NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT
GREEN SPACES STRATEGY
2007 – 2012
## Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

What is Green Space?

The green space considered within this strategy can be defined as:

“All open green spaces which are either publicly accessible or of public value, including parks, ornamental gardens, amenity areas and wilder areas of natural green space and woodlands”

The strategy has considered the following 7 different types of green space:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural green space
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Amenity green space
- Provision for children and young people
- Allotments and community gardens
- Cemeteries and closed churchyards

What is a Green Spaces Strategy?

It is an assessment that considers:

- Why green space is important
- What green space exists in the district
- Where our green spaces are located
- The quality and accessibility of our green spaces
- The needs of local communities in relation to green space
- Whether the existing green spaces meet these needs
- What we can do to make sure that the amount, quality and accessibility of green space keeps pace with community needs

Why did we need a Green Spaces Strategy?

We needed to produce a strategy for a number of reasons, including:

- Because weren’t sure whether we had the right amount of green space for our local communities
- Because we didn’t have a full picture of the quality and accessibility of our green spaces
- Because by doing an assessment we can ensure that our limited resources are invested where they are most needed
- To demonstrate to those who may invest in our green spaces that we have carefully considered the needs of the district
- To ensure that our planning and green space policies are up to date and relevant

What did we do?

In order to find out more about the district’s green spaces we undertook a number of tasks, including:

- An audit of provision – how much green space do we have and where is it located?
- An accessibility audit – how far are people prepared to travel to different types of green spaces and how accessible are our existing sites?
- A quality audit – what is the quality of our green spaces?
Community consultation – what do local people think of their green spaces?
Consultation with other organisations, such as parish councils, that manage green spaces – what did they think?
An analysis of the issues and problems relating to green space provision in the district

Based on the audit and consultation work we have recommended the following local provision levels for the 7 different types of green space:

- Parks and gardens – 0.6ha per 1,000 population (6 square metres per person)
- Natural and semi-natural green spaces – all residents of the district should live within 300m of an area of natural and semi-natural green space
- Amenity green spaces – 0.6ha per 1,000 population (6 square metres per person)
- Provision for children and young people – 0.75ha per 1,000 population (7.5 square metres per person)
- Outdoor sports facilities – 2.2ha per 1,000 population (22 square metres per person)
- Allotments and community gardens – 0.5ha per 1,000 population (5 square metres per person)
- Cemeteries and closed churchyards – 0.5ha per 1,000 population (5 square metres per person)

What did we find?

- Across the whole of the district there are over 5,400ha of publicly accessible green spaces
- Based on the above recommended provision standards we have identified some areas that have a shortfall in provision of one or more of the 7 different types of green space
- The quality and accessibility of our green spaces varies across different types of green spaces and different areas of the district, with provision for children and young people receiving the lowest quality and accessibility ratings

What are we going to do to improve our Green Spaces?

Based on the research and findings highlighted above we have drawn up a range of aims and objectives that, if initiated, will significantly improve the district’s green spaces.

In order to link with the Community Plan for the district the following aims have been identified:

- Green spaces – safe and strong
- Green spaces – healthy
- Green spaces – learning and earning
- Green spaces – clean and green
- Green spaces – culturally connected
- Green spaces – accessible

These 6 broad aims are supported by 11 specific objectives and a detailed action plan that identifies the timescale involved, key partners and measurable outcomes.

Finally, and in order to ensure that the strategy remains relevant and that the aims and objectives are implemented, a monitoring and review process has been included.
1.0 Improving our Green Spaces - Setting the Scene

1.1 Background to the Green Spaces Strategy

The District of Newark & Sherwood contains over 5,000ha of publicly accessible open space, from major tourist attractions such as Rufford Country Park, Sherwood Forest Country Park and Newark Castle and Gardens (which together attract over 1million visitors each year) to playgrounds and churchyards in tiny villages such as Norwell.

Newark & Sherwood District Council’s existing Parks & Open Spaces Strategy covered the period 2000 to 2005 and a new strategy is thus required. The current strategy only covers open spaces under the control of the District Council and the Audit Commission’s 2001 Best Value Review of the Council’s Parks and Open Spaces Service criticised this fact and recommended that the Council should develop a detailed improvement plan based on:

- The identified needs of the public across the district
- Mapping the amount and quality of what is provided by the Council and others, and identifying gaps in provision
- Prioritising areas for improvement and development

In response to these recommendations, and in line with Planning Policy Guidance Note 17, the District Council appointed consultants PMP to carry out a district-wide open space provision and needs assessment. The study, which looked at 8 different kinds of open space and involved consultation with both local open space providers and the public, resulted in a fairly comprehensive audit of the district’s open spaces and an implementation and action plan, including recommendations on local provision standards. Following on from the PMP audit District Council officers have carried out further survey and consultation work to ensure that the study is as complete and comprehensive as possible. The findings and recommendations of the study, together with relevant strategies and plans from the District Council and other organisations, have formed the basis for this strategy.

1.1.1 Definition of Green Space

The green space considered within this strategy can be defined as:

“All open green spaces which are either publicly accessible or of public value, including parks, ornamental gardens, amenity areas and wilder areas of natural green space and woodlands”

These green spaces can be either publicly owned or in private ownership and will be areas of value for recreation, relaxation, sporting activities, wildlife and landscape. In general green spaces should have an element of public accessibility and areas where public access is forbidden or discouraged, such as private gardens and agricultural land, are not included. Some areas of green space, such as privately owned woodlands, may not have full public access but may have rights of way running through them and such areas have been included where they are considered to be of public value.

1.2 Introduction to Newark & Sherwood District

1.2.1 General information

The District of Newark & Sherwood is geographically the largest of the 7 local authority districts within Nottinghamshire, covering an area of 65,000ha. It is a diverse
Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

district with former coalfield areas in the northwest and largely rural and agricultural areas in the south and east. The population of Newark & Sherwood is 106,273 (2001 Census), roughly 10% of the County’s total. Nearly 25% of the population is under the age of 19 and 23% of the population is over 60, with 16% being retired.

Economically the district’s former dependence on the mining and manufacturing sectors as its major employers has declined over the last decade with the closure of all but 1 of its coalmines and a reduction in the workforce at traditional manufacturers such as NSK Bearings and Flowserve. The agricultural sector has also been in decline for a number of years. The loss of jobs in these sectors has been balanced by increasing employment in the food and service industries and the current unemployment rate for the district (based on the number of people claiming benefits) is 1.7%. Across the district the unemployment rate varies from 4.7% (Devon ward in Newark) to 0.5% (Southwell).

The district has a diverse landscape, with 5 differing regional character areas: Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands; Trent Washlands; East Nottinghamshire Sandlands; South Nottinghamshire Farmlands; and the nationally famous Sherwood landscape area. The 2 most dominant natural features are the remnants of Sherwood Forest in the west and the Trent valley in the east.

In terms of its settlement pattern the district can be divided into 3:

- The north-western part mainly comprises of relatively recent settlements that grew as a result of the exploitation of the area’s coal reserves. The principal colliery settlements are Ollerton/Boughton (population 11,626), Rainworth (pop 6,535), Edwinstowe (pop 4,959), Bilstonhore (pop 4,954), Bilsthorpe (pop 4,355) and Clipstone (pop 3,469).
- The eastern part, which is dominated by the market town of Newark-on-Trent (the largest settlement in the district with a population of 25,376). Newark is the main shopping and service area for the surrounding rural area and the Newark urban area also includes the large settlements of Balderton (pop 10,076) and Farndon (pop 4,001). Outside of the Newark urban area the largest settlement in the eastern part of the district is Collingham (pop 4,472).
- The south west of the district, which contains the small market town of Southwell (pop 6,565) and the large villages of Lowdham (pop 4,954) and Farnsfield (4,747).

The majority of the settlements in the district are of a small size, with 58 parishes having a population of less than 500.

1.2.2 Green Spaces in Newark & Sherwood

Whilst, as a predominantly rural district, Newark & Sherwood contains many thousands of hectares of open land, the majority of this is agricultural land that is not publicly accessible. However, the district is also fortunate to possess a number of major green spaces of regional and national importance, including the Sherwood Forest area, which is a National Nature Reserve.

Wildlife and conservation

Newark & Sherwood District contains a diverse range of ecological habitats, including woodland, heathland, grassland and wetland, and includes 1 National Nature Reserve, 1 Special Area for Conservation, 7 Local Nature Reserves, 19 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 438 Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation.
Historic and culturally important sites

These include Newark Castle & Gardens, Rufford Abbey, Southwell Minster and Sherwood Forest. The district contains 3 parks/gardens which are on English Heritage’s Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Sporting facilities

Whilst the district does not contain any outdoor sporting facilities of national importance, there are a number of sites which draw competitors and spectators from across the country, including Southwell Race Course and Nottinghamshire County Sailing Club at Hoveringham.

Parks and gardens

The district contains 3 Green Flag Award winning parks (Vicar Water Country Park, Newark Castle Gardens and Sherwood Avenue Park) together with 3 high quality country parks (Rufford Country Park, Sherwood Forest Country Park and Sherwood Pines Forest Park) and a range of other public parks and gardens.

1.3 The Benefits of Green Spaces

People benefit from good quality parks and open spaces in a variety of ways and throughout the various stages of their lives. The Government-appointed Urban Green Spaces Taskforce outlined the following benefits commonly attributed to urban green spaces:

Economic

- Add value to surrounding properties (both commercial and residential) and consequently increase tax yields to maintain public services
- Contribute to attracting tourists
- Encourage employment and inward investment to an area
- Help to create a favourable image of a place

Social

- Provide places for quiet contemplation and reflection, for relaxation, informal recreation, peace, space and beauty
- Provide opportunities for people to improve their health and personal fitness, leading to reductions in obesity and heart disease
- Provide opportunities for people to take part in a wide range of outdoor sport and recreational activities
- Provide safe areas to meet, talk and play, for free association of friends and strangers, for families and between the generations
- Provide cultural links with an area’s past, giving a sense of place and identity
- Provide opportunities for community events, voluntary activity and charitable fund raising

Environmental

- Provide habitats for wildlife, aiding bio-diversity
- Help to stabilise urban temperatures and humidity
- Absorb pollutants in air and ground water
- Provide opportunities for the recycling of organic materials
- Slow storm water run-off and reduce drainage infrastructure
- Provide a sense of the seasons and the links between the natural world and the urban environment
Health
- Parks and green spaces provide freely accessible places for walking, cycling and other physical activities which can help people avoid obesity, coronary heart disease and strokes
- Research has shown that contact with the natural world can benefit mental health by reducing stress and increasing self-esteem and mental well-being

Educational
- Green spaces can act as an educational resource – an outdoor classroom stimulating ideas on art, design, the environment and natural sciences and cultural heritage
- Green spaces are also a valuable training resource for a variety of work-based training for horticulture and environmental studies

1.4 Links with other strategies

The objectives of the Green Spaces Strategy cannot be achieved in isolation. In order to be relevant and deliverable they must be considered in the context of wider national and regional strategies and supported by local plans and policies

1.4.1 National context

Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 – Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation (ODPM 2002)

This document, part of the Government's national framework for planning policy, sets out policies that will need to be taken into account by regional planning bodies in the preparation of regional planning guidance notes and by local authorities in the preparation of development plans.

PPG17 aims to support the wider government objectives of:
- Supporting an urban renaissance
- Supporting urban renewal
- Promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion
- Health and well-being
- Promoting more sustainable development.

It also sets out priorities for local authorities in terms of:
- Assessing needs and opportunities – undertaking audits of open space, sport and recreational facilities
- Setting local standards
- Maintaining an adequate supply of open space
- Planning for new open space


This report recognises that parks and green spaces are a popular and precious resource which can make a valuable contribution to the attractiveness of a neighbourhood and to the health and well-being of people and can expand educational opportunities of children and adults alike.

The report is divided into 4 parts:

(i) Parks and Green Spaces and Urban Life
Emphasises the benefits urban parks and green spaces bring to people, neighbourhoods and cities; and
Contribution to wide, long-term social, economic and environmental progress.

(ii) Challenges and Responses
- Considers some of the problems affecting urban parks and green spaces and how they can be overcome through investment, partnerships, information systems and marginalized groups.

(iii) Creating Green Space Networks
- Makes recommendations for good practice in providing a strategic policy framework within which all decision makers can operate
- Calls for a more co-ordinated approach at the national level to guide local strategies

(iv) Making It Happen
- Demonstrates how the report recommendations can help deliver the wider vision of 'liveable, sustainable, modern towns and cities'
- States that strong civic and local pride and responsibility are necessary to achieve the vision reinforced by a successful green spaces strategy
- Sets out roles and responsibilities of varying organisations that can be involved within the provision of open space.

Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Open Spaces (DTLR, 2002)
This study looked at the uses and users of urban green spaces, barriers preventing use, the wider benefits to quality of life in urban areas and examples of innovative approaches to creation, management and maintenance.

The study produced a number of key findings, including:
- Over 33 million people make over 2.5 billion visits to England’s urban green spaces each year
- The five main barriers deterring people from using urban green spaces are:
  - Lack of or poor condition of facilities
  - Other users (including anti-social behaviour)
  - Concerns about dogs and dog fouling
  - Safety and other ‘psychological’ issues (e.g. vulnerability)
  - Environmental quality issues such as litter, graffiti and vandalism
- Most of the barriers are resource issues which relate to the location, accessibility or environmental quality of urban green spaces
- The most frequently mentioned characteristics of the ideal urban green space were vegetation, water, play opportunities, comforts (seats, toilets, shelters), good access, sport and events
- Urban green spaces can act as a catalyst for wider community initiatives.
- The fact that parks and other green spaces are open every day with free entry and offer neutral ground with non-discriminatory access makes them completely different from many building-based activities

Living Spaces: Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM, 2003)
This document sets out the Government’s approach to making cleaner, safer, greener public spaces and contains a section dedicated to urban parks and green spaces.
The importance of green spaces to the Government’s priorities on regeneration, renewal, healthy living, neighbourhood pride and community cohesion is highlighted and the document stresses the Government’s commitment to the creation of networks of accessible, high quality parks and diverse green spaces in all towns and cities.

**How to … Create Quality Parks and Open Spaces (ODPM, 2005)**

This document has been produced as part of the Government’s ‘How to’ programme for the creation of cleaner, safer and greener communities.

The guide is divided into 3 sections:

- Part 1 provides an introduction and explains the challenge
- Part 2 explains how to develop the strategic climate for creating and maintaining quality parks and green spaces
- Part 3 explains some key issues and the tools available to address them
- Part 4 summarises the actions and powers, along with sources of advice for using them.

The guide stresses that a strategic approach is needed to deliver networks of diverse and high quality green spaces and states that having a green space strategy will make it easier for different organisations to commit themselves and to pool responsibility, objectives, resources and actions. It also stresses that a green spaces strategy should be based on robust evidence of local needs and should link to the local development framework.


This guidance highlights the benefits associated with Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation in relation to wildlife, educational and recreational value. The document stresses the role LNRs can play in meeting Biodiversity Action Plan targets and recommends that LNRs are provided so that there is a minimum of 1 hectare for every 1,000 population.

**Local Sites – Guidance on their Identification, Selection and Management (DEFRA, 2006)**

This publication provides guidance on the development and management of systems to identify sites of local importance for nature conservation. The guidance states that local sites should form just one element within a wider Open Space Strategy that takes account of a full range of social uses requiring different types of open space and that the Open Space Strategy should make provision elsewhere for the demand for other functions which would have an adverse effect on Local Sites’ biodiversity or geological value. Where local space provides primarily for social and community functions or benefits not related to a site’s nature conservation interest, it should not be selected as a Local Site.

**Towards a Country Parks Renaissance (GreenSpace 2003)**

This document, produced for the Countryside Agency by the Urban Parks Forum (now Green Space) and the Garden History Society, outlines the findings of a national health-check of 137 country parks (representing a total area of nearly 19,000ha) and makes recommendations for their future management.
The report contains the following recommendations that are of relevance to the continuing management and development of country parks in the district:

- Include country parks in local authority parks and greenspace strategies
- Ensure the continuity and enhancement of the country park image
- Develop incentives that encourage all country parks to participate in the renaissance programme
- Create a shared vision which could help to unify the family of country parks and focus attention
- Prioritise the role of country parks in linking the town to the countryside
- Include a core set of 8 activities in the work programme of all country parks (the countryside, education, interpretation, recreation and sport, sustainability, biodiversity, heritage, events and festivals)
- Adopt a set of minimum quality/service standards for all country parks
- Address ‘people’ as well as ‘place’ in all country park work
- Promote to relevant bodies the ability of country parks to assist in achieving social agenda objectives and targets


This strategy highlights the 4 inter-related programmes that multi-purpose forests will contribute to:

- Forestry for Rural Development
- Forestry for Economic Regeneration
- Forestry for Recreation, Access and Tourism
- Forestry for the Environment and Conservation.

The strategy stresses the economic, social, health, recreational and environmental benefits associated with woodlands and forests and highlights the role that forests play in helping to achieve objectives contained in the Government’s sustainable development agenda.


Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 imposes a statutory duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Further details of these duties are outlined in the Government Green Papers ‘Every Child Matters’ and ‘Youth Matters’ and the following points are of relevance to this strategy:

- Children and young people should be involved in the planning and development of services
- Services for children should be safe and accessible
- There should be effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- The government will make available a budget for all local authorities to spend, at young people’s discretion, on projects to improve things to do and places to go
- The government proposes to introduce a set of national standards in relation to activities and services for children and young people, including: access to 2 hours per week of sporting activity; opportunities to make a positive contribution to their community through volunteering; a wide range of other recreational cultural sporting and enriching experiences; and a range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time.
Game Plan: a strategy for delivering Government’s sport and physical activity objectives (DCMS, 2002)

The Government’s strategy for sport and physical activity highlights the fact that participation in sport and physical activity in the UK is lower than it should be and that levels have not changed significantly over recent years. The strategy sets a target to increase significantly levels of sport and physical activity, with 70% of the population becoming reasonably active by 2020 (defined as participating in 30 minutes of moderate activity five times a week). The strategy notes that a holistic approach should be taken, including providing safe and secure environments to promote sport and physical activity.


This document sets out Sport England’s approach and priorities for sport, with a vision of making England the most active and the most successful sporting nation in the world by 2020. The framework sets out priorities for action and those relevant to green spaces include:

- Access to the countryside – better co-ordination of the planning, promotion, marketing and delivery of countryside, water-based and urban fringe activities.
- Parks and open spaces – develop the recreational opportunities of parks and open spaces by integrating multi-activity sporting facilities with the community focus provided by parks.
- Facilities database – develop a comprehensive facilities database as a strategic planning tool for sport and a source of public information on sports facilities.

Outdoors for All? Draft Diversity Action Plan (DEFRA, 2006)

Between September 2002 and December 2005 the Countryside Agency carried out a review of the diversity of people who access outdoor recreation in the countryside. The review concluded that a lack of information and concern about not being made welcome undermined people’s confidence to access outdoor recreation and that a lack of confidence in engaging with diverse groups was apparent amongst recreation providers. In response to this the government’s draft Diversity Action Plan sets out outcomes and objectives aimed at ensuring that all groups in society have the opportunity to discover the joys of the outdoors, including ‘the woods and green spaces closer to where most people live and even areas of urban open space that people use for informal recreation’. The Action Plan sets targets to achieve (by 2016) a sustained and measurable increase in:

- Awareness by under-represented groups of what the natural environment has to offer, and where to go to enjoy it
- The numbers of people in under-represented groups enjoying the natural environment

The Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy sets objectives and actions that will help to achieve these targets in the Newark & Sherwood area.
1.4.2 Regional Context

**East Midland’s Integrated Regional Strategy (East Midlands Assembly, 2005)**

This IRS framework provides a summary of the main ways that more integrated delivery can be achieved in partnership at the regional, sub-regional and local levels. The framework aims to ensure that policies and strategies are not prepared in isolation but within the wider context and sets out the following 5 agreed priorities for the region: reduce inequalities in the region; conserve and enhance the natural environment; create sustainable and healthy communities throughout the region; improve economic performance and competitiveness; and use natural resources more efficiently and reduce the impacts of climate change.

The framework sets out a number of sustainable development objectives and those of relevance to this strategy are:

- To improve health and reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles, protecting health and providing health services
- To provide better opportunities for people to value and enjoy the region’s heritage and participate in cultural and recreational activities
- To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime
- To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of natural, cultural and built environmental and archaeological assets of the region
- To enhance and conserve the environmental quality of the region by increasing the environmental infrastructure

There are a number of component strategies of the framework and those of relevance are considered in more detail below.

**East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (East Midlands Assembly)**

The East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy sets the framework for the production of Local Development Frameworks and other land use documents within the East Midlands. The strategy has a number of policies which impact upon strategy production.

The overarching regional objectives are:

1. To address social exclusion, through the regeneration of disadvantaged areas and reducing regional inequalities in the distribution of employment, housing, health and other community facilities
2. To protect and where possible enhance the quality of the environment in urban and rural areas so as to make them safe and attractive places to live and work
3. To improve the health of the region’s residents, for example through improved air quality, the availability of good quality well designed housing and access to leisure and recreation facilities
4. To promote and improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness
5. To improve accessibility to jobs, homes and services across the region by developing integrated transport, ensuring the improvement of opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of high quality public transport
6. To achieve effective protection of the environment by avoiding significant harm and securing adequate mitigation where appropriate, and to promote the conservation, enhancement, sensitive use and management of the region's natural and cultural assets
7. To bring about a step change increase in the level of the region’s biodiversity, by managing and developing habitats to secure gains wherever possible, and ensuring no net loss of priority habitats and species.

The RSS also contains the following policies which are of relevance to this strategy:

Policy 27 Protecting and Enhancing the Region’s Natural and Cultural Assets: sustainable development should ensure the protection, appropriate management and enhancement of the region’s natural and cultural assets.

Policy 28 Priorities for Enhancing the Region’s Biodiversity: local authorities, environmental agencies, developers and businesses should work together to promote a major step change increase in the level of the region’s biodiversity.

Policy 29 A Regional Target for Increasing Woodland Cover: local authorities, environmental agencies, developers and businesses should help to create new areas of woodland to meet a regional target of 65,000 hectares of tree cover by 2021.

Policy 30 Priorities for the Management and Enhancement of the Region’s Landscape: Development Plans, future Local Development Frameworks and other strategies of local authorities and agencies should:

- Continue to promote the highest level of landscape character protection
- Promote initiatives to protect and enhance the natural and heritage assets
- Be informed by landscape character assessments

Policy 31 Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment: Development Plans, future Local Development Frameworks and economic development strategies should seek to understand, conserve and enhance the historic environment of the East Midlands.

Policy 32 Regional Priorities for Sport and Recreation: local authorities should work with County-based Sport Partnerships, the East Midlands Regional Sports Board, Sport England and other relevant bodies to ensure that there is adequate provision of sports and recreational facilities consistent with the priorities for urban and rural areas.

**Emerging East Midlands planning policy**

The East Midlands Regional Assembly is currently reviewing the existing Regional Spatial Strategy and to this end has published a draft replacement document. The objectives contained within it, to a large extent, mirror those in the previous strategy, similarly draft Policy 40 Regional Priorities for Culture, Sport and Recreation remains largely unchanged from Policy 32 set out above.

The key change between the old and new document is the development of sub-regional elements known as Sub-Regional Strategies. Newark and Sherwood is within the Northern Sub-Region, and a number of policies are contained within it that are relevant to the Green Spaces Strategy, including:

**Northern SRS Policy 4: Enhancing Green Infrastructure Though Development**

Local Development Frameworks and other strategies will, when identifying the location and nature of development or infrastructure provision, ensure that consideration is given to where the greatest public benefit would be gained through the enhancement of Green Infrastructure. For this purpose, the multiple benefits identified in the East Midlands Public Benefit Analysis project, the key strategic environmental opportunities set out in the Northern Coalfields Environmental Study and other relevant work should be used. Green Infrastructure Plans will be used where possible to achieve this.
Northern SRS Policy 5: Sherwood Forest Regional Park

Local authorities and other agencies should work together to promote the creation of a Sherwood Forest Regional Park which generates environmental, economic and social benefits of both local and national significance by:

- Protecting and enhancing the distinctive landscape, natural, cultural and historic assets
- Developing the recreational potential both for local communities and or visitors
- Creating a world-class visitor experience which generates sustainable economic benefits for local communities.

Regional Environment Strategy (East Midlands Assembly, 2002, 2003)

This strategy provides a framework for environmental policy development in the East Midlands and addresses 5 key environmental components: people and heritage; air; land and land use; water; and natural heritage. The strategy includes the following policies which are of relevance to green spaces:

Policy ENV1: To manage the historic environment so that the resource is conserved for the benefit of present and future generations
Policy ENV2: To ensure that all important elements that underpin the concept of local distinctiveness are conserved and managed
Policy ENV3: To equip people with the skills and knowledge so that they value the environment and can contribute to its enhancement
Policy ENV4: To work in suitable partnerships in the region to ensure that all East Midlands people have safe access to a diverse, well-managed environment of which they can be proud
Policy ENV9: To conserve and manage our natural heritage of geology, geomorphological landforms and processes so that the best is protected during development affecting it
Policy ENV13: To protect and appropriately manage all ancient and semi-natural woodlands and increase the extent of multi-purpose forests and woods that deliver environmental, as well as social and economic benefits
Policy ENV14: To use appropriate, high quality materials and design to optimise environmental benefits of built development contributing to the ‘urban renaissance’
Policy ENV21: To conserve and dramatically enhance biodiversity according to regional Biodiversity Action Plan priorities
Policy ENV22: To enhance the character and quality of the region’s landscape by protecting the best and improving the rest

East Midlands Green Infrastructure Scoping Study (East Midlands Regional Assembly, 2005)

The Integrated Regional Strategy for the East Midlands identifies the enhancement of Environmental Infrastructure as a key challenge for the region. Green Infrastructure, which can be defined as ‘a network of multi-functional greenspace provided across the region’, is a central component of Environmental Infrastructure and has been identified as the first priority for improved action across the region. This Scoping Study was commissioned to investigate an identified under-investment in Green Infrastructure in the region. The study concentrated on a number of local study areas within which the existing Green Infrastructure resource was mapped. Whilst none of these areas was wholly within Newark & Sherwood, the Greenwood area, which includes part of the District, was included.
The study used the following categories of green space:
- Parks and public gardens
- General amenity space
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Woodland
- Water courses
- Grassland and heathland
- Coastal habitats
- Moorland
- Agricultural land
- Allotments, community gardens and urban farms
- Cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds
- Derelict land
- Private gardens

The study also categorised green spaces by their functions as shown below:

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<tr>
<th>Functional Category</th>
<th>Functional Analyses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Flood amelioration</td>
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<td>Air quality amelioration</td>
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<td>Biodiversity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Renewable energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Flood protection</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Labour productivity (recreational benefit)</td>
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<td>Labour productivity (visual benefit)</td>
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<td>Image and investment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Contribution to regeneration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Contribution to tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Recreation and amenity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Access to Accessible Natural Greenspace</td>
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<td>Health</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Cultural Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-functionality</td>
<td>Potential multi-functionality derived from green space location and physical characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Potential for additional functions through physical intervention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study recommended that a Green Infrastructure Network should develop a public benefit assessment framework that is aligned to the multi-functional role of Green Infrastructure in order to determine strategic priorities for the further development of detailed functional mapping.


This document provides a strategic framework for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, identifies the main issues affecting the region’s wildlife and outlines opportunities and activities that will ensure its protection and enhancement. The strategy highlights the decline in biodiversity across the East Midlands and states that the region has the poorest biodiversity in the country. The strategy considers a number of key socio-economic areas of activity that affect biodiversity and those of relevance to this strategy include:
- Water and wetlands
- Forestry and woodlands
- Urban and post-industrial regeneration
- Sustainable communities and green infrastructure
- Community engagement, enjoyment and education
- Tourism and recreation.

The strategy contains objectives relating to these socio-economic areas and many of these are directly related to objectives and actions contained in this strategy.


The Tourism Strategy for the East Midlands highlights the importance of tourism to the economy of the East Midlands and stresses the importance of the ‘greenscape’ of the area - the green landscape and rich agricultural land which feeds the farms, markets towns, parks, forests, wetlands, waterways and lakes of the area.

An aim of the strategy is to combine the many attractions that give the Sherwood Forest area so much potential into an integrated destination with an international reputation for the quality of its recreational and cultural facilities. The strategy also highlights the need to enhance the environment, including habitat enhancements and the value of the region’s extensive wetland habitats.

**‘Space4Trees’ – Regional Forestry Framework (Forestry Commission and Partners, 2005)**

This document highlights the growing contribution that trees and woodlands make to the health and diversity of the environment, to the vitality of the regional economy and to the quality of life of people who live and work in the region.

The framework has the following priorities and aims:

- Trees and people – to provide and promote more opportunities for everyone to enjoy the social, health and educational benefits of trees and woodlands
- Trees and the environment - to maximise the contribution of trees and woodlands to the region’s natural, cultural and historic environment and ensure that trees and woodlands are better able to withstand external environmental pressures
- Trees and the economy - to encourage innovation, enterprise and growth of woodland related businesses and to enhance their contribution to the regional economy
- Communication and collaboration - to create a better understanding of the roles and benefits of trees, woodlands and wooded environments and support the sharing of information, innovation and good practice

**‘Change 4 Sport’ in England’s East Midlands – A Regional Plan for Sport 2004 to 2008 (Sport England East Midlands, 2004)**

The regional sports plan for the East Midlands emphasises the linkages between organised sport, recreation and the wider active living agenda. The plan contains outcomes relating to increased participation in sport and highlights sport’s role in: reducing health inequalities and improving health and well-being; creating stronger and safer communities; and developing stronger regional and local economies.
‘Investment for Health’ – A Public Health Strategy for the East Midlands (East Midlands Assembly)

This strategy aims to improve the health of East Midland’s residents by reducing health inequalities, year-on-year, through: addressing the social, economic and environmental determinants of health; supporting healthy lifestyles; protecting health; and improving access to, and provision of, local health and health related services.

In relation to supporting healthy lifestyles the strategy highlights the problems related to physical inactivity and the positive impact that increased participation in sport and physical activity can have on levels of obesity.

Nottinghamshire Agenda 21 – A plan for a better quality of life

This document was produced by the Nottinghamshire Agenda 21 Forum as an action plan for the 21st century. It focuses on several priority areas, of which open space and recreation is one. The Nottinghamshire Agenda 21 Vision for Open Space is:

“A Nottinghamshire with a network of good quality open spaces and recreational opportunities. These should be developed in an efficient, sustainable and imaginative way, with local communities having a say in how they are managed.”

A combined partnership approach was undertaken to produce a local Agenda 21 strategy for Newark and Sherwood, and consultation on this document was undertaken with a wide variety of community groups, statutory agencies and other partners. The strategy is structured around 21 indicators. For each of the priority areas, an action plan has been developed.

The objectives for achievement for open space through Agenda 21 are:

- Ensure access to an appropriate network of both formal parks and informal open spaces through increased protection and enhancement
- Improve the range and affordability of indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities and facilities
- Encourage a quality management and maintenance approach
- Ensure that recreational and open spaces are managed in accordance with the principles of access for all, sustainability and nature conservation.

A plan of action was developed and priorities included:

- An audit of outdoor recreational activities and open space
- Development of district open space studies
- Development of a County wide recreational routes strategy
- Community Involvement Programme
- Development of new / existing areas of trees or wood.

This strategy emphasises the importance of open spaces in Nottinghamshire and the priorities identified impact on open space in Newark and Sherwood.

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Joint Structure Plan (Nottinghamshire County Council, 2003)

The Joint Structure Plan (JSP) is the strategic land use plan for the County of Nottinghamshire. It sets out the land use policies covering matters such as the protection and enhancement of the environment and acts as the strategic planning framework for the more site-specific policies and proposals of local plans/local
development documents. The JSP sets out the following objectives which are relevant to the Green Spaces Strategy:

- To further social inclusion through the regeneration of disadvantaged areas by ensuring that all members of the community have improved access to a wide range of employment, housing, services, education, training, cultural and leisure opportunities
- To promote health and social well-being through improving accessibility to leisure and recreation facilities
- To produce good quality environments in urban and rural areas so that the unique character and distinctiveness of Nottinghamshire is protected and enhanced

The JSP contains specific policies relating to locally and regionally important nature conservation sites (including sites of importance for nature conservation and local nature reserves), protected species, wildlife habitat creation, landscape character, trees and woodlands, river corridors, location of recreation and tourism facilities, open spaces and playing fields and recreational routes.

Specific policies of relevance to this green spaces strategy are:

- **Policy 6/2 Open Spaces and Playing Fields**
  Local plans will propose and safeguard land for open spaces and playing fields following a local assessment of need. Applications involving the loss or partial loss of playing fields will not be permitted unless:
  a) Alternative provision of at least equivalent community benefit and accessibility is made available; or
  b) It can be demonstrated that there is an excess of sports pitch provision and public open space in the area

  Development on public and private open space will only be permitted where it would not involve a loss in meeting recreation needs or loss of a valuable amenity area and the long term implications have been taken into account. The provision of new areas of open space and playing fields to meet the needs of the current population or of new development will be in locations locally accessible to the communities to be served by the new facility, or accessible by a choice of means of transport

- **Policy 6/3 Recreational Routes**
  Public rights of way and other recreational routes will be provided, maintained and wherever possible improved. Where development results in the loss of a public right of way, an alternative route of an appropriate character will be required. Priority will be given to developing routes linking urban areas to the countryside and the reuse of former railway lines and other transport features such as canals.

**Nottinghamshire Landscape Character Assessment**

Nottinghamshire County Council is currently undertaking a comprehensive landscape characterisation study to include the 3 main environmental aspects of the landscape – the historic, ecological and current landscape. In response to the Government’s draft Planning Policy Statement PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas the assessment will result in new ‘Landscape Policy Zones’ which will replace existing Regional Landscape Character Areas and Landscape Types. The new landscape character assessment will be used to develop supplementary planning guidance (linked to the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Joint Structure Plan) which will inform planning officers, developers and others regarding policy and practice for the conservation, enhancement and regeneration of the rural landscapes of the County.
An initial study of the Sherwood area of the County has resulted in 80 separate draft Landscape Policy Zones. These have been surveyed and allocated condition and sensitivity scores which in turn have resulted in draft policies for each zone.

1.4.3 Local Context

District-wide Open Space Provision and Needs Assessment (NSDC & PMP Consultancy, 2003)

This study aimed to provide a clear picture of the district’s existing and future needs for green space and its ability to meet these needs in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility. It was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of PPG17 and involved widespread research and consultation. The study recommended local provision standards and highlighted specific actions that were required to address the findings of the study.

The study’s research, consultations and recommendations have, where necessary, been expanded upon and integrated into this strategy.


The previous Newark & Sherwood District Council Parks and Open Spaces Strategy was published in 2000 and concentrated mainly on open spaces under the control of the District Council. The stated overall vision for parks and open spaces in Newark and Sherwood was:

“To ensure that the District’s parks and open spaces are managed and maintained in an efficient, sustainable and imaginative way which encourages their use by the widest range of people and which allows their users to have a real say in how they are run.”

The strategy outlined seven strategic objectives that acted as a framework for implementing the strategy over the five year period. These can be summarised as:

1. Ensure that both residents and visitors have access to parks and open spaces that are well maintained and offer the widest possible range of facilities
2. Ensure that Council spending on parks and open spaces allows for their management and maintenance in line with customer expectations and best practice
3. Manage parks and open spaces in a strategic and customer orientated way that ensures that they are a safe, stimulating, vibrant and valued amenity
4. Use the opportunity created by Best Value to improve the standards and methods of parks and open spaces delivery, enhance customer satisfaction and ensure that staff are well trained and motivated
5. Enhance provision by encouraging community involvement, working in partnership and provide training and employment opportunities within parks and open spaces
6. Ensure that parks and open spaces are maintained in a manner which links to principles of sustainability and biodiversity
7. Ensure accessibility and relevance to all sectors of the community.

The strategy also contained an action plan with 49 recommended actions and 32 of these have been either partially or fully implemented.
Newark and Sherwood Local Plan (NSDC, 1999)

Together with the County Structure Plan the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan forms part of the development plan for the district.

The plan contains a number of objectives which are directly related to parks and open spaces. These include:

- Encourage and make provision for recreation and sports related developments
- Ensure the district is well provided with recreational facilities and open space
- Protect existing public and private open space and other land of recreational, amenity or visual importance
- Promote Newark Riverside as a linked open space system and encourage the recreational use of the River Trent
- Increase public access to woodland areas
- Support appropriate recreational and leisure uses in the countryside.

The Local Plan includes policies, based on the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) ‘Six Acre Standard’, which set standards for open space provision in new housing developments. Existing areas of open space and school playing fields will be protected from development, unless they are surplus to requirements. Specific policies are also included which state that:

- The Council will examine the scope that exists for the creation of woodland areas around the main built-up area of Newark
- The Council will investigate the possibility of the creation of a major open space facility in the Newark area
- A comprehensive landscape master plan will be prepared to guide the future development of Devon Park/Sconce Hills Park in Newark
- The District Council will seek to provide public open space in Ollerton/Boughton

Newark and Sherwood Local Development Framework.

The government has introduced a new system of development plan production, replacing the Local Plan with a Local Development Framework (LDF) which is a portfolio of documents rather than one single document.

Newark and Sherwood District Council has already begun production of its’ Core Strategy Development Plan Document which will set out the key policy framework for the LDF, including Open Space Standards. Much of the detail will be included in a Development Control Development Plan Document and a Supplementary Planning Document on Developer Contributions.

As these documents are adopted the relevant parts of the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan will be superseded and it is anticipated that the Core Strategy Document will be finally adopted by the Council in 2008.

The LDF will be heavily influenced by the results of this Strategy and any action plans and studies resulting from it.

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options Report (October 2006) includes the following Preferred Options that are of relevance to this strategy:

Preferred Option 28: Existing Community Facilities and Open Space
The District Council will protect existing community facilities and open space that contributes to the social life of the settlement or neighbourhood, unless it can be demonstrated to be no longer viable or there is suitable alternative provision elsewhere.

Preferred Option 29: Leisure, Recreation and Greenspace
The District Council will incorporate the findings of its Green Spaces Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy into the Local Development Framework. These documents will set open space standards, which will be used for the proper planning of the District, including the levying of developer contributions. The District Council will use the Community Greenspace Provision and Improvement Plans, which will be produced in the wake of the Green Spaces Strategy, for individual areas, to inform decisions on development proposals. The District Council will, where appropriate, make provision for new, or the protection of existing, greenspaces and recreational facilities in both urban and rural areas.

Preferred Option 31: Sherwood Forest Landscape Area
The District Council recognizes the national and regional importance of Sherwood Forest. Within Sherwood Forest the District Council will seek to protect and enhance the unique characteristics of the area.

Preferred Option 33: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation
The biodiversity of the District will be conserved and enhanced through the protection of habitats, species and sites of ecological value, with particular regard to designated wildlife sites of international, national and local significance, ancient woodlands and species and habitats of principal importance identified in Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and in the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Plan. The District Council will also seek to enhance biodiversity by maximizing opportunities in and around new development sites and by working with partners to secure new nature conservation sites.

Preferred Option 34: Greenwood Community Forest
Within the Greenwood Community Forest area the District Council will aim to secure environmental improvements in line with the aims of the community forest as part of development proposals.

Preferred Option 39: Historic Environment
The District Council will conserve and enhance the District’s historic environments, with particular regard to Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens and archaeological sites.

Newark and Sherwood Biodiversity Implementation Plan (NSDC, 2003)
The Biodiversity Action Plan identifies five Regional Character Areas within Newark and Sherwood, namely:

(a) Sherwood
(b) The Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands
(c) The Trent Washlands
(d) The East Nottinghamshire Sandlands
(e) The South Nottinghamshire Farmlands.

Of the five areas, only Sherwood is located entirely within the District of Newark and Sherwood.

The action plan summarises the habitat specialisms of Newark and Sherwood as:
- woodland (including lowland wood pasture and parkland, oak birch, mixed ash and wet woodlands)
- heathland / acid grassland
- neutral / wet grassland; and
- the River Trent.

Specific priorities identified for Newark and Sherwood are:

- develop up to date knowledge of species
- protect rare and threatened species from further loss
- promote proper consideration of protected species in planning and land management.

The biodiversity action plan details suggested targets for Newark and Sherwood covering all of the habitats and species that are found in the district. For every priority habitat and key species an action and associated delivery mechanism is specified. The strategy also identifies a range of opportunities that would have a significant positive impact on the biodiversity of each regional character area.


The district’s first Community Plan, produced by a partnership including the District and County councils, the East Midlands Development Agency, Nottinghamshire Police and the Newark & Sherwood Primary Care Trust, included a range of priorities and actions relating to community safety, culture, economic regeneration, the environment, health, lifelong learning and social inclusion. Those relevant to green spaces included:

- To develop and enhance participation in cultural activity in rural areas
- To promote tourism in all areas
- To promote the wildlife and landscape of the area as a means of developing sustainable tourism
- To promote healthy lifestyles and contribute to the reduction of obesity
- To develop an educational programme that promotes the flora and fauna of the district
- To restore or bring under sustainable management areas of green space
- Develop and support a voluntary and community sector forum

**Newark & Sherwood Community Plan 2006 – 2016 (Newark & Sherwood Partnership, 2006)**

The second Community Plan for the district proposes the following 6 shared priorities that will help to ensure that by 2015 the district will be one of the top 5 in the East Midlands for quality of life:

- Safe and strong
- Healthy
- Learning and earning
- Clean and green
- Accessible
- Culturally connected

Green spaces are able to contribute towards each of these priorities and the aims and objectives of this strategy link with these priorities (see Section 6).
Newark & Sherwood District Playing Pitch Strategy (Sport England, 2003)

The current playing pitch strategy for the district was produced by consultants KKP for Sport England as part of a County-wide process funded by Sport England and the New Opportunities Fund. The strategy process involved an audit of all pitches (football, rugby, cricket, bowls) in the district and the production of an action plan with recommendations for site specific actions and more general sports specific actions.

Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement

The LAA for Nottinghamshire contains as a priority ‘To achieve cleaner and greener public spaces’ and the target attached to this is to increase the number of Green Flag award-winning parks in the County from 7 in 2005/6 to 12 in 2008/9. The individual target for Newark & Sherwood is to gain an additional Green Flag award in 2008/9, increasing the number of Green Flag parks in the district from 3 to 4, and this has been included in the Strategy action plan.


The business plan for the County Council’s 3 country parks includes Rufford and Sherwood Forest – both of which are located in Newark & Sherwood.

The plan shows the following primary management projects:

- Rufford Country Park – Heritage Lottery Bid to be submitted to allow for Estate & Parkland Renaissance, create Local Nature Reserve at Gallows Hole Dyke
- Sherwood Forest Country Park – consultant’s study into the future of Sherwood Forest Country Park, woodland maintenance plan

Parish Plans

A number of parish councils in the district have produced parish plans using guidelines (and sometimes funding) from the Countryside Agency and/or DEFRA.

Parish plans are designed to identify the needs of local communities and involve widespread consultation amongst local residents, businesses and community groups. The planning process, which is supported by the District Council, results in an action plan that prioritises the issues raised and sets out how they can be tackled. The provision of open space and the outdoor recreational facilities available to local people are frequently an important issue with parish plans.
2.0 Improving our Green Spaces - Identifying the Issues

2.1 Scope of the Strategy

The Newark & Sherwood Green Space Strategy covers any land used formally or informally by the public for outdoor recreation, irrespective of ownership. Areas where public entry is discouraged or prohibited, such as agricultural land and private gardens, are not taken into account.

The Government’s definition of open space (as contained within PPG17) is:

“All open space of public value, including not just land but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity”

The geographical scope of the Strategy conforms to the administrative boundary of Newark & Sherwood District Council. However, significant green spaces close to the district boundary that serve residents of the district have been taken into account.

In line with PPG17 the following 7 categories of green space have been included within the study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks and gardens</td>
<td>Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and semi-natural greenspaces, including urban woodland</td>
<td>Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor sports facilities</td>
<td>Participation in outdoor sports, such as the pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside and water sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity greenspace</td>
<td>Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for children and young people</td>
<td>Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Allotments and Community Gardens**
Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion

**Cemeteries and Churchyards**
Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity

PPG17 includes 2 further categories of open space – green corridors and civic spaces, however these have not been included in this strategy for the following reasons:

- Civic spaces have not been included as these are mainly of relevance to large urban areas and this strategy concentrates on green spaces
- The audit work undertaken by PMP Consultancy encountered difficulties in assessing green corridors due to landowner suspicion about the motives involved in assessing rights of way across private land and confusion about the definition of green corridors
- Green corridors were found in the audit to be the open space type that had the highest margin of error in relation to quantity
- There are no national or local standards for the provision of green corridors.

The County Council has done some work on the coverage of the rights of way network in the district and the action plan contained in Chapter 6 contains a recommendation that further work be carried out on the provision of green corridors and recreational routes (Action 11.4).

### 2.2 Issues and Problems

Based on a range of indicators, including public consultation and feedback, the experience and knowledge of those involved with green space management in the district and benchmarking against other local authority areas, there are a number of major issues and problems that need to be addressed by the Green Spaces Strategy.

#### 2.2.1 Under-investment

There is no statutory duty on councils to provide or maintain green space and this, combined with factors such as the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering for local authority grounds maintenance, has led to a loss of investment in parks and open spaces in the country over the past 25 years. The 2001 Public Park Assessment estimated that there was an annual funding deficit of around £126 million based on comparisons to 1979/80 figures. The availability of local authority capital funds has also declined, from 25% of overall budget in the mid-1970s to just over 8% in 2002/2001, although this loss has been compensated for to some extent by capital funding from new sources such as the lottery.

Locally, the 2000 Newark & Sherwood District Council Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and the 2001 Best Value Review of the District Council’s Parks and Open Spaces Service confirmed that the position in Newark & Sherwood in the 1990s
mirrored that nationally, with a loss of over £100,000 from District Council parks and grounds maintenance budgets between 1988 and 1999. However the past 6 years has seen above inflation increases in parks budgets following a number of management initiatives and successful revenue bids and this has gone some way towards compensating for previous reductions.

Other open space providers in the district have not suffered a corresponding loss of financial provision for open space maintenance, with parish councils having greater flexibility through their precept to ensure that funding is available for maintenance and organisations such as the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust being funded in a less regulated manner.

2.2.2 Poor quality sites

The lack of funding identified in the previous section has left a legacy of a large number of sites of poor quality, with problems such as ageing play equipment, over mature shrub planting and a lack of facilities such as seating and signage.

2.2.3 Poor site distribution

In the past, the provision of green spaces has occurred in an unplanned manner, resulting in variable provision across the district. The majority of publicly accessible green spaces have been in existence for over 30 years and green spaces may thus be poorly located to serve modern day population centres.

2.2.4 Insufficient Community Involvement

Historically there has been a lack of community consultation and research into the needs of local communities with relation to green space provision and usage. Whilst this has been addressed more effectively over the past decade, with, for example, the creation of 'Friends' volunteer groups such as the Friends of Vicar Water Country Park and the Friends and Users of Boughton Brake, there has still been a lack of systematic public consultation and engagement.

2.2.5 Lack of Strategic Approach

In the past there has been insufficient strategic planning in green space management and this has led, in some cases, to unplanned, ad hoc, interventions across the district. In some cases different authorities and organisations have carried out improvement schemes without first establishing how these may conflict with other similar schemes. Poorly planned and resourced improvements have also been made that have proved to be unsustainable.

2.2.6 Conflicting User Demands and Expectations

Publicly accessible green spaces frequently allow for a range of different uses and this can lead to conflict between those who feel that their local green space should be for relaxation and passive recreation and those who want to use it for potentially noisy and disturbing activities such as ball games. There can also be conflict between users who wish green spaces to be managed in a less intensive way (which may encourage greater biodiversity) and those who feel that areas such as meadows look untidy and uncared for.
2.2.7 Lack of Facilities for Teenagers

Both nationally and locally there has been a realisation that the provision of freely accessible, high quality outdoor facilities for teenagers can have both direct and indirect social and health benefits, both for the teenagers involved and the local community. Facilities such as skate/BMX parks, multi-sports ball courts and youth shelters have been shown to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour by providing diversionary activities for young people, however, despite some recent improvements, there has been a lack of such facilities across the district.

2.2.8 Specific Issues Arising from Consultation Exercises

Consultation exercises carried out as part of the PMP audit and subsequent consultation have highlighted the following issues:

Issues raised by internal District Council consultations:

- There is a lack of usage of open space with too many spaces being of low quality. This could also stem from the size of open space being too small to provide significant functional usage
- There are not enough facilities provided within open spaces such as benches, litter bins, toilets etc but then if provided they would need also need maintaining. Some open spaces do not provide facilities due to vandalism but residents are asking for facilities such as bins to put litter in – residents want ownership of open space and also want to be able to look after their open space
- Lack of signage and facilities causes limited usage and quality and along with limited quantity this leads to low valued open spaces
- There is a requirement for proper facilities to be tailored for the right usage. For example - proper shelter areas for youths to hang out / equipped play areas for young children and not just an open grassland area on the corner of a housing estate which can lead to the annoyance of neighbours
- There appears to be contrasting and conflicting uses of open space e.g. amenity green space being used for dogs, children playing and making noise and elderly users
- The most appropriate usage of open space now may not be the most appropriate in 3-5 years time. Therefore there needs to be a dynamic approach to open space management. Usages may change as a result of demographics, employment, tenure, culture and/or social mix
- Public open spaces should be an integral part of the design of new residential areas and not simply represent space left over after development. Design considerations for safety such as the use of lighting, no places to hide such as many trees and bushes and provision of an open view to the open space can also help reduce the incidence of crime. However design considerations in relation to crime should not be seen as an excuse to create bland treeless spaces. Careful design, including informal surveillance from houses fronting onto open spaces and maintenance of lines of sight, can also reduce the potential for crime to occur.
- The opportunity exists to increase the value of open spaces in supporting biodiversity, through creation of wildlife habitats, and in providing visual/environmental benefits, through tree planting.
- Other quality issues raised included dog fouling and drug needles on some playing pitches.
Issues raised by those attending public meetings:

- Security and safety is poor in many open spaces
- Lighting improves the quality of open space
- Lack of safety when open space is located adjacent to water
- Dog fouling is a problem in many areas – there is a need for a specific dog walking area
- Equipment / facilities in the open space is important and makes the space more valuable and likely to be used
- Sites will not be used if there is a lot of litter and they are poorly maintained
- Footpaths and designated rights of way in Nottinghamshire are in general, well maintained
- Maintenance of small open spaces is equally as important as larger ones
- Many open space sites become an eyesore if they are not well maintained
- Graffiti and vandalism is a problem in some areas
- Thorough maintenance of any open space is vital, including weeds, trees and landscaping
- Cleanliness is important
- Motorbikes and other misuse of open spaces destroys the potential quality of sites
- The type of vegetation and planting is often inappropriate for the variety of open space
- Quality increases if open spaces meet the needs of the community involved and the facilities are respected

Issues raised by those contacting the Council to comment/complain about open spaces:

- Infrequent grass cutting – grass allowed to become too long between cuts
- Grass arisings not collected after cutting
- Overgrown trees and shrubs causing concerns over safety, shading, damage to paths and access difficulties
- Litter and fly-tipping
- Dog fouling
- Vandalism of facilities, particularly play areas and fences
- Horses loose on open spaces
- Problems with ball games on open spaces
- Problems with misuse of open spaces – particularly by teenagers

Issues raised at the inaugural meeting of the Newark & Sherwood Open Space Forum:

**Financial**
- Need to consider the financial feasibility of the provision of open spaces, including capital costs of setting up a new provision and ongoing maintenance costs
- Private/Public management of open spaces

**Security**
- The public feel threatened by vandalism and youths – there is a lack of policing
- Educate the public as to what open spaces should be used for and why
- Declaration of ownership at all open spaces
- Designing out crime
- Prevention of Travellers using open spaces in an inappropriate manner
- More signage needed to prevent dog fouling
Public Awareness

- Need for greater objectivity in assessment
- Councillors to go out and ask the public what they want
- Benchmarking against other councils
- Formation of a quality committee
- Target children through schools to raise awareness and find out what children want
- Public consultation
- Difficulty in parking when visiting open spaces
- Raise awareness of the impact of open spaces

Issues raised by organisations involved in the strategy consultation process:

- Lack of provision for young people, including areas where they can gather without being seen to cause a problem
- Areas of green space created by the restoration of industrial areas, their future management and maintenance and potential to provide significant areas of natural and semi-natural green space.
- The protection and enhancement of areas of Common Land
- The importance of linear routes, including public footpaths, bridleways and towpaths, as open spaces of value
- The importance of protecting existing green spaces from development
- The importance of some highway verges as areas of high biodiversity value
- The cultural heritage value of churchyards in relation to important monuments and tombstones contained within them and the need to safeguard these
- The importance of some churchyards as areas of high biodiversity and the opportunity to manage these as natural and semi-natural green spaces.
- The opportunities offered for enhanced creation of, and public access to, areas of natural and semi-natural green space by the increasing number of agri-environment schemes.

Newark & Sherwood District Council Priorities and Budget Survey (2004)

The District Council surveyed over 3,000 residents in 2004 about their attitude to the Council’s proposed strategic priorities and key services. Of the 5 strategic priorities the highest ranking were ‘To Maintain Safer Communities’, ‘To Protect and Improve the Environment’ and ‘To Provide Leisure and Health Opportunities for All’.

From a list of 27 proposed core services the 3 ranked most important in the survey were ‘Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour’, ‘Designing Out Crime’ and ‘Cleanliness of the Environment’.

From a list of 25 discretionary services provided by the Council respondents felt that ‘Parks and Playing Fields’ was the most important. The survey also found that ‘Activities for Teenagers’ was third in the list of things most needing to be improved in the district.

2.3 Leisure and Demographic Trends

Changes in the popularity of, and participation in, different leisure activities may lead to significant trends that need to be addressed. In order to anticipate the demand for particular types of green space and the activities that take place upon them it is important that this strategy takes account of underlying changes in leisure needs and levels of participation.
2.3.1 Participation in Recreational Activities

The General Household Survey, undertaken by the Office for National Statistics, collects information on a range of topics, including sport and leisure, from people living in private households in Great Britain. The survey has been carried out continuously since 1971 and is thus able to illustrate trends in participation in sport and leisure activities.

The 2002 General Household Survey collected information from nearly 15,000 people aged 16 and over and the main findings were as follows:

- Based on annual participation walking (46%) was the most popular sports activity, followed by swimming (35%), keep fit/yoga (22%) and cycling (19%). Participation in other sports relevant to outdoor green spaces includes running (9%), golf (12%), tennis (7%) and bowls (4%).
- Participation rates in sport have declined from a peak of 82% in the early to mid 1990s to the current rate of 59%.
- Participation rates in the East Midlands are amongst the highest in the country.
- Competitive participation in sports has increased by 6% since 1996 and the numbers of people who are members of sports clubs and/or received tuition/coaching has also increased significantly.
- 4% of those questioned had volunteered in sport, with 45% of these having given 5 or more hours of their time in the 4 weeks prior to the interview.
- Participation rates were higher amongst men than women and those aged under 20 were most likely to participate.
- There has been a rise in participation rates amongst the over 60s compared with 1987.
- Whilst participants in sport are most likely to use an indoor sports facility (23%), a large proportion use both outdoor sports facilities (11%) and outdoor sites with a natural setting (16%).

2.3.2 Emerging Recreational Opportunities, Activities and Facilities

The development of new surfacing materials allows for facilities such as all weather pitches to be developed which are capable of meeting a greater demand and allowing for more intensive usage than traditional turf pitches.

The recent successes of the England rugby and cricket teams have already had a knock-on effect at grass roots level, with an increase in participation amongst children and a growing demand for mini-rugby pitches and artificial cricket wickets.

There has also been an increase in the supply of recreational and sports facilities by the commercial and voluntary sector and a trend towards local authorities managing their leisure facilities through independent trusts.

2.3.3 Demographics

As part of its Structure Plan Review, Nottinghamshire County Council has made projections about population growth in the district. Based on the demand for new houses, migration into and out of the District and anticipated death rates it is estimated that the population of the district will grow by around 5,000 people by 2021. However this overall growth masks changes within the district, with a reduction in population of around 1,000 in both the southern and north-western parts of the district and a significant increase of around 7,000 people in the Newark area.
Across the county it is projected that the age structure will change between 2001 and 2021, with an increase in retirement age households of 23%, a reduction in married couple households in the 15 to 65 age range of 22% and a significant increase in one person households of 31%.

These demographic changes will effect the way in which future green space provision and improvements are planned, with a need to take into account the projected increase in the population of the Newark area and the increase in those of retired age and/or living in one person households.

The future provision of leisure and recreation activities and facilities will also be affected by factors such as gender, ethnicity, disability and employment status and detailed statistics from the 2001 Census should be used to plan the way these factors affect particular areas and communities.

2.3.4 Environmental Factors

Transport analysts predict that the need to cut carbon emissions is so pressing that by 2030 lifestyles will be much more locally based, due to the heavy environmental charges that driving a car or using air transport will incur. This will result in a reduction in holidays abroad and an emphasis on local facilities that do not involve unnecessary car journeys. There is thus a challenge for service providers to put in place local, high quality facilities that mean that people are less likely to need to travel to more distant facilities. There will also be a need to design into open space schemes accessible routes for walking and cycling to encourage people to leave their cars at home.

The increasing number of incidences of flash flooding resulting from exceptionally heavy rainfall will also have an impact on the future use and management of green spaces. Soft landscape areas such as open grass, woodlands and planted areas can help to mitigate the effects of such rainfall by absorbing the water more readily than hard surfaces such as roads and pavements. Open spaces can also play a part in assisting drainage with the installation of sustainable urban drainage systems on existing and new areas of green space.

2.4 Research and Consultation

A range of research and consultation has guided the vision, aims and objectives contained in this strategy.

District-wide Open Space Provision and Needs Assessment (PMP Consultancy, 2003)

In line with the recommendations of PPG17 and the Audit Commission’s Best Value Review of the District Council’s Parks and Open Spaces Service Newark and Sherwood District Council engaged PMP Consultancy to carry out a district-wide assessment of the quantity, quality and accessibility of green spaces in the district. This study involved extensive research and consultation through the following mechanisms:

- All parish council clerks or chairmen in the district were sent a questionnaire asking them to identify all green spaces in their parish and to rate these according to their quantity (insufficient, about right, too much), quality (poor, fair, good, excellent) and accessibility (poor, fair, good, excellent)
- 3 public meetings were held across the district where local people were asked to come along and give their opinions on the quantity, quality and accessibility of their local green spaces
PMP thoroughly researched the strategic context of the district’s green spaces and listed the various documents that had relevance to green space issues.
PMP contacted other open space providers in the district to gain information on their green spaces.

Newark & Sherwood Open Spaces Forum

This forum was set up in 2003 and meets twice a year to discuss open space issues. The forum has been used as a consultation mechanism for this strategy. Those attending have included representatives from parish councils, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, Groundwork Newark & Sherwood, Nottinghamshire County Council, the Greenwood Partnership and the Sherwood Forest Trust.

Open Space Related Community Groups

There are a number of community voluntary groups in the district with a specific or related interest in green space issues. These groups provide a valuable source of local information on green spaces and a ready-made sounding board for consultations. Relevant groups include:

- Voluntary sports clubs which use outdoor sports facilities. For example Newark Town Football Club leases the football facilities on Devon Park in Newark from Newark & Sherwood District Council.
- Tenants and residents associations and estate action partnerships which often take an interest in their local green spaces. For example the Winthorpe Road Tenants and Residents Association in Newark regularly considers open space issues and seeks to influence improvements to the local green spaces on the Winthorpe Road estate.
- Specialist interest groups such as local history societies and the Civic Trust which may become involved in open spaces with particular heritage merit or links.
- Environmental groups which are involved in helping to manage and maintain particular sites of ecological interest. For example the Potwell Dyke Grasslands Action Group in Southwell has taken on the management of a particular grassland area and this has led to its designation as a Local Nature Reserve.

Site Based Questionnaires

The district and county councils and other green space providers such as Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Forest Enterprise routinely use site-based questionnaires to assess levels of user satisfaction and to seek to gain ideas for new initiatives.

2.5 Funding

2.5.1 Revenue funding

The revenue funding for the day-to-day maintenance of green spaces in the district comes from a variety of sources. The majority of funding is derived from local taxation and central government grants, with the district and county council’s green space maintenance being mainly funded locally through the Council Tax and centrally from...
the government’s revenue support grant and parish council spending on green spaces being funded by the local parish precept. Other sources of revenue funding include:

- Section 106 planning gain funding for open spaces on new housing developments which have been adopted by the district council. The council currently requires developers to make a commuted maintenance payment equivalent to 15 years of annual maintenance of any sites that they wish the council to adopt.
- Through grants linked to specific projects. For example the capital improvements to Cleveland Square playing field in Newark were partly funded by a grant through the Countryside Agency’s Doorstep Green scheme and this also included funding of the maintenance of the site for 3 years after completion of the improvements.
- Income generated by green space facilities such as football pitches, car parks and catering outlets.
- Charitable donations to organisations such as Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
- Corporate sponsorship
- Environmental grants such as the Environmental Stewardship and Woodland Management Grant schemes

Section 2.2.1 discusses some of the problems associated with under-investment in revenue expenditure on the district’s green spaces and the strategy Action Plan lists actions that need to be taken to ensure that green spaces are maintained to a high standard.

2.5.2 Capital funding

Funding for major improvement projects to green spaces can be derived from a number of sources:

- District and county council Capital Programme funds derived from the sale of assets, government grants and borrowing
- Grant assistance from Lottery funding bodies such as the Football Foundation, Big Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund and Sport England Lottery Fund
- Regeneration grants from bodies such as the East Midlands Development Agency, Alliance SSP, Coalfields Regeneration Trust and European Objective 2 funding
- Grants associated with the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme from environmental bodies such as Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd (WREN) and the Onyx Environmental Trust
- S106 planning gain funds associated with new housing developments
- Grants from charitable trusts

The district’s green spaces have benefited from a significant capital investment over the past decade, however many sites are still in need of improvement and the Action Plan attached to this strategy lists a number of projects for which capital funding is currently being sought and recommends that funding be identified to improve other sites needing investment.

2.5.3 Funding Mechanisms for Green Spaces

The management and maintenance of the majority of the district’s green spaces is funded through local authority revenue expenditure, however as highlighted in Section 2.2.1, the past 30 years has seen a significant decline in revenue funding for
green spaces. In response to this a recent CABE Space publication ‘Paying for Parks: eight models for funding urban green spaces’ shows that there are alternatives to the traditional local authority funding of the management and maintenance of green spaces.

The eight mechanisms illustrated, together with their identified strengths and weaknesses, are as follows:

1. Traditional local authority funding
   
   **Strengths**
   - local and national taxation provides a relatively stable source of funding on an annual basis
   - strategic thinking can enable pooling of resources between and within local authority departments, neighbouring local authorities and the voluntary and community sectors
   
   **Weaknesses**
   - annual funding arrangements can result in financial uncertainty and an inability to think long term
   - ring-fencing funding specifically for green space is unusual due to its non-statutory status
   - partnership working can be difficult if green spaces span several local authority boundaries

2. Multi-agency public sector funding
   
   **Strengths**
   - pooling of resources between different bodies can support mutual goals, leading to efficiency savings and better value for money
   - encourages the formation of partnerships and can build community capacity
   
   **Weaknesses**
   - many initiatives that encourage collaboration are one-off and short term
   - there is competition for resources from other areas, for example police and health services

3. Local taxation initiatives
   
   **Strengths**
   - dedicated local taxation can secure reliable and significant local resources
   - good quality green spaces can increase property values and create tax revenue when properties are bought and sold
   
   **Weaknesses**
   - English local authorities have limited autonomy and freedom to impose additional local taxes
   - an initial financial outlay is involved and returns from schemes may take time to be realised

4. Planning and development opportunities
   
   **Strengths**
   - can provide steady funding which is secured at the outset
   - establishes mutual public and private goals as property developers are required to contribute to developing and maintaining publicly accessible green spaces that can in turn help to increase the value of their assets and investments
   
   **Weaknesses**
   - the funding is susceptible to competition from other types of infrastructure such as public transport
   - can be used only for new development
5. Bonds and commercial finance

Strengths
- bodies created to access commercial finance are free from the financial restrictions that local authorities usually face
- can provide an initial and significant source of capital finance to fund green space projects

Weaknesses
- typically used only for infrastructure projects with predictable revenue
- assets, in this case green spaces, need to generate enough financial return to make it economically viable
- English local authorities are not currently permitted to issue voter-approved bonds

6. Income-generating opportunities

Strengths
- generates extra money, spreads risks and increases usage of green space
- if ownership of land is retained by the local authority it provides a long-term investment
- can encourage the involvement of local businesses and stimulate the local economy

Weaknesses
- difficulties in ring-fencing income within general public finance
- risk of over-commercialisation and environmental damage unless managed carefully

7. Endowments

Strengths
- steady and secure income which can be supplemented by the funding generated by other models
- financial risks can be spread across a range of investments
- investment in a property portfolio can help to increase the value of the property and subsequently the value of the endowment

Weaknesses
- the initial endowment needs to be big enough to yield the necessary income; securing such a large asset will be beyond most organisations
- managing the investment requires considerable financial expertise, which may not be available within a local authority

8. Voluntary and community sector investment

Strengths
- charitable status of not-for-profit organisation brings tax-relief benefits and can attract investment from sources that local authorities cannot
- partnership agreements between local authorities and not-for-profit organisations can increase opportunities for accessing lottery and regeneration funding

Weaknesses
- fundraising programmes are usually more suitable for capital projects than longer-term revenue funding, and many not-for-profit bodies struggle to survive financially due to the precarious nature of the income they rely on
- democratic responsibilities and accountabilities between the local authority and the voluntary and community sector are not always clear

The strategy Action Plan makes a range of recommendations relating to the funding of parks and green spaces.
3.0 **Current Green Space Provision**

3.1 **Overview**

Based on the study undertaken by PMP Consultancy and updated by officers from the District Council there are 5,400ha of publicly accessible green space in Newark & Sherwood District, ranging from large country parks to small amenity green spaces. The geographical scope of the study area conforms to the administrative boundary of Newark & Sherwood, however significant green spaces outside of the study area that are frequently used by district residents have been included. Figure 1 illustrates the location and type of green space provision in the district.

The green space audit, which was carried out in 2003 and 2004, involved a detailed questionnaire which was sent to all parish councils in the district as well as significant landowners such as the Forestry Commission and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. The questionnaire asked landowners and those with a knowledge of their local green spaces to categorise them into 1 of the 8 categories of open space and to make an assessment of their quality and accessibility.

The PMP study also divided the district into 6 sub areas and suggested a settlement hierarchy, based on settlement size. These divisions are shown in the maps and tables below.

The 6 sub-areas are:
- Sub-Area A – the northwestern part of the district
- Sub-Area B – the central southern part of the district
- Sub-Area C – the central northern part of the district
- Sub-Area D – the northeastern part of the district
- Sub-Area E – the Newark and Balderton area
- Sub-Area F – the southeastern part of the district

The settlement hierarchy is as follows:
- Hierarchy 1 – Large Town
- Hierarchy 2 – Town
- Hierarchy 3 – Large Village
- Hierarchy 4 – Medium Village
- Hierarchy 5 – Small Village
- Hierarchy 6 - Hamlet

The use of these sub-areas and settlement hierarchies is considered to be appropriate and relevant to this green spaces strategy. In particular the hierarchies have been used to produce a recommended level of provision for a particular size of settlement.
Figure 1: Green Spaces within Newark & Sherwood District
Figure 2 Division by Sub Areas

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Table 1 Sub Areas and Parishes

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Figure 3 Division by Hierarchy
Table 2 Hierarchy of Settlements

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coddington</td>
<td>Farnsfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collingham</td>
<td>Lowdham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farndon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy 5 – Small Village</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bleasby</td>
<td>Gunthorpe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulcote</td>
<td>Halam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caunton</td>
<td>Hoveringham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eakring</td>
<td>Kirklington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edingley</td>
<td>North Muskham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elston</td>
<td>Norwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epperstone</td>
<td>Oxton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiskerton-cum-Morton</td>
<td>Rolleston</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy 6 – Hamlets</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alverton</td>
<td>Halloughton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averham</td>
<td>Harby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnby-in-the-Willows</td>
<td>Hawton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathley</td>
<td>Hockerton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besthorpe</td>
<td>Holme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton-on-Trent</td>
<td>Kelham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caythorpe</td>
<td>Kersall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotham</td>
<td>Kilvington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cromwell</td>
<td>Kirton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Stoke</td>
<td>Kneesall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe</td>
<td>Langford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egmonton</td>
<td>Laxton and Moorhouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girtton</td>
<td>Lyndhurst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonalston</td>
<td>Maplebeck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grassthorpe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 **District-wide Green Space Provision - Quantity**

3.2.1 **Parks and Gardens**

The definition of what comprises a park or garden can be a broad one, encompassing urban parks and gardens, country parks and small community gardens/pocket parks which may be in rural settlements. By their nature large urban and country parks will include a range of different open space types, including provision for children and young people, natural and semi-natural green spaces and outdoor sports facilities.

The total district audited figure for parks and gardens is just under 396ha and this includes small (c1ha) ornamental gardens such as Newark’s Castle Gardens and Beaumond Gardens through urban parks like Sconce & Devon parks in Newark (combined area of 14ha) right up to large country parks such as Rufford, Sherwood Forest and Vicar Water country parks.

Sub Area A (the north-western part of the district) contains over 85% of the district’s parks and gardens, however this is due to the presence of several large country parks. The predominantly rural and agricultural areas of the district, such as Sub Areas C & E, have little or no provision.

3.2.2 **Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces**

This category includes both land that has been naturally colonised by plants and animals and areas where the intensity of the management allows natural processes to predominate. Examples of natural and semi-natural green space will include woodlands, heathland, nature reserves and areas of open and running water.

Although Newark & Sherwood is a predominantly rural district, the majority of the countryside is comprised of agricultural land which is intensively managed. In addition some areas of woodland are privately owned and do not have any sort of public access to them. In order to be of public value it is considered that accessibility, particularly in urban areas, is an essential element in the designation of natural and semi-natural green space.

The audited area of natural and semi-natural green spaces in the district is 4,205ha. Much of this comprises Forestry Commission land such as Sherwood Pines and reclaimed colliery spoil tips such as Boundary Woods. Large areas of coniferous woodland cultivated for sale as timber crops do not contain a great deal of biodiversity and could be considered to be a type of agriculture, however recent efforts by the Forestry Commission to diversify these areas and the provision of public access to them means that they have been classified under this category.

Sub Area F, the predominantly urban area of the district, has the lowest level of provision - only 14m² per head of population compared with nearly 850m² for someone living in Sub Area A.

3.2.3 **Amenity Green Spaces**

PPG 17 defines amenity green spaces as being most commonly, but not exclusively, located in housing areas and lists informal recreation spaces, green spaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens as examples.

The green space audit has identified nearly 74ha where the primary use is as amenity green space. However many other types of open space effectively double up as
amenity green space, for example open access outdoor sports facilities and playing fields that have been counted as provision for children and young people are also used for informal use by dog walkers and visitors who wish to use the site for relaxation.

3.2.4 Provision for Children and Young People

This type of green space includes all equipped children’s play areas (except where these are located in parks and gardens) as well as teenage areas such as skate parks. Where play areas are located in larger playing fields/recreation grounds then the site is classified under this category unless the site includes marked out sports pitches and the primary use is considered to be as outdoor sports facilities.

The audited figure for provision for children and young people is nearly 37ha, however as noted above, this does not include children’s playing space that is located in sites primarily used for other purposes such as parks and gardens. In many areas amenity green space also doubles up as children’s playing space – sometimes leading to tensions between those living adjacent to the areas.

3.2.5 Outdoor Sports Facilities

This category of green space includes not only playing pitches (football, rugby and cricket) but also facilities such as athletics tracks, tennis courts and golf courses. Open areas of water such as angling and sailing lakes that are primarily used for sporting purposes have also been included in the audit.

The green space audit identified nearly 618ha of outdoor sports facilities, however this figure was influenced by several large facilities such as golf courses and sailing lakes and removing these reduces the figure to 220ha. The 2003 District Playing Pitch Strategy identified 168ha of sports pitches and greens available for community use and a further 67ha of school pitches.

3.2.6 Allotments and Community Gardens

The Allotment Act of 1922 defines an allotment garden as “an allotment not exceeding 40poles in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by him/herself or his/her family”. Statutory allotment sites are protected under law and cannot be disposed without Government consent. Community gardens are areas communally managed and maintained which may include vegetable crops but may just be garden areas for leisure and relaxation.

Just over 41ha of green space was categorised as allotments and community gardens, with the vast majority of this being statutory allotment sites.

3.2.7 Cemeteries and Churchyards

The majority of sites making up this open space type will be traditional churchyards, many of which will have been in existence for hundreds of years. The majority of these will have been closed for burials and many towns and villages now have separate cemeteries.

The green space audit identified 46ha of cemeteries and churchyards. With the majority of settlements having a church, provision is spread across the district
3.3 District-wide Green Space Provision – Quality, Accessibility and Value

The Government’s Planning Policy Guidance note relating to open space (PPG 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation) stresses the importance of auditing the quality of open spaces as the results of such audits will ‘allow local authorities to identify potential for increased use through better design, management and maintenance’.

3.3.1 PMP Audit

The PMP open space provision and needs assessment included an audit of the quality and accessibility of green spaces based on the judgement of the district council and parish councils. The following key criteria were used to assess quality:

Cleanliness and Maintenance
Vandalism and Graffiti
Litter problems
Provision of bins for rubbish/litter
Dog Fouling
Noise
Smells (unattractive)
Maintenance & Management

Security and Safety
Lighting
Equipment (e.g. in play areas or recreation provision)
Boundaries (including hedges, fencing and gates)

Vegetation
Planted areas
Grass areas

Ancillary Facilities
Toilets
Parking (related to open spaces)
Pathways (within the open space sites)
Information & Signage

The accessibility of sites was similarly judged against the following criteria:

General
- Entrance to sites (i.e. are the entrances to sites easily seen, easily accessible etc)
- Opening times (i.e. do the sites tend to be open at all times such as informal recreation areas or are there specific closing times for instance locking of gates to a park)
- Cost to user i.e. Value for Money (i.e. are most open space sites free for use or are there charges that deter usage by the local resident population)

Distances & Catchment Area
- Accessible by public transport (i.e. are most open space sites within your parish accessible by public transport)
- Accessible by cycleways (i.e. are most open space sites within your parish accessible by cycling e.g. are specific cycleways provided or accessible by cycling on quiet roads etc)
- Accessible by walking (i.e. are most open space sites within your parish within easy walking distance of the majority of the parish households)
- Distance from majority of population within your parish (i.e. are most of the open space sites within your parish within easy access from the majority of households preferably by walking, cycling or public transport)

**Signage & Promotion**
- Signage (i.e. is the signage to the open spaces appropriate where required and clear to see and easy to follow)
- Information and/or promotion of the sites (i.e. is the information and promotion, where provided, appropriate and clear to see, easy to read and encourages positive usage)

**3.3.2 District Council Audit**

Newark & Sherwood District Council has undertaken an audit of the quality and accessibility of a sample of the green spaces under its ownership. The criteria used for this audit were based on those used for the assessment of sites under the Green Flag award and sites were scored against the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Ancillary facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grass (including pitches)</td>
<td>Seating/picnic areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft landscaping (shrubs, flower beds, hedges etc.)</td>
<td>Play facilities (including provision for teenagers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play equipment</td>
<td>Sports facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings</td>
<td>Litter and dog bins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paths and car parks</td>
<td>Toilets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street furniture</td>
<td>Refreshments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fences/walls/gates</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetation</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Entrances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weed control</td>
<td>Path surfaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pruning</td>
<td>Signposting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>Disabled access and facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affordability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Security and Safety</th>
<th>Environmental sustainability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gates and fencing</td>
<td>On-site recycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>Environment-friendly materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCTV</td>
<td>Biodiversity encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>Range of habitats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft landscape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Involvement</th>
<th>Cleanliness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Litter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities and activities</td>
<td>Dog fouling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Fly tipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graffiti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sites were assessed by District Council officers and representatives from parish councils, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and play equipment manufacturers and each
of the criteria was scored on a scale of 1 to 10 with 0-1 ranking as very poor, 2-4 as poor, 5-6 as fair, 7-8 as good, 9 as very good and 10 as excellent. The site was then given an overall score and rated as either passing or failing.

In total 150 sites were assessed and of these 11% were rated as good, 70% as average and 19% as poor. Based on a passing score equivalent to 65% and above, 30% of sites passed and 70% failed.

### 3.3.3 Value

The value of an open space site is entirely different to quality and relates mainly to 3 key factors as described in the companion guide to PPG17:

- **Context** – a site that is inaccessible is irrelevant to potential users and therefore is of little value irrespective of its quality. Also in areas where there are large amounts of high quality open space or more than is actually required, some of it maybe of little value. In contrast to this, a site of little quality but in an area of low provision, may be of extremely high value to the public.
- **Level and Type of Use** – poorly used open space sites may be of little value while highly used sites may be of high value.
- **Wider Benefits** – there are many wider benefits of open space sites that should be taken into account when analysing the results of particular sites e.g. visual impact, benefits for biodiversity, educational, cultural, economic etc. These benefits are difficult to assess in a systematic way and would require detailed site visits.

Evaluating value therefore involves attempting to assess these factors, in particular relating the context of the open space site (quality and accessibility) against the level of use of each site.

Using a simple high/low classification gives the following possible combinations of quality and value for open spaces, together with a simple means of determining the most appropriate policy approach to each open space:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Quality &amp; Accessibility / Low Value</th>
<th>High Quality &amp; Accessibility / High Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>Action:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance value in its primary purpose</td>
<td>Protect all open space sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-delegate to other purposes to increase value</td>
<td>Vision: for all open spaces to be within this category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Quality &amp; Accessibility / Low Value</th>
<th>Low Quality &amp; Accessibility / High Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>Action:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance quality &amp; enhance value</td>
<td>Enhance quality where possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-delegate to other purpose to increase value</td>
<td>Protect open space site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If not possible, maybe surplus to requirements in terms of present primary purpose.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.4 Parks and Gardens

The overall quality and accessibility of parks and gardens in the district, based on the PMP audit and the findings of other surveys, seems to be good or very good, with over 75% being rated as good or very good for quality and over 60% good or very good for accessibility. A number of sites (e.g. Friary Gardens in Newark) provide poor access for people with disabilities. These findings are backed up by the results of survey work carried out at specific sites, including Rufford Country Park, Sherwood Forest Country Park, Sherwood Avenue Park and Newark Castle Gardens, where questionnaires have revealed high levels of customer satisfaction.

3.3.5 Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces

Whilst the PMP survey found that the quality and accessibility of natural and semi-natural green spaces was generally acceptable, with 46% being rated as average and 38% as either good or very good, this type of open space is the most difficult to assess as many of the sites are fairly remote and not regularly used by large numbers of people. Site-based questionnaires are only used for a small number of natural and semi-natural green spaces (such as Sherwood Pines Forest Park), however a number of sites have volunteer groups associated with them and information could be gathered by these groups.

3.3.6 Amenity Green Space

The majority of amenity green spaces (70%) are rated by both the PMP audit and the District Council audit as being of average quality and accessibility, however 60% of the 100 sites assessed as part of the District Council survey were classed as failing sites, despite the majority of them being of average standard. Sites of this nature tend to be small open spaces with few formal facilities or different landscape or habitat types and thus score receive lower scores than larger sites with a greater range of facilities and habitats. However amenity green spaces are often the only pieces of open space in built up areas and their value may thus be considered to be high.

3.3.7 Provision for Children and Young People

This type of open space received the lowest quality and accessibility rating in both the PMP and District Council audits. Around 30% of sites included in the PMP audit were considered to be poor or very poor for both quality and accessibility and 86% of the 29 sites assessed in the District Council audit were considered to be failing sites.

The majority of failing sites are located in sub-area F (Newark and Balderton), the main urban area of the district, with more than a third of sites being rated as poor or very poor. This finding is supported by evidence from the settlement hierarchies, with 50% of sites in hierarchy 1 (large town - Newark) and 25% of sites in hierarchy 2 (small town) being rated as poor or very poor. The quality and accessibility of provision for children and young people in the district’s villages is significantly better, with over 60% of sites being rated as good or very good. However of the small number of sites in hierarchy 6 (hamlets) none are considered to be of high quality and 50% are rated as poor – indicating that such small settlements struggle to provide high quality provision for children and young people.

3.3.8 Outdoor Sports Facilities

The quality rating for outdoor sports facilities is generally favourable with around 70% of the sites audited in the PMP study being classed as good or very good for quality
and accessibility. However, there are no sites rated as being of good or very good quality in hierarchy 1 (Newark).

3.3.9 Allotments and Community Gardens

The overall quality and accessibility of allotments in the district appears to be satisfactory, with over 50% of sites audited by PMP being rated as good or very good. In hierarchies 1 and 2 all allotments audited were judged to be of good or very good quality.

3.3.10 Cemeteries and Churchyards

There do not appear to be any particular problems with the quality and accessibility of the majority of cemeteries and churchyards in the district, with the PMP audit showing that the quality and accessibility of less than 15% of the sites is poor or very poor.
4.0 Green Space Provision Standards

4.1 PMP Audit Recommendations

In line with the recommendations of PPG17 the PMP study suggested that local provision standards be applied and based these on the results of consultations with parish councils, the District Council and members of the public.

Those consulted through the PMP audit were asked to assess whether they felt the amount of each of the 7 kinds of open space was sufficient, too much or too little for their local area. Based on a statistical analysis of these results PMP recommended the following standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Type</th>
<th>Suggested Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks and gardens</td>
<td>0.6 – 0.8ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and semi-natural green spaces</td>
<td>10ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor sports facilities</td>
<td>2.5ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity green space</td>
<td>0.6ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for children and young people</td>
<td>0.75ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotments and Community Gardens</td>
<td>0.5ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries and Churchyards</td>
<td>0.5ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Hierarchies of Provision

The recommended provision of open spaces can also be defined using a hierarchy of provision and recommended catchment areas. The Mayor of London’s ‘Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies’ (2004) gives the following public open space hierarchy for London:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Categorisation</th>
<th>Size Guideline (ha)</th>
<th>Distance from Homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Over 400</td>
<td>8km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>60 – 400</td>
<td>3.2km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>20 – 60</td>
<td>1.2km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Parks</td>
<td>2 – 20</td>
<td>400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Local Parks</td>
<td>0.4 – 2</td>
<td>400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket Parks</td>
<td>Less than 0.4</td>
<td>400m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other authorities have taken a similar hierarchical approach, with South Tyneside Borough Council having the following standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Categorisation</th>
<th>Size Guideline (ha)</th>
<th>Distance from Homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Parks and Open Spaces</td>
<td>Over 30</td>
<td>3km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Parks &amp; Open Spaces</td>
<td>10 – 30</td>
<td>1km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Parks &amp; Open Spaces</td>
<td>2 – 10</td>
<td>400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket Parks &amp; Open Spaces</td>
<td>0.2 – 2</td>
<td>200m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a predominantly rural district Newark & Sherwood has a different settlement and population distribution than the examples given above, however a hierarchy that fits with the nature and circumstances of the district is outlined in Section 5.4.8.

4.3 Catchment Areas

As part of consultations undertaken with local residents through the PMP study people were questioned as to what they felt were reasonable distances for people to travel to the different kinds of green space. Issues arising from this process regarding the catchment areas of green spaces were as follows:

- The amount of time people are willing to travel depends on the quality of the site, amenities provided at the site, the type of destination and the time likely to be spent there
- Play areas – these should be accessible by public transport but preferably within a walking distance of 5 minutes although people would travel further to a larger play area and if they were to spend more time there. Schools should have play areas on sites to provide local facilities within walking distance.
- Sports facilities – people expect that they may have to undertake a short drive or around a 20 minute walk. However some people are prepared to travel further and would drive up to half an hour.
- Churchyards and cemeteries – 5 minutes walk
- Country parks – people expect to travel further for a day out and these areas tend to be regional facilities that benefit more people. These should also be accessible by public transport
- Amenity greenspace – five minutes walk or less
- Allotments – need to be close as people need to travel with equipment, although many disagreed and felt that people with allotments are willing to travel up to 20 minutes
- There should be an area (preferably a small park or garden) within walking distance of most housing.

4.4 Parks and Gardens

There are no definitive national standards for the provision of parks and gardens and whilst a standard was recommended by the PMP study it recognised that the presence of 3 large country parks (Rufford, Vicar Water and Sherwood Forest) in the north-western part of the district affected the analysis. The study thus suggested a lower standard should be applied when country parks were removed from the analysis.
The suggested standard for urban parks (0.6ha per 1,000 population) results in a slight surplus of provision in the Newark area – the main urban area of the district. Given that this is the area most likely to possess traditional urban parks this suggests that the standard is appropriate to the local area.

The suggested standard for parks and gardens also translates into an appropriate sized facility for settlements of a size that are likely to warrant a neighbourhood park. Thus for Rainworth, a large village with a population of just over 6,500, the standard translates into an area of between 4 and 5ha – a reasonable size for a multi-purpose neighbourhood park facility.

4.5 Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces

Although there are no definitive national standards for the provision of natural and semi-natural green space English Nature has made recommendations as to the accessibility of natural green space for people in urban areas. English Nature’s recommendation is that those living in towns and cities should have:

- An accessible natural green space less than 300m (5 minutes walking distance) from home
- Statutory Local Nature Reserves at a minimum level of 1ha per thousand population
- At least one accessible 20ha site within 2km of home
- At least one accessible 100ha site within 5km of home
- At least one accessible 500ha site within 10km of home

The PMP study’s suggested standard for natural and semi-natural green spaces in the district was 10ha per 1,000 population, however the study pointed out the following:

- The distinction between rural and urban areas
- The fact that based on this standard there is an overall surplus of over 900ha across the district (this has now risen to over 3,000ha with the addition of sites that were not included in the PMP audit)
- The fact that the main urban sub-area and the more urban hierarchies show such a large under provision of natural and semi-natural green space that it is difficult to envisage how such areas could ever meet the suggested standard.

The large surplus of natural and semi-natural green space in the district is largely due to a number of large sites such as the Sherwood Forest and Sherwood Pines/Clipstone Forest areas in the north-west of the district (sub-area A). The main urban area of the district (sub-area F) has a deficit of over 300ha and this illustrates the difficulty of attempting to apply equal standards for natural areas to both urban and rural areas. The use of English Nature’s suggested standards for towns and cities will thus be more appropriate for the urban areas of the district.

English Nature has also published standards for the provision of Local Nature Reserves, with a recommendation that all districts should contain a minimum of 1ha of LNR per 1,000 population.

4.6 Amenity Green Spaces

Whilst there are no national standards covering amenity green spaces, the current Newark & Sherwood Local Plan has a requirement that new housing developments of 30 or more dwellings should provide 15 square metres of amenity green space per dwelling. Based on the existing average household size for the district of 2.4 people
this equates to a standard of around 0.62ha per 1,000 population. Based on a range of responses to its consultation the PMP study recommended a similar standard of 0.6ha per 1,000 population.

A number of other types of green space can effectively double up as amenity green space, for example grass playing pitches can act as amenity green spaces, as can playing fields and recreation grounds.

Based on the suggested standard the audit shows a district-wide surplus of around 10ha, however this figure conceals deficits in certain areas.

4.7 Provision for Children and Young People

National standards for children’s playing space are provided by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA), with the ‘Six Acre Standard’ (NPFA, 2001) recommending a minimum standard of 0.8ha of outdoor playing space for children. The NPFA’s definition of children’s playing space is:

(i) Designated areas for children containing a range of facilities and an environment that has been designed to provide focussed opportunities for outdoor play
(ii) Casual or informal playing space within housing areas

The current District Council standard for children’s playing space on new residential developments (as contained in the district Local Plan) is 20 square metres per dwelling. Based on the existing average household size for the district of 2.4 people this equates to a standard of around 0.83ha per 1,000 population. The PMP study, based on a range of consultation responses, recommended a slightly lower standard of 0.75ha per 1,000 population and using this standard there is a district-wide deficiency in provision of over 30ha. The PMP study pointed out that amenity green spaces also provide sites for children’s play and, as noted above, those children’s play areas located in parks and gardens are not counted as provision for children and young people.

The Six Acre Standard recommends that all children should live within walking distance of appropriate play facilities. Local Areas for Play (LAPs), a small area of open space specifically designated and laid out for young children, should be located within 1minutes walking distance from home whereas Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs), a piece of open space designated and equipped for children of early school age, should be within 5minutes walking distance from home. Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) are larger areas designated and equipped mainly for older children, but also with play opportunities for younger children, which should be within 15minutes walking distance from home. The use of these recommended walking distances provides a further means of assessing whether there is sufficient provision for children and young people in particular communities.

For smaller, rural communities the Six Acre Standard recognises that a village’s ability to provide land for play facilities and then to equip and maintain them may be beyond its financial means. However the Standard makes the following recommendations:

(i) For communities of 1,000 or more people there should be full provision of LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs
(ii) For communities with a population of between 250 and 1,000 there should be provision of LAPs and LEAPs, with priority being given to a LEAP
(iii) For communities with a population of between 100 and 250 there should be a LEAP plus casual playing space of at least 100sq. metres and LAPs on any new housing developments

(iv) For communities of less than 100 people there should be a casual area for play of at least 100sq. metres and LAPs on any new housing developments.

Using the recommended standard there is a district-wide deficit in provision for children and young people of 43ha and this is spread across all sub-areas. Whilst this is partly balanced by the surplus provision of amenity green space and parks and gardens it still reflects a general view, based on a range of consultations, that there is a district-wide shortfall in play facilities for children and young people.

4.8 Outdoor Sports Facilities

The PMP study stressed that this category of green space includes not only playing pitches but also facilities such as athletics tracks, tennis courts and golf courses and recommended a provision standard of 2.5ha per 1,000 population.

The NPFA Six Acre Standard recommends that a minimum of 1.6ha per 1,000 population of outdoor playing space should be provided on all new housing developments. Of this, at least 1.2ha should be for pitch sports (cricket, football, rugby union, rugby league, hockey, lacrosse and American Football) with the balance (0.4ha) being made up by non-pitch sports such as athletics, tennis, bowls and croquet. The Six Acre Standard excludes large outdoor sporting facilities such as golf courses and fishing/sailing lakes which were included within the PMP study.

The current District Council standard for outdoor playing space on new residential developments (as contained in the district Local Plan) is 40 square metres per dwelling. Based on the existing average household size for the district of 2.4 people this equates to a standard of around 1.67ha per 1,000 population.

The District Playing Pitch Strategy (Sport England, 2003) identified a local standard of 1.69ha/1000 population needed to meet local needs in relation to pitches and greens.

Using the recommended local standard there is a district-wide surplus of provision of outdoor sports facilities of around 350ha, however the vast majority of this is contained in sub-areas B and D which contain a number of large sporting facilities such as golf courses and sailing lakes. Sub-area A, the main urban area of the district, has a deficiency of provision of over 30ha. These figures illustrate the difficulty in setting an appropriate standard for outdoor sports facilities, with the presence of a few large sites tending to exaggerate the provision figures.

4.9 Allotments and Community Gardens

The proposed local standard for allotments and community gardens arising from the PMP study was 0.5ha per 1,000 population, however the study pointed out that demand for allotments can be very localised. Based on an average plot size of 310sq. metres this translates into 16 plots per 1,000 population.

Whilst there are no definitive national standards for the provision of allotments the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) recommends a minimum provision level of 20 plots per 1,000 households which, based on an average household size of 2.4 people, equates to 8.3 plots per 1,000 population or 0.3ha per 1,000 population. The 1970s Thorpe Report into allotments recommended
a standard of 0.5 acres/1,000 population which, based on an average plot size of one sixteenth of an acre, is equivalent to 8 plots per 1,000 population.

Using the recommended PMP standard of 0.5ha per 1,000 population there is a district-wide deficit in provision of nearly 12ha, with all sub-areas and all hierarchies showing a deficit. However if the NSALG recommended standard is used this is turned into an overall surplus of nearly 10ha.

4.10 Cemeteries and Churchyards

The PMP study, based on a range of consultations, suggested that an appropriate provision standard for cemeteries and churchyards was 0.5ha per 1,000 population. Using this standard there is a district-wide deficit in provision of just over 7ha, with the larger settlements and urban areas having the highest deficit.

Although it is unlikely that any new churchyards will be created to reduce this deficiency, there will be a need for additional cemetery space as existing sites become full.
5.0 Improving our Green Spaces – Aims, Objectives and Policies

5.1 Vision

The vision for Newark & Sherwood (as contained in the Community Plan) is:

“Our aim is for residents of Newark & Sherwood to feel that their area offers them the best quality of life in the East Midlands. By 2010 we aim that to be one of the top 10 rural districts in the region and by 2015 one of the top 5. We need communities that area clean and green; learning and earning; accessible; healthy; culturally connected; and safe and strong”

In order to link the Green Spaces Strategy with the Community Plan the vision for the district’s green spaces is:

“Newark & Sherwood - a district enriched by high quality, accessible green spaces that meet the needs of local people, help to build strong, sustainable communities and enhance our shared environment for existing and future generations”

5.2 Strategic Aims and Objectives

The Community Plan for Newark & Sherwood for the period 2006 – 2016 has identified the following six themes that will help to build sustainable communities in the district:

- Safe and strong
- Healthy
- Learning and earning
- Clean and green
- Culturally connected
- Accessible

Green spaces are able to contribute to each of these themes and the following strategic aims and objectives will act as a framework for implementing the Green Spaces Strategy over the next 5 years:

Green Spaces – Safe and strong
- To ensure that the district’s green spaces are managed and maintained so as to protect the health and safety of those who use and work in them
- To ensure that the district’s green spaces encourage the involvement of local people and strengthen local communities by engendering a sense of local ownership and pride
- To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide facilities and activities which involve and engage children and young people

Green Spaces – Healthy
- To promote the value of green spaces as a major contributor to the health and well being of local communities
- To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide facilities and activities which promote physical activity for all sectors of the community

Green Spaces – Learning and Earning
- To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide opportunities for training, education and life-long earning
To ensure that the district’s green spaces contribute to the wider regeneration of the district

**Green Spaces – Clean and Green**
- To ensure that the district is provided with a diverse and appropriate range of high quality green spaces that meet the recreational and social needs of local communities
- To ensure that the district’s green spaces are managed and maintained in a manner which protects and improves the environment and promotes sustainable development

**Green Spaces – Culturally Connected**
- To ensure that the district’s green spaces contribute towards people’s understanding of their shared natural and cultural heritage

**Green Spaces – Accessible**
- To ensure that the district is provided with a network of accessible green spaces that meet the needs of all sectors of the community

5.3 **Turning Aims and Objectives into Actions**

In order to ensure that the aims and objectives of this strategy are translated into specific, deliverable actions a delivery plan has been drawn up. This identifies the action required, the partners who will be able to help deliver it, the resources required and a timetable for delivery.

5.3.1 **Green Spaces – Safe and Strong**

To ensure that the district’s green spaces are managed and maintained so as to protect the health and safety of those who use and work in them

**Site-based staff and volunteers**
The presence of authorised staff on green spaces will help to ensure that users feel safe and deter misuse. A recent report from CABE Space (‘Parks Need Parkforce’, CABE Space, 2005) highlighted the need for staff within green spaces in order to ensure that the success of a decade of parks regeneration is not jeopardised. The CABE report quoted recent research that showed that 39% of women felt unsafe in London’s green spaces and 89% of them said that more staff would make them feel safer. Whilst smaller, less significant green spaces will be unable to support specific staff the involvement of volunteers and peripatetic rangers will provide reassurance for users. Encouraging local people to become involved with their local green spaces will engender a sense of ownership and encourage users to become local guardians. Volunteer ‘Friends’ groups have been set up on a number of the district’s parks and green spaces and members of these groups can act as official or semi-official wardens, reporting problems to the managing organisation.

Local police, Community Support Officers and neighbourhood watch members can also make a real difference by patrolling sites and acting as a visible presence.

**Combating Anti-social Behaviour and Fear of Crime**
Green spaces suffer from a range of anti-social behaviour including:
- Vandalism leading to damage of the site’s facilities and infrastructure
- Misuse, including unruly behaviour, drug-taking, illegal motorcycling, damage to neighbouring properties, intimidation of green space users and alcoholism
- Litter, graffiti and fly-tipping
- Dogs and dog fouling
A recent national survey of people who never or rarely use parks revealed that 68% were put off by dog fouling, 57% by vandalism and graffiti and 44% by poor maintenance. In order to encourage more people into parks and green spaces it is thus essential to tackle these barriers and a range of measures can be taken to reduce anti-social behaviour and misuse:

- Design green spaces to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour and fear of crime
- Ensure, wherever possible, that areas are visible to passers-by and nearby residents
- Ensure sites are well used by well-meaning visitors
- Provide and maintain appropriate facilities such as litter and dog bins
- Ensure litter, graffiti and fly-tipping is removed as promptly as possible
- Instil a sense of ownership and pride amongst the local community and encourage the formation of Friends groups
- Utilise and train site-based staff such as gardeners and rangers to combat anti-social behaviour
- Use of CCTV cameras and lighting
- Locking of sites at night
- Enforce restrictions and bye-laws
- Make use of official routes such as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

Utilise safe working practices and risk assessments

In order to protect the health and safety of those using and working in green spaces it is vital that the various risks involved are assessed and appropriate working practices and remedial actions introduced.

To ensure that the district’s green spaces encourage the involvement of local people and strengthen local communities by engendering a sense of local ownership and pride

The Government’s Green Spaces Task Force report ‘Green Spaces, Better Places’ (DLTR, 2002) highlighted the following benefits linked with community involvement:

- Increased local sense of ownership
- Facilities will be suited to local needs
- Reduces conflict between users
- Allows access to additional funding
- Develops social capital and community cohesion

Measures to improve community engagement with green spaces include:

- Seek to achieve and maintain a sense of community ownership of, and pride in, green spaces
- Encourage and support the formation of community user groups such as ‘Friends of the Park’
- Work in partnership with specialist user groups such as bowls and football clubs
- Utilise the experience and knowledge of specialist groups such as ornithological societies
- Seek to involve local community-based organisations such as youth clubs, Sure Start, scout groups and local day centres
- Conduct appropriate consultation and community needs analysis before initiating any significant changes
- Regularly consult site users as to their likes and dislikes and seek to act on these
- Holding events that are of relevance to local communities
To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide facilities and activities which involve and engage children and young people

Creating facilities that involve and engage children and young people will help to ensure that they feel that green spaces are relevant to them. As well as reducing the likelihood that young people will misuse other green space facilities, such provision has been shown to provide diversionary activities which have a positive effect on vandalism and anti-social behaviour in the surrounding area.

Involving children and young people in the design of their local green spaces has also been shown to promote responsibility and reduce anti-social behaviour (‘Involving Young People in the Design and Care of Urban Spaces’ CABE Space, 2004). The involvement of youth workers, local schools and youth clubs in green space projects will help to ensure that children and young people are fully involved and catered for.

5.3.2 Green Spaces – Healthy

To promote the value of green spaces as a major contributor to the health and well being of local communities

Parks and green spaces have a vital role to play in promoting healthy living and preventing illness by providing places for walking, cycling and other physical activities. Programmes such as the Countryside Agency’s ‘Walking your way to health’ have been promoted in the district and the Newark & Sherwood Foragers is a walking group that was formed from this initiative. The group organises walks in several areas of the district and makes use of many of the district’s green spaces. Regular use of green spaces can also help to reduce stress-related illnesses and has been shown to help relieve the symptoms of mental illness.

To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide facilities and activities which promote physical activity for all sectors of the community

Newark & Sherwood’s parks and green spaces provide a wide variety of facilities that encourage and facilitate physical activity including:

- Children’s play areas
- Teenage facilities such as multi-sports kick-about areas
- Outdoor sports facilities, including bowling greens, tennis courts and pitches for football, cricket and rugby
- Open grass for informal ball games and recreation
- Walking and cycling routes
- Orienteering trails

There are also many groups and organisations providing sports activities based on green spaces. These include numerous local football, rugby and cricket teams as well as sports development staff from the district and county councils. ‘Parklife’ is a Sport England funded programme, managed by the Greenwood Partnership, which encourages and facilitates physical activities on green spaces such as Vicar Water Country Park.

5.3.3 Green Spaces – Learning and Earning

To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide opportunities for training, education and life-long earning
Parks and green spaces are increasingly used as an ‘outdoor classroom’ for school subjects ranging from nature study to citizenship. A number of green spaces in the district provide facilities for environmental education, with Sherwood Pines Forest Park having a well-established environmental education programme with a classroom based on the site. Opportunities exist to further involve schools in the district with their local green spaces and rangers from the district and county councils and organisations such as the Sherwood Community Rangers have a key role to play in providing an environmental education service to schools, community groups and local people.

Green spaces are also able to act as training facilities and venues for work experience. Rumbles Catering Project, which runs the visitor centre at Vicar Water Country Park, provides training in catering and life skills for adults with learning difficulties. Organisations such as BTCV also play a valuable role in training volunteers in environmental skills and the BTCV Institute for Environmental Conservation is a partnership between BTCV and Broxtowe College, funded by the Learning and Skills Council, that provides training and educational opportunities across a range of subjects.

To ensure that the district’s green spaces contribute to the wider regeneration of the district

There is a clear link between quality green spaces and land value, with CABE Space’s 2005 report ‘Does Money Grow on Trees’ demonstrating that the value of commercial and residential properties neighbouring regenerated green spaces rises by as much as 20%, with a consequent increase in tax yield to maintain public services. A recent survey by the Halifax Building Society has also found that house prices in areas with an award-winning approach to landscape and environmental management are 23% higher than the regional average.

The quality of an area’s green spaces is also a key element in creating a favourable image for the area and thus encouraging inward investment and employment.

Quality green spaces also contribute to the economy of the district by:

- Providing places for physical activity and relaxation and thus contributing to a healthier and more active population with consequent savings for the NHS and local employers
- Supporting sustainable urban drainage systems and thus helping to counter the problems and costs involved with flooding
- Attracting tourists to the area – the value of tourism to the district is significant and many of the district’s green spaces (Sherwood Forest, Newark Castle & Gardens, Rufford Country Park) are key elements of the tourism package.

5.3.4 Green Spaces – Clean and Green

To ensure that the district is provided with a diverse and appropriate range of high quality green spaces that meet the recreational and social needs of local communities

Section 3 of this strategy outlined the current quantity, quality and accessibility of the district’s green spaces and Section 5.4 to 5.6 and the Strategy Action Plan detail specific policies and actions that will ensure that this objective is met.
To ensure that the district’s green spaces are managed and maintained in a manner which protects and improves the environment and promotes sustainable development

The provision of high quality green spaces can contribute significantly towards the sustainable development of the district by:

- Providing opportunities for social interaction, healthy exercise, relaxation and community cohesion
- Supporting biodiversity by providing wildlife habitats and green corridors
- Playing a key role in flood prevention and sustainable urban drainage by reducing and channelling surface water run-off (the rate of run-off for surfaces with trees and grass is estimated to be 10 – 20%, compared with 60 – 70% for hard surfaced areas)
- Reducing pollution by filtering air pollutants such as sulphur dioxide
- Cooling the air – moisture from trees and woodlands helps to cool the air of towns and cities, with daytime temperatures being 2-3C lower in a large urban park than in surrounding streets
- Providing a visual amenity and creating opportunities for derelict and degraded land to be reclaimed as ecologically and recreationally valuable areas
- Boosting the local economy and supporting jobs and training

5.3.5 Green Spaces – Culturally Connected

To ensure that the district’s green spaces contribute towards people’s understanding of their shared natural and cultural heritage

Many of the district’s green spaces are an essential part of the heritage and culture of local people and communities. Whilst regionally and nationally known sites such as Rufford Abbey, Sherwood Forest and Newark Castle are rich in history and legend, many smaller green spaces also provide reservoirs of collective memories, containing burial places, ancient monuments, memorials and links with industries and customs from the recent past. Green spaces also provide venues for local festivals, civic celebrations and performances.

Involving local people in green space-based cultural events and in interpreting the cultural and natural heritage of their local environment will help to ensure that green spaces are at the heart of local communities.

5.3.6 Green Spaces – Accessible

To ensure that the district is provided with a network of accessible green spaces that meet the needs of all sectors of the community

In order for green spaces to be at the heart of communities they must be accessible and relevant to all sectors of society and issues which may deter certain groups from using them must be tackled vigorously.

The green spaces audit has identified certain areas where access to particular types of green space is difficult due to a lack of provision or information.

5.4 Recommended Green Space Provision Standards

Section 4 of this strategy considered the background to the establishment of local provision standards for Newark & Sherwood. In order to ensure that the district is
provided with sufficient green spaces of an appropriate type and which meet the needs of local people specific policies for the provision and protection of green space are required.

### 5.4.1 Parks and Gardens

There are 15 sites in the district that have been classed as parks and gardens and these range from small pocket parks to large country parks. Setting a provision standard for such a diverse range of sites is thus difficult, however the suggested provision standard for parks and gardens of **0.6ha per 1,000 population** is felt to be appropriate where it relates to the provision of neighbourhood parks and gardens rather than large country parks.

Using this standard Figure 4 shows that the main deficiency of parks and gardens is in Rainworth and Ollerton & Boughton. Both of these communities are of a size to warrant a neighbourhood park but lack such a facility, although this is compensated for to some extent in Ollerton & Boughton by the existence of other green space types.

The majority of the district’s residents live within 5km of a major park or garden (Figure 5) and, whilst there are large areas of the district that are not covered, some larger villages such as Blidworth have playing fields and play areas that act as neighbourhood parks.

The use of a hierarchy of provision for parks is also a useful way of assessing the district’s level of provision and further information on this is included in section 5.4.8.

### 5.4.2 Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces

There are over 100 individual natural and semi-natural green spaces in the district with a total area of over 4,000ha. The sites range from small areas of natural grassland or woodland of less than 0.1ha to very large areas up to hundreds of hectares. As with parks and gardens the diversity of such sites makes it difficult to set a meaningful provision standard and the suggested standard of 10ha per 1,000 population results in a district-wide surplus of over 3,000ha but a deficiency of over 300ha in the main urban area of the district. This standard also produces a deficit in provision in many of the rural parishes of the district and Figure 6 illustrates this concept of rural natural accessible green space deprivation. It should be noted, however, that many farms are now being managed in a more environmentally sensitive manner and that such agri-environment schemes can make a contribution to natural and semi-natural green space. For example at Hawton Grange Farm, south of Newark, there is permissive access along farm tracks and through new poplar woodland, with site information boards and picnic areas.

Whilst some areas have a deficit in provision, the whole of the district is within 5km of an area of natural and semi-natural green space (Figure 7)

The provision of natural and semi-natural green spaces can also be assessed by the use of a hierarchy of provision based on English Nature’s Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt) model. The ANGSt model requires:

- That no person should live more than 300m (5 minutes walking distance) from their nearest accessible natural green space
- Statutory Local Nature Reserves at a minimum level of 1ha per thousand population
- At least one accessible 20ha site within 2km of home
- At least one accessible 100ha site within 5km of home
- At least one accessible 500ha site within 10km of home

As stated in Section 4.5 it is difficult to see how the main urban area of the district can meet these standards, particularly those relating to distance from large (over 100ha) sites. However the presence of areas of former gypsum workings to the south of Newark, some of which are already designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, provides opportunities for the creation of areas of natural and semi-natural green space linked to Newark by the Sustrans cycle route and other rights of way. Taking these factors into consideration a suggested hierarchy of provision for the district, based on local research and consultation, is given in Table 3 below.

The categorisation of natural and semi-natural green spaces is also important and it should be noted that some sites that are primarily classed as parks and gardens, such as Scone Hills/Devon Park in Newark, also contain considerable areas of natural and semi-natural green space. Many playing field sites (which will be categorised as either outdoor sports facilities or provision for children and young people) also contain natural and semi-natural areas such as hedgerows and areas of tree planting and the opportunity exists to further increase the biodiversity of such sites.

Table 3 Recommended Provision Standards – Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural &amp; Semi-Natural Green Space Categorisation</th>
<th>Size Guideline (ha)</th>
<th>Distance from Homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional N&amp;S Green Spaces</td>
<td>Over 100</td>
<td>10 - 30km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District N&amp;S Green Spaces</td>
<td>10 – 100</td>
<td>2 - 10km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood N&amp;S Green Spaces</td>
<td>2 – 10</td>
<td>500m - 2km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local N&amp;S Green Spaces</td>
<td>1 – 2</td>
<td>500m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket N&amp;S Green Spaces</td>
<td>0.2 – 1</td>
<td>300m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4 - District-wide Provision - Parks & Gardens - Range of Provision per Head of Population
(Recommended Provision - 0.6 Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)
Figure 5 - Extent of District within 1 to 5 kilometres of a Major Park
Figure 6 - District-wide Provision - Natural & Semi-natural Green Spaces - Range of Provision per Head of Population
(Recommended Provision - 10 Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)

Difference between actual & recommended provision
- Less than 227ha - Areas with greatest deficit provision
- 227 to 759ha
- 759 to 2,083ha
- 2,083 to 5,140ha
- 5 to 5,140ha - Areas where provision is nearest recommended levels
- 5 to 100ha
- 100 to 500ha
- More than 500ha - Areas with highest excess provision
Figure 7 - Extent of District within 5 kilometres of a Natural/Semi-natural Green Space
5.4.3 Amenity Green Spaces

There are over 140 amenity green space sites of over 600m² in the district with a total area of 73.3ha. This equates to a current provision level of 0.69ha per 1,000 population. The current Newark & Sherwood Local Plan standard for the provision of amenity open space on new housing developments equates to 0.62ha per 1,000 population and the PMP recommendation was 0.6ha per 1,000 population. Using this standard results in a district-wide surplus of 9.5ha, but deficits in many areas of the district (Figure 8). A standard of \(0.6ha/1,000\) population is thus considered to be appropriate.

Figure 9 illustrates that there are large areas of the district that are not within 1 kilometre of an amenity green space, however for many villages the main area of public open space will be a playing field and this effectively doubles as amenity green space in these areas.

5.4.4 Provision for Children and Young People

There are 65 sites designated as being for children and young people in the district with a total area of 36.6ha. The National Playing Fields Association's 'Six Acre Standard' recommends a standard of 0.8ha per 1,000 population and the Newark & Sherwood Local Plan standard for new housing developments is 0.83ha per 1,000 population. The PMP recommendation was 0.75ha per 1,000 population. Given that:

- Using the 0.75ha/1,000 population standard results in a district-wide deficit of 43ha;
- Additional children's playing space will be provided within parks and gardens, many of which include designated children's play areas; and
- Consultation exercises have consistently found that local people feel that there is a shortfall in provision for children and young people

it is considered that a standard of \(0.75ha\) per \(1,000\) population is appropriate.

The use of recommended walking distances to children’s play areas (as shown in the Six Acre Standard) provides a further means of assessing the provision levels for children and young people. Assessments of provision based on walking distances will be given within the specific green space community action plans (see Section 5.4.8).

Based on the recommended provision level:

- Many parishes in the district show a deficit in provision, however a number of small, rural parishes are sufficiently provided for by play areas within villages (Figure 10).
- All sub areas in the district show a deficit in provision (Figure11)

Whilst large areas of the district do not lie within 1km of a children’s play area the majority of people live within 3km of a play area, (Figure 12). In addition some villages are served by playing fields where, whilst the primary use has been taken to be for outdoor sports, the facility still acts as a playing field for children.
Figure 8 - District-wide Provision - Amenity Green Spaces - Range of Provision per Head of Population (Recommended Provision - 0.6 Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)

Difference between actual & recommended provision:
- < -4.5ha - Areas with greatest deficit provision
- -4.5 to -1.0ha
- -1.0 to 0.25ha
- 0.25 to 0.25ha - Areas where provision is nearest recommended levels
- 0.25 to 1.0ha
- 1.0 to 2.0ha
- > 2.0ha - Areas with highest excess provision
Figure 9 - Extent of District within 1 kilometre of an Amenity Green Space
Figure 10 - District-wide Provision - Play Facilities for Children & Young People - Range of Provision per Head of Population (Recommended Provision - 0.75 Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)
Figure 11 - Provision for Children & Young People by Sub-area (Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)
Figure 12 - Extent of District within 1 to 3 kilometres of a Children's Play Area

Distance from Play Areas
- 0 - 1km
- 1 - 2km
- 2 - 3km
5.4.5 Outdoor Sports Facilities

The National Playing Fields Association’s ‘Six Acre Standard’ recommends a provision level of 1.6ha per 1,000 population of outdoor playing space for sport (defined as pitches, greens, courts, athletics tracks and miscellaneous sites such as croquet lawns and training areas). The Newark & Sherwood Local Plan standard for sports fields on new housing developments is 1.67ha per 1,000 population and the district playing pitch strategy recommended 1.69ha per 1,000 population for grass pitches and greens. The PMP recommendation was for 2.5ha per 1,000 population, however the total audited figure of 618ha included facilities such as golf courses and water used for recreation that are excluded from the NPFA standard. Using the PMP standard there is a district-wide surplus of over 350ha of outdoor sports facilities, however removing golf courses and water-based sports reduces the total provision figure to 220ha giving a deficit of 13ha. Taking all these factors into account it is recommended that a standard of **2.2ha per 1,000 population** is adopted. This standard will exclude golf courses, horse race tracks and water-based recreational areas but will include the following:

- School sports fields
- Athletics tracks
- All informal areas within a defined outdoor sports facility, e.g. those grassed areas that are not specifically marked out as pitches
- Grass pitches and greens
- Artificially surfaced areas such as tennis courts and multi-sports areas

Based on this standard Figure 13 demonstrates that substantial areas of the district have a deficit in outdoor sports facilities, however those worst affected are predominantly small rural communities which, in many cases, would not be able to support such facilities. The majority of the district’s communities lie within 3km of an outdoor sports facility (Figure 14). Consultees involved in the preparation of this strategy (Section 4.3) felt that it was reasonable to expect people to drive for a short distance to reach a sports facility and the coverage shown in Figure 14 can thus be considered to be appropriate for the majority of the district.

In order to further investigate the provision of, and need for, specific outdoor sports facilities in the district the strategy action plan (Section 6) recommends that further work be carried out on developing the district playing pitch strategy. Such work would involve a more detailed analysis of the demand for particular pitch and court based sports and how that demand may develop in the future. The level of existing facilities can then be assessed against this.
Figure 13 - District-wide Provision - Outdoor Sports Facilities - Range of Provision per Head of Population
(Recommended Provision - 2.2 Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)

Difference between actual & recommended provision
- < 7.5ha - Areas with greatest deficit provision
- 7.5 to 9.4ha
- 9.5 to 11.4ha
- 11.5 to 13.4ha - Areas where provision is nearest recommended levels
- 13.5 to 15.4ha
- 15.5 to 17.4ha
- > 17.5ha - Areas with highest excess provision
Figure 14 - Extent of District within 1 to 3 kilometres of an Outdoor Sports Facility
5.4.6 Allotments and Community Gardens

The green spaces audit has identified just over 41ha of allotments in the district on 41 separate sites, equating to a provision level of 0.38ha per 1,000 population. The PMP recommendation was for 0.5ha per 1,000 population, which results in a deficit of nearly 13ha of allotments. The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners recommends a minimum figure of 20 plots per 1,000 households (which equates to around 0.3ha per 1,000 population).

Whilst some parishes have a surplus of allotment provision, and in the past allotment sites have been sold off in Newark due to their continuing lack of use, there is evidence of a renewed interest in allotment gardening linked with recent concerns over food additives, food miles and healthy lifestyles. For instance Newark, Balderton and Ollerton & Boughton now have waiting lists and in Southwell nearly 30 people are currently waiting for a vacant plot. It is thus considered that a provision standard of **0.5ha per 1,000 population** is appropriate. Using this figure will allow for varying amounts of additional space over and above the actual allotment plots and will also make allowance for community gardens.

Figure 15 illustrates the provision levels using the recommended standard and demonstrates that many of the larger settlements in the district are showing a deficit in provision. A number of the more rural areas also show a slight deficit, however these tend to be based on villages which would be too small to support allotment provision.

Figure 16 demonstrates that the majority of the district is within 3km of an allotment site and, given that many consultees felt that it was reasonable to expect people to drive for a short distance (up to 5km), this coverage is felt to be appropriate in terms of the location of allotment sites. However for certain larger villages such as Lowdham and Farnsfield, which lack allotment sites, additional provision should be pursued.

5.4.7 Cemeteries and Churchyards

The audit has identified 46ha of cemeteries and churchyards, equating to a provision level of 0.43ha per 1,000 population. The PMP recommended standard was 0.5ha per 1,000 population. Using the PMP standard there is a district-wide deficit of just over 7ha, with the largest deficit occurring in the more urban areas.

Given the need for future burial space once existing burial grounds become full it is recommended that the standard of **0.5ha per 1,000 population** should be adopted.

Figure 17 illustrates the provision levels using the recommended standard and confirms that the largest deficit in provision is in the urban areas of the district. Figure 18 shows that virtually the entire district is within 3km of a churchyard or cemetery.
Figure 15 - District-wide Provision - Allotments & Community Gardens - Range of Provision per Head of Population
(Recommended Provision - 0.5 Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)
Figure 16 - Extent of District within 1 to 3 kilometres of an Allotment
Figure 17 - District-wide Provision - Cemeteries & Churchyards - Range of Provision per Head of Population
(Recommended Provision - 0.5 Hectares per 1,000 Head of Population)
Figure 18 - Extent of District within 3 kilometres of a Cemetery/Churchyard
5.4.8 Conclusions

Whilst setting local provision standards based on the area of provision per 1,000 population is appropriate and justifiable for some types of green space provision, it is more problematical for other types. In particular a standard of this type for natural and semi-natural green spaces is difficult to set given the diverse nature of the district.

Given the multi-functional nature of green spaces and the fact that much of the use made of them is informal a hierarchical approach to green space is also useful (see Section 5.2) and the hierarchy shown below is felt to be appropriate for the district:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Categorisation</th>
<th>Size Guideline (ha)</th>
<th>Distance from Homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional Park</td>
<td>Over 60</td>
<td>Up to 30km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Park</td>
<td>10 – 60</td>
<td>Up to 15km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Park/Playing field</td>
<td>4 - 10</td>
<td>Up to 3km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Park/Playing field</td>
<td>2 – 4</td>
<td>Up to 1km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Playing Field</td>
<td>0.5 – 2</td>
<td>Up to 500m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket Playing Field</td>
<td>0.2 – 0.5</td>
<td>Up to 300m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using this hierarchy areas which do not meet the relevant distance thresholds are able to be identified. Figure 19 illustrates the catchment area for publicly accessible pocket, local, neighbourhood and town parks/playing fields and shows that large areas of the district are not covered by facilities of this nature. Whilst many of these areas are rural in nature the figure demonstrates that some larger villages and towns, such as Rainworth and Ollerton/Boughton, are not served by this level of facility. Figure 19 also shows that virtually the whole of the district is covered by a district park and similarly all residents of the district live within 30km of a regional park. However the catchment areas for District and Regional Facilities rely on people being able to reach them by car or public transport.

Combining the use of hierarchies, catchment area recommendations and population-based standards provides a way of determining surpluses and deficits for green space provision in the district. Utilising specific green space standards for different sized communities in the district (see Table 4 below) can then allow for all settlements in the district to be assessed and any shortfalls identified. The strategy action plan recommends that specific Community Green Space Provision and Improvement Plans should be drawn up for all large settlements in the district and these will utilise provision standards to identify specific issues within local communities. A sample Provision and Improvement Plan is shown as Table 5 below.
Figure 19 - Extent of District within Catchment Area of Parks & Playing Fields

Distance from Park/Playing Field
- 300m from Pocket Park
- 500m from Local Playing Field
- 1km from Neighbourhood Park/Playing Field
- 5km from Town Park/Playing Field
- 15km from District Park
### TABLE 4 RECOMMENDED MINIMUM GREEN SPACE PROVISION ACCORDING TO SETTLEMENT SIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITY TYPE</th>
<th>LARGE TOWN (over 20,000 population)</th>
<th>TOWN (6,000 – 20,000 pop)</th>
<th>LARGE VILLAGE/NEIGHBOURHOOD (3,000 – 6,000 pop)</th>
<th>VILLAGE/NEIGHBOURHOOD (1,000 – 3,000 pop)</th>
<th>SMALL VILLAGE (300 – 1,000 pop)</th>
<th>HAMLET (under 300 pop)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-purpose park/playing field</td>
<td>District park</td>
<td>Town park</td>
<td>Neighbourhood park/Playing field</td>
<td>Neighbourhood playing field</td>
<td>Local playing field</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural &amp; Semi-natural green spaces</td>
<td>District N&amp;SN green space &amp; range of smaller spaces</td>
<td>Neighbourhood N&amp;SN green space &amp; range of smaller spaces</td>
<td>Neighbourhood N&amp;SN green space &amp; range of smaller spaces</td>
<td>Local N&amp;SN green spaces</td>
<td>Local N&amp;SN green spaces</td>
<td>Access to nearby N&amp;SN green spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity green spaces</td>
<td>Appropriate range</td>
<td>Appropriate range</td>
<td>Appropriate range</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for children and young people</td>
<td>Play areas and teen facilities within walking distance of homes</td>
<td>Play areas and teen facilities within walking distance of homes</td>
<td>Play areas and teen facilities within walking distance of homes</td>
<td>Play area. Limited teenage provision</td>
<td>Play area</td>
<td>Possibly small play area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor sports facilities</td>
<td>Appropriate range of sports – football, cricket, rugby, tennis, bowls</td>
<td>Appropriate range of sports – football, cricket, rugby, tennis, bowls</td>
<td>Appropriate range of sports – football, cricket, rugby, tennis, bowls</td>
<td>Appropriate range of sports – football, cricket, bowls</td>
<td>Limited – football &amp; cricket</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotments and community gardens</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries and closed churchyards</td>
<td>Yes – including cemetery</td>
<td>Yes – including cemetery</td>
<td>Yes – including cemetery</td>
<td>Churchyard</td>
<td>Churchyard</td>
<td>Churchyard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012
## TABLE 5 SAMPLE COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE PROVISION AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN – NEIGHBOURHOOD/VILLAGE

**Parish/Neighbourhood:** Bridge Ward (North of Lincoln Road)  
**Population:** 2,280 (estimated)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green Space Type</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Area/Length</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Gardens</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fleming Drive and Chestnut Ave playing fields (including Castlefields play area) act as Neighbourhood parks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity Open Space 0.6ha/1,000pop</td>
<td>Wolsey Road OAP bungalows, Wolsey Road Harvest Drive, Meering Avenue, Park Crescent, Alexander Avenue, Robert Dukeson Ave</td>
<td>0.15, 0.08, 0.06, 0.06, 0.09, 0.15, 0.07</td>
<td>Open grass, rose beds, seating Open grass Open grass, shrubs &amp; trees Open grass Open grass, shrubs &amp; trees Open grass Open grass (balancing pond)</td>
<td>Average, Average, Average, Average, Average, Average</td>
<td>Requirement 1.4ha Actual 0.7ha Shortfall 0.7ha</td>
<td>Fleming Drive and Chestnut Avenue playing fields act as AOS as well as PCYP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for Children &amp; Young People 0.75ha/1,000pop</td>
<td>Fleming Drive playing field, Castlefields Play area, Chestnut Ave playing field, Seven Hills Hostel play area</td>
<td>1.27, 0.15, 0.93, N/A</td>
<td>Play equipment (LEAP), BMX track, open grass, planting Play equipment (LEAP), open grass Ball court, open grass, goalposts Play equipment for residents only</td>
<td>Average, Average, Average</td>
<td>Requirement 1.7ha Actual 2.35ha Surplus 0.65ha 95% of area within 500m walking distance of Neighbourhood Area</td>
<td>Fosse estate skate park within 1km walking distance Enhanced teenage provision on Fleming Drive playing field S106 funds available from new housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green Space Type</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Area/Length</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Sports Facilities</td>
<td>Bishop Alexander School playing field</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>Junior football pitch</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Requirement 5.0ha</td>
<td>Lincoln Road playing fields within walking distance. Area covered by Newark-wide facilities (golf/tennis/rugby/cricket clubs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2ha/1,000pop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Actual 0.9ha</td>
<td>Shortfall 4.1ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural &amp; Semi-natural Green Space</td>
<td>None specific but open land to west acts as N&amp;SGS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotments &amp; Community Gardens</td>
<td>Allotments off Fleming Dr</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Parking Mains water</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Requirement 0.9ha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.4ha/1,000pop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Actual 0.7ha</td>
<td>Shortfall 0.2ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries &amp; Churchyards</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5ha/1,000pop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.0 Green Spaces Action Plan

6.1 Introduction

Based upon the:

- Audit of green space within the district;
- Assessment in terms of quantity, quality, accessibility and usage of sites;
- Range of consultations;
- Knowledge and experience of those responsible for managing green spaces in the district; and
- Themes contained within the Community Plan for the district

A set of specific actions can be drawn up that will help to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in Section 5.2. These are listed in the action plan in the following pages together with the strategic objective and strategy aim that they support.

6.2 Implementation

In order to ensure that the actions contained in the action plan are delivered within the recommended time frame it will be necessary for a range of partners to be involved in their implementation. The action plan thus contains a column that lists the relevant key partners as well as a timescale for implementation and a list of outcomes that will derive from the successful implementation of each recommended action.

The action plan covers the 5-year period from 2007 to 2012 and the timescale for implementation is as follows:

- Short term - by the end of 2008
- Medium term - by the end of 2010
- Long term - by the end of 2012

Actions where the timescale is given as ‘Ongoing’ will involve continuous implementation throughout the 5-year term of the strategy.

Abbreviations contained within the Action Plan are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSDC</td>
<td>Newark &amp; Sherwood District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCC</td>
<td>Nottinghamshire County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCs</td>
<td>Parish Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFT</td>
<td>Sherwood Forest Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWT</td>
<td>Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC</td>
<td>Forestry Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>Sherwood Community Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GN&amp;S</td>
<td>Groundwork Newark &amp; Sherwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPC</td>
<td>Southwell Parish Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Brackenhurst College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSPF</td>
<td>Newark &amp; Sherwood Play Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Sport England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTCV</td>
<td>British Trust for Conservation Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPC</td>
<td>Rainworth Parish Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPC</td>
<td>Edwinstowe Parish Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCF</td>
<td>Greenwood Community Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCT</td>
<td>Primary Care Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>English Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Civic Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTB</td>
<td>Heart of England Tourism Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH</td>
<td>English Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLF</td>
<td>Heritage Lottery Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLF</td>
<td>Big Lottery Fund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 6.3 Action Plan

### 6.3.1 Green Spaces - Safe and Strong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. To ensure that the district’s green spaces are managed and maintained so as to protect the health and safety of those who use and work in them | 1.1 Ensure that the presence of authorised staff and volunteers in green spaces is maximised:  
   - Maintain staffing levels in green spaces  
   - Identify need for new staff and seek finance for recruitment  
   - Encourage formation of green space-based volunteer groups  
   - Work with police to ensure police and CSO patrols regularly visit green spaces | NSDC, NCC, SFT PCs, NWT, FC, Police  
Friends groups  
Sports clubs  
Tenants & Residents Assocs  
Neighbourhood Watch | Ongoing | No of new staff recruited  
No of new Friends groups formed |
| 1.2 Minimise fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in green spaces:  
   - Design green spaces to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour and fear of crime  
   - Ensure sites are well used by well-meaning visitors  
   - Utilise and train site-based staff and volunteers to combat anti-social behaviour  
   - Use of CCTV cameras and lighting  
   - Locking of sites at night  
   - Enforce restrictions and bye-laws  
   - Make use of official routes such as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders  
   - Ensure litter and graffiti is promptly removed  
   - Control dogs and dog fouling | NSDC, NCC, NWT, PCs, FC, Police, | Ongoing | Reduction in reports of crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour |
## Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.3 | Ensure that sites are regularly inspected for H&S risks and prompt remedial action taken:  
   - Carry out regular risk assessments for staff, volunteers and visitors  
   - Carry out regular, documented site inspections  
   - Ensure all reports of damage and misuse are acted upon promptly | NSDC, NCC, SFT, PCs, NWT, FC, Friends groups Sports clubs | Ongoing | Reduction in reported accidents |

| 1.4 | Assess and improve safe access to green space sites:  
   - Review accident statistics, upgrade road crossings and improve warning signs etc. | NSDC, NCC, PC, Police | Medium term | Reduction in reported accidents |

| 2. | To ensure that the district’s green spaces encourage the involvement of local people and strengthen local communities by engendering a sense of local ownership and pride | | | |

| 2.1 | Seek to involve local people, voluntary groups and community-based organisations:  
   - Encourage and support the formation of community user groups such as ‘Friends of the Park’  
   - Work in partnership with specialist user groups such as bowls and football clubs  
   - Seek to involve local community-based organisations such as youth clubs, Sure Start, scout groups and local day centres  
   - Assess opportunities for greater third sector involvement in the management and maintenance of green spaces | NSDC, NCC, SFT PCs, NWT, FC, SCR, GN&S, BTCV, Police Friends groups Sports clubs, SE Tenants & Residents Assoc | Ongoing | No of new volunteer groups formed No of community groups involved in green space projects No of consultation exercises carried out No of people consulted No of events held in green spaces |

| 2.2 | Conduct appropriate consultation and community needs analysis before initiating any significant changes:  
   - Regularly consult site users as to their likes and dislikes and seek to act on these  
   - Engage with non-users and hard-to-reach groups | NSDC, NCC, SFT PCs, NWT, FC, SCR, GN&S, BTCV, Police Friends groups Sports clubs, TRAs | Ongoing | No of user surveys carried out No of non-user surveys carried out |
### Objective

3. **To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide facilities and activities which involve and engage children and young people**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Progress specific projects that increase provision for children and young people:</td>
<td>Hawtonville Youth Project, Rainworth youth facilities, Former Rufford School playing fields, Big Lottery Fund ‘Children’s Play Programme’</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, RPC, GN&amp;S, EPC, PCs, BLF, NSPF</td>
<td>Short and medium term</td>
<td>No of new/improved youth facilities, No of new/improved play facilities, No of young people using new facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Identify areas that have a shortfall in provision for children and young people and put in place measures to address this deficiency:</td>
<td>Identify areas with shortfall in provision, Consult with young people to establish needs, Identify appropriate sites, Identify funding opportunities, Initiate projects in consultation with young people, Monitor and review</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, Young people’s groups (youth clubs, scouts, sports clubs, etc.)</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>No of new facilities created, Reduction in crime and asb on green spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Carry out ongoing consultation with children and young people to identify needs and opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, GN&amp;S, Young people’s groups</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Involve existing young people’s groups in green spaces and create new green space-based young people’s groups (e.g. junior ‘Friends’ groups)</td>
<td></td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, GN&amp;S, NWT, FC, BTCV, Young people’s groups</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>No of groups involved, No of new groups formed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3.2 Green Spaces - Healthy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4. To promote the value of green spaces as a major contributor to the health and well being of local communities | 4.1 Encourage the use of green spaces by both existing (e.g. Newark & Sherwood Foragers) and new health-related groups:  
- Ensure sites are suitable for use with level, firm footpaths and appropriate ancillary facilities  
- Assist with marketing and organisation of existing and new groups  
- Investigate funding opportunities for new projects | NSDC, NCC, PCs, FC, GN&S, GCF, SFT, NWT, BTCV, Newark & Sherwood Foragers | Ongoing | No of people participating in activities  
No of new groups formed |
| 4.2 Encourage the use of GP referral schemes for green spaces:  
- Discuss with Primary Care Trusts  
- Identify funding opportunities  
- Identify and learn from exemplar schemes  
- Initiate schemes in selected areas | NSDC, NCC, PCs, PCT | Medium term | No of referral schemes set up  
No of people participating |
| 4.3 Publicise the health benefits of green spaces:  
- Include information on relevant web sites  
- Include information in relevant leaflets  
- Arrange publicity at relevant outlets – hospitals, GP surgeries, etc. | NSDC, NCC, FC, GCF, NWT, SFT, PCs, PCT, BTCV | Short term and ongoing | No of new publicity initiatives |
Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide facilities and activities which promote physical activity for all sectors of the community</td>
<td>5.1 Work with partners to organise a range of green-space related sports and health-related activities:</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, FC, GCF, PCs, BTCV, Sports clubs Newark &amp; Sherwood Foragers SE</td>
<td>Short term and ongoing</td>
<td>No of events No of people participating in events No of clubs and organisations involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Continue to roll out the ‘Parklife’ project at selected green spaces in the district</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Work with sports clubs to encourage and facilitate their use of green spaces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Ensure sports development officers are aware of and make use of opportunities for activities on green spaces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Work with organisations such as BTCV to encourage health-related volunteering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2 Ensure that facilities that assist with improving health are relevant and well maintained:</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, FC, PCs, SFT, SE Sports clubs Governing bodies</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Increased No of participants No of enhanced facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Consult with relevant user groups before instituting new schemes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Monitor usage of facilities to assess relevance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Keep facilities up-to-date to ensure their ongoing relevance and attractiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ƒ Work with local sports clubs to ensure that the provision and maintenance of their facilities encourages maximum use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>5.3 Update and expand the current Playing Pitch Strategy for the district:</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, SE, Voluntary sports clubs, governing bodies</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Production of new District Playing Pitch Strategy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ƒ Assess accuracy of information and update as necessary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ƒ Carry out further research into participation and pitch generation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ƒ Update strategy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ƒ Consult with appropriate bodies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ƒ Publish strategy</td>
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### 6.3.3 Green Spaces – Learning and Earning

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| 6. To ensure that the district’s green spaces provide opportunities for training, education and life-long earning | 6.1 Review existing and develop new programmes of environmental education:  
- Consult with schools in the district to identify the demand for environmental education  
- Review current provision and identify gaps  
- Initiate new schemes on appropriate sites | NSDC, NCC, FC, SFT, GCF, NWT, BTCV, Schools | Short term Ongoing | No of schools participating  
No of new education initiatives |
|  | 6.2 Encourage training schemes within the district’s green spaces:  
- Facilitate and extend existing schemes such as Rumbles Catering Project, BTCV Institute for Environmental Conservation, Notts Wildlife Trust’s courses for wildlife management and identification skills  
- Encourage the formation of new green space-based training schemes such as modern apprenticeships and work experience  
- Work with Brackenhurst College to identify opportunities for environmental and horticultural training in the district’s green spaces  
- Involvement of EnProve in green spaces | NSDC, NCC, FC, SFT, PCs, BTCV, GN&S, BC, NWT Schools | Ongoing | No of people participating in training  
No of schemes initiated  
No of people gaining qualifications  
No of people progressing to employment |
| 7. To ensure that the district’s green spaces contribute to the wider regeneration of the district | 7.1 Ensure that new housing developments make an appropriate contribution to green space development through a combination of on site and off site provision:  
- Re-write the NSDC Supplementary Planning Guidance on the provision of open space in connection with new housing developments to ensure that all significant developments (3 or more houses?) make a full contribution  
- Enforce the provisions of the existing (and future) SPG | NSDC, SE | Short term and ongoing | Area of green space arising from new developments  
Financial contribution to existing green space provision and maintenance |
### Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

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</table>
| 7.2       | Maximise the tourism opportunities linked with green spaces by marketing and promoting green spaces with tourism potential:  
- Ensure all major sites have a marketing plan  
- Consider joint promotional activities  
- Ensure green spaces meet appropriate tourism quality standards | NSDC, NCC, FC, PCs, NWT, SFT, GCF, HTB, | Short term and ongoing | No of marketing plans produced  
Increase in visitor numbers from outside district  
No of sites with quality accreditation |
| 7.3       | Wherever possible link green space improvements with wider regeneration initiatives | NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, SFT, GCF, EMDA, | Ongoing | No of linked schemes |
6.3.4 Green Spaces – Clean and Green

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| 8. To ensure that the district is provided with a diverse and appropriate range of high quality, accessible green spaces that meet the recreational and social needs of local communities | 8.1 Carry out ongoing consultation to ensure that green spaces meet the needs of the communities they serve:  
- Carry out regular site-based surveys  
- Consider using common format questionnaires to allow for benchmarking  
- Consult with non-users to identify barriers to use  
- Analyse results and use to guide future improvements | NSDC, NCC, FC, PCs, NWT, SFT, GCF | Ongoing | No of people surveyed |
| | 8.2 Carry out regular quality and accessibility audits to ensure that green spaces are continuously improved:  
- Agree a common format for audits (based on Green Flag criteria) to allow for benchmarking between different organisations  
- Develop a simplified audit for smaller sites (less than 0.06ha)  
- Use the audit information to prioritise green space improvements | NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, SFT, | Ongoing | No of sites surveyed |
| | 8.3 Assess current green space provision quality in local areas:  
- Prepare community-wide green space provision and improvement plans  
- Regularly assess need and demand for facilities and activities  
- Assess and action opportunities for opening up school playing fields for increased community use  
- Actively resource creation of green space and/or enhanced access to existing green spaces where a deficit has been demonstrated | NSDC, PCs, NCC, SE, EN | Short term and ongoing | No of plans produced  
Area of green space created  
Area of green space protected |
### Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.4 Draw up individual management plans for all parks and green spaces of local and district-wide significance:</td>
<td>Identify relevant sites in consultation with local users and communities</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, SFT,</td>
<td>Short to medium term</td>
<td>No of plans produced</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Consider using common format for management plans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Include quality audit information within plans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Draw up plans and implement</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.5 Gain Green Flag accreditation for additional parks and green spaces in the district:</td>
<td>Identify appropriate sites</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, SPC, FC, SFT</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Number of Green Flag award-winning sites</td>
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<td>Identify and initiate improvements required to reach Green Flag status</td>
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<td>Apply for Green Flag status</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Possible sites include Sconce &amp; Devon parks, Newark, War Memorial Recreation Ground, Southwell, Sherwood Forest Country Park and Rufford Country Park</td>
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<td>8.6 Declare further appropriate sites as Local Nature Reserves:</td>
<td>Identify appropriate sites</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, SFT, FC, NWT, PCs</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Number of LNRs designated</td>
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<td>Identify and initiate any steps required to allow designation procedure to proceed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Designate sites</td>
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<td>Possible sites include Intake Wood, Clipstone,</td>
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### Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

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<tr>
<td><strong>8.7 Draw up a Strategy for Children’s Play, covering:</strong>&lt;br&gt;· Standards, access, management, design and location&lt;br&gt;· Links with existing facilities and activities&lt;br&gt;· Consultation over new and refurbished outdoor play facilities&lt;br&gt;· Maintenance of existing and new facilities&lt;br&gt;· Funding sources</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, FC, Community groups, Sure Start, Big Lottery Fund; NSPF</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Production of District-wide Play Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9. To ensure that the district’s green spaces are managed and maintained in a manner which protects and improves the environment and promotes sustainable development</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.1 Ensure that the district’s green spaces promote best environmental practice in relation to recycling, composting and minimising the use of pesticides, peat and other harmful products:</strong>&lt;br&gt;· Encourage managing organisations to produce environmental policies relating to green space</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, SFT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>No of initiatives introduced</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>9.2 Ensure that the district’s green spaces protect and promote biodiversity:</strong>&lt;br&gt;· Ensure that existing areas of nature conservation importance are protected&lt;br&gt;· Encourage landowners to manage land in order to protect and promote biodiversity in accordance with the Newark &amp; Sherwood Biodiversity Action Plan&lt;br&gt;· Implement targets from the BAP&lt;br&gt;· Ensure that natural and semi-natural green spaces include appropriate information relating to wildlife and conservation</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, SFT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Implementation of BAP targets&lt;br&gt;No of interpretation schemes introduced</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>9.3 Ensure that sustainability good practise is applied to green spaces:</strong>&lt;br&gt;· Consider using the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) within green space management&lt;br&gt;· Ensure new green space projects (including buildings on green spaces) are built to meet appropriate environmental standards</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, SFT</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>No of EMAS schemes introduced&lt;br&gt;No of green space buildings meeting standards</td>
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### Newark & Sherwood Green Spaces Strategy 2007 - 2012

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<tr>
<td>9.4 Ensure that green spaces provide opportunities for social interaction, healthy exercise, relaxation and community cohesion – see Objectives 2, 3, 4, 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, GCF, SFT, SCR</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>No of projects instituted</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.5 Maximise the contribution green spaces make to the local economy through jobs and training – see Objectives 7 &amp; 8</td>
<td>NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, GCF, SFT, SCR</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>No of jobs and training places created through green space projects</td>
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#### 6.3.5 Green Spaces – Culturally Connected

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.1 Progress existing projects that link with cultural and natural heritage:</td>
<td>NSDC, EH, HLF, NCC, SFT, GCF, FC, NWT, EN, PCs, CT</td>
<td>Short and medium term</td>
<td>No of new heritage projects initiated No of users of new projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Renovation of Sconce &amp; Devon parks in Newark</td>
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<td>▪ Newark Heritage Trails</td>
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<td>▪ Sherwood Heritage Interpretation project</td>
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<td>▪ Sherwood Forest Living Landmark’s bid</td>
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<td>10.2 Ensure that sites of cultural and natural heritage importance are marketed and promoted and that interpretation material is relevant and accessible:</td>
<td>NSDC, EH, HLF, NCC, SFT, GCF, FC, NWT, EN, PCs</td>
<td>Short and medium term</td>
<td>No of marketing initiatives Amount of funding attracted</td>
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<td>▪ Investigate joint marketing initiatives for relevant sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Identify funding for new interpretation projects</td>
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<td>▪ Identify sites that are currently under-promoted in terms of their natural and cultural heritage and initiate appropriate improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.3 Work with appropriate organisations and groups to promote and interpret the role played by green spaces in the district’s cultural and natural heritage:</td>
<td>NSDC, EH, HLF, NCC, SFT, GCF, FC, NWT, EN, PCs, Schools, CT,</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>No of people attending guided tours No of schools involved</td>
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### 6.3.6 Green Spaces – Accessible

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| 11. To ensure that the district is provided with a network of accessible green spaces that meet the needs of all sectors of the community | 11.1 Ensure that existing green spaces are protected:  
- Assess sites as to quantity, quality, accessibility and value  
- Identify sites with particular need for protection and include in Local Development Framework | NSDC, NCC | Ongoing | No of sites protected |
| | 11.2 Develop and adopt local provision standards as part of the Local Development Framework process:  
- Further consult on the recommended standards contained in this strategy  
- Consult specific user groups that may not previously have been involved, e.g. children and young people, disabled people  
- Adopt standards and include in LDF | NSDC, NCC | Medium term | Adoption of specific standards |
| | 11.3 Using recommended local provision standards identify areas where there are deficiencies of green space and take appropriate action:  
- Identify areas with under provision of particular types of green space provision  
- Identify opportunities for new green space provision  
- Identify opportunities for alternative management of green spaces to address deficiencies  
- Include corrective action in community green space provision and improvement plans  
- Include corrective action in site management plans (where appropriate) | NSDC, NCC, PCs, NWT, FC, SFT | Short to medium term | No of corrective actions initiated |
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<th>Outcomes</th>
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| 11.4 Encourage and facilitate improved access to rural green spaces: | - Carry out further work on the provision of green corridors and recreational routes in the district  
   - Seek to improve the public rights of way network through agreements with private and public landowners  
   - Encourage landowners to allow access to natural areas of countryside | NSDC, NCC, FC, Landowners, NWT | Ongoing | Area of land made accessible  
Length of new rights of way |
| 11.5 Encourage and facilitate the creation of areas of natural and semi-natural green space: | - Identify ways in which existing green spaces such as amenity areas and churchyards can be managed and maintained so as to encourage wildlife  
   - Consider the relevance of existing green space use and the possibility of converting areas to natural and semi-natural green space  
   - Use the planning process to ensure that new housing developments make a contribution to the development and maintenance of natural and semi-natural areas | NSDC, NCC, PCs, FC, NWT, SFT | Short term and ongoing | Area of natural and semi-natural green space created |
| 11.6 Encourage under-represented groups to access and make use of green spaces: | - Undertake research into usage of green spaces by under-represented groups  
   - Ensure publicity is targeted at ‘hard-to-reach’ groups  
   - Consult with under-represented groups over barriers to access and participation  
   - Ensure events and activities are relevant and accessible to all | NSDC, NCC, FC, SFT, GCF | Short term and ongoing | Increase in awareness amongst under-represented groups  
% increase in visits by under-represented groups |
7.0 Monitoring and Review

7.1 Introduction

In order to ensure that the strategy remains relevant and that the actions contained within it are implemented within the recommended timescale it is important that regular monitoring and review is undertaken.

In order to ensure that effective monitoring and review is undertaken the following will be required:

- The Newark & Sherwood Open Spaces Forum (NSOSF) will consider Strategy progress at each of its quarterly meetings. In addition 1 meeting per year will be entirely devoted to reviewing progress towards implementing the action points.
- An implementation team made up of officers from the District and County Councils and representatives from other relevant green space providers will be set up.
- The implementation team will provide regular reports on progress to the NSOSF and other relevant partners.
- The implementation team will review the recommended actions as circumstances change and recommend relevant amendments to the Strategy and action plan.
- The implementation team will ensure that progress is publicised widely via relevant publications and websites.
- The implementation team and its partners will prepare a replacement strategy for 2011 in order to ensure that continuous green space improvements in the district take place.

7.2 Performance Indicators

In order to be able to monitor the success of the Green Spaces Strategy a range of performance indicators needs to be developed. The action plan contains a rage of suggested outcomes and these, linked with relevant performance indicators issued by central government via the Audit Commission, will allow for progress to be carefully monitored.

Relevant Audit Commission performance indicators are as follows:

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<td>Percentage area of the authority’s parks and open spaces which are accredited with a Green Flag Award</td>
<td>This is based on Performance Indicators currently being used by local authorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>The number of playgrounds and play areas per 1,000 children under 12</td>
<td>Used as an Audit Commission PI (AC-12) up to 2000/01</td>
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<tr>
<td>The number of sports pitches available to the public per 1,000 population</td>
<td>Used as a statutory PI (13) up to 1999/2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of parks and open spaces per 1,000 head of population</td>
<td>Currently being piloted as part of voluntary quality of life and cross-cutting indicators (No26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total net spending per head of population on parks and open spaces</td>
<td>Variation on statutory Audit Commission PI (14)</td>
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<td>The status of the local authority’s policy and strategy for play</td>
<td>Developed by the Children’s Play Policy Forum</td>
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Other relevant performance indicators include those linked with the Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement (which contains a stretch target for Green Flag parks in the County indicating that there will be five Green Flag parks in Newark & Sherwood by 2009-10) and those associated with the District Council's involvement with the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE). Relevant performance indicators include:

PI15 – Community Consultation and Quality Assurance
PI22 – Customer Satisfaction Performance Report
PI38 – Community/Customer Surveys undertaken
PI34 – Environmental Practices Indicator
PI18 – Number of Playgrounds per 1,000 children
PI36 – Number of Dog Fouling notices issued
PI32 – Hectarage of Local Nature Reserve sites per 1,000 population