

# Green Space Strategy

2013–2027

## Executive Summary

Oxford has an abundance of superb green spaces which provide places where people of all ages can relax, play, enjoy nature and take part in recreation or sport. They incorporate important historic landscapes, enhance Oxford's world-famous cityscape and include nature reserves, woodland and meadows.

These green spaces support the local economy having a significant impact on the economic life of an urban centre; they greatly add to people's satisfaction with their local area and help to bring communities together.

They act as the City's lungs and are crucial for maintaining and improving people's health and well-being. Evidence shows a brisk walk every day, in a local green space, can reduce the risk of heart attacks, strokes and diabetes by 50%, fracture of the femur, colon and breast cancer by 30% and Alzheimer's by 25%. Add to this the positive impact of exposure to nature and green space on stress and mental health and the full picture in relation to health and wellbeing can start to be understood<sup>1</sup>.

They therefore need protecting and enhancing this strategy provides a vision and objectives for how the City's green spaces should be planned and managed. Some of the proposed improvements will take time, which is why this is a 15 year strategy; however there is a particular focus on the next four years.

The strategy has been produced using best practice and guidance from the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and assisted by GreenSpace, the national charity which works to improve parks and green spaces, "*GreenSpace South East has worked collaboratively with Oxford City Council in the production of this Green Space Strategy. By choosing to work collaboratively Oxford City Council has ensured that this document follows available guidance and good practice. Reviewing progress and priorities at this point will continue to ensure that this strategy is a living document, reflective to the needs of City residents and business. I'm confident that this strategy will be well received by local people and the parks team are focussed on its delivery in the future*"<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> GreenSpace. (2011). Blue Sky Green Space: Understanding the importance of retaining good quality Park and Green Space and the contribution they make to improving peoples lives

<sup>2</sup> Michelle Parker. (2011). GreenSpace South East Manager

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# 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Oxford's parks and open spaces are of great significance. Oxford has been termed an 'Iconic Landscape' and is recognised worldwide for its skyline of domes and 'dreaming spires'. Many of the City's green spaces, such as Shotover and South Park, provide uninterrupted views of the City. However, these green spaces represent more than just an iconic landscape, they are integral to the life of the City and its economy<sup>3</sup> and make a significant contribution to improving the outcomes for local people's health and well-being. They also help to build stronger, more engaged communities, give people a greater sense of satisfaction with where they live and play a vital role in preserving the City's cultural heritage and biodiversity.
- 1.2 The 2009 Oxford City Place Survey<sup>4</sup> showed the importance people attach to their local green space by revealing that parks are the most used Council service, with 79% of respondents saying they used parks and open spaces at least once a month. They also show that parks have the highest user satisfaction rate of all City services (80%). National surveys mirror this importance with 91% of people believing that public parks and open spaces improve their quality of life<sup>5</sup>.

## The Purposes of the Green Spaces Strategy are to:

- Protect and improve Oxford's accessible parks and open spaces
- Provide clear objectives and direction for the planning and management of parks and open spaces
- Provide the Council with a robust basis for making development decisions and negotiating planning gain
- Identify ways in which parks and open spaces can be improved in a coordinated way whilst providing value for money.

## What has been achieved from the last strategy?

- 1.3 The last Green Spaces Strategy ran from 2006 to 2011 and has led to some significant achievements:
- Completion of the review of provision of infrastructure which led to new fencing around allotments and new park benches
  - £3.1 million refurbishment of 69 play areas
  - Green Flag Quality Award for four City parks
  - The introduction of the Park Ranger team
  - The formation of 14 Friends of Groups
  - The introduction of a specification for all parks works
  - Events in parks to celebrate the London 2012 Olympics
  - Completed a Playing Pitch Strategy.
  - The installation of an adiZone – a multi-sport outdoor gym venue which aims to inspire the local communities and young people to get involved in sport
  - Improved the entrances, gates and fencing of allotments across the City
  - A new pavilion at Barton

<sup>3</sup> CABE Space, The Value of Public Space

<sup>4</sup> Mruk Research. (2009). Oxford City Council Place Survey Report

<sup>5</sup> CABE Space. (2004). Public Attitudes to Architecture and Public Space, by MORI

- Attained external funding to support the delivery of the strategy
- Work is scheduled to improve infrastructure, namely toilets and pavilions
- A cemetery project is progressing to ensure that cemetery provision meets the needs of the population.

1.4 A number of actions to continue from the last strategy include:

- Encouraging the use of sites for educational purposes
- Where possible to improve the links between green spaces
- Increase provision in areas highlighted as having inadequate provision
- Improve access to surrounding farmland and green belt.

### **Links to the local, corporate and service plans**

1.5 Oxford City Council's Core Strategy 2026 was adopted in March 2011 and sets out the spatial planning framework for the development of Oxford up to 2026. The Green Spaces Strategy fits in with Policy CS17 (Infrastructure and developer contributions), CS18 (Urban design, townscape character and the historic environment) CS21 (Green spaces, leisure and sport) and CS12 (Biodiversity) of the Core Strategy.

1.6 Oxford City Council's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 vision is to remain committed to its core ambition of 'building a world class City for everyone'. The City Council's corporate priorities are:

- CP1 - A vibrant and sustainable economy
- CP2 - Meeting housing need
- CP3 - Strong and active communities
- CP4 - Cleaner greener Oxford
- CP5 - An efficient and effective Council

1.7 Oxford City Leisure and Parks service plan vision is to provide, '*World class parks, open spaces and leisure opportunities to enhance the quality of life for everyone living, visiting or working in Oxford*'.

1.8 Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums may, as part of their neighbourhood plans, produce their own individual local Green Space Strategies. The Oxford Green Spaces Strategy needs to be flexible enough to incorporate these and accommodate their objectives and priorities based on the vision for a particular area.

### **What does this Green Spaces Strategy cover?**

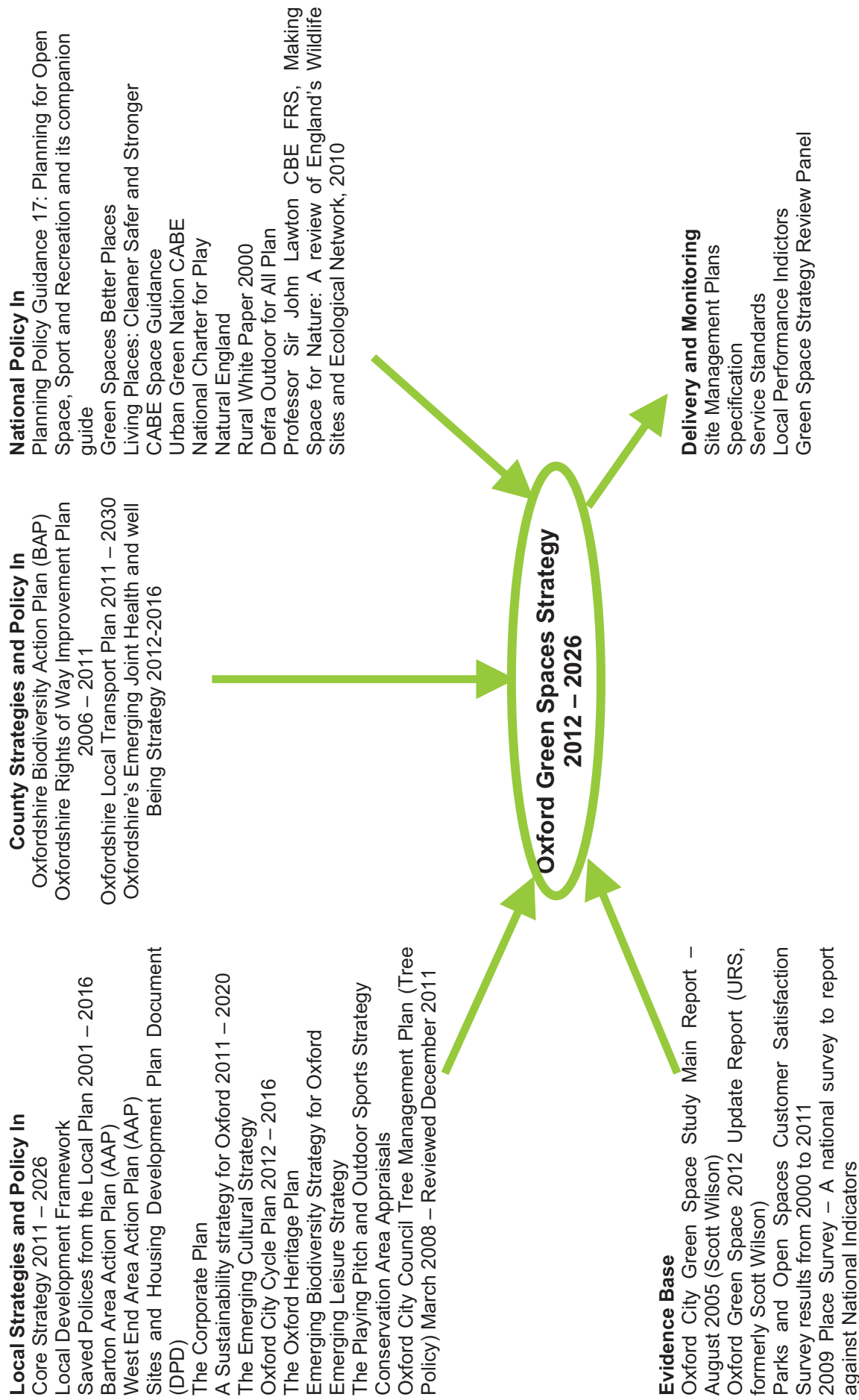
1.9 The focus is on green space in the City that is freely available to the public irrespective of the landowner for informal recreation, allotments and play spaces. However, the main impetus will be on those areas that are managed by Oxford City Council. It includes green spaces that are managed specifically for recreation such as the large parks and other green spaces which are more informally managed for wildlife. It does not include green spaces closed to the public e.g. private gardens.

- 1.10 Oxford's playing pitches were audited separately for the Oxford Playing Pitch Strategy which was adopted by the City Council in April 2012.

### **Oxford's parks and open spaces**

- 1.11 Appendix one illustrates the distribution of parks and open spaces, play areas and allotments. Appendix two explains the hierarchy and definitions used.

## How does the Green Spaces Strategy fit with other Strategies and Policies?





## 2.0 Parks and Open Spaces Vision and Aims

2.1 A vision statement and aims have been agreed for Oxford’s green spaces.



Bury Knowle Park

*“To provide world class parks and open spaces to enhance the quality of life of everyone living, visiting or working in Oxford”*

2.2 In order to achieve this vision the following aims are proposed. The objectives to meet these aims are set out in the following six chapters.

		<b>Links to Corporate Plan</b>
<b>Aim 1</b>	To establish a quantity standard of green space provision to ensure that Oxford has an agreed amount of green spaces to meet existing and future needs of residents, workers and visitors.	CP1 CP4
<b>Aim 2</b>	To ensure everyone living, working and visiting in Oxford has easy access to open space.	CP1 CP4
<b>Aim 3</b>	To achieve high quality green spaces across Oxford, including spaces that are nationally recognised for their quality and attractions.	CP5
<b>Aim 4</b>	To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the City’s biodiversity, sustainability, heritage and culture.	CP1 CP3
<b>Aim 5</b>	To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the City’s health and well-being	CP3
<b>Aim 6</b>	To support community cohesion and community involvement in the design and stewardship of green spaces.	CP1 CP3

## 3.0 Oxford's Local Quantity Standard

*Aim – 1 To establish a quantity standard of green space provision to ensure that Oxford has an agreed amount of green spaces to meet existing and future needs of residents, workers and visitors.*



Port Meadow

- 3.1 This strategy sets out Oxford's parks and open spaces quantity standards. There are many different types of green space each providing a different experience for the visitor. Each has different uses and qualities and attracts different sections of the community; each space contributes to an area's sense of place and identity. Whilst this strategy is based on an assessment of publicly accessible green space within the City boundary, it is important to note the multiple benefits of the wider network of green infrastructure in and around the City. Agricultural land, university and college grounds, riparian corridors and the surrounding green belt for example connect the City with the wider landscape and provide access to the countryside, opportunities for recreation and flood mitigation.
- 3.2 In 2005 URS (formerly Scott Wilson) produced the Oxford Green Space Study<sup>6</sup> upon which the earlier strategy was based. In 2012 URS was asked to update the survey<sup>7</sup>. The Oxford Green Spaces Study 2012 Update Report has focused on assessing current quantity data. After consultation with the Oxford Preservation Trust, a number of sites were added as well as a small number of sites which fall outside the City boundary but are within walking distance. The total Hectares of unrestricted Green Space was found to have increased from 771ha to 785ha.
- 3.3 The statistics released with the 2011 Census in July 2012 showed that the population of Oxford has grown over the past decade from 134,005 in 2001 to 151,900 in 2011; a total increase of 17,895 or 13.35%. This is substantially higher than the 2.8% increase predicted in the 2005 study and is partly explained by a

<sup>6</sup> Scott Wilson. (2005 text update 2007). Oxford City Green Space Study

<sup>7</sup> URS Oxford Green Space Study 2012 Update Report



significant increase in the student population. It is acknowledged that the needs of an expanding population should be addressed, but care must also be taken to protect the distinctive and sensitive character and environments of Oxford. The Council has concluded that a standard linked to population does not fulfil this requirement and will focus instead on protecting and enhancing existing green space and ensuring that new developments contribute to the provision of high quality, multi-functional green space where it is required most.

- 3.4 Existing green spaces, particularly public green spaces, are protected by planning policies. It is also important to ensure that any new development does not overburden existing infrastructure, including green infrastructure. Increasing the recreational opportunities of open space can be as much about improvements to the quality of existing spaces, as about increasing quantity (Section 5 below includes guidelines for enhancing the quality of the existing spaces).
- 3.5 Therefore, planning policies are in place to ensure that new developments result in improved provision of public green space, either by contributions to help improve the quality of local green spaces, or by on-site provision of new public open space. Opportunities will also be sought to open up new areas of green space to the general public and new developments may be expected to provide such access. This could include, for example, improvements to public rights of way. This approach is detailed in Policy CS21 and CS17 of the Core Strategy 2026 and also in the draft Sites and Housing Plan. The draft Sites and Housing Plan requires residential development involving 20 or more dwellings to provide at least 10% of the total site area as suitable public open space. Existing planning policies will therefore act to ensure that existing public open space is protected and that the impact of new development on green spaces is mitigated by improvements to the quality of green spaces or by provision of new space.

**Objective 01:**

Maintain the total hectares of unrestricted open space at 785ha and seek opportunities to increase this.

- 3.6 Oxford Playing Pitches Strategy is a document that provides a strategic assessment of the playing pitch provision in Oxford in addition to provision of outdoor sports facilities. The key objectives of producing the Playing Pitch Strategy are to:
1. Ensure that Oxford has the right number of playing pitches, to the right standard and in the right places
  2. To protect existing playing pitch provision from competing demand within the City
  3. To achieve a higher standard of pavilion provision for its playing pitches
  4. To identify where developer contributions or funding can be used to improve and maintain pitch provision and ancillary facilities
  5. To help increase participation in sport and physical activity (previously NI8).

**Objective 02: Oxford's Playing Pitch Strategy**

To deliver the recommendations in the playing pitch strategy.

- 3.7 The provision of allotments provides many of the benefits that the six aims of the Green Spaces Strategy is seeking to achieve, including physical and mental health and well-being, sustainability and biodiversity, community cohesion and involvement, and retaining and preserving the cultural heritage of an area. Often allotments will have an area designated to wild flowers to encourage pollinating insects and should not be seen as a used plot. By renting an allotment people feel that they are doing something productive, it's sociable, it can be educational, it can reduce obesity and inactivity, it encourages recycling and can make considerable savings to the family budget. Allotments provide fresh, nutritious, often organic food with very few "food miles" involved. For these reasons allotments are protected under the saved policy from the Local Plan 2001-2016 Policy SR8.
- 3.8 Several factors are likely to be driving an increased demand for allotment plots including the increase in population and the effect of the recession meaning that more people may be more inclined to grow their own food. As many new developments have small gardens or no gardens at all, demand could increase further. Allotment waiting lists are a good indication of demand but are constantly changing which needs to be closely monitored. A travel distance to plots has been assessed using the 1900m and 750m standards discussed in objective 04, but further work is required. See Appendix three.
- 3.9 Oxford City Council delegates the management responsibilities of allotments to associations. In the Communities & Local Government (C&LG) published document "A Place to Grow"<sup>8</sup> this is viewed as good practice. There is a commitment to maintain the current sites, provide administrative support and liaison with the Oxford and District Federation of Allotment Associations (ODFAA) as this network of volunteers needs to be nurtured and maintained. Practical support is provided with tree problems and clearance. The associations have become increasingly self financing, however the Council are still responsible for major works. Grants are also set up so many associations benefit yearly and the monies are currently used for clearing new plot or large projects. The Associations will vote on the best way to use the grants in that year.
- 3.10 All associations are invited to the allotments liaison meeting which is managed jointly by ODFAA and OCC. In 2012 the group produced "The Allotments Charter", which aims to clarify the roles and responsibilities of devolved management. The forum has been pro-active in encouraging sites to; reclaim un-worked plots, to work together to improve, promote and share resources and best practice. It is also involved in discussions about managing availability, accessibility and demand.
- 3.11 The quality as well as quantity of allotments is important and this is covered in section 5.0, objective 17 of the strategy.
- 3.12 The Council has derelict allotments at Horspath and Michery Farm which are no longer in use as they were not being used and there are sometimes requests to the Council to open the closed sites. Whilst allotments offer benefits that fit with our

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<sup>8</sup> Dr Richard Wiltshire. (2010). A Place To Grow, Local Government Association (LGA) and Communities and Local Government (CLG)

strategic ambitions we are not proposing that these sites should be reopened at this time because:

- The ODFAA have gathered a large amount of data covering most sites and we have vacant plots, although we do not as yet know exactly how many.
- We have some overgrown plots that can be cleared.

**Objective 03: Oxford's Allotments**

To retain the existing number of managed allotment sites and maximise their productive use.

## 4.0 Improving Access to Green Space



The Trap Grounds Boardwalk

*Aim – 2 To ensure everyone living, working and visiting in Oxford has easy access to open space.*

- 4.1 Oxford is a unique City, defined by the distinctive character of its neighbourhoods but also by its rural setting and its connection to the wider landscape. Linking the green spaces identified within this study are the wide flood plains of the River Thames and the River Cherwell which comprise thousands of hectares of agricultural land and private land which together have the potential to form an integrated network of green infrastructure. Improving public access to these areas by collaborating and building partnerships with stakeholders is a key aim of this strategy.
- 4.2 This strategy sets out Oxford's parks and open spaces local distance standards for green space, i.e. how far people are willing to travel to their nearest green space. Natural England believe that everybody should have access to good quality green space near to where they live as "Natural green places provide natural solutions to many 21st century diseases – obesity and inactivity, heart disease and strokes, depression and mental illness"<sup>9</sup>. Whilst distance measures are a useful benchmark, people, especially the elderly, also benefit from seeing a small green space or trees from their window.
- 4.3 The Oxford Green Spaces Study 2012 Update Report identified percentage areas of urban village that are within the walking distance standards set for City, Neighbourhood and Local sites. The walking distance standards were decided using survey data from the Parks Customer Satisfaction Survey, the consultation carried out in the Oxford City Green Space Study by URS and best practice guidance. The table in Appendix four shows the percentage of the area of urban village within the accessibility standards. The table also shows the same at City level. This data is accompanied by maps with walking distance standard buffer zones. One set of maps is included in Appendix four for the Abingdon Road urban village as an example. The other 15 urban village map sets are available from the Council web site.

<sup>9</sup> Natural England. (2010). Nature Nearby Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance

- 4.4 Local strategies will have to be developed to address percentage deficiencies as circumstances change from one area to another. Action will include improved gates, pedestrian crossings to limit lines of severance, improved access to the green belt, opening access to green space owned by other landowners and improvements to the right of way network.

#### **Objective 04: Improving local access to Green Space**

Our aspiration is that people do not have to walk more than 1900m to their nearest large park, not more than 750m to their nearest medium park and not more than 400m to their nearest small park. This standard will be applied to all new developments as well as existing residential areas.

Where deficiency in access to green space is identified the following approach will be applied:

- Where deficiency is due to factors such as lack of pedestrian crossings then seek to address this by offering new access points and safe routes
- Look at opportunities to utilise existing inaccessible green space by opening it up for public access
- Seek opportunities to create new accessible green space such as the proposed new park within the Barton housing development
- Where none of the above three options are available, enhance the quality of existing accessible green space
- Access and distances needs to be considered for all members of society
- Improve the communication of the access to surrounding farmland and green belt by foot, cycle and horse
- Identifying enhancements to the public right of way network.

#### **Objective 05: Improve connectivity between sites and to the large areas of open space with recreational opportunities that exist outside the city.**

- 4.5 Improving access is key to achieving the walking distance standard.
- 4.6 The Council's vision makes clear its commitment to all City's residents. The strategy has objectives to ensure this is achieved and that all people are able to engage with and have access to the natural environment. These groups could include BME (black and minority ethnic) and people in disadvantaged areas. Local priorities should be decided according to local circumstances. Where budgets allow,



recommendations from Disability Discrimination Act audits should be applied to ensure gates, pathways, signage etc are accessible to all.

**Objective 06: Work with communities to better understand the needs of under represented groups.**

- 4.7 The Green Space Strategy supports the saved policy from the Local Plan 2001-2016 SR10 which contains a number of proposals to create new footpath links in order to develop the green network.
- 4.8 As part of the open space network, as recognised by the Landscape Institute and Natural England, inland waterways and river and towing paths perform multiple functions:
- Strategic links between areas
  - Important wildlife corridors
  - A recreation and sport resource
  - Accessible amenity in urban areas
  - Access to the countryside
  - Visual amenity
  - A community resource.
- 4.9 The towpaths of the Oxford Canal which is part of a virtually traffic free long distance route as far as Coventry and the Thames Path provide these functions. These routes, also known as “Blue Space” meet many of the aims of this strategy and are freely available.
- 4.10 The strategy will ensure that we work with organisation such as Sustrans Safe Cycle routes, Oxford City Cycle initiative and the Environment Agency to enhance green and blue corridors through Oxford.
- 4.11 Increase the focus on providing better public transport links to large parks and play areas by working with groups such as the Oxford Bus User Group. Also improve the cycle routes and compliment the recommendations from the Oxford Cycle Strategy.

**Objective 07: Improve how we promote our green spaces to tourists and visitors.**

## 5.0 Promoting High Quality Green Space

*Aim 3 - To achieve high quality green spaces across Oxford, including spaces that are nationally recognised for their quality and attractions.*



Receiving The Green Flag Award 2011

- 5.1 This chapter sets out Oxford's quality standard for green space. The aim seeks to raise the quality so as to improve peoples' enjoyment and satisfaction. This is a standard set across the City so that all residents, regardless of location, receive the same quality of open spaces.
- 5.2 Oxford City Council manages and maintains many different types of green space, from large parks, country parks and nature parks, to cemeteries and allotments. It is important to recognise that each green space is unique, valued and needs to be managed as such. It is also important to recognise that demand can change between different types of green space, and that flexibility is required. Therefore, whilst objectives eight through to eighteen are generic, the parks service recognises these differences.
- 5.3 People use green spaces in different ways, seek different experiences from them and look at different facilities and features. All of these factors affect whether individuals feel that they are visiting good quality green space and therefore good customer consultation is important.
- 5.4 Annual Customer Satisfaction Surveys have continually shown a high level of satisfaction with the quality of the horticulture within parks and open spaces, but a low level of satisfaction with the quality of infrastructure, such as pathways, fences, pavilions and toilets.

### **Objective 08: Improve Parks Infrastructure**

To improve the quality of the parks pathways, fences, pavilions and toilets.

- 5.5 While there is a good distribution of Green Flag Parks across the City, this could be improved by achieving this award at Blackbird Leys Park in South East Oxford. It is proposed to bring one park to Green Flag Community Award (formally Green Pennant) status by 2015 and a further two by 2020.

### **Objective 09: National Standards:**

To increase the number of parks that achieve the Green Flag Award and the Green Flag Community Award. To maintain Country Park Accreditation for Shotover Country Park.

- 5.6 The parks service currently inspects a minimum of 20 parks and open spaces each month using a scoring card system. A number of medium and small parks fall below their potential. While the standard aims to bring all medium and small parks to “good” this does not mean that the service should not strive for excellent. Where excellent is achieved it should not be allowed to slip. Currently the majority of large parks are in a good condition whilst medium and small parks are in the main sufficient.

<b>Recorded Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Failing
2	Poor
3	Sufficient
4	Good
5	Excellent

### **Objective 10: Increase the Standard**

To increase the standard of all “medium” and “small” green spaces to achieve an average quality inspection score of four.

- 5.7 These design principles follow CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) Space and Green Flag design guidelines.

### **Objective 11: High Quality Design**

To ensure that all of Oxford’s parks and open spaces are designed to the following principles:

- Safe and accessible to all, clearly marked entrances and internal paths, including provision for pedestrians and cyclists
- Welcoming, with well-maintained entrances and signage
- Designed to enhance natural surveillance
- Clean and well maintained
- Designed to be adaptable to climate change
- Designed to allow biodiversity to flourish.

- 5.8 The management and maintenance of Oxford’s parks and open spaces needs to continually improve. When the Grounds Maintenance Specification was written in 2010, service standards were applied. This ensures that the horticultural aspects

such as grass cutting, as well as the cleanliness aspects such as littering and dog fouling, are kept to a high standard, thereby reflecting the needs of the users.

### **Objective 12: High Standard of Cleanliness**

Achieve the Service Standards set out in the specification (see Appendix five).

- 5.9 In order to provide high quality parks and open spaces the parks service needs to invest in its workforce. A skills gap and an aging workforce have been identified across green space management nationally, and Objective 10 helps to address this locally.

### **Objective 13: Creating a Skilled Workforce**

To provide the parks workforce with the necessary horticultural and professional skills to contribute towards the world class vision.

- 5.10 The parks service is accredited with ISO9001 which relates to quality standards designed to ensure that we meet the needs of customers and other stakeholders. It has been shown that superior operational performance can be achieved upon implementing ISO9001.
- 5.11 The parks service is also ISO14001 accredited, which is the internationally recognised standard for the environmental management of businesses. It prescribes controls for those activities that have an effect on the environment. These include the use of natural resources, handling and treatment of waste and energy consumption.

### **Objective 14: Retain ISO9001 and ISO14001**

- 5.12 The Play England manual 'Design for Play' identifies the following principles for designing successful play spaces:
- Are bespoke
  - Are well located
  - Make use of natural elements
  - Provide a range of play experiences
  - Are accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children
  - Meet community needs
  - Allow children of different ages to play together
  - Build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge
  - Are sustainable and appropriately maintained
  - Allow for change and evolution.

### **Objective 15: High quality play spaces**

To apply the following principles to the location and design of play space:

- The Play England manual 'Design for Play'
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents design guides
- The Association of Play Industries design guidelines
- Play spaces should be located where there is good natural surveillance from street and neighbouring houses
- Play spaces should be located on accessible green space where feasible and include elements of natural and free play
- A buffer zone should be provided around play areas
- All play areas should be designed to be inclusive for children and young people with disabilities
- Play areas should be designed to create a variety of facilities in distinctive spaces which enhance the local character and environment
- Install equipment which encourages physical activity.

- 5.13 Oxford's trees are of immense environmental and aesthetic value. Trees play a key role in defining the landscape of a green space. They also provide vital habitat for wildlife. Oxford City Council recognises these benefits and seeks to preserve healthy trees and encourage the planting of new trees.
- 5.14 The overall aim of the tree policy is to ensure that Oxford's tree stock is retained, enhanced and increased. It also details how we will manage our trees in relation to best practice health and safety guidance<sup>10</sup>.

### **Objective 16: High quality tree management**

By adhering to the Oxford City Council Tree Management Plan (Tree Policy) March 2008.

- 5.15 The importance of allotments has been covered in section 3.0. They, however, also need to be of a good cultivated quality and the facilities such as access roads and fencing need to be fit for use, so that the benefits of allotments can be fully gained. A healthy workable standard would be in the interests of the users and ensure some baseline consistency in provision.

### **Objective 17: High quality allotments**

- 5.16 The cemeteries and churchyards in Oxford contribute to the six aims of the Green Spaces Strategy. A number of them have been improved so they provide

<sup>10</sup> Oxford City Council (2008) Tree Management Plan (Tree Policy), Reviewed December 2011



accessible green space for peaceful contemplation and improved habitats for biodiversity.

**Objective 18: High quality cemeteries and churchyards**

Ensure that cemetery provision meets the needs of the population.

## 6.0 Contribution of Green Space to Biodiversity, Sustainability, Heritage and Culture



Wild Flowers in Cutteslowe Park 2011

*Aim 4 - To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the City's biodiversity, sustainability, heritage and culture.*

- 6.1 The Green Spaces Strategy supports the Sustainability Strategy for Oxford (2011-2020) which brings together all the Council's existing policies relating to sustainability and sets out a longer term framework to address these issues. It will be delivered through a series of strategies and action plans that cover: climate change; air quality; waste; water quality; biodiversity and land quality. This chapter will identify objectives that:
- Support Oxford City Council's target to reduce its carbon footprint
  - Identify how the parks services can adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change
  - Conserve and encourage biodiversity
  - Protect and preserve heritage and culture.
- 6.2 The targets set out in the "Getting Our House in Order" carbon management plan have been met, that was to reduce our carbon emissions by 25% by March 2011. In 2012 Oxford City Council refreshed and re-launched a new carbon management plan, 'Carbon Reduction at the Heart of Everything We Do' which sets out targets to reduce our CO2 emissions by 5% year on year.
- 6.3 Low Carbon Oxford was launched on 14 October 2010 to ensure Oxford's future as a sustainable and low carbon City. The initiative, one of the first in the country, started a programme of co-operation that will help reduce the City's carbon footprint. In 2011 Oxford City Council was the first UK local authority to be awarded the British Standards Institution Kitemark for energy reduction. This independent verification scheme recognises the outstanding carbon management practices and commitment to ongoing improvement.
- 6.4 The ultimate aim of Low Carbon Oxford is to achieve a City target to reduce CO2 emission by 40% by 2020. The programme involves (amongst other things) partner organisations (known as 'Pathfinders') signing a charter to commit them to:

- Collaborating to reduce our carbon footprints by 3% year on year, every year for the next 10 years and reporting on progress
- Creating a low carbon, sustainable economy which will be an example to cities across the country
- Collaboration on creating more green jobs, increased prosperity and opportunity for all.

### **Objective 19: Promoting sustainability within the parks service**

To adopt and promote practices that contribute to the sustainable management of parks and open spaces and help to reduce the City's carbon footprint.

### **Objective 20: Adapting to climate change**

To adopt and promote practices that recognise the key role that Oxford's parks and open spaces can play in the City's mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

- 6.5 Local authorities have a statutory duty on biodiversity (section 40, Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006). "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat". Oxford City Council is currently producing a Biodiversity Strategy to ensure a joined up approach to biodiversity conservation and enhancement. The strategy will set out how Oxford City Council is fulfilling its duties as set out in the NERC Act 2006, and, with effective partnership working, integrate biodiversity conservation efforts across the City.
- 6.6 In September 2010, the Government commissioned the Lawton Review of England's wildlife and ecological network<sup>11</sup>. The essence of what needs to be done to enhance the resilience and coherence of England's ecological network can be summarised in four words: MORE, BIGGER, BETTER, JOINED.
- 6.7 In Oxfordshire the national Biodiversity Action Plan has been delivered through the use of Conservation Target Areas (CTAs), which identify the most important areas for wildlife in the County, where targeted conservation work will have the greatest benefit. A number of these areas lie within the City; The Oxford Meadows and Farmoor CTA; the Thames and Cherwell at Oxford CTA and some areas of the Shotover CTA. Any biodiversity enhancements proposed for the green spaces within these areas will aim to meet the conservation objectives of these CTAs.

<sup>11</sup> Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FRS. (2010). Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network

- 6.8 Oxford City Council manages three Ecological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's): Port Meadow, Lye Valley and Shotover Country Park. As well as two Geological SSSI's: Magdalen Quarry and Rock Edge. Port Meadow is part of an internationally designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Whilst these sites are of huge significance, other green spaces such as allotments and cemeteries should not be underestimated in terms of their contribution towards biodiversity and sustainability.
- 6.9 A wildlife corridor is a link of wildlife habitat of generally native vegetation, which joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. These corridors are critical for the maintenance of ecological processes, including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations. They can also provide opportunities for walking and cycling which offer both health benefits through exercise and environmental benefits through reducing car journeys.
- 6.10 The plant life and trees found within urban parks and green space play an important role in improving the air quality in urban environments and reducing pollutants.<sup>12</sup>
- 6.11 The "Blue Space" waterways in Oxford, with their banks and line of trees provide a valuable corridor for wildlife and should be protected. This includes the Oxford Canal from Hythe Bridge Street to Wolvercote, the Thames Path and the minor tributaries of Boundary Brook, the Bayswater Brook and the Northfield Brook. The Upper Thames River Valley has been identified by the RSPB as part of its Future Scapes Initiative which will re-connect and restore floodplains and wetland habitat through buffering and the creation of new habitat.
- 6.12 Green Spaces need to be considered in their relationship to the natural river and drainage systems of Oxford with the parks and open spaces being an important part of Oxford's floodplain.

### **Objective 21: Protect and enhance biodiversity**

- To ensure the protection of internationally, nationally and locally important sites of biodiversity interest (Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Sites and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation)
- To encourage delivery of the conservation objectives of the Conservation Area Targets within the City. This will be developed in the Biodiversity Strategy
- To identify areas to create new habitats, enlarge existing ones, improve the management of sites so that they may become designated and joined up in line with the Lawton review
- To ensure wildlife corridors are protected, enhanced or created
- Protection of important and prosaic species in all sites.

<sup>12</sup> Relf, D. (1996). Plants Actually Clean the Air

- 6.13 Oxford has rich and extensive archaeological remains which extend right across the local authority area. These remains include prehistoric palaeo-channels which preserve ancient pollen evidence, landscapes of late Neolithic and early Bronze Age ritual and burial monuments located along the gravel terraces of the Thames and Roman kilns recorded across the limestone ridge located to the south and east of the City. Oxford also has an exceptional built and natural heritage including a large number of listed buildings, unlisted industrial and vernacular structures, veteran trees, designed parks and gardens and important historic views that have been celebrated by poets and artists through the ages. The historic environment therefore has a great deal to contribute to the enjoyment of public open space by residents and visitors<sup>13</sup>.
- 6.14 A number of the large public open spaces in Oxford are particularly notable for their archaeological heritage and views. Port Meadow is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and encompasses a wide variety of monuments including Bronze Age barrows, Iron Age roundhouses which are still visible as shallow earthworks, possible Civil War earthworks, a 17th-18th century race track and 1st world war airfield. The University Parks preserve part of a Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age linear barrow cemetery and the remains of late Iron and Roman farmsteads and field systems. Shotover Park includes the site of a Neolithic Long Barrow and the route of the Old London Road. Other notable sites of historic importance within the City's green spaces include Bury Knowle House with its landscaped park and Ha Ha<sup>14</sup>, the ruins of the 12th-century Godstow Nunnery near Lower Wolvercote and an extensive area of medieval ridge and furrow earthworks in South Park, representing the remnants of open field farming.
- 6.15 In the Saved Policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-16 ten view cones have been designated as views of importance in and around the City, such as from South Park and Raleigh Park. Where areas of vegetation will impact on views, reference to the view cones will inform management and any schemes to improve the land will take into account these cones.
- 6.16 Ensuring that the historic and archaeological fabric of these sites is preserved, whilst at the same time encouraging the use of these open spaces for recreation, sports and events, provides a challenge and it is vital that strategies are put in place to avoid conflict between these aims. The City Council is therefore developing a Heritage Plan for Oxford in partnership with the Oxford Preservation Trust which aims to develop a better understanding of how Oxford's exceptional heritage can make a positive contribution to all aspects of life within the City, including improvement to the public realm, social well-being, health and educational outcomes. The Green Spaces Strategy will support the outcomes and work to implement the Oxford Heritage Plan and its subsidiary documents.

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<sup>13</sup> Further information on the historic environment of Oxford can be obtained from Heritage Gateway (<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>), County Council Heritage Search (<http://publicapps.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/portal/publicapps/applications/heritage>) and the City Council Heritage Plan website ([http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decP/Conservation\\_occw.htm](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decP/Conservation_occw.htm)).

<sup>14</sup> Ha-ha walls typically formed a boundary between the estate's gardens and grounds. These walls were constructed so as to be invisible from the house, ensuring a clear view across the estate.



- 6.17 The importance of Oxford’s “Blue Space” has been mentioned. These corridors also have an industrial heritage and historical heritage.

**Objective 22: Protect, preserve, promote and enhance the archaeological features, built heritage and historic view cones in parks and open spaces.** Avoid new planting on historic earthworks and within sensitive view cones. Support the identification of further heritage assets in managed open space by further non-intrusive surveys.

- 6.18 Many of our parks and green spaces have an element of historic association such as the name, a monument or commemorative features, with most telling the stories of the local community. Consequently they imbue the area with a distinctive character. Research has proven that the historic environment has a positive and profound relationship to peoples' sense of place; which in turn can have many positive benefits including increased sense of identity and pride.
- 6.19 Cultural activities such as community events, art and sculpture, music and debate are all available via our green spaces. These are accessible and affordable for all, providing a platform for skills, interests and lives to be shared; broadening knowledge and awareness and often reinforcing or reintroducing civil society which can so easily become lost in the constant evolution of urban areas. Events and art can engage everyone; they do not exclude, they excite and inspire and bring people together. The Green Spaces Strategy supports the aims of the emerging Culture Strategy for Oxford 2012-2015<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> GreenSpace. (2011). Blue Sky Green Space: Understanding the importance of retaining good quality Park and Green Space and the contribution they make to improving peoples lives

## 7.0 Contribution of Green Space to Health and Well-being

*Aim 5 - To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the City's health and wellbeing.*



Football in Blackbird Leys Park

7.1 There are worrying trends relating to the nation's health. Obesity and less active lifestyles have led to an increase in preventable diseases which are placing increasing pressures on the National Health Service. Around 8% of annual deaths in Europe (at least one in 13) have been attributed to overweight and obesity. Green spaces provide a wealth of opportunities for exercise and sport. Evidence shows a brisk walk every day (in a local green space) has many health benefits and can reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes and diabetes by 50 per cent. Add to this the positive impact of exposure to nature and green space on stress and mental health, on aggression and violence within inner-city communities and the full picture in relation to health and wellbeing and access to green space can start to be understood<sup>16</sup> The health costs of inactivity in Oxford is at least £2million a year<sup>17</sup>.

The Oxford Heritage Plan has shown how heritage can have a positive impact on social well-being, health and pride of place.

This chapter will identify objectives that:

- Promote linkages between spaces for wildlife, walkers, cyclists and equestrians
- Work with partners to promote the health benefits of parks and open spaces
- Increase the educational opportunities in parks and open spaces.

7.2 Wildlife corridors are important for both wildlife and recreation.

### **Objective 23: Promoting links between green spaces**

To work with transport planners to identify opportunities to increase the number of safe walking, riding and cycling routes.

<sup>16</sup> GreenSpace. (2011). Blue Sky Green Space: Understanding the importance of retaining good quality Park and Green Space and the contribution they make to improving peoples lives

<sup>17</sup> Be Active, Be Healthy. (2006/7). Measure cost of inactivity

- 7.3 The health benefits of parks and open spaces have already been well documented in this strategy. Schemes such as Oxford Health Walks have received a national award from Walking for Health. These short organised walks around Oxford are led by volunteers and aim to keep people healthy; mentally and physically. The award means that Oxford Health Walks will benefit from being formally recognised by health professionals, prospective partners and funders.

**Objective 24: Promote the health benefits of parks and open spaces to all members of society**

To work with health partners and National Governing Bodies of Sport to promote new and existing projects in which parks and open spaces can be used to improve health to make stronger and more active communities.

- 7.4 Oxford is renowned for being a centre of academic excellence. This provides a mutually beneficial situation where we are aiming to benefit through research, internships and the colleges can benefit through access to outdoor learning space.
- 7.5 Improved links with schools and involvement of school children in parks, open spaces and allotments will help to tackle vandalism, anti-social behaviour, inactivity and obesity.

**Objective 25: Expand on the opportunities for and from the education sector**

- Promote the educational benefits of parks and open spaces as an outdoor learning environment for local schools
- Establish closer links with Oxford's schools
- To establish clear, well promoted employment pathways that are accessible to all by extending the apprentice scheme and working with local Colleges
- Support community projects in biodiversity, archaeology and history working with organisations such as Oxford Preservation Trust and Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.

## 8.0 Community Involvement



Friends of Quarry Hollow Park

*Aim 6 - To support community cohesion and community involvement in the design and stewardship of green spaces.*

- 8.1 The leisure sector is well aware of the benefits of volunteering, both to the volunteer, by offering training, work experience, health benefits, education and social engagement and to the parks service and local tax payer, by offering free labour to supplement limited resources at a time of financial restraint. Therefore the service has utilised volunteers for many years. Nationally well over half a million individual volunteers each year, represented by thousands of community groups, working in tens of thousands of communities, give up their time freely and passionately. Whether helping to improve a Council managed space or looking after community managed land, created by local communities, for local communities<sup>18</sup>.
- 8.2 Locally, at the time of writing, there are 14 Friends Groups who work approximately 218 hours monthly. Volunteering empowers local people to take more control of their environment and gives them opportunities to become more active in their community. These people lead by example and positively influence and change the behaviour of others. Green space volunteering is often the catalyst for wider participation, the development of community leaders and wider community improvement. A good example, are the volunteers who lead health walks in Oxford's parks.
- 8.4 The Council's policy is to ensure all members of society, including under-represented groups have the opportunity to engage, volunteer and have access to consultation. The parks service will work to gain a broader understanding of community groups to help us better shape the services we provide.
- 8.5 It is therefore crucial that this strategy builds on and improves the volunteering opportunities that are already in place.

### **Objective 26: Community involvement**

To support new and existing community involvement in the use, design, management, fundraising and enhancement of parks and open spaces.

<sup>18</sup> GreenSpace. (2011). Blue Sky Green Space: Understanding the importance of retaining good quality Park and Green Space and the contribution they make to improving peoples lives

- 8.6 In Oxford there are a number of excellent examples of community led green spaces, such as Milham Ford Nature Park cared for by the New Marston Wildlife Group and BBOWT's CS Lewis Community Nature Reserve cared for by the Friends of CS Lewis community volunteer group. There are also many Friends of Groups that cover city parks, play areas, allotment associations and even disused cemeteries.

**Objective 27: Increase the number of active volunteers**

To engage with businesses, community groups, churches, schools, colleges, environmental charities, the health, sport and physical activity sector to increase the number of volunteers.

- 8.7 Some of the evidence gathered for this Green Spaces Strategy is through consultation. The importance of good community consultation has been identified on a number of occasions including in the quality section.

**Objective 28: Customer consultation**

To continue to gather good quality customer consultation from all sectors of the community.

## 9.0 Delivering the Strategy

### Action Plan

- 9.1 The detailed actions necessary to deliver the vision, aims and objectives adopted in this strategy are set out in the Action Plan. For each objective a set of actions is given with timescales and those responsible for delivery. The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated yearly until the end of the strategy period.
- 9.2 The Action Plan will be delivered using the existing revenue budget, capital bids and through partnership working. However, as a result of the comprehensive spending review, the department has had to make efficiencies over the next four years to this revenue budget. In order to maintain a high level of service and still deliver, the service is looking at efficiency savings, income generation and greater use of volunteers.
- 9.3 A map summarising the key actions is available in Appendix six.

### Monitoring and Review

- 9.4 A review panel will be set up, including external key stakeholders, and an annual monitoring report will be produced which will be discussed at the Green Spaces Networking meeting. This will consider whether the aims and objectives are on target and where they are not what intervention is needed.
- 9.5 Geographical Information System maps will be updated to show where improvements to accessibility have been made.



## Action Plan (the action plan will be reviewed and updated annually)

**Aim – 1 To establish a quantity standard of green space provision to ensure that Oxford has an agreed amount of green spaces to meet existing and future needs of residents, workers and visitors**

What do we want to achieve?	How are we going to do it?	Milestones	Timescale for completion	Responsibility for delivery	Cost/Resources
Objective 01: Maintain quantity	Work with planners to ensure that The Local Development Framework protects the quantity of green space available	Meetings with planners	2013	Parks and Open Spaces (P&O Spaces) and the Planning Department	Existing resources
Objective 02: Oxford's Playing Pitch Strategy	To deliver the recommendations in the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS).	Annual review of PPS	2026	See Playing Pitch Strategy	
Objective 03: Oxford's allotments	Continue to work closely with the Allotment Associations  Work with the Oxford & District Federation of Allotment Associations (ODFAA) to attain updated figures for the number of plots, occupancy of sites and accurate waiting list data  Maximise the usage of plots in our open allotments  Produce an Allotment Plan	Quarterly liaison meeting  ODFAA to gather information quarterly  Grant awards for plot clearance  Work with the ODFAA	2013 onwards  Accurate data by 2015  98% occupancy by 2015  2017	P&O Spaces / Allotment Associations  P&O Spaces / ODFAA  Parks Operational Manager  ODFAA/ P&O Spaces	Existing resources  ODFAA  Officer Time  Officer Time

**Aim – 2 To ensure everyone living, working and visiting in Oxford has easy access to open space**

What do we want to achieve?	How are we going to do it?	Milestones	Timescale for completion	Responsibility for delivery	Cost/Resources
Objective 04: Improving local access to Green Space to meet walking distance	The Oxford Accessibility Standards will help to inform where there are areas of deficiency. Area specific recommendations will be made	Work with partners to improve linkages  Access audit of sites	Plan in place 2015  2016	All stakeholders including: P&O Spaces / Planning / Communities /County Council / Direct Services /Accessibility	Existing resources  Commission green space partner

standards			Identify enhancements to rights of way Explore improved access to inaccessible green space Design new linear park – 2013 Feasibility 2013 Agree and develop a plan (2013) Actively patrol river banks Work with County Council Undertake DDA audits Plan developed 2014-2016 Development officers to meet transport providers Work with Communities team	2014 2014 Concurrent with housing development Concurrent with housing development Implement 2013 -2015 Concurrent with the project 2016 2015 2016 2020 2013 Onwards	Officer / Oxfordshire County Council / schools / Universities P&O Spaces / Planning / Communities & County Council P&O Spaces P&O Spaces UMBEG / Park Rangers and Operational Manager Sustrans / Development Officers / County Council Parks Development Officers / Access Officer P&O Spaces and Access Officer P&O Spaces and public transport providers Parks Development Officers	Potential Community Infrastructure Levy projects Existing resources Officer time Officer time Existing resources Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Officer time Officer time Officer time / CIL Officer time
Objective 05: Improve connectivity between sites	Proposed new park at Barton Proposed new park at Minchery Farm East Proposed safety enhancements in Gillians Park Work with Unlawfully Moored Boats (UMBEG) which clears areas of the tow path where there has been anti-social behaviour, unlawfully moored boats to improve access Consult on increasing the number of Safe Cycle routes and implement Develop a plan to implement access improvements that have been identified in the disability access audits. Develop a costed plan to meet the DDA recommendations Work with public transport providers to improve the routes to large parks					
Objective 06: Work with communities to better understand	Consult with communities to identify the barriers to then accessing green spaces					

the needs of underrepresented groups	Work with partners to promote the green spaces in the city	Agree an approach with partners (2013)	2014	Parks Development Officers / Tourist Information Centre	Existing resources.
Objective 07: Improve how we promote our green spaces to tourists and visitors					

### Aim 3 - To achieve high quality green spaces across Oxford, including spaces that are nationally recognised for their quality and attractions

What do we want to achieve?	How are we going to do it?	Milestones	Timescale for completion	Responsibility for delivery	Cost/Resources
Objective 08: Improve the parks infrastructure	Improved pathways Refurbish toilets Modernise our pavilion stock	Works underway (2013-2016)	2016	P&O Spaces	Capital funds: Pathways - £150K Toilets - £195K Pavilions -£2.45m External grants
Objective 09: National Standards	Achieve five Green Flags including one in the south east of the city  Encourage local groups to go for Green Flag Community Award (Formally Green Pennants).  Maintain Country Park accreditation for Shotover Country Park	Complete refurbishment in Blackbird Leys Park (2013)  Parks Development officers to assist with entries in 2013  Complete Management Plan in 2013	2014  Continuous  2020 back in favourable condition	P&O Spaces Manager  Parks Development Officers  P&O Spaces	Existing resources  Officer time  Consultants drafting management plan Officer time / grants
Objective 10: Increase the Standard	Work to the existing specification to ensure parks are meeting the standard. Continue to audit all sites and include in annual monitoring report  Develop site Management Plans for all Large Sites, along	Review specification annually  Develop	2013 onwards  2027	P&O Spaces  P&O Spaces	Existing resources  Volunteers

	with generic site management plans sites for Medium and Small Parks and Management statements for countryside sites	management plans for one park per year	2013 onwards	Parks Development Officers	Officer time
Objective 11: High Quality Design:	Develop opportunities for voluntary action/contribution through support for Friends Groups and others	Continue to assist new Friends and hold annual volunteer meeting	On all new play areas	P&O Spaces	Existing resources
Objective 12: High Standard of Cleanliness	Through the application of best practice design principles	As above, develop one plan per year	Throughout strategy	P&O Spaces	Existing resources
	To empty more than 85% of all bins every week	Review litter frequencies regularly	2015 then yearly	Ranger and Litter Team / Parks Operational Manager	Officer time
	Clear litter hot spots	Target areas highlighted from monitoring	A week after hot spot identified	P&O Spaces	Officer time / community payback
	Train all parks staff to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering, dog-fouling and to report anti-social behaviour.	Include in Personal Development Plan of all staff (2013 onwards)	Ongoing	All staff	Officer time
Objective 13: Creating a Skilled Workforce	Expansion our apprenticeship scheme	Fourth apprentice	2015 / 2026	P&O Manager	Officer time / local Colleges
	Keep training up to date with relevant legislation e.g. protected species and habitats	Update training matrix	2013 onwards	All Staff	
	Develop clear employment pathways	Attend a careers fair (2013)	Annually	P&O Spaces Manager	Officer time
Objective 14: Retain ISO9001: and achieve ISO14001	ISO9001 – monthly internal audits and annual external audit	Work with schools (2013)			
	ISO14001 – work with contractors to compile and create relevant procedures to achieve award	Undertake audits	ISO retained (2013 onwards)	Development Officers	Officer time
		Undertake audits	ISO retained (2013)	Development Officers	Officer time

Objective 15: High Quality Play Spaces	Consultation on introducing "No Smoking Zones" in play areas  All new and enhanced play space to be designed using Play England's "Design for Play" manual	Parks Development Officers to meet with Friends Groups (2013)  Each time a play area is updated	Formal consultation 2014  On all new play areas	P&O Spaces  P&O Spaces	Officer time  Existing resources / grants/ Friends Groups
Objective 16: High Quality Tree Management	Work to the adopted Tree Policy  Tree programme to determine and complete required works  A clear plan for watering and aftercare of new trees	Review tree policy  Trees inspected every three years  Plan developed (2013)	Ongoing  Three year inspections  Annually	Tree Team  Parks Operational Manager  Tree Team Supervisor	Officer time  Officer time  Existing resources
Objective 17: High Quality Allotments	Annual condition surveys to ensure that quality and safety standards are kept	ODFAA to undertake surveys	2013 onwards	P&O Spaces / Allotment Associations and ODFAA	Existing resources
Objective 18: High Quality Cemeteries and Churchyards	Develop a new cemetery	Complete feasibility at Horspath Road (2013)	2017	P&O Spaces	Existing resources

**Aim 4 - To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the city's biodiversity, sustainability, heritage and culture**

<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>How are we going to do it?</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale for completion</b>	<b>Responsibility for delivery</b>	<b>Cost/Resources</b>
Objective 19: Promoting Sustainability the Parks Service	Recycle 100% of tree produce	Biomass storage feasibility 2013	Annually	P&O Spaces	Existing resources
	Promote the role that green spaces play in mitigating effects of climate change	Meet low carbon parents (2013)	2013 onwards	P&O Spaces	Existing resources
	Provide a peat free parks service	Procure plants from suppliers that guarantee not to use peat	2015	Parks Operational Manager	Officer time
Objective 20: Mitigation and Adapting to Climate Change	Use of sustainable materials where possible – recycled, local, low energy and low waste	Include in site management plans	2013 onwards	Parks Operational Manager	Existing resources
	Review management practices to reduce use of powered mowing and maintenance wherever possible	Leaving areas of long grass and wildflowers	2013 onwards	P&O Spaces	Existing resources
	Review management practices to reduce fleet fuel use	Increase use of electric vehicles	2013	P&O Spaces Manager	Officer time
	Ensure water conservation	Grey water harvesting in pavilions (2013)	2013 onwards	P&O Spaces	Existing resources
	Landscaping schemes to incorporate sustainable drainage e.g. areas in cemeteries, allotments	Submit capital bids and external grants	2013 onwards	P&O Spaces / BBOWT	Existing resources
	Encourage the provision of linked corridors of green space enabling species to migrate	Include in management plans	2013 onwards	Parks Development Officer	Officer time / external funding
	Habitat creation to strengthen resilience of species under threat supported by Berks, Bucks, Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)	Work with BBOWT to identify areas for habitat creation	2013 onwards	Parks Operational Manager	Officer time / external funding
	Broaden tree species selection to cope with climate change	Include in annual tree replacement	2013 onwards	Tree team supervisor	Existing resources



Objective 21: Protect Biodiversity and allow it to flourish		programme			
	<p>Undertaken biodiversity surveys for each site and update the specification to take account of any changes</p> <p>Act on best practice guidelines, e.g. DEFRA hedge cutting and review the specification accordingly</p> <p>Analyse grass cutting regimes and machinery used, review changes to encourage biodiversity</p> <p>Audit current practices in regards to pesticide and chemical use</p> <p>Implement organic cultural methods or Integrated Pest Management strategies in parks, and seek alternatives to chemical pesticides where possible</p> <p>Management Plan for Port Meadow</p> <p>Management Plan for Shotover</p> <p>Management statements for all other countryside sites. Consult relevant local groups regularly on proposed management</p>	<p>Develop an action plan</p> <p>Review training plans</p> <p>Annual specification review</p> <p>Annual Specification review</p> <p>Develop a plan with BBOWT</p> <p>Work with Wolvercote Commoners and Freemen to draft a plan</p> <p>Work with consultants to develop a plan</p> <p>Work in partnership with Friends &amp; BBOWT</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2013</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2013 onwards</p> <p>2013</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2014</p> <p>2020</p>	<p>Parks Operational Manager / BBOWT / volunteers / universities</p> <p>Training officer</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces / BBOWT</p> <p>Parks Operational Manager</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>Grounds Maintenance Team</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces / Freemen/ Commoners</p>	<p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Officer time</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Natural England grant</p> <p>Officer time</p>

	<p>Work with Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB), BBOWT on making the Upper Thames Valley a Nature Improvement Area (NIA) and the Future Scape initiative</p> <p>Link to Oxford Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)</p> <p>Implement alternative planting, such as perennial and wild flower areas to encourage biodiversity and reduce resources</p> <p>Work with other landowners and departments to protect, enhance and create wildlife corridors such as Cuckoo Lane</p> <p>The identification and eradication of invasive species</p> <p>Sympathetic riparian habitat management is required for protected species such as otters and water voles</p>	<p>Partnership with BBOWT</p> <p>Support development of the plan</p> <p>Seek advice from BBOWT</p> <p>Partnership with BBOWT</p> <p>Partnership with BBOWT</p> <p>Partnership with BBOWT</p>	<p>2013</p> <p>2013 onwards</p> <p>2013 onwards</p> <p>2013 onwards</p> <p>2013 onwards</p> <p>2013 onwards</p>	<p>Parks Operational Manager / Countryside Team / Footprint</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>Countryside team</p> <p>Parks Operational Manager</p>	<p>Officer time &amp; consultants</p> <p>Officer time</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>External funding</p> <p>Officer time</p> <p>Officer time</p>
<p>Objective 22: Protect, preserve, promote and enhance the archaeological features, heritage and viewing cones in Parks and Open Spaces</p>	<p>Enforce the byelaws to deter activities which may damage archaeological remain</p> <p>Closely monitor the potential impact that events and other activities may have on historic landscapes and take appropriate action</p> <p>Support the Oxford Heritage Plan</p> <p>Audit of archaeological sites on council managed open space</p>	<p>Regular Ranger patrols</p> <p>Regular liaison with Events team</p> <p>Work with planning officers</p> <p>Check council sites against the Urban Archaeological Database</p>	<p>Throughout strategy</p> <p>Throughout strategy</p> <p>2013 onwards</p> <p>2013 onwards</p>	<p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces</p> <p>P&amp;O Spaces and OCC Archaeologists</p>	<p>Existing resources</p> <p>Officer time</p> <p>Officer time</p> <p>Officer time</p>

## Aim 5 - To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the City's health and well-being

What do we want to achieve?	How are we going to do it?	Milestones	Timescale for completion	Responsibility for delivery	Cost/Resources
Objective 23: Promoting Links between green spaces	Establish green walking and cycling routes throughout Oxford including signage  Promotion via Parks and Open Spaces Marketing plan	Meet County Council public rights of way officers	2020  2013 onwards	P&O Spaces / Sustrans  P&O Spaces	External funding bids  Existing resources
Objective 24: Promote the Health Benefits of Parks and Open Spaces to all members of society	Continue to provide quality allotments  Develop further links with the local health service to promote physical activity and areas of quiet parks and open spaces. Ideas suggested include jogging routes, health walks and green gyms.  Work with the Sports Development Team to encourage clubs to utilise parks  Monitor usage at a sample of parks and play areas  Promote parks through the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces marketing plan.  Increase free opportunities to exercise  Explore partnerships with Fusion Lifestyle to increase activities in parks  Promote to underrepresented groups to increase their usage of parks	Meet Allotments Associations quarterly  Develop fitness trails in parks (2013)  Monthly meeting  Ranger survey  Implement plan  Work with GO Active  Health meetings with Fusion  Work with Communities team	Yearly  2015  2015  2014  2013  2015  2013  2013 onwards  2013 onwards	Parks Operational Manager  Health Service / Sports Development  Sports Development  Groundwork / Development Officers  Development Officers  Go Active Coordinator  Leisure Client Officer  P&O Spaces	Existing resources  Officer time  Officer time  Existing resources  Existing resources  Officer time  Officer time  Officer time  Officer time
Objective 25: Expand on the opportunities for and from the education sector	Encourage university students to undertake dissertations and research projects in parks and open spaces  Work with local schools to become more involved in parks	Meetings with universities  Meet local schools	2013 onwards  2013	P&O Spaces Manager  School Sports	Officer time  Officer time

	and open spaces either as outdoor classroom or education about the environment	Develop the apprentice Scheme	onwards	Development Officer	Existing resources/external grants
	Develop clear career pathways		2015	Parks and Open Spaces Manager	

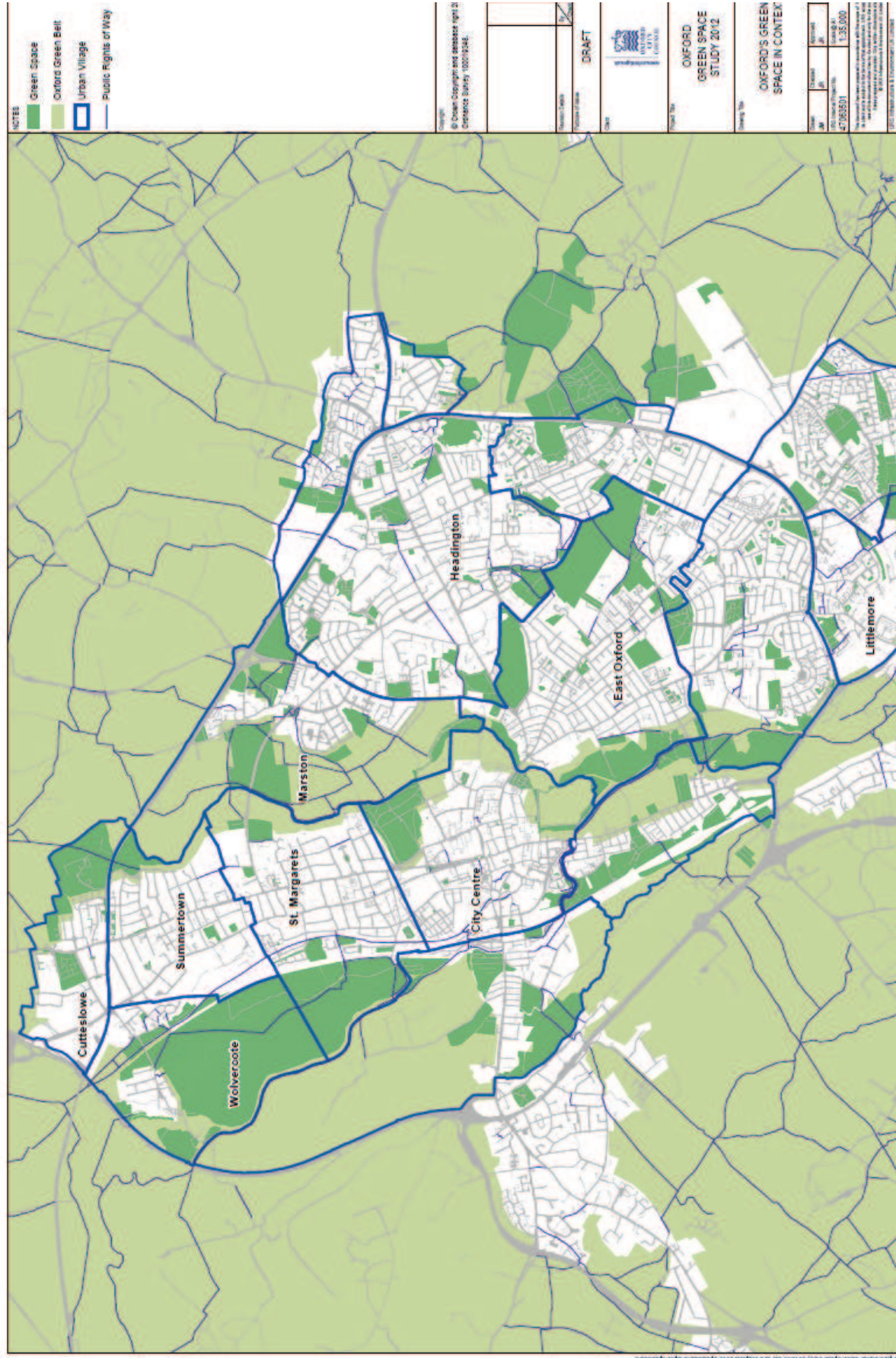
### Aim 6 - To support community cohesion and community involvement in the design and stewardship of green spaces

What do we want to achieve?	How are we going to do it?	Milestones	Timescale for completion	Responsibility for delivery	Cost/Resources
Objective 26: Community involvement	Promoting stewardship of green spaces through support for the Green Flag Community Award for community groups	Parks Development Officers to meet Friends regularly	2015	Development Officers / Friends Groups	Existing resources
	Increase community awareness and encourage use from children's centres, nurseries etc	Implement Parks Marketing Plan	2013 onwards	Development Officers	Officer time
	Involve the community in decision making	Liaise with Communities team prior to major projects	2013	P&O Spaces / wider community / Communities Team	Officer time
	Promote the work of the Friends Groups/Allotment Associations to other internal and external agencies	Promote in The Pitch and Council Website	When applicable	Development Officers	Officer time
Objective 27: Increase the number of active volunteers	Develop closer partnership working with the University Parks	P&O Spaces Manager to meet University annually	Annually	P&O Spaces Manager	Officer time
	Support voluntary and community groups in seeking and applying for external funding	Meet with groups regularly	2013	Development Officers	Officer time
	Increase the number of active volunteers	2% annually	Annually	Development Officers/ Friends Groups	Training budget
	Increase the skills base of volunteers	Develop a volunteers training	2014	Development Officers	Officer time

Objective 28 Customer consultation	On-line annual customer satisfaction survey  1:1 interviews by Park Rangers  Oxford City Council Talkback Panel  Hold a SpaceShaper event	plan (2013) Surveys throughout the year  As above  October 2013  Plan event 2014	2027   Annually  Event held 2015	Development Officers/ Friends Groups/ Corporate Consultation Officer / Internship  Communications team  Development Officers	existing resources   Officer time  Existing resources
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# Appendix 1: Parks and Open Spaces Distribution



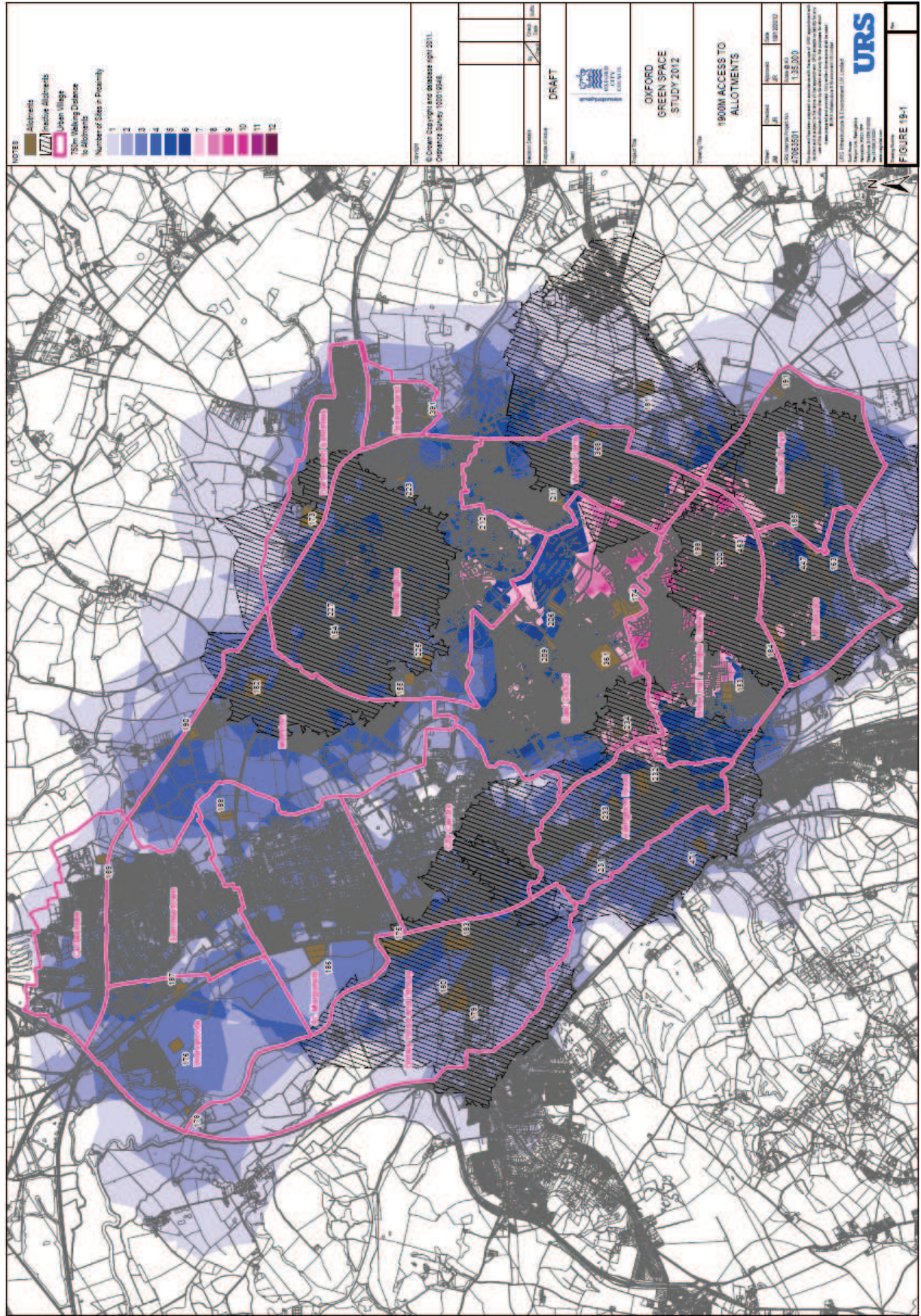


**Appendix 2:  
Classification according to a hierarchy - Definitions of large, medium, small parks and formal / informal sites**

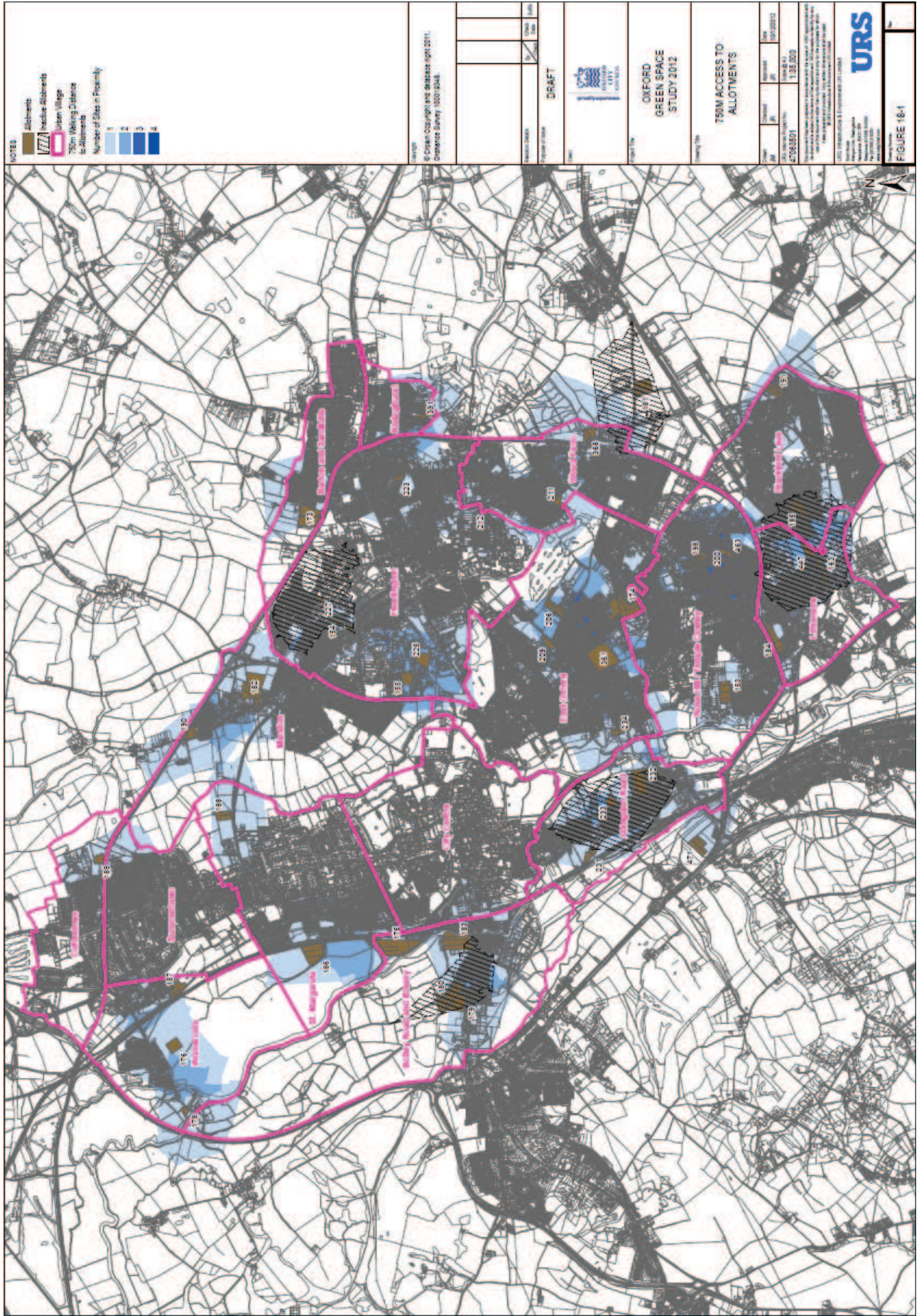
	<b>Also Known as:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Large park</b>	City Park (URS Report)	Of a significant size (vary between 7 ha and 122 ha), with secure boundaries and prominent entrances. Usually of a historical significance and sub-regional importance. A high quality landscape comprising a range of elements inc. sports facilities, play areas for all ages and car parking. Likely to have a wide catchment area and significant weekend use.	Cuttleslowe & Sunnymead Park Hinksey Park Florence Park
<b>Medium park</b>	Neighbourhood Park (URS Report)	Intimate relationship with local neighbourhood. Provision of a flexible space, with prominent trees, possibly with some planting and shrubbery's. With sports facilities such as fenced off-basket ball hoops or multi use games area (MUGA) or Street Sport site. Children's play area and extensive site furniture often including youth shelter.	Fry's Hill Park Botley Park Headington Hill Park
<b>Small Park</b>	Local Park (URS Report)	To serve the immediate locality and needs. Often containing some children's play equipment, but not necessary,	John Allen Park Ridgefield Road Recreation Ground Gaisford Road Recreation Ground
<b>Formal</b>	Parks – City, Neighbourhood and Local; Playgrounds; Sports Grounds; Square / Garden; and Civic Squares.		
<b>Informal</b>	Ecological sites; Green Links; Greens and Commons; and Churchyards / Cemeteries.		
Allotments and development sites are not included within the definition of formal and informal green space provision.			



### Appendix 3: Allotment Walking Distance Maps









## Appendix 4: Percentage of the urban village area with accessibility to City, Neighbourhood and Local sites based on walking distance standards

Source: URS Oxford Green Space Study 2012 Update Report

	1 Site		2 Sites		3 Sites		4 Sites		5 Sites		6 Sites	
	Area	%	Area	%	Area	%	Area	%	Area	%	Area	%
<b>Abingdon Road = 192.44ha</b>												
City Formal	162.17	84.27%	30.28	15.73%								
City Informal	60.58	31.48%	29.32	15.24%	74.47	38.70%						
Neighbourhood Formal	75.88	39.43%	38.39	19.95%	21.20	11.02%						
Neighbourhood Informal	70.15	36.45%	54.88	28.52%	39.82	20.69%	6.66	3.46%				
Local Formal	79.89	41.51%	21.07	10.95%	4.72	2.45%	5.71	2.97%	1.81	0.94%		
Local Informal	64.62	33.58%	13.56	7.05%	1.91	0.99%	0.49	0.26%	0.17	0.09%		
<b>Barton and Sandhills = 124.30ha</b>												
City Formal	114.97	92.49%										
City Informal	26.04	20.95%	7.00	5.63%								
Neighbourhood Formal	68.19	54.86%	42.63	34.29%	1.33	1.07%						
Neighbourhood Informal												
Local Formal	51.88	41.74%	22.49	18.10%	16.62	13.37%	0.58	0.47%				
Local Informal	24.94	20.06%										
<b>Blackbird Leys = 223.8ha</b>												
City Formal	200.69	89.68%	19.95	8.91%	3.16	1.41%						
City Informal	14.69	6.56%										
Neighbourhood Formal	50.09	22.38%	93.18	41.64%	38.69	17.29%	29.73	13.28%	1.42	0.64%		
Neighbourhood Informal	117.38	52.45%										
Local Formal	67.09	29.98%	82.36	36.80%	37.23	16.64%	3.65	1.63%				
Local Informal	31.12	13.91%	18.91	8.45%								
<b>Botley Road and Binsey = 458.73ha</b>												
City Formal	85.06	18.54%	7.13	1.55%								
City Informal	239.25	52.15%	143.31	31.24%	15.12	3.30%						
Neighbourhood Formal	65.70	14.32%	86.57	18.87%	2.56	0.56%						
Neighbourhood Informal	107.62	23.46%	57.37	12.51%	6.04	1.32%						
Local Formal	53.42	11.64%	17.26	3.76%	0.88	0.15%	0.04	0.01%				
Local Informal	89.06	19.41%	32.38	7.06%	1.75	0.38%						
<b>City Centre = 320.76ha</b>												
City Formal	122.84	38.30%	136.92	42.69%	61.00	19.02%						
City Informal	199.03	62.05%	32.18	10.03%								
Neighbourhood Formal	183.69	57.27%	27.49	8.57%	3.18	0.99%						
Neighbourhood Informal	135.89	42.36%	36.44	11.36%	0.02	0.01%						
Local Formal	89.85	28.01%	57.53	17.94%	22.74	7.09%	17.71	5.52%	1.59	0.50%	0.09	0.03%
Local Informal	153.00	47.70%	39.38	12.28%	9.08	2.83%	1.32	0.41%				

<b>Cotteslowe = 154.82ha</b>		<b>1 Site</b>		<b>2 Sites</b>		<b>3 Sites</b>		<b>4 Sites</b>		<b>5 Sites</b>		<b>6 Sites</b>	
City Formal	150.12	96.96%		38.23	24.69%								
City Informal	55.85	36.07%		26.38	17.04%	46.95	30.33%	1.79	1.16%				
Neighbourhood Formal	48.32	31.21%		8.50	5.49%								
Neighbourhood Informal	77.10	49.80%		20.46	13.22%	0.04	0.03%						
Local Formal	65.32	42.19%											
Local Informal	34.78	22.47%											

<b>East Oxford = 450.07ha</b>		<b>1 Site</b>		<b>2 Sites</b>		<b>3 Sites</b>		<b>4 Sites</b>		<b>5 Sites</b>		<b>6 Sites</b>	
City Formal	75.43	16.76%		335.38	74.52%	39.27	8.72%						
City Informal	184.60	41.02%		173.26	38.50%	37.51	8.34%						
Neighbourhood Formal	168.22	37.38%		95.86	21.30%	45.48	10.10%	0.00	0.00%				
Neighbourhood Informal	169.99	37.77%		48.26	10.72%	17.58	3.91%	18.78	4.17%				
Local Formal	181.65	40.36%		82.71	18.38%	16.46	3.66%	7.55	1.68%	0.91	0.20%		
Local Informal	148.56	33.01%		35.95	7.99%	5.91	1.31%	2.01	0.45%	4.14	0.92%	2.91	0.65%

<b>Headington = 555.15ha</b>		<b>1 Site</b>		<b>2 Sites</b>		<b>3 Sites</b>		<b>4 Sites</b>		<b>5 Sites</b>		<b>6 Sites</b>	
City Formal	214.81	38.69%		298.14	53.70%	40.40	7.28%	0.04	0.01%				
City Informal	53.54	9.64%		142.20	25.62%								
Neighbourhood Formal	216.61	39.02%		139.36	25.10%	36.26	6.53%	31.01	5.59%				
Neighbourhood Informal	186.77	33.64%		45.65	8.22%	3.36	0.61%						
Local Formal	195.89	35.29%		75.04	13.52%	30.07	5.42%	12.62	2.27%	1.58	0.28%		
Local Informal	205.31	36.98%		53.43	9.62%	4.29	0.77%						

<b>Littlemore = 159.23ha</b>		<b>1 Site</b>		<b>2 Sites</b>		<b>3 Sites</b>		<b>4 Sites</b>		<b>5 Sites</b>		<b>6 Sites</b>	
City Formal	65.18	40.93%		10.90	6.84%								
City Informal	55.33	34.75%		48.92	30.72%	10.38	6.52%						
Neighbourhood Formal	22.32	14.02%		21.60	13.56%	3.82	2.40%	0.05	0.03%				
Neighbourhood Informal	20.28	12.74%		0.12	0.08%								
Local Formal	47.41	29.77%		5.37	3.37%	0.71	0.45%						
Local Informal	29.17	18.32%		6.90	4.34%	4.24	2.66%						

<b>Marston = 373.41ha</b>		<b>1 Site</b>		<b>2 Sites</b>		<b>3 Sites</b>		<b>4 Sites</b>		<b>5 Sites</b>		<b>6 Sites</b>	
City Formal	227.45	60.91%		64.97	17.40%								
City Informal	6.36	1.70%											
Neighbourhood Formal	117.14	31.37%		73.13	19.58%	23.11	6.19%	3.06	0.82%				
Neighbourhood Informal	98.83	26.47%											
Local Formal	97.86	26.21%		59.94	16.05%	4.32	1.16%	0.08	0.02%	0.13	0.04%		
Local Informal	71.47	19.14%		39.97	10.70%	7.17	1.92%						

	1 Site	2 Sites	3 Sites	4 Sites	5 Sites	6 Sites
<b>Risinghurst = 49.60ha</b>						
City Formal	47.09	94.95%				
City Informal	8.16	16.45%				
Neighbourhood Formal	39.37	79.37%	0.06	0.12%		
Neighbourhood Informal	29.70	59.89%				
Local Formal	18.46	37.22%	5.50	2.64	0.14	0.28%
Local Informal	13.88	27.98%				

	1 Site	2 Sites	3 Sites	4 Sites	5 Sites	6 Sites
<b>Rose Hill / Temple Cowley = 347.04ha</b>						
City Formal	236.14	68.04%	16.34	4.71%		
City Informal	53.23	15.34%	124.45	35.86%		
Neighbourhood Formal	161.51	46.54%	8.42	2.43%		
Neighbourhood Informal	151.24	43.58%	31.23	9.00%	3.80	1.10%
Local Formal	169.80	48.93%	9.43	2.72%	3.46	1.00%
Local Informal	91.24	26.29%	17.42	5.02%	0.11	0.03%

	1 Site	2 Sites	3 Sites	4 Sites	5 Sites	6 Sites
<b>St. Margarets = 329.11ha</b>						
City Formal	263.91	80.19%	11.23	3.41%		
City Informal	159.15	48.36%	71.31	21.67%	58.24	17.70%
Neighbourhood Formal	58.15	17.67%				
Neighbourhood Informal	62.32	18.93%	52.71	16.02%	10.57	3.21%
Local Formal	51.26	15.58%	17.20	5.23%	1.44	0.44%
Local Informal	64.68	19.65%	58.93	17.91%		

	1 Site	2 Sites	3 Sites	4 Sites	5 Sites	6 Sites
<b>Summertown = 212.62ha</b>						
City Formal	173.87	81.78%				
City Informal	75.19	35.36%	33.99	15.99%	10.25	4.82%
Neighbourhood Formal	28.11	13.22%	41.10	19.33%	1.53	0.72%
Neighbourhood Informal	34.44	16.20%	3.88	1.82%	0.60	0.28%
Local Formal	45.98	21.62%	12.05	5.67%		
Local Informal	19.86	9.34%	0.19	0.09%		

	1 Site	2 Sites	3 Sites	4 Sites	5 Sites	6 Sites
<b>Wolvercote = 266.00ha</b>						
City Formal	39.07	14.69%				
City Informal	0.14	0.05%	117.86	44.31%	148.00	55.64%
Neighbourhood Formal	6.93	2.61%				
Neighbourhood Informal	76.13	28.62%	94.76	35.62%	42.64	16.03%
Local Formal	42.46	15.96%	7.20	2.71%	19.77	7.43%
Local Informal	102.10	38.38%	42.93	16.14%	8.59	3.23%
					7.41	2.79%
						0.18
						0.07%

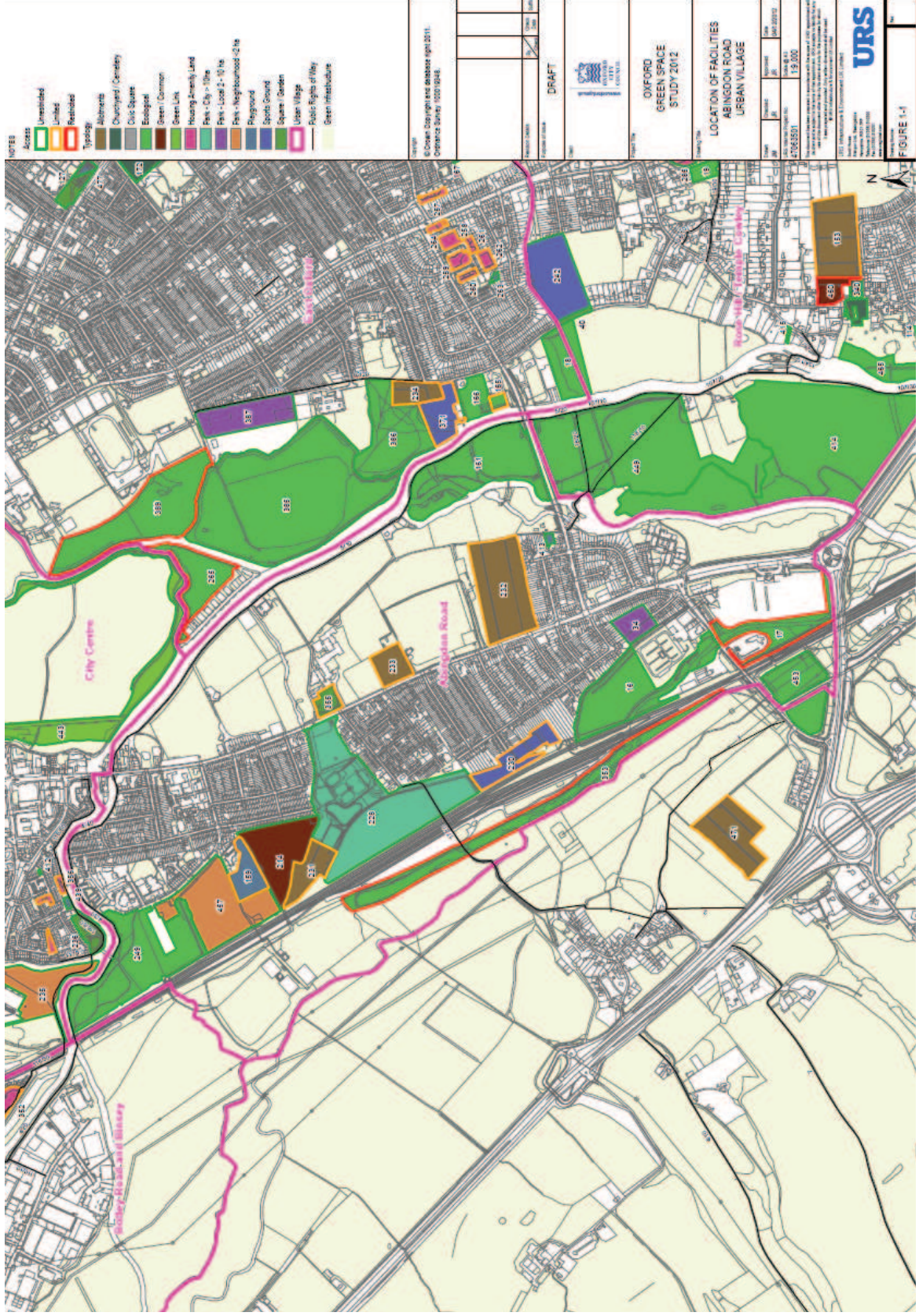


Wood Farm = 202.71ha		1 Site		2 Sites		3 Sites		4 Sites		5 Sites		6 Sites	
City Formal	76.25	37.62%	89.14	43.97%	36.13	17.83%	1.19	0.59%					
City Informal	52.31	25.81%	150.40	74.19%									
Neighbourhood Formal	33.08	16.32%											
Neighbourhood Informal	51.48	25.40%	83.10	41.00%	14.02	6.92%							
Local Formal	58.91	29.06%	41.56	20.50%	18.84	9.30%	7.60	3.75%	1.96	0.97%	0.76	0.38%	
Local Informal	47.90	23.63%	26.94	13.29%	21.95	10.83%	9.78	4.83%	3.25	1.60%			

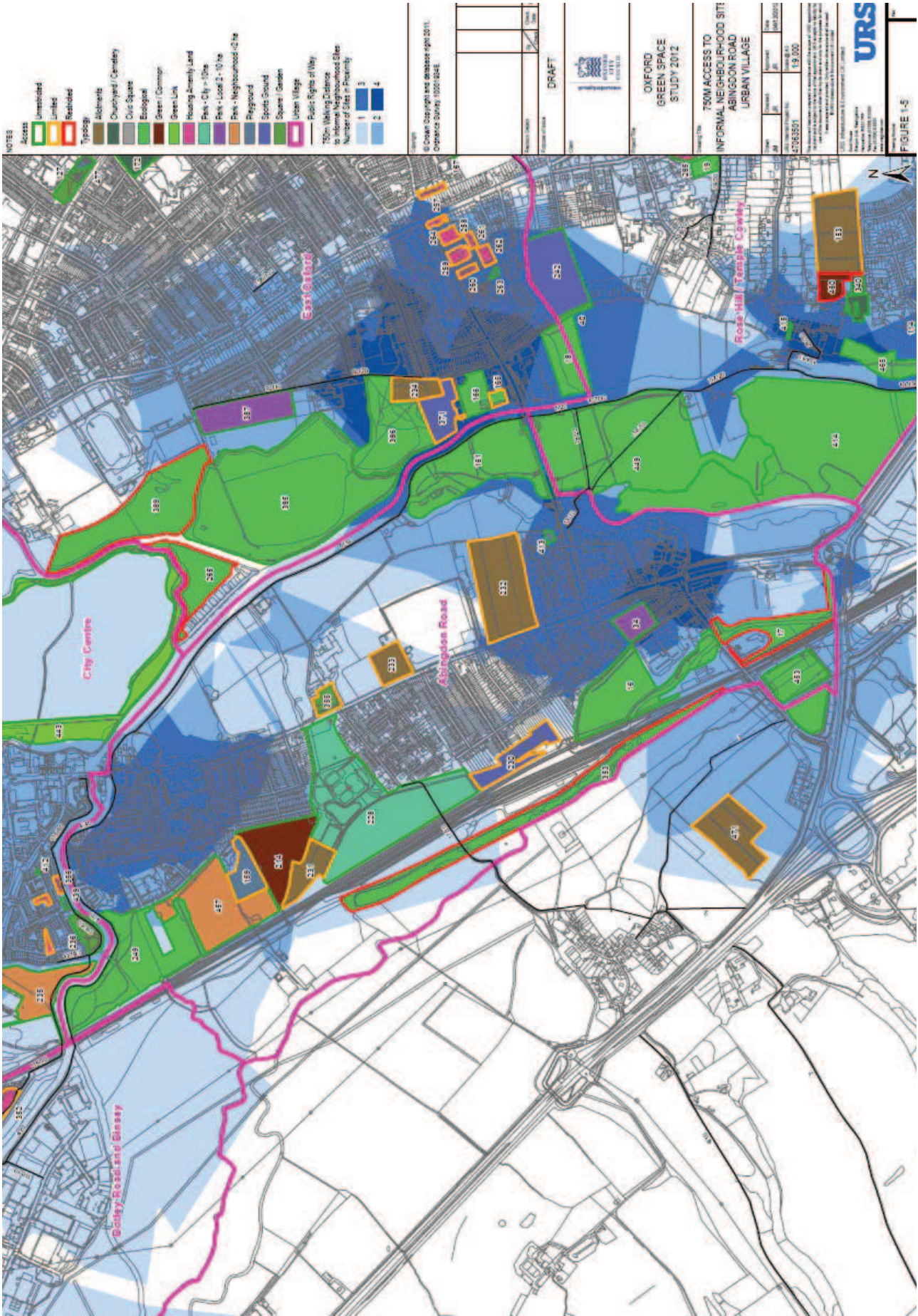
**Percentage of the City Level area with accessibility to City, Neighbourhood and Local sites based on walking distance standards**

City Level = 4,419.79ha		1 Site		2 Sites		3 Sites		4 Sites		5 Sites		6 Sites	
City Formal	2255.04	51.02%	1090.93	24.68%	196.31	4.44%	1.23	0.03%	-	-	-	-	-
City Informal	1243.44	28.13%	1112.40	25.17%	478.42	10.82%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Neighbourhood Formal	1343.31	30.39%	777.21	17.58%	232.58	5.26%	66.25	1.50%	1.42	0.03%	-	-	-
Neighbourhood Informal	1389.30	31.43%	534.16	12.09%	195.32	4.42%	59.57	1.35%	6.93	0.16%	-	-	-
Local Formal	1317.12	29.80%	575.60	13.02%	167.36	3.79%	65.44	1.48%	11.59	0.26%	0.89	0.02%	
Local Informal	1191.70	26.96%	453.79	10.27%	133.15	3.01%	23.51	0.53%	15.08	0.34%	3.09	0.07%	

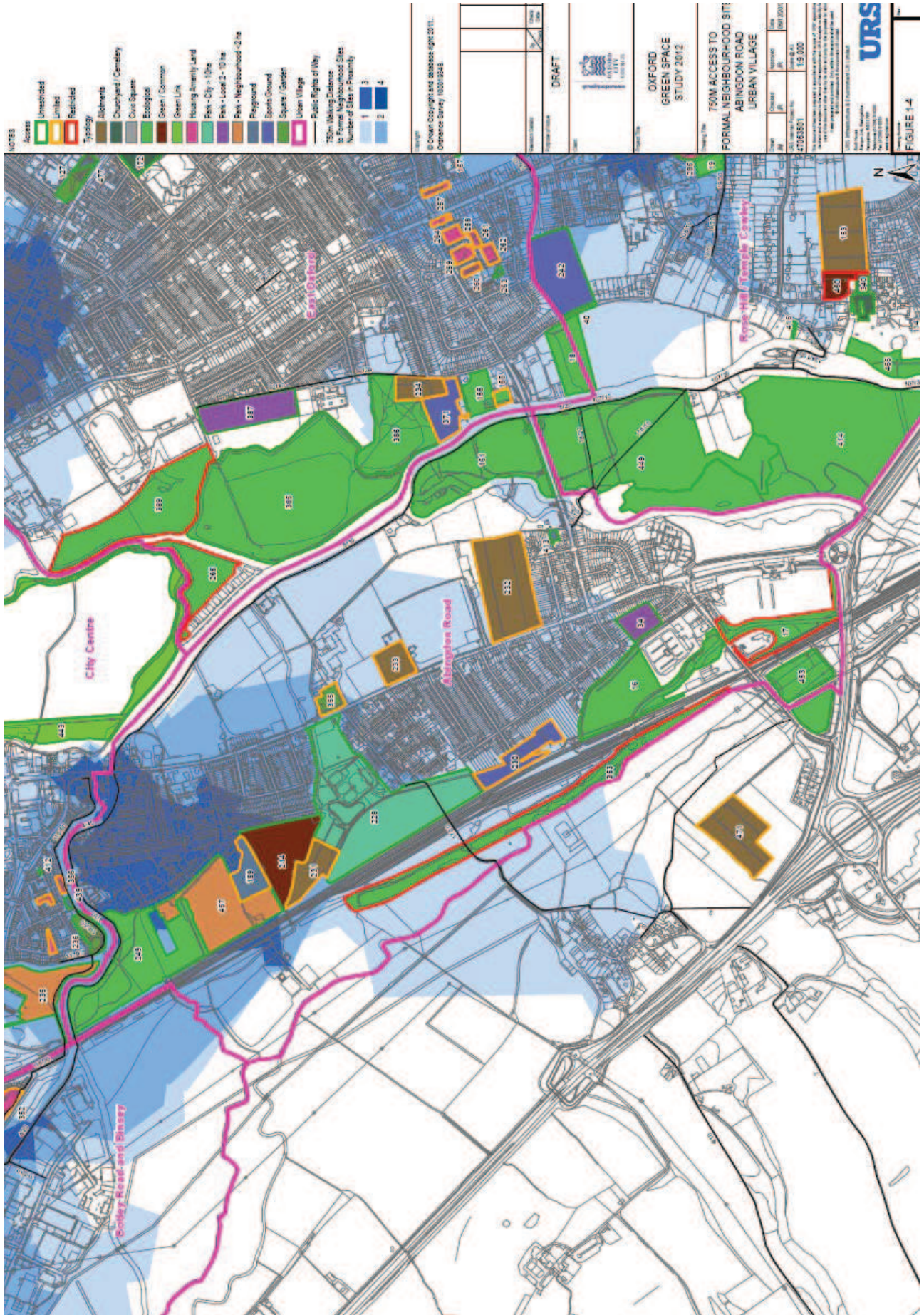
Abingdon Road Urban Village : Set of example maps to accompany data





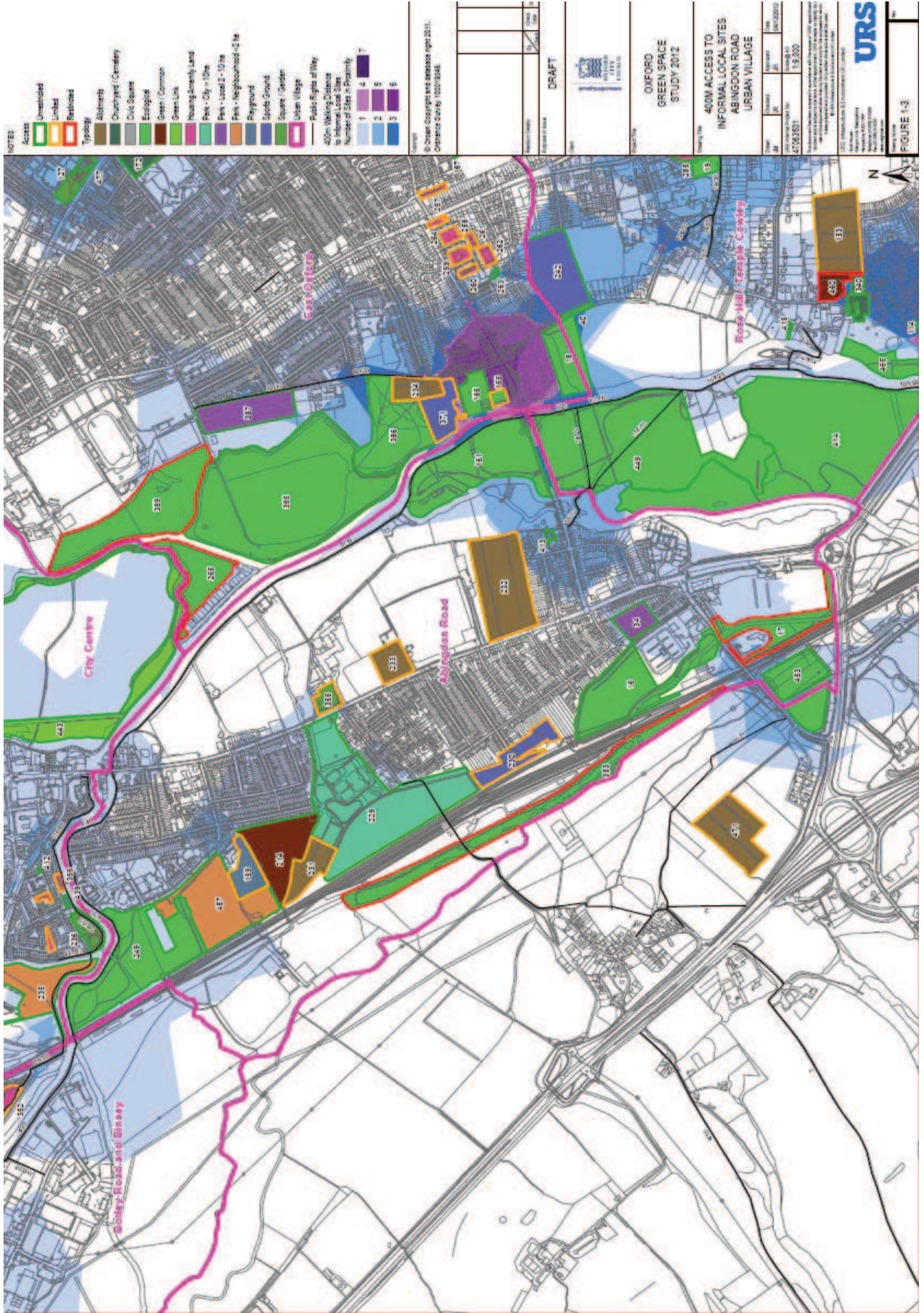




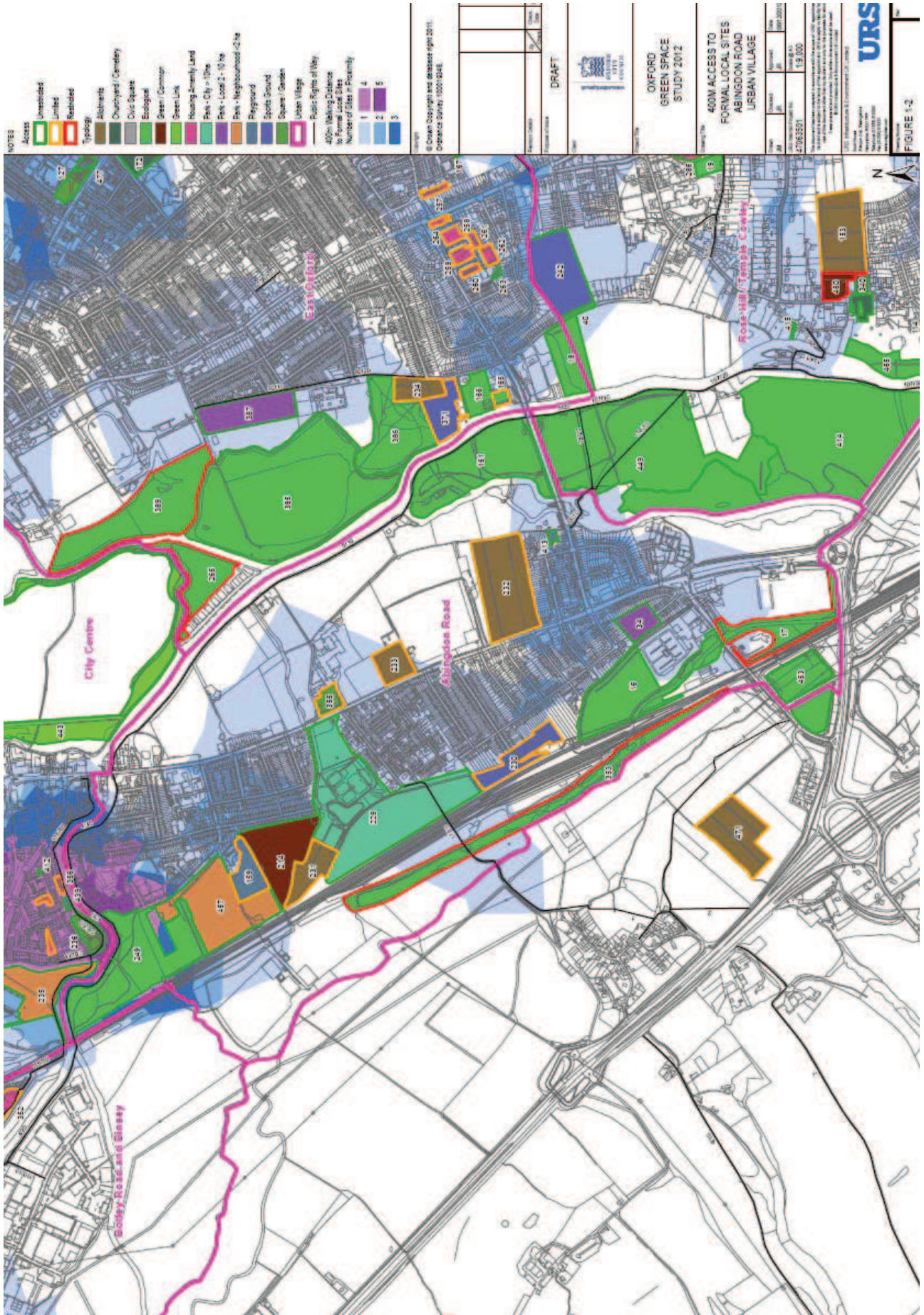


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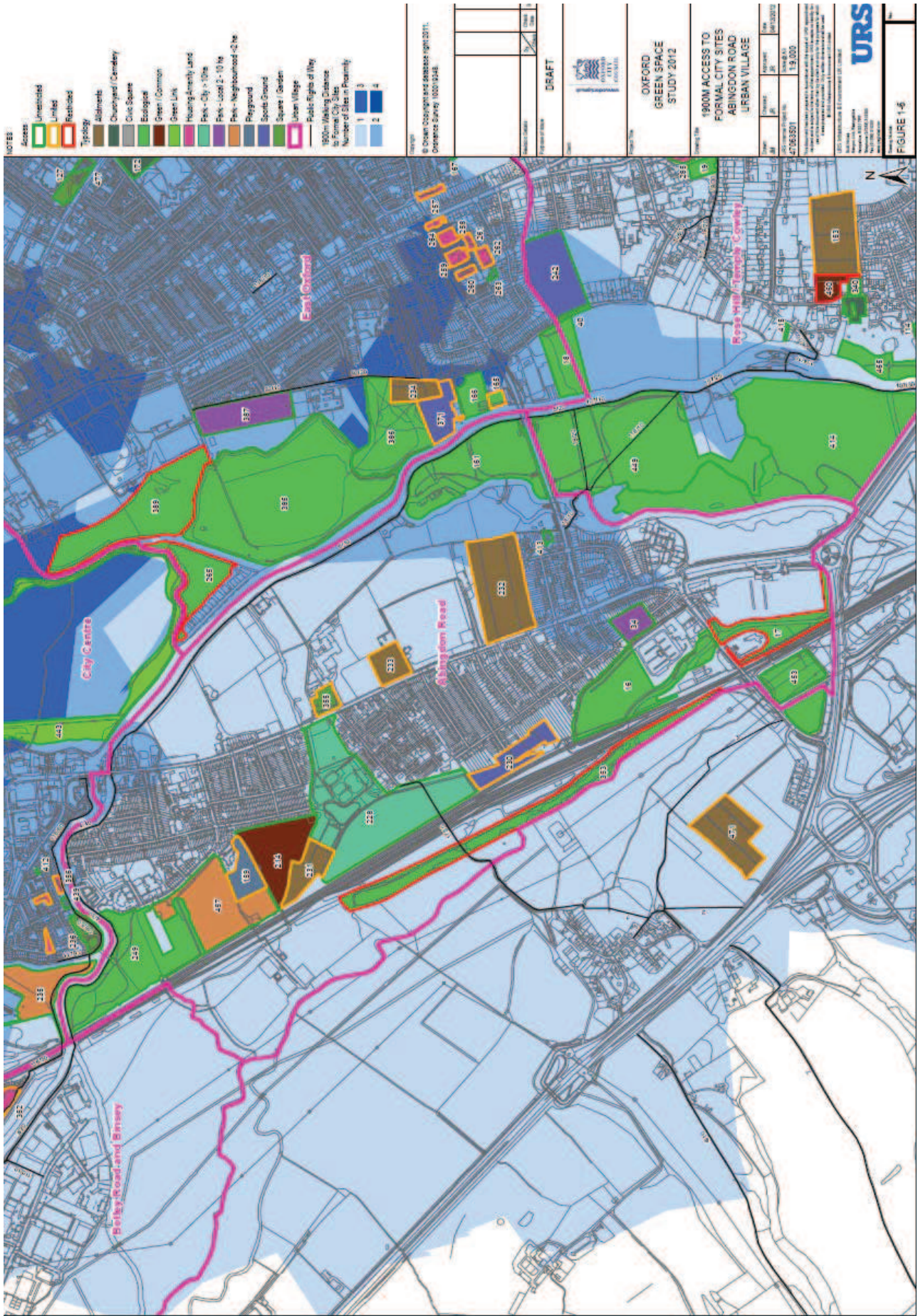












## Appendix 5

### City Leisure & Parks Parks and Open Spaces Specification Executive Summary

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This summary highlights the purpose of the Parks and Open Spaces specification and provides headline information to Officers, Councillors and the public on the standard of works that we aim to achieve.

#### 2. Purpose of the Specification

- 2.1 The specification illustrates the way in which we deliver services in the following areas; parks maintenance, outdoor sports facilities, pavilions, litter picking, litter and dog bin emptying, park patrols, cemetery management and maintenance, tree works (including planting), playground maintenance and countryside maintenance.

#### 3. Headline Standards:

- Litter and Bin Emptying
  - Bins are emptied at the same time as litter picking is undertaken. The frequency varies depending on the usage of the parks from daily in high use parks to weekly in low use parks
- Grass Cutting
  - The majority of grassed areas, termed standard in the full specification, are cut on a 10 working day cycle between late March and early November
- Sports Turf
  - Maintained to a standard suitable for amateur leagues
  - Marked out to rules of the individual sport
- Shrub Beds
  - City Parks and Green Flag Parks are maintained monthly
  - The majority of shrub beds, termed standard in the full specification, are pruned and maintained twice per annum
- Hedges
  - The majority of hedges, termed standard in the full specification, are cut twice per annum
  - Countryside hedges are cut once per annum
- Tree Maintenance
  - Tree maintenance inspections are carried out as a Parks Management function every three years
  - The tree team carry out work as required from the above inspections or inspections undertaken due to customer enquiries
- Pavilion and toilet Maintenance
  - Pavilions cleaned a minimum of once per week
  - Parks toilets cleaned daily
- Playground Maintenance
  - Weekly inspections undertaken
  - Monthly report of repair work carried from weekly inspections
  - Independent engineer checks undertaken every six months



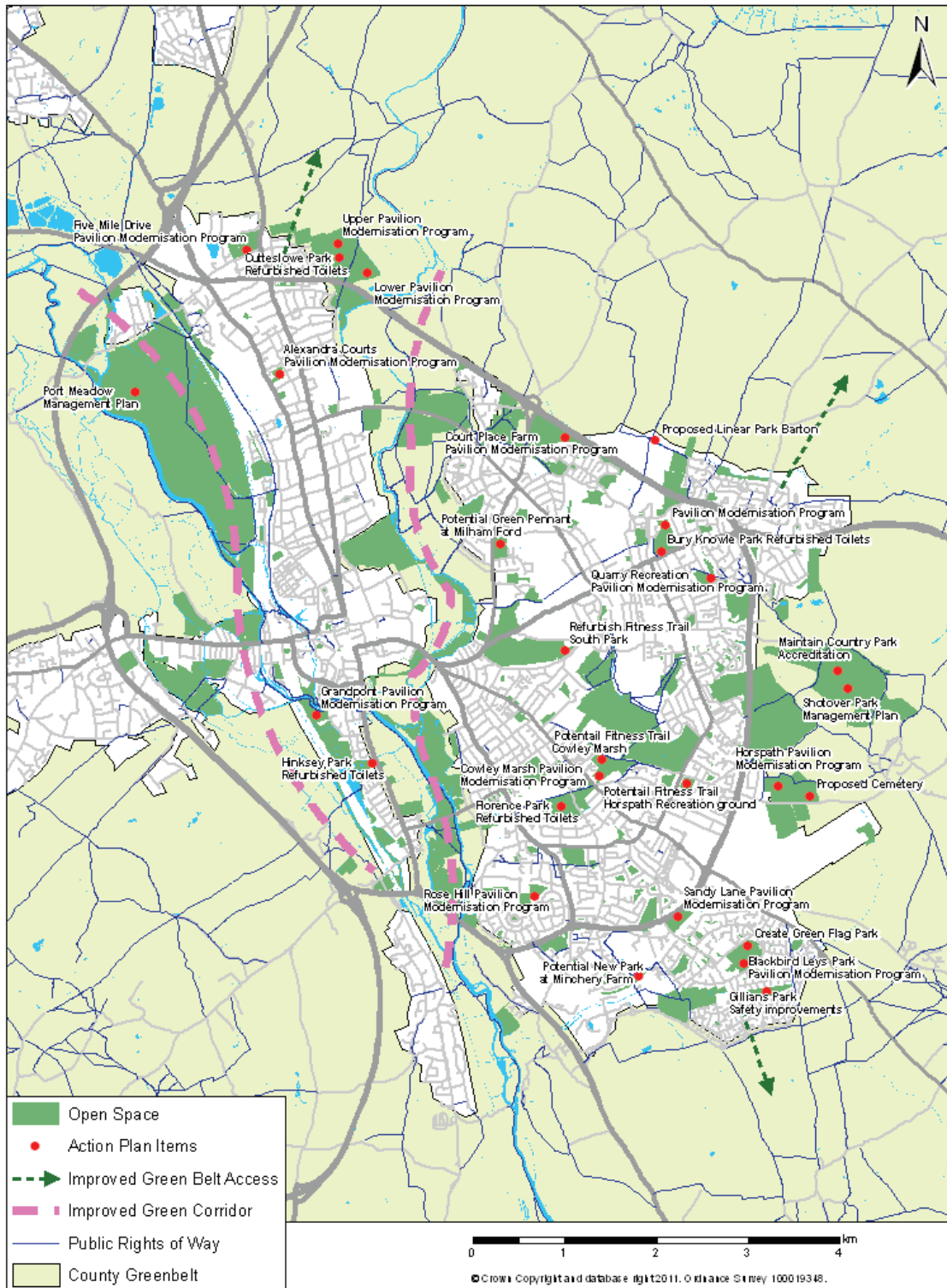
- We also offer a 24 hour out of hours service – 07711 439 090
- 3.1 The appendices show a summarised frequency table of all of the activities that are covered in detail the full service specification.
- 3.2 The specification will be reviewed on an annual basis and agreed at the Council's Direct Service Board meeting.
- 3.3 Sites are also monitored to ensure the standards in the specification are being consistently delivered.
- 3.4 This document is only a summary of the specification and the full specification should be viewed for a complete understanding of the standards we aim to achieve. A full copy of the specification is not on the website as it is a working document however it is available from [parks@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:parks@oxford.gov.uk).

Appendices:

1. Parks maintenance table of frequencies
2. Fine turf table of frequencies

## Appendix 6: Map summarising the key actions

### Action Plan Map



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