

Draft Aberdeen Open Space Strategy



ABERDEEN

CITY COUNCIL

March 2011

Foreword	
Chapter 1 Introduction	3
1.1 What is open space?	4
1.2 What does this strategy cover?	4
1.3 Vision	6
1.4 Aims	6
1.5 Objectives	7
Chapter 2 Policy Context	10
2.1 National Policy Context	10
2.2 Regional Policy Context	10
2.3 Local Policy Context	11
2.3.1 Green Space Network	12
2.4 Financial Context	12
CHAPTER 3 Open Space Audit	14
3.1 The process	14
3.2 Major Findings	15
CHAPTER 4 Developing the Strategy	19
4.1 How we developed the strategy	19
4.2 Open Space Standards	21
CHAPTER 5 Delivery	22
5.1 Partnership Working	22
5.2 Resources	23
5.3 Delivery – Action Plan	24
CHAPTER 6 Monitoring & Evaluation	25
6.1 Monitoring the Strategy	25
CHAPTER 7	26
Action Plan	26
APPENDICES	
References	

CHAPTER 1

1.0 Introduction

This strategy sets out a strategic vision, aims and objectives for open space in Aberdeen. Its main purpose is to ensure the city has enough accessible and good quality open space. The Strategy is based on the findings of the Aberdeen Open Space Audit 2010. The approach to the development of this strategy has been to involve as many people and organizations with an interest in open space as possible throughout each stage. It is hoped that this will mean the strategy is 'owned' by everyone.

Aberdeen has many high quality, well used public parks and open spaces, which are highly valued by its citizens as important community resources. This strategy revolves around four themes: people, health, the economy and the environment.

The audit of the city's open spaces gives us a good picture of the amount of open space we have, its quality and how accessible it is to those who currently, or could use it. It also identifies some challenges, such as how to protect what we have, increase its quality and maintain it - make better use of what we have. This strategy sets out to address these challenges, taking into account the current financial climate, through working more with communities and businesses and through more efficient and effective management. An example could be to consider the possibilities of developing some of the larger amenity spaces into alternative, higher quality, more functional and publicly desirable types of open space.

The strategy process has also included developing new standards for open space in new developments. These will encourage the development of more useful, publicly desirable and efficient open space, types such as natural areas, green corridors, play spaces and allotments.

A detailed action plan has been developed, which focuses on encouraging greater community involvement and partnership working in developing and maintaining open spaces. It suggests reviewing the management of sites, in terms of financial, social and environmental sustainability, promoting good design of networks of open spaces, providing better access and information and supporting the use of open spaces for community events.

1.1 What is open space?

Greenspace Scotland defines 'open space' as open, usually green land within and on the edges of settlements. Parks, public gardens, allotments, woodland, play areas, playing fields, green corridors and paths, churchyards and cemeteries, natural areas, institutional land as well as 'civic space' such as squares or other paved or hard surfaced areas with a civic function are all forms of open space.

1.2 What open space does the strategy cover?

This strategy considers open space as defined by Planning Advice Note 65, Planning and Open Space. Private gardens and farmland are not covered by this Strategy. A brief description of each open space is provided below. Details of the PAN65 typology are provided in **Appendix 1**.

Public Parks and Gardens



Amenity Green Space

Areas of land normally enclosed, designed, constructed, managed and maintained as a public park or garden



Play Space for Children

Landscape areas providing visual amenity or separating different buildings providing informal recreational activities and general environmental benefits



Sports Areas

Areas providing safe and accessible opportunities for teen agers and children play, usually linked to housing areas



Large and generally flat areas of grassland or specifically designed surfaces used primarily for designated sports (including playing fields, golf courses, tennis courts and bowling green)

Green Corridors



Routes including river corridors and old railway lines, linking different areas within a town or city as part of designated or managed network and used for walking cycling, or linking towns and cities to their surrounding countryside or country parks

Natural Semi-Natural



Areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with residual natural habitats or which have been planted or colonized by vegetation or wildlife including woodlands and wetlands

Allotments



Areas of Land growing fruits, vegetables or other community growing plants either in individual allotments or as a community spaces activity

Civic Space



Squares streets, waterfront, and promenades predominantly of hard landscaping that provide a focus for pedestrian activity and can make connections for people and for wildlife

Burial Grounds



Includes Churchyards and Cemeteries

1.3 Vision

A network of attractive, appealing, well connected community places. Places for everyone to enjoy for health, learning, recreation and nature.

1.4 Aims

Aberdeen's Open Space Strategy will benefit people, health, the economy and the environment. It aims to:

1. Provide good and equitable access to a network of quality open spaces that promote stronger, responsible and proud communities
2. Promote and facilitate healthier life styles
3. Ensure Aberdeen is an attractive and appealing place to enjoy living, working and investing in
4. Protect, enhance and value our environment for current and future generations

What themes does the strategy covers ?

People



Health



Economy



Environment



1.5 Objectives

To achieve the vision and aims, eight objectives were identified by partners, stakeholders and the public, who contributed to the process of developing this strategy. These are listed below, along with a summary on what they are designed to achieve and how.

1. Create, protect and enhance Green Space Network	Connecting our urban open spaces and surrounding, more rural green spaces to each other, and to the communities around them, offers a wide range of social, health, economic and environmental benefits. These are recognised in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan and actions to achieve this objective relate to ensuring Green Space Network is seen as a key facility within new developments..
2. Improve the quality of open spaces	This objective focuses on improving the quality of open spaces and their associated facilities, in order to make better use of what we have. Actions to achieve this include producing a prioritised project plan for improving open spaces, particularly play spaces and encouraging good design, such as making the most of the natural landscape and using natural play materials.
3. Provide well maintained and managed open spaces, balancing available resources with community demand	<p>Open Space management and maintenance is an issue that concerns all of us. This objective recognises the current financial situation and considers new ways of managing and maintaining open space. The audit and strategy consultation process showed that people would like to see more natural management of open spaces,</p> <p>Some open space and park user groups already exist who are actively engaged in improving their open spaces, through for example regular events. This objective will support similar approaches. See Sunnybank Park case study.</p>
4. Improve access to and within open spaces	It was clear through community consultation that access is a issue for people and this objective will be delivered through providing more information on open spaces and how to access them, working with others to achieve this where appropriate and supporting the implementation of the Core Path Plan. This objective also relates to how open space types are accessed, and a review of the city's pitches provision in particular is necessary.
5. Increase the value and use of open spaces for health, education, play and lifelong learning	<p>Throughout the consultation, people were concerned with how open spaces are protected. People felt this could be achieved was through making sure open spaces are well used. They felt there are opportunities for schools to use open spaces and that there were strong links with Curriculum for Excellence.</p> <p>Promoting active lifestyles and encouraging events in open spaces were also seen as ways to increase use of open spaces. People felt that greater usage of open space could also be achieved by making them more multi-functional, with a range of attractions and facilities attracting people of all ages and abilities.. Anti-social behaviour, dog fouling, litter and safety were considered to be barriers to increasing the use of open</p>

	spaces. These issues link to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code
6. Seek business, community and other agency involvement	Parks and open spaces provide communities with a focal point for social interaction and cultural activities. Using parks and open spaces for events, festivals and other activities increases the value of open spaces. Increasing involvement of others in helping to manage open spaces is seen as a positive opportunity to address the restrictions the Council faces in providing grounds maintenance.
7. Recognise the economic, environmental and social value of open spaces	This objective is key to addressing the concerns people had with how to protect open spaces. It revolves around the social and environmental benefits offered by open spaces, as well as benefits to the wider economy. This objective aims to work with communities and partners to measure and promote the value open spaces and the benefits they provide.
8. Maximise opportunities to mitigate and adapt to climate change and further biodiversity	Open space plays an important role in capturing and storing water and reducing localised flooding after significant rainfall events. Trees and vegetation help in reducing noise and absorbing dust and air pollutants. Open spaces also provide habitats for plants and animals within urban areas. This objective is designed to make the most of these environmental benefits.

Case Study- Sunnybank Park

Sunnybank Park - a new community Park located between four distinct communities in Aberdeen: Old Aberdeen, Powis, Sunnybank and Froghall.

Formerly an outdoor sports centre, the site was closed and considered for urban development. Following community consultation, there was a strong mandate to save the space.

The Friends of Sunnybank Park (FoSP) was established and developed physical, management and funding plans for the site. The value of this space was then recognised, the plans approved and a handover to the community negotiated.

The FoSP decided that it was not feasible to maintain the outdoor centre and, following consultation, a new future as a community park was set. Immediate plans for the site include; dog walking area, pond, community allotments, walks and wildlife and access improvements. Funding has been secured from the Scottish Government, Aberdeen Greenspace Trust and Aberdeen Forward for these. Longer term plans include a formal sports area and perhaps a community building.

The Park forms part of a matrix of green spaces, including a play area and woodland, altogether creating a larger sense of space and place. The additional spaces are not leased by the FoSP, but they are considered and managed as part of the overall place.

The FoSP formed partnerships to bring support, expertise and funding to their work. They also engaged local communities. There is now a dedicated BTCV Green Gym volunteer programme operating in the Park, as well as many other volunteering and social events. The FoSP also maintain a newsletter, a website, a facebook group and hold monthly meetings to discuss and direct progress. The ambition is to employ a Development Officer to develop the longer term plans. This is a long term project and the case continue



Volunteers at work



Picnic in the Park



*300 years old "Gibberie Wallie"
Parks Heritage*

CHAPTER 2 Policy Context

2.1 National

This strategy supports the Scottish Government's strategic objectives for a healthier, safer and stronger, wealthier and fairer, smarter and greener Scotland.

The Scottish Government, through Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), stresses the need to protect, enhance and create open space for the benefit of people, the environment, natural heritage and biodiversity. It highlights the need for quality open space as an important part of future development and encourages a long term, strategic approach towards protecting, creating and managing open spaces and green space networks.

The policy states that planning authorities should undertake an open space audit to record the baseline conditions and prepare an open space strategy which sets out the vision for new and improved open spaces and addresses any deficiencies identified in the audit.

The SPP also requires development plans to identify and promote green networks where this will add value to the provision, protection, enhancement and connectivity of open space and habitats around cities.

Open space links to various national policy agendas including:

- PAN 65 Planning and Open Space Scottish Planning Policy
- Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003
- Local Government Scotland Act (2003)
- Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy - It's in Your Hands
- Let's Make Scotland More Active – A Strategy for Physical Activity
- Designing Places – A Policy Statement for Scotland

Links to various policies are provided in the Figure 1.

2.2 Regional

Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan sets a vision to make the region an attractive, prosperous and sustainable European City region and an excellent place to live, visit and do business. It recognises the role that a high quality environment plays in delivering this vision. It considers the challenges of sustainable development, climate change adaptation, flooding and unpredictable weather conditions and the need for high quality design and landscaping in developments. The Structure Plan requires Local Development Plans to protect the natural environment from the effects of development.

There are also a number of regional plans, programmes, policies and strategies that relate to the issues covered by this strategy such as, North East Scotland Biodiversity Action Plan, Forest and Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City and the Joint Health Improvement Plan.

2.3 Local

This strategy supports the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008 as well as the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan, by helping to deliver policies that protect and enhance the natural environment, and promote high quality design.

The Open Space Strategy has very close links with other strategies such as Aberdeen City's Nature Conservation Strategy and should not be considered as a stand alone document for delivering wider environmental benefits. Links to the various relevant policies and strategies are provided in Figure 1

Supplementary Guidance on Open Space has been developed in parallel with this strategy, and sets out the Council's approach towards planning and development of new open spaces. See www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/openspace



Figure 1 – Open Space Strategy's links to other Strategies and Policies

2.3.1 Green Space Network

Aberdeen's Green Space Network (GSN) is a strategic network of woodland and other habitats, active travel and recreation routes, greenspace links, watercourses and waterways, providing an enhanced setting and other land uses and improved opportunities for outdoor recreation, nature conservation and landscape enhancement. The GSN, which overlays Open Space, Green Belt, Natural Heritage and other policies, indicates where greenspace enhancement projects could be focused. The GSN intends to avoid habitat fragmentation and supports a variety of functions. Figure 2 below shows Aberdeen's Green Space Network.

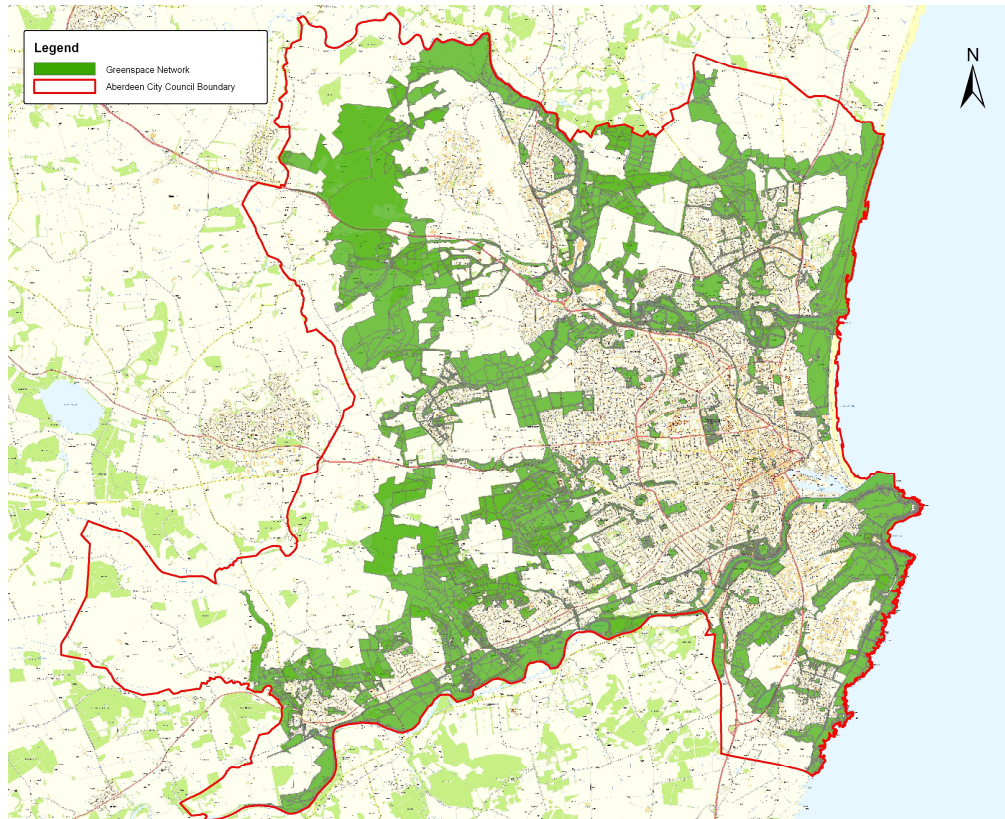


Figure 2 – Aberdeen's Greenspace Network

A Geographic Information System (GIS) database has been developed alongside this strategy to demonstrate the rationale for selecting GSN, as well as co-ordinating strategic and community demand for enhancements. This GIS tool should be seen as a resource for anyone with an interest in enhancing Aberdeen's natural environment and open spaces. An example of the GIS database tool is shown in the figure 3.

Figure 3 – Green Space Network GIS Database

2.4 Financial Context

Aberdeen City Council, along with the rest of the country, faces challenging financial times. The Council has produced a Five-Year Business Plan, outlining its priorities and the ways in

which it will make the savings required to ensure long term financial stability. This strategy considers the current financial situation at its core and focuses on supporting innovative and sometimes radical new ways of working in order to ensure the strategy is deliverable and its objectives are achieved. The details are provided in chapter 5 and the action plan in section 7 identifies the resources to deliver the various actions of the strategy.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Open Space Audit

Aberdeen City Council carried out an open space audit to give a clear and robust understanding of open space in Aberdeen, including their distribution, quality, quantity and accessibility.



Open Space Audit data collection

The open space audit was carried out according to national best practice guidance from Greenspace Scotland¹ and the Scottish Government². It combines the information collected by earlier relevant projects along with site assessments and community engagement carried out in 2009 and 2010. The audit process is outlined in figure 4 below:-

¹ Greenspace Quality: A Guide to Assessment, Planning and Strategy Development; Greenspace Scotland & Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership <http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk>

² Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65: Planning and Open Space; The Scottish Government; 2008
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/05/30100623/0>



Figure 4 – Open Space Audit process

3.2 Major Findings

Aberdeen has many high quality, well used public parks and open spaces although these tend not to be very evenly distributed across the City. The most densely populated areas, particularly the city centre has the least open space, with limited opportunities to create more.

The regeneration priority areas tend to have the poorest quality open spaces and some of these areas also lack in the quantity of provision. The post-1960s residential developments around the outer areas of the city have the greatest quantities of open space. Much of this is amenity grounds which is usually poor in quality and costly to maintain.

The audit also found that there are a very high number of small play spaces but many of them are poor quality.

Case Study – Deer Road Park

Despite its wider prosperity, there are pockets of serious deprivation within the city of Aberdeen. The Woodside community is recognised as being one of six regeneration “priority areas” by Aberdeen City Council.

As part of the Council’s ongoing regeneration efforts, a local park in the Woodside area was restored and upgraded. The existing Deer Road Park was largely unused and undervalued by the local community. It consisted of a few pieces of old, neglected play equipment and two goal posts without a proper football pitch. The park was surrounded on two sides by a seven foot chin link fence that had such large gaping holes, it served no useful purpose.

This project – a collaboration between Auld Woodside Action Group, Aberdeen Greenspace, Aberdeen City Council, Station House Media Unit, Scottish Natural Heritage and North Sound Radio – has brought about the complete regeneration of the park. New post and rail fencing has been erected, with much of the labour provided by local volunteers. Modern play equipment was installed along with a surface games pitch and new tarmac path. Native trees, hedges and bulbs were also planted to make the park much more attractive for people and wildlife.

The results have been remarkable and Woodside now has a park that the community designed, delivered and has pride in. The park is well used and the project has also brought positive publicity to the area.



Before the Improvement



After the Improvement

Throughout the audit and strategy preparation process it has been clear that the quality, accessibility, management and maintenance of open space are the key issues concerning the public, rather than necessarily the provision of more open space. Details of the audit findings are provided in the Open Space Audit report.

Figure 5 below shows the over all quality of the open spaces across the city. The figure shows dark blue being low quality open spaces and dark green as high quality at scale of 1-25. The details of each type of these open spaces and individual site scores are provided in the open Space Audit Report.

Figure 5 – Open space Quality

Figure 6 below shows the quantity of major types of open spaces. The details of each type of open spaces according to PAN 65 Typology are provided in the open space audit report.

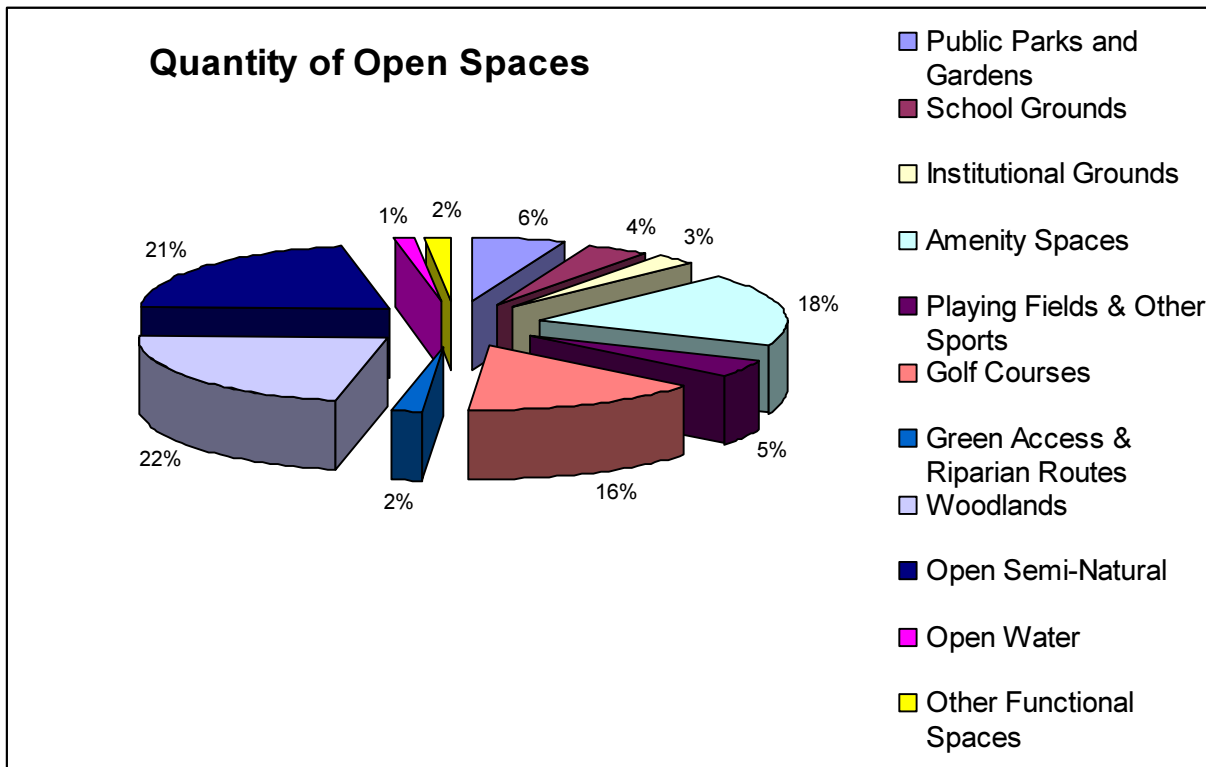


Figure 6 – Open Space Quantity

Mastrick District Centre Regeneration Project – Case study

An Open Space area in the Mastrick District Centre has been improved by the community working closely with local shop keepers and local services. The improvement project has created an attractive, well designed and thriving civic space for the residents, shoppers and retailers..

A lack of site investment and maintenance over the years and pockets of antisocial behaviour had lended the area a neglected feel. This deterioration in infrastructure, site access and overall appearance over time was seen as a key barrier to making best use of this area.

The community wanted to make the District Centre safer to use, more attractive, clean, and accessible and improve the range of facilities. Community representatives and local services worked together via a neighbourhood planning partnership to produce an improvement plan and secured nearly £400,000 in funding from the Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund, the Fairer Scotland Fund, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Greenspace.

This investment has breathed new life into the open space areas and brought huge benefits to the community. The accessibility and overall appearance of the open space has improved, alongside newly designed pedestrianised and greenspace areas and play equipment, bins and seating, noticeboards and trees and hedgerow planting.

The newly installed CCTV, shopsafe scheme and improved lighting have helped reduce anti-social behaviour, making the area safer to use for families. This project has also improved the socio-economic viability of the Centre area, with previously vacant retail units now occupied.

Police Officer Stewart Mackie supports the new play facility & improved pedestrian area beyond



Lord Provost Peter Stephen joins in with the community celebrations!

CHAPTER 4 Developing the Strategy

4.1 How the strategy was developed?

The vision, aims and objectives for this strategy were developed at three workshops attended by community, business and agency stakeholders. Further community consultation was carried out through six local events as well as several meetings with specific stakeholder groups.



Youth consultation

The local events focused on the vision, aims and objectives and sought the public's views and ideas on how to achieve these. A map-based exercise was also undertaken where people were asked to highlight the spaces they value most, as well as any ideas they had for changing or improving them. Figure 7 below shows the ideas and improvements across the city, blue dots being most valued places and the green dots for ideas for changes or improvements.

Figure 7 –Ideas and improvements

The community consultation results reflect the findings of the open space audit. The ideas collected through this process were used to develop the strategy's action plan. In addition open space standards have been developed for new open spaces.

The process followed to develop the strategy is shown in the Figure 8 below.



Figure 8 – Open space Strategy process



Community Consultation

4.2 Open Space Standards

The Open Space Audit identified a need to review Aberdeen's Open Space Development Guidelines for Greenfield Sites (2001), in order to provide higher quality and more accessible open space, rather than simply quantitative provision. For this reason, standards on the quality and accessibility, as well as quantity of open space were developed. The new standards allow for situations where the Open Space Audit may suggest that improvements to the quality of existing open spaces could be more useful to the existing and future community in an area than purely the provision of new open space.

See www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/openspace

The open space standards developed as a result of the Open Space Audit and in parallel with this strategy will guide the planning and development of future open spaces, ensuring an adequate supply of good quality and accessible open space. The standards are presented as part of Supplementary Guidance on Open Space and are a material consideration in the planning process.

Benchmarking with other local authorities, along with the consultation undertaken as part of the Audit and Open Space Strategy process were used to identify appropriate standards for quantity, accessibility and quality. Maps showing accessibility standards for most commonly used open spaces has been updated and the details are provided in **Appendix 2**.



Greenferns Open Space -Masterplan

CHAPTER 5 Delivery (Key delivery mechanisms)

5.1 Partnership Working

Successful implementation of this strategy will require a partnership approach and joint working between various partners - private, public and voluntary sectors, along with the communities of Aberdeen.

There are already many partners who are actively involved in managing some of Aberdeen's open spaces and provide funding for specific projects, with many examples of good practice available. Joint working can achieve best results and also satisfy the multiple needs of the community.

Case-Study - Split the Winds, Calsayseat, Powis

Aberdeen Greenspace worked with Froghall, Powis and Sunnybank Environmental Group to improve a small greenspace outside the Calsayseat Medical Centre. The area has few greenspaces and this one is important to the local community.

Staff at Aberdeen Greenspace discussed with the group how the space was currently used and their aspirations for the greenspace. A plan was drawn up and displayed in the Medical Centre asking for comments.

Once the plan was agreed seating was installed, trees and bulbs were planted by the community and Aberdeen Greenspace Volunteer Group. A hedge was planted to separate the space and screen the area from the noise of the neighbouring road traffic.

The planting has matured and the area is now well used by the community and has a real sense of tranquillity in an area busy with traffic.



Before the Improvement



After the Improvement

The Council's Five-Year Business Plan is looking for further development of partnership working and multiagency approaches to the way services are delivered. The process of developing this strategy has highlighted many opportunities in this regard, in relation to the cross-cutting aims and strategic objectives for open space.

5.2 Resources

Open space management and maintenance is a major issue facing the Council at present and times to come. The Council's financial situation means that innovative and imaginative ways of looking after our open space resources and making the most of what resources we have are the key to delivering the aims of the strategy.

Some of the strategy's actions revolve around the need to explore various alternative resources - monetary and non-monetary, and innovative ways of managing and maintaining open spaces.

Case Study- Ashgrove Children's Centre Outdoor Play & Garden Project

This project was to develop the substantial greenspace around the centre offering opportunities for children and adults from the surrounding regeneration areas to work and play together, gain new skills, confidence and friendships, access nature, physical activities and opportunities for peace and quiet reflection.



The project involved installing a willow dome, building outdoor seating, and planting native trees and hedges. A wooden fence was erected to make the wildlife area safe and a number of planters were built and installed which will allow the children to grow plants from seed that will provide a splash of colour in summer.

The work was carried out by the Aberdeen Greenspace Volunteer Group. The children were involved in planting bulbs in the grounds

The project has created sensory areas, wildlife garden space, winding pathways and hide aways, seating and planted areas, free space for bikes, areas to run around, a story garden and an imaginative play area. An outdoor space that can be used in all weathers, muddy puddles to play in, places to jump and roll in the grass, opportunities to nurture and grow things and stimulate the senses, to access physical play or be tranquil and observe.

This project in partnership with Ashgrove Children's Centre was funded through Aberdeen Greenspace, BAA Communities Trust and Scottish Natural Heritage.



5.3 Delivery Action Plan

The priorities of this strategy are based on the results of the open space audit and community consultations. The strategy outlines the actions required to deliver quality, accessible and fit for purpose open spaces. The action plan outlined in Section 7 provides the details of each objective and how they will be delivered through various actions and tasks. It assigns high, medium and low priority to each action. It identifies the major partners and services to take the lead on delivering each action. In some cases actions can apply to more than one objective.

CHAPTER 6

6.1 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy

Progress on the implementation of the strategy will be monitored using the indicators highlighted in the action plan. Questions will be asked annually within the Aberdeen City Alliance survey framework, The City Voice, in order to monitor customer satisfaction. Land use change such as urban development and changes in the provision of open space will be monitored using GIS aerial photography.

An Environmental Policy and Monitoring Group will monitor the progress of the strategy's implementation in relation to the action plan and policy objectives. The group will meet quarterly to discuss the progress. An annual monitoring and evaluation report will be published showing the overall progress against strategy objectives and outcomes of the actions.

Some specific monitoring tools such as a digital monitoring system will also be used to monitor the use of open spaces. Data collected will show the usage of these open spaces.

The Strategy will be reviewed and updated in 2016.

CHAPTER 7 Action Plan

Aim	Protect, enhance and value our environment for current and future generations						
OBJECTIVE 1	CREATE, PROTECT AND ENHANCE GREEN SPACE NETWORK						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Link to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
1.1. Ensure green infrastructure (Green Space Network) is considered within new developments as a key form of necessary infrastructure	1.1.1 Publish Supplementary Guidance on Open Space, including section on Green Space Network	2, 4, 6, 8	*EP&I	Officer Time	H	June 2011	Adoption of SPG
	1.1.2 Develop a Geographical Information System (GIS) layer explaining the rationale and priorities for improvement and development of the Green Space Network Policy	4	EP&I	Officer Time	H	Sep 2011	Area of GSN enhanced or protected. Annual update of GIS database
	1.1.3 Promote the use of Green Space Network and associated GIS layer within the Council and to others for planning and development of open spaces	6, 8	EP&I	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	No of workshops and seminars held to promote GSN
1.2. Work with developers, businesses, communities and landowners to raise awareness of Green Space Network and support its delivery	1.2.1 Involve stakeholders in the planning of green space network improvements	All	EP&I *H&E	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	No of communities and stakeholders involved per year
1.3. Prioritise the development of strategic new paths to form part of the Green Space Network by linking communities with open space and other key destinations	1.3.1 Use the Open Space Audit results and core paths planning process to prioritise paths linking communities and green space network	3, 4, 5, 8	EP&I H&E	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	Length of way marked paths

* Enterprise Planning & Infrastructure – EP&I

* Housing & Environment –H&E

Aim	Ensure Aberdeen is an attractive and appealing place to enjoy living, working and investing in						
OBJECTIVE 2	IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OPEN SPACES						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Key links to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority: High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
2.1 Use the findings of the Open Space Audit to develop a strategic framework of short, medium and long term priority projects	2.1.1 Prepare a project plan prioritising open space enhancement projects	1, 2, 4, 8	EP&I	Officer Time	H	2012-2013	Completed Project Plan
	2.1.2 Implement a project plan of prioritised open space projects	1, 2, 4, 8	H&E EP&I Aberdeen Greenspace	Officer Time, External Grant	M	2012-2016	Number of projects completed and underway
2.2 Encourage good practice in design of new and existing open spaces	2.2.1 Improve public perceptions of safety and reduce anti-social behaviour by working with communities, community wardens and Grampian Police and other partners in the design of open spaces	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	EP&I H&E *EC&S	Officer Time	H-M	2011-2016	Improved perception of safety by communities (City Voice Monitoring) No of reported incidents in open spaces Statements from public about their general fear of crime in open spaces %age of open spaces achieving higher scores under the Open Space Audit Quality Criteria Achieve one Green Flag Award per year
	2.2.2 Implement Open Space Supplementary Planning Guidance	1, 6, 8	EP&I H&E	Officer Time	H	2011-2016	
	2.2.3 Adopt Green Flag 'good' standard for open spaces	3, 4, 6	H&E	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	
2.3 Encourage public art in open spaces	2.3.1 Support Aberdeen City Council's Public Art Policy, working with universities, organizations and local artists to engage communities in public art projects in open spaces where appropriate	5, 6	EP&I H&E	Officer Time, External Grant, Planning Gain	L	2011-2016	No of art projects completed
2.4 Review the distribution and quality of play spaces	2.4.1 Work with Aberdeen Play Forum and others to identify play spaces to be developed, enhanced or removed	3, 4, 5, 6, 8	EP&I H&E APF	Officer Time	H	2011-2013	Complete review of play spaces No. of play spaces developed, enhanced or removed per year %age of play spaces meeting Open Space Supplementary Guidance standards on
	2.4.2 Implement the review of play spaces, making play spaces more natural and challenging where possible	3, 4, 5, 6, 8	H&E APF	Officer Time, External Funding	M	2012-2016	

Aim	Provide good and equitable access to a network of quality open spaces that promote stronger, responsible and proud communities						
OBJECTIVE 3	PROVIDE WELL MAINTAINED AND MANAGED OPEN SPACES, BALANCING AVAILABLE RESOURCES WITH COMMUNITY DEMAND						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Key links to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority: High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
3.1 Review, write and implement open space management and maintenance plans that fit with the objectives in this strategy	3.1.1 Prepare a project plan prioritising management plans to be reviewed and developed 3.1.2 Involve communities in the development of management plans for open spaces 3.1.3 Involve communities in the review of existing management plans, with a view to finding more environmentally sustainable and cost effective means of maintaining open space	All All All	H&E EP&I H&E EP&I H&E EP&I	Officer Time Officer Time Officer Time	M H H	2011-2012 2011-2013 2011-2013	No of Plans, reviewed, written and implemented. %age of open space sites with management plans No of management plans reviewed. Instruments and methods to involve citizens in the design and planning process of open spaces and to inform them about the project
3.2 Provide and promote site management information	3.2.1 Use most appropriate media for providing management information including for example web-based resources, podcasts, site signage, interpretation panels, open days and leaflets 3.2.2 Review existing and necessary site information as part of management planning process (see actions 3.1.2 and 3.1.3)	2, 5, 6, 8	H&E EP&I *EC&S EP&I H&E EC&S	Officer Time Officer Time	M M	2011-2016 2011-2013	No of sites with appropriate level and type of information available %age of open space sites with management plans
3.3 Support communities and organisations who express an interest in community-led maintenance of open spaces	3.3.1 Encourage community groups and local businesses to form park user groups such as 'Friends of groups' 3.3.2 Support award schemes that encourage community and others' involvement in open space	1, 2, 6 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	EP&I H&E EC&S AG EP&I H&E CC	Officer Time Explore Project Funding Officer Time	M M	2011-2014 2011-2016	No of active park user groups established Number of communities involved

	management, such as 'Aberdeen in Bloom'						
	3.3.3 Involve schools in design and management of open spaces	All	EP&I *AYC CC	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	No of schools involved in design and management of open spaces
3.4 Explore alternative models for delivering open space management and maintenance service	3.4.1 Undertake a feasibility study of alternative models, e.g. Parks Trust	3, 7	EP&I H&E	Officer Time Explore Project funding	H	2011-2014	Complete feasibility study
Aim	Provide good and equitable access to a network of quality open spaces that promote stronger, responsible and proud communities						
OBJECTIVE 4	IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND WITHIN OPEN SPACES						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Key links to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority: High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
4.1 Provide information on how to access open spaces in Aberdeen	4.1.1 Produce access information, such as path maps, leaflets and interpretation panels, newsletters, media articles etc and create a web based resource to coordinate leaflets and other guidance	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8	EP&I H&E AG	Officer Time	M	2011-2013	Number of promotion material produced.
	4.1.2 Disseminate information using local neighbourhood and park notice boards and explore use of social network web-based services	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8	EC&S H&E	Officer Time	M-L	2011-2016	Number of promoted sites
4.2 Support the implementation of the Core Paths Plan	4.2.1 Deliver the Core Paths Plan programme for signage and interpretation	1, 3, 5, 8	EP&I	Officer Time, External Grant Funding	H	2011-2016	Length of way-marked core paths
4.3 Encourage the integration of access with other policy areas such as transport, health, economy and biodiversity	4.3.1 Work with Local Transport Strategy team, NHS, AG, Forestry Commission Scotland, bus companies, SNH, communities and other partners to integrate access to the outdoors with other policy	1, 5, 6, 7, 8	EP&I EC&S H&E SNH AG *FC	Officer Time	M-L	2011-2016	Number of linkages developed.

- * Aberdeen Youth Council
- * Education Culture and Sport
- * Forestry Commission -FC

	areas						
4.4 Use the Open Space Audit findings to identify priorities for improving access to specific open space types	4.4.1 Review Aberdeen's Sports Pitch Strategy	2, 3, 5	EC&S EP&I H&E Sport Scotland	Officer Time	H	2011-2016	Complete review of Pitch Strategy
Aim	Promote and facilitate healthier life styles						
OBJECTIVE 5	INCREASE THE VALUE AND USE OF OPEN SPACES FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION, PLAY AND LIFELONG LEARNING						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Key links to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority: High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
5.1 Encourage schools and educational institutions to use open spaces	5.1.1 Support Curriculum for Excellence by encouraging outdoor learning	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	EC&S H&E EP&I	Officer Time External Grants	M	2011-2016	Total number of hours that pupils are educated directly in open spaces
	5.1.2 Promote, support and advertise Green Flag Awards initiatives in schools	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	EC&S H&E	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	No of schools involved and green flag awards achieved
	5.1.3 Work with Schools and Youth Council in design and management of open spaces	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	EC&S EP&I H&E	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	Include within management planning process
5.2 Promote responsible access to open spaces	5.2.1 Provide advice and information on responsible use of the outdoors in line with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code	1, 3, 4, 6, 8	EP&I H&E SNH AG	Officer Time External Grants	L	2011-2016	Reduction in no. of complaints about user conflicts
5.3 Promote active and healthy lifestyles	5.3.1 Work with NHS Grampian and other partners to promote the health benefits of open space and outdoor recreation	2, 4, 7, 8	EP&I EC&S H&E NHS	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	Increase in use of open spaces. Results of annual surveys
5.4 Enable and promote events in open spaces	5.4.1 Develop guidance to maximise the use of open spaces for events e.g corporate days	4, 6, 7	EP&I H&E	Officers Time	M-L	2013-2016	Type of guidance developed

	5.4.2 Work with event organisations, businesses and communities to encourage the use of open spaces for events	4, 6, 7					No and type of events held in open spaces
Aim	Ensure Aberdeen is an attractive and appealing place to enjoy living, working and investing in						
OBJECTIVE 6	SEEK BUSINESS, COMMUNITY AND OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Key links to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority: High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
6.1 Develop private, public and voluntary partnerships	6.1.1 Develop a strategic framework of projects to attract support from various sources	All	EP&I AG SNH	Officer Time Planning gain	H	2011-2014	Complete framework
	6.1.2 Encourage school / youth and Corporate Social Responsibility support for open spaces	All	EP&I H&E AG	Officer Time Explore Funding	H-M	2011-2016	No of partnership projects developed
	6.1.3 Develop a multiple agency approach for improvement and investment of open spaces	All	H&E EP&I EC&S	Officer Time	H-M	2011-2016	No of partnership projects developed
	6.1.4 Promote the Grant Finder funding sources database held by the External Funding Team	All	H&E	Officer Time	H	2011-2016	Complete register
6.2 Build capacity of communities to take responsibility for open spaces	6.2.1 Develop a Guide to Improving Your Open Spaces to facilitate community ownership and management of open spaces	1-7	EP&I H&E *GS	Officer Time External Funding	M	2012-2016	Complete Guide
6.3 Encourage business, community and other agency involvement in the planning process, and active engagement in developing, enhancing and maintaining open spaces	6.3.1 Promote cross-service and external involvement in the masterplanning process for new developments and improvement of existing open spaces	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	EP&I EC&S H&E AG	Officer Time	H	2011-2016	No of agencies and business involved and spaces maintained
6.4 Pursue income, sponsorship and other, in kind assistance to improve the quality and maintenance of open	6.4.1 Research innovative and best practice examples of ways to support the maintenance of open spaces	1, 2, 3, 4	EP&I H&E EC&S AG	Officer Time	H	2011-2014	£s or equivalent provided towards open space projects and maintenance

* Greenspace Scotland -GS

spaces	6.4.2 Promote and support “adopt a park” or “adopt a path” type schemes for communities or businesses	1, 2, 3, 4	EP&I H&E	Officer Time	H	2011-2014	£s or equivalent provided towards open space projects and maintenance
	6.4.3 Explore opportunities for fund raising at events for reinvestment in open spaces	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	EP&I H&E	Officer Time	M	2012-2014	Complete and disseminate events guidance
6.5 Establish an Open Space Forum to promote, encourage and oversee community based projects and share skills and experience	6.4.1 Co-ordinate through existing forums where appropriate	All	EP&I	Officer Time	H	2011-2016	No of meetings held. Recorded minutes and information shared
Aim	Ensure Aberdeen is an attractive and appealing place to enjoy living, working and investing in						
OBJECTIVE 7	RECOGNISE THE ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL VALUE OF OPEN SPACES						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Key links to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority: High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
7.1 Promote the economic, environmental and social value of open spaces to all users	7.1.1 Produce and implement a Promotion Plan for highlighting the environmental, social and economic value of open spaces	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	EP&I H&E AG	Officer Time	M	2012-2014	Complete Promotion Plan. Initiatives taken that enable an open space to create income
	7.1.2 Identify best practice examples of community projects and local ‘champions’ to help promote local open spaces	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	H&E EP&I EC&S AG, SNH		M	2011-2016	No of case studies collected Types of economic activities
Aim	Protect, enhance and value our environment for current and future generations						
OBJECTIVE 8	MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES TO MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND FURTHER BIODIVERSITY						
Actions	Sub-Action/Tasks	Key links to other strategy objectives	Delivery/ Key Service/ Partners Lead in Bold	Resource Implication/ Funding	Priority: High, Medium, Low	Time Scale/ Target	Indicators/ Parameters
8.1 Support the delivery of Aberdeen City’s Nature Conservation Strategy	8.1.1 Design and manage open spaces to benefit biodiversity	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	EP&I H&E *LBAP	Officer Time External Grant	H-M	2011-2016	Nature Conservation Strategy / LBAP

* Local Biodiversity Action Plan-LBAP

and Local Biodiversity Action Plan			AG SNH	Funding Partnership Working			indicators
8.2 Encourage Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) as valued, functional elements of open spaces	8.2.1 Encourage the creation of new SUDS in open spaces where appropriate and recognise as positive aspect or facility within open space	1, 2, 5, 7	EP&I H&E	Officer Time External Grant Funding	M	2012-2016	Include within Management Planning Process for sites
	8.2.2 Research case studies and examples from elsewhere and promote best practice	1, 2, 5, 7	EP&I	Officer Time	M	2012-2014	No of case studies
8.3 Consider the use of open spaces for energy efficient/renewable energy and other technologies where appropriate	8.3.1 Work with partners to explore opportunities to make best use of woodlands e.g using wood for renewable energy	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	EP&I H&E FC	Explore Funding Developers contribution	H	2011-2012	Adoption of Trees and Woodland Strategy
8.4 Protect open spaces for the role they play in flooding management, air quality, and furthering biodiversity	8.4.1 Support policies protecting open spaces within Local Development Plan	All	EP&I H&E SNH SEPA	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	Open Space Audit Review 2015
8.5 Plant native and wildlife friendly species where appropriate in open spaces and highlight importance of plants, trees and shrubs in adapting to climate change	8.5.1 Continue to implement the Granite City Tree Planting project	1, 2, 3, 6	H&E AG SNH EP&I	Officer Time FC Funding AG	M	2011-2016	No and types of trees planted
	8.5.2 Publish a city planting guide for native species to promote biodiversity	1, 2, 3, 6	EP&I H&E	Officer Time	H	2011-2012	Adoption of Trees and Woodland Strategy
8.6 Encourage more environmental friendly design and management	8.6.1 Consider waste, recycling, sustainable sourcing of materials and chemical use as part of management plans	1, 2, 3, 6, 7	H&E EP&I All other partners	Officer Time	M	2011-2016	No of open spaces targeted for recycling facilities
8.7 Maximise the use of open spaces for sustainable travel and encouraging healthy lifestyles	8.7.1 Work with Local Transport Strategy team, green space officers, and other partners to encourage use of open spaces for walking and cycling	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	EP&I H&E	Officer Time Explore funding Partnership working	M	2011-2016	Increase in open space user number.

Appendices

Appendix 1 PANS 65 Typology

Appendix 2 Maps

1. Aberdeen Green Space Network
2. Open Space Quality in the City
3. Major Open Spaces according to distance threshold
4. Neighbourhood Open Spaces according to distance threshold
5. Local Open spaces according to distance threshold
6. Natural and Semi-Natural Open Spaces according to distance threshold
7. Children and Young people Play Spaces according to distance threshold
8. Allotments and Community Gardens according to distance threshold

DRAFT

Organisations inputting to the Strategy – The list below includes those who attended workshops and community consultation events

Aberdeen District Scout Council
Aberdeen Earth Guard
Aberdeenshire Council
Aberdeen City Environmental Forum
Aberdeen Greensapce
Aberdeen Play Forum
Aberdeen Outdoor Access Forum
Adventure Aberdeen
Ashley & Broomhill Community Council
Aberdeen Youth Council
Bridge of Don Community Council
Braeside & Manofield Community Council
Bucksburn Community Council
Bucksburn & Newhill community Council
Cove and Altens Community Council
Culter Community Council
Forestry Commission Scotland
Friends of the Earth Aberdeen
Elected Members
Grampian Police
Grampian Orienteer Scouts
Homes for North East Scotland (Stewart Milne)
Kingswells Community Council
Kincorth and Leggart Community Council
Land Use Forum
Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership
Macaulay Land Use Research Institute
North East Scotland Biological Records Centre
North East Scotland Transport Authority
Rosemount & Mile End Community Council
Queens Cross and Harlaw Community Council
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Scottish Natural Heritage
Torry Community Council

ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Aberdeen Greenspace
APP	Aberdeen Play Forum
AYC	Aberdeen Youth Council
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
EC&S	Education Culture and Sport
EP&I	Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure
FCS	Forestry Commission Scotland
GSN	Green Space Network
H&E	Housing and Environment
LA	Local Authority/ies
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
MLURI	Macaulay Land Use Research Institute
NESBReC	North East Scotland Biological Records Centre
NESTRANS	North East Scotland Transport
NHS	National Health Service
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPP	Scottish Planning Policy
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
SUDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

DRAFT

TECHNICAL TERMS

Biodiversity	Biodiversity is the variety of life including all living things from the smallest insect to the largest whale, as well as the environments they live in.
Green Space Network	A network of greenspaces connected with other networks such as hydrological, ecological and transport, social elements, such as community infrastructure accessibility and quality of life and economic issues related to regeneration, place making and image.
Habitat	It is the natural environment in which an organism lives, or the physical environment that surrounds (influences and is utilized by) a species population
Monitoring	The mechanism to monitor continuous improvement and the status of the open spaces across the local authority area
Open Space Audit	An assessment and analysis of greenspace provision across a Local Authority area to establish the quality, quantity and accessibility of greenspace assets.
Open Space Standard	PAN 65 defines the open space standard as "the assessment of greenspace provision and need based on the quality, quantity and accessibility of open spaces
Open Space	Open Space is the open, usually green land within and on the edges of settlements
Sustainable Development	Development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs
Species	A group of organisms capable of interbreeding and producing fertile offspring

Appendix 1

Table 1 Full land use classification incorporating PAN 65 Open Space Typology

	PAN 65 Typology	Full land use classification
Roads		1.1 Roads and tracks
		1.2 Roadside (manmade)
		1.4 Parking/loading
		1.5 Roadside (unknown)
Water		2.2 Tidal water
		2.3 Foreshore/rocks
Rail		3 Railway
Paths		4 Path
Buildings		5.1 Residential
		5.2 Commercial/Institutional
		5.3 Glasshouses
		5.4 Other structures
		5.5 Airports
PAN 65 Open Space	Public parks and gardens	6.1 Public park and garden
	Private gardens or grounds	6.21 Private gardens
		6.22 School grounds
		6.23 Institutional grounds
	Amenity greenspace	6.31 Amenity - residential
		6.32 Amenity - business
		6.33 Amenity - transport
	Playspace for children and teenagers	6.4 Playspace
	Sports Areas	6.51 Playing fields
		6.52 Golf courses
		6.53 Tennis courts
		6.54 Bowling greens
		6.55 Other sports
	Green corridors	6.61 Green access routes
		6.62 Riparian routes
	Natural/Semi-natural greenspace	6.71 Woodland
		6.72 Open semi-natural
		6.73 Open water
	Other functional greenspaces	6.81 Allotment
6.82 Churchyard		
6.83 Cemetery		
6.84 Other functional greenspace, e.g. caravan park		
Civic space	6.9 Civic space	
7. Other open land		7.1 Farmland
		7.2 Moorland
		7.3 Other, e.g. landfill, quarries
		99 Areas undergoing change

References & Research

1. Aberdeen Greenspace Mapping October 2007
2. Aberdeen Greenspace Audit Draft Report August 2007
3. A Guide to Health Impact Assessment of Greenspace 2010
4. Aberdeen's Strategy for Access to the Outdoors 2004
5. Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy 2008
6. Aberdeen Parks and Green Space Strategy 2006
7. Bristol Parks and Green Space Strategy 2008
8. Draft Fife Greenspace Strategy
9. Dundee Public Open Space Strategy
10. East Dunbartonshire's Greenspace Strategy 2005
11. Forest and Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City 2005
12. Greenspace and Health Outcomes Framework
13. Greenspace Quality- A guide to assessment, planning and strategic development
14. Glasgow and Clyde Valley GCV green network
15. Inverness Greenspace Strategy
16. North East Local Biodiversity Action Plan
17. Open Space Audit Report 2010
18. Proposed Draft Open Space Supplementary Guidance March 2011
19. Planning Advice Note PAN 65
20. Scottish Planning Policy
21. Single Outcome Agreement
22. The Scottish Forestry Strategy