to the tow path to facilitate shared use.</p> <p>Implementation of two cycle super highways in collaboration with Transport for London</p>	<p>Implement cycle improvements and walking improvements in line with the Cycle Plan and the Local Implementation Plan 2</p> <p>Work with the Thames Gateway Development Corporation and Lea Valley Park Authority to develop the missing link in the Lea Valley Park between Bow and the River Thames</p> <p>Improve cycle route markings and signage in Victoria Park</p>	<p>Annual cycle and walking capital programme subject to funding</p> <p>June 2012</p> <p>June 2012</p>
Provide new and improved entrances to parks	Plan term	New and enhanced entrances have been provided at a number of parks and open spaces through the improvement programme	<p>Carry out an assessment of optimum locations for new gates and entrances based on enhanced mapping technology</p> <p>Implement improvements to gates and entrances as part of the capital investment programme</p>	<p>March 2013</p> <p>Annual capital programme subject to funding</p>
Develop new	Plan	A new bridge connects Meath	Ensure that master plans and	Ongoing

strategic gateways including bridges to parks and open spaces	term	Gardens to Mile End Park.	other area based planning policies include improvements to connectivity and overcome lines of severance  Work with the Thames Gateway Development Corporation and Lea Valley Park Authority to implement bridge connections as part of the River Lee Park and Olympic Park development	March 2016
Provide accessible toilets in major and key parks	Plan term	New accessible toilet facilities have been provided at Victoria Park.	Carry out an options appraisal for providing access to toilet facilities in or near parks in open spaces as part of the Council's wider approach	March 2013
<b>Objective</b> To safeguard and improve the quality and accessibility of valuable housing amenity land				
Work with the RSLs and other land owners to ensure that grounds maintenance standards are in line with BV199 targets	Plan term			
<b>Objective</b>				

To ensure the Olympic Park and Millennium Quarter and other major developments deliver open space accessible to the residents of Tower Hamlets				
Input to Olympic Park planning process	Medium term	According to the legacy park plans approximately one-sixth of Tower Hamlets by area is within 10 minutes walk of the Olympic Park; this the part of the borough to the south of Victoria Park and to the east of Mile End Park, benefiting residents of Bow and north Poplar.	<p>The Council continues to engage with the Olympic Park planning process.</p> <p>New and upgraded bridges could connect the borough to the Park at Hackney Wick and Fish Island.</p>	
Encourage development proposals within the Millennium Quarter and on other sites to provide high quality civic/open spaces in accordance with planning policy	Plan term	Parts of open spaces required by the MQ master plan have been delivered but are not yet fully functioning as adjacent sites are awaiting development.	<p>Continue to ensure that planning applications in the MQ are reviewed to deliver open space across a range of development sites</p> <p>Work to secure and implement new Tower Hamlets Local Park sites in Hackney Wick, Spitalfields, Bethnal Green, Poplar Riverside, Millwall and Bromley-by-Bow</p>	<p>March 2016</p> <p>In line with development coming forward</p>
<b>Outcome</b>				



To prioritise public safety in parks				
<b>Objective</b>				
To make parks and open spaces even cleaner and safer				
Further develop and implement the programme to reduce crime and anti social behaviour in parks and open spaces	Medium term		Adopt new bye laws for parks and open spaces	May 2012
Let Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Contract	Medium term	Let new contract in 2006	Align contract with other public realm contracts to enable coherent and consistent management of the public realm	April 2013
Incorporate measures to design out crime into park management plans	Medium term	Park management plans for key parks incorporate site safety and security plans  Capital projects have included, subject to the availability of funding, measures to design out crime.	Include designing out crime as a key feature of parks capital investment	Annual capital programme subject to funding
Develop the network of CCTV within parks and open spaces	Plan term	CCTV cameras have been implemented in a number of parks where anti-social behaviour was identified.	Update CCTV Strategy  Ensure that the annual CCTV investment programme considers the need for CCTV in parks and open spaces	February 2012  Annual capital programme subject to funding
<b>Objective</b>				

<b>To increase training and employment opportunities in the open space business sector</b>				
Engage with Further Education partners to explore partnership potential	Medium term	The Council has engaged a number of apprentices and these have worked with the landscape contractors, Park Rangers and in-house gardening team.	Seek to appoint apprentices within the context of the Council's corporate scheme.	Annually, subject to funding.
<b>Outcome</b> To maximise funding opportunities arising from planning obligation benefits; lottery applications; partnership funding and any other windfall opportunities in order to support the action plan.				
<b>Objective</b> Maximise the potential of the major open spaces to attract tourism and investment.				
Contribute to the Thames Gateway East London Green Grid	Plan term	Adoption of Green Grid Strategy in February 2011.	Develop a Green Grid Strategy implementation programme	Annually, subject to funding
Integrate festivals and parks into the Borough Tourism and Regeneration Marketing strategies	Medium Term		Implement the Victoria Park Audience Development Plan to establish the park as a visitor destination	March 2015
To undertake research into the economic value to the Borough of the park based festival programme	Medium term	Participated in an international action research project to investigate the economic impact of festivals and community events.	N/A	
<b>Objective</b>				

To improve value for money, in terms of cost per visit to parks and open spaces, and to increase visitor numbers				
To develop a comprehensive Marketing Strategy for parks and open spaces	Medium term	Activities to promote the use of parks have included development of the 'Parks for Everyone' guide to Parks & Open Spaces in Tower Hamlets, events promotion, newspaper articles, better web based information, improved profile of awards activities including Tower Hamlets in Bloom. Better signage has been installed at sites where capital improvement works have taken place.	Review and refresh all online content	October 2012
To improve signage and site based information	Plan term	Developed a standard for parks signage that welcomes users and provides clear information. New signage has been a feature of the landscape improvement works that have been delivered at priority investment sites across the borough.	Implement signage improvements as part of capital projects	Annual capital programme subject to funding