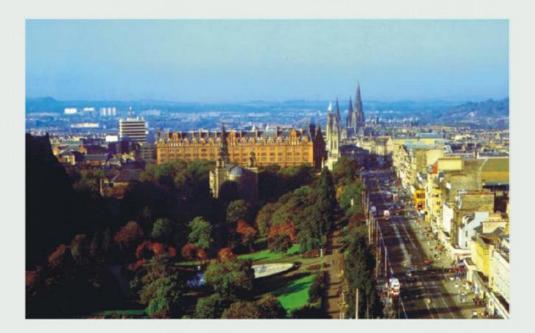


### Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy



March 2006

The City of Edinburgh Council
Culture & Leisure



## Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy

Prepared in conjunction with and on behalf of

The City of Edinburgh Council

Ву

**WJ Cairns and Associates** 

**Consulting Landscape Architects & Environmental Planners** 

March 2006



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### CITY OF EDINBURGH PUBLIC PARKS AND GARDENS STRATEGY

## Summar Cutive

### The Vision

"A quality parks system worthy of international comparison; accessible, diverse and environmentally rich; which fulfils the cultural, social and recreational needs of the people."

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Edinburgh values its reputation as one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, renowned for its setting, history and built heritage. But there are pieces missing from the top city jigsaw. World-class cities have world class parks, and Edinburgh has no room for complacency. If a 'wake up call' were needed, it came with the recent publication of Alan Tate's seminal work, Great City Parks, for which no Edinburgh park was deemed worthy of inclusion.

Enlightenment and Victorian ideals ensured that urban development in the 18th and 19th centuries embraced green spaces, from the symmetrical gardens of the New Town to the sprawling green spaces of the Meadows and Princes Street Gardens. Today, the city is engaged in the regeneration of Edinburgh's Waterfront and the development of the South East Wedge. If we are to follow the approach of our Georgian and Victorian forebears, however, the role of public parks must form an important part of the planning of these new settlements.

There is abundant evidence from cities like New York, Berlin and Singapore to show how parks are an essential element in the modern city, and how park renewal can spark wider community and business regeneration. Parks are the barometers of a city's health.

Re-igniting the vision requires an honest reassessment of our approach to design, management, maintenance and training.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

There are two aspects to creating a top quality parks system: firstly renewing the existing parks; and secondly creating new parks in areas where provision is poor. The Council recognises that there are other key providers of parks within Edinburgh. They include Historic Scotland, The Royal Botanic Garden and the owners of the New Town gardens. All of them have a role to play in achieving the six Goals on which the Parks and Garden Strategy is based. Each goal is supported by objectives:

Goal One: To highlight and interpret those aspects of Edinburgh's heritage located within the city's parks

### Objectives:

- Promote parks and gardens as an integral part of the renaissance of the city
- Ensure that cultural heritage is reflected in every park renewal project
- Portray each park's historical significance so that it is understood

Goal Two: To conserve the natural habitat and wildlife

### Objectives:

- Conserve biodiversity in parks and protect ecosystems
- Promote understanding of the natural heritage
- Recognise the role of parks as a positive environmental influence on noise, air quality, flooding and CO2 absorption

Goal Three: To realise parks' potential in supporting healthy living

### Objectives:

- Ensure that there is an equitable distribution of parks so that everyone can have access to them
- Provide a diverse range of open spaces for recreation, relaxation and enjoyment
- Provide opportunities for physical activity in parks

Goal Four: To put parks at the centre of community identity and planning

### Objectives:

- Foster participation and social inclusion by providing opportunities for voluntary and community activities within parks
- Promote community stewardship by encouraging participation in the design and care of parks
- Encourage the responsible use of parks and ensure that they are safe, clean, and free from litter, graffiti and dog fouling

Goal Five: To improve the landscaping and visual appearance of parks

### Objectives:

- Ensure that the parks work collectively as a system
- Use good design and management to express the city's character through its parks
- Create landscapes that are robust and functional as well as attractive and stimulating
- Employ parks as a catalyst for neighbourhood investment and enhancement

 Define park boundaries, access points and linkages in a city-wide approach

Goal Six: To develop the resources and structures required to implement the strategy

### Objectives:

- Raise the profile of parks and gardens in the context of the management of the city as a whole
- Increase the efficiency of parks management and maintenance by revising operational structures, promoting better cross-departmental working and ensuring that the appropriate skills and resources are available
- Overcome the de-skilling and loss of confidence and competence in parks management and maintenance
- Ensure that parks management personnel are fully engaged in the wider City regeneration process

### INVESTING IN FACILITIES AND SKILLS

This study charts a downward trend in funding, staffing levels and related skills over the past fifteen years. In part, this was due to the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering in 1990, which subjected direct labour organisations to competition. This was followed by the closure of parks facilities and the removal of traditional features. Today, Edinburgh is spending less than half of the average Scottish local authority per head on its parks, and just one third of the budget of the top spending Council. The strategy proposes a serious review of the capital and revenue budgets available for parks regeneration.

### **EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**

It is not only a question of spending more but spending it in line with the priorities of local communities, parks users and the Council's partner organisations. Towards that end the Council commissioned the first major research project into the views of visitors/users/non users of parks. It is essential that communities have the opportunity to help in the planning and redesign of new and existing local parks.

### **MONITORING**

It is vital that investment in parks is reinforced by quality ground maintenance services. Moving Parks Development and Task Forces together within the new Services for Communities Department will help to remove the potential overlaps and gaps generated by the current shared responsibility between Culture & Leisure and Environment & Consumer Services. There is an opportunity for new technology to be utilised in an up-to-date monitoring system that will allow resources to be accurately allocated and monitored in detail.

### CONCLUSION

The city needs to reverse the decline in the large parks resource with which it was endowed. This is a considerable challenge but it will have a greater prospect of success if it is part of wider urban area action plans.

Parks offer individuals and communities opportunities to choose healthy lifestyles and interact with nature. The City Council has allocated major sums towards parks regeneration in the next three years. The first step towards building the partnership that will deliver the capital funding with the revenue required to consolidate these gains will be taken with the adoption of this Strategy.

# Chapter One

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the City of Edinburgh with a strategy for its parks and gardens system that sets realistic aspirations and shows the way forward to achieving them. The strategy is a means of matching the availability, function and role of parks and gardens with the changing requirements as identified by user surveys.

The strategy also provides a policy framework for the preparation of more detailed management plans for individual parks and gardens or for individual design implementation and management plans.

The study has focused on parks and gardens within the urban area of Edinburgh and the relationship between these, park users and other stakeholder groups. Other parks in rural areas, including the Pentland Hills to the South of Edinburgh have different issues associated with them and are subject to a different approach. Notwithstanding this, there are recommendations listed in the report that apply throughout the parks system.

Chapter 2 describes the methodology used in the study.

Chapters 3 and 4 set the context for the strategy. Chapter 3 deals with the parks resource, its size, distribution and condition. The perceptions of users and non-users of this resource are described with reference to recent surveys commissioned by the Council.

Chapter 4 describes the national policy and value context within which Edinburgh's parks will be viewed by other cities and organisations in the UK and overseas. English Beacon Councils and local authorities whose parks have won the Green Flag Award are examples of good practice, which the City of Edinburgh Council can use to inform the direction for the development of the parks and gardens.

Chapter 5 discusses the need for standards and argues that quantitative standards are often perceived as the solution, whereas qualitative standards are devalued or ignored. Standards are an important issue in the development of parks and gardens.

Chapter 6 sets out the development strategy, providing the bulk of the recommendations to the Council and discusses a GIS pilot study that examines accessibility of a park to different socio-economic groups. A more detailed GIS study should be undertaken in order to fully understand the factors that influence the use of parks and accessibility to parks within the city. The study should extend to all open space in Edinburgh. This is particularly important in achieving equitable distribution of parks and gardens and the setting of locally derived standards. In conjunction with good urban design, as expressed in the Urban Design Guidelines produced by the City Council, a cohesive, well-connected urban green space system could be achieved.

This strategy is merely the starting point for a continuous process. The commitment to change is equally important and the adoption of the strategy is merely the first step. This commitment must extend through all levels of the Council and requires inter-departmental collaboration and the co-operation and support of all the stakeholders in the parks and gardens system if the strategy's vision is to be achieved.

### 2 Methodology

### 2.1 The Consultants Brief

2.1.1 The Edinburgh Parks and Gardens Strategy began with the formation of a brief by the City of Edinburgh Council with input from selected stakeholders represented by a Steering Group (see Appendix 3 for the composition of the group). The content of the brief was broad, providing the consultants with plenty of scope to address the main issues in the decline of Edinburgh's parks system with the aim of achieving "...a consensus between the key stakeholding groups in taking forward the preservation, renewal and development of Edinburgh's parks and gardens."

### 2.2 The Steering Group

- 2.2.1 The steering group was composed of representatives of stakeholder groups having an interest in parks and gardens. The organisations comprising the working group helped to steer the strategy outcomes in line with their particular remit. The themed meetings acted as forums to debate issues arising from previous meetings or interviews and feedback from the consultants.
- 2.2.2 The consultants reported progress to the Steering Group. The meetings also acted as open forums for discussion centred around key themes common to parks regeneration. The themes were;

### 1. STRATEGIES

Objectives and methods of the various strategies that will influence the Edinburgh Parks Strategy e.g. the allotment strategy, the open space framework, the sports and physical recreation strategy.

INTERNATIONAL PARKS
 Characteristics of successful parks.
 Management comparisons.

- 3. MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE SYSTEMS, TRAINING
- 4. FUNDING Public & Private Sources.
- 5. PRESENTATION OF STRATEGY
- 2.2.3 Themes 1-4 provided the framework within which to discuss the sub-themes listed on page 1 of the pre-interview information form:
  - Renewal of the parks and gardens as a key cultural component of the city;
  - Provision of safe, attractive, well-maintained parks, free of litter and dog fouling;

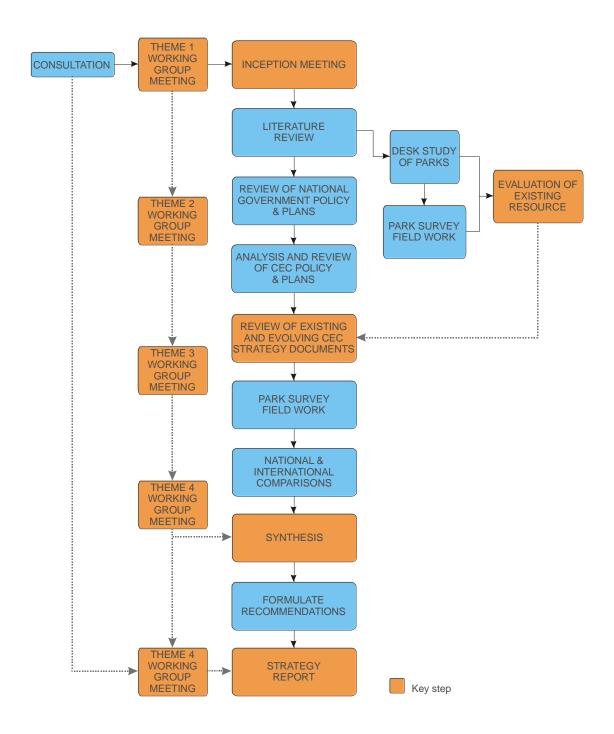
- Enhancement of the recreational and educational value of the city's parks and gardens;
- Promotion of community ownership of, and involvement with, parks and gardens;
- Maximisation of the health benefits which parks can deliver to the population;
- Enhancement of the biodiversity, wildlife and landscape benefits delivered by parks;
- Ensuring that parks and gardens are appropriately accessible to all of the people of the city and to visitors;
- Considering the role of parks and gardens in the city's landscape framework.
- 2.2.4 Figure 2.1 illustrates the study methodology which progressed through several phases of desk study, field work and consultation which examined the following areas:
  - History;
  - Analysis of public use and demand;
  - Role and value of parks;
  - Management;
  - Development;
  - Finance and monitoring

### Consultation

- 2.2.5 The steering group was consulted during the four themed meetings. Individual representatives of organisations within the working group were also consulted separately or in smaller forums involving related organisations.
- 2.2.6 Other individuals outside the steering group were consulted to ensure a full range of opinion was reflected by the strategy.
- 2.2.7 The next section explains the methodology adopted in more detail.

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Figure 2.1: Study Methodology



### 2.3 Study Methodology

Literature Review

2.3.1 There is a great deal of literature from the UK and overseas on the subject of the decline in quality of parks and open space. The literature covers the causes of decline, user / non-user surveys, management issues and potential sources of development funding. The literature review provided the background information and context for the problem to be addressed through the brief. Consequently the literature review was wide ranging and offered an insight into the history of parks decline across the UK and the means by which this is being addressed.

### Desk Study of Edinburgh's Parks

2.3.2 A desk study of Edinburgh's parks was essential to provide an understanding of the extent and diversity of the parks resource prior to commencing any fieldwork. The desk study was also used to help identify those parks that should be visited in order to obtain a representative sample of the overall resource. The consultants used maps at scales of 1:10,000, 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 and existing published material about Edinburgh's parks and gardens. The ongoing parks audit by the Council also helped the consultants identify parks to visit during the field study.

### Parks Survey Field Work

2.3.3 Having selected a number of different types of park from the desk study, these were visited and their condition assessed in greater detail. From the survey and assessment a clear statement about the health of Edinburgh's parks resource was produced from which a strategy vision would emerge.

### Review of National Government Policy and Plans

2.3.4 Although forming an integral part of the literature review, it was decided that a review of national government policy and plans constituted an important step in its own right. An examination of Government policy revealed that parks and open space have moved higher up the political agenda in recent years, particularly in England, where a new unit within the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), CABE Space, has been set up to advocate the benefits of high quality parks and open space and actively promote regeneration in this area of city life.

### Analysis and Review of CEC Policy and Plans

2.3.5 This stage of the study provides the policy context within which the final strategy document would emerge. An understanding of structure and local plans, including future development zones and proposals, is essential to ensuring that any opportunities arising from such developments could be capitalised on. Because the strategy also must fit within existing local plan parameters, a grasp of current development trends and strategies is essential to ensure

that it does not conflict with the aims of the development plan for Edinburgh.

### Review of Existing and Evolving CEC Strategy Documents

- 2.3.6 In order to produce a successful strategy that functions in concert with many other related strategies, it is necessary to review existing and relevant emerging strategies for three reasons:
  - a) to eliminate overlaps thus streamlining implementation;
  - b) to recommend areas where strategies could complement one another and strengthen the effectiveness of policies on the ground; and,
  - c) to prevent conflicts of interest i.e. the recommendation of one strategy working against the aims of another.
- 2.3.7 It is good practice to promote collaboration between departments and individuals whose remit includes or relates to parks and gardens. Collaboration and the sharing of skills and knowledge enhances communication links within the organisation and strengthens human resources, thus making more efficient use of scarce resources.

### Evaluation of Existing Resource

2.3.8 The results of the desk study and field survey work formed the primary data with which the existing resource was evaluated. The evaluation, in tandem with the review of existing and evolving CEC strategy documents, assisted in the formulation of recommendations specific to the physical regeneration of parks and the coordination with other strategies and organisations.

### Park Survey Field Work

2.3.9 A second phase of park survey work involved revisiting some parks in the light of the literature review and the analysis of plans and policies in previous steps. Revisiting parks in the context of feedback from the working group and other consultations enabled a more focused argument to be presented behind the recommendations. This second visit to the parks system was a necessary step in formulating the proposed parks classification system and to record the appearance of certain parks, or elements of parks, through photographs. The photographs were used to provide evidence of a particular aspect of the parks system e.g., poor quality buildings within parks, cultural assets or visual amenity.

### National and International Comparison

2.3.10 The vision for Edinburgh's parks and gardens was born from the concept of Edinburgh as a world-class city that should have a world-class parks system. This phase of the study looked at world-class parks overseas and drew on Alan Tate's book "Great City Parks". This review of international comparisons gives an idea of how parks are valued by other countries and how, in some cases, they are given high status within the city planning process.

2.3.11 During this phase the consultants searched for examples of good practice in parks management across the UK and developed an understanding of what constitutes a successful, functional and sustainable parks system. Examples of good park practice included Bexley and Dundee.

### Synthesis

2.3.12 The research material and consultation feedback was gathered together and used to identify strengths and weaknesses in Edinburgh's parks resource. Opportunities for change and the direction this change should take were identified and used to structure the approach to formulating recommendations that will achieve an improvement in the parks resource.

### Formulate Recommendations

2.3.13 Flowing from the previous step are the recommendations that build on the research and consultation and analysis of data. At this stage it was important to refer back to the original brief and ensure that recommendations are achievable within the existing framework of local governance.

### Strategy Report

2.3.14 The final report was compiled in partnership and consultation with the Culture and Leisure Department. The report structure reflects the methodological approach taken and is supported by a number of maps, diagrams and appendices.

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### 3 THE CITY'S PARK RESOURCE

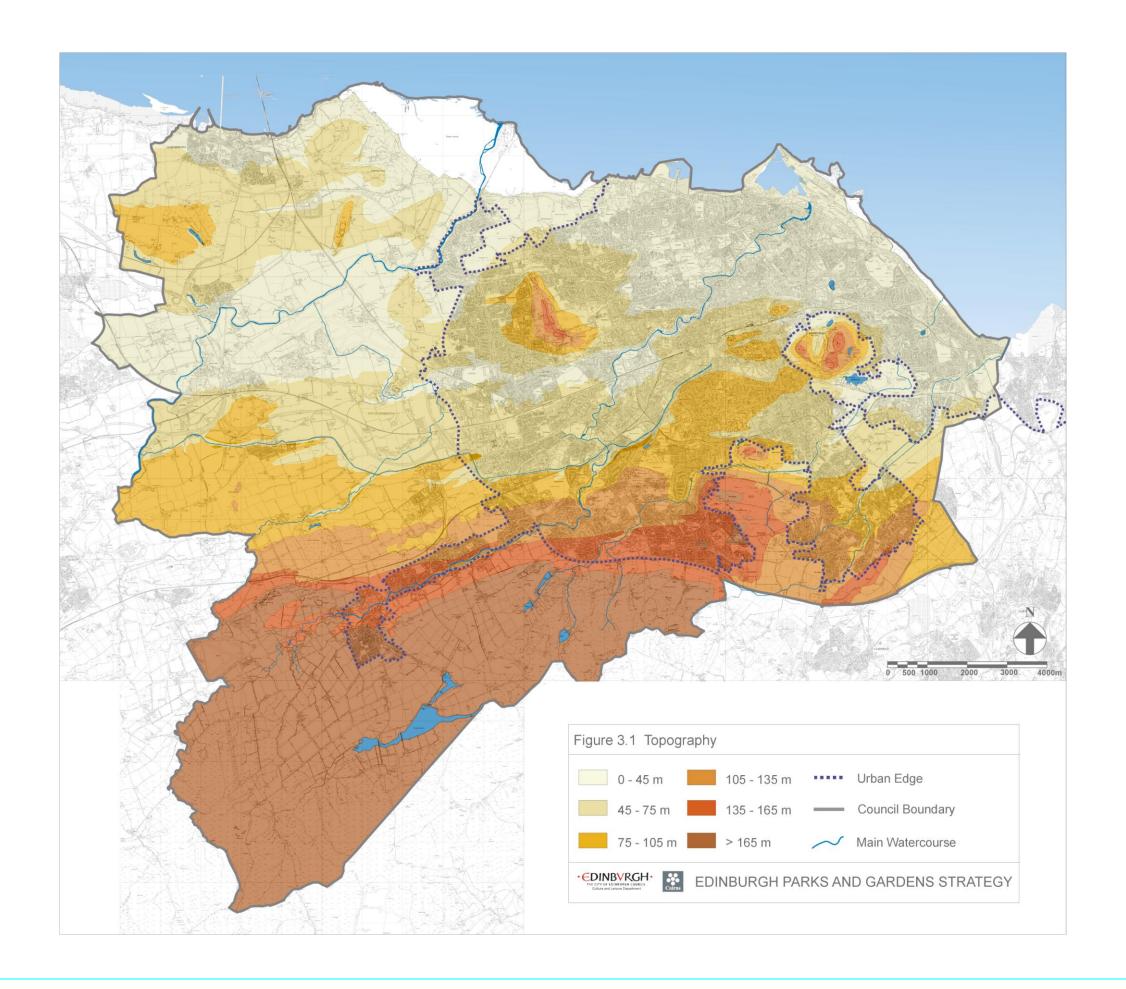
### 3.1 Introduction

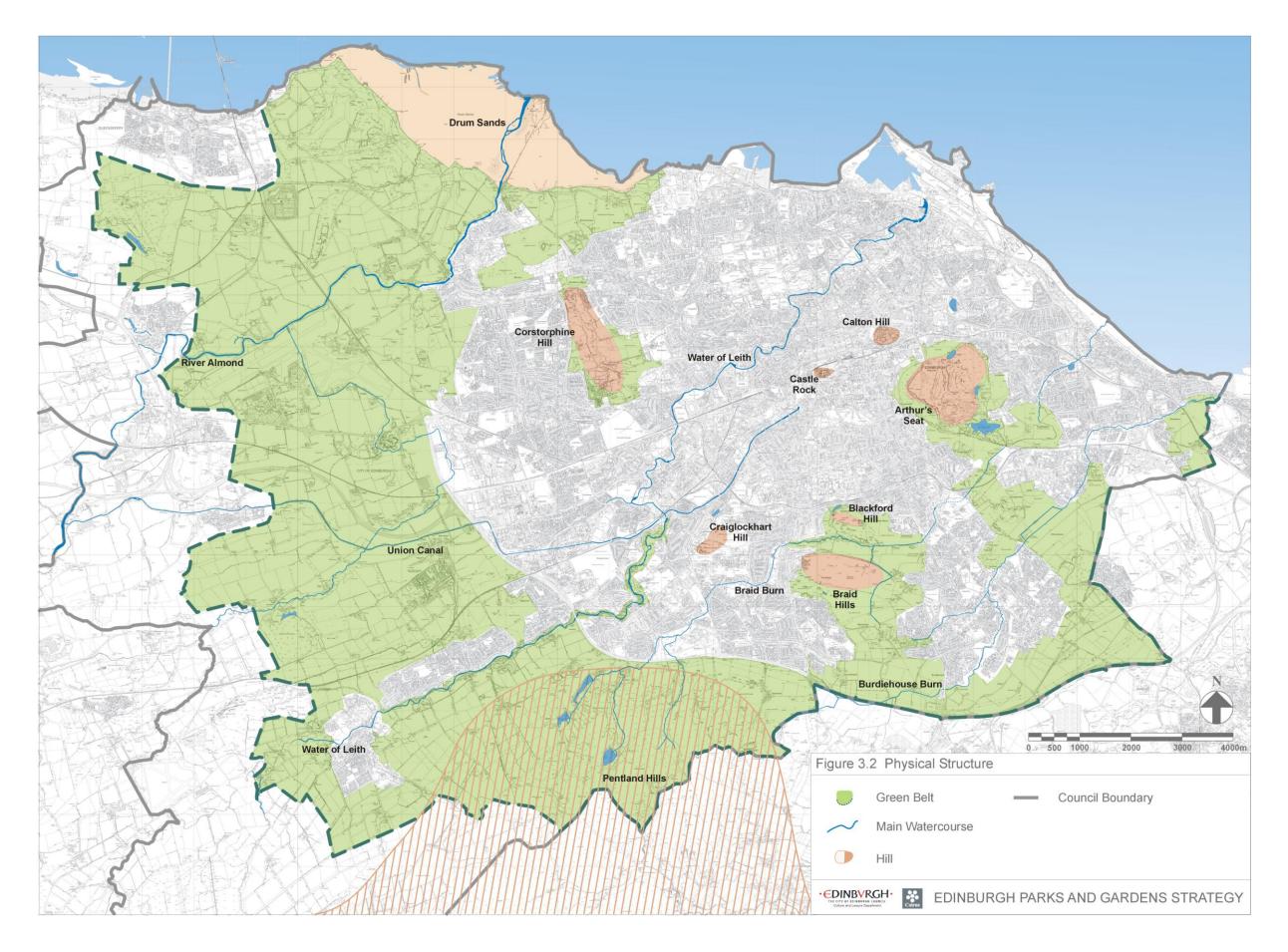
- 3.1.1 In common with other cities in the UK, Edinburgh boasts great diversity in its parks and open spaces. There are areas of seminatural woodland; naturalistic parks such as the Hermitage of Braid are havens of biodiversity in the city; playing fields; popular multifunctional recreational parks such as The Meadows and linear 'parks' such as The Water of Leith or Figgate Park. Cumulatively these parks represent a significant resource, the value of which is discussed in Chapter 4.
- 3.1.2 The distribution of Edinburgh's parks and gardens is a function of topography and the legacy of city planning led by James Craig's design of the New Town and later by Patrick Abercrombie and Derek Plumstead's *Civic Survey & Plan for the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh*, completed in 1949 and continued by subsequent structure and local plans.
- 3.1.3 Figure 3.1 illustrates how the topography of Edinburgh and the 'seven hills' create large areas of semi-natural landscape and points of orientation that assist in providing Edinburgh with a unique physical structure. This iconic landscape is matchless among cities, giving Edinburgh its distinctive physical identity and sense of place. Nowhere else are the vestiges of Scotland's volcanic past so readily apparent and easily accessible.
- 3.1.4 The seven hills comprise the major structural components of the city's landscape. Figure 3.2 illustrates the relationship of the hills with other physical features and the urban area. The green belt is another major structural component. It is important to explore the existing and potential relationship of Edinburgh's parks and gardens with it. The 'fingers' of green belt that penetrate the city can contribute to the enhancement of the parks and gardens system. This concept is discussed further in Chapter 4.
- 3.1.5 Figure 3.3 (Views and Ridgelines) illustrates the role of topography and streetscape in creating view corridors. The parks themselves become the focus of many views or framed views. Panoramic views from parks to other parts of Edinburgh are also important to creating a sense of place and orientation within the city.

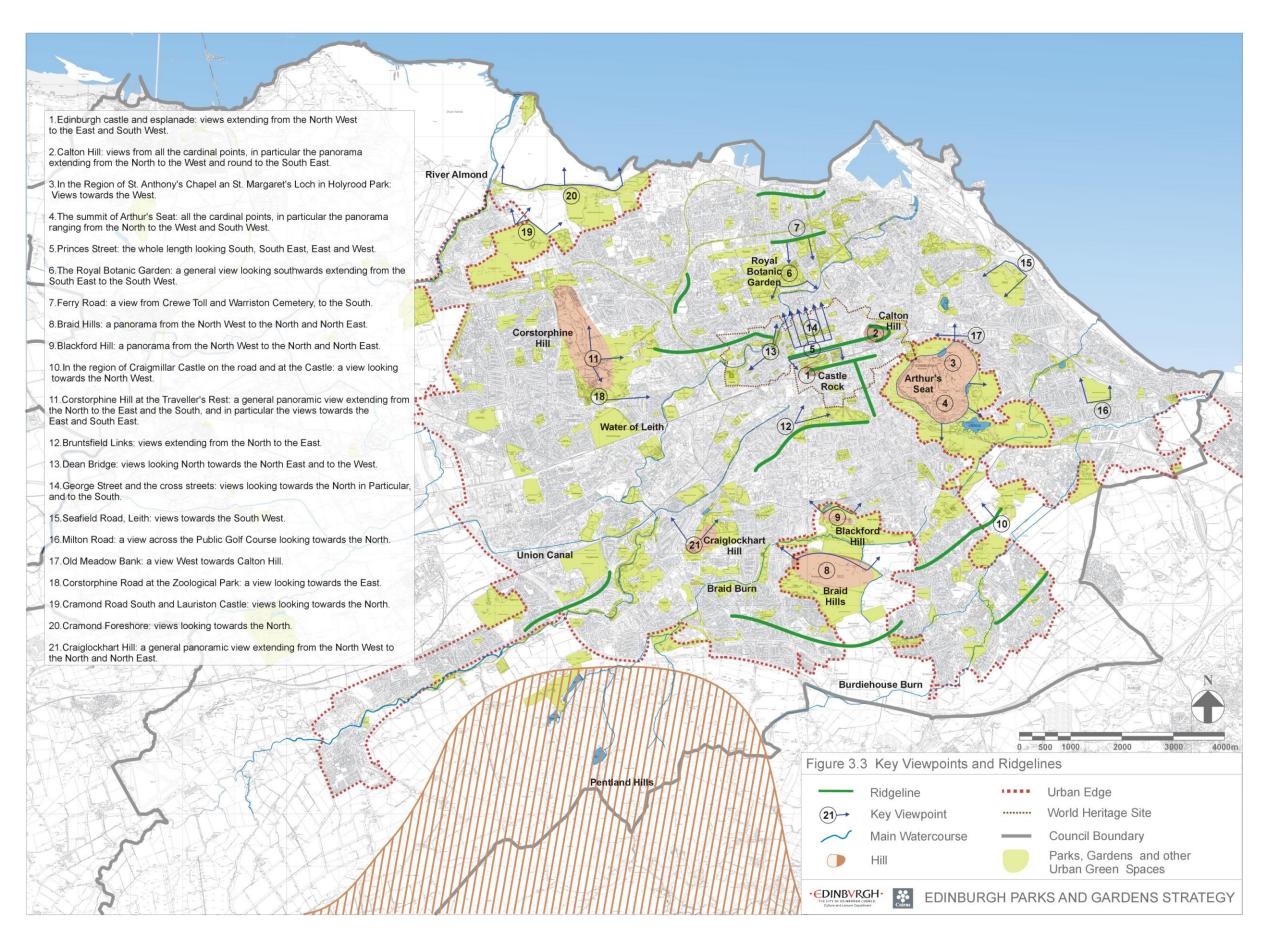
### 3.2 Size and Distribution of Parks

3.2.1 The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) maintains a total of 141 parks, ranging in size from Glendevon Park, the smallest at 0.1ha, to The Braid Hills at 94ha. Between these, there are parks of many different sizes illustrated in Figures 3.4 and 3.5.

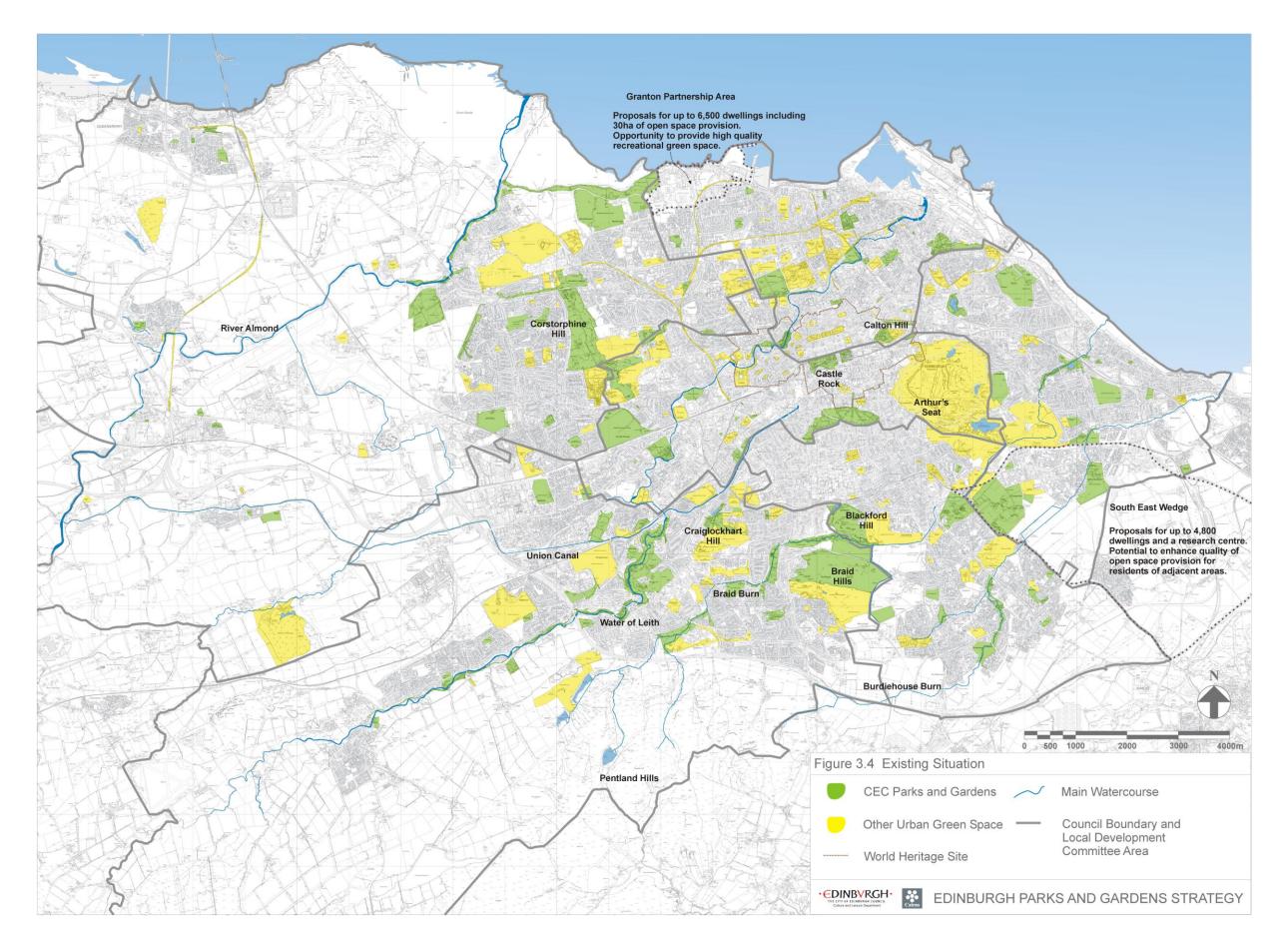
March 2006







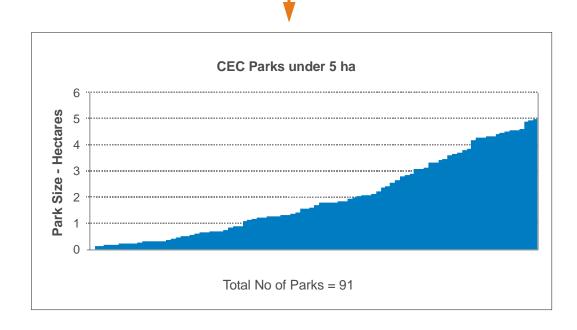
- 3.2.2 Size distribution is weighted towards the smaller parks with 94 parks, or 66% of the total, under 5 ha in size (see Figure 3.5 below). Of the 141 parks, 63, or more than 45%, are under 2.4 ha in size. However, the larger parks occupy a larger proportion of the total area of parkland. This is illustrated on the upper part of Figure 3.5. To the left of the orange line are parks under 5ha in size and to the right of the line are all the remaining parks. Notice the much larger blue shaded area to the right of the orange line, which indicates the relative proportion of the whole parks estate occupied by parks over 5 ha.
- 3.2.3 Analysis of the distribution of small parks using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) shows that the small parks are located mostly in the North and East of the city. The larger parks form a belt to the West and South of the city (see Figure 3.4). A combination of topography and city planning has influenced this distribution. The larger parks are situated on some of the seven hills, whereas the denser nucleus of the Old and New Towns and Leith has resulted in a concentration of smaller parks.
- 3.2.4 The size and distribution of parks is an important consideration when establishing standards in parks provision. This is the subject of Section 6.7.



CEC Parks Size Range

100
90
80
70
60
Parks under 5 ha
30
20
10
0
91
Total No of Parks = 141

Figure 3.5: CEC parks size range.



### 3.3 Benchmarking – parks by area

3.3.1 Measured against its population, Edinburgh has 3.31 hectares of Council-owned parks and green spaces (including amenity areas, golf courses etc) per 1000 of population. If Holyrood park and the Royal Botanic Garden are added, the figure is 4.03 ha/1000 popn (see figure 3.6). Comparison with other cities shows that Glasgow has about 5.52 ha/1000 popn of municipal parks and green spaces and Dundee 6.95 ha/1000 popn. Aberdeen has 2.16 ha/1000 popn

- of parks, but has a great deal of publicly owned greenspaces which are not classified as parks. If these are taken into account it has 7.15 ha/1000 popn.
- 3.3.2 Edinburgh is, therefore, in a comparable position to other Scottish cities in acreage of public parks per capita. It appears to have less in the way of "other" municipally owned greenspaces than the other Scottish cities. However, before drawing any firm conclusions, it should be noted that there are caveats involved in making any such comparison without detailed examination of the way land is classified in each city. Edinburgh gives the impression of being well served by greenspaces, but some of these (such as the Braid Hills Wedge), are privately owned and recreational and access opportunities are currently restricted or absent.

Figure 3.6: Comparisons with other Scottish Cities

	Aberdeen	Dundee	Edinburgh	Glasgow
Total population(2001 census)	212,125	145,663	448,624	577,869
Public green open spaces*(ha)	1517	1393	1809	3193
Hectares per 1000 popn	7.15	9.56	4.03	5.52
Council-owned public parks (ha)	459	557	1033	1394
Hectares parks/1000 popn	2.16	3.83	2.30	2.41

<sup>\*</sup> Includes parks, amenity open spaces, golf courses etc but excludes school playing fields, social work, Police and Fire properties.

### 3.4 Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes

- 3.4.1 Included among Edinburgh's City Parks and Gardens are a number of properties of which the most significant are The New Town Gardens where the majority of these are privately owned and cared for. (Appendix 1 & 2). Principal among the New Town Gardens are the West, Central and East Queen Street Gardens, Calton Hill, Regent Gardens, Princes Street Gardens and Dean Gardens. Designated as a World Heritage Site, the Gardens form a most extensive system of public and private open space comprising squares and walks which together with the surrounding buildings are collectively termed the New Town. The result of neo-classical town planning of the 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the system was designed to take full advantage of the topography and Edinburgh townscape.
- 3.4.2 The Council's strategy for the City's Parks and Gardens incorporates the full scope of the provisions for conservation and interpretation of the historic value of gardens and designed landscapes as listed in the Inventory prepared jointly by Scottish Natural Heritage and Historic Scotland. In this instance, the following separate value categories are adopted as criteria with which to assess required actions in restoration or other management works:
  - as a work of art
  - historical

- horticultural, arboricultural or silvicultural
- architectural
- scenic
- nature conservation
- 3.4.3 In addition to the New Town Gardens, there are other designated gardens and parks within the City which are listed. These include: Cammo House, Craigmillar Castle, Dean Cemetery and Northfield. All of these come under the same criteria and indeed there are sites such as Lauriston Castle which are of equal historic value and to which identical criteria should be applied.

### 3.5 The Non-CEC Resource

- 3.5.1 The non-CEC parks resource (see Figure 3.4) shows greater diversity in its distribution and in its physical form than the CEC parks. Holyrood Park (owned by the Crown) is the largest single park, at 263 ha, in the City, containing a range of natural features and giving extensive panoramic views from the summit of Arthur's Seat. The close juxtaposition of Duddingston Loch and the golf course creates an extensive area of parkland and open space where there is the opportunity to participate in a multitude of recreational activities in the heart of the city.
- 3.5.2 There are also many golf courses throughout the city and playing fields for a variety of sports. The private gardens of the New Town add a distinctive character to this urban quarter. An aerial view of the New Town shows how the large private gardens differ from CEC parks in their extensive tree cover. The gardens have considerably more trees than the other parks and open spaces in Edinburgh.
- 3.5.3 Many of the larger parks and open spaces in the non-CEC resource are used for discrete functions such as golf courses or playing fields. This affords the parks some protection but does limit their integration within the wider parks and open space system. The extent to which these areas could be integrated is discussed further in Chapter 4, which examines existing strategies related to parks and gardens.
- 3.5.4 The private gardens (with the exception of The Royal Botanic Garden) are not accessible to the public. Residents adjacent to the gardens hold keys and pay a subscription that is used to manage and maintain the gardens. This strategy has not attempted to review current management and maintenance practices for these gardens as they are self-regulating. However, the gardens are important components of the urban fabric, having been designed to harmonise with the built environment and street layout. The way in which they currently function and how this could continue is addressed and discussed later.
- 3.5.5 Figure 3.4 shows the distribution of non-CEC parks and gardens. This figure is not exhaustive and some gardens and open spaces may have been omitted. However, it does provide a good indication of the relative distribution and size of these parks and open spaces.

- 3.5.6 Again there is a very broad size range¹ and a similar pattern of size distribution. There seems to be a higher proportion of medium to large sized parks and a higher concentration of small parks and gardens in the urban core. Linear 'parks' are a feature of the non-CEC resource and important in contributing to the connectivity of the green space system and for enhancing biodiversity.
- 3.5.7 This overview of quantitative provision merely illustrates the broad distribution of parks and gardens of different sizes. It does not tell us anything about disparities in provision in both quantitative and qualitative terms. For an insight into how parks and gardens are perceived or used by residents and visitors to the city it is necessary to consult people through a user/non-user survey.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Raw data generated by Cairns Limited. Data did not include the area of each entity. Hence, it was not possible to create tables as per figure 3.5.

### 3.6 Park Usage

- 3.6.1 Park user surveys usually aim to ascertain the type of user, frequency of use, form of use and satisfaction with the park and its facilities. CEC commissioned a user/non-user survey the results of which were published by The Audience Business (TAB) in September 2002. The aims of the survey were to:
  - Estimate usage of parks and gardens;
  - Establish the visitor demographic profile;
  - Understand motivations and barriers:
  - Establish demographic profiles and identify barriers for nonusers;

The survey was therefore broad in scope in that non-users and visitors to Edinburgh were included in the sample population.

- 3.6.2 The results of the survey showed that there is high recognition of Edinburgh's main parks and gardens such as Princes Street Gardens, the Royal Botanic Garden, Holyrood Park etc., (see Figure 3.6) while there is high awareness by visitors of only four of the major parks (first four listed in Figure 3.7).
- 3.6.3 The parks listed in Figure 3.7 are attractions in their own right. They are large parks, some of which are advertised to tourists, capable of accommodating a wide number of different uses and large numbers of people. These parks are visited most days by some people. Princes Street Gardens are probably used frequently to sit in and have lunch or stroll, by those who work in the city centre or those passing through.
- 3.6.4 Another strand to the research was a survey of perceptions of local parks and frequency of visits to local parks. Some users consider the parks listed in Figure 3.8 to be their local park due to the proximity of the park to their place of residence. Only 3% of the sample considered Princes Street Gardens to be their local park, yet 26% of respondents said it was the park they visited most often.

Figure 3.7: Awareness & attendance amongst visitors and residents. (Source: TAB)

Park or Garden	Edinburgh Residents		Visitors	
Paik VI Galdell	Awareness	Attendance	Awareness	Attendance
Princes Street Gardens	100%	85%	88%	68%
Meadows/Bruntsfield Links	99%	62%	38%	24%
Royal Botanic Garden	99%	60%	82%	14%
Holyrood Park	99%	56%	82%	26%
Leith Links	97%	45%	36%	10%
Calton Hill	96%	69%	42%	8%
Inverleith Park	94%	38%	30%	6%
Corstorphine Hill	85%	16%	36%	4%
Saughton Park	81%	22%	26%	6%
Craigmillar Castle Park	77%	7%	24%	2%

Figure 3.8: Respondent's local park and the park they visit most often. (Source: TAB)

Park or Garden	Local Park	Park visited most often
St Margaret's	9%	6%
Braidburn	5%	2%
Pilrig Park	4%	1%
Liberton	3%	1%
Inch	3%	1%
Victoria Park	2%	1%
Brighton	1%	1%
Blackford Hill	1%	1%
Figgate	1%	1%
Gracemount	1%	1%
Ferniehill	1%	1%
Portobello	1%	1%

- 3.6.5 Figure 3.8 illustrates that although a park is considered to be a local park by a proportion of the population, it is not necessarily the park visited most often. Reasons for visiting non-local parks include:
  - To sit in after shopping;
  - Work nearby;
  - Pass through on the way to work;
  - Good facilities for children;
  - Have lunch there.
- 3.6.6 The study found that over half of residents live less than a mile away from the park they visit most often, with over two thirds of the residents walking to the park and almost one fifth using public transport. However, only 2% of residents travel to the park by bicycle.
- 3.6.7 The survey also assessed barriers or factors that prevented respondents from visiting parks and gardens more often. Barriers to usage of parks include:
  - Weather 28%;
  - Too busy or tired 22%;
  - Safety concerns 9%;
  - Public transport problems 4%.
- 3.6.8 Only 1% of the sample reported that dog fouling, unattractive or sparse areas and vandalism prevented them from visiting parks. However, this is not to say that these problems are not significant enough to be addressed. The rating of the importance of different aspects of parks and gardens shows that respondents are mainly concerned about:
  - Cleanliness/control of litter;
  - Freedom from vandalism:
  - Good overall maintenance;
  - Feeling safe and secure;
  - Easily accessible by road and public transport.

These are aspects of Edinburgh's parks and gardens perceived by respondents as in need of improvement.

### 3.7 Princes Street Gardens

3.7.1 A visitor survey by TMS demonstrated that the park was very well used by people visiting Edinburgh who had made a decision to visit PSG before coming to the city. Key activities included walking in the gardens, sitting on benches/grass and having lunch, a picnic or a snack. Two thirds of the sample consisted of parties, the commonest size range being 2-4, with 40% of parties containing children. People seemed to be in PSG and enjoy being there for its ambience.

- 3.7.2 Ease of access to PSG, good maintenance, cleanliness and sufficient seating were considered to be the most important features. On the whole people were satisfied with PSG and the development options put forward by the sample were low key.
- 3.7.3 Results of the TAB report show that awareness of PSG is high both for residents and visitors. The overall effect is to create a very public park in a spectacular setting, fringed by different uses and used for quiet enjoyment and less active forms of recreation. The fact that the gardens are locked at night means the park does not suffer from vandalism as much as might be expected, given its central location.
- 3.7.4 The cultural emphasis of the gardens as a venue for theatre and other events and the presence of sculptures, a fountain and other ornamentation add diversity to the structure of the park and the activities contained within it. There is no sense of over commercialisation the gardens are sympathetic to their landscape framework and respect their surroundings.
- 3.7.5 PSG is a unique and powerful attraction in the city centre. The findings of the visitor survey by TMS are not radical. However, they do provide those concerned with the management of parks something to strive for because PSG demonstrates the reasons for a high degree of user satisfaction that could be attainable in other parks even those without the grandeur of the city centre setting.

### 3.8 Summary

- 3.8.1 Figure 3.4 illustrates the existing situation with regard to the distribution of CEC and non-CEC parks and gardens. The picture is dominated by the large parks, particularly those associated with the hills. The smaller parks tend to be distributed to the North and East of the city with the large parks forming a belt to the South and West.
- 3.8.2 There is a higher proportion of small CEC parks than non-CEC parks and a more even distribution across the size range within the non-CEC parks. However, a larger proportion of the non-CEC parks tend to be for a single use e.g., golf courses or do not permit access to the public.
- 3.8.3 The user survey shows a high awareness in residents of Edinburgh's major parks and lower awareness amongst visitors of more than half these parks. These parks are also used frequently by residents who do not consider them to be their local park.
- 3.8.4 Local parks are used by people within a one mile radius who either walk or take public transport to reach the park. Women with children tend to be the heaviest users of parks.
- 3.8.5 Princes Street Gardens is an example of a park that satisfies the needs of the user population by providing a pleasant and safe environment in which to spend time or pass through.

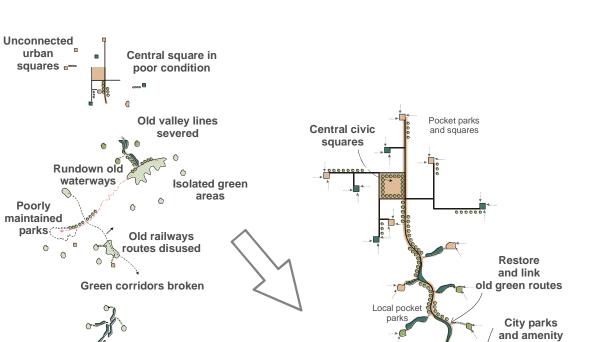
### 4 THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 4.1 The Value of Parks

- 4.1.1 Since the Victorians created the first municipal parks, the inhabitants of cities have come to value parks and open spaces as oases of green in the city. As the pace of life becomes ever more hectic, parks become more valuable as nearby places to exercise in the open air and stay in contact with seasonal change and the natural world.
- 4.1.2 The TAB and TMS reports show that individuals value parks for different reasons. Non-government organisations and other stakeholder groups have specific interests related to a particular aspect of the parks resource. For example the Wildlife Trusts are concerned with parks and open spaces as places where biodiversity can be maintained and enhanced, whereas an individual may value a park purely for visual amenity.
- 4.1.3 If these values and benefits are eroded, people will turn their backs on parks and cease to use them. Figure 4.1 shows how a parks system including greenways, waterways, civic and public squares, contributes to connectivity within a city. This enables many of the benefits listed below to be realised at the local and city level.

### **Environmental Benefits**

- 4.1.4 Parks provide a network of green spaces that allow biodiversity to thrive, and wildlife to migrate within, and across, city boundaries. Trees improve the quality of life within the city by absorbing pollution, airborne particles, dampening noise and fixing atmospheric carbon.
- 4.1.5 In Tokyo, the removal of greenery contributed to 0.6°C of the 2°C increase in heat over the last 100 years.
- 4.1.6 In Frankfurt, Germany, streets without trees had an air pollution count of 10,000–20,000 dirt particles per litre of air. However, in a street with trees in the same neighbourhood, the air particle count was only 3000 dirt particles per litre of air.



Neighborhood parks and

Access

sports areas

Access to open countryside

Isolated pockets of open space

Figure 4.1: Achieving connected green space system. (Adapted from Andrew Wright Associates in 'Towards an Urban Renaissance')

Restore old Waterways

0

Pathways

Routes

**Open Countryside protected** 

Views

**Utilise old Railways** 

as new green routes

Protect existing green corridors

Local pocket

### Health and Relaxation

- 4.1.7 It has long been known that parks promote health and relaxation by providing oases of calm and physical diversity within the urban landscape. Recently the role of parks in improving public health has come increasingly to the fore with the recognition that informal, locally-based, free-of-charge facilities offer the best long term solutions to physical inactivity. Parks thus to help counter the health problems that accompany it, such as obesity. Obesity is described by health professionals as nothing less than an epidemic, and parks have a vital role to play in providing sustainable solutions. A wide variety of activities might be undertaken, from simply walking to the park at one end of the scale, to sports and organised "Green Gym" activities at the other. Research by the British Trust for Conservation for Volunteers shows that "Green Gym" participants may burn one third more calories per minute than taking part in a step aerobics class.
- 4.1.8 The key factors in making parks succeed in the long terms as venues for physical activity are already known. Accessibility, in terms of both location and the absence of conceptual and physical barriers is of key importance, but in order to sustain a pattern of regular visits the key factors are quality and diversity. The potential benefits have been estimated and are significant. Figures compiled by the Director of Public Health for Yorkshire and Humberside indicate that in health terms, a 20 hectare park in Sheffield provides a cost benefit of £1 million to the economy and £226.000 to the NHS alone. A 3km footpath has similar cost benefits of £358,000 and £74,000 per year respectively. The health agenda is set to grow in significance so it is of vital importance that a productive partnership is made with Lothian NHS Trust and the newly created Health and Social Care Department to begin to realise these benefits in Edinburgh.

### Play, Entertainment and Recreation

4.1.9 Parks can accommodate a variety of facilities for children's play, entertainment events and recreation. Parks are places where children develop motor neurone skills and can learn to push themselves, particularly where they mix with older children on challenging play equipment.

### Community Spirit

- 4.1.10 Parks can become the heart of community activities. They are successful in uniting members of communities regardless of age, gender, race and religion, since they are open to everybody. Consequently, they can engender civic pride.
- 4.1.11 Central Park, New York attracts more than 25 million visitors a year, is assisted by 2,500 volunteers and runs community service programmes and nature education classes that catered for 10,000 school children in 2002.

### Education

4.1.12 Parks offer a range of educational opportunities in subjects such as history, natural sciences, mathematics and citizenship.

### The Urban Economy

- 4.1.13 Parks contribute to the urban economy in different ways. New York, Paris and Barcelona are examples where parks were the starting point for city regeneration. The parks helped to create the conditions for inward investment and the appropriate setting for businesses situated next to the parks on reclaimed industrial land. Attractive, thriving parks can increase the valuation of neighbouring properties, mitigate vandalism and create tourist attractions. Parks can accommodate facilities and thus can be a source of significant revenue.
- 4.1.14 Green roofs, or roof parks and gardens, improve insulation in buildings and can reduce heating and cooling costs by as much as 25%.
- 4.1.15 Trees can save up to 10% of energy consumption within cities through their moderation of local climate.
- 4.1.16 As park quality increases, more money and investment is attracted, thus helping its maintenance and development. Central Park in New York, for example, has raised \$250m in private money since 1980.
- 4.1.17 The values listed above are inter-related and cumulatively they contribute to a large resource, the value of which is greater than the sum of its parts. This concept of inter-relatedness is the thrust of current thinking in the regeneration of towns and cities across the UK. It is a central theme of sustainable development principles that can be used to guide open space planning for the residents of Edinburgh today and in the future.

### 4.2 International Comparisons

4.2.1 Comparing Edinburgh's parks to parks and gardens in cities overseas gives an insight into how different management mechanisms have delivered a resource that responds to environmental and fiscal constraints and the needs of users.

### Singapore

- 4.2.2 The island city-state gained its independence from Britain in 1962. The President, Lee Kuan Yew, held a passionate belief that if Singapore were to become into an important nation state it must develop a citywide system of landscape that was an example to, and the envy of, the Asian Region.
- 4.2.3 Singapore parks and open spaces are all treated as national assets, funded and maintained by government to help "sell" Singapore as a tourist destination, as a place to attract global businesses working in the Asian Region and as a positive asset for the well being of all Singaporeans. The parks strategy, when combined with others, has been a huge success, and has helped build Singapore into an

- important economy and the most important business centre in the Asian Region.
- 4.2.4 Edinburgh may wish to develop a case that Princes Street Gardens, Calton Hill and Holyrood should be redeveloped into a "world class" landscape, a national asset, which will help Edinburgh enhance its position as a world class tourist and business city.
- 4.2.5 London has its Royal Parks, which are effectively the capital's "National Parks" Edinburgh's Landscape Spine could play an equivalent and equally important role for Scotland's capital.

# New York, USA

4.2.6 New York city presents fascinating examples of parks organisation in terms of land ownership, funding and management responsibility. This is particularly so where rundown parks required refurbishment and important historic parks needed restoration.

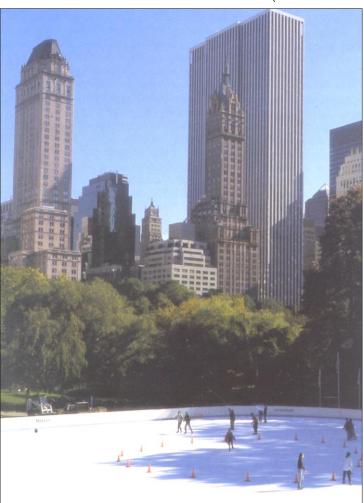


Figure 4.2: Central Park. (Source: Tate 2001)

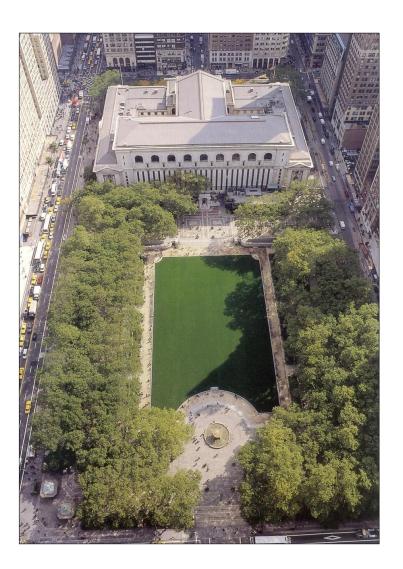
#### Central Park

- 4.2.7 Central Park was created by New York State Legislature in 1853 and funded by the Council of New York. In 1980 responsibility for running the park was given to the Central Park Conservancy, a private not- for-profit organisation. The Conservancy manages the park under a contract with the City of New York. Since taking responsibility for managing Central Park, the Conservancy has raised over US\$200 million towards running and restoration costs. A large endowment fund (US\$65 million) provides much of the funding for maintenance. In the past decade, staffing levels have doubled and a team of 2,000 volunteers provide 40,000 person-hours of work each year.
- 4.2.8 Central Park has been transformed from a dangerous, run-down place into a vibrant, well used and vital open space.

#### **Bryant Park**

4.2.9 Bryant Park is located in Manhattan, the largest public open space in that part of the island, although only 2.43 hectares (6 acres) in extent. The park was completely refurbished in the late 1980's/early 1990's following its transfer to private management. The work was undertaken as part of a wider programme to revitalise downtown New York. William H Whyte described Bryant Park in his 1980 survey as "dangerous - it has become the territory of dope dealers and muggers because it is relatively under-used by the people. Bryant Park is cut off from the streets by walls and fences and shrubbery. You cannot see in. You cannot see out. There are few entry points. The park will be used by people when it is opened up to them" (Tate, 2001).

Figure 4.3: Bryant Park. (Source: Tate 2001)



- 4.2.10 Using Whyte's simple principles, the park was revitalised by the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation. Today Bryant Park is the most intensively used public open space in midtown Manhattan and a model for the private funding, refurbishment and management of a small city centre public park. This is a lesson for Edinburgh's parks. Many of the problems of parks will be solved through increased public use, which is in turn fostered through making the landscape more accessible.
- 4.2.11 Both Bryant Park and Central Park offer excellent examples of ways public parks can be financed, restored and managed, using mechanisms external to City Government, for the overall benefit of the city, its image and its people. There is a significant benefit in terms of fiscal management in both capital and revenue to the city in releasing day-to-day management responsibility, yet keeping a tight contractual relationship over those responsible for running the parks.
- 4.2.12 Perhaps the City Council should consider formulas which allow a number of its important parks to be run and funded privately (e.g. Bryant Park, New-York; or perhaps privately financed and run by a trust (e.g. Central park New-York).

# Paris, France

- 4.2.13 A small number of fine parks have been developed in Paris within the past twenty years as a result of the passionate belief by politicians at both ends of the political spectrum in their importance to the city and for the well being of its people. All are significant examples of modern park design.
- 4.2.14 Park de la Villette located on the site of a former abattoir, this park was designed to be a model for the 21st century; and was built in the 1980's by the national government following the initiative of the then President François Mitterand. The park's designer, Bernard Tschumi, an architect, departed from all known concepts, creating a theory driven theme of "deconstruction" and "dis-junction", and dismissed the opportunity to explore the relationship of the Parisian urban dweller and nature in the Twenty-First Century. Park de la Villette serves to remind us that "park designers are responsible for creating places for users rather than for themselves".
- 4.2.15 Parc de Bercy built between 1992-1997, the park is a response by the right wing mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac to the building of Park de la Villette. The Parc de Bercy was built using finance from the Planning Programme for Eastern Paris.



Figure 4.4: Parc André-Citröen. (Source Tate 2001)

- 4.2.16 Parc André-Citröen is the second contemporary park for the city launched by Mayor Chirac. It was intended to stand in direct contrast to the initiative of the then President François Mitterand who launched a series of "Grands Projets" including the multicultural Parc de la Villete.
- 4.2.17 The creation of these parks demonstrates a political will by leaders at national and city level to create world-class city parks in the capital.

# Berlin, Germany

4.2.18 Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, in order to provide for the recreation needs of its citizens, the Berlin City Authority developed a fine system of parks - many through the medium of Garden Festivals, an interesting system of linked public open spaces and city edge country parks. Because a large proportion of the population live in high-rise and medium-rise apartment blocks, the City developed a large number of pleasure gardens. These are similar to British allotment gardens, however they are more flexible used as gardens rather than plots to grow vegetables, developed and maintained to high standards.

4.2.19 The Pleasure Garden is an idea Edinburgh may wish to pursue for community involvement. Pleasure gardens would appeal to a wider spectrum of the population than allotment gardens.

# Minneapolis

- 4.2.20 The Minneapolis Park System has been described as "the best-located, best financed, best designed, best-maintained public open space in America". The parks system covers an area of 2,630 ha and comprises two principal parts the regional park system or 'Grand Rounds' and the extensive neighbourhood park system.
- 4.2.21 The Grand Rounds has a predominantly linear layout through residential neighbourhoods. The park system includes 47 neighbourhood recreation centres that provide for the leisure needs of the population during the cold continental winter months. There is a sculpture garden and 88 kilometres of walking paths and 58 kilometres of biking and skating paths.
- 4.2.22 In the latter part of the 19th century the Special Committee on Park Enlargement set out to create a general plan to organise the park system. The Committee exhorted: 'Minneapolis aspire to be...THE BEAUTIFUL CITY of the land'. This commitment gave the parks early impetus.
- 4.2.23 The Minneapolis Park System is run by a directly elected body that is almost independent of the city's government The Minneapolis park and Recreation Board which owns the land and controls, maintains and establishes the budget for the parks system. Its capital budget comes directly from property taxes and amounted to over \$25 million, or 18% of the total city levy for a population of just over 160,000, in 1998. Property taxes provided 70% of the Board's funds.
- 4.2.24 The success of the Minneapolis Park System stems from the early thinking about the park as a system rather than a collection of separate disconnected entities. Putting this sort of integrated thinking into the management of Edinburgh's Parks System will make management more effective and integrated with other strategies and organisations.

# 4.3 The UK National Context

4.3.1 Over the past five years, at the UK national scale, issues concerning the declining quality of the urban environment including parks and gardens have moved further up the political agenda. The realisation that poor quality open space exacerbates the decline in the urban environment, deepens social inequity and contributes to migration from cities to rural areas has led to the creation of an organisation with the specific remit for increasing the quality of green space. To this end, a new unit within the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), called CABE Space, has been funded by the UK Government. This section outlines some of the thinking that has led to the movement for improved open spaces.

# Central government

- 4.3.2 The report by the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs, "Town & Country Parks", describes the evolution of the parks movement since Victorian times and the national decline of UK parks in the latter part of the 20th century. The report gathered evidence from a range of sources in order to chart this decline and to find its root causes.
- 4.3.3 The report concluded that funding available to local authorities has not kept pace with the increasing amounts of green space they are required to manage. It is anticipated that the populations of cities will become denser, given current thinking on city planning and urban regeneration.
- 4.3.4 The follow-on report of the Committee was completed by the Green Spaces Task Force in 2002 for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. "Green Spaces, Better Places" states that £100 million is needed over the next 5 years to reverse the decline in urban parks. Without this backing, parks will not play their fundamental role in the following related policy areas:
  - Urban regeneration and renewal;
  - Health;
  - Social cohesion, community development and citizenship;
  - Education and life long learning;
  - Environmental sustainability;
  - Heritage and culture.

The report presents the case for a new administrative body with a specific remit for green spaces.

- 4.3.5 Other national guidelines and studies stemming from central Government research, of relevance to parks and gardens, include *Towards An Urban Renaissance*. This seminal report by the Urban Task Force, commissioned by the DETR, examines the pattern of urban decline in English Towns and Cities.
- 4.3.6 The report concludes that there is the need for sweeping institutional and cultural change in order to revitalise towns and cities and create urban environments in which people can thrive.
- 4.3.7 Raising the quality of life in towns and cities and creating wider life opportunities is fundamental to achieving an Urban Renaissance. The report recognises the importance of the interface between the public realm and parks and open space. One of the key recommendations is a national urban design framework. A secondary recommendation being the need for local authorities to prepare a single strategy for their public realm and open space, dealing with provision, design, management, funding and maintenance.
- 4.3.8 The *Urban Design Compendium*, produced by English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation, emphasises that open space and landscape are integral components of successful urban design. The Compendium describes an extensive typology for open space that

includes atria, courtyards, plazas and private gardens and a diversity of park types. Thus, a network of connected spaces, easily accessible to pedestrians, is established. An important facet of such an urban design framework is the creation of a high quality public realm that functions in concert with parks and complements them by facilitating easy access from the city centre to parks.

- 4.3.9 These two reports reinforce the strategy for reviving parks advocated in *Park Life: Urban Parks and Social Renewal.* This report, published in 1995, and prepared in partnership with 12 local authorities, based its strategy for renewal on the arguments that:
  - Not all open space is sacrosanct;
  - Parks may make ideal settings for the development and siting of new education, social and cultural facilities;
  - Best results will only be achieved by different sectors and interests working together.

#### Scottish Executive

- 4.3.10 The Scottish Executive Central Research Unit commissioned a report that took a critical look at the planning, design and management of public open spaces in cities, towns and villages in Scotland.
- 4.3.11 The report, by Kit Campbell Associates, indicates the tendency for local authorities to plan open space on a quantitative provision basis using the guidelines in NPPG 11, rather than on a local plan basis where local needs are accounted for and reflected in the provision of open space.
- 4.3.12 The dependence on quantitative standards ignores issues such as quality, accessibility, resources and sustainability. The pilot study described in section 5.7 of this strategy report demonstrates the importance of assessing the relationship between the local population and the distribution of open space.
- 4.3.13 A key conclusion of the report is that locally oriented mechanisms for provision of open space should acknowledge the way in which private and public space interact to find the optimal level of provision.
- 4.3.14 The way in which the development process focuses on individual sites, sometimes ignoring the wider context, can result in an inflexible approach to forms and levels of provision. The pilot study in Section 6.7, demonstrates how important open space provision is at a local level. Further guidance in Local Plans derived from GIS studies of this nature could better inform developers of appropriate levels of provision.
- 4.3.15 The report includes the recommendations that local authorities and their partners should:
  - Improve open space policies in development plans;
  - Prepare open space strategies that involve cross-departmental thinking;

 Develop an appropriate hierarchy of open space and use it as a basic tool in connection with open space planning and management.

# Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and Open Space

- 4.3.16 Campbell's report also calls for a Planning Advice Note (PAN) for open space. PAN 65 was published in February 2003. It reinforces the recommendations of the Green Task Force Report and Kit Campbell's report, providing advice on promoting effective links between the planning, design and management of open space.
- 4.3.17 PAN 65 encourages partnerships between local authority departments responsible for open space, with active participation from local communities and other stakeholders. It emphasises that open space strategies are an effective way of co-ordinating policy and assessing provision and need. An open space strategy should feed into the development process, providing informed policy, land disposal and spending decisions.

# 4.4 National Comparisons

4.4.1 The ways in which other local authorities across the UK have achieved successful management of parks and open spaces is something to learn from. Good practice can stem from a belief within the organisation that open space is a valuable resource. Good practice can also be the result of external incentives such as The Green Flag Park Award.

# Green Flag Award<sup>2</sup>

- 4.4.2 The Green Flag Park Award is an independent award managed by The Civic Trust in England and Wales, giving voice to public expectation about what public parks should offer their users. It aims to raise standards of parks management and promote the value of a public park. The award therefore focuses on the qualitative aspects of parks provision by measuring the park, its facilities and features against the criteria summarised below:
  - A welcoming park the overall impression for anyone approaching and entering the park should be positive and inviting regardless of the purpose for which they are visiting:
  - Healthy, safe and secure the park must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Relevant issues must be addressed in management plans and implemented on the ground. New issues which arise must be addressed promptly and appropriately;
  - Clean and well maintained for aesthetic as well as health and safety reasons issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed;
  - Sustainability methods used in maintaining the park and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For more information, see ILAM Fact Sheet 97/11.

- practices available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed;
- Conservation and heritage particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of:
  - Natural features, wildlife and fauna;
  - Landscape features;
  - Buildings and structural features.
- Community involvement management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community who represent as many park user groups as possible.
- Marketing a marketing strategy should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed. There should be good provision of information to users about management strategies, activities, features and ways to get involved. The park should be promoted as a community resource.
- Management a Green Flag Park must have a management plan or strategy in place that reflects the aspirations of Agenda 21 and adequately addresses all the criteria listed above and any other aspects of the park's management. The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed.

Financially sound management of the park must also be demonstrated.

4.4.3 The number of applications for Green Flag Awards is increasing. Local authorities that achieve the award for parks set a precedent for other authorities. To date, the Green Flag Award has not been extended to Scotland. The experience of the successful councils could be shared through the English Beacon Council scheme.

# English Beacon Councils

4.4.4 The Beacon Council scheme identifies excellence and innovation in local government and aims to share good practice so that councils can learn from each another. The scheme has been in operation since 1999, with new themes coming into focus each year. Beacon status is awarded to those councils that can demonstrate a clear vision, high satisfaction with services and a willingness to innovate amongst other attributes within a specific theme. Themes are selected by Government because of their importance in the day-today lives of the public and they are key to improving the quality of life in all communities. One of the themes for year 2002/2003 is 'Improving Urban Green Spaces', for which a number of councils attained Beacon status including the London Borough of Bexley and Northamptonshire County Council. These examples of good practice are described below, in addition to examples of the approach other Scottish cities have taken to strategic planning for parks and open spaces.

# London Borough of Bexley

- 4.4.5 Bexley is an outer London borough with a population of over 220,000, with over 100 parks and open spaces covering 638ha. It has achieved a high standard by consistent strategic planning, Member level commitment, prudent financial management, joined-up working, responsiveness to the community and a corporate belief in the sustainable management of the local natural environment have all been key to its success.
- 4.4.6 Bexley is committed to initiatives such as Local agenda 21, 'friends' groups, an extensive outdoor events programme, and community partnership schemes such as young offender projects.
- 4.4.7 Bexley's Parks Strategy has helped the Borough achieve 4 Green Flag Awards through the application of eight key aims, underpinned by a series of objectives and actions clearly expressed and available on their website (www.bexley.gov.uk).
- 4.4.8 The status of Beacon Council and the Green Flag Award has created pride in the borough's parks, which in turn has encouraged the promotion of the parks and the dissemination of good practice to other councils.

# Northamptonshire County Council

- 4.4.9 Northamptonshire received Beacon status for their innovative pocket parks. The pocket parks are open areas of land owned and managed by local people, providing free open access for anyone at all times, whilst helping to protect and conserve local wildlife, heritage and landscape.
- 4.4.10 The Pocket Parks scheme provides 'Countryside on the Doorstep' for people in the county. The parks vary in size from 0.04 to 34 ha, each of which is managed by a committee of local residents who have adopted a standard constitution.
- 4.4.11 Public access to the countryside is limited in Northamptonshire. The long-term vision for Pocket Parks is to create a Pocket Park in the majority of the county's towns and parishes, subject to public consultation and community desire.
- 4.4.12 Northamptonshire County Council's approach involved the following aspects of service delivery, the principles of which could be applied to some of Edinburgh's neighbourhood parks:
  - Promote sustainable community action by encouraging and empowering people to act as stewards of their local environment. The process results in communities themselves undertaking the consultation work and developing links with the private, public and voluntary sectors;
  - Establish and maintain strong partnerships with both public and voluntary sectors and in addition encourage financial contributions from the private sector;
  - Work with the community to maintain the long-term viability of the group. Involve volunteers from the outset and ensure they are concerned with planning, management and maintenance.

# Manchester City Council

- 4.4.13 Manchester City Council is markedly different from Edinburgh physically, socially and culturally. The city experienced dramatic economic decline when traditional industries were no longer viable and people began to migrate. The city is on the mend due to a number of regeneration initiatives in various parts of the city. The council has worked in partnership with local businesses to boost the quality of life and the local economy, support business and create jobs.
- 4.4.14 The Irk Valley Project is a partnership between Manchester Leisure, Groundwork Manchester, North Manchester Regeneration, H Marcel Guest, The Red Rose Forest, The Countryside Agency and the Mersey Basin Campaign.
- 4.4.15 The Project aims to connect local people with their environment, with the realisation of the benefits of good quality green space to the health and well being of the community. It aims to target key sites within the formerly heavily industrialised Irk Valley, where the enhancement of green space will be of the greatest benefit. Initial success is being measured by the extent of community involvement in the identification and renewal of neglected open space.
- 4.4.16 The Irk Valley Project is an example of where partnership with major stakeholders and local businesses is addressing a serious problem. The issues include contaminated land and fragmented land ownership that act as barriers to the rejuvenation of the open spaces within the Valley, therefore prohibiting access to the benefits these green spaces could provide.

#### **Dundee City Council**

- 4.4.17 Dundee City Council published a public open space strategy in 1999. The *Rethinking Open Space* strategy follows many of the areas of best practice outlined in government publications and guidelines. For example, a visitor survey was carried out as a component of the strategy, to obtain the views of the public with regard to open space and to find out what open space is used for. The survey also asked citizens what they thought of the current condition of open space and how they thought it could be improved. The results of the survey provided direct input to the strategy.
- 4.4.18 Three guiding principles will help deliver the strategy:
  - Environmental principles focusing on sustainable resource use and stewardship of the environment for future generations;
  - Social principles focusing on equality of opportunity, community involvement and empowerment and meeting local needs;
  - Economic principles providing Best Value through efficient, effective and responsive service delivery and encouraging partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 4.4.19 The strategy also created a hierarchy of public open space with four principle categories: country park, city parks, neighbourhood parks

- and local parks. The hierarchy will help to aid the planning of the provision of public open space relative to adjacent populations.
- 4.4.20 The 3-year action plan to implement the strategy also includes actions to enhance the arts and historic environment, marketing access and tourism, all of which are key features recognised in the Green Flag Park Award scheme for English Councils.

#### Sheffield City Council

- 4.4.21 Sheffield City Council published a Parks Regeneration Strategy in 1993 with a 5-year review in 1998 and recommendations for future action from 1999.
- 4.4.22 Key achievements to 1998 included:
  - Established working partnerships with Sheffield Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and numerous local and community wildlife interest groups;
  - Up to £7 million Heritage lottery funding received for regeneration of specific parks and gardens;
  - Massive growth of parks users and 'Friends' type interest groups;
  - Establishment of Parks and Open Spaces major and small grants programme to support policy implementation;
  - ILAM Open Space Management Award for community partnership projects in Hillsborough parks and Ecclesfield Park;
  - Innovative partnership developments have been made through leasing/licensing arrangements.

# Aberdeenshire Council

- 4.4.23 Aberdeenshire Council received an Award in the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning 2002 for their innovative Community Oriented Developer Contributions approach. This includes clear guidance for developers linked to emerging Local Plans and a rigorous analysis of themes for which developer contributions could be required. The themes include strategic landscaping, open space and public access (see also section 5.6.5).
- 4.4.24 The Planning Audit Unit Report for 2002 published in March 2003 stated that Aberdeenshire continues to record the highest number of decisions associated with Planning Agreements.

# Glasgow City Council

4.4.25 Glasgow City Council (GCC) has adopted flexible standards for its open space system. For new developments provision of open space is split into two main categories depending on the type of development. Provision in terms of hectares per 1000 population differs between low rise developments and high rise developments (see Figure 4.5 below).

- 4.4.26 Access to open space is also variable depending on age of target population and/or function of open space within the proposed development. The accessibility component in tandem with the extent of a real provision provide the Council with a flexible tool for providing the optimal open space ratio.
- 4.4.27 The area based and accessibility criteria for provision of open space are further augmented by the use of Section 75 Agreements.

  Developer contributions can be applied on site or off site on either land owned by the developer or land owned by GCC.
- 4.4.28 GCC have already produced a parks and open space strategy that states the issues confronting GCC in creating the sort of integrated open space system for such a large conurbation. However, before producing a more potent open space strategy that aims to address these issues directly GCC will be completing a thorough audit of open space. From this, landownership will be ascertained and an accurate assessment of the existing resource obtained. This meticulous process will provide the building blocks for GCC's open space strategy.

Figure 4.5: Glasgow City Council open space standards.

Development Type	Area based provision			Access based provision	
Low rise with gardens	Type of open space		Ha/1000 persons	Age (yrs)	Distance (m)
	Children's play areas		0.7	3-7	90
				7-11	300
				5-14	1000 (adventure play)
	Sports pitches	Kick about	1.7	N/a	500
		Play pitches		N/a	1000
	Amenity open space		0.5	N/a	400
	Total		2.9		
High rise	Informal areas for play		0.7		
	Amenity open space		0.5		
	Total		1.2		

# 4.5 The City of Edinburgh Council Context

- 4.5.1 The City Council has produced a number of strategies related to parks and open space. The overarching Open Space Framework sets out the Council's aspirations for the planning and management of its open spaces. The framework acknowledges the cross-cutting nature of open space issues and the need for an holistic approach to planning and management. The framework recognises the need for integration with the many other strategies that have recently been produced or are emerging, such as the City of Edinburgh Access Strategy. The Parks and Gardens Strategy falls within the umbrella of the framework, and it too must not contradict or devalue the aims of other strategies.
- 4.5.2 This section demonstrates how the Parks and Gardens Strategy should complement existing and emerging strategies and guidelines, in conjunction with a more local approach to open space planning and management.

# Planning Policy

4.5.3 Through its local plans, the Council pursues a policy of protecting all open spaces, both public and privately owned, which contribute to the amenity of their surroundings and the City, which provide or are capable of providing for the recreational needs of residents and visitors or which are an integral part of the city's landscape or townscape character. These may include open spaces of historic or nature conservation interest. It also promotes, both through local plans and supplementary planning guidance, the creation of new areas of major public open space as part of new development and regeneration proposals. The majority of these open spaces are identified on local plan proposals maps and may be covered by one or more designations depending on their environmental quality and value to the community.

# The Development Plan

- 4.5.4 The development plan for the City comprises the Edinburgh & Lothian's Structure Plan (2004) and a number of local plans. These documents provide the statutory planning framework for the Council's policies and proposals towards the protection and use of the city's open spaces, including the majority of those identified by this Strategy, and the creation of new areas of open space where there is considered to be a deficiency in its provision.
- 4.5.5 The Council is in the proposes of reviewing its local plans and aims to reduce their number to two: one to cover Rural West Edinburgh i.e. land west of the city by-pass extending from South Queensferry to the Pentland Hills; the other, a new local plan to be called the Edinburgh City Local Plan, to cover the rest of the City. With regard to this Plan, the Council has published a project brief setting out a programme of work with the intention of producing a consultation paper in autumn 2004, prior to the preparation of a final Plan in May 2005. The Parks & Gardens Strategy, along with other strategies

- prepared for sports pitch provision, allotments and access to open space, will be important considerations for the new local plan.
- 4.5.6 The Council also produces supplementary planning guidance on a range of development issues, including open space provision in new development.

# Open Space Framework

- 4.5.7 In addition to its local plans, the Council has produced a number of strategies that promote the better planning and management of its open spaces, principal among these is the Draft Open Space Framework. The Framework acknowledges the ongoing work of both the Council and its stakeholders to improve the open space across the city. There was also an appreciation of the increasing pressures and changing attitudes to open space.
- 4.5.8 The Framework sets a vision for Open Space:
  - 'Deliver quality and sustainable open space for the City of Edinburgh that continues to contribute to economic prosperity and quality of life'.
- 4.5.9 There are various projects and strategies underway across the Council that are addressing a range of open space issues. In order to be able to develop both strategy and policy guidance that will update existing open space agendas it was recognised that it would be important to engage those in the city responsible for or are guardians of open space to consider the whole picture (the Framework).
- 4.5.10 The Open Space Framework considers the different types of open space that the city has and should offer, looking at not just green but also civic spaces and considers how the overall protection, enhancement, provision, promotion of open spaces can be achieved and sets out a series of aims to do this.
- 4.5.11 The aims of the Framework are:
  - Create a network of open space (green and civic) that knits the city together
  - Improve mechanisms for funding, management and enhancement of open space
  - Improve the quality, quantity, accessibility and enjoyment of open space
  - Improvements will be made to the quality of open space and it will be given greater protection
  - The council's commitment is even greater benefits will be obtained for all from the city's existing and new open spaces
  - Open space provision will provide opportunities for all those who live in the city to lead healthy and physically active lifestyles.
  - Promoting the city locally, nationally and internationally
- 4.5.12 The role of Parks and Gardens are recognised as being important in delivering the following objectives:

- Landscape and Townscape Setting; Biodiversity; Heritage; Design; Environmental Amelioration; Local and Visual Amenity; Health; Recreation; Sport; Play; Commuting; Remembrance; Education; Outdoor events and Tourism.
- 4.5.13 The Framework considered how existing and potential policy and guidance could reflect these objectives. Gaps in the provision were identified as tasks that both the Council and others responsible for open space would take forward.
- 4.5.14 The Framework proposed that for the Heritage objective the Parks and Gardens strategy should include all formally identified and other designed landscapes. A hierarchy for Parks and Gardens should be developed and provision across the city that results in benefits to health should be considered. Parks and Gardens should have a role in the provision of spaces for recreation and that links with the provision of sports facilities through the Pitches Strategy are created. The strategy should also recognise the role of strategic open spaces within the city and access to them during the cities festivals and other events.
- 4.5.15 The Frameworks principle message is that we need to focus firmly on the existing provision of open space and its management as well as assessing requirements for open space in all emerging new development.
- 4.5.16 The Parks and Gardens Strategy should sit within the umbrella of the Open Space Framework and also complement other strategies and initiatives that are in place or being prepared by the Council. The following strategies and policy guidance provide important context to the Parks and Gardens Strategy and will help to fulfil the actions and links identified in the document.
  - Access Strategy
  - Play strategy
  - Biodiversity Action Plan
  - Pentland Hills
  - Urban Nature Conservation Strategy

# Access Strategy

- 4.5.17 Edinburgh is not equally accessible to all of its residents. The Access Strategy for Edinburgh aims to improve functional access within the City applying an emphasis on recreational development and management. It is conducted by contributing to Edinburgh's status as a world-class city by extending the potential benefits of access to all the City's residents and visitors through a vision of an integrated, inclusive and sustainable network of routes for walking, cycling and horse riding.
- 4.5.18 The strategy identifies ways in which such a vision will be realised through five key themes. For each, it defines objectives and sets out recommendations for action:
  - Sustainable transport

- An attractive and enjoyable network
- Encouraging healthier lifestyles
- An inclusive and accessible network
- Safety and security

There are many areas where both the Access and the Parks and Gardens Strategy converge or enhance one another.

- 4.5.19 For example, one of the recommendations is to integrate the development of access routes with parks and open spaces to provide a ready-made recreational network. Hence a successfully applied network of access by means of the above five themes is of paramount importance in increasing utilization and appreciation of the parks and gardens in Edinburgh.
- 4.5.20 Without a doubt, the Access Strategy has a positive implication on the Parks and Gardens Strategy. Through this will, among other things, increase the aspect of health within the City; therefore, the Council should consider the increase of park users when implementing the strategies and the effects that may arise from it.

# Biodiversity Action Plan

- 4.5.21 Within the City of Edinburgh Council's administrative boundary there is a great variety of habitats containing some rare and endangered species. The range of habitats includes:
  - Coastal and marine:
  - Semi-natural grassland;
  - Rivers and burns;
  - Rock faces:
  - Urban;
  - Wildlife corridors
  - Woodland.

Many of these habitats are part of the urban green space system, of which the parks and gardens are but one component. The flora and fauna found in these habitats, therefore, has to share them with users of parks. Some of the species to be found include:

- Water vole;
- Otter;
- Badger;
- Daubenton's bat;
- Sparrowhawk;
- Kingfisher;
- Spotted flycatcher;
- Great crested newt.

- 4.5.22 The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for Edinburgh aims to investigate and promote the interests of both habitats and species in the wider environment. It aims to protect and enhance biodiversity in Edinburgh. It is therefore important to consider how the implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy might contribute to the aims of the BAP.
- 4.5.23 For example, the water vole is a protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. The water vole population in Scotland has declined by 90% since 1940. Degradation or fragmentation of habitat and fluctuating water levels has contributed to its decline. The BAP states that proposed access improvements along the Union Canal, River Almond and Water of Leith need to take account of water vole needs.
- 4.5.24 This report cannot fully assess how the implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy might converge or conflict with the Edinburgh's BAP. It will be necessary for the Council to collaborate closely with those responsible for implementing the BAP so that there is no conflict between the two. The Council should also develop expert partnerships with organisations such as the Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT). The SWT are experts in researching and surveying species and providing advice to organisations on habitat restoration and enhancement.

#### Pentland Hills Regional Park

- 4.5.25 The Pentland Hills Regional Park (PHRP) meets the southern edge of Edinburgh and is physically separated from the city by the bypass. The Hills provide the backdrop to Edinburgh and many views from areas such as Morningside and Gorgie/Dalry. The Pentlands are of value in terms of recreation and biodiversity. The BAP illustrates the habitats and species of importance in the Regional Park.
- 4.5.26 An Integrated Management Strategy for the Regional Park was published in December 2000 after a series of participatory events within stakeholder communities and the City of Edinburgh. Suggestions for change arising from the events were grouped under four headings:
  - The enjoyment of the hills;
  - The economy of the hills:
  - Landscape, natural and cultural heritage;
  - Future public involvement and partnerships.

The suggestions of participants informed the policies of the management strategy, which were grouped under the themes listed above.

4.5.27 Edinburgh's parks and gardens provide similar functions to the PHRP though in a more formal urban setting. Respect for the economy, landscape, cultural and natural heritage of the PHRP could be learned, particularly by school children, through Edinburgh's parks and gardens, thus enabling a closer relationship between countryside and city. This approach could enhance both the countryside and the green urban environment. The Council

could parallel the suggestions under these headings for its parks and gardens thus creating a better link between urban and rural environments.

# Play Strategy

- 4.5.28 The close integration of the objectives of the Play Strategy and those of the parks and gardens is extremely important. Play is an activity that enables children to grow mentally, physically and socially by bringing them in contact with children of all ages.
- 4.5.29 Some of the key actions within the Play Strategy for Edinburgh have implications for the Parks and Gardens Strategy. For example:

Establish a Play Development Unit that:

- Is structured to operated at an appropriate level to ensure that play is considered in the decision making process in every Council department;
- Facilitates the development of a joint planning strategy for playgrounds and play areas in parks and open spaces.

The Play Strategy also points to the need to carry out an audit and mapping of all existing Edinburgh Council playgrounds, play facilities and play areas within city parks, open spaces, parks and housing areas. One important output of the audit would be to identify local gaps in playground provision. The GIS pilot study, described in Section 6.7, demonstrates how this might be integrated with the full GIS provision study for parks and gardens recommended in this section.

4.5.30 Another objective of the play strategy is to make play areas accessible to children of all abilities and to make these play areas safe. The Play Strategy and the Parks and Gardens Strategy therefore have many areas of convergence. If the Council is not to duplicate effort and put pressure on scarce resources within the organisation, it must ensure close collaboration in the implementation of both strategies.

# **Urban Nature Conservation Strategy**

- 4.5.31 Unlike the BAP, the Urban Nature Conservation Strategy (UNCS) is concerned with specific wildlife sites. It outlines the management requirements for identified urban wildlife sites, some of which occur in parks and gardens. For example:
  - Calton Hill and Regent Gardens;
  - Craiglockhart Hills;
  - Disused railway network;
  - Figgate Burn Park.
- 4.5.32 The threats to urban wildlife sites are similar to those that contribute to the decline of parks and gardens. In renovating parks and gardens it is important that any proposals do not exacerbate these problems. The Parks and Gardens Strategy should seek to enhance not only the parks but also the wildlife sites they contain. It may be feasible to expand the area of the wildlife sites or to provide

sympathetic zoning of activities within parks that would help promote biodiversity in line with the BAP.

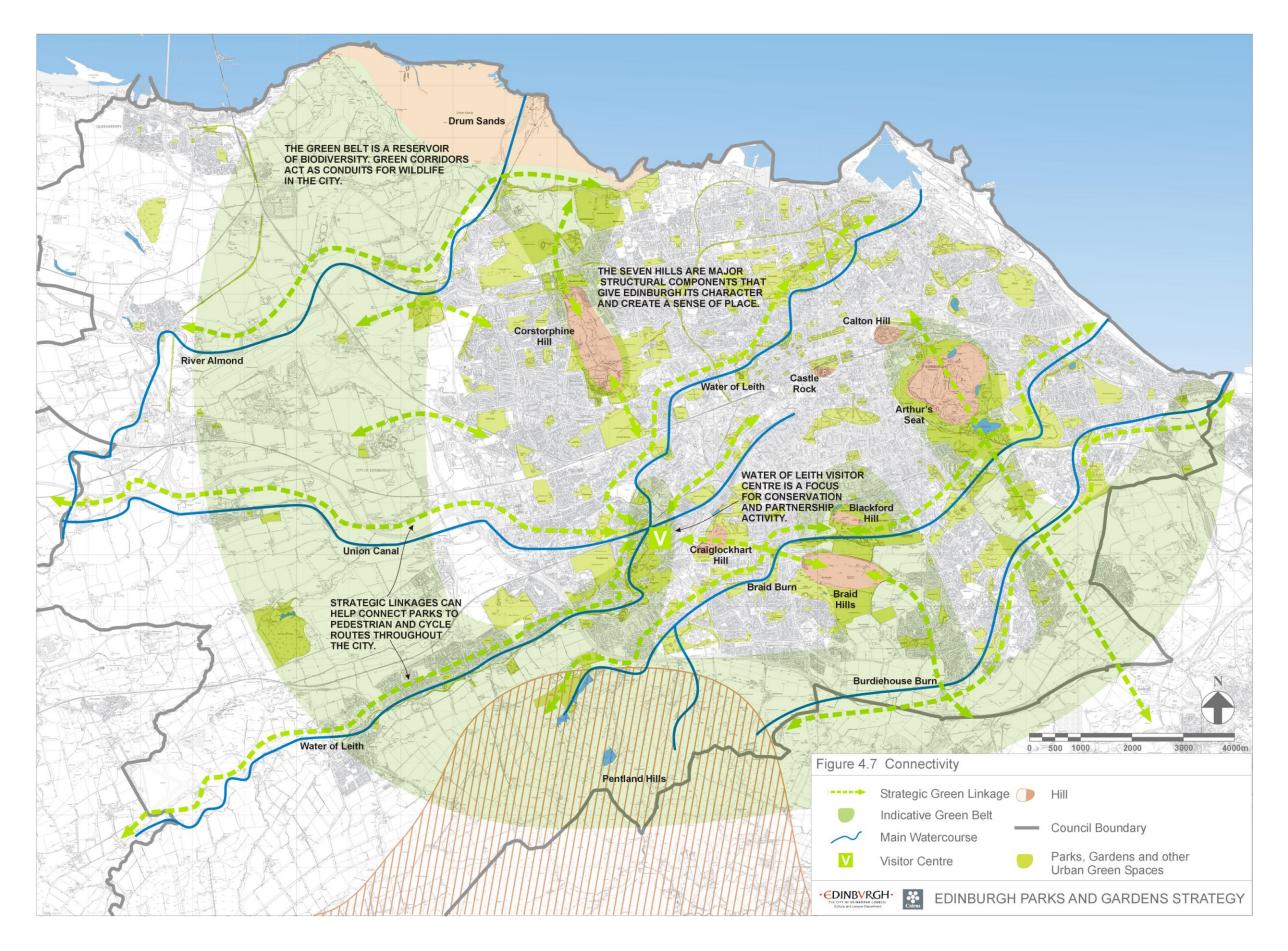
Figure 4.6: Threats to urban wildlife sites.

Threat	Percentage of urban wildlife sites affected		
Potential development	8		
Recreational pressure	12.5		
Vandalism	9		
Litter	13		
Unsympathetic Management	14		

4.5.33 The Council needs to work with those who manage and care for urban wildlife sites in order to ensure a common goal is achieved.

# 4.6 Strengths to Build On

- 4.6.1 From chapter three and section 4.5 it is apparent that the city has many strengths to build on that can stimulate the rejuvenation of parks and gardens. In turn, this will raise perceptions of the Capital city and arrest the long decline in quality of the urban environment.
- 4.6.2 Figure 3.3 (Views and Ridgelines) illustrates the role of topography and streetscape in creating view corridors. The parks themselves become the focus of many views or frame views. Views from parks to other parts of Edinburgh are also important to creating a sense of place and orientation within the city.
- 4.6.3 Figure 4.7 (Connectivity) illustrates the strengths on which Edinburgh can build to realise the vision of a connected, inclusive and integrated parks and opens space system. The major structural components of the seven hills could anchor the existing network of strategic linkages by the creation of further linkages between them.
- 4.6.4 The Water of Leith is an example of partnership working and participation in planning that has led to a continuous linear route rich in biodiversity. This green finger penetrates into the heart of Edinburgh from the green belt, providing a pedestrian and cycle route for people within the city.
- 4.6.5 The Union Canal is part of the Millennium Link, an important recreational route to Glasgow and the West of Scotland.
- 4.6.6 The green belt is a vital buffer zone limiting urban sprawl and creating an environment in which there is the opportunity to enhance biodiversity and retain elements of our cultural and natural heritage. The Pentland Hills Regional Park is an important link to these aspects of our past, and a pool of biodiversity in itself, providing recreation, education and space in a natural environment outside the city.



# Chapter Five

# 5 SETTING STANDARDS FOR THE FUTURE

# 5.1 Introduction

"What kind of parks system does Edinburgh aspire to?"

- 5.1.1 Edinburgh aspires to be a world-class city and is rightly regarded as one of the most beautiful in Europe. The capital of Scotland and seat of a new parliament, it is also one of Europe's most dynamic and fast-growing cities. The centre of the city is classified as a World Heritage Site and parks provide the setting for many of Edinburgh's historic buildings.
- 5.1.2 It has been demonstrated that parks are a key element of the fabric of city life and a barometer for a city's cultural health, both on a city-wide and local level. This suggests that Edinburgh could be expected to have a world-class parks system. The following is a vision statement which crystallises the overall ambitions for the City's Parks System

# **VISION**

"A quality parks system worthy of international comparison; accessible, diverse and environmentally rich; and which fulfils the cultural, social and recreational needs of the people".

- 5.1.3 It is illuminating to test the current provision of parks and gardens against this vision. The preceding sections have demonstrated the following points:
  - In common with other UK cities, Edinburgh's parks have experienced a serious and long-term decline in terms of:
    - The funding of parks maintenance
    - The number of staff engaged in maintaining the parks
    - The skills level of staff
    - The quality and range of facilities that they offer to users
  - In 2001-2002 Edinburgh had the second lowest spend (per 1000 head of population) on parks open spaces and horticultural services of 15 Scottish Councils. The comparison is made in the Association of Public Services Excellence Scheme's (APSE) report "Horticultural Services Performance" 2002.
  - Edinburgh's spend of about £13,000 per 1000 head of population compares with the average spend (of the 15 participating Councils) of £27,655 and the highest in this group of £37,544.
  - It is notable that Glasgow City Council's spend on parks per 1000 head of population is about 2.5 times Edinburgh's.

- Since 1988 the annual revenue budget for maintaining and developing Edinburgh's parks and gardens has reduced in real terms of about £5 million.
- The best parks in Edinburgh do not compare in quality with the best parks in London, Paris, Berlin and New York.
- The majority of parks have not been individually appraised in partnership with the communities they serve, in order to ensure that they offer the facilities needed by their users.
- No major Edinburgh park has yet been refurbished as part of the ongoing city regeneration programme, unlike major cities such as Paris. Berlin and Barcelona.

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Council should adopt a vision for Edinburgh's parks and gardens that reflects its aspirations to be a world-class city.

- 5.1.4 It is necessary to identify the gap between existing provision and the system envisaged in the vision statement. The following facts illustrate the gap:
  - 62% of the TAB survey sample said Edinburgh's parks and gardens were very important to them and a further 23% considered them important;
  - 74% of visitors said that parks and gardens were of above average importance;
  - Recent research has found that whilst cleanliness and the control of litter are believed by parks users to be the most important factors, these issues had amongst the lowest satisfaction ratings.
- 5.1.5 It certainly is not just a matter of applying more financial or human resources, although it can be assumed that more resources will be needed. New approaches are required and the following are ideas that have worked elsewhere and should be taken up in Edinburgh:
  - Working to achieve quality and best value at all levels. In order to achieve high quality outputs, there must be a quality organisation capable of producing these. This means staff organisation, skills and recruitment as well as staffing levels must be looked at:
  - Placing partnership working at the heart of parks renewal and management. This has the effect of broadening the base of support for parks; enabling stakeholders to participate; unlocking new funding opportunities; opening up new mechanisms for project implementation; and avoiding the type of annuality problems that have beset capital projects in the past;
  - Monitoring performance based on up-to-date data. The gathering and effective use of data is critical to prioritising resources and managing the resource effectively. This will

require investment to put in place systems such as a Geographical Information Systems (GIS), and to maintain these properly.

# 5.2 Quality Standards for Parks and Gardens

- 5.2.1 It is not feasible in this strategy to create a list of the improvements required for each park. Given that partnership is to be placed at the heart of renewal it is vital that each park is individually appraised and if renovation is to take place, that the programme for this is agreed with the stakeholders in that particular park. This section outlines a framework for assessing parks' quality, the function of which would be to decide how planning improvements should be made.
- 5.2.2 There is no existing quality standards framework for parks and gardens. A thorough approach to the measurement of quality standards is a pre-requisite of a quality parks system. Without this, there is no benchmark against which improvements can be planned and implemented, or against which the quality of any renovated park can be measured.
- 5.2.3 Any assessment procedure requires a methodology through which criteria are defined and performance benchmarks may be established. In terms of the goals and objectives set for Edinburgh's Parks and Gardens, the first base for standards evaluation may be said to be in place. Thus the city, in order to achieve its goal of having "Quality Parks", must incorporate the following in its parks:
  - Ecological Integrity as expressed by existing habitats, their ecosystems and conservation management, practice and design;
  - Cultural Heritage as expressed by the identity and incorporation of historic land use and artefacts and their effective interpretation to park users through planning and design;
  - Encouragement of public participation opportunities through community involvement in the design and management of neighbourhood and local parks;
  - Regeneration of Parks as an integral part of urban renewal and area economic sustainability.
- 5.2.4 Each of these goals address three fundamental functions of parks:
  - Provision of integrated natural and cultural environments in the City;
  - Provision for recreational activities;
  - Provision of designed amenity to optimise environmental and recreational potential.
- 5.2.5 How should the individual and collective performance of parks within a city be evaluated in terms of required action programmes, investment and routine management? It is agreed that a city should

aim to provide diversity of size, function and content within its parks system. It follows, therefore, that as a starting point city parks may be classified according to size, function and content. This is the basis of the recommendations embodied in the Scottish Executive's Report, "Rethinking Open Space", in which the principles of classifying parks within a hierarchy are outlined. However, the system must also provide the means of measuring qualitative factors of parks such as intensity of use, user satisfaction, appropriateness of facilities, overall design quality, ecological integrity, standards of maintenance, security, supervision and general performance against SWOT criteria, including costs.

# 5.3 Proposed Parks Quality Assessment System

5.3.1 The assessment system proposed for Edinburgh parks and gardens is essentially qualitative. Assessment of park quality should be applied to all parks regardless of size, location and classification. Therefore, all parks will be subject to a consistent system of evaluation and benchmarking.

# A. Public Perception and Interpretation of Parks

5.3.2 Questions on user understanding of any given park, its area, topographic, physiographic and ecological characteristics, landscape structure, primary functions, activity facilitation, user levels, overall quality of facilities and activity areas and landscape.

#### Practical Issues:

- Is the park adequately described to users and understood in terms of its physical, ecological and landscape characteristics?
- Are the facilities offered and the activities catered for in the park effectively promoted?
- Is it known how many people use the park and what are their age groups, activity preferences and other socio-economic data?
- Are members of the local community (friends) participants in a given park's improvement/ plans?

### **B.** Boundaries of Parks

5.3.3 The boundaries of Parks are their external 'face' and give the initial impression of what may lie inside and the overall quality of the whole. The boundaries are experienced from footpaths, roads, public transport, and surrounding buildings, be they houses, offices or hotels. They may be expressed explicitly by timber, stone or brick walls, hedges, cast iron railings, security fencing, woodland with agricultural type fencing, or implicitly, as incidental shrubbery or open land merging imperceptibly with the surrounding built, agricultural or natural environment. The boundaries of Edinburgh parks and gardens are, in general, run down, inappropriately designed and difficult to maintain, and therefore are included as a key element in the programme of enhancement within the Strategy.

5.3.4 The following questions are intended to test the performance of boundaries against several key criteria:

#### Practical Issues:

- Do the boundaries of a given Park prevent or inhibit visual penetration into the Park by external viewers, on foot, in motor vehicles or from adjoining properties or open spaces?
- Does the Park need to be fenced at all?
- Are there sections of the boundary that do need to be fenced for safety or security reasons?
- Where boundaries are fenced, is the fence or wall design appropriate or adequate functionally and aesthetically?
- Are the principal views into the Park, and of its landscape, inhibited by boundary planting?
- Are there problems of litter accumulation, routine maintenance and machine access due to poor boundary design?
- Do the boundaries of the Park enhance or detract from its optimal potential?

#### C. Access

- 5.3.5 Access may be physical or visual. The CEC has prepared an Access Strategy for parks and open spaces which sets out proposals for continuing the development of landscape and footpath linkages between parks and the City's major open spaces and natural systems, such as the Water of Leith from the Forth to the Pentlands. Access linkages need to be visually expressive so that pedestrians and other users may derive a clear sense of direction and orientation. Access is expressed also by the entrance points to parks that may provide a strong physical and visual statement, such as the gates into Holyrood Palace or the West Entrance to the Royal Botanic Garden. Edinburgh Parks generally have poorly expressed entrances that fail to exploit their significant rôle as nodes within the city's urban landscape.
- 5.3.6 The following questions are intended to guide a critical review of access and entrances to the City's parks and gardens.

# Strategic Issues:

- Are the access points or entrances to Edinburgh's parks given due consideration in programmes of enhancement?
- Have the Internal vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian circulation systems in parks been subject to specialist review in terms of effectiveness and access potential?

#### Practical Issues

 Does the City provide a network of inter-connected and accessible parks such that it is feasible for the walker or cyclist to journey to and from different points in the city without leaving the parks and open space system?

- Are the City's parks and gardens adequate in terms of their visual access?
- Has there been any attempt by the City to address accessibility issues in the past?
- Is there provision for off-street car parking for park users within Edinburgh parks?

# D. Nature Conservation, wild life and woodland management

- 5.3.7 A prime function of City Parks and Gardens is to provide the opportunity for people to experience the natural environment and to gain insights into and participate in wildlife and woodland management. Everyone has a responsibility to heighten their environmental awareness and to put into practise the principles of nature conservation. The CEC has introduced its Biodiversity Action Plan in conjunction with a wide partnership of Groups including the Forestry Commission, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Wildlife Trust. The current key issue is whether the Action Plan is being effectively implemented.
- 5.3.8 The following questions are intended to establish the present status of nature conservation and environmental education in city parks.

# Strategic Issues:

- Are Edinburgh parks an integral part of the Biodiversity Action Programme.
- Does the park have a Nature Conservation management Plan?
- Does the park come under a Woodland Management scheme?

#### Practical Issues:

- Are the existing woodlands and tree stock in the Park in a healthy state?
- Are there provisions for the local community to participate in the Park as nature conservation volunteers or in programmes for education or environmental awareness?

# E. Recreation

5.3.9 As a primary function of parks, recreational opportunities for organised sports or for informal enjoyment such as walking, running or sitting in natural or formal garden settings are expressed by the provision of appropriate facilities as required from the CEC Play Strategy and the Pitches Strategy. Effective siting, land drainage, land form, quality of playing surfaces and integration of diverse facilities within the landscape setting of parks are key factors. Also equally important are criteria against which parks are evaluated in terms of promoting healthy leisure activities all year round.

#### Practical Issues:

 Does the Park offer a range of accessible, well-maintained formal and active recreational facilities that are attractive to all age groups?

- Does the Park also provide a range of accessible informal and natural areas for informal and passive recreation?
- Is the Park's terrain more suited to active and formal recreation or natural informal recreation?
- In the context of the city as a whole, is the balance between formal and active recreation and informal passive recreation satisfactory?
- Is there a deficit in provision of quality formal active recreation facilities in the city at local or neighbourhood level?
- Is there sufficient provision of significant expertly maintained formal gardens, woodland gardens and other areas of outstanding horticulture?
- Is there adequate provision in neighbourhood parks for special events such as cross country running, fêtes, and community organised activities?

# F. Landscape Structure and Design

- 5.3.10 The world's great city parks have each been the object of inspired design, such as that of Frederick Law Olmstead for Central Park in New York, Andre Le Notre for Versailles or Joseph Paxton for Birkenhead Park. William Playfair may be regarded as the single greatest influence upon the design of Edinburgh's later New Town squares, but also Calton Hill, Princes Street and Regent Terrace Gardens. There is, however, no great tradition in Edinburgh of inspired parks design as there is in many cities less endowed by nature and where man has been obliged to be creative in the visual arts. Having said this, there are in Edinburgh parks exceptional features largely lying hidden within overgrown vegetation in a state of neglect. There are also, unfortunately, too many instances where design principles in park layout are absent and the landscape of parks has been the consequence of horticultural expedience.
- 5.3.11 Stimulated by this Strategy, there is an opportunity to introduce landscape design into the renovation or re-construction of the City's parks on a scale hitherto unimagined. Landscape design is based on an analytical process that takes ecology as its starting point. It also analyses the visual structure and character of the landscape as given: the nature and function of facilities to be sited and the connections to circulation systems. Landscape design co-ordinates and integrates these elements as well as incorporating the elements of horticulture and forestry and principles of civil engineering and architecture within a 'designed' framework. Such a process of analysis and design requires to be applied to every park in the city.
- 5.3.12 The following questions are intended to establish the principles that need to be applied in the re-designing of Edinburgh's parks and gardens.

# Practical Issues:

 Do the City's parks effectively reflect the nature of its dramatic physiographic features, its seven hills, the Forth Estuary and the river valleys of the Water of Leith and Almond?

- Does the park fully exploit the inherent natural features of its site?
- Does the park's landscape express the qualities of its site and provide a sense of overall order, definition and containment of each of its main activity areas?
- Is there sufficient contrast in the size and arrangement of tree planted areas and open space and in the sequence experience and movement through the park?
- Are the principal views and viewpoints from the park, effectively defined?
- Does the park effectively exploit its surroundings?
- Does the park's circulation system fit well with the terrain and vegetation/spatial structure reinforcing the overall design of the Park and the convenience of users?
- Is the landscape of the park in a state of decline?
- Should the park be re-designed and renovated?
- Does the park suffer from inconvenient path networks, confusing layout, clutter, incongruous structures, lack of grounds maintenance, unsightly fencing, vandalism, graffiti and litter problems?
- Can the park's visual and physical connectivity, to other parks and greenspaces, be strengthened?
- Can the park's local character be conserved and enhanced to avoid a homogeneous design for all sites within each category?

# **G.** Parks Management

- 5.3.13 The reorganisation of local government parks management into broadly based Recreation Departments in the mid-1970s in local government generally resulted in increased competition for decreasing financial resources within the broader departmental administration. Gradually this has resulted in under-funding and the consequent de-skilling and reduction in quality of those services previously provided by stand-alone Parks Departments. Then, parks were looked after by trained gardeners and their security by dedicated park keepers. Now, parks are looked after by a combination of personnel with restricted horticultural skills, mobile squads and mobile park wardens. Edinburgh recognises that within the wider remit of Culture and Leisure, a comprehensively reorganised and re-skilled parks service is needed and should be backed by appropriate levels of funding.
- 5.3.14 The following questions are to highlight the key management problems and opportunities to be addressed by the Council in the implementation of the Strategy.

Strategic Issues:

 Does the Council aim to broaden the concept of parks management into urban land and environmental management?

#### Practical Issues:

- Is there a coherent vertically and horizontally integrated parks management structure with responsibility for all of Edinburgh's public parks and gardens?
- Are there any unresolved management problems concerning external or in-house contractors?
- Are there any plans to change the existing management structure to meet the new responsibilities and challenges associated with implementing the Strategy?
- Is there a parks and landscape design & project implementation unit?
- Does the Council operate apprenticeship or management training schemes?

# H. Promotion of Parks and Gardens

- 5.3.15 The parks and gardens of Edinburgh are under- promoted as well as suffering from long-term under-investment. A major campaign is needed. This should be undertaken within the context of the proposed capital works programme for the regeneration of Edinburgh's Parks and Gardens that is central to the purpose of this Strategy. Promotion must extend through all media, including IT, to increase citizen awareness, building up the momentum of expectation and the active involvement of people in the parks regenerative process and in planning a sustainable future for parks. Such a programme would establish the significance of hierarchy and differentiation of parks such that choice is extended through enhanced perception. Promotion of regeneration must go hand in hand with practical improvements including street signs directing people to park entrances and facilities, interpretative boards showing illustrative maps of parks as well as information on park events, natural features and special characteristics.
- 5.3.16 The following questions highlight some of the potential in an effective Parks promotional campaign.

# Practical Issues:

- Are the people of Edinburgh aware of the extent and diversity of the parks and gardens resource of their city?
- Do the people of Edinburgh place a higher value on their parks than other UK cities?
- Is there awareness in the Scottish media and business community of the commercial potential of an effectively promoted parks regeneration programme?

# **Recommendation 2**

A parks quality standards framework based on comprehensive analysis of the existing situation should be formulated, adopted and put into practice by the Council.

# Chapter Six

# 6 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

# 6.1 Aiming to succeed

- 6.1.1 This section deals with the main issues that require to be addressed in order to implement a parks improvement programme. Many of the recommendations flowing from this section relate to processes rather than actual outcomes. This is because the practical goals that will be set for each park need to defined in concert with the relevant stakeholders.
- 6.1.2 Success in implementing the Parks and Gardens Strategy depends to a large extent upon the abilities of the key organisation at its heart, namely the Council, and Parks Unit in particular. Its fitness in terms of its structure, the skills of its staff and its effectiveness at building the partnerships that will be required will be at least as great a factor in deciding outcomes as the availability of financial resources. This section will therefore look not only at the parks resource itself and how improvements may be effected, but also at the Parks Unit and the need for it to work effectively with external partners.
- 6.1.3 A fit organisation coupled with adequate resources, a clear vision and well-understood processes has the very best chance of success.

# 6.2 Partnership working

- 6.2.1 The issues affecting parks and their users are cross cutting, involving many different aspects of day-to-day life. For example, encouraging people to make better use of parks will increase their health and well-being through physical activity and contact with the outdoors. However, according to the TAB survey, people may be deterred from using parks out of fear for their personal safety (9%) or because parks suffer from vandalism or the presence of litter or dog faeces (1%). Perhaps the benefits to health of using parks for physical activity are not well-publicised or existing marketing material is poorly targeted. These factors can be exacerbated by poor transport links to parks, resulting in a negative cumulative impact that can only be addressed through a range of different stakeholder organisations and a cross-departmental approach by CEC by implementation of the Access Strategy.
- 6.2.2 The condition of parks, and the perception the public has of them, influences how they are used. The responsibility for their condition rests with a number of different organisations pursuing a range of policy objectives. The effective management of public and privately owned parks and open space throughout the city is therefore a complex task requiring inputs from organisations with similar objectives and some with related objectives. The review of strategies in section 4.5 illustrates the need for a body that can oversee the implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy and act as a long-term mechanism for the discussion of issues relating to parks and open space.

- 6.2.3 A Green Space Partnership formed from the key stakeholder organisations concerned with parks, gardens and open space in the city and chaired by the Council's Executive Member for Sport, Culture and Leisure, would ensure the co-ordinated implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy and the family of related strategies described in section 4.5. Members of the Partnership would include organisations such as:
  - City of Edinburgh Council;
  - Greenspace Scotland;
  - Historic Scotland;
  - Scottish Natural Heritage;
  - Communities Scotland
  - Universities:
  - Representatives of owners of the private gardens;
  - Royal Botanic Garden.
- 6.2.4 The Partnership would provide a pool of knowledge and experience in parks and open spaces and related issues. Such a Partnership is needed in order to unlock the potential of parks and their contribution to the three key areas of sustainable development, namely:
  - 1. Maintenance and enhancement of environmental capital;
  - 2. Social inclusion and diversity; and,
  - 3. Long-term economic development and prosperity.
- 6.2.5 The principal aims of the Green Space Partnership would be to:
  - 1. Facilitate integrated working by organisations responsible for Edinburgh's parks system

If improvements are to be made to parks and gardens and benefits realised in the long-term then it is essential to develop more synergy between the organisations responsible for Edinburgh's parks system. The Partnership would involve a regular gathering of stakeholder organisations through which working relationships would be strengthened. The Partnership would implement and guide the use of the Parks and Gardens Strategy but also advise on the creation of new parks and gardens and ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of present and future parks and gardens.

2. Oversee implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy in concert with existing and related emerging strategies.

Implementation will occur in the context of a family of related strategies, some of which are described in section 4.5. It is therefore vital that there is strong leadership in the implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy as the regeneration of parks and open spaces is a complex issue.

3. Act as a hub where information regarding sources of funding for parks and gardens is collated and disseminated.

The decline in quality of parks and open spaces throughout the UK is due partly to a lack of funds. Although the regeneration of parks is now receiving political backing and therefore greater funding than before, park managers need to be aware of all the possible alternative sources of funding that will help with the continuing development of the parks system.

4. Monitor and review examples of good practice in all sectors of parks management and development throughout the UK.

The Council could learn a great deal from the way in which other local authorities throughout the UK are tackling the problem of declining quality of public parks. Section 4.4 describes the rôle of English Beacon Councils in sharing experience of good practice and publicising their success in various aspects of service delivery, including parks and open space. It is important that the Council is more pro-active in its approach to parks and open space management by actively seeking alternative mechanisms by which urban green space can be enhanced.

5. Publicise parks locally, nationally and internationally and advocate a culture of stewardship and ownership among Edinburgh residents.

Promoting the use of parks and open space is the key to the longevity and sustainability of the entire green network within the city. The Partnership should formulate a marketing strategy with police, health and education bodies that aims to increase the numbers of people using parks by raising awareness of improvements to the parks system and enhancing access.

6. Strengthen links with Lothian and Borders Police through their "Youth Strategy".

The Council cannot afford to ignore the impact that crime and the fear of crime have on the use of urban green space. Lothian and Borders Police, through their Youth Strategy, are actively targeting youth crime. Goal three of their "Action Plan for Youth Strategy" states that they will:

"Support statutory and voluntary agencies in the development of opportunities for young people that aim to promote responsible behaviour and good citizenship."

Parks and open spaces offer venues where these sorts of opportunities could be provided. The Green Space Partnership would be a strong platform from which to facilitate the use of parks and open space in helping to achieve this facet of the Youth Strategy.

# 7. Strengthen links with Lothian NHS Board.

The value of open space to health is widely known and this relationship should be encouraged. The presence of areas of trees and other vegetation within a parkland (or open space) setting relieves stress and enables residents to stay in touch with the seasons. Walking can help reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke and reduce high cholesterol. Green links between parks provide a means by which people can exercise and/or gain access to open space in order to participate in other physical and social activities. The Council should strengthen links with the Lothian NHS Board and raise awareness of where people can walk in the city away from traffic and how walking can help them recover from illness or prevent illness.

8. Strengthen links with Primary and Secondary Schools and Community organisations such as Lifelong Learning and Safer Routes to Schools.

By educating children about the benefits of green space and the detrimental effects of anti-social behaviour at an early age, many of the problems associated with the decline in quality of parks and open space could be prevented. Children with a sense of social responsibility are less likely to damage public property and encourage their peers to do likewise. Lothian and Borders Police could help carry this message to schools through Goal five of their 'Youth Strategy' that seeks to:

"Continue worthwhile involvement in the education process by maintaining meaningful and sustainable partnerships with our Education Departments."

9. Network with voluntary and other non-governmental organisations such as BTCV, SPOKES.

Voluntary organisations are a valuable resource possessing a range of skills and abilities that focus on particular aspects of the environment. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), for example, aim to create a more sustainable environment through partnerships with communities and by enhancing learning opportunities. BTCV also advocate, through their conservation activities, the concept of the Green Gym, whereby people can become involved in local conservation activities and improve their health at the same time.

SPOKES is the Lothian Cycle Campaign which campaigns (effectively) for better conditions for cyclists, especially in Edinburgh and the Lothians. Cycle routes through Edinburgh make use of parks and follow parts of the green network illustrated in Figure 4.7.

10. Act as a steering group for the production of design guidelines for Edinburgh's parks, gardens and other open spaces.

Many of Edinburgh's parks and gardens originated over 200 years ago. The original landscape structure and buildings of many of them

remain intact. The installation of new facilities, structures and planting in existing and new parks and gardens has created an infrastructure that supports a range of different functions. However, as the rôle and function of parks and gardens changes the infrastructure is likely to be repaired, replaced or modified. The Council should produce design guidelines for parks, gardens and open spaces that aim to enhance the movement framework<sup>3</sup> in and around urban green space.

11. Encourage close ties with local businesses adjacent to parks or larger businesses willing to support parks development.

High quality parkland and open space adjacent to commercial property adds value by enhancing the setting of the property and by providing a pleasant location where staff can eat lunch or go for a short walk during their lunch break. The popularity of Princes Street Gardens is an example of the appeal of conveniently situated and attractive open space to staff of local businesses. Saughton Park is also frequently used by workers from nearby offices as a place to sit and read, or eat lunch. Businesses that benefit from parks and gardens should be invited to assist in maintaining the condition of those parks. Where poor quality parks are located close to local businesses, they should be invited to contribute to their regeneration.

12. Form close ties with Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) Space, Greenspace Scotland and ILAM.

Aims 2, 3 and 4 are dependent on an understanding of the parks 'movement' and how this is evolving in England where parks regeneration, by a variety of techniques, has been gaining momentum over a number of years. Forming close ties with CABE Space would be particularly beneficial. Though the organisation's remit is solely for English parks and open space, forming close links would assist in the strategic development of Edinburgh's urban green space.

6.2.6 As Scotland's capital city, Edinburgh should be instrumental in leading the renaissance of the country's parks and open spaces. The Green Space Partnership should therefore set an example of joint working to improve standards in parks and open spaces and provide an innovative model that other cities can follow.

# **Recommendation 3**

A Green Space Partnership should be set up with the overarching aim of driving forward an integrated approach to the renewal of Edinburgh's parks and gardens.

6.2.7 The experience of the Culture & Leisure Department is that significant benefits can be obtained from the setting up of a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Urban Design Compendium Appendix

fundraising trust, like the Usher Hall Conservation Trust. This body is chaired by the Lord Provost. with its 6 members drawn from academic, financial, legal and other fields as well as elected members of the Council. Its role would be promotion of the City's parks and gardens and assisting in securing new streams of funding.

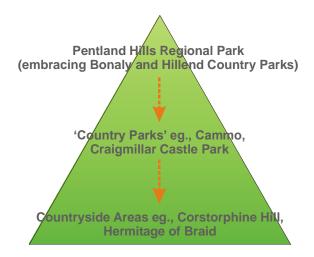
## **Recommendation 4**

A Parks and Gardens Conservation Trust should be set up to promote the City's Parks and Gardens and assist in securing new streams of funding for renewal projects.

# 6.3 A Parks Classification System

6.3.1 Parks in Edinburgh are not designed to any one model and so they differ greatly in size, landscape and the facilities they offer. Currently they also differ in terms of the standards of maintenance that are applied and who carries this out. Crucially, parks differ in terms of their function, and in terms of the groups of people who make use of them. A notional hierarchy of CEC managed parks is illustrated in Figure 6.1

#### A: NATURAL PARKS



#### **B: FORMAL PARKS**



Figure 6.1: Existing notional parks hierarchy.

6.3.2 It is logical that some kind of classification system should arise, and there are clear advantages to formalising this system. The creation of a systematic framework will help to group parks with those most alike and to make it clear what sorts of standards of design and maintenance are appropriate for the various types of parks. This systematic approach does not imply that one type of park is more important than another. The Classification System allows objective evaluations of purpose and allocation of resources based on function and potential function, rather than on preconceived ideas about the relative values of individual parks.

- 6.3.3 The Classification System (see figures 6.2 and 6.3) provides useful pointers to both design and maintenance requirements. The simplicity of design and function required for neighbourhood parks should not be confused with poor or inappropriate design. Smaller parks with a limited number of functions must be maintained effectively and therefore design quality is as (if not more) important as in city and premier parks.
- 6.3.4 Because there is a huge variety in Edinburgh's parks, it would be possible to arrive at a classification consisting of a large number of types. This is undesirable, and potentially overcomplicated. The tendency should be towards "grouping" rather than "splitting". Parks serving only local populations should reflect the needs and desires of these populations as far as possible, and so there is likely to be intrinsic variation within groups. For these reasons four categories of parks and one for gardens are proposed. The classification system refers to Council-owned parks and gardens only. Whilst non-Council parks and gardens may fall into analogous categories, and for the purposes of the overall level of provision may be assessed as such, the classification system is fundamentally a management tool. The categories are described in more detail in Figure 6.2 but are briefly as follows.
- 6.3.5 **Pentland Hills Regional Park** (PHRP) has its own Joint Committee which oversees its operation in terms of the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1979. PHRP is part of the hierarchy of parks provision even though the nature of a Regional Park its primary land-use is not recreation makes it different to other public parks. It is guided by a 5-year Integrated Management Strategy approved in 2000 (see section 4.5.10).
- 6.3.6 Premier Parks: A small number consisting of high quality parks, offering a wide range of facilities aimed at international and national visitors as well as local and city-wide users. These will often be areas with significant resources of cultural or natural heritage and may themselves be of historical importance. Design quality should be optimal and unique to each park. Standards of maintenance should be very high thus dictating the need for designated site-based maintenance teams. The overall impression should bear comparison with the best regarded parks anywhere in the world.
- 6.3.7 Natural Heritage Parks: These are generally large areas, the functions of which are determined by topography and ecology. In the main, these parks will tend to be dominated by woodland but also include coastal areas with topographical features such as hills and river valleys. The semi-natural character of these parks means that management for biodiversity is of fundamental importance, many of which are designated or proposed Local Nature Reserves, Urban Wildlife Sites or Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation as defined in the Edinburgh Urban Nature Conservation Strategy and Local Plans. Therefore, these areas are well suited to informal environmental education. Access is likely to be via car hence they will generally include designated car parking areas within their boundaries.
- 6.3.8 **City Parks:** Parks providing facilities that are used by people who may live anywhere in the city. These are likely to be larger in size

and the facilities provided will be more specialised, with many including sports pitches and other formal facilities. However, these parks may also function as the Community Park for some people by virtue of their location and the absence of other smaller areas. Access will be by car, bus, bicycle or on foot.

- 6.3.9 **Community Parks:** Parks serving chiefly the people of a defined local area. These are generally smaller in area and the facilities provided are likely to be relatively simple. Functions should be determined as a far as possible by consultation with users and potential users. Access to these parks will be mainly on foot or by cycle.
- 6.3.10 Gardens: generally small areas subject to intensive horticultural input, with some provision for passive recreation (generally seats) but no provision for other forms of recreation. Generally used for quiet enjoyment and relaxation.

#### **Recommendation 5**

A Parks classification system should be adopted and used as a guide to the design of upgrading and renewal projects and maintenance

Figure 6.2: Draft parks classification system.

Pentland Hills Regional Park				
Defining characteristics	Design factor 1	Design factor 2	Maintenance factor 1	Maintenance factor 2
Extensive area of mainly privately-owned land	Provide for public access	Ranger service essential	Need to work closely with owners	Provide information/interpretation
Primary land uses generally not recreation	Moderate effects of access Exclude some activities	Support economy of land-use pattern	Need to work closely with owners	Recreational use generally not intensive
Wide range of habitat types	Biodiversity a key factor	Specialist input required	Need to work closely with owners	Specialist input required
Contains areas designated for recreation (Country Parks) owned by the Council	Provide for different recreational activities	More intensively used	Higher level input required than in wider Regional Park	
Serve visitors from region/further afield	Provide adequate car parking	Within landscape constraints	Standards should reflect the park's status	
Premier Parks				
Defining characteristics	Design factor 1	Design factor 2	Maintenance factor 1	Maintenance factor 2
Compare with the best regarded urban parks internationally	Establish Standards		Specialised/ designated maintenance team	
Designed individually to unique criteria	Evaluate each park on its own terms		Specialised/ designated maintenance team	
Intensive horticultural input	Specialist design input required		Specialised/ designated maintenance team	
Associated amenity functions: demonstrations / shows / plant collections, temporary and permanent.	Specialist design required		Specialised/ designated maintenance team	Security an issue
Associated facilities e.g. high quality café/restaurant	Specialised designs		Franchised management	Security an issue
Quality toilet facilities	Specialised designs		To match design standard	
Serve national/international visitors	Interpretation/ information to reflect multi-national visitor base		Maintenance to reflect status	
Fulfil some of the functions of community parks	Identify local users			
Fulfil some of the functions of city parks	Identify city-wide users			

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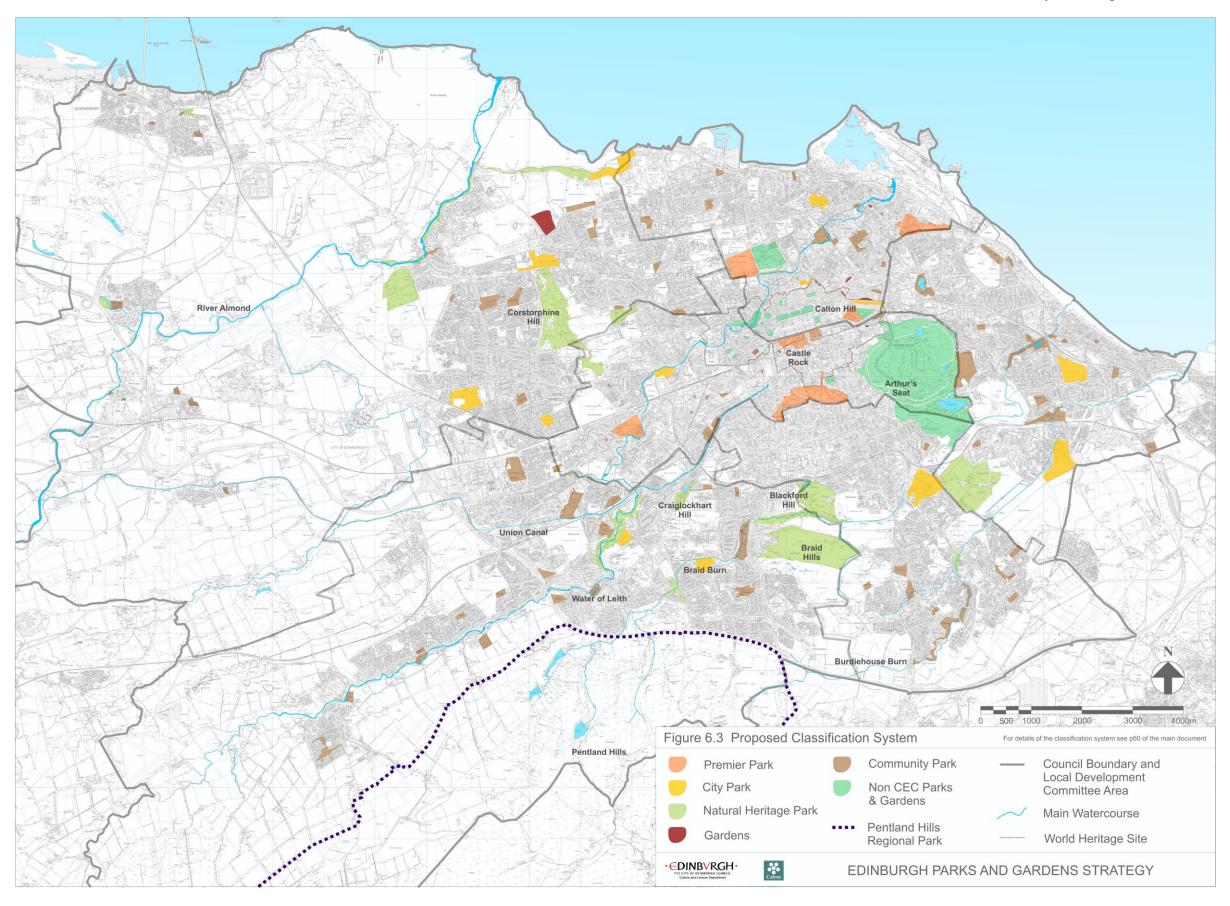
Optional features				
,		1 .	Specialised/ designated maintenance team	
		Balance with day-to-day requirements	Reinstatement conditions imposed	
May specifically exclude some activities common to other types of park	Identify possible incompatibilities e.g. cycling, dogs		Enforcement/ security issue	

Defining characteristics	Design factor 1	Design factor 2	Maintenance factor 1	Maintenance factor 2
Functions determined by topography/ecology	Work mainly with existing resource	Specialist input required	Specialised contractor required	
City-wide access, generally with designated car parking	Security is of key importance	Car parking within landscape constraints	Maintenance to reflect status	
Generally large in size	Visits may be longer in duration	Toilets may be demanded	Mobility of maintenance teams within site an issue	
Interpretation/information provision is a fundamental objective	Specialised design area	Must have clear objectives & target audience	Must be regularly maintained & updated	
Biodiversity is a fundamental objective	Specialised design area	Relate to biodiversity plans	Specialised contractor required	
Low or no horticultural input				
Toilet facilities provided	Establish design standard		Ability to maintain must be established	Security is an issue
Optional features	<u> </u>			•
Countryside furniture	Establish design standard		Ability to maintain must be established	
Designated interpretive centre	If functions dictate		Ability to maintain must be established	Security is an issue
Other buildings	If functions dictate		Ability to maintain must be established	Security is an issue
Restrictions on certain types of activity	Use design to inform users		Must have ability to enforce	

City Parks				
Defining characteristics	Design factor 1	Design factor 2	Maintenance factor 1	Maintenance factor 2
Certain functions determined from outside the local area	Dependent on functions/strategic need	Integration of functions is critical	Combinations of facilities	Specialised maintenance may be required
Has some of the features of community parks	Consult locally if required		Within abilities of maintenance team	
Generally larger than community parks	More scope - landform/ landscape	Functions relocated from n/hood parks		
Accessible from city wide - by car/bus/cycle	Consider designated parking	Provide information to users		
Generally same horticultural maintenance standard as community parks	Design landscape within maintenance capabilities		Within abilities of maintenance team	
Optional features				
Sports pitches/bowling greens/other formal facilities	Specialised design		Specialised maintenance	Security is an issue
Sports centre	If inherited		Specialised maintenance	Security is an issue
Larger areas of woodland/semi-natural areas	New areas if appropriate	Should reflect strategic objectives	Specialised maintenance as in Natural Heritage Parks	
Children's play area	New facilities if appropriate	Should reflect strategic objectives	Ability to maintain must be established	Security is an issue
Contains items of cultural/historical/environmental significance	Objectives for these established	May be statutory requirements	Specialised maintenance	
Pavilion	Consider upgrade		Establish ability to maintain	Security is an issue
Toilets	Establish standard	Consider upgrade	Ability to maintain must be established	Security is an issue
Other buildings	As dictated by function		Ability to maintain must be established	Security is an issue

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Community Park			Only of Edinburgh Fubin	C Parks and Gardens Strati
Defining characteristics	Design factor 1	Design factor 2	Maintenance factor 1	Maintenance factor 2
ocal - proximity to users is key	Measure catchment area	Design for local users as client	Local maintenance team preferred	Team maintains several parks
Accessible - safe & easy routes/access points	Disabled/pushchair access	Promote safe routes to park	Must be adequately maintained	
Attractive - people will want to use it	Landform/landscape	Security	Capable of being well maintained	
Clear purpose(s) determined exclusively by local need	Consultation required	Provide for functions with set limits	Involve/inform contractor in identifying purposes	
Pedestrian/ cycle access, no designated car parking provided	National design standard may apply			
Available for community events	Consultation required	Provide space	Responsive to need	
Generally smaller in size	Design quality critical	Consider landform changes		
Caters for passive recreation	Consultation required	Provide facilities		
Optional features				
Recreation - active	Consultation required		Within limits of ability	
Recreation - informal	Consultation required		Within limits of ability	
Nature conservation/biodiversity	Consultation required		Within limits of ability	
Horticulture	Consultation required		Within limits of ability	
Arboriculture	Consultation required		Within limits of ability	
Children's play area	Consultation required		Within limits of ability	
Pavilion	Generally if inherited only		Within limits of ability	
Toilets	Generally if inherited only		Within limits of ability	



## 6.4 Parks Renewal

6.4.1 A framework for the evaluation of the quality of any individual park has been described in chapter 5, and this should be the primary tool for planning improvements. However, there are a number of nonintrinsic issues that need to be taken into account. These arise either from visitor survey data or from policy.

#### A. Increase Surveillance

- 6.4.2 There is continuing concern amongst parks users (which is reflected in the most recent survey) about the lack of a presence of parks staff in parks. This is an important public perception and is based on their experience of actual changes:
  - Reduction in overall number of staff;
  - Change from static park officers to mobile patrols;
  - Reduction in number of park patrol officers;
  - Centralised maintenance and closure of park bothies.
- 6.4.3 This is an area of prime concern that must be seriously addressed. It would appear that major changes to organisation will be required as well as more resources in order for the public to actually perceive an improvement. Currently there is limited use of CCTV systems to monitor facilities. CCTV and/or other security measures should be considered wherever major investment in facilities takes place.

#### Recommendation 6

The Council should make the increase of surveillance in parks a prime objective.

### **B.** Minimise Barriers to Parks Access

- 6.4.4 The Council has certain obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1998. In terms of access to parks, this can be interpreted as a duty to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that those with disabilities are not prevented from having access to parks. In the main, parks that are accessible to pedestrians with a pram or pushchair will also be accessible to those with restricted mobility. Problems occur where, as in West Princes Street Gardens, the main access points are via steep slopes or steps. However, even here there is an alternative access via a tarmac road. Although it is important to note that physical barriers are one facet of the obstacle that restricts access to parks; other facets comprise perception and social barriers that limit inclusion from an increasingly culturally diverse population.
- 6.4.5 Entrances to parks at some locations need to be designed in order to prevent unauthorised access by motorbikes and cars. However, when appraising parks it is of key importance that fences and gates are sympathetically designed and accommodate the needs of disabled people. Expert advice is available from organisations such

as Paths for All and the Fieldfare Trust, which specialise in access issues.

#### **Recommendation 7**

The Council must carefully consider access when planning any improvement works and call for expert advice as required.

## C. Promote school use of park facilities

6.4.6 The current round of replacement school building means that green spaces around schools are under pressure as never before. Parks in suitable locations could embrace school activities, and could be improved in ways that make them more suitable for use by school groups. Consultation with the Children and Families Department and individual schools will be required to ascertain the workability of this proposal.

### **Recommendation 8**

Schools should be encouraged to make more use of their local parks, where feasible, and improvements to facilitate this should be considered.

# D. Promote parks as "outdoor sports centres"

6.4.7 For Edinburgh to become the most active City in Europe parks need to be greater utilised as venues where sport or activities events could take place. Clearly, parks have limitations in terms of weather, light availability during winter and equipment storage. Lack of toilet facilities need not necessarily be a barrier when the intention is to provide services in community parks, which are aimed primarily at those living within easy reach.

### **Recommendation 9**

The Council should consider promoting sports and physical activity events in line with the Sport and Physical Recreation Strategy.

## E. Combating litter

6.4.8 Recent research of park users has shown that the control of litter is one of the most important aspects of maintenance. However, there is a wide disparity between the level of importance accorded litter control (4.7 out of 5) and the level of satisfaction at what is being achieved (3.3 out of 5). This strongly suggests that current arrangements for litter collection are failing to meet public expectations, and that there should be a review of the current budgets and management arrangements.

In view of poor public satisfaction with litter control, budgets and management arrangements should be reviewed to ensure improvement.

# F. Dealing with dog fouling

6.4.9 Again, an issue of great importance, but less straightforward to deal Dog faeces are unpleasant and potentially with than litter. hazardous to health. However, reactive policy change such as a ban on dogs from all parks should be avoided. It must be recognised that dog-walkers are amongst the most regular of park users, and that there are demonstrable health benefits accruing to owners from dog ownership. Increasingly, it is seen as a basic moral requirement incumbent on any dog owner to clear dog faeces. The Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003 places responsibility firmly on the owner to remove dog faeces from public places. However, the failure of some dog owners to act in a responsible manner means that an action plan for parks needs to be formulated. Provision of designated dog faeces bins is part of the solution, but this must be backed up by a campaigning approach, bringing on board partners such as the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Dogs Trust. In particular, there must be close co-operation between Parks Division staff and both Dog Wardens and Environmental Wardens employed by the Environmental and Consumer Services Department. Extension of facilities such as provision of plastic bag dispensers might be considered for some areas. These are facilities that could attract sponsorship. The setting up of some form of monitoring is required in order to gauge success. This could be done by asking parks users whether the situation has improved or deteriorated, preferably backed up by a site survey.

### **Recommendation 11**

In partnership with others, the Council should draw up an action plan for dealing with dog fouling, but should recognise the potential health benefits accruing from dog ownership.

# G. Reinvention of parks buildings

6.4.10 There are many buildings within parks that were connected with their maintenance or function, but which are now redundant. The condition of some others, particularly sports pavilions, has now deteriorated to the extent that their appearance is now a negative influence. The reinvention of redundant or under-utilised buildings could inject new life into parks and help decrease the frequency of anti-social behaviour. The capital costs of building development or even demolition may be high, but there exists the potential for the creation of a new sense of place and pride in some parks. Buildings should be designed to enhance the function of parks and harmonise with the physical structure. Some buildings have the potential to be

reinvented as a combined franchised café, park information point and changing facility. The optimum location for purveyors of refreshments would need to be considered at the design stage of the renewal process if the public were to make full use of such facilities.

## **Recommendation 12**

An appraisal of the function and condition of parks buildings should be carried out, with a view to reinventing them wherever possible as integrated components of the parks service provision.

# H. Integration of public art

6.4.11 User survey data showed that demand for public art is low. However, Community involvement may be a key to the successful integration and 'ownership' of public art in parks, therefore the introduction of public art into parks should not be ruled out as it is well known that sensitive and appropriate artworks can transform a space and increase its value. Many examples exist of artworks that have become an intrinsic part of the fabric of the parks, notably the Parc Guell in Barcelona, which incorporates artworks by Gaudi.

#### **Recommendation 13**

Careful consideration should be given to the inclusion of sensitively located appropriate artworks in parks.

# 6.5 Delivering Improvements

- 6.5.1 The Parks Classification System described above illustrates the need for an approach to improvement tailored to the needs of a specific park or type of park. It follows, therefore, that the approach taken to improving parks will differ between types. Grouping parks into similar types allows the formulation of a number of different mechanisms designed to bring about the desired change. In particular, the pattern of stakeholder involvement will necessarily vary between types of park.
- 6.5.2 The involvement of government agencies and city-wide heritage trusts will tend to be concentrated upon the premier parks, by virtue of the fact that these will tend to be the areas of most significance in terms of cultural heritage. At the same time, users in these parks tend to be a more disparate group, less easily referenced by geographical area. It should not be forgotten, though, that even Princes Street Gardens acts as the local green space for some residents and workers.
- 6.5.3 At the other end of the scale, community parks will tend not to involve government agencies unless there is a compelling reason to do so, for example, the existence of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or Site of Special Scientific Interest. The focus will tend to be on users and local residents within the catchment of the community park, with a view to encouraging and facilitating them to participate in redesigning their open space and becoming involved in its

- management, and possibly assisting in the securing of resources to carry out specific improvements.
- 6.5.4 City Parks are in an intermediate position. Again involvement of government agencies is likely to be less, if any, and the views of local residents and users are of critical important. However, City Parks tend to draw their users from a wider area, particularly where sporting activities are concerned, and therefore user groups (sports associations and clubs) must be included.

Figure 6.4: Indicative external stakeholder involvement pattern.

Premier Park	City Park	Natural Heritage Park	Community Park
Scottish Natural Heritage Historic Scotland Cockburn Association Other bodies where relevant, e.g., World Heritage Trust Community Councils Amenity Associations Friends Groups Local Residents Users	Scottish Natural Heritage User Groups e.g., sports sportScotland Community Councils Amenity associations Friends Groups Local Residents Users	Scottish Natural Heritage Friends Groups Amenity Associations Community Councils Other bodies where relevant e.g., Scottish Wildlife Trust Forestry commission Users	Scottish Natural Heritage Users Users Groups e.g., sports Community Councils Amenity Associations Friends Groups Local residents

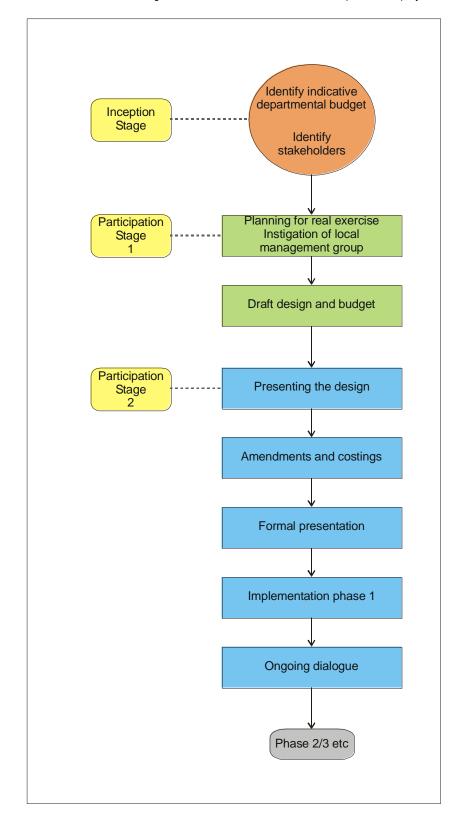


Figure 6.5: Stakeholder involvement in improvement projects.

6.5.5 There are a number of potential mechanisms for carrying out improvement works. The mechanism adopted for each project will depend on individual circumstances.

# 6.6 Addressing Gaps in Provision

- 6.6.1 The Council has already achieved successes and carried out good work by acquiring a number of privately owned areas and opening these up for public access and benefit. Few of these areas have the status of parks, but there is one notable exception, namely Craigmillar Castle Park. This is the most extensive area of land to be turned into a public park for many decades, and is still in the process of development. Nevertheless, creation of new parks remains opportunistic.
- 6.6.2 The identification of gaps in parks provision and taking action to address them is a problematic area. One of the problems is that there is no standard, either quantitative or qualitative, that relates to parks provision. There are a number of standards that relate to green space and playing fields, the best known of which is the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standard (figure 6.6). Local authorities tend to develop their own standards, a sample of which is shown in Figure 6.7.

Figure 6.6: National playing field standards.

NPFA 6 Acre Standard: 2.4ha outdoor playing space per 1000 people Comprising:			
1. Outdoor Sport 1.6 – 1.8 ha / 1000 people			
Pitch sports	1.2 ha / 1000 people		
Other formal outdoor sports excluding golf	0.4 – 0.6 ha / 1000 people		
2. Children's Play Spaces	0.6 – 0.8 ha / 1000 people		

6.6.3 Accessibility standards: Numerous studies have indicated that a walking time of 5 minutes or less is key to local usage. Some UK Councils have translated the 5-minute rule into a 400m catchment. However, three studies have shown that straight-line distance should be 280m, also accounting for local barriers. The NPFA recommended 240m as the distance for children to be able reasonably to walk in 5 minutes.

Figure 6.7: Local plan open space standards.

Council	Description		Standard (ha/1000 people)
	Overall outdoor pla	aying space	2.43
Dundee	Children's play space in new developments		0.8
	Recreational open space in new developments		1.4
Aberdeen	Landscaped areas in new developments		1.4
Edinburgh	Open space in new developments		1.62
Glasgow	Open space in new	Low rise with gardens	2.9
	developments	High rise	1.2
Stirling	Open space at neighbourhood level		2.43

- 6.6.4 Despite high annual increases in property values, the population of metropolitan Edinburgh continues to grow, whereas those in other Scottish cities are declining. Dundee's population, for example, is falling at 6 times the national average. Meanwhile as family sizes fall, demand for housing grows. The result is that Edinburgh's parks and open spaces are under pressure like no other city in Scotland.
- 6.6.5 Examination of the base plan of parks in the city highlights areas where the provision of parks is scant (see Figure 3.4). Chief among these is Gorgie/Dalry. Given the high cost of land, it is not clear how parks can be provided in built-up areas in a direct way (i.e. purchase of land by the Council) without a very substantial capital outlay. The answer to enhanced provision in such areas is likely to lie in the sensitive design of larger-scale new developments, where open space can be provided. This is particularly so in developments of the scale of Granton Waterfront or the South-East Wedge. However, small size need not mean that the quality and value of a park is low as evidenced by Paley Park in Manhattan, New York. This approach will require close co-operation between Planning and the Culture and Leisure Department.

From the outset of the planning of large scale developments there should be close co-operation between Culture and Leisure (Services for Communities from April 2006) and Planning to examine the potential for the inclusion of high-quality open spaces.

6.6.6 Planning legislation to generate funds for the renewal of parks, in particular the use of Section 75 Agreements, may be a powerful tool. In this situation, developers will formally agree to fund improvements to neighbouring facilities, which could include a local park. This again depends upon close co-operation between Planning and Parks.

## **Recommendation 15**

More use should be made of Section 75 Agreements to facilitate the improvement of parks facilities.

6.6.7 The Council's case for Section 75 Agreements, under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, and certain types of funding, would be greatly strengthened if a detailed spatial evaluation of parks in relation to the people of the city were available. Some of the data that could be used for such an evaluation currently exists. However, more data, the integration of new and existing data and the upgrading of the Parks GIS system will be required before such an evaluation could be performed. Also, the proposed new City-wide Local Plan will give the Council an opportunity to give clear guidance on Agreement procedures, as well as listing potential projects including open space additions or improvements to parks, in the public interest.

# 6.7 GIS Pilot Study

- 6.7.1 The equitable distribution of urban services including park facilities is difficult to judge without an analysis of likely demand for the facilities. An example in the private sector might be a tyre repair firm seeking the best location to open a new garage. Without careful research into the location of the nearest competitor and the accessibility of the proposed location, the viability of the new garage would be uncertain and it could fail.
- 6.7.2 A similar approach is needed in the provision of parks, gardens and other open spaces. On behalf of the Council, The Audience Business (TAB) carried out market research into how parks are used and what people like or dislike about them and what they wish to see improved (see Section 5.9). The TAB report is very important in providing a statement by residents and visitors about how they use and perceive parks and gardens.
- 6.7.3 A follow-on study to the TAB report should look in more detail at the demographic profile of residents in those parts of the city where it is clear that the parks system is not meeting the needs of the local

- population, or where it appears that there is an under provision of publicly accessible parks of a particular type.
- This pilot study demonstrates how GIS could be used to enhance service delivery or achieve a more equitable distribution of parks and gardens. It is recommended that a full study be initiated to determine demographic trends in areas of Edinburgh and how this can affect use, and therefore the quality of parks and open spaces. The study should examine the distribution of the smaller community parks, which the TAB report indicates as under-utilised, and their relationship with the larger parks. The study would also need to interrogate 2001 census data and deprivation statistics to give an accurate profile of the resident population. Transport links and the location of other culture and leisure facilities such as leisure centres. libraries, youth clubs etc, would also need to be taken into consideration. Analysis of census and demographic data should be compared to previous census takes in Edinburgh and trends compared to other local authorities and national data. This rigorous approach would ensure that changes in demographic profile could be anticipated and consequently a flexible approach to service delivery could be adopted.
- 6.7.5 A pilot study has examined 5 areas in Edinburgh. An example of one area is shown in Figure 6.8.

#### Rationale

- 6.7.6 Local usage is the key to the success of smaller parks and gardens. Studies have demonstrated that a walking distance of 5 minutes is the key to local usage. The NPFA recommend 240m as the distance for children to walk in 5 minutes. This time distance might also apply to other vulnerable or less able members of society, such as the elderly and disabled.
- 6.7.7 Poor access to parks and open space and under provision of suitable open space within a short enough walking distance can deter people from using parks. This has implications for health, transport and crime. The use of attractive, safe green space or the proximity of diverse green spaces that exhibit a range of vegetation types promotes good health in adjacent populations. If people do not need to use cars or public transport to reach areas of open space, the amount of traffic congestion and pollution is reduced, which benefits the health of the population and reduces road related deaths and accidents. Under-utilised parks and gardens become neglected and unsafe and can attract crime.

# Method

- 6.7.8 A number of areas were chosen in a desk study, using GIS, to be representative of the different patterns of provision that occur throughout the city. These are described below and illustrated in Figure 6.9.
- 6.7.9 This led to the assumption that residents within the zone are adversely affected by the under provision of parks and gardens in their local area. In order to test this theory the following method was used:

- ArcExplorer GIS used to display map data on a computer. See Figure 6.8 which illustrates selected parks with a 240m access zone around each park;
- 2. CEC and non-CEC parks and gardens adjacent to the deficient zone were selected;
- An access zone extending 240m beyond each park was defined. A straight line distance of 240m is considered to be a five minute walk in an urban area if barriers etc., are accounted for;
- 4. The census and demographic data (represented by points on the map) lying outside the access zone were selected and the data extracted to an Excel spreadsheet. Refer to Appendix 4 for a list of the different fields this data contains;
- 5. The data was analysed to determine the likely impact of spatial separation from the selected parks on particular socio-economic sub-groups living outside the access zone.
- 6.7.10 The census data gives an economic profile of the sample population and is an indication of the 'fitness' of that population. The SAPEEL data gives the age profile of the sample population based on mid-2000 population estimates. See Appendix 5 for figures illustrating census data and SAPEEL data.
- 6.7.11 Figures 6.9 and 6.10 illustrate graphically the variations in population profile and lifestyle of the sample populations for each of the areas.

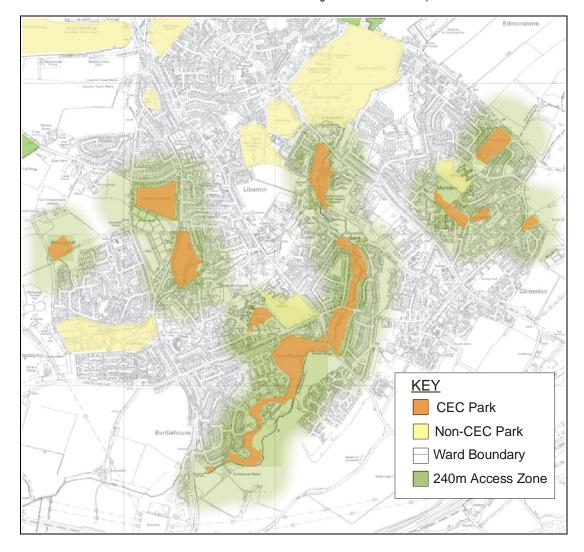


Figure 6.8: Selected CEC parks with 240m Access Zone.

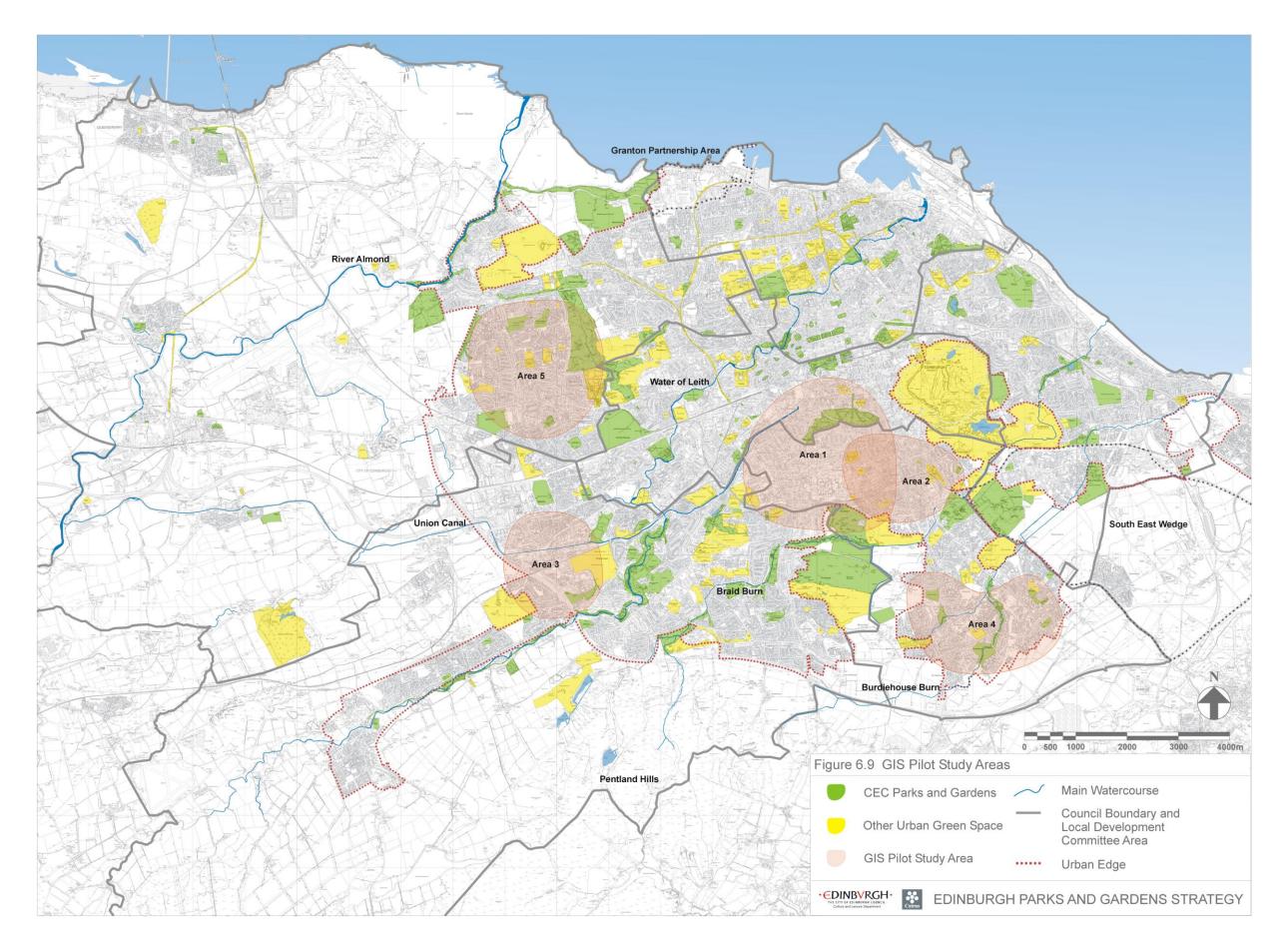
# Area Summaries

# 6.7.12 Area 1

This area is situated in the districts of Merchiston, Marchmont and Morningside to the north of the Hermitage of Braid. The area was chosen as it is apparent from Figure 6.3 that there is a distinct zone devoid of parks and open space.

The sample population is located to the south and west of The Meadows and Bruntsfield Links and north of Hermitage of Braid. Approximately 74% of the housing stock is in flats. A large proportion of the population are therefore unlikely to have private green space of their own.

The sample population contains the highest proportion of retired and economically inactive people and the lowest proportion of 0-15 year olds.



### 6.7.13 Area 2

This area forms a corridor between the eastern edge of The Meadows and Inch Park. It is contiguous with Area 1 but was assessed separately due to the proximity of the recreational spaces of Holyrood Park. It was chosen as an area potentially deficient in open space.

However, the amount of flatted accommodation is less than Area 1 at 55%. Compared to the other Areas studied, this sample population shows the lowest proportion of people over the age of 64.

### 6.7.14 Area 3

This area is situated in the South-west of the city in Wester Hailes and Baberton. The city bypass cuts across the area, which was chosen because there is a cluster of 13 play areas.

In this case, the population within the 240m access zone was sampled. The full results are shown in figures 6.10 to 6.11. The sample population is of a similar size to area 2, with 88% of the housing stock being flats. Car ownership is the lowest of the areas sampled and unemployment the highest. The population of this area are probably the least affluent of the areas sampled.

### 6.7.15 Area 4

Area 4 is located in the districts of Liberton, Burdiehouse and Moredun. The area was chosen as it has a fragmented, linear park system with other non-CEC single use sites such as cemeteries in close proximity. The sample population is a long distance from the nearest sports pitches, with Inch Park and Hunters Hall being the nearest large capacity sports areas. The area is close to the southeast wedge where development proposals for up to 4,800 dwellings will bring opportunities for additional and enhanced open space provision.

The sample population is the highest of all the areas assessed, with 36% of the housing stock being flats, which indicates that a larger proportion of the population will have access to their own back gardens. This low percentage is attributed to the suburban location of the sample population.

This area shows the highest proportion of economically inactive people, the highest proportion of 0-15 year olds and the highest proportion of long term ill. The sample has the lowest proportion of 16-64 year olds.

# 6.7.16 Area 5

This area is located to the west of Corstorphine Hill in the districts of Clermiston and Corstorphine. The area was chosen for the same reasons as Area 1 – there appears to be under provision of publicly accessible open space.

The population outside the 240m access zone was sampled in this case. This area shows the highest car ownership, the highest proportion of economically active people and the highest proportion

employed full time. The population of this area are probably the most affluent of the areas sampled.

## Limitations

- 6.7.17 The pilot desk study has looked at a limited number of locations throughout Edinburgh. In the absence of a 'control' i.e., an area showing 'normal' distribution of open space, the distance of 240m or a five-minute walk, was used throughout to demonstrate disparities in provision.
- 6.7.18 Variables such as location of other cultural, community and leisure facilities were not used in the study. These will influence the magnitude of adverse impacts associated with under-provision of open space. The location of sports pitches relative to residents was not examined. The location and frequency of, public transport routes was not mapped. Accessibility to public transport affects accessibility to parks and open spaces.
- 6.7.19 It is recommended that a full study be undertaken that takes into account these and other factors. The study should also include a survey of residents in the area to determine their level of satisfaction with the provision of parks, ease of access to parks and the condition of parks they visit most frequently.

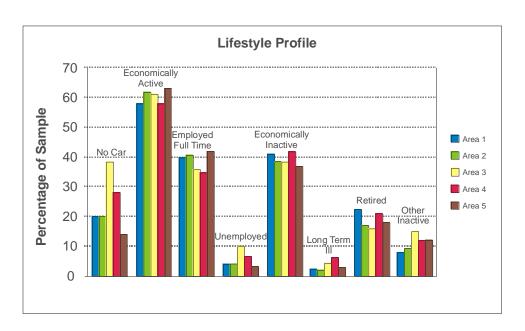


Figure 6.10: Study areas 1-5: Lifestyle profile.

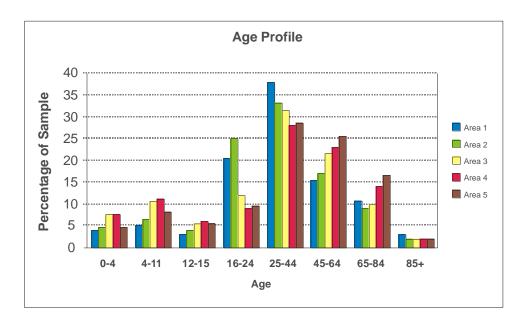


Figure 6.11: Study areas 1-5: Age profile.

### Discussion

- 6.7.20 The desk study demonstrates the importance of determining an accurate socio-economic profile of neighbourhoods in the vicinity of parks and open spaces. Figures 6.11 and 6.12 together give an indication of whether 'vulnerable' sectors of society might be further disadvantaged by inadequate provision of parks and open space.
- 6.7.21 Looking at the data for area 1, where the population outside the access zone was sampled, there is a high proportion of people living in flats and a high proportion of economically inactive people (41%). Combined with the obvious deficiency in publicly accessible open space, it might be inferred that this leads to a deepening in the inequity of parks and gardens provision. However, the area is well served by public transport, making parks such as The Meadows and the Hermitage of Braid accessible.
- 6.7.22 Without a user survey or participation exercise or exhibition focusing on the needs of this neighbourhood, a clear idea of their preferences cannot be obtained.
- 6.7.23 Area 3 is similar to area 1 in that there appears to be a deficiency in the amount of open space there. Almost 90% of the population live in flats, car ownership is low and there is a high proportion of economically inactive people. There is a large population of younger people aged between zero and 15. There are also barriers to movement, namely the City Bypass on the western side and the Water of Leith to the south.
- 6.7.24 An examination of the area reveals a cluster of over thirteen play areas that provide the most accessible recreational resource for the younger people in the area. The Water of Leith and the Union Canal offer further linkages into the greener heartlands of the city.
- 6.7.25 In this respect the needs of the population in area 3 in terms of open space provision appear to be attaining equilibrium. However, other

factors that have a bearing on open space provision such as population density have not been taken into account, nor has the quality of the existing play areas, open space and parkland been assessed. This could reveal the need for action in terms of refurbishment or re-distribution of play areas or enhancement of movement between them.

- 6.7.26 Area 5 appears to be deficient in publicly accessible open space. This area represents affluent suburban Edinburgh, which is inferred from the data illustrated in Appendix 2. Car ownership is the highest of the sample areas at 86% and there is the highest proportion of economically active people and the lowest percentage unemployed. The area also shows the highest proportion of people aged 64 and over.
- 6.7.27 Area 5 is adjacent to Craiglockhart Hill and Edinburgh Zoo and the open countryside is not far to the west. A low proportion of the housing stock is flats, with many properties having large gardens. The different socio-economic and age profile of this more affluent and older population should be reflected in the provision and management of open space in this area.
- 6.7.28 Further studies that expanded on this pilot study and utilised surveys or participatory planning could provide open space planning at a local scale that directly meets the needs of the resident population.

### **Recommendation 16**

Using GIS, the Council should carry out a survey of the distribution of parks and open space in Edinburgh and the facilities on offer, in terms of the socio-economic characteristics of the surrounding population.

# 6.8 Management, Staff and Skills Training

- 6.8.1 This section deals mainly with the functioning of the Parks & Sport Division of the Council's Culture and Leisure Department. In order to achieve the change required in the physical resource and how it is perceived and used by customers, change is required within the organisation. Whilst the Parks & Sport Division will operate in constructive partnerships with a range of organisations and individuals, the Council remains the key body and the one charged with the responsibility for action.
- 6.8.2 The following are the main organisational issues for consideration:
  - The need to increase skill levels within the division
  - The adequacy of human resources
  - Organisation and communications within the division
  - The re-alignment and integration of various functions relating to parks:
    - Dav-to-dav maintenance of parks:
    - Park Patrol and Countryside Rangers;

- Relationships between Play, Play Development and Parks;
- Relationships between Sport and Parks;
- Management and maintenance of natural heritage areas.

### New Skills

- 6.8.3 In order to bring about the desired change and to sustain necessary improvements, the requirement for an organisation that is fit to deliver these is a pre-requisite. There will be a need for skills to be developed or provided that are currently not available within the division. In particular there is an identified need for:
  - Professional landscape design skills;
  - Community development skills;
  - Strategic direction and performance monitoring;
  - Maintenance of Natural Heritage Parks and natural heritage features;
  - Professional tree specialist(s);
  - Operation and maintenance of a new GIS system;
  - Raising of general skills levels.
- 6.8.4 It is neither desirable nor feasible for Parks to attempt to provide for all skills and services in-house. It is preferable that design work should continue to be out-sourced on the basis that costs can be contained, but also because a diversity of creative approaches is something to be encouraged. However, it is desirable for the skills of a qualified landscape architecture professional to be available to the division, in order to ensure that external designers are properly briefed and that effective control is exercised over the quality and costs of design work. It is important to set consistent design standards and this would be assisted by the preparation of a Landscape Design Manual (possibly in conjunction with consultants) for the different categories of park and oversee its application. This person should ideally be a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute.

The capacity for City Development Department to provide landscape architectural services to the Parks Unit should be assessed. If it does not exist, the Unit should recruit a suitably qualified landscape architect.

6.8.5 Community development is at the heart of a community parks system. The Council needs to engage closely with communities to ensure that local people are not only consulted, but encouraged and enabled to participate in the redesign and management of their community park. A particular set of skills are required in order to carry out this type of work effectively, plus the knowledge of participative models and the ability to put these into practice.

### **Recommendation 18**

The Parks Unit should further train staff and consider recruiting one or more community development specialists

6.8.6 To ensure that the Parks & Gardens Strategy is implemented and its progress monitored, suitably skilled staff should be identified to oversee the work. They will have the responsibility of co-ordinating progress, ensuring that work in parks and gardens accords with the strategy, and ensuring that stakeholder engagement is continuing to be effective. It is suggested that one member of staff should be identified as the key point of contact between the Green Space Partnership and the Council. This officer would also lead on performance monitoring, which will be critical in reporting to partner organisations, particularly those involved in co-funding improvements.

## **Recommendation 19**

The Parks Unit should form a core team to drive the implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy.

- 6.8.7 The effectiveness of in-house manual staff is of fundamental importance if standards within parks are to be raised and maintained at a higher level. It seems unlikely that there could be a return to the staffing levels of the 1970's in the parks system of the future. However, it is noted above that along with an overall reduction in staffing levels there has been a loss of skills, to the extent that basic horticultural skills are felt to be lacking in many of the operatives carrying out parks maintenance.
- 6.8.8 The development of the parks classification system has indicated where horticultural skills require to be concentrated, and these are within the premier parks. City and Community Parks areas will have less intensive maintenance regimes and will require different skills to maintain them effectively.

- 6.8.9 Natural Heritage Parks will require to be managed largely by a completely separate workforce with a different specialised set of skills and aptitudes. The requirement for these areas is estate maintenance, consisting of a number of types of work, but which can be grouped as follows:
  - Footpath and track repairs and maintenance;
  - Repair and maintenance of simple drainage systems;
  - Repair and maintenance of signage;
  - Sympathetic management of vegetation forming wildlife and landscape features.
- 6.8.10 For these particular areas of work there are no dedicated maintenance staff. There is no facility for certain types of work to be carried out in a timeous and cost-efficient manner, and this has led to the deterioration of the infrastructure in some natural heritage areas. It is essential for maintenance works to be carried out in close consultation with the Countryside Ranger team as theirs is the key role in monitoring Natural Heritage Parks.
- 6.8.11 Other areas of work (forestry/arboricultural work), litter picking and grass cutting of extensive areas fall within the remit of the existing workforce or contractual arrangements.

The Council should create a designated multi-skilled estate team trained to maintain Natural Heritage Parks.

- 6.8.12 In any urban area a trained and experienced tree officer has a key role to play in maintaining the health and structural integrity of trees in parks and in other publicly accessible areas, and in doing so ensures that the Council's duties in relation to public safety are properly discharged. This is particularly necessary in a city with as many mature trees as Edinburgh.
- 6.8.13 A combination of climate-change induced freak weather, and an increasingly litigious society suggest that, if nothing else, it is financially prudent for the Council to pay particular care to this subject. It is suggested that it is a necessity for at least one professionally qualified officer to be retained in-house. This officer will provide the technical knowledge and expertise to make sound management decisions relating to the tree stock and, importantly to provide a reliable source of advice to colleagues and would specify work to be undertaken by specialist contractors. In the light of the large number of mature trees in the city, consideration should be given to sharing the responsibility of overseeing the tree stock with other members of staff in the Parks section.

The Council should employ a specialist professional tree officer within the Parks Unit and provide training for other parks staff to assist with this work.(achieved)

6.8.14 The need for an up-to-date GIS system is discussed in detail in Section 6.10. This specialist tool requires skill and knowledge to maintain it once it is established. Given that the GIS is expected to become a key tool for all staff engaged in parks management or renewal, it is important that there is a core unit within the Parks Unit of appropriately skilled staff who can maintain the system effectively and who can train and guide other staff who will simply be users of the system.

### **Recommendation 22**

The Council should set up a GIS unit within the Parks Unit with the necessary skills to maintain the system and train others in its use.

- 6.8.15 To ensure that the workforce at all levels is properly equipped to implement the strategy, a planned and adequately resourced approach to training and professional development is required. Properly delivered, training not only ensures that staff are able to provide services in a customer-friendly and cost-effective way, but also fosters good staff morale, motivation and assists in the development of a rewarding career structure.
- 6.8.16 It is not possible to deal with training issues in detail in this document. However, some of the relevant training issues which are key to the implementation of the strategy are as follows:
  - Use and maintenance of GIS;
  - Good practice in community involvement and participation

## **Recommendation 23**

The Parks Unit should draw up a training strategy aimed at countering the loss of skills and providing staff with skills in new areas of work.

- 6.8.17 Edinburgh has a number of teaching institutions where research into and the teaching of horticulture, arboriculture, ecology and landscape is undertaken disciplines with key relevance to parks and gardens e.g. the Universities of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt and Napier, and the Royal Botanic Garden. Historic Scotland is also a practitioner that might be invited to participate in exchanges. While informal linkages already exist, there is no formalised exchange, no teaching undertaken by parks staff and no joint research projects.
- 6.8.18 The diversity and inherent value of Edinburgh's parks provides a resource that could be utilised by the city's research and higher

teaching institutions. The creation of a centre of excellence in parks management is a possibility. This could stimulate educational institutions in and around Edinburgh to include park management in their teaching material or as a separate discipline in its own right. Sheffield University's Department of Landscape is an excellent example of where parks and open space research has become highly tuned, with parks being the subject of Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses.

### **Recommendation 24**

Formalised links between the Council and the city's horticultural teaching and research institutions should be created, with the aim of creating a parks management centre of excellence in Edinburgh.

## 6.9 Organisation and Communication Within the Division

- 6.9.1 Currently the responsibility for parks is divided between two departments through the open space maintenance protocol between the Parks Unit and Environmental Task Forces. The Parks Unit (the 'Strategic Client') employs specialist parks officers and maintenance staff attached to Princes Street Gardens, Saughton Park, Lauriston Castle and staff at the Inch Nursery and Inverleith Workshops. It holds capital and revenue budgets for parks development. The majority of staff engaged in parks maintenance are employed by the Task Forces (the 'contractor'), who also hold the revenue budget. The Task Forces are intended to be self-monitoring, and the Parks Unit has no role in supervising maintenance work in most parks areas.
- 6.9.2 The intended benefit of this arrangement is that mobile, multi-skilled teams carry out litter collection and horticultural maintenance tasks in one visit, thus avoiding costly duplication. However, although this arrangement has produced benefits for the city it has led to a lowering of horticultural standards. Staff may be engaged in multi-tasking, but there is clear evidence that the horticultural skills base necessary for the provision of quality parks simply no longer exists. Cost savings may have resulted from the aggregation of certain tasks such as gang mowing, tree and shrub pruning and litter collection, but this has been paid for by a decline in standards.
- 6.9.3 During the development of the Protocol between the two Departments several fundamental issues that impact directly on quality of service were noted. A key issue intrinsic to the successful implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy is the need to "...develop a suite of performance measures and appropriate indicators that will generate sufficient assurance as to the high quality of service delivery for both members and management." Without performance measures and indicators, and the authority to counter poor performance, a consistent and reliable standard of maintenance will not be achieved.

6.9.4 From 1 April 2006 the Parks Unit will transfer to the new Services for Communities Department. The Department will have responsibility for many locally delivered services including roads, street lighting, housing, street cleaning and refuse collection, and means that the Task Forces and Parks Unit will be reunited within the same division. The structure of the new Department is still being determined at the time of writing, but it is likely to mean that significant efficiencies will result, and that this will aid in achieving best value.

#### **Recommendation 25**

The day-to-day maintenance arrangements for parks should be reviewed and Best Value principles of continuous improvement rigorously applied.

### **Recommendation 26**

The Parks Unit and the Task Forces (to be brought together in Services for Communities from April 2006) should develop performance measures and indicators and mutually agree how these are to be implemented to achieve the aims of the Parks and Gardens Strategy.

- 6.9.5 The starting point for the formulation of performance measures and indicators will be a Parks Audit, in combination with a qualitative assessment of the existing parks resource, leading to the setting of qualitative standards. Once the Parks Unit has a fully functioning and integrated GIS, its ability to set performance objectives will be greatly enhanced.
- 6.9.6 The review of existing strategies in section 3.5 highlights a degree of convergence between the Play Strategy and the Parks and Gardens Strategy. There is a need to co-ordinate the aims and objectives of both strategies through the parks development, technical (play), and play development sections. In particular, it may well prove to be essential that there is effective co-ordination between these sections when it comes to the redesign of community parks.

### **Recommendation 27**

The Parks Unit should continue to work closely with the Technical and Play Development Sections once new structures are put in place in April 2006

6.9.7 The Park Patrol Service has a crucial role to play in the renewal of parks. In the TAB survey (2002) there are a number of findings which have direct relevance to Park Patrol's future contribution, as these are related to park users' perceptions of security, and more importantly, the actual day-to-day supervision of parks.

Figure 6.12: Edinburgh park users' satisfaction with parks (Source TAB)

	Average user score using five-point scale.		
	Importance	Satisfaction	
Cleanliness and control of litter	4.7	3.3	
Freedom from vandalism	4.6	3.3	
Good overall maintenance standards	4.4	3.9	
Parks should feel safe and secure	4.4	3.6	

- 6.9.8 It is clear that there are discrepancies between the levels of importance accorded by users to these issues and their expressed level of satisfaction with them. This strongly suggests that a new approach is required to improve performance. The role of the park warden service is a key one, as this is the primary interface between the public and the Council as park provider, and therefore it should act to educate, interpret, advise and supervise. This specialised role is required of a modern, customer-focused park warden service.
- 6.9.9 The Park Patrol service has recently received eight additional staff. The effectiveness of Park Patrol in providing a better, more customer-oriented service can be measured against the following factors:
  - Do users perceive operatives as friendly and approachable?
  - Are operatives present during times when the park is in use?
  - Are operatives able to prevent vandalism and anti-social behaviour?
- 6.9.10 Currently the Park Patrol and Countryside Ranger services exist as separate units. Holyrood Park and a number of progressive English local authorities have merged such units to provide an holistic interpretation, education and security service based on customer needs. Consideration should be given to such a step being taken by the Council, the merged service to be called the Park Ranger service.

The Council should integrate the Park Patrol Service with the existing Countryside Ranger Service to create a Park Ranger Service focused to on customer needs.

### 6.10 Promotion and Information

- 6.10.1 Promoting parks effectively has several benefits:
  - Services are advertised to potential users;
  - The profile of parks is raised;
  - User numbers are likely to increase.
- 6.10.2 Clearly the Council needs to have confidence that the services being offered are those which users want to make use of, and there is abundant recent research data to define this. The areas that particularly require attention have already been highlighted, and these need to be addressed prior to, or at least in parallel with, a promotional campaign. Promotion would not only be aimed at local people, but also at visitors and tourists, and so the media employed will vary with the target audiences. It is of key importance that the information aimed at different user types should be clearly identified as part of a process of interpreting parks.
- 6.10.3 A process of renewing information boards in parks has already begun, but the provision of on-site information and interpretive material is a complex subject that calls for specialist input if opportunities are not to be missed. The experience of Countryside Rangers could be shared with Park Rangers in order to create interpretive material that appeals to a wide audience. In particular, it must be carefully considered how parks relate to each other and what information should be given in each location on its neighbouring parks. It would be a missed opportunity if each park's signboard gave only information relating to that park, and did not advertise nearby facilities, including parks, and thereby help to encourage use.
- 6.10.4 Promotion needs to be clearly planned and not pursued in an ad hoc manner, with a system of monitoring to measure its effectiveness. A Parks Information and Promotion action plan should be drawn up, which will guide the Council through the phases of renewal. Given that it is envisaged that the Green Space Partnership will contribute to profile-raising, and that local groups will be empowered to participate in planning and managing their local parks, it is essential that there is clear guidance for all to refer to.

## **Recommendation 29**

A Parks Information and Promotion Action Plan should be produced.

#### 6.11 Resources and Finance

- 6.11.1 In the most recent research, 50% of Edinburgh parks users sampled either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel there is a big need for additional investment in parks and gardens."
- 6.11.2 It is unlikely that the resources will immediately become available in order to raise parks maintenance and capital budgets to the vastly greater scale of those in the world's best urban parks systems. Additional revenue and capital funding has recently been provided

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- by the Council and this represents an important turning point. However, a significant increase is needed if the momentum of parks renewal is to continue. New mechanisms must be utilised to fund the capital works required.
- 6.11.3 It is clear that reductions in revenue budgets would result in a further decline in the level of service and the continued degradation of the fabric of the parks. Vitally, increased budgets must be tied to accurate monitoring of service levels.

The Council should seek to increase revenue budgets for parks maintenance and development

6.11.4 Edinburgh's spending on parks per 1000 of population was the 14<sup>th</sup> (i.e. second lowest) out of 15 Scottish local authorities who participate in the Association of Public Services Excellence Scheme (2001-2002 figures). If progress is to be made towards the vision of a parks system befitting a world-class city, there must be a substantial and sustained increase in revenue funding. It is suggested that an appropriate target in the first instance would be to aim to achieve a funding level at the average level of the same 15 local authorities. Based on the 2001-2002 figures, this would involve an increase of 112%, or an increase of 22.4% per year over 5 years.

## **Recommendation 31**

The Council should seek, within 10 years, to raise spending on parks per 1000 population to the equivalent of the average spend of the 15 Local Authorities who participate in the Association for Public Services Excellence Scheme

6.11.5 Parks renewal will require the spending of significant capital sums. It is essential that the Council cultivates partnerships with external funding partners such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, Entrust and the New Opportunities Fund. To date the Council's success rate in attracting external funders to parks is low. To have any chance of succeeding in a major renewal programme, the Council must build productive and lasting partnerships with the right organisations. In order to do this, it is suggested that a funding team be set up in the Culture & Leisure Department with specific responsibility for pursuing this.

## **Recommendation 32**

The Parks Unit should allocate staff to a Funding working group in order to co-ordinate and progress lottery bids and external funding partnerships.

6.11.6 Success in attracting external funding will not, however, absolve the Council of the need to invest in its parks through capital budgets. Most external funding agencies will provide grants on the basis that the applicant meets a proportion of costs themselves. In some cases this may be 50%, or more, or less. It is often the case that Trusts with charitable status attract grant aid at higher rates than local authorities. It remains the case though that the Council will still require to assign substantial capital sums in order to achieve the parks renewal programme envisaged.

#### **Recommendation 33**

To maximise support from external partners, the Council should be ready to vote the capital budgets necessary to match fund grant-aid

6.11.7 The allocation of additional Scottish Executive quality of life funding to parks in 2002-3 enabled the creation of costed outline renewal plans for a number of the parks provisionally classified as premier. For example, preliminary costings for Princes Street Gardens and the Meadows/Bruntsfield Links provide an indication of the order of investment required (see Figure 6.13 below). Given the level of funding needed, and requirement for detailed design and specialist works, it seems likely that the premier parks work will have to be phased over several years. Also, external funds will need to be sought to enable the work to be taken forward.

Figure 6.13: Indicative costings for premier park regeneration.

Park	Phase1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Total £
Meadows/ Bruntsfield Links	650,000	650,000	700,000	2,000,000
Calton Hill	265,000	265,000	280,000	810,000
Princes Street Gardens (E & W)	600,000	600,000	600,000	1,800,000
Leith Links	150,000	150,000	140,000	440,000
Inverleith	2,700,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	7,700,000*
Saughton				NYA
Total				12,750,000

<sup>\* £4,000,000</sup> of the Inverleith Park total relates to the upgrading of sports pitches and pavilions

6.11.8 A key element of the vision for Community Parks is that local people formed into "Friends" or other groups can participate in planning and managing their local park. This participation should extend to encouraging local groups to raise funds for improvement to their parks. Some local groups have already been successful in obtaining small grants from their Local Development Committees for parks improvements. Local people may have access to funds (e.g. small local business sponsorship) that the Council would not. They should also be empowered to undertake their own fundraising events. In order to enable this, the Council should produce an information pack for local groups that will assist them in raising funds.

#### **Recommendation 34**

The Parks Unit should produce an information pack to help local groups raise funds for Community and other parks.

6.11.9 It will be necessary for the Council to allocate capital funds to the renewal of community and city parks. Whilst at this stage it is not possible to estimate the actual costs of works since these will be determined by a partnership of interests that has yet to be formed, it will be useful to give an indication of the scale of funding required and the years in which this will be required. The table below indicates how the renewal of the city and community parks might be approached. Given that staff time is likely to be one of the main constraints, it is proposed that the renewal programme should address no more than 2 community parks and either one city park or one natural heritage park for each LDC area. It should be noted that the indicative sums listed below relate to the Council's contribution, not the overall budget. These figures are introduced for discussion purposes, but serve to illustrate the need to phase works over at least five years, and give an indication of the scale of funding required.

Figure 6.14: Capital budget requirements for 5-year parks renewal programme.

			Notional CE	DC budgets		Average (£)				
		Each commi	unity park			50,000				
		Each city pa	rk				250,000			
		Each natura	l heritage park				200,000			
		2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	Total (£)	Total (nr)		
UNITY RK	Renewal budget (£)	600,000	600,000	600,000	500,000	350,000	2.65m			
COMMUNITY	Number renewed per year	12	12	12	10	7		53		
PARK	Renewal budget (£)	750,000	750,000	750,000	500,000	500,000	3.25m			
CITY PARK	Number renewed per year	3	3	3	2	2		13		
NATURAL HERITAGE PARK	Renewal budget (£)	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	3.0m			
NATU HERIT PAI	Number renewed per year	3	3	3	3		15			
	Budget Total (£)	1.95m	1.95m	1.95m	1.75m	1.45m	<u>8.9m</u>	<u>81</u>		

# 6.12 Monitoring Performance

- 6.12.1 The measuring of performance is of fundamental importance. This is a cornerstone of the Best Value approach, and is the only real way that progress in implementing the strategy and the raising of standards can be quantified. Currently, performance monitoring is hampered by the lack of useful data and effective systems to handle it. There appear to be difficulties, for example, in identifying exactly what has been spent on maintaining any given park, and no way of quantifying exactly what work has been carried out. It is suggested that it is therefore impossible to say that Best Value is actually being achieved. It is similarly difficult to plan effectively.
- 6.12.2 There are difficulties in arriving at a performance management system that achieves more than compiling statistics which are hard to verify, and which often bear little relationship to the experience of parks users. Nevertheless, such a system must be put in place to ensure that continuous improvement is maintained in terms of services delivered and cost effectiveness. Work is currently underway in a cross-local authority working party under the aegis of VOCAL (Voice of Chief Officers of Culture & Leisure formerly the

- Scottish Association of Directors of Leisure Services) to develop such a system based on existing Quality Management models. The Council is advised to appraise itself of this work when published.
- 6.12.3 Whatever the shape of a new quality management model, it is suggested that significant change and investment is required in order to create a parks service in which reliable information is gathered and utilised as a matter of daily routine. It is highly likely that a GIS will be the type of system applicable, as this is widely used by organisations with land resources to manage and large amounts of data that relate to these resources.
- 6.12.4 In the future, management decisions should be based as far as possible on primary data. In particular, the Council must commit itself to gathering parks user data on a continuous basis. Careful consideration should be given to identifying what data is needed, how it will be gathered, and how it will be stored and used. Some types of data, such as that gained from survey or other relevant strategies, will not need to be updated very often, and clearly the gathering of data which is not useful must be avoided. The basic data types should include:
  - User numbers;
  - User profiles;
  - Maintenance regimes and costs/resource implications of each operation;
  - Biodiversity information;
  - Archaeological information;
  - Individual tree records:
  - Complaints;
  - Criminal/anti-social activity reports;
  - Events:
  - Building inspection/maintenance records;
  - Boundary inspection/maintenance records
  - Litter bins, signboards and seats inspection/maintenance records;
  - Play inspection/maintenance records;
  - Site history records;
  - Site photographs

#### **Recommendation 35**

The Council should draw up an action plan which identifies the monitoring data which needs to be gathered to inform management decisions, and which incorporates the roll-out of GIS within the Parks Unit, including new software, hardware and training

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Within ten categories of recommendation, we make thirty four specific recommendations. These embrace all of the main areas of action required to be taken by the Council to achieve the objectives set by the terms of reference for this study.
- 7.1.2 How then are these to be achieved and what means need to be set in place to ensure their co-ordinated implementation? A five point strategy to oversee a systematic and integrated programme of action is proposed as follows:
  - a parks and gardens strategy implementation and monitoring working group should be set up with adequate powers and resources made available to them. A senior member of CEC staff should be deputed to the role of Strategy Implementation Manager to be responsible for delivery;
  - (ii) a chartered landscape architect should be appointed by CEC to introduce new comprehensive design standards, prepare design briefs and raise the overall quality standards within Edinburgh's parks and gardens in accord with the objectives and criteria set out in the strategy;
  - (iii) conservation and parks management plans should be prepared for each park to determine design and functional parameters as a basis for designed improvements and change and the introduction of enlightened methods of grounds maintenance and habitat management;
  - (iv) a specialised staff training scheme in amenity horticulture, conservation in practice and parks and sports facilities management should be set up to ensure the supply of suitably skilled personnel;
  - an overall promotional and education programme targeted to enhance the enjoyment and utility of the city's parks should be introduced.

# 7.2 Strategy Recomendations

#### Vision

**R 1:** The Council should adopt a vision for Edinburgh's parks and gardens that reflects its aspirations to be a world-class city.

# **Quality Standards**

**R 2:** A parks quality standards framework based on comprehensive analysis of the existing situation should be formulated, adopted and put into practice by the Council.

#### **Green Space Partnership**

- **R 3:** A Green Space Partnership should be set up with the overarching aim of driving forward an integrated approach to the renewal of Edinburgh's parks and gardens.
- **R 4:** A Parks and Gardens Conservation Trust should be set up to promote the City's Parks and Gardens and assist in securing new streams of funding for renewal projects.

#### Classification

**R 5:** The parks classification system should be adopted and used as a guide to the design of upgrading and renewal projects and maintenance.

#### Renewal

- **R 6:** The Council should make the increase of surveillance in parks a prime objective.
- **R 7:** The Council must carefully consider access when planning any improvement works and call for expert advice as required.
- **R 8:** Schools should be encouraged to make more use of their local parks, where feasible, and improvements to facilitate this should be considered.
- **R 9:** The Council should consider promoting sports and physical activity events in parks, in line with the Sport and Physical Recreation Strategy.
- **R 10:** In view of poor public satisfaction with litter control, budgets and management arrangements should be reviewed to ensure improvement.
- **R 11:** In partnership with others, the Council should draw up an action plan for dealing with dog fouling, but should recognise the potential health benefits accruing from dog ownership

- **R 12:** An appraisal of the function and condition of parks buildings should be carried out, with a view to reinventing them wherever possible as integrated components of the parks service provision.
- **R 13:** Careful consideration should be given to the inclusion of sensitively located appropriate artworks in parks.

#### **Provision Gap**

- **R 14:** From the outset of the planning of large scale developments there should be close co-operation between Culture and Leisure (Services for Communities from April 2006) and Planning to examine the potential for the inclusion of high-quality open spaces.
- **R 15:** More use should be made of Section 75 Agreements to facilitate the improvement of parks facilities.
- **R 16:** Using GIS, the Council should carry out a survey of the distribution of parks and open space in Edinburgh and the facilities on offer, in terms of the socio-economic characteristics of the surrounding population.
- **R 17:** The capacity for City Development Department to provide landscape architectural services to the Parks Unit should be assessed. If it does not exist, the Unit should recruit a suitably qualified landscape architect.

#### Management, Staff and Skills Training

- **R 18:** The Parks Unit should further train existing staff and consider recruiting one or more community development specialists.
- **R 19:** The Parks Unit should form a core team to drive the implementation of the Parks and Gardens Strategy.
- **R 20:** The Council should create a designated multi-skilled estate team trained to maintain Natural Heritage Parks
- **R 21:** The Council should employ a specialist professional tree officer within the Parks Unit and provide training for other parks staff to assist with this work (achieved).
- **R 22:** The Council should set up a GIS Unit within the Parks Unit with the necessary skills to maintain the system and train others in its use.
- **R 23:** The Parks Unit should draw up a training strategy aimed at countering the loss of skills and providing staff with skills in new areas of work.
- **R 24:** Formalised links between the Council and the city's horticultural teaching and research institutions should be created, with the aim of creating a parks management centre of excellence in Edinburgh.

#### **Organisation and Communication**

- **R 25:** The day-today maintenance arrangements for parks should be reviewed and Best Value principles of continuous improvement rigorously applied.
- **R 26:** The Parks Unit and the Task Forces (to be brought together in Services for Communities from April 2006) should develop performance measures and indicators and mutually agree how these are to be implemented to achieve the aims of the Parks and Gardens Strategy.
- **R 27:** The Parks Unit should continue to work closely with the Technical and Play Development Sections once new structures are put in place in April 2006
- **R 28:** The Council should integrate the Park Patrol Service with the existing Countryside Ranger Service to create a Park Ranger Service focused to on customer needs.

#### **Promotion and Information**

- **R 29:** A Parks Information and Promotion Action Plan should be produced.
- **R 30:** The Council should seek to increase revenue budgets for parks maintenance and development.
- **R 31:** The Council should seek, within 10 years, to raise spending on parks per 1000 population to the equivalent of the average spend of the 15 Local Authorities who participate in the Association for Public Services Excellence Scheme.
- **R 32:** The Parks Unit should allocate staff to a funding working group in order to co-ordinate and progress lottery bids and external funding partnerships.
- **R 33:** To maximise support from external partners, the Council should be ready to vote the capital budgets necessary to match fund grant-aid.
- **R 34:** The Parks Unit should produce an information pack to help local groups to raise funds for Community and other parks.

### **Monitoring Performance**

**R 35:** The Council should draw up an action plan which identifies the monitoring data which needs to be gathered to inform management decisions, and which incorporates the roll-out of GIS within the Parks Unit, including new software, hardware and training.

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#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank the following people in the compilation of this document:

Firstly the members of the Steering Group for their guidance, comments, advice and contributions to the Strategy namely Herbert Coutts, Jim McKay, John Munro, Iain Park and Keith Logie from the CEC Culture & Leisure Department; Karen Stevenson from the CEC City Development Department; Martin Hulse, David McDonald and John Byrom from the Cockburn Association; Alex Morris from the Forestry Commission; John Simon from the Friends of Parks; Krysia Campbell from Historic Scotland; Niall Corbet from the Scottish Natural Heritage; George Anderson from the Royal Botanic Garden; Richard Griffith and Jon Mengham from the World Heritage Trust.

Thanks are also due to Bob McLean and Ken McLeod from the CEC Culture & Leisure Department for their time and assistance.

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from the Cairns Limited Team for their input and contributions throughout the course of the project.

# **APPENDICES**

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# **Appendix 1: City of Edinburgh Council Parks**

LDC - Local District Council

IGDL - Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes

Premier Parks	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	Features in IGDL
Bruntsfield Links West	Premier	4.501	Central	32	Millennium Park	No
Bruntsfield Links East	Premier	10.652	Central	32	Millennium Park	No
Calton Hill	Premier	7.782	North & Leith	20	SSSI	No
Inverleith Park	Premier	25.266	North & Leith	17	Millennium Park	No
Leith Links East	Premier	12.633	North & Leith	22	Millennium Park	No
Leith Links West	Premier	7.483	North & Leith	22	Millennium Park	No
Meadows	Premier	24.497	Central	32/33	Millennium Park	No
Princes St Gardens East	Premier	3.284	Central	32	World Heritage Site	Yes
Princes St Gardens West	Premier	13.381	Central	32	World Heritage Site	Yes
Saughton Park	Premier	16.401	Central	28	Millennium Park	No
	Total area	125.880	hectares			

City Parks	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	Features in IGDL
Colinton Mains Park	City	9.388	Pentland	44	-	No
Davidsons Mains Park	City	14.587	West	6	-	No
Gyle Park	City	16.560	West	23	-	No
Gypsy Brae Recreation Ground	City	17.182	West	6	-	No
Hunters Hall Park (JKC)	City	26.539	East	57	-	No
Inch Park	City	25.928	South	53	-	No
King George V Park (Eyre Place)	City	1.773	North & Leith	17	-	No
London Road (Royal Terr) Gardens	City	4.120	North & Leith	20	-	No
Paties Road Recreation Ground	City	4.836	Pentland	26	-	No
Portobello Park (excl GC)	City	6.072	East	58	-	No
Roseburn Park	City	5.528	Central	15	-	No
Union Park	City	4.280	West	24	-	No
Victoria Park	City	6.418	North & Leith	12	-	No
·	Total area	143.211	hectares			

Natural Heritage Parks	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	Features in IGDL
Blackford Hill/Hermitage of Braid	NH	58.633	Pentland/South	49/51	SSSI, LNR, SINC	No
Braid Hills (inc golf courses)	NH	94.071	Pentland	52	SINC	No
Cammo Estate	NH	39.282	West	13	SINC	Yes
Colinton Dell	NH	18.220	Pentland	25/26/43	SINC	No
Corstorphine Hill	NH	76.162	West/Central	6/15	LNR, SINC	No
Craiglockhart Dell	NH	3.000	Pentland	26	SINC	No
Craiglockhart Hill	NH	3.620	Pentland	26	SSSI	No
Craiglockhart Sports Centre	NH	5.300	Pentland	26	SINC	No
Craiglockhart Woods	NH	9.324	Pentland	26	SINC	No
Craigmillar Castle Park	NH	73.191	East	57	Jubilee Park, SINC	Yes
Cramond/Granton Foreshore	NH	21.454	West	6	SSSI, SINC	No
Natural Heritage Parks	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	Features

						in IGDL
Ferry Glen, South Queensferry	NH	2.526	West	4	SINC	No
Moredun Woods	NH	3.648	South	56	SINC	No
Pikes Pool, Kirkliston	NH	7.845	West	3	SINC	No
Ravelston Woods	NH	8.400	West	8	SINC	No
Redford Wood	NH	6.664	Pentland	43	SINC	No
River Almond Walkway	NH	36.450	West	5	SINC	No
Rocheid Path	NH	1.301	North & Leith	17	SINC	No
	Total area	469.091	hectares			

						Features
Community Parks	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	in IGDL
Abercorn Park	Comm	0.809	East	40	-	No
Allison Park, Kirkliston	Comm		West	3	-	No
Balgreen Park	Comm	0.140	Central	27	-	No
Baronscourt Park	Comm	1.670	East	36	-	No
Bingham Park	Comm	3.811	East	58	-	No
Blinkbonny Park	Comm	4.517	Pentland	1	-	No
Bloomiehall Park	Comm	2.374	Pentland	2	-	No
Braidburn Valley Park	Comm	12.562	Pentland	51	-	No
Brighton Park	Comm	0.864	East	39	-	No
Burdiehouse Burn Park	Comm	2.745	South	54	-	No
Burdiehouse/Southhouse Valley Pk	Comm	7.199	South	54	-	No
Burdiehouse/Southhouse Valley Pk	Comm	3.036	South	54	-	No
Cairntows Park	Comm	1.801	East	57	-	No
Campbell Park	Comm	3.418	Pentland	2	-	No
Clermiston Park	Comm	6.415	West	13	-	No
Curriemuirend Park	Comm	0.198	Pentland	2	-	No
Dalmeny Street Park	Comm	0.855	North & Leith	22	-	No
Dovecot Park	Comm	5.876	Pentland	25	-	No
Drum Brae Park	Comm	9.116	West	13	-	No
Drum Park	Comm	0.596	South	56	-	No
Dundas Park, S Queensferry	Comm	2.065	West	4	-	No
East Pilton Park	Comm	2.856	North & Leith	10	-	No
Easter Drylaw Park	Comm	1.766	West	7	-	No
Ellens Glen	Comm	3.393	South	56	-	No
Fairmilehead Park	Comm	4.466	Pentland	52	-	No
Fauldburn Park	Comm	0.732	West	13	-	No
Ferniehill Community Park	Comm	0.678	South	55	-	No
Fernieside Recreation Ground	Comm	2.614	South	55	-	No
Figgate Burn Park (East)	Comm	8.198	East	58	SINC	No
Figgate Burn Park (West)	Comm	4.416	East	58	-	No
Gilmerton Park (The Dell)	Comm	1.784	South	56	-	No
Glendevon Park	Comm	0.111	Central	27	-	No
Gorgie/Dalry Community Park	Comm	1.124	Central	30	-	No
Gracemount Park	Comm	2.900	South	54	-	No
Granton Crescent Park	Comm	1.775	North & Leith	10	-	No
Hailes Quarry Park	Comm	12.658	Pentland	25	-	No
Harrison Park East	Comm	2.819	Central	29	<u>-</u>	No
Community Parks	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	Features

						in IGDL
Harrison Park West	Comm	4.231	Central	29	-	No
Haugh Park	Comm	1.274	West	5	-	No
Henderson Gardens Park	Comm	0.207	North & Leith	21	-	No
Inchcolm Park, S Queensferry	Comm	0.487	West	4	-	No
Jewel Park	Comm	11.453	East	58	-	No
Joppa Quarry Park	Comm	2.337	East	40	-	No
Keddie Park	Comm	0.561	North & Leith	21	-	No
King George V Park (Currie)	Comm	2.172	Pentland	2	-	No
King George V Pk, S Queensferry	Comm	0.644	West	4	-	No
Liberton Garden Park	Comm	4.243	South	53	-	No
Liberton Park	Comm	4.392	South	53	-	No
Lochend Park	Comm	9.273	East	38	-	No
Malleny Park	Comm	2.114	Pentland	1	-	No
Marchbank Park	Comm	5.938	Pentland	1	-	No
McLeod Street Park	Comm	0.157	Central	29	-	No
Meadowfield Park	Comm	20.878	East	36	-	No
Meadows Yard	Comm	1.705	East	39	LNR	No
Meadowspot Park	Comm	2.009	Pentland	26	-	No
Montgomery Street Park	Comm	1.225	North & Leith	20	-	No
Morningside Park	Comm	1.250	Pentland	51	-	No
Muirhouse Park	Comm	4.283	West	7	<u>-</u>	No
Muirwood Road Park	Comm	1.803	Pentland	2	-	No
Murieston Park	Comm	0.604	Central	30	<u>-</u>	No
Newcraighall Park	Comm	3.283	East	57	<u>-</u>	No
Orchard (Brae) Park North	Comm	1.962	West	8	<u>-</u>	No
Orchard (Brae) Park South	Comm	0.547	Central	8	<u>-</u>	No
Parkside, Newbridge	Comm	0.385	West	3	<u>-</u>	No
Pentland View Park	Comm	1.588	Pentland	2	-	No
Pilrig Park	Comm	7.443	North & Leith	22	<u>-</u>	No
Prestonfield Park	Comm	1.363	South	50	-	No
Ratho Park	Comm	1.176	West	3	-	No
Ratho Station Park	Comm	2.060	West	3	-	No
Ratho Station Recreation Ground	Comm	1.523	West	3	-	No
Ravelston Park	Comm	1.716	West	8	-	No
Redbraes Park	Comm	1.033	North & Leith	19	-	No
Redhall Park	Comm	3.608	Pentland	26	-	No
Regent Road Park	Comm	1.246	Central	34	-	No
Riverside Park	Comm	0.293	West	3	-	No
Rosefield Park	Comm	1.353	East	39	-	No
Seafield Recreation Ground	Comm	5.439	East	39	<u>-</u>	No
Seven Acre Park	Comm	1.535	South	53	-	No
Sighthill Park	Comm	13.201	Pentland	42	_	No
Silverknowes Park	Comm	5.696	West	7	_	No
Spylaw Park	Comm	3.054	Pentland	43	-	No
St Margarets Park	Comm	3.591	West	24	_	No
St Marks Park	Comm	5.171	North & Leith	21	_	No
Starbank Park	Comm	1.097	North & Leith	11	_	No
Station Road Pk, S Queensferry	Comm	0.422	West	4	_	No
- Campair Court in a guardining		Ţ. ILL				Features
Community Parks	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	in IGDL

Time I sin	Total area	282.868	hectares			
White Park	Comm	0.305	Central	29	-	No
Whinhill Park	Comm	1.923	Pentland	42	-	No
West Pilton Park	Comm	4.974	North & Leith	9	-	No
Stenhouse Place East Park	Comm	0.284	Central	28	-	No

Gardens	Classification	Area (ha)	LDC	Ward	Designations	Features in IGDL
Atholl Crescent	Garden	0.289	Central	30	World Heritage Site, Conservation Area	Yes
Bellevue Crescent Gardens (N&S)	Garden	0.317	North & Leith	19	World Heritage Site, Conservation Area	Yes
Castle Terrace Garden	Garden		Central	32	World Heritage Site, Conservation Area	No
Coates Crescent	Garden	0.256	Central	16	World Heritage Site, Conservation Area	Yes
Dunbar's Close Garden	Garden	0.173	Central	34	World Heritage Site, Conservation Area	Yes
Gardner's Crescent	Garden	0.119	Central	30	Conservation Area	No
Gayfield Square	Garden	0.344	North & Leith	20	Conservation Area	Yes
Hillside Cresent Gardens	Garden	0.654	North & Leith	20	Conservation Area	No
Hopetoun Crescent Gardens	Garden	0.487	North & Leith	19	-	No
Lauriston Castle	Garden	13.131	West	6	-	Yes
Taylor Gardens	Garden	0.300	North & Leith	21	-	No
	Total area	16.070	hectares			

Total area of parks and	1037.120	Hectares
gardens		

# Appendix 2: Non City of Edinburgh Council Parks and Gardens

# IGDL - Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes

Parks	Features in IGDL		
Holyrood Park	No		

Gardens	Features in IGDL			
Ainslie Place Gardens	Yes			
Belgrave Crescent Gardens	Yes			
Buckingham Terrace Gardens	Yes			
Charlotte Square Gardens	Yes			
Clarendon Crescent Gardens	Yes			
Comely Bank Terrace Gardens	Yes			
Dean Gardens	Yes			
Douglas Crescent Gardens	Yes			
Drummond Place Gardens	Yes			
Drumsheugh Gardens	Yes			
Eglinton Cres/Glencairn Cres Gardens	Yes			
Eyre Crescent Gardens	Yes			
George Square Gardens	Yes			
Grosvenor Cres/Lansdowne Cres Gardens	Yes			
Hill Square Gardens	Yes			
Learmonth Gardens	Yes			
Moray Place Gardens	Yes			
Moray Place Bank Gardens	Yes			
Queen Street Gardens (West)	Yes			
Queen Street Gardens (Central)	Yes			
Queen Street Gardens (East)	Yes			
Randolph Crescent Gardens	Yes			
Regent Gardens	Yes			
Royal Botanic Garden	Yes			
Royal Circus Gardens	Yes			
Royal Crescent Gardens	Yes			
Rutland Square Gardens	Yes			
Saxe Coburg Place Gardens	Yes			
St Andrews Square Gardens	Yes			
St Bernards Crescent Gardens	Yes			

# Appendix 3: Membership of the steering group

Herbert Coutts Director of Culture & Leisure (Chair)

Martin Hulse, John Byrom

John Simon

Alex Morris

Niall Corbet

Krysia Campbell

Cockburn Association

Friends of parks

Forestry Commission

Scottish Natural Heritage

Historic Scotland

Krysia Campbell Historic Scotland
George Anderson Royal Botanic Garden

Karen Stevenson City Development Department, CEC

Richard Griffiths World Heritage Trust

Jim McKay

John Munro

Dept of Culture & Leisure, CEC

Compared to the compare

Appendix 4: List of Data Available for GIS Analysis

Data Source	Data Fields
	No. households
0	No households with one car
Census 1991	No households with two cars
	No. households with three cars
	Total number cars
	No. dwellings
	No. unshared dwellings
	Built form
	No. adults
	Economically active adults
	Economically active people
	Adults in full time employment
	Adults in part time employment
	Self employed adults
	Adults on a government scheme
	Unemployed adults
	Economically active student
	Economically inactive adults
	Economically inactive student
	Permanently sick adults
	Retired adults
	Other inactive adults
SAPEEL 2000	Ward
Mid 2000 population	Total persons, females & males
estimates	Age 0-4
	Age 5-11
	Age 16-24
	Age 16-24 Age 25-44
	Age 45-64
	Age 65-84
	Age 85+
City of Edinburni	Location of CEC parks
City of Edinburgh Council	No. Playgrounds
	No. and type sports pitches
	Area (ha)
	Cycle routes
	Play areas
	Address points
Cairns Limited	Location of non-CEC parks

Appendix 5: Census Data and SAPEEL Data

	Area	1	2	3	4	5
	No. of Adults	9667	5796	5476	10392	10099
	Flats <sup>4</sup>	74	55	88	36	27
	Car Ownership	80	80	61.5	72	86
%	Economic Active	58	61.5	61	58	63
	Employed Full Time	40	40.5	36	35	42
	Unemployed	4	4.5	10	7	3.5
	Economic Inactive	41	38.5	38.5	42	37
	Long Term III	2.5	2	4.5	6.5	3
	Retired	22.5	17	16	21	18
	Other Inactive	8	9.5	15	12	12

Aggregated 1991 Census Data (Source CEC)

	Area	1	2	3	4	5
	No. of Persons	9667	5796	5476	10392	10099
% in age group	0-4	4	4.5	7.5	7.5	4.5
	4-11	5	6.5	10.5	11	8
	12-15	3	3.5	5.5	6	5.5
	16-24	20.5	25	12	9	9.5
	25-44	38	33	31.5	28	28.5
	45-64	15.5	17	21.5	23	25.5
	65-84	10.5	9	10	14	16.5
	85+	3	2	1.5	1.5	2

Aggregated mid-2000 Population Estimates (Source SAPEEL 2000)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> As a percentage of total housing stock

## Appendix 6: Stakeholders in Edinburgh Parks and Gardens

Historic Scotland The responsibilities of Historic Scotland fall under two categories. It is an

executive agency that manages some of Scotland's most significant historic properties, and it is a consultative body that advises Scottish ministers on relevant issues. Their role regarding parks is to provide advice about listed buildings within parks, as well as parks themselves, through consultations. Their role would benefit from the existence of an accessible database

holding information about the parks and gardens.

World Heritage Trust The centre of Edinburgh is designated a World Heritage Site. The

Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (WHT) is committed to preserving and enhancing the unique character of this site, which includes many heritage parks. They essentially inform and advise on planning and development issues and monitor the Site, and are currently conducting a "Conservation"

Area Character Appraisal" of the Site as detailed in their directives.

Royal Botanic Garden The Royal Botanic Garden, along with the parks in the city, is an important part of the identity of the city of Edinburgh. The role of this organisation is

to participate in maintaining and developing the unique facet of Edinburgh's Green Heritage. Additionally, they are able to facilitate education and

training for the parks services.

Scottish Natural Heritage Scottish Natural Heritage is a government agency for the protection of

natural heritage. Its role regarding parks is to act as an advisor to CEC in

matters involving or affecting Scotland's natural heritage.

Forestry Commission The mandate of the Forestry Commission covers the whole of Scotland. Its direct role regarding Edinburgh's parks concerns the licensing and felling of

trees. A priority of the Scottish Forestry Strategy "Forests for Scotland" in relation to Edinburgh parks is "to provide woodland recreation opportunities

near towns".

Cockburn Association The Cockburn Association responds to planning applications and attends

public inquiries to promote and enhance the historic and modern character of Edinburgh. Open spaces and parks are an integral part of Edinburgh, thus the Cockburn Association works towards preserving the characters of

parks.

Natural Heritage Section, Planning and Strategy, City Development

Department

City Development is currently working on an Open Space Framework, the goal of which is to integrate all of the different open space strategies in order to provide a consistent view of CEC's aspirations for its open spaces. The role of City Development is to provide guidance in the development of

related open space strategies such as this one.

Friend of the Parks

Currently the 'Friends' groups, of which there are less than ten in Edinburgh, operate on an individual basis. Their members are people who

share a vested interest in the existence of their local parks, and volunteer

their time to benefit the park

Water of Leith Conservation Trust

The mission of the Water of Leith Conservation Trust is to conserve and enhance the river as a haven for wildlife and as an educational and

recreational resource for all.

The Trust acts as a mediator between the different interest groups connected to the Water of Leith. They raise awareness, provide an educational programme, operate the visitor centre, encourage and inspire the community, work, with volunteers, for the benefit of the river and its walkway and they work with the landowners and official bodies who have

responsibility for the river.

Several groups fund the manager's post and the rest of the money required is obtained through fund-raising activities. The main Council Departments

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involved with the Trust are City Development, Environmental and Consumer Services and the Rangers from Culture and Leisure.

The Trust is a stakeholder in the parks and would work in conjunction with the Parks Division on any integration project between the Water of Leith and adjacent parks.

British Waterways (Scotland)

British Waterways is responsible for the Union Canal, and as such is a stakeholder in the parks of Edinburgh. The canal and its cycle path / walkway attracts seven million visitors a year. With the regeneration of the canal complete, British Waterways are hoping to provide developments along the canal to increase the number of boat users.

The park of greatest interest to them is Harrison park, as this is the first significant open space on the canal from the city centre. There is potential to develop it for the benefit of the local community, the canal and the park itself, and British Waterways are keen to work closely with the Parks Division on future developments of this park, and currently have an active relationship with the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan.

Woodland Trust Scotland (WTS)

The WTS is an organisation dedicated to the conservation of native and broadleaved woodland. This is demonstrated by their policy, which emphasises the importance of trees in attracting visitors, urban health, human health and environmental quality. WTS owns and manages a total of 78 sites covering some 7,100ha.

British Conservation Trust Volunteers (BCTV)

The BCTV is a stakeholder in Edinburgh's parks through the existence of some of their volunteer groups, especially those involved in the upkeep of countryside parks. In their efforts to help improve community environments, they are involved in Cammo Park, Hermitage of Braid and Corstorphine Hill, and are also involved in the Edinburgh Forest Project and the HSE Environmental clean-up.

More importantly, the BCTV is an organisation with the resources and skills to set up volunteer initiatives and provide the individuals with the necessary structure to become self-sufficient. The organisation itself does not provide funding, but provides fund-raising support for volunteer groups, as well as qualified personnel and resources for organisations with access to funds.

Community Councils

Local Development Committees

Street Associations

Other organised focus groups