Appendix D: Green Space Strategy

A Green Space Strategy for the Scottish Borders

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE

Scottish Borders COUNCIL

Halcrow

KIT CAMPBELL ASSOCIATES

A Green Space Vision
for the Scottish Borders

*The Scottish Borders will have a network of accessible,
high quality and highly valued green spaces
creating communities and settlements to be proud of,
promoting sustainability, supporting bio-diversity
and extensively contributing to the economic,
social and environmental aspirations of the region.*

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1   Introduction

Green spaces play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life for local communities in the Borders. They improve the appearance of the many Borders towns and villages, and provide for informal recreation, sport and play. This comprehensive Green Space Strategy and action plan aims to ensure that the area achieves an appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing green spaces.

This Green Space Strategy sets out what the Council aims to do, in conjunction with its partners, to ensure protection of green spaces and sustainable provision, management and maintenance to meet the needs of existing and new communities, as well as visitors to the Borders. It provides a vision and sets directions, priorities and actions for the next fifteen years. More detailed background evidence in support of the green space strategy is set out in the *'Audit and Consultation Report (2008)'*.

1.1   The Purpose of this Green Space Strategy

The development of a Green Space Strategy offers a major opportunity to improve parks and green spaces. A recent Greenspace Scotland Report, "Greenspace Quality: a guide to assessment, planning and strategic development" emphasises the need for a more strategic approach to green space. CABE Space (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) guidance identifies the role of Green Space Strategies is to:

- ❑ Generate political and inter-departmental support for parks and green spaces and establish clear lines of responsibility;

- ❑ Develop a vision shared by politicians, officers, key partners, stakeholders and communities;

- ❑ Define the value and role of parks and green spaces in meeting corporate and community aims;

- ❑ Create a comprehensive policy framework for the protection, enhancement, accessibility and use of parks and green spaces;

- ❑ Make sure that green spaces enhance the quality and diversity of the environment, the life of local communities and promote civic pride and social inclusion;

- ❑ Ensure that the green space network meets the needs of local people, now and in the future;

- ❑ Provide a framework for resource allocation that maximises funding to support improvements from internal revenue budgets and external funding; and

- ❑ Create a framework for voluntary and community groups to participate in green space provision and management.

'Green Space Strategies - a good practice guide' CABE Space.

1.2   The Aims and Objectives of this Scottish Borders Green Space Strategy

We endorse the above views but also include the following aims and objectives for a Scottish Borders Green Space Strategy;

- To provide and enhance a strategic network of accessible, high quality green space throughout the Borders;

- To provide guidance for the effective planning and protection of open space, sport and recreational facilities which meet local needs by;

- providing appropriate green space planning policies and standards which provide clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners, which will be taken forward as part of the Development Plan;

- ensuring provision of green spaces is distributed and located appropriately within the Borders' towns and rural areas;

- promoting good green space design and management principles in all new and existing developments.

- To strengthen local community involvement and interest in the Borders' green spaces by:

  - encouraging community participation in the design, management and care of their local green spaces;

  - promoting the value of green space as a major contributor to health and social well being, via its use for recreational, educational and sporting activities;

  - ensuring green spaces are locally valued and well used community assets.

- To improve Green Space by:

  - ensuring green spaces are locally accessible, clean, attractive, well maintained, fit for purpose and safe;

  - improving the existing green space contribution to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural value of the Borders;

  - providing a sustainable approach to green space management and maintenance.

These **aims and objectives** are important with many internal and external stakeholders involved in green spaces – Planning, Estate Management, Parks and Open Spaces, Grounds Maintenance, Community Councils, Community groups, as well as other stakeholders such as Forest Enterprise, Borders Sport and Leisure Trust, and Scottish Natural Heritage

1.3   What will this Green Space Strategy Cover?

This Green Space Strategy covers the following types of accessible green space as listed below. Much of it is owned and managed by the Scottish Borders Council and Community Councils, but some areas are either privately owned or outside the control of local governments. This is based on the typology of open space in Planning Advice Note 65 (PAN65):

Parks and Gardens (PG)

These areas of land are normally enclosed, designed, managed and maintained as a public park or garden. Their primary purpose is to provide accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.

Local Amenity Green Spaces (AGS)

These are landscaped areas that are a visual amenity and/or have separate land uses e.g. major areas of grass within housing areas and business parks that are usable for informal recreation, social activities and informal play. Their primary purpose is to provide opportunities for informal recreation close to home or work, or to enhance the appearance of residential and other areas. Recreation grounds that are not consciously designed to an original layout and village greens in rural areas are also included.

Green Corridors (GC)

These are green routes/linkages including river corridors, major road verges and hedgerows connecting different areas within urban and rural areas and joining green spaces together. Their primary purpose is for walking, cycling or horse riding routes and for wildlife migration.

Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces (NGS)

These are areas of undeveloped or previously undeveloped land with residual natural habitats. Their primary purpose is for wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

Allotments and Community Gardens (ACG)

Areas of land rented for growing vegetables, fruits or flowers. Their primary purpose is to provide opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

Churchyards and Cemeteries (CC)

This category includes municipal cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds with legitimate public access. Their primary purpose is for burial of the dead and quiet contemplation, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

Civic Space (CS)

Includes squares, streets and waterfront promenades, predominantly of hard landscaping that provide a focus for pedestrian activity and civic or cultural events, and can make connections for people and for wildlife.

Play Space for Children and Young People (CYP)

This includes equipped play areas, ball courts, BMX tracks, skateboard areas and multi use games areas for children and young people. Where these are within larger parks and gardens or areas of amenity space they will be recorded as a subtype to the predominant type.

Outdoor Sports Facilities (OSF)

These are large and generally flat areas of grassland or specially designed surfaces used for designated sports e.g. playing fields, golf courses, tennis courts and bowling greens – areas which can generally be booked and whose primary purpose is for playing of sport. Where these are within parks or large recreation grounds they will be recorded as a subtype to the predominant type.

School Grounds/Playing Fields (EDUC)

These are large areas of open space associated with primary and secondary schools and are generally flat areas of grassland with a combination of playing fields, play grounds, play facilities or other areas of sport such as tennis, cricket or football. Most are inaccessible to the public but several have multi-use purposes and are used by the public after school hours and at weekends.

It should be recognised, however, that many green spaces are multi-functional and may have secondary and even further purposes or functions e.g. an Urban Park may include a play area and some semi-natural areas, as well as a sports pitch.

The following green spaces are not covered unless they are accessible to and available for use by the public:

- ❑ Large back gardens, natural and other landscape features in the countryside; and

- ❑ Private historic gardens.

This Green Space Strategy however, recognises that these areas may contribute significant and wide ranging benefits as part of the broader green infrastructure of the district, and that in some cases, where they are accessible and available for public use, they provide opportunities that meet the requirements and definition of local green space.

Plans showing the typology of green spaces for each of the principal Borders' towns are included in the Appendices document "*Audit and Consultation Report*".

1.4 Benefits of Green Space

Green space is widely accepted as offering lasting social, economic, cultural, educational, environmental and health benefits and this is endorsed by detailed research carried out by CABE Space. This is detailed further in the *'Introduction' of the 'Audit and Consultation Report (2008)'* but is summarised below.

1.4.1 Social Benefits and Opportunities

Perhaps the most obvious benefits and opportunities that green spaces provide for urban living are social – they create opportunities for people to do things, take part in events and activities or just to be.

- **Children's Play** – children's play is one of the main reasons for visiting open spaces. The importance of play for a child's development is supported by a wide range of research and is now increasingly accepted by professionals as well as ordinary people. Despite the importance of play for a child's development, there are some issues in the urban context that restrict the opportunities for play in the external environment for many children including parental anxiety about children's safety to poor provision of play facilities;

- **Passive Recreation** – walking the dog, watching your children play, wildlife, people, looking at views, reading or resting or just meeting people. Research has shown the importance of passive recreation is far more important to individuals lives than active recreation and most parks and open space users will use an open space for passive use rather than sport or events;

- **Active Recreation** – organised sport, children's play, music, events. Despite being the minority user of parks and open spaces, nationally it is estimated that up to 16% of park users will visit for active recreation alone and account for 7.5 million visitors each year;

- **Community Focus** – festivals, meeting people formally or informally. Research in recent years has confirmed the importance of parks and open spaces as a focus for the community, or as places for people to meet each other, both formally and informally. This may be through organised events which may increase the sense of community. However, it is not only large and formally organised events that are important to the community. Studies have shown that about one third of people entering parks do so on their own, one third with a friend and one third with a large group;

- **Cultural Focus** – different ethnic backgrounds have different requirements from open spaces. There may be approaches related to design and management of parks and open spaces that could be investigated that would encourage wider use of these areas by these groups;

- **Open Spaces as Educational Resources** – The benefits to children have included sensory perception, children's behaviour, outdoor learning opportunities, different patterns of play.

1.4.2 Health Benefits and Opportunities

Research shows that contact with the natural world can benefit mental and physical health. Access to a quality green environment not only benefits health in preventative terms, but speeds recovery and plays a vital part in our mental well being.

Physical inactivity has been estimated to cost the NHS about 2-3% of its total budget, according to Dr. William Bird medical advisor to the British Heart Foundation.

Keeping active greatly reduces the risk of dying from coronary heart disease, and of developing diabetes, hypertension, obesity and certain cancers and helps maintain health and independence in older adults.

1.4.3   Environmental Benefits and Opportunities

Our green spaces and street trees can ameliorate urban environments, making it feel more liveable by screening eyesores, reducing noise and absorbing harmful pollutants. They support diverse wildlife habitats in our towns, connecting people with nature close to home, school or work. The environmental benefits of urban open spaces and adjacent countryside are there for all regardless of social class, creed, ethnic background or gender.

1.4.4   Wildlife – Opportunities for Habitats and Human Experience

The Scottish Borders is surrounded by natural and semi-natural green space and areas of wildlife value and interest. This includes the many habitats and designated wildlife spaces across the Borders that are managed by the Council and its partners, including Forest Enterprise, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to improve sites for wildlife as well as accessibility, management and tourist potential.

1.4.5   Economic Value of Green Spaces

There has been more research recently between the link of having high quality green spaces and benefits to economic vitality particularly by CABE Space, SNH and the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). It is recognised that a clean attractive green environment not only gives social, recreational and health benefits to our citizens but is a vital part of attracting investments.

"Environmental enhancement not only makes places more attractive and pleasant but green space initiatives can result in community strengthening and local economic stimulation as well as improvement to local environmental quality"

"Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Green Spaces" ODPM

Bank Street Gardens, Galashiels

2 Background Research and Consultation – The Borders Context

2.1 The Character of Green Space in the Scottish Borders

The Scottish Borders' green spaces have much in common with many other very rural districts that include historic towns and extensive rural areas but are characterised by the number of historic industrial towns such as Hawick, Galashiels and Selkirk ranging from Eyemouth on the North Sea coast to Newcastleton in the extreme south and Peebles in the west of the region. Within the Region, settlements only comprise 3% of the Borders area and can be summarised as a "series of small towns surrounded by countryside".

Green space in the Scottish Borders is varied in type, form, pattern, character and design, and ranges from the formal parks of the principal towns, to local recreation grounds, allotments, play areas and sports pitches, to significant areas of semi-natural green space and the village greens and amenity spaces of the extensive number of rural settlements.

2.1.1 Galashiels and Melrose

Galashiels, including **Tweedbank**, in geographical terms, lies very much at the heart of the Borders region in the narrow valley of the Gala Water, close to its meeting with the River Tweed. Sitting on the A7, one of the main routes through the Borders, linking Edinburgh with Carlisle, Galashiels has a direct route to the other major towns in the area, such as Selkirk and Hawick to the South. Galashiels is also only a short journey by major roads from other important centres of population such as Peebles to the west and Jedburgh to the south east. **Population 14,083**.

Melrose, with the triple peaks of the Eildon Hills being the most distinctive landmark in the Borders dominates the Melrose skyline. A town steeped in history with its abbey and historic town centre, this is reflected in the character of its green space. **Population 1,671**.

2.1.2 Peebles and Innerleithen

Peebles has a long and distinguished history and is one of the Royal Burghs. The town has been physically shaped by its position in the Tweeddale Valley and also by the meeting of the Eddleston Water with the River Tweed at the heart of the town. **Population 8,159**.

Innerleithen, has grown over recent years, from its outset as a collection of crofts, to a mill town, royal retreat and now a popular tourist town. Historically, it is well known for events as well as sports and games. **Population 2,619**.

2.1.3 Hawick and Selkirk

Hawick's past can be seen to have been strongly shaped by its geographical setting, by being in border territory, particularly important in its earlier formative years, and by standing by the River Teviot and the Slitrig River. Its important sources of power in its industrial heyday, maximised the benefits of its own setting and convenient position, and has therefore helped shape its own future. The scenery and rural facilities to be found in surrounding Teviotdale are fundamental resources which ensure a healthy share of the local tourism trade. Hawick is also famous for its Rugby Club. **Population 14,801**.

Selkirk, a historic Royal Burgh, standing above the Ettrick and Yarrow valleys, provides an attractive setting for this important town. As with several of the Borders towns, it has a history of industrial development including textiles and more recently glass production. Just to the west of the town's two main tributaries of the Tweed, the Yarrow and Ettrick join and flow through the lower part of the town where much of the early industrial development had taken place. Tourism has taken more of an important role recently with the many historic landmarks, rolling hills and countryside surrounding Selkirk. **Population 5,839**.

2.1.4   Jedburgh and Kelso

Jedburgh, unlike some Border towns was not subject to expansion as a result of the industrial revolution and early attempts to introduce woollen manufacture in the 18th century were unsuccessful. By the early 19th century however, recovery from the Union had begun.

As it stands today, the town retains the same plan as it had centuries ago and is dominated by its ruined Abbey. **Population 4,136**.

Kelso lies in a fine setting at the junction of the rivers Tweed and Teviot. It is a town that can boast of having much architectural interest that offers a useful insight into its history.

To the north of the town in parkland overlooking the River Tweed stands Scotland's largest inhabited house, the magnificent Floors Castle. Kelso's town centre and square is widely recognised for its largely unspoilt beauty with much of its history still visible in its streets and buildings. Situated in a particularly scenic location, the town also sits conveniently at the junction of three important Borders routes. **Population 6,150**.

2.1.5   Eyemouth and Duns

Eyemouth, a historic town lies five miles north of the border where the mouth of the River Eye provides a natural harbour. The varied coastal front, including sandy beaches, makes a picturesque attraction which lies just off the A1, the major route linking Edinburgh with Newcastle. **Population 3,479**.

Duns, is a small historic market town in Berwickshire which retains many of its distinctive townscape characteristics. It was developed around 1545 and is based around its medieval church, market square and Cross. **Population 2,953**.

2.1.6   The Borders Countryside

The magnificent countryside surrounding all of the Borders settlements cannot be ignored. All the settlements within the Borders are small enough for countryside to be accessible, allowing everyone good access to it. Most of the towns are built around river corridors, with green corridors based on these, linking town/village with open countryside. In determining standards for natural green space, it is important to recognise the importance of the easy access to countryside as well as the green links afforded within the towns in particular. **Population 44,590**.

2.1.7   Demographic Background

The importance of demographic information is important as without it for the Borders' towns and larger villages, it is not possible to determine whether we have enough open space or even too much and where these gaps are, if any exist.

The Scottish Borders currently has a **population of 106,764**.

For the purpose of this strategy, in developing provision standards and assessing quantities of open space, we have derived a hierarchy of settlements based on population and size:-

Large settlement (10,000 – 15,000) – Hawick, Galashiels (including Tweedbank)

Medium settlement (5,000 – 10,000) – Peebles, Selkirk, Kelso

Small settlement (up to 5,000) – Melrose, Innerleithen, Jedburgh, Eyemouth, Duns, Coldstream.

Key Census Day statistics for the Scottish Borders:

- The Scottish Borders population on Census Day 2001 was 106,764, of which 48.1% was male and 51.9% female;

- The Borders population has grown steadily (almost 10%) over the last 20 years;

- The number of people aged 19 and under has dropped (-9.2%) since 1981;

- The proportion of those aged 19 or under is lower in the Borders than Scotland;

- The 10-19 age groups form a larger proportion of the population in 1981 than they do in 1991 or 2001;

- There is a notable decline (-22.3%) in the population aged 15-29 (1981-2001);

- The number of people between the ages of 30-59 has increased by nearly one-third (1981-2001);

- The retired population has increased (+12.2%) in the last twenty years;

- There is a greater percentage of people of retirement age or over in the Scottish Borders than for Scotland as a whole; and

- The 75+ age group has grown by 32.4% from 1981 to 2001.

Source: 2001 Census © Crown Copyright (KS02).

With a growing "older" population how popular are the Borders as a place to live? The last '*Quality of Life'* survey carried out in 2003 discovered the following:

- **Ranked 1st** with 89% saying 'very important' - Looking after the health and well being of local people;

- **Ranked 3rd** with 82% saying 'very important' - Providing activities and facilities for younger people;

- **Ranked 4th** with 79% saying 'very important' - Meeting the needs and interests of older People;

- **Ranked joint 6th** with 76% saying 'very important' - Making the Borders a safer place in

- which to live, work and visit;

- **Ranked 8th** with 64% saying 'very important' - Encouraging people to visit the Borders

- **Ranked 10th** with 61% saying 'very important' - Revitalising and strengthening local community life;

- **Ranked 11th** with 59% saying 'very important' - Creating town centres that people want to come to;

- **Ranked 12th** with 55% saying 'very important' - Conserving the physical environment;

- **Ranked 13th** with 51% saying 'very important' - Conserving the Borders heritage of historic buildings and townscapes; and

- **Ranked 14th** with 41% saying 'very important' - Fostering cultural life in the Borders.

(Second Quality Of Life Survey of the Borders People's Panel New Ways Planning Partnership Prepared For: New Ways Planning Partnership Prepared By: Scott Brand, mruk Ltd).

2.2   Borders Consultation

As part of the development of the Green Space Strategy, considerable consultation was carried out and is discussed in detail in the following section under "Involving Communities". More detailed information is also available in the appendices: *'Audit and Consultation Report (2008)'*.

Research in recent years by a range of investigators, in particular Scottish Natural Heritage, GreenSpace Scotland, CABE Space, GreenSpace ('*Public Parks Assessment 2001'*) and Comedia Demos ('*Park Life'* report) has confirmed the importance of parks and open spaces as a focus for the community, or as a place for people to meet each other, both formally and informally. This may be through organised events which can increase the sense of community.

However, it is not only large and formally organised events that are important to the community. National studies have shown that about one third of people entering parks do so on their own, one third with a friend and one third with a large group. Different racial groups have also been identified as having different approaches to active and passive recreation.

Considering many of these issues, it is important to "involve communities" and define green space stakeholders in developing any strategic overview for the development, management and maintenance of green space in the Scottish Borders.

2.3   Involving Communities

2.3.1   Green Spaces Stakeholders

Stakeholders are people who have an interest, so when we talk about green space, this potentially means everyone. They may use them passively (walking through them on their way to work, school or the shops), or actively (playing sport, visiting a facility there, or an event, or walking the dog), or live or work next to a green space. Green space touches most of us. With this in mind, we have carried out considerable initial consultation but recognise that ongoing work with the Green Space Strategy will require further ongoing consultation, particularly with Community Councils.

Taking into account local views is fundamental to achieving a successful green space network that people are satisfied with and feel safe using. Such an approach is very much in accordance with the advice of *'Scottish Planning Policy 11'* and *'Planning Advice Note 65'* which emphasises the importance of developing **local** provision standards, rather than the blanket application of national standards.

The local community have been engaged through the following four methods:

1.   Urban and Rural Stakeholder Consultations;

2.   Discussions with Scottish Borders Council Staff;

3.   Community Councils and Village Hall Committees; and

4.   Resident on-line consultation.

Table 2.3 – Summary of Consultation Issues (opposite)

1. Urban and Rural Stakeholder Consultation

- Several issues were raised as part of the urban/rural stakeholder consultation including comments relating to infrastructure generally and the importance of green infrastructure;
- The Borders is perceived as having a strong identity and image but it is let down by the image of many of its settlements;
- There were concerns about the need to protect views, and historic important views within the Borders with the need to strengthen tourism in the Borders;
- Cycle routes and SUSTRANS were seen as important partners but appear to be struggling for funding;
- Historic landscapes are very important and must be protected across the Borders;
- There appears to be varying standards of maintenance in different communities. Community Councils would like more say on maintenance standards;
- Better countryside access is required. Despite the abundant countryside surrounding all settlements, it is not always deemed as accessible;
- Teenagers lack facilities within the Borders with more youth workers required and skate/BMX facilities in particular;
- Signage is very poor within green spaces;
- Allotments have been lost to development over many years and there is an increase in demand in some settlements; and
- The importance of the railway being re-opened was emphasised to the green economy and green infrastructure development within the Borders.

2. Discussions with Scottish Borders Grounds Maintenance Staff

- The best aspects of green space in the Borders were considered the horticulture, trees and overall design;
- Most staff felt teenage facilities were severely lacking, but had mixed views on how well play areas were used;
- Sports pitches were considered reasonable but changing facilities were perceived as poor and needing improvement;
- Communities should also be more involved and green space should consider higher priorities to nature conservation;
- Green spaces are perceived as safe by local residents as well as highly valued but many felt there should be more green space;
- The worst issues around green spaces included dog fouling, anti-social behaviour and teenagers, litter and graffiti with vandalism; and
- Generally most staff felt the quality and quantity of green space was about right.

3. Community Councils/Stakeholders and Village Hall Committees

- The Quantity of open space within the Borders was considered "about right" with exception of changing facilities, teenage facilities and allotments. Most priorities were for teenage facilities of some kind and youth activity;
- There was variation in relation to perception in quality of open spaces, with most areas considered good/very good, with the exception of housing areas, children's play areas, teenage areas and changing pavilions.

4. On Line Consultation

- The most popular activities are hill walking (76%) wildlife observation (41%) and Rugby (20%).
- The majority of people living in the Borders think the quality of facilities in their local area and within the Borders is good to very good, with only concerns in relation to public changing facilities. Parks and Gardens are highly thought of; and
- Most respondents felt there was enough open space within the Borders with the exception of play areas, allotments and some sports facilities such as tennis courts.

2.3.2   Consultation with Young People

33% of the Scottish Borders population is made up of young people up to the age of 29, with just less than 19% under the age of 15. They are a difficult group to involve in decision making, design and management of the green spaces they use. There have been successes to date and developments continue in relation to involving young people. However more work is required to ensure the Council fully engages with young people. Their needs depend on age and level of parental dependency. Young children need access to safe green spaces closer to home though older children want to play alone or meet friends but still be relatively close to home. Older teenagers will travel quite independently within their own or an adjacent neighbourhood or simply "hang out" and be well away from other residents to avoid potential conflict.

Also, a recent study by the Heritage Lottery Fund (May 2003), shows that 86% of parents with children aged 11 or under, say that on a warm day their children would rather go to the park than sit watching a television program.

2.3.3   Consultation with Ethnic Minority Groups

The 2001 census identifies that less than 3% of the population in the Borders comes from black and ethnic minority groups with the remainder primarily white British. People from ethnic minority backgrounds face a variety of problems when accessing services. These may be through cultural differences, accessibility issues, as well as language barriers or fear of prejudice or harassment (real and perceived). An Action Plan will be developed that will look at how increased usage of open spaces by BME groups can be delivered with reference to the Black Environment Network Research, *'Ethnic Communities and Green Spaces – Guidance for Green Space Managers'*.

2.3.4   Improving Access for All

In the Borders, over 14% of the population in 2001 were economically inactive due to permanent sickness or disability. It is however important to recognise that good access benefits everyone. Disability may be physical or mental impairment and both may equally limit someone's chance to enjoy green space. Physical barriers may be gates and stiles, narrow paths, overhanging branches, lack of seating or uneven surfaces. Other barriers may be a lack of confidence to access facilities, the need for an accompanying carer, the need for transport especially in the more rural settlements or being unable to read information during or before a visit.

Further consultation to identify the specific needs of minority and disabled groups is a probable requirement as part of the implementation of the strategy as well as building on developing disabled routes and the Paths to Health Programme.

2.3.5   Consultation with Older People

As previously noted, 22% of the population are over pensionable age. Older people are a diverse and expanding group and regular users of parks and green spaces for activities such as walking dogs, relaxing or taking grandchildren to play. They are also often the ones who are most likely to fill in a questionnaire or form a Friend's Group! They are also likely to be part of the community who may feel most excluded in many remote areas of the Borders, especially where there is a lack of community facilities and transport issues.

2.3.6   "Friend's of Green Space" Groups

The Borders currently have a number of Friends Groups across the Region but also have a number of Floral Gateway groups who are involved in enhancing their local communities. The Council are keen to establish further groups in relation to specific open spaces and local communities. Friend's Groups and Floral Gateway groups are very important to parks and open spaces within the many Borders communities, as they have one common goal – to improve their local community green space. They create an important focus for the community and many successful partnerships have developed in areas where the "park" is at the heart of the community.

The support from Scottish Borders Council is essential to ensure these groups are established and supported effectively. The work to establish and support such groups will form part of an Action Plan of this Green Space Strategy.

2.3.7   Summary of Local Consultation

Any consultation exercise over such a wide and diverse area is always difficult to ensure as many views are taken into account as possible. The response for the Scottish Borders was reasonable with an excellent response in particular from Community Councils. Several key issues are highlighted below:-

- The quantity of open space is about right overall, with exceptions related to allotments, teenage facilities and changing facilities;

- The quality of open spaces is about right although there are some variations across the region. Some concerns voiced about children's play areas and housing areas as well as changing pavilions; and

- Further community involvement is desired by some groups across the region.

2.4   Policy Context and Background

The gathering of data that has been carried out in the development of this Green Space Strategy is important in setting local standards for the type, location, quantity, quality and accessibility of green spaces, helping to identify gaps in provision and to define key priorities for investment.

At a national level the key policy and guidance documents that underpin this strategy and set out clear expectations for local authorities to take a strategic approach to green space are:

- *'Scottish Planning Policy 11'*; **The key objectives of the SPP are:**

  ❑   to protect and enhance open space;

  ❑   to ensure a strategic approach to open space and other opportunities for sport and recreation by requiring local authorities to undertake an open space audit and prepare an open space strategy for their area;

  ❑   to protect and support opportunities for sport and recreation;

  ❑   to provide guidance on the quality and accessibility of open space in new developments and on providing for its long-term maintenance and management; and

  ❑   to provide guidance on planning for development of new indoor and outdoor facilities for sport and recreation.

- *'Planning Advice Note 65'*:

  ❑   the PAN encourages partnership between local authority departments with responsibility for open space, with active participation from local communities, open space users, amenity bodies, and the development industry in the achievement of quality open space. It emphasises that open space strategies are an effective way of co-ordinating policy and assessing provision and need. They should feed into the development plan process, providing the basis for informed policy, land disposal and spending decisions.

There are also a number of key local policy documents that are relevant to the Green Space Strategy. These are summarised in the Appendices document but are listed overleaf:

◼ *New Ways Partnership*

New Ways is the Scottish Borders approach to Community Planning, as specified under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The Council has the duty to initiate, facilitate and maintain the process but other bodies such as NHS Boards, Scottish Enterprise, Fire Boards, Police Boards and Chief Constables also have a duty to participate. Their aim is not only to establish close working practices with these agencies, but also to bring in other vital partners such as Borders College, VisitScotland Borders, Communities Scotland and the Voluntary Sector, with whom they have established a Compact Agreement.

◼ *New Ways Environmental Strategy*

The Scottish Borders Environmental Strategy forms part of the New Ways, the approach to Community Planning in the Scottish Borders. Its main focus is on environmental sustainability and is led by the Sustainability Support Group.

◼ *Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)*

The purpose of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is to identify areas for improvement and to deliver better outcomes for the people of the Scottish Borders and Scotland through specific commitments of the Scottish Borders Council, community planning partners and the Scottish Government.

The Agreement covers all local authority services in the Scottish Borders, including those delivered by or with non-departmental public bodies, agencies, businesses, the third sector and other partners.

The Agreement is based around and builds upon the existing Community Plan, the Council's Corporate Plan, and other plans and strategies existing within and between partner organisations.

The Scottish Borders faces a number of major challenges that will impact on service delivery and investments in infrastructure over the next few years and which inform the Single Outcome Agreement. These include:-

- ❑ Continuing investment to maintain and improve the public infrastructure (buildings, bridges, roads, parks and open spaces, flood and waste management);

- ❑ Promoting a step change in health improvement;

- ❑ Sustaining the region's small towns as viable economic, social and cultural entities;

- ❑ Accommodating development pressures arising particularly with the re-instatement of the Waverley Railway route and ensuring such development is balanced with the protection and conservation of the environment, landscapes, and the built heritage of towns and villages;

- ❑ Modernising the delivery of public services in order to maintain and enhance the quality of public services.

◼ *Scottish Borders Development Plan 2005*

The Scottish Borders Development Plan sets out the Council's approach to the development and use of land. Together with the Scottish Borders Structure Plan (approved November 2002), and the Local Plan (adopted 2008) it forms the statutory Development Plan for the Scottish Borders.

The Development Strategy for the Scottish Borders is set out in the approved Scottish Borders Structure Plan 2001-2011. The Local Plan is the main mechanism through which the strategic policies of the Structure Plan are taken forward to a detailed level. This includes the allocation of sites for development and guidance for all towns and villages in the Scottish Borders.

The Green Space Strategy is relevant to a number of other key Council strategies:

'Scottish Borders Strategy for Physical Activity, Sport and Physical and Education 2006-2011' - this strategy is the culmination of a wide range of consultations between Scottish Borders Council and key partners including NHS Borders, **sport**scotland, District Sports Councils, Borders Sport and Leisure Trust and many other key stakeholders. It seeks to deliver national and local priorities for sport through six main themes.

These, and others, are expanded within the appendices (including specifically Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy, Core Path Plan and Local Biodiversity Action Plan), but it is important to determine where the Green Space Strategy sits within this hierarchy and what the links are. These are especially important when determining regional and local priorities and especially when looking at allocation of funding. The Green Space Strategy is central to the delivery of many of these policies objectives, including health, the economy, quality of life and economic regeneration. A structure is developed below indicating the hierarchy.
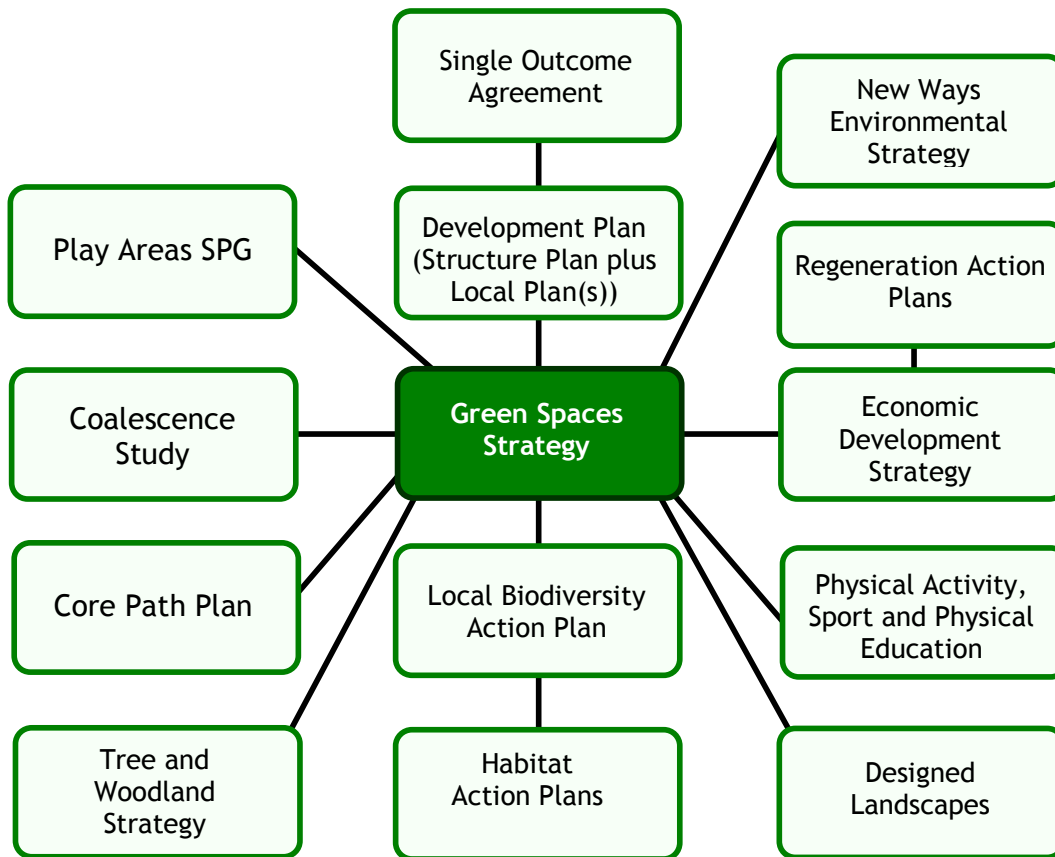
Figure 2.4 - Proposed Policy Hierarchy

Importantly however, the key messages derived from the policy review are:

- Green Space has risen up the national policy priorities in recent years, with a change in emphasis from "quantity" to "quality and accessibility" and from "Sport and Open Space" to "Open Space and Physical Activity";

- Green Space strategies should be "cross-council";

- There are wider links to issues like sustainability e.g. travel by bike;

- There is a need to raise the profile of the importance of the quality of Green Space in the Community Planning Process and to highlight its benefits;

- The quality of green space is a key indicator of liveability;

- There is an opportunity to widen the scope for developer contributions to enhancement of all green spaces and not just play areas;

- It is important that in developing an Green Space Strategy, that in terms of setting a wider framework for the strategy, the links to existing policies and strategies are determined, in particular the important ones highlighted in the policy hierarchy.

Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick

3 Our Methodology - Green Space Audits and Standards – Quality, Quantity and Accessibility

Part of the process of developing the strategy audits of the quality and value, and the quantity and accessibility of green spaces were carried out across the Borders principal towns and the rural villages in line with the advice in *PAN65*. Without a comprehensive audit, we would be unable to set new standards or determine what we had or where it was. In doing this, we used standardised audit forms and GIS analysis to undertake these audits. This process has initiated the development of appropriate local provision standards. These audits covered many issues including:

- Maintenance and Cleanliness;

- Health and Safety;

- Biodiversity;

- Facilities and Management;

- Usage and Recreational value;

- Negative factors.

3.1 Identifying and Prioritising

There is localised recognition that there needs to be some improvements to parks and open spaces in the Scottish Borders and many have been carried out to date. However, despite the enthusiasm to do so, these changes cannot all be brought about at once and action needs to be organised, prioritised, resourced and adequately funded. The quality and value audits are discussed later but it is important to acknowledge the importance of these in determining policies on green spaces. With the help of open space audit scores and a quality/value matrix that categorises spaces and places, it will be easier to identify key priorities for action.

A comprehensive audit will give:

- Clear policies for protection linked to prescribed and identified sites;

- Give specific recommendations by settlement where there are opportunities to improve accessibility and quality of green spaces;

- Clear recommendations by settlement linked to significant growth opportunities, with defined standards for quality, accessibility and quantity;

- Clear understanding through custodianship of the areas to be retained and protected;

- Criteria for sites that may lead to occasional disposal;

- Determine what additional resources are required to build on existing good practice.

3.2 Investment in Green Space

The Scottish Borders has invested funds into many parks and open spaces to date and recognises the need to continue to maintain open spaces across the Region to a high standard,(Wilton Lodge Park in Hawick is an excellent example), but this has often been opportunity driven as and when funds have become available. There is however the perception that capital investment is required across many areas of open space in the Borders, particularly in infrastructure, sports facilities, teenage facilities and children's play.

National Government has advised Local Government to undertake rigorous audits of parks and open spaces through '*PAN65'and 'SPP11'*, and to use this as a basis for future investment. This must be linked to the Local Plan and other regeneration and economic initiatives. Funding can often be theme based within strict operational areas with little direct funding for parks or open space funding. Any investment plan must take this into account and be flexible as these are often the only sources of funding that may be available. A comprehensive audit allows priorities to be determined on the ground as the Council will have the base data detailing how well or poorly an open space is doing. It allows policies to be determined in relation to improvement, re-allocation or rationalisation. It also allows the Council to assist in allocating existing and future resources, whether through Developer contributions or a funding provider.

3.3   Value for Money

One of the greatest assets from parks and open spaces is that they are freely available for everyone to use. However, development, management and maintenance costs are considerable, but in comparison to other leisure facilities, offer excellent value for money. The cost per visit per person to a public park nationally is less than 50p! Cost effective asset management is about getting the best out of available assets. Can the Council get more out of some of the district's open spaces by extending the range of facilities on offer?

The Council also needs to look at space that is under-performing, and may be surplus to requirements (low in value), or too difficult to bring up to standards. If this is the case, the Council needs to seek alternative uses. Local provision standards help to assess whether an open space is surplus to requirements and this aspect of green space provision is explored further in the section that follows.

3.4   Quality and Value Audits and Standards

Essentially a quality and value audit has three purposes:

1.   To ascertain the quality and value of each site through evaluating a range of features or characteristics as objectively and consistently as possible;

2.   To identify the features or characteristics which result in some sites being of low quality or value, to provide a focus for improvements or enhancements;

3.   To identify those sites that the Council should protect from development; those that would benefit from improvement and enhancement or those that may benefit from consideration for alternative green space uses.

Although driven partly by '*SPP11'*, the audit encompasses wider implications than land use planning and seeks to provide the basis for prioritising improvements in site management, long term development as well as maintenance.

For the purpose of this Strategy, green space has been classified based on the '*PAN65'* typology. In seeking to maximise consistency, the Kit Campbell Associates Report *'Rethinking Open Space'* recommends the use of standard forms, which have been used in the Scottish Borders audit.

Consultants were commissioned to audit over 500 sites in the Borders in Spring 2008, to record scores for the quality and value of a variety of site characteristics.

The scores provide a basis for comparing sites and also provide an overview of the present state of open space in the Borders. As such, they have provided a preliminary identification of those spaces the Council should protect through the planning system and those that are a priority for future enhancement. The matrix developed in Figure 3.4 (Pg.19) shows how this has developed under *'SPP11'* guidelines. Sites are ultimately classified as either high quality/value or low quality/value. The full results are detailed in the appendices "Audit and Consultation" Report.

The Audit and Consultation Report had three main purposes:

1. To provide an overview of the audit results;

2. To suggest draft quality standards for the various forms of green space and sport and recreation provision in the Borders and to provide benchmarks for the audit;

3. To provide details of the audit process.

Typology Maps were created from on site audits, as part of the audit process, based on the typology description in Section 1.3, determined from the '*PAN65*' typology.

The typologies for each of the principal towns and larger villages are shown in the Audit and Consultation Report. It is important to clarify that most settlements were audited in the Scottish Borders, including the principal towns and villages, but not every settlement was visited or every site audited. This was partly due to time resources but also some sites were not accessible – eg Sports Clubs and Schools.

3.4.1   Definition of Quality and Value

It is also important to define what quality and value actually mean as part of any on site audit:-

Quality relates to the range of facilities or features on a site. The quality audit covers factors such as site accessibility, safety and security, management and maintenance and the presence of planting, trees, seats, and other facilities.

Value relates to the contribution the site makes to local amenity, recreation and well being, bio-diversity, cultural heritage, community or other strategic objectives.

Sites were audited on the following basis using the '*PAN65*' typology:

- Allotments and Community Gardens (ACG);

- Play space for Children and Young People (CYP);

- Teenage facilities (CYP);

- Multi-functional Green Spaces - covering local amenity green spaces (AGS), parks and gardens (PG), churchyards and cemeteries (CC), green corridors (GC), natural and semi-natural green spaces (NGS);

- Outdoor Sports Facilities- covering sports pitches and tennis, multi-courts (OSF);

- School Grounds/Playing Fields (EDUC).

We have combined the audits of local amenity green spaces, parks and gardens, churchyards and cemeteries, natural and semi-natural green space and green corridors due to the multi-functionality of those open spaces, as well as much of the quality criteria is similar across each typology.

	High Quality / Low Value	High Quality / High Value
High Value	**Policies should aim to:** 1. Enhance the value of the current main use (primary purpose) of the green space; 2. Consider whether a different main use of the green space might increase its value; and 3. Consider a complete change of use if 1 and 2 are impossible.	The ideal for all green spaces; the planning system should seek to protect them.
Low Value	**Low Quality / Low Value** **Policies should aim to:** 1. Enhance the quality of the green space provided it is possible also to enhance the value; and 2. Consider the space surplus to requirements in terms of its current use if value cannot be improved. Consider alternative uses.	**Low Quality / High Value** **Policies should aim to:** 1. Enhance the quality of the green space and seek to protect it through the planning system.
	Low quality	High quality

Figure 3.4 – Quality/Value Matrix, as summarised by CABE Space

The result from this work now enables Scottish Borders Council:

- To rank sites across the Scottish Borders in terms of value or quality either in general or in relation to specific features or characteristics;

- To identify priorities for investment and development or changes to management and maintenance practices;

- To identify the need for developer contributions to fund the enhancement of existing provision within the vicinity of a proposed development;

- To enter the audit results into a GIS for mapping purposes.

4   Analysis of Findings – The Audit Results

4.1   The Audit Results

Full details of the **audit results** are too detailed to list within the scope of this strategy. However a **summary** follows in relation to the principal settlements:

- Galashiels;

- Melrose;

- Innerleithen;

- Hawick;

- Peebles;

- Jedburgh;

- Kelso;

- Selkirk;

- Eyemouth;

- Duns;

- Rural areas.

A series of quality and value maps in the appendices gives an excellent indication of the current performance of open spaces in the Borders. These maps are shown for each principal town in the Region and are also summarised in a series of tables.

4.1.1   Galashiels

The overall quality of open space in **Galashiels** is very high across most typologies, especially parks and gardens, pitches, and amenity green spaces with some sites scoring 100%. Children's play facilities vary depending on location but with overall maintenance to a high standard. The quality of natural green space is also very high.

Good open space examples include:

- Bank Street Gardens;

- Scott Park;

- Gala Policies;

- Eastlands Cemetery;

- Gala Bowling Club.

As expected, the value of most green spaces to the local community is generally high, but the value of play facilities to the local community based on play value and play space is low. Many of the play areas are maintained to a very high standard, but provide little in the way of exciting stimulating play through either design of the play space or choice of equipment.

4.1.2   Melrose

The overall quality of green space in **Melrose** is excellent with some high quality open spaces across the full typology range, in particular Gibson Park, Weirhill Cemetery, as well as the recently improved town centre civic space and local churchyards. The quality of some pitch provision is however of some minor concern. Gibson Park provides comprehensive sports facilities as well as good play provision. Some open spaces are however not freely accessible as are part of tourist attractions or club facilities.

The value of open space in Melrose is also high with most spaces appearing to be well used and popular with local residents and visitors alike. The lack of allotments in Melrose is also an issue.

4.1.3   Innerleithen

Open spaces in **Innerleithen** are also high in quality and value with some very good sites, in particular Innerleithen Recreation Ground, Innerleithen Cemetery, and St. Ronan's Well. The lack of allotments in Innerleithen is also noticeable. The quality of maintenance in the town is high for all typologies. A small town, the quality of the open spaces is excellent, with play facilities excellent and very good sports facilities in particular.

4.1.4   Hawick

Hawick is very similar to Galashiels with quality of green spaces very high.

The following are very impressive:

- Wilton Lodge Park;

- Volunteer Park;

- Wellogate Cemetery;

- Club sports facilities.

All are very important to the town and highly valued by the community. The new Artificial Turf Pitch at Volunteer Park is excellent as is the new civic space in the Heart of Hawick. However, the overall quality of children's play areas varies and many of them lack play stimulation and are poorly designed. There is a number of allotment sites which vary in quality, with some sites fully occupied and others having many vacant plots and appearing unkempt and under valued.

4.1.5   Peebles

The overall quality of most open spaces in **Peebles** is high with most open spaces achieving high quality due to excellent standards of maintenance.

The following are particularly impressive:

- Victoria Park;

- Hay Lodge Park;

- St. Andrew's Cemetery;

- Whitestone Park;

- The Gytes Leisure Centre.

Likewise, most open spaces are highly valued in Peebles. Play areas are maintained to a high quality but are often poor in play value and design, reflected elsewhere in the Borders. Sports facilities are also of high quality and valued by the local community.

4.1.6 Jedburgh

The overall quality of most open spaces in **Jedburgh** is high with many open spaces also highly valued. Considering the smaller number of open spaces overall, some quality issues are a minor concern in some areas of the town but overall the quality is high. Allerley Well Park, Howden Park, Bandstand area are all excellent examples with overall quality of sports provision also high. However, quality and value of play facilities is a concern. There are no allotment sites in the town.

4.1.7 Kelso

Kelso has a very high standard of open space provision across the town with maintenance standards high and some excellent examples of open space and sports facilities, in particular the parks at Bridgend and Shedden Park, as well as the sports facilities, including the artificial turf pitch on Inch Road, the rugby and tennis clubs. The quality of play facilities is also high but is also less valued due to poor design and play value, although there have been some improvements in certain locations such as Shedden Park. There is also a lack of allotments in the town.

4.1.8 Selkirk

Selkirk has a very high standard of open space provision across the town with maintenance standards high and some examples of open space and sports facilities, in particular the Recreation Ground, Victoria Park as well as the sports facilities, including the rugby and tennis clubs. The quality of play is reasonably high but is also less valued due to poor design and play value. No allotments were found in Selkirk.

4.1.9 Eyemouth

Eyemouth also has an overall high quality of open spaces particularly the River Walk and well maintained areas of amenity space within housing areas. Value however is noticeably lower than elsewhere in the Borders region with play value very low due to poorly designed play facilities. There are no allotments and lower quality sports pitches although the new High School facilities will be welcome.

4.1.10 Duns

Duns also has an overall high quality of open spaces, particularly Duns Park which provides many facilities such as bowls, tennis, pitches, children's play and formal gardens. There are no allotments in Duns.

4.1.11 Rural Areas

Across the remaining Borders settlements, there are a number of green spaces and sports facilities that reflect the quality and standards of the principal Borders Towns. Overall the quality of green space is high and in many cases exceptional with good examples in Stow, Ancrum, Broughton, Fountainhall, Greenlaw, St. Boswells, and Tweedbank. The overall quality of sports facilities and children's play is however lower in the outlying rural areas, perhaps reflecting different ownership and maintenance regimes. Most of the towns have Club facilities which are very high quality, whereas in the rural areas, these are very much community facilities maintained and owned by the community where resources are obviously more limited. This is reflected in the lower quality of many sites. Almost without exception however, bowling clubs and their facilities are excellent.

4.2 Quality Standards

The Council has an aspiration that all of the principal spaces and facilities in the Borders should be of both high quality and high value. The audit scores obviously provide comparative data on each site, but as stated, it is necessary to use an essentially arbitrary "cut off" point above which sites are classed as high quality or value and below which they are classed as low quality or value. This approach provides an initial method to assess the sites in a "broad brush" manner and underpin further policy assessments, based on the matrix shown in Figure 3.4.

The quality and value audits have detailed what the present levels of standards are in the Scottish Borders.

These standards have two main uses:

1. They provide benchmarks for the Council to assess and compare the quality of different facilities of the same type within its area as an aid when determining priorities for improvement or changes to management regimes. Given that it will not be always be possible to achieve all aspects of the standards in relation to existing provision (for example because of limited resources) quality standards are an **aspiration**. As such they should be **challenging**, but broadly **achievable**, and the Council will aim to achieve them wherever practicable.

   Any assessment of the quality of nature of existing open spaces of sport and recreation facilities needs a clear set of benchmarks, related to stated standards and, ideally some form of scoring system. It is also an important opportunity for the "**estate management and grounds maintenance system**" and the "**planning system**" to work together. The aim should be to jointly identify those open spaces or facilities which need enhancement; the form this enhancement should take; and relative priorities;

2. They set out the Councils requirements as a guide for developers on the quality of provision the Council will expect them either to provide or fund. In this context, quality standards are a requirement, although they must obviously be applied in a way which is reasonable given the specific circumstances of a proposed development.

4.3   Investment Priorities

The quality audits carried out give a clear view of how to develop our priorities. These are further developed in Sections 5 and 6. An annual **investment plan** will be drawn up based on these audits with key details showing proposed timescales, targets and funding possibilities. This will be delivered through the development of a **strategic green space network** outlining the Council's **key priorities** in regenerating its green spaces as well as identifying sites that need protection and those that could be disposed of.

4.4   Quantity Audits and Standards

The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) have for many years advocated open space provision, the most well known being the 6 acres of open space per 1000 head of population. Scottish Borders Council in the current Local Plan use NPFA standards for various typologies of open spaces. The Borders Local Plan also states:

"All new development will be expected to be of high quality in accordance with sustainability principles, designed to fit with Scottish Borders townscapes and to integrate with its landscape surroundings.... The standards will apply to all development are that: it provides open space that wherever possible, links to existing open spaces and that it is in accordance with current Council standards and incorporating as a minimum, the NPFA "Six Acre Standard". In some cases a developer contribution to wider neighbourhood or settlement provision may be appropriate, supported by appropriate arrangements for maintenance".

4.4.1   Local Standards Development

As we have already stated, current government guidance on standards of provision urges local authorities to set standards that reflect **local conditions** and **local needs**, in consultation with **local people**.

The Scottish Borders as stated already has a number of provision standards in line with the NPFA standards. These standards recommend amounts of provision per 1000 of the population.

In summary, the NPFA standards are:

- ❑ **Children's Play Space:** up to 0.8 hectares per 1000 population (includes casual or informal playing space in housing areas);
- ❑ **Outdoor Sport Space:** 1.6 hectares per 1000 population.

We have now developed a new set of quantity standards as well as accessibility/distance thresholds through work carried out by Consultants appointed by Scottish Borders Council. We have also benchmarked against other authorities elsewhere in the country who adopted new local standards based on a similar audits. These include Blyth Valley in Northumberland, Mid Sussex, and Horsham.

The Authorities benchmarked were chosen for the following reasons:

- ▨ Blyth Valley is also a large rural area with three major settlements – Cramlington, Blyth and Seaton Delaval, with smaller villages between;

- ▨ Mid Sussex District and Horsham are both large rural districts;

- ▨ All three authorities have gone through the '*audit'* process.

As we have established, in general, Scottish Borders residents consider that there is generally sufficient green space within the Region. Based on the typology maps resulting from the audit, these were mapped onto GIS which then allowed quantities of provision to be determined per settlement and provision of open space per person per settlement. The results are summarised in Table 4.4. These are important as it allows the Council to determine provision standards that are locally derived, based on local needs and a local assessment.

Gun Knowe Park, Tweedbank

Typology	G'shiels (M²)	Melrose (M²)	I'leithen (M²)	Hawick (M²)	Peebles (M²)	Jedb'gh (M²)	Kelso (M²)	Selkirk (M²)	E'mouth (M²)	Duns (M²)	Rural (M²)
Parks & Gardens	162,475	74,873	987	341,770	225,878	98,745	45,373	0	893	51,427	711,515
Local Amenity Green Spaces	83,654	1,678	9,562	206,554	89,563	51,538	185,866	138,781	152,309	28,687	523,993
Green Corridors	257,924	23,873	0	150,800	83,120	55,843	31,407	120,179	12,377	5866	137,900
Natural/Semi-Natural Green Spaces	948,297	1,834	159,706	168,294	422,585	0	227,476	0	496,196	0	207,521
Allotments & Community Gardens	10,187	0	0	43,830	13,916	0	11,109	0	0	0	7,007
Churchyards & Cemeteries	62,208	32,906	23,452	126,995	33,235	28,280	42,407	62,670	13,257	15,787	236,435
Outdoor Sports Facilities	248,014	107,077	79,355	149,245	217,100	94,955	162,302	130,203	45,465	20,284	519391
Education	13,097	0	0	46,042	0	15,212	6,244	0	0	22,658	44055
TOTAL	1797064	245188	276419	1251056	1095223	352369	718935	460786	726371	174536	2387822
Sq m per person	128	147	105	85	134	85	117	79	209	59	54

Note – Education land was included in Outdoor Sports Facilities where this was the primary use and a dual use perceived. Individual Play Areas and Civic Space are included in the TOTAL amount but not shown as a separate typology. Play areas where situated in a Park & Garden or Local Amenity Green Space are included within that typology area.

Table 4.4 - Quantity of Public Open Space in the Borders per Settlement.

NB: With reference to the table above; Forest Parks and Country Estates are not included.

4.4.2   Overview of Existing Provision

The Scottish Borders has a large quantity of green space:

We have audited educational land and have included it in this analysis as there is a degree of flexibility in how some sites could be used. Land used for education is often used for outdoor sports facilities and is in many cases dual use. Education land is publicly owned and therefore could be made accessible in required circumstances where deficiencies may also occur. Likewise there are many small areas of amenity green space on estates which are often too numerous to audit and quantify. Where there are large areas of these on an estate and they have an impact on local amenity, they have been included. Small isolated sites have therefore been excluded.

A number of issues stand out:

- Natural green spaces, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Parks and Gardens are the largest green space land uses;

- The average size of amenity green space is large in several of the major settlements, in Hawick and Eyemouth especially;

- Outdoor Sports Facilities are also a major land use, with a significant average site size within many of the towns;

- Education is not a significant land use but in most cases where present is primarily sports pitches and available for some public use. If accessible to the public, these spaces have been classified as Outdoor Sports Facilities, but if inaccessible, classed as Education.

4.5   Accessibility Audits and Distance Thresholds

There are three key factors relating to the Borders geography which has an important bearing on the formulation of distance thresholds for the area and determining which communities have "accessibility deficiencies" to different forms of provision.

The key factors are:

1. The compact nature of the main towns and larger rural settlements;

2. The relatively high degree of parochiality between them and rural areas;

3. The varying levels of multiple deprivation and related high levels of car ownership.

4.5.1   The Nature of Distance Thresholds

Distance thresholds are not hard facts, but a broad and flexible guide to the distance which people in general will be willing to travel in order to use or visit a facility or space. They are affected by many issues such as human factors (age issues) and individual circumstances and variations in external circumstances, such as physical barriers (rail and road corridors).

There are two other key points:

1. The distance that people in any particular area travel to spaces or facilities is a function of the distribution of provision, coupled with the range of factors summarised above. In an area with little provision e.g. rural areas or outlying villages, empirically established distance thresholds will be much higher than in another area with a high level of well distributed provision;

2. There is a clear difference between people's need to travel and willingness to do so. Rugby players may not be willing to travel more than a mile, for instance, to their local club, but the distance they will need to travel to take part in matches depends primarily on the geographical area covered by the league in which their team plays. The higher a player's standard of skill, the wider this area will be.

4.6   Accessibility Audit Findings

Distance thresholds were mapped using GIS to determine accessibility deficiencies for:

- Parks and Gardens;

- Natural/Semi-Natural Green Spaces;

- Local Amenity Green Spaces ;

- Outdoor Sports facilities;

- Combined Urban Parks Gardens, Natural/Semi-Natural/Amenity Green Spaces.

The many play areas in the Borders region were audited but were not mapped as a detailed play strategy is required for the Borders in relation to play provision. Allotments were generally non existent so were also not mapped. Distance thresholds were derived from local consultation on how far local people are prepared to walk to a facility as well as recognised advisory standards. The maps are found in the appendices as well as further information on how they were derived.

4.6.1   Galashiels

Parks and gardens are very accessible in Galashiels with both the Public Park and Scott Park providing facilities within the distance threshold. The North West area of the town in particular, Halliburton are however deficient in parks and gardens provision. Gun Knowe Park in Tweedbank is accessible to this extension of Galashiels as well as providing a high quality accessible park provision to parts of the main town.

Local amenity green space including the important river corridor, also provide good access to green space in Galashiels. Linked with **natural/semi-natural green space**, there are no deficiencies in provision in the town. **Outdoor sports facilities** are also well catered for particularly in relation to sports pitch provision and bowling greens.

When combined, as expected, all areas of Galashiels and Tweedbank have excellent access to green space within the town as well as good links to the outer countryside.

4.6.2   Melrose

Parks and gardens are also within access of all residents of Melrose and neighbouring Gattonside, with an excellent facility at Gibson Park.

The are small pockets of **local amenity space** in the town but these are insignificant due to the good accessibility afforded by parks and gardens as well as sports facilities.

Outdoor sports facilities are very well catered for covering all parts of Melrose and beyond.

There is no **natural/semi-natural green space** within the town, but based on the distance threshold, all parts of the town have excellent access to open countryside as well as the nearby Community woodland at Darnick, a well used local educational resource.

When combined, Melrose, Gattonside and beyond, have exceptional access to several types of green space.

4.6.3 Innerleithen

Parks and gardens are provided by St Ronans Well and as it is on the periphery of the town, is not accessible to all residents. However, Innerleithen Recreation Ground and the St Ronans Primary School, both **outdoor sports facilities** provide good overall access for the town as a whole and surrounding area.

Local amenity green space is limited to only small areas.

No **natural/semi-natural green space** sites exist within the town but excellent access exists to outer countryside for all residents.

When combined, Innerleithen is well served in relation to access to open space for all residents.

4.6.4 Hawick

Hawick has overall good access for **parks and gardens** with the impressive Wilton Lodge Park, Moat Park and smaller areas providing access for most residents. Only a small area to the North of the town lacks acess to parks and gardens but is compensated by good access to **local amenity green space** and open countryside.

Outdoor sports facilities, as expected for a sports orientated town like Hawick is well catered for, with the impressive Club facilities as well as Volunteer Park.

When combined, Hawick has complete access for green space across the whole town and beyond.

4.6.5 Peebles

Only the north part of Peebles does not have access to **parks and gardens**, but the town is dominated by impressive provision in the centre and along the river corridor with Hay Lodge Park and Victoria Park.

Local amenity green space is provided for in several of the housing areas but these are relatively insignificant across the town, made up for by excellent access to **natural and semi-natural** green space and open countryside.

Outdoor sports facilities are also easily accessible with the Gytes Centre and Whitestone Park the main provision.

When combined, Peebles has complete accessibility to some form of green space provision.

4.6.6 Jedburgh

For a small town the size of Jedburgh, there is good access to green space across the whole town with **parks and gardens** provided by Allerley Well Park and **outdoor sports facilities** provided by Howden Park and Club facilities.

Natural and semi-natural green space is available with good links to the outer countryside. When all are combined, there are no accessibility deficiencies within Jedburgh.

4.6.7 Kelso

Kelso has little provision in relation to **parks and gardens** to the north of the town but has accessibility to the south with Bridgend Park providing good access. This is more than made up for with overall good access to **natural and semi-natural green space** and **local amenity green space** as well as very good access to **outdoor sports facilities** including Club facilities.

When combined, access across the whole town is excellent.

4.6.8 Selkirk

Selkirk has no accessible formal **parks and gardens** within the town but is well catered for in relation to **outdoor sports facilities** and **natural green space**. This includes the recreation ground and the Club facilities

When combined, all residents have good access to green space.

4.6.9 Eyemouth

Eyemouth has overall, reasonable access to green space. Despite the small quantity of **parks and gardens**, it has large accessible areas of **local amenity green space** as well as the coastal headland. Access to **sports provision** is however very poor with only a small number of facilities and no sports pitch provision.

When combined, access overall is excellent.

4.6.10 Duns

Duns has good access to green space with the Duns Park providing excellent multi functional provision for the whole area.

4.6.11 Rural Areas

When assessing accessibility to green space provision within a large area like the Borders, it is essential to assess the key settlements in relation to most green space or recreational facilities. However, we have also assessed the level of accessibility of facilities in most of the smaller rural settlements.

Few of the smaller settlements have parks or gardens but are well provided for in relation to village greens, recreation grounds or a sports field. Typically, such a facility includes a play area, a kick about area and occasionally a changing facility. However, with open access to countryside and therefore natural green space accessible to most people, provision of green space is therefore excellent within walking distance thresholds in rural settlements.

In relation to access to sports facilities, driving distance thresholds are significant and access to sports pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and changing facilities becomes significant. Key sites within the towns therefore become more important in relation to accessibility, not just for town residents but also for the more rural locations.

4.7 Setting, Developing and Applying Local Provision Standards

Standards for the green space typologies (as classified in Section 1 of this Strategy and applied throughout the Strategy) consider surpluses and deficiencies in provision on the basis of quantitative, qualitative analysis and consultation undertaken. Consultation with local residents and officers of the Council, with their findings along with national recommended guidance have been used to inform the appropriate distance thresholds, which have been applied using GIS mapping to demonstrate potential surplus/deficiencies in provision. In order to set provision by standards it is important to consider any standards previously applied by the Council and through the planning framework. The standard for green space previously applied reflected the National Playing Fields Association standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population.

The location, accessibility and quality of green space is also important in ensuring that the areas are well used and appropriate to the needs of the Borders communities.

Setting distance thresholds for each type of open space for all areas is not easy to achieve, as many factors will influence travel times. The figures are based on generic average travel times. However the standards provided, provide guidance that help to identify gaps in provision and meet local needs as identified through local consultation and detailed analysis.

In developing and applying standards of provision, it is important to be clear that:

- National standards of recommended provision have been used for comparative purposes only along with benchmarking with similar authorities.

- Existing standards of provision relate to the current level of provision of a specific typology;

- Recommended standards of provision are based on local assessment and analysis, but may be the same as a national recommended standard if appropriate, and specifically where current levels of provision do not meet a nationally recommended standard as a minimum. Equally, the future recommended standard may be the existing provision, if it is particularly high, and to lose it would significantly change the natural character of the area.

It is not appropriate to set local standards in the same way for each typology; this is because the majority of people access different types of provision in different ways, for example, walking to a park or children's play area, driving to an outdoor sports facility. In addition, the way in which people choose to access different types of provision may be influenced by locational factors, for example, a high quality park may be within cycling or driving, but not walking distance in a rural area. It is also important to take into consideration the extreme rural nature of the Borders and in some cases it may be the case what the nearest facility is in relation to certain typologies, no matter what the distance!

With this in mind, we have developed a set of standards based on the settlement hierarchy described in Section 2.1.7

Large settlement (10,000 – 15,000) – Hawick, Galashiels;

Medium settlement (5,000 – 10,000) – Peebles, Selkirk, Kelso;

Small settlement (up to 5,000) – Melrose, Innerleithen, Jedburgh, Eyemouth, Duns, Coldstream.

Tweedbank countryside

4.7.1 Parks and Gardens

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** None

- **Existing Provision:**

❑ **Galashiels**	11 sq m per person	❑ **Jedburgh**	24 sq m per person
❑ **Melrose**	45 sq m per person	❑ **Kelso**	7 sq m per person
❑ **Innerleithen**	0.5 sq m per person	❑ **Selkirk**	0 sq m per person
❑ **Hawick**	23 sq m per person	❑ **Eyemouth**	0.5 sq m per person
❑ **Peebles**	28 sq m per person	❑ **Duns**	17 sq m per person
		❑ **Rural**	16 sq m per person

- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 5 sq m per person (urban and rural)

Quantity: The total quantity of provision should at least match the amount of provision required by the application of the quantity standard. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 3.6 sq m pp; Mid Sussex 2.0 sq m pp;)

- **Accessibility Standard**

  - ❑ **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 450 m

  - ❑ **Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:** Not applicable

  - ❑ **Rural Qualification:** Proximity to the two nearest strategic parks

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 900 m; Horsham 1000 m)

Accessibility: All dwellings should be within the walking distance threshold of at least one park, garden, recreation ground or a sports pitch site providing opportunities for informal recreation within the defined large, medium and small settlements. Rural villages would access the two nearest strategic parks and gardens to their settlement in any of the above settlement hierarchy.

Justification: All residents should have easy access to a park or garden. This means that accessibility is more important that quantity. Suitable designed and managed sports pitches can fulfil some of the functions of parks and recreation grounds, but there will be a need for additional space over and above that required for the pitches and support accommodation alone. Where particular forms of green space can be multifunctional – and recreation grounds generally contain a mix of several recreation opportunities – this makes the most effective use of land. This is especially relevant within rural areas where village greens, recreation grounds, sports fields are often multi functional.

Deficiencies: Consideration to be given in relation to Selkirk, Innerleithen and Eyemouth by upgrading of existing local amenity green space and outdoor sports facilities to parks status.

Application of Standard:

- **New Development:** apply either the quantity and/or accessibility standards, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency through Developer Contributions.

- **Existing Areas:** apply the accessibility standard, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency.

Section 75/Developer Contributions Policy: The Council will seek contributions from all developments which will increase the use made of parks, such as residential and office developments, based on 5 sq m per person, with contributions sought outside the settlement hierarchy towards the 2 nearest strategic parks and gardens.

Opportunities: Upgrade other typologies to parks and gardens status to improve deficiencies.

4.7.2 Local Amenity Green Space and Civic Space

▦ **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** None

▦ **Existing Provision:**

❑ **Galashiels**	6 sq m per person	❑ **Jedburgh**	12 sq m per person
❑ **Melrose**	1 sq m per person	❑ **Kelso**	30 sq m per person
❑ **Innerleithen**	4 sq m per person	❑ **Selkirk**	24 sq m per person
❑ **Hawick**	14 sq m per person	❑ **Eyemouth**	44 sq m per person
❑ **Peebles**	11 sq m per person	❑ **Duns**	10 sq m per person
		❑ **Rural**	12 sq m per person

▦ **Proposed Quantity Standard:** Not Appropriate

Quantity It is not desirable for local amenity green space to be a discrete category of provision. Instead, the Council and its partners will adopt a policy of supporting its integration into other forms of green space wherever possible. Where there is under provision of parks, local amenity green space could be upgraded to meet that deficiency. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 6.0 sq m pp; Horsham 4.0 sq m pp)

▦ **Accessibility Standard:**

❑ **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 450 m

❑ **Rural Qualification:** Walking

Benchmark: (Blyth 300 m; Mid Sussex 300 m; Horsham 350 m)

Accessibility: Every dwelling within all settlements should be within the walking distance threshold of at least one local amenity green space or public access pitch.

Justification: Accessibility is more important than quantity because accessible, high quality green spaces meet local needs better than larger, more distant sites. Most forms of green space are multi-functional and therefore serve a number of purposes, the most important of which is to "soften" and enhance the appearance of an area & provide an attractive setting for buildings and for pathways and other transport routes. When assessing whether there is adequate amenity space in an area, it is important to consider the whole of the green network. Therefore, distance thresholds for amenity green spaces can be applied to other forms of green space where they serve an amenity function.

Deficiencies: Galashiels, Melrose and Innerleithen have perceived deficiencies in Local amenity green space but these are reflected with acceptable provisions of other typologies.

Application of Standard:

▦ **New Development:** apply either the quantity and/or accessibility standards, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency through Developer Contributions.

▦ **Existing Areas:** apply the accessibility standard, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency.

Section 75/Developer Contributions Policy: The Council will seek contributions from residential developments to the enhancement of Local Amenity green space if there are deficiencies in parks and gardens, sports pitch provision, play areas and natural/semi-natural green space and to the agreed provision standards for those typologies if deemed appropriate.

Opportunities: Upgrading of Local Amenity green space to enhanced facilities where current deficiencies are identified e.g. Parks and Gardens.

4.7.3   Accessible Natural Green space

▩   **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:**   None

▩   **Existing Provision:**

❑ **Galashiels**	67 sq m per person		❑ **Jedburgh**	0 sq m per person
❑ **Melrose**	1 sq m per person		❑ **Kelso**	37 sq m per person
❑ **Innerleithen**	61 sq m per person		❑ **Selkirk**	0 sq m per person
❑ **Hawick**	11 sq m per person		❑ **Eyemouth**	142 sq m per person
❑ **Peebles**	52 sq m per person		❑ **Duns**	0 sq m per person
			❑ **Rural**	5 sq m per person

▩   **Proposed Quantity Standard:** Not Appropriate

Quantity: It is not desirable for accessible natural green space to be a discrete category of provision. Instead, the Council and its partners will adopt a policy of supporting its integration into other forms of green space wherever possible. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 20 sq m pp; Horsham 20 sq m pp)

▩   **Accessibility Standard:**

❑   **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:**   800 m

❑   **Rural Qualification:**   No – all settlements have access to NGS

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 600 m; Horsham 1000 m)

Accessibility: Every dwelling should be within 800 m of at least one accessible natural green space.

Site Size and Accessibility: All dwellings in the Scottish Borders have excellent accessibility to open countryside and natural/semi-natural green space. Well located accessible natural green space will be given a high degree of protection by Scottish Borders Council and will be protected by policies relating to nature conservation or specific nature conservation designations. These include SPP N5, Local Plan Policy NE3, SPG for Biodiversity and the Scottish Borders Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Justification: Natural green spaces offer local residents and visitors the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and to be close to nature. Sites such as community woodlands, Forest Habitat Network and potential wetland habitat networks should be easily accessible to all residents. When coupled with high quality, accessibility is more important than quantity because many smaller but higher quality sites should have a greater capacity to accommodate users than fewer larger and often lower quality ones. They should also provide a better experience for visitors.

Deficiencies: Several of the towns have deficiencies in natural green space, but have good access to outer countryside.

Application of Standard:

▩   **Existing Areas:** apply the accessibility standard, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency.

Section 75/Developer Contributions Policy: The Council will **not** ask developers to provide on site natural green spaces but seek contributions towards the enhancement of either existing natural green spaces and to increase the biodiversity of other existing green space typologies such as parks and gardens, sports pitches sites, education land and local amenity green space, particularly in the main towns. In certain cases, the Council may also ask for contributions to improving access to the outer countryside where this is deemed appropriate.

Opportunities: Improve access to outer countryside around towns.

4.7.4   Equipped Play Areas

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:**   Up to 8 sq m per person based on the NPFA standard for **play space**

- **Existing Provision:**   based on an average 500 sq m per equipped play area

  - **Galashiels**   0.8 sq m per person
  - **Melrose**   0.5 sq m per person
  - **Innerleithen**   0.5 sq m per person
  - **Hawick**   0.4 sq m per person
  - **Peebles**   0.5 sq m per person
  - **Jedburgh**   0.8 sq m per person
  - **Kelso**   0.7 sq m per person
  - **Selkirk**   0.9 sq m per person
  - **Eyemouth**   0.3 sq m per person
  - **Duns**   1.3 sq m per person

- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 0.5 sq m per person – urban and rural (based on fixed equipped play areas)

Quantity: The total quantity of provision should at least match the amount of provision required by the application of the quantity standard.

Benchmark: (Blyth 0.8 sq m pp; Mid Sussex 0.65 sq m pp; Horsham 0.5 sq m pp)

- **Accessibility Standard:**

  - **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:**   450 m
  - **Rural Qualification:**   Walking

Benchmark: (Blyth 300 m; Mid Sussex 300 m; Horsham 350 m)

Accessibility: All dwellings with more than one bedroom should be within the walking distance threshold of at least one equipped play area.

Justification: All children should be able to use play areas. These spaces also meet a valuable social need for parents and carers. Accessibility is more important than quantity because many young children will not be able to walk far to a play area.

Deficiencies: There are no significant deficiencies across the region.

Application of Standard: Because play areas do not have a fixed capacity to accommodate use, it is not possible to adopt a supply and demand approach to determine an appropriate quantity standard. Accordingly a standard has been developed from first principles based on a conceptual model and the key requirements of the recommended quality standards and distance thresholds. This is detailed in the *'Audit and Consultation Report (2008)' Section 7*.

- **New Development:** Apply the quantity standard, aiming to achieve only the minimum level of provision, but with the highest possible quality and play value. Apply the accessibility standard to improve the quality and interest, attractiveness, safety and security of existing sites with potential and value.

- **Existing Areas:** apply the accessibility standard, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency.

Section 75/Developer Contributions Policy:

In the short term, developer contributions to be utilised in improving existing play areas if within the appropriate distance threshold.

Opportunities: The region is well served by a large number of play areas but there are opportunities to improve play sites in key locations, in particular in strategic park sites where destination play facilities with youth activity areas should be developed.

4.7.5 Youth Activity Areas

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:**   None

- **Existing Provision:**   Not Known

- **Proposed Quantity Standard:**   0.3 sq m per person

Quantity: The total quantity of provision should at least match the amount of provision required by the quantity standard.

Benchmark: (Blyth 0.1 sq m pp; Mid Sussex 0.3 sq m pp; Horsham 0.2-0.4 sq m pp)

- **Accessibility Standard:**

  - **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:**   800 m

  - **Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:**   Not applicable

  - **Rural Qualification:**   Proximity to the two nearest strategic parks

Benchmark: (Blyth 600 m; Mid Sussex 600 m; Horsham 1000 m)

Accessibility: All dwellings with more than one bedroom should be within walking distance of at least one neighbourhood youth area within the defined large, medium and small settlements. Rural villages would access the two nearest youth facilities within a strategic park and garden nearest to their settlement in any of the above settlement hierarchy.

Justification: Young people tend to be a neglected group in terms of access to community infrastructure, partly because their needs can be difficult to define. Indeed, many young people are unable to give a clear answer when asked to identify the facilities they would like in their area.

However, young people have every right to "hang about" and indulge in largely harmless but sometimes noisy activities close to home, so there is a clear need to provide for them. Given the nature of youth culture and the difficulties of territorialism, it is important that young people should have a degree of choice, through access to more than one youth area within their neighbourhood.

Deficiencies: There are considerable deficiencies across the whole region.

Application of Standard: The same basic conceptual model for youth provision as for equipped play but with different parameters. This is detailed in the '*Audit and Consultation Report (2008)'* *Section 7*.

- **New Development:** apply the quantity standard, aiming to achieve only the minimum level of provision, but with the highest possible quality and youth and activity value. Apply the accessibility standard to improve the quality and interest, attractiveness, safety and security of existing sites with potential and value.

- **Existing Areas:** apply the accessibility standard, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency.

Section 75/Developer Contributions Policy:

In the short term, developer contributions to be utilised in improving existing youth activity areas if within the appropriate distance threshold.

Opportunities: Development of youth sites and activity areas in strategic parks.

4.7.6   Allotments

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:**   None

- **Existing Provision:**

❑ **Galashiels**	1 sq m per person	❑ **Jedburgh**	0 sq m per person
❑ **Melrose**	0 sq m per person	❑ **Kelso**	2 sq m per person
❑ **Innerleithen**	0 sq m per person	❑ **Selkirk**	0 sq m per person
❑ **Hawick**	3 sq m per person	❑ **Eyemouth**	0 sq m per person
❑ **Peebles**	2 sq m per person	❑ **Duns**	0 sq m per person
		❑ **Rural**	0.1 sq m per person

- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 3 sq m per person (urban); 2 sq m per person (rural)

Quantity: The amount of provision of allotments should at least match the amount of provision required by the application of the quantity standard. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 4.4 sq m per person; Mid Sussex 1.75 sq m per person; Horsham 1.25 sq m per person)

- **Accessibility Standard:**

  - ❑ **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:**   600 m

  - ❑ **Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:**   4.5 km

  - ❑ **Rural Qualification:**   Walking

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 900 m; Horsham 1000 m)

Accessibility: All dwellings should be within walking distance threshold of at least one allotment site within the settlement hierarchy and driving distance within the rural areas.

Justification: The main need for allotments is in the principal towns in the Borders where gardens linked to dwellings tend to be very small, shared spaces or almost non-existent.

Deficiencies: All the principal towns have accessibility deficiencies across the Borders with few sites and in some cases non-existent. Many of the rural areas and outlying villages also have no allotment sites.

Application of Standard:

- **New Development:** apply the quantity standard, aiming to achieve only the minimum level of provision, but with the highest possible quality and value. Apply the accessibility standard to improve the quality and interest, attractiveness, safety and security of existing sites with potential and value.

- **Existing Areas:** apply the accessibility standard, together with the quality standard. If this test is not satisfied by existing provision, the Council's priority will be to remedy the deficiency.

Section 75/Developer Contributions Policy: In the short term, developer contributions to be utilised in improving existing allotment areas if within the appropriate distance threshold.

Opportunities: Upgrading of existing allotment sites in all the major towns, with potential further provision across the Borders generally.

4.7.7 Sports Pitches

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** NPFA six acre standard

- **Existing Provision:** (does not include School Playing Fields, as most are inaccessible)

❑	**Galashiels**	18 sq m per person	❑	**Jedburgh**	23 sq m per person
❑	**Melrose**	64 sq m per person	❑	**Kelso**	26 sq m per person
❑	**Innerleithen**	36 sq m per person	❑	**Selkirk**	22 sq m per person
❑	**Hawick**	11 sq m per person	❑	**Eyemouth**	13 sq m per person
❑	**Peebles**	30 sq m per person	❑	**Duns**	7 sq m per person
			❑	**Rural**	12 sq m per person

- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 15 sq m per person (urban and rural)

Quantity: The total quantity of grass and artificial pitches available to community based clubs and teams should at least match the amount of provision required by the application of the quantity standards. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 10 sq m pp; Mid Sussex 12.25 sq m pp; Horsham 14 sq m pp)

- **Accessibility Standard:**

❑	**Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:**	850 m
❑	**Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:**	Not applicable
❑	**Rural Qualification:**	Proximity to the 2 nearest strategic sites

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 900 m; Horsham 1000 m)

Accessibility: All dwellings should be within walking distance of at least one playing pitch within the defined large, medium and small settlements. Rural villages would access the two nearest sports facilities to their settlement in any of the above settlement hierarchy.

Justification: All residents should have the opportunity to take part in the pitch sport of their choice. In the first instance this requires enough pitches with accessibility being secondary as the competitive nature of sports pitches means that participants will not always use the pitch nearest to their home. In addition, roughly half of all matches are played "away". Cricket and rugby teams tend to draw their membership from a wider area than football teams and many football pitches are also used by young people for mini-soccer or casually for "kickabouts". Especially in the more built-up areas, there is a need for football pitches to be more accessible than cricket or rugby pitches.

Deficiencies: As accessibility is secondary, quantity provision standards have shown there to be particular deficiencies in Eyemouth and in Hawick as well as the rural area.

Application of Standard: Ideally, the Borders should have its pitches on a limited number of sites within the settlement hierarchy as this will maximise economies of scale in development, management and maintenance costs. In particular, the Council will seek to improve existing facilities and increase facilities in Hawick and Eyemouth.

- **New Development:** developers will not be required to make any on-site provision but instead will require them to contribute to off-site provision on a region-wide basis.

- **Existing Areas:** The Council will oppose building development on playing fields in all but exceptional cases, whether the land is public or private or educational use. It will do so because the loss of any part of a playing field may represent the irretrievable loss of an opportunity for participation in pitch sports.

Section 75/Developer Contributions Policy: The Council will seek contributions from all developments which will increase the use made of sports pitches, such as residential and office developments, based on the identified quantity standard.

Opportunities: Enhancement of facilities across the District with emphasis on further provision in Eyemouth, Duns and Hawick and key strategic sites across the region.

5 The Strategic & Local Green Space Network – Policies and Aspirations

Local consultation has summarised and concluded that overall the quality, accessibility and quantity of green space in the Borders is largely very good, well maintained and valued by our local communities. However, consultation also raised a number of concerns and issues such as deficiencies in some typologies of open space and the need for continuous improvement and long term investment. The policies we have derived in Section 6 for the Council and our partners to aim for, leading to a more detailed action plan will assist us in this task. However, we need to be more specific as to what our priorities are and what specifically we need to concentrate on. With the resources we have, the capacity to draw down funding from within the Council, externally and from developers, we need to prioritise accordingly. We have therefore proposed a "**Strategic and Local Green Space Network**", the sites which are most important to us, which need to be **protected** as well as continually **enhanced** through capital **investment** as well as enhanced management and maintenance. Many of these sites are already high quality through excellent maintenance, but as prescribed, many require long term management plans and long term investment to improve their long term futures and development. This will allow us and our partners to deliver our Green Space Vision and Policy Aspiration.

5.1 Our Vision

"The Scottish Borders will have a network of accessible, high quality and highly valued green spaces creating communities and settlements to be proud of, promoting sustainability, supporting bio-diversity and extensively contributing to the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the region".

5.2 Delivering Change

The Council can now choose to continue to manage within existing resources in many areas or to improve open spaces and facilities proactively. This Green Space Strategy emphasises the need to improve proactively. Community involvement in a strategic network of green spaces and in improving sites is critical. Although involving the community can require increased resources, these efforts should result in lower maintenance costs through an increase in local pride and less vandalism/abuse through peer pressure. The Strategic and Local Green Space Network as outlined below in Table 5.3 is the immediate priority for the Council with Developer Contributions and funding to be targeted towards these sites. The new provision standards can now be used to determine whether new developments require new on site facilities and/or off site contributions towards existing open space facilities within the Strategic and Local Green Space Network. The audit has confirmed that there is generally sufficient open space provision across the Borders and that the overall priority should be existing site enhancement, based on this new strategic network.

Delivering this change will be through delivering the Councils existing corporate aims which are summarised below and through a number of policy development areas and SMART objectives and ultimately through a series of Action Plans detailed in Section 8, with short, medium and long term targets, working with strategic partners, local communities and key stakeholders. Not all may be achievable, but a vision has now been created and targets and opportunities identified.

Corporate Aims

- Strong, Inclusive and Safe Communities;
- A Robust and Dynamic Economy;
- A Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment;
- Improved Health and Well Being;
- Learning for Everyone;
- A Well Connected Borders.

Policy Development Areas

We have therefore proposed a number of key policy development areas which embrace the above issues and are developed in detail in Section 7 - Action Plan and provide the necessary guidance in taking the strategy forward.

1. The Council recognises the importance and value of all its green spaces to the whole Borders' community and will seek to protect and enhance them through the planning system;

2. The Council through partnership working with private and public organisations, as well as community councils, will seek funding opportunities to sustainably manage and enhance publicly accessible green spaces in the interests of the whole community;

3. The Council will work in conjunction with partners, users, and stakeholders and involve them in the "decision making" process relating to the use, development and management of the Borders' green spaces;

4. The Council will work in partnership with local people and other agencies in order to provide cleaner, safer and greener environments. These will be publicly accessible and socially inclusive, catering for a wide range of people, ages and backgrounds for their enjoyment and safe use without the fear of crime;

5. The Council will encourage the use of the Borders' green spaces as important centres of education as well as places to celebrate our cultural diversity;

6. The Council will encourage multifunctional use of green space to provide a balanced provision for play, sports, recreation and biodiversity, which will promote the health, enjoyment and well being of the Borders' local communities;

7. The Council will protect and enhance the Borders' biodiversity within its open spaces.

Objectives

- To provide and enhance a strategic network of accessible, high quality green space throughout the Borders;

- To provide guidance for the effective planning and protection of open space, sport and recreational facilities which meet local needs by;

  - providing appropriate green space planning policies and standards which provide clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners, which will be taken forward as part of the Development Plan;

  - ensuring provision of green spaces is distributed and located appropriately within the Borders' towns and rural areas;

  - promoting good green space design and management principles in all new and existing developments.

- To strengthen local community involvement and interest in the Borders' green spaces by;

  - encouraging community participation in the design, management and care of their local green spaces;

  - promoting the value of green space as a major contributor to health and social well being, via its use for recreational, educational and sporting activities;

  - ensuring green spaces are locally valued and well used community assets.

- To improve Green Space by;

  - ensuring green spaces are locally accessible, clean, attractive, well maintained, fit for purpose and safe;

  - improving the existing green space contribution to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural value of the Borders;

  - providing a sustainable approach to green space management and maintenance.

The Council have also defined the following activities and skills required to deliver this programme which are wide-ranging and would include the following:-

- Community Development and partnership building;

- Promoting and publicising;

- Landscape management;

- Landscape design;

- Tree management/arboriculture;

- Parks Development;

- Activity development and programming;

- Events Management;

- Nature Conservation / biodiversity;

- Countryside access and "land assembly";

- Horticulture;

- Planning;

- Landscape Planning;

- Funding applications / grant aid bids.

Table 5.3 Strategic Green Space Network – List of Sites (right)

5.3   The Strategic District-Wide Network (based on the following)

Strategic Parks;	
Henderson Park - Coldstream	Bridgend Park – Kelso
Denholm Green - Denholm	Shedden Park – Kelso
Duns Park - Duns	Gibson Park – Melrose
Scott Park – Galashiels	Tweed Green – Peebles
Public Park – Galashiels	Victoria Park – Peebles
Wilton Lodge Park – Hawick	Hay Lodge Park – Peebles
Moat Park – Hawick	Gun Knowe Park - Tweedbank
Allerley Well Park – Jedburgh	Bank St. Gardens, Galashiels;
All Green Corridors	
All Countryside Sites/Forest Parks;	
Sports Facilities at:	
All Borders Bowling Greens	Howden Park, Jedburgh
All Borders Tennis Facilities	Lothian Park, Jedburgh
All local Rugby and Football Clubs	Innerleithen Recreation Ground
Tweedbank Sports Centre	Victoria Park pitches, Innerleithen
Selkirk Recreation Ground	Volunteer Park, Hawick
South Port Recreation Area, Selkirk	Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick
Gytes Leisure Centre, Peebles	Tweed Road, Galashiels
Hay Lodge Park, Peebles	Galashiels Academy
Victoria Park, Peebles	Fountainhall Playing Fields
Whitestone Park, Peebles	Eddleston Playing Fields
Gibson Park, Melrose	Newcastleton Polysport
Shedden Park, Kelso	Recreation Ground, Coldstream
Edinburgh Road, Kelso	Broughton Playing Fields, Broughton
Broomlands, Kelso	All village playing fields
Artificial Turf Pitches; and	
Play and Youth Facilities.	
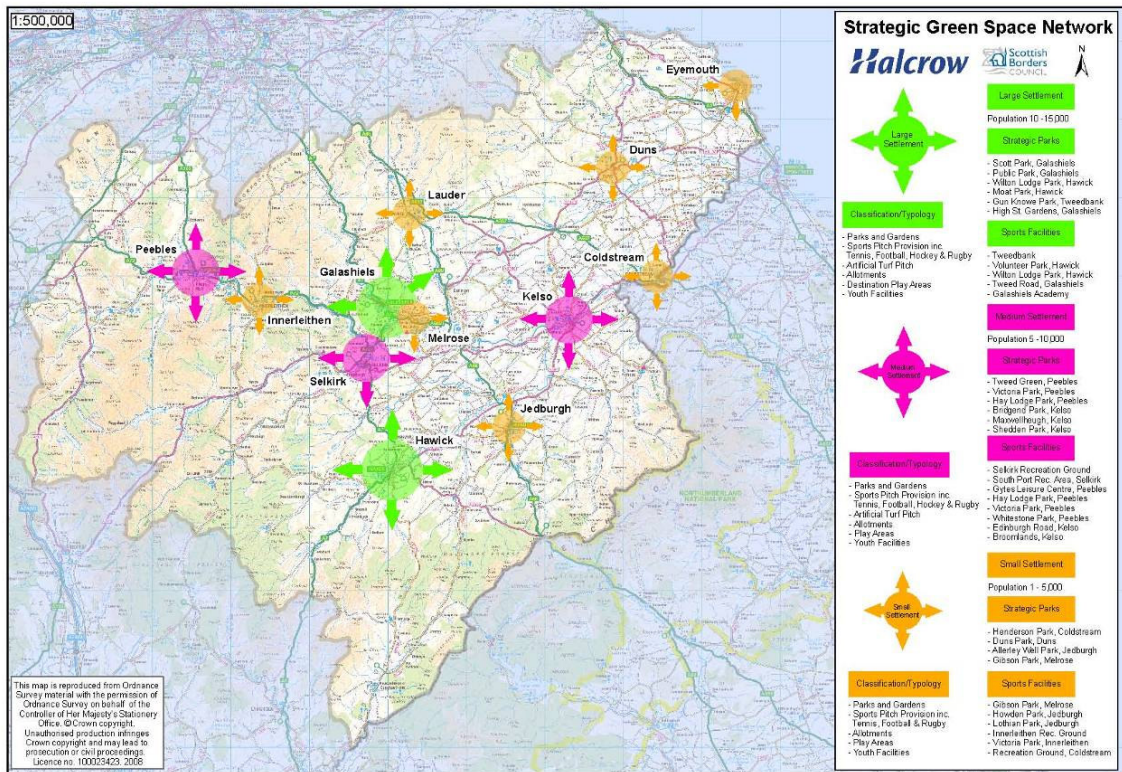
5.4 The Strategic District-Wide Network Map

The quality of all the strategic and local green space network sites should meet the quality standards requirements in all respects:

> ❑ The priorities are to enhance the quality of the sites in the strategic and local green space network;
>
> ❑ The priorities are to improve the accessibility of the sites in the strategic and local network;
>
> ❑ The priorities are to protect through the planning system all the sites in the strategic and local network;
>
> ❑ The priorities are to increase the provision where there are currently defined deficiencies through the planning system;
>
> ❑ The priorities are to increase community and stakeholder involvement across the Borders in all aspects of green space management, maintenance and development.

5.5 The Scottish Borders Provision Level

The spaces that the Council will seek to upgrade and enhance to make High Quality/High Value are included in the proposed strategic and local green space network in Table 5.3. We have however also have identified the specific areas where the provision of open space is currently insufficient for the key settlements as well as a number of sites that require review based on their current *low quality and low value* status.

5.6   Opportunities and Sites for Review

Less than 30 sites across the Borders are currently classed as low quality and of low value. There is no specific pattern to location or typology and include sites in Hawick, Earlston, Eyemouth and Peebles and include allotments, play facilities as well as amenity green space. The Council will review those spaces that have been classed as being genuinely low quality and low value, in the light of wider planning policies.

The policy on low quality low value sites is as follows:

- Enhance the quality of the green space provided it is possible also to enhance the value;

- Consider the space surplus to requirements in terms of its current use if value cannot be improved. Consider alternative uses.

Along with the above criteria, we will also include the following:

- Determine any other typology deficiencies in the area within distance thresholds;

- Determine how poor the quality and value is and whether enhancement is realistic;

- Determine future long term investment opportunities of each site;

- Determine local community "value" by localised consultation;

- Opportunities for enhancement of nearby green space facilities within the green space network.

5.7   The "Local" Green Space Network – Settlement Action Plans

The development of a strategic and local green space network through settlement Action Plans are detailed below and are only a draft for consultation and indicate **aspirations** for each settlement. It is in response to consultation to the Green Space Strategy and consultation work, meetings held with community representatives, colleagues who work within green space and others who have been involved, directly and indirectly.

It forms a basis of what we as a Council, our partners, stakeholders and local communities need to do to:

- **Improve the quality** of our local green space;

- **Improve the provision** of our local green space;

- **Protect** our local green space;

- **Involve people** in our local green spaces.

5.7.1 Galashiels

Issues

- **Provision deficiencies** – allotments only;

- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities;

- **Quality deficiencies** – none.

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities:

- Scott Park;

- Public Park;

- Bank St. Gardens, Galashiels;

- Gun Knowe Park;

- Tweedbank Sports Centre;

- Tweed Road;

- Galashiels Academy;

- Club Facilities including Rugby and Bowling;

- Play Areas.

Aspirations

- Enhancement of Scott Park and Public Park which need investment in facilities;

- Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities, and Tweedbank Sports Centre;

- Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including Scott Park and Public Park;

- Introduction of destination play areas in key locations including Scott Park and Public Park with an overall reduction in the number of small local areas of play that provide little in the way of play value. This is to be developed further through detailed play study;

- Development of allotment sites based on local demand.

5.7.2 Melrose

Issue

- **Provision deficiencies** – allotments only and natural green space;

- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities;

- **Quality deficiencies** – none.

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Gibson Park;

- Club Facilities including Rugby and Bowling;

- Play Areas.

Aspirations

- Enhancement of Gibson Park which need investment in facilities;

- Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities, and Gibson Park sports facilities;

- Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including Gibson Park;

- Introduction of an Artificial Turf Pitch in the town;

- Development of an allotment site based on local demand;

- Improved access to the wider countryside.

Melrose Bowling Club

5.7.3   Innerleithen

▦   **Issue**

- ❑   **Provision deficiencies** – parks & gardens and allotments;

- ❑   **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities;

- ❑   **Quality deficiencies** – none.

▦   **Strategic Green Space Network Priorities**

- ❑   Innerleithen Recreation Ground;

- ❑   Victoria Park pitches;

- ❑   Club Facilities including Rugby and Bowling;

- ❑   Play Areas.

▦   **Aspirations**

- ❑   Enhancement of Innerleithen Recreation Ground which needs investment in facilities and upgrading to park and garden status;

- ❑   Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities;

- ❑   Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including the Recreation Ground;

- ❑   Introduction of an Artificial Turf Pitch;

- ❑   Development of allotment site based on local demand;

- ❑   Diversification of existing sites introducing biodiversity value as well as continuing to improve the access to outer countryside.

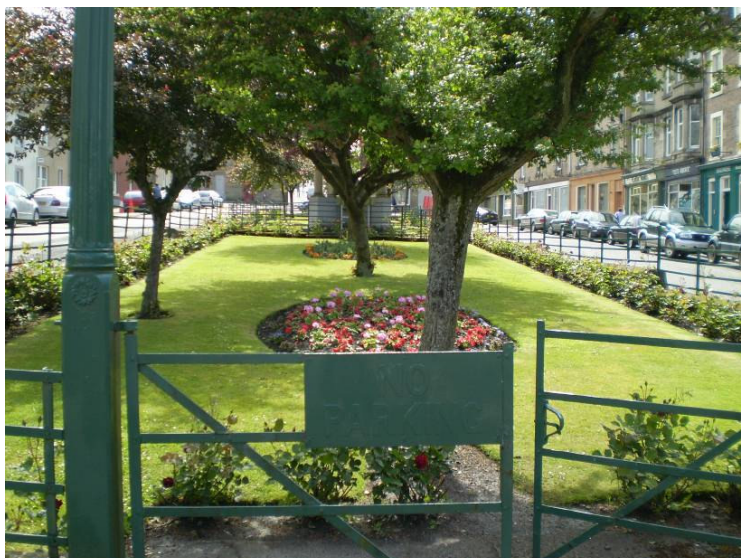
Selkirk

5.7.4   Hawick

Issue

- **Provision deficiencies** – outdoor sports facilities (small deficiency)

- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities;

- **Quality deficiencies** – allotments.

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Wilton Lodge Park;

- Moat Park;

- Volunteer Park;

- Wilton Lodge Park sports facilities;

- Club Facilities including Rugby, Tennis and Bowling;

- Play Areas.

Aspirations

- Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including Wilton Lodge Park/or Volunteer Park;

- Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities;

- Improvement of existing allotment sites to improve local demand;

- Continued enhancement of strategic parks;

- Introduction of destination play areas in key locations including Wilton Lodge Park and/or Volunteer Park with an overall reduction in the number of small local areas of play that provide little in the way of play value. This is to be developed further through detailed play study.

Drumlanrig Square, Hawick

5.7.5   Peebles

Issue

- **Provision deficiencies** – teenage facilities, allotments;
- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities;
- **Quality deficiencies** – allotments.

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Tweed Green;
- Victoria Park;
- Hay Lodge Park;
- Gytes Leisure Centre;
- Hay Lodge Park;
- Victoria Park;
- Whitestone Park;
- Club Facilities including Rugby, Tennis and Bowling;
- Play Areas.

Aspirations

- Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including Tweed Green or Victoria Park;
- Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities;
- Introduction of an Artificial Turf Pitch;
- Improvement of existing allotment sites to improve local demand.

5.7.6   Jedburgh

Issue

- **Provision deficiencies** – natural green space, allotments, teenage facilities;
- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities;
- **Quality deficiencies** – none

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Allerley Well Park;
- Howden Park;
- Lothian Park;
- Club Facilities including Rugby, Tennis and Bowling;

❑ Play Areas.

■ **Aspirations**

❑ Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including Lothian Park or Howden Park;

❑ Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities;

❑ Introduction of destination play areas in key locations including Lothian Park and Howden Park with an overall reduction in the number of small local areas of play that provide little in the way of play value. This is to be developed further through detailed play study.

❑ Development of allotment site based on local demand;

❑ Introduction of an Artificial Turf Pitch;

❑ Diversification of existing sites introducing biodiversity value as well as continuing to improve the access to outer countryside;

❑ Continued enhancement of strategic parks.

Jedburgh

5.7.7 Kelso

Issue

- **Provision deficiencies** – allotments, teenage facilities;
- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities;
- **Quality deficiencies** – none.

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Bridgend Park;
- Shedden Park;
- Broomlands;
- Edinburgh Road;
- Club Facilities including Rugby, Tennis and Bowling;
- Play Areas.

Aspirations

- Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including Shedden Park;
- Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities;
- Introduction of destination play areas in key locations including Shedden Park and with an overall reduction in the number of small local areas of play that provide little in the way of play value. This is to be developed further through detailed play study;
- Development of allotment site based on local demand;
- Continued enhancement of strategic parks as well as development/enhancement of sports facilities/local amenity green space to parks and gardens status.

5.7.8 Selkirk

Issue

- **Provision deficiencies** – allotments, parks and gardens, natural green space, teenage facilities
- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities; parks and gardens;
- **Quality deficiencies** – none.

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Selkirk Recreation Ground;
- South Port Recreation Area;
- Club Facilities including Rugby, Tennis and Bowling;
- Play Areas.

Aspirations

- Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations including Selkirk Recreation Ground;

- Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities;

- Development of allotment site based on local demand;

- Introduction of an Artificial Turf Pitch;

- Enhancement of sports facilities/local amenity green space to parks and gardens status;

- Introduction of destination play areas in key locations including Selkirk Recreation Ground and with an overall reduction in the number of small local areas of play that provide little in the way of play value. This is to be developed further through detailed play study;

- Diversification of existing sites in particular local amenity green space and sports and playing fields, introducing biodiversity value as well as continuing to improve the access to outer countryside.

Selkirk Tennis Courts

5.7.9   Eyemouth

Issue

- Provision deficiencies – Parks and Gardens, outdoor sports facilities, teenage facilities, allotments;

- Accessibility deficiencies – teenage facilities;

- Quality deficiencies – local amenity green space

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Club Facilities including Tennis and Bowling;

- Play Areas.

Aspirations

- Development of sports facilities and playing pitches in Eyemouth is a priority (location to be determined) as well as developing close links with the new High School development;

- Maximising the potential of the former High School site in relation to improving quality, accessibility and quantity of provision, in particular Parks and Gardens;

- Continuing to improve the access to outer countryside and coastal footpaths;

- Introduction of an Artificial Turf Pitch;

- Improve the quality of all existing sites as provision in Eyemouth is low with quality a problem in some areas;

- Introduction of teenage facilities in key location.

5.7.10   Rural Areas

Issue

- **Provision deficiencies** – teenage facilities, allotments, outdoor sports facilities;

- **Accessibility deficiencies** – teenage facilities, outdoor sports facilities;

- **Quality deficiencies** – none.

Strategic and Local Green Space Network Priorities

- Henderson Park – Coldstream;

- Denholm Green – Denholm;

- Duns Park – Duns;

- Fountainhall Playing Fields;

- Eddleston Playing Fields;

- Newcastleton Polysport;

- Recreation Ground, Coldstream;

- ❑ Broughton Playing Fields, Broughton;

- ❑ All village playing fields;

- ❑ Club Facilities including Rugby, Tennis and Bowling;

- ❑ Play Areas.

Aspirations

- ❑ Improve accessibility to existing principal settlements within the Borders for all sports facilities, parks and gardens;

- ❑ Continuing to improve the access to outer countryside and coastal footpaths;

- ❑ Introduction of teenage facilities in key locations in larger villages such as Coldstream, Duns, Denholm, Newcastleton and Broughton;

- ❑ Development of allotment sites based on local demand;

- ❑ Continued enhancement of all sports facilities, in particular changing facilities;

- ❑ Continued enhancement of all play facilities.

Town Yetholm Village Green

6   Key Green Space Issues – Our Vision and Strategy

6.1   Introduction

This chapter summarises the main issues facing the Council, its partners and stakeholders if it is to achieve the proposed vision for green space in the Scottish Borders. We also describe some of the options facing us in achieving this goal. The development of a Green Space Strategy for the Borders is based around three key issues:

1.   **A Green Space Strategy Action Plan** – creating a draft framework for the implementation of the strategy that will guide all future green spaces and public places improvements based on a defined action plan;

2.   **A Green Spaces Consultative Network** – identifying a way in which we could effectively involve local people in decisions about the management and development of our green spaces and public places;

3.   **Measuring Progress** – suggesting how we can measure what has been done and how much there is still to do.

6.2   The Vision for the Scottish Borders Green Space

"The Scottish Borders will have a network of accessible, high quality and highly valued green spaces creating communities and settlements to be proud of, promoting sustainability, supporting bio-diversity and extensively contributing to the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the region".
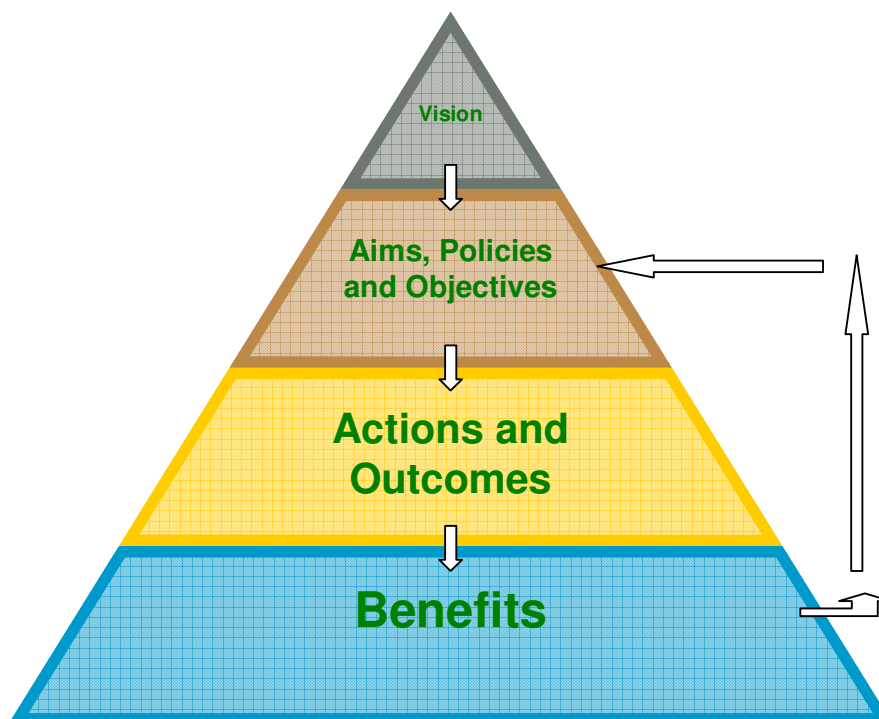

Figure 6.2 Delivering the Vision

This vision will guide and support Scottish Borders Council's actions on green spaces. This must be considered when designing both spaces and management regimes for them.

The vision has five key components:

1. A strong network of green spaces will be protected through the planning system, enhanced and managed by Estates Management and Parks Services, to provide multi-functional benefits, and will be well integrated with surrounding street patterns and rights of way as appropriate;

2. Green space will be socially inclusive, catering for a wide range of people, ages and backgrounds;

3. Green space will be enhanced and managed to maximise their biodiversity value;

4. Green space will make a substantial contribution to the visual amenity, identity, character and local distinctiveness of the Border's settlements;

5. Green space will be managed and maintained in a flexible, creative and sustainable manner seeking to minimise energy and chemical inputs, increasing re-cycling and through use of local materials.

Ten overarching strategy guidelines are proposed to expand the vision into real deliverable statements with clear deliverable Action Plans.

STEWARDSHIP

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1. The Council's Stewardship Role

As the representative of the residents of the Scottish Borders, The Council will manage green spaces in the interests of the whole community.

The Council is the steward of many of the Borders most valuable green spaces and owns them in trust, now and for future generations.

2. Green Space History and Heritage

The Council will protect and preserve the historic and architectural heritage found within the Borders green spaces particularly in some of our most sensitive urban and rural areas. The Council will ensure that this heritage is protected, now and for the future.

MANAGEMENT

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3. Green Space as Community Assets

The Scottish Border's green space is essential and a permanent community resource. The Council will work in conjunction with partners, users, and stakeholders and involve them in the "decision making" process relating to the use, development and management of the region's green spaces.

4. Investing in Community Green Space

The Council recognises that green spaces require investment. The Council will actively seek resources for the regeneration of many green spaces, in partnership with the local community and external agencies based on a developed "strategic green space network". The Council will ensure any investment is sustainable, maintenance regimes are developed and where new developments and initiatives are introduced, maintenance issues are taken into account in the design, management and ongoing sustainability of the facility.

5.   Universal Access to Green Space

The Borders green spaces are available for use by all sections of the local community, including the business community. The Council will support and promote fully inclusive access and use of the Scottish Borders green spaces for all lawful purposes.

6.   The Right to Safety

All sections of the local community have the right to use the Borders green spaces in safety and without fear of crime. The Council will work in partnership with local people and other agencies in order to provide cleaner, safer and greener environments.

7.   Education for Citizenship

The Council recognises that green spaces are a rich resource for learning, not only about the living environment, but the Borders history and culture. The Council will encourage the use of the region's green spaces as important centres of education as well as places to celebrate our cultural diversity.

8.   Spaces for Play, Sport and Recreation

The Borders green spaces are an essential community resource in providing quality spaces for play, sport and recreation. The Council will ensure that these uses are provided for in health, enjoyment and well being of the region's local communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

9.   Community Living Spaces

The Council will continue to develop green spaces to ensure that they remain "living spaces". The Council will protect and enhance the Borders biodiversity, maximise resource efficiency by increasing recycling opportunities, establish a better use of essential energy sources and minimise the use of pesticides and chemicals.

10.   Aiming High and Ensuring Quality

The Council will make best use of resources available to ensure the highest quality for all the region's green spaces. The Council will strive to adopt the principles of the Civic Trust Green Flag standard across all community green spaces and assess the quality and value of them all as set out in the recently revised '*SPP11*'.

The Council's aim is to build on its success in Britain in Bloom and gain Green Flag awards in its main urban settlements.

6.3   Key Issues

The Council has identified a number of key issues for the future of green space provision in the Scottish Borders:

- Involving Communities;

- Parks and Gardens;

- Local Amenity Green Space;

- Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space Areas;

- Green Corridors;

- Equipped Play Areas and Youth Provision;

- Sports Pitches and Multi-Courts / Artificial Turf Pitches;

- Churchyards and Cemeteries;

- Allotments;

- Opportunities;

- Partnership Working with local stakeholders;

- Green Space Management, Maintenance and Development;

- Funding.

We discuss these issues below in further detail.

6.3.1   Involving Communities

Needs

As already identified throughout the work in developing the Green Space Strategy, there is a need to develop better ways of involving local communities in green space management, maintenance and development. There are currently a number of groups in existence in relation to parks and open spaces and there are clear benefits to developing groups to work with green space management. These include Floral Gateway organisations as well as a number of Friend's Groups. A key dimension of successful green space management is a willingness to engage local communities in the task, and to think creatively about means to make this happen. Community participation needs to happen within a framework which gives weight to different voices within the community, and that is not unduly influenced by sectional interests. Involving the voluntary sector in any green space management can tap an under-utilised resource.

There is also a need to work with other partners with an interest in the management of green space, e.g. Scottish Natural Heritage, Forest Enterprise as well as local Community Councils.

Opportunities

With the development of this Green Space Strategy there are clear immediate opportunities to involve communities in green spaces in the Borders. Some excellent work is already undertaken with Floral Gateway Groups but there is enormous potential to involve local communities, particularly in relation to the development of parks management plans for the major parks, improvements to play facilities as well as encouraging the number of Friends Groups.

The high quality but low value of many of the regions green spaces however means that the involvement of local communities is essential in delivering a better quality green space network in relation to management, and in particular, development and assisting in attracting funding to allow much of this to happen.

Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick

6.3.2   Parks and Gardens

Needs

The quality of parks, gardens and recreation grounds in the Borders is excellent and they score highly due to the quality of maintenance. Also in many cases they are highly valued by local communities and it has also been identified in Eyemouth the distinct need for a Strategic Park and Garden, wherenone currently exist. The Strategy has identified that parks and gardens should be a strategic priority and should continue to be maintained to a high standard to ensure all are high quality and high value. The successful management of the Borders green spaces depends upon a correct understanding of the nature and needs of different types of green spaces. Locally derived green space typologies are valuable to differentiate between green space types and their appropriate aspirations and management regimes.

A clear distinction between ownership and management responsibilities for green space can help to establish a unified and integrated management regime.

Opportunities

There is currently no parks hierarchy in the Local Plan, but this would be a sensible approach to adopt. However, we propose that as the Borders towns are compact, it should be enough to develop a single-tier hierarchy based on the settlement hierarchy:

Strategic parks: major parks with a good range of facilities, intended to serve a large, medium and small towns and a district-wide catchment. The Council will therefore seek to make these parks different and complementary. Any future Green Flag parks will be included in this level of the hierarchy.

There are also a number of smaller parks or recreational grounds within walking distance of each of the main neighbourhoods in most of the settlements, with a lesser range of facilities, designed to complement those in other spaces in the main towns but generally with an emphasis on providing local play opportunities or informal sports facilities. The Council will actively seek to maximise pedestrian and cycling access to these spaces.

As a matter of policy, each of the strategic parks should contain a destination children's play area and also have teenage facilities, where appropriate.

A strong theme also coming from consultation has been the need to have management plans and long term development plans for each major green space. There are clear implications in relation to capital and revenue funding in relation to longer term investment of these spaces.

At the same time, there are opportunities as part of the drive to involve communities in developing Management Plans for the major parks, within the region.

6.3.3   Local Amenity Green Space

Needs

The Scottish Borders has limited quantities of amenity green space in many towns due to the nature of the topography, density of settlement and local geography. Likewise the situation is similar in villages. However where less accessible in certain localised areas, other typologies of open space such as natural green space, parks, sports pitches or play areas provide sufficient green space, meeting local standards.

Opportunities

Amenity green space which is found in most residential areas should continue to be managed and maintained to a standard where it is kept at least clean and safe as these spaces are mostly on people's immediate doorsteps and therefore most visible. There are continuing pressures on existing budgets in relation to maintenance, particularly in relation to local amenity green space.

6.3.4   Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space

Needs

There is a considerable amount of natural and semi-natural green space across the Scottish Borders with some significant and strategic sites within the Border's towns and rural areas. These are all important in relation to biodiversity as well as accessibility. However, some, through local consultation, consider accessibility to be an issue in the Borders region, but with many sites within the many towns, and open countryside surrounding all, access to outer countryside should not be considered a major issue.

Opportunities

Natural green spaces offer local residents and visitors the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and to be close to nature. Such sites and open countryside should be easily accessible to all residents and visitors. There are also opportunities to design Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) which can provide multiple benefits, including amenity, nature conservation and flood storage. They should be safe (by including gently shelving banks), including protective measures to prevent unauthorised access to any incoming or outgoing piping and easy access for cleansing.

6.3.5 Green Corridors

Needs

Green corridors are an important part of the green space network providing visual, wildlife and sustainable transport links between urban spaces and the countryside. They are especially a feature of the Borders towns located in valley bottoms such as Galashiels, Hawick and Tweedbank as well as those located alongside rivers, such as Peebles and Selkirk.

Opportunities

There are opportunities available for utilising many of them as "green links" as they are important in the development of any strategic green space network. River corridors and former railway lines are important visual links as well as wildlife corridors.

Peebles

6.3.6 Equipped Play Areas and Youth Provision

Needs

As a result of the lack of youth provision, teenagers tend to colonise play facilities intended for younger children and their quality suffers as a result. In surveys conducted, local people identified increasing youth provision as a priority.

At the same time, there are issues in relation to the quality and play value of play facilities in many areas. There are many play areas across the region which are generally maintained to a high standard and therefore are classed as high quality but play value is very poor. There is little or no diversity in play opportunities with only a small number of exceptions. Most play areas form part of larger open spaces such as parks and gardens and as a result are not shown on the typology maps.

Opportunities

As part of the initiative to improve green space quality across the region, opportunities exist to improve the quality and play value of play areas and increase the number of youth facilities across the whole Borders area. The development of youth and play facilities is an excellent way in which to empower a local community to get involved. This could be developed through a comprehensive Youth and Play Strategy for the Scottish Borders region.

6.3.7 Sports Pitches, Multi-Courts and Artificial Turf Pitches

Needs

The spread of pitches across the District is very good. There are issues related to the quality of provision of changing facilities and some facilities such as football, tennis and lack of all weather facilities. A number of artificial turf pitches also exist across the region, in particular Hawick, Kelso and Newcastleton. However the large and medium towns do not all have such facilities.

Opportunities

There is no Playing Pitch Strategy for the Scottish Borders and there is a clear need for a more detailed audit of sports facilities across the region, in particular relating to provision of rugby, football, tennis and hockey. For instance, a *'Playing Pitches Strategy' would* identify any need for improved changing and toilet facilities to serve the existing pitches and would provide an approach which would prioritise this work in areas where maximum benefit can be gained by giving higher priority to those sites with most pitches, which could then be served by one building.

The need for improvements to pitch quality at certain sites would be identified within the *'Playing Pitches Strategy*. Sites within the large and medium towns should also be identified for the development of an artificial turf pitch, particularly in Galashiels, Peebles and Selkirk.

6.3.8 Churchyards and Cemeteries

Needs

The quality of churchyards and cemeteries is very good with good overall provision. Churchyards are not provided in response to standards, but as an integral part of (mainly long established) churches or other places of worship. Some of those who visit them do so to tend a specific grave and if so distance is largely immaterial. Churchyards are nonetheless useful as places for quiet contemplation and often have nature conservation value.

Opportunities

In areas where there are deficiencies of certain typologies of open space, churchyards and cemeteries are important in providing areas of natural green space or areas for gentle passive recreation, such as walking, sitting, fresh air or quiet contemplation.

6.3.9 Allotments

Needs

The overall provision of allotments across the Borders is not well provided for, with demand increasing with waiting lists on some sites and with many areas simply having no provision.

Opportunities

Funding is difficult to obtain for allotment developments and improvements but allotments nevertheless are an important leisure facility, especially for younger generations who are now taking up allotment gardening alongside more established users.

6.3.10 Reviewing Green Space Opportunities

Issue

The Borders overall has sufficient quantity of green spaces but there is a conflict between the strongly expressed desire for better management and maintenance and what the Council can afford. There is also the view that local residents wish to have improved maintenance despite many sites scoring highly in the quality audit. Local expectations are high!

Opportunities

There are opportunities to rationalise provision and possibly convert some spaces to other uses or dispose of some sites which currently offer little to local communities. The audit information identifies those spaces that are of least value to community or wildlife.

If the Council is able to find alternative uses for some sites but retain its present revenue budget for management and maintenance, it will be able to spend slightly more on each site it retains.

6.3.11 Partnership Working with Schools and Education Authorities

Issues

Out of hours access to school facilities varies from one school to another across the District. Given the heightened security of recent years, many school grounds are now locked, while others still have open access but with little formal community use.

Some schools however have been noted as having multi and dual use by the school as well as community use out of hours, particularly in the rural areas and Galashiels Academy being an excellent example. All school sites were also audited as part of the green space audit and were found to be generally of high quality and high value. If open for general use they were classed as Outdoor Sports Facilities rather than Education use.

Needs

Like community indoor sports facilities, there is a growing need to modernise school indoor facilities. At the same time, there is a need to promote better 'school club to community club' links and pathways.

Opportunities

The Council has the opportunity to continue to work more closely with school governors to develop artificial turf pitches and community pitch sports clubs. Where a school has indoor facilities which are suitable for community use, there is an obvious opportunity to widen the concept of the community club. For schools with current community use, there are opportunities to co-ordinate and promote these arrangements more effectively.

6.3.12 Green Space Management, Maintenance and Development

Issue

Local people have indicated that they would like to see their green spaces managed and maintained to a higher standard. There is also the concern that green space, whilst mainly of a high quality in relation to maintenance, as indicated by the quality audits, future long term development plans need to be considered in relation to infrastructure condition, long term use, and longer term investment plans.

Needs

Improving management, maintenance and development is not simply a matter of doing things differently, but generally also requires additional resources.

Opportunities

Some sites such as the several Parks would benefit from involvement by teams of volunteers or Park Champions. However, there are obvious limits to the extent to which volunteers can deliver long term management and maintenance. The development of long term Management Plans or Development Plans for the Strategic Parks, with cost implications are an opportunity which would assist the Council in gaining external funding for longer term investment. A dedicated Parks Development Officer would realise some of these opportunities, allowing dedicated time to be given to development opportunities.

6.3.13 Funding

Issues

In recent years, maintenance resources nationwide and locally have declined considerably in real terms. The green estate has increased with new adoptions linked to new developments, often without a budget to maintain the new green space.

The three key areas have been identified where changes could be implemented:

1. Increasing the funding/resources available;

2. Altering the management and maintenance regimes;

3. Prioritising fewer sites.

Opportunities

Developer contributions from any future development proposals in the region may support further green space or facility enhancement or development but are likely to be limited to certain areas. However, there may be opportunities for "pooled" Section 75 contributions towards the strategic network which have "region" wide benefits.

6.4 The Need for Enhancement of Existing Provision or Need for New Facilities

Planning agreements require developers to contribute towards green space provision through Section 75 Agreements. It is an intention of '*SPP11*' that developers' contributions should increasingly be used to enhance the quality of existing green space that would be used by residents of a proposed development, within existing urban or rural areas.

The Council has a revised Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG9) on Developer Contributions, which was updated in April 2008. This requires developer contributions in the form of standard charges towards the cost of leisure, sport, recreation, play areas and community facilities, either on site or off site. It also includes landscape, open space, trees and woodlands including costs of future management and maintenance. Most individual developments will not lead to a requirement for major investment in new infrastructure, services and facilities. However the cumulative effect of a number of similarly sized developments may lead to a requirement to upgrade a facility.

As the SPG states, not every proposed development will require additional provision. If the amount and quality of provision within the appropriate distance thresholds of the proposed development site will match or exceed the adopted provision standards when the development is complete, there is no need for either additional provision or the enhancement of any existing provision. If either or both of these pre-conditions are not met, however, the Council will be justified in requiring the developer either to make on-site provision or contribute to the provision or enhancement of off-site provision, based on the standards in Section 4.

Before seeking contributions to off-site provision, the Council will ensure they are satisfied that they will be able to use them within the distance threshold of the proposed development site. The Council may also seek contributions to its strategic network of open spaces provided a "District wide" benefit can be proved, for example, towards district sports facilities as well as strategic parks such as Wilton Lodge Park, Volunteer Park and Tweedbank.

6.5   Contributions to the Enhancement of Existing Provision

The need for the enhancement of existing provision arises when there will be a sufficient quantity of provision within the distance threshold of the development site after the development, but some elements of this provision fail to meet the adopted quality standard.

The Council will seek developer contributions based on a Development Control Model using information available from the 'SPP11' audit, provision and quality standards for off site contributions based on the model below.

Whilst minimum quantitative, accessibility and qualitative standards need to be met in the provision of new green spaces or enhancement of existing ones, the design quality of a green space can make a major difference to whether or not a green space is successful and well used.
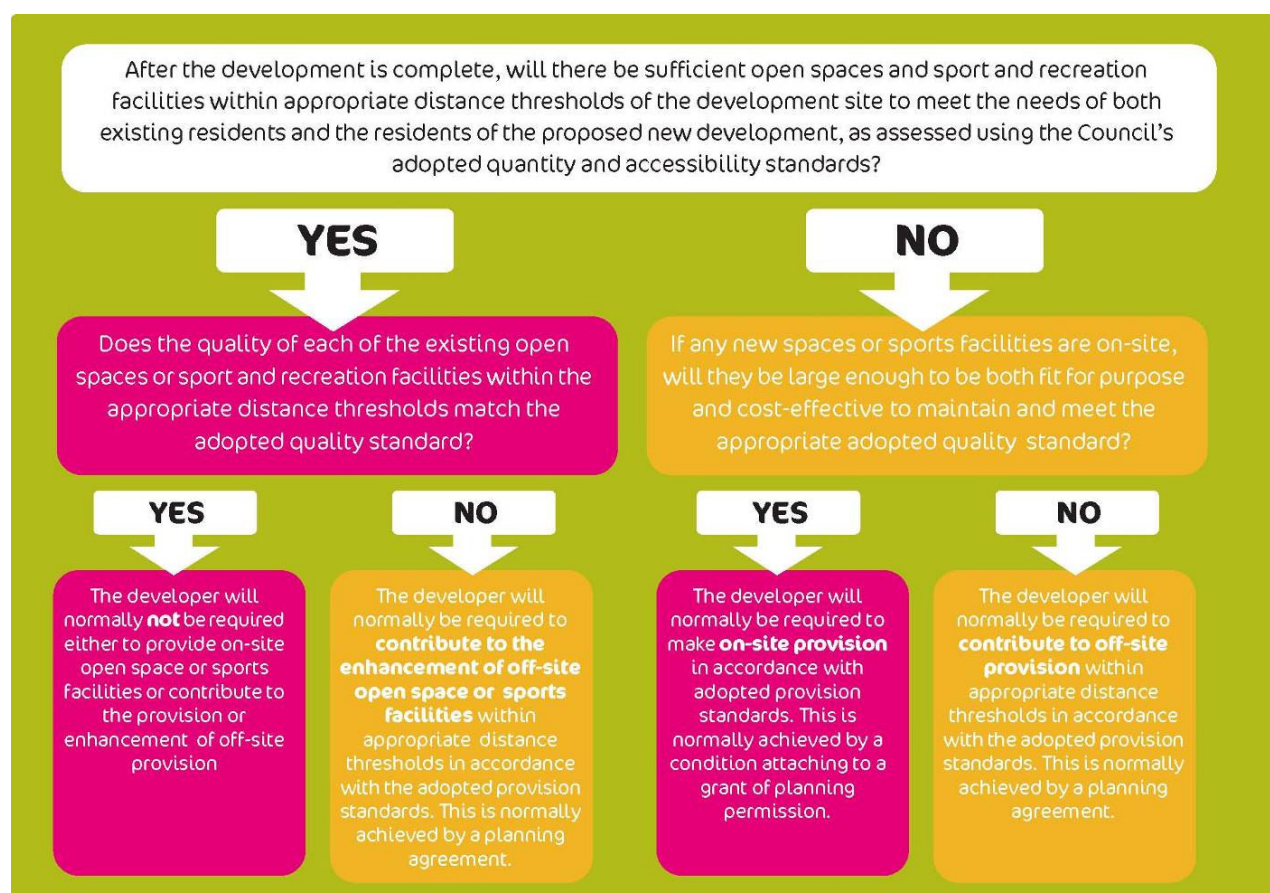

Figure 6.5 – Development Control Model

6.6   Performance Indicators – Measuring Progress

There have been a range of nationally recognised performance measurements provided by the Audit Commission that were applied to green spaces.

CABE Space has been advocating and promoting the outcomes and values of parks and open spaces (e.g. promoting satisfaction in place, providing a place for young people to participate in active recreations and empowering communities) rather than focusing on inputs (i.e. service delivery).

They suggest:

- Encouraging the inclusion of national indicators such as NI10 Visits to museums and galleries (parks and green spaces also have an important role in the cultural offer to communities), NI188 Adaptation to climate change, NI195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness, NI197 Improved local biodiversity;

- Promotion of those local indicators that champion and prioritise green space. These might include:

  - Number of Green Flag Awards and a self assessment of quality of a range of sites using the schemes criteria;

  - Evidence gathered using the Towards An Excellent Service for Parks and Open Space Performance Management Framework; and

  - Indicators on satisfaction in parks and open spaces using the surveys traditionally used for *'Best Value Performance Indicator 119E'*.

6.6.1   Green Flag Awards

The Green Flag Award scheme was launched in England in 1996. It was designed to encourage good standards in parks and green spaces, recognise the diversity and what makes those sites special and recognise the value of the green spaces to the people who use them. The award is the benchmark by which the quality of green spaces is judged. The Civic Trust, using a steering group of national, public and voluntary sector organisations and informed individuals, independently runs the Green Flag Scheme. Two recent additions are the Green Pennant for sites managed by voluntary and community groups and the Green Heritage Site Award which is for sites of heritage value.

Green Flag is planned to be launched in Scotland from 2009/10 after recent successful trials but will be subject to successful funding being obtained to run the program. At present, the Scottish Borders has no Green Flag parks.

If successful, by 2015 it is hoped to have a Green Flag Park or Green Pennant open space within all the major towns in the Borders, in particular:

- Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick;

- Gun Knowe Park, Tweedbank;

- Bank St. Gardens, Galashiels;

- Gibson Park, Melrose;

- Bridgend Park, Kelso;

- Shedden Park, Kelso;

- Duns Public Park, Duns;

- Henderson Park, Coldstream;

- Hay Lodge Park, Peebles;

- Allerley Well Park, Jedburgh.

6.7 Site Classification by Use – Grounds Maintenance Implications

6.7.1 Maintenance Standards

The current grounds maintenance regimes have different regimes in relation to different areas. Not all sites are treated equally e.g. parks and gardens are maintained to a much higher standard in comparison to amenity green space. As highlighted, the standard of maintenance in the Borders region is very high particularly within parks and gardens. There are however, pressures on internal budgets and local consultation has highlighted the need for continued and in some cases, enhanced maintenance standards.

Any proposed changes in standards would need to be agreed locally and to fit with the existing budget for the area as well as the typologies of open space.

Research on maintenance standards will be carried out as an Action Plan of this strategy looking specifically at:

- Existing standards;

- Level of specification;

- Typology of open space;

- Development of Management Plans for all Strategic Parks and nature conservation sites;

- Grounds Maintenance Budget;

- Service delivery;

- Alternative methods of maintenance;

- Volunteer labour and use of reparation "labour" initiatives (Probation Services, NACRO, Youth Offending Service, HM Prison Service, Inside Out Trust).

This will enable the following:

- Improved management regimes, specific to the typology of use and local expectations. Links to management plans;

- Improved maintenance regimes, specific to the typology and local expectations;

- Clarification of standards of provision, for client, contractor and customers;

- Priorities for development, based on quality audits;

- Community needs and aspirations.

6.8 Sustainable Design and Development

In order to support the Council's vision for the Scottish Borders as a clean, green and safe region and that welcomes investment to support economic regeneration, it is important that the authority maintains and sustains its physical infrastructure. For many years, new investments, due to a lack of consideration for its maintenance and sustainability requirements, have declined into a poor condition to be subsequently replaced again in later years. During the intervening years of decline, the image and liveability of the area becomes reduced, causing poor public perceptions of the area. The Council has moved towards a "Sustain and Maintain Policy" and is developing mechanisms where this is taken into account in all capital projects and planning decisions. This is a key role that will be developed by the Council whereby it will not take on any other management or maintenance "obligations" unless sustainability and maintenance have been approved and agreed.

6.9   Anti-Social Behaviour

CABE Space, November 2004, published an important Policy Note on *'Preventing Anti-Social Behaviour in Public Spaces'*. Research commissioned by CABE Space reveals that community groups estimate that 31% of parks suffer from unacceptably high levels of vandalism and behaviour related problems. Around 60% of local authorities are seen by these groups to have achieved very limited or practically no success in tackling the problem.

Solutions – CABE Space has seen two approaches emerge to the problem of anti-social behaviour in public spaces:

1.   "**Target hardening**" – the redesign of facilities and equipment to make them near indestructible, and less susceptible to theft, vandalism and abuse;

2.   "**Place making**" – investing in good design, attractive new facilities and good maintenance to create public spaces that the community will want to use and enjoy.

The evidence for place making – The CABE Space study showed that well designed, well maintained public spaces can contribute to reducing the incidence of vandalism and anti social behaviour, and result in long term cost savings.

Approaches that work:

- Responding rapidly to problems such as vandalism by sending a clear message that abuse will not be tolerated;

- Reinstating park keepers and park wardens to reassure visitors while discouraging anti-social behaviour;

- Reasserting the clarity of design with open vistas and clear sight lines;

- Fully engaging the community (including groups creating problems) in the process of reclaiming the park or open space.

So the benefits of investing in public space can be three-fold:

1.   Successfully tackling problems of anti-social behaviour;

2.   Achieving long term cost savings;

3.   Creating the neighbourhoods in which we want to live.

CABE Space recommends that:

- We should invest in the good design, staffing and maintenance of public spaces to tackle problems of anti social behaviour, or to prevent the start of a downward spiral;

- Security measures and target hardening should not be used as the only response to problems of anti-social behaviour in public space, but should be employed selectively where they will be effective, and as part of a co-ordinated approach.

The Council will develop Action Plans related to the issues of anti social behaviour in parks and green spaces in accordance with CABE Space guidance.

7   Action Plans

These Action Plans will enable Scottish Borders Council and its partners through open space stewardship, to meet green space needs and provide a fair distribution of safe, accessible, clean, attractive green spaces, and achieve the strategic green space network. They are based on the 10 overarching policies, detailed in Section 6. Action plans are however meant to be clear and concise and if possible, define outcomes and benefits, as well as being broadly achievable. The emphasis is on partnership working. The Council is not able to deliver this without community support and stakeholder involvement. We have therefore developed an Action Plan that will need to be reviewed regularly. The Scottish Borders Council as the principal landowner and custodian of much of the open space will be a key player but we have identified "key partners" who will have important roles to play. This includes local communities who have already indicated support for the green space we currently have. The development of any Action Plan may also be seen as over ambitious and restrictive, when taking into account existing issues such as budgets, staffing, skills requirement and changing political priorities.

With this in mind, the Action Plan will need an annual review as well as being flexible, but with key individuals identified from each organisation who could be involved as well as strong leadership from the Council. As we have already stated, this green space strategy is a document and delivery mechanism for many current service areas within the council (planning, technical services, estate management) as well as a number of key stakeholders within the region. We propose to develop more detailed technical data sheets or Project Plans for each Action Plan with more details highlighting requirements, funding, staffing, and timescales.

Key to Action Plans 8.1-8.4:

*Partners, stakeholders and community representatives (Who):

FE   - Forest Enterprise

BSLT   - Borders Sport and Leisure Trust

SBC   – Scottish Borders Council

SNH   – Scottish Natural Heritage

SS   – **sport**scotland

CC   – Community Councils

NHS   – NHS Borders

FAC   - Factors

RSL   – Registered Social Landlords

ELLL   - Education & Lifelong Learning

SC   – Sports Clubs

**Timescales:

Short Term (S)   – 5 years (up to 2013)

Medium Term (M)   – 5-10 years (up to 2018)

Long Term (L)   – 10 years onwards

7.1 Stewardship

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.1.1	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council and partners will seek to enhance parks and other large areas of amenity green space to provide more semi-natural green space through native or naturalistic planting particularly in areas of accessibility deficiencies.	SBC CC RSL	M, L	Staff costs; Grant funding; S75; Revenue costs.	• Increased biodiversity; • Improved access to natural green space; • Enhancement of local open spaces.
7.1.2	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council and partners will in rural areas seek to enter into access stewardship agreements with landowners to improve access to natural and semi-natural sites.	FE SBC SNH CC	M, L	Staff costs; Grant funding.	• Improved access to natural green space; • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Improved community engagement.
7.1.3	Strong, inclusive and safe communities	The Council and partners will seek to tackle issues related to anti-social behaviour in parks and gardens in accordance with CABE Space guidance.	SBC CC RSL	S, M, L	Staff costs; Revenue costs.	• Improved safety in open spaces; • Local community empowerment; • Increased use of open spaces by local people.
7.1.4	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council will review maintenance regimes, looking at standards, levels of specification in relation to typology of space and need for development of Management Plans.	SBC CC BSLT	S, M	Staff costs; Revenue costs.	• Higher levels of maintenance; • Increased quality of most important open spaces; • Increased usage of open spaces.

7.2   Management

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.2.1	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council and partners will develop Management Plans for all existing parks and gardens based on a new single tier parks hierarchy of strategic parks and will involve local people, stakeholders as part of the process.	SBC CC SNH	S, M	Staff costs; Grounds maintenance implications.	• Higher levels of management and maintenance; • Local community empowerment; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement.
7.2.2	A protected and enhanced natural environment A robust and dynamic economy	The Council and partners will develop long term investment plans based on asset management practices which will be developed based on the quality and value audits that have been carried out as part of the 'SPP11' audits. These in turn will be re-assessed every five years.	SBC CC SNH	S, M, L	Staff costs; Grant funding required.	• Increased quality of the most important open spaces; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Health benefits to local people and visitors.
7.2.3	A protected and enhanced natural environment A robust and dynamic economy	The Council and partners will apply the principles of Green Flag for all strategic parks and gardens/green spaces and apply for Green Flag periodically for the spaces listed: ❑ Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick ❑ Gun Knowe Park, Tweedbank ❑ High St. Gardens, Galashiels; ❑ Gibson Park, Melrose ❑ Maxwellheugh Park, Kelso ❑ Shedden Park, Kelso ❑ Hay Lodge Park, Peebles ❑ Allerley Well Park, Jedburgh ❑ Duns Park, Duns ❑ Henderson Park, Coldstream	SBC CC SNH	S, M, L	Application costs; Staff costs; Changes to grounds maintenance.	• Increased quality of the most important open spaces; • Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement.

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.2.4	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Learning for everyone	The Council and partners will encourage more positive use and more activity in all parks and gardens by encouraging local people to use them more through improved management and maintenance as well as programmes of activity. A Parks Development Officer position is required to encourage this initiative. Initiatives to be also developed through Education and Lifelong Learning.	SBC CC SNH BSLT	S, M, L	Staff costs; Changes to grounds maintenance.	• Increased usage of open spaces; • Local community empowerment; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders;
7.2.5	Strong, inclusive and safe communities	The Council will work with partners and local residents in relation to issues associated with local amenity green space. These may include "no ball game" issues, anti-social behaviour or standards of maintenance. The Council will enhance amenity green spaces in terms of design layout and planting so that their contribution to residential character and local identity is maximised.	SBC RSL CC	S, M, L	Staff costs; Consultation; Changes to grounds maintenance.	• Local community empowerment; • Improvements to local on the doorstep neighbourhood open spaces; • Increased use of open spaces by local people; • Health benefits to local people; • Improved safety in open spaces.
7.2.6	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council with partners will seek to develop sustainable management plans for all strategic natural and semi-natural green space sites, seeking to enhance their biodiversity value in terms of site size, links, habitats and management.	SBC FE SNH	L	Staff Costs; Changes to grounds maintenance.	• Higher levels of management and maintenance; • Local community empowerment; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement; • Increased local biodiversity.

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.2.7	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council with partners and in particular, local communities, will apply Green Flag principles for key natural/semi-natural green space sites.	SBC FE SNH	M, L	Application costs; Staff costs; Changes to grounds maintenance.	• Increased quality of the most important open spaces; • Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement.
7.2.8	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council and partners will support the integration of natural and semi-natural green spaces into other forms of green space wherever possible.	SBC CC SNH	M, L	Revenue implications on grounds maintenance.	• Increased biodiversity; • Improved access to natural green space; • Enhancement of local open spaces.
7.2.9	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council and local communities will continue to manage and maintain closed churchyards and cemeteries under its ownership / management for the benefit of local people and wildlife.	CC SBC	S, M, L	Existing.	• Increased biodiversity; • Improved access to natural green space; • Enhancement of local open spaces.
7.2.10	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council will ensure strategic parks, and major semi-natural green space sites on the urban fringe and the best used local green spaces are managed and will incorporate the principals of best practice in relation to each different typology.	SBC CC SNH FE	S, M, L	Revenue implications on grounds maintenance.	• Higher level of protection and continued enhancement; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders; • Enhancement of local open spaces. • Increased biodiversity; • Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces;

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.2.11	A protected and enhanced natural environment Improved health and well being	The Council will establish an annual capital programme for improvements to its strategic parks and major semi-natural green space sites, as well as play facilities, reviewed on a five yearly basis, based on a new strategic network.	SBC	M, L	Capital costs; Revenue implications on grounds maintenance.	• Increased quality of the most important open spaces; • Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement.
7.2.12	A protected and enhanced natural environment Improved health and well being	The Council with partners, will maximise every opportunity in relation to grant funding to include the following: ❑ Heritage Lottery Fund; ❑ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme; ❑ Big Lottery Fund; ❑ **sport**scotland; ❑ Arts Council Scotland; ❑ Groundwork UK; ❑ Scottish Executive; ❑ Scottish Natural Heritage.	SBC FE SNH BLST SS CC NHS FAC RSL ELLL SC	S, M, L	Staff costs; match funding required; Revenue implications on grounds maintenance; Consultants fees.	• Increased quality of the most important open spaces; • Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement.
7.2.13	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council will seek developer contributions based on a Development Control Model based on information available from the '*SPP11*' audit, provision and quality standards for off site contributions for all types of green space.	SBC	S, M, L	Staff costs.	• Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. • Increased quality of the most important open spaces;

7.3 Use

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.3.1	Strong, inclusive and safe communities	The Council and other green space stakeholders will develop a *'Community Involvement Action Plan'* to engage and involve local communities through development of Friend's Groups in particular.	SBC RSL CC	S, M	Staff costs; New staff post.	• Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality;
7.3.2	Strong, inclusive and safe communities	The Council will develop, in partnership a system to develop volunteering opportunities on council managed green space.	SBC CC SNH	M, L	Staff costs; New staff post; Consultation.	• Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Health benefits to local people and visitors;
7.3.3	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council will work with health partners to investigate, assess and promote new ways of using green spaces to improve health and wellbeing. This will include investigating any possible funding opportunities.	SBC NHS SNH	M	Staff costs; New staff post.	• Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Health benefits to local people and visitors;
7.3.4	A well connected Borders	The Council will develop publicity material to publicise both strategic green space sites to all sectors of the community who need improved access to information on their local green spaces.	SBC CC SNH	S	Printing and design costs.	• Local community empowerment; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders;

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.3.5	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council will consult and involve local communities on green space issues and developments to include the following in line with the Council's Strategy for Community Engagement and Consultation. These will include : ❑ Children; ❑ Older People; ❑ People with Disabilities; ❑ Carers; ❑ People with Learning Difficulties; ❑ Black and Minority Ethnic groups; and ❑ Other excluded groups.	SBC CC BSLT	S, M, L	Staff costs; Consultation costs.	• Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within the Scottish Borders;
7.3.6	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being A well connected Borders	The Council will make "access for all" an integral part of all policy, strategy and activity in the planning development and management of the Borders green spaces in line with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, as well as adopting the *'BT Countryside for All'* standards and their accompanying approach as an integral part of any physical access policy.	SBC SNH FE	S, M, L	Capital and revenue implications.	• Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Increased access to natural green space.

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.3.7	Improved health and well being A well connected Borders	The Council with partners will extend the network of green corridors within the Borders towns and improve links and access to rural areas in developing a strategic network working in partnership.	SNH CC SBC	M	Capital and revenue implications.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Increased access to natural green space.
7.3.8	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council will seek to ensure that all strategic parks will have at least a destination play facility and a youth facility, if appropriate, all maintained to a high quality and of sufficient value to the local community.	SBC	M , L	Capital and revenue implications.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces;
7.3.9	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council with key partners will develop a network of play areas and play spaces in line with a new 'Play Area & Outdoor Youth Provision Strategy', in particular developing a more strategic overview of sites, with less emphasis on smaller equipped Local Areas of Play (LAP).	SBC CC Sch	S, M, L	Capital and revenue implications.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces;
7.3.10	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council will encourage the upgrading and improvement of school facilities and support the long term plans for the development of sports provision throughout the district. Any scheme submitted for support must however demonstrate wide community access to the facility.	SBC CC ELLL	M, L	Capital and revenue implications; Grant funding.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces;

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.3.11	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council will work in partnership with Community Councils to improve play area provision in the rural areas. Community Councils are not responsible for play provision within the rural areas but have the capacity to apply for grants to improve existing facilities within their own areas.	SBC CC	S, M, L	Staff costs.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces;
7.3.12	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council acknowledges an increased demand for small sided football which is currently hampered by the lack of available facilities. The value of such football in developing skills and participation in the game is recognised. Encouragement and support will be given to any new proposals for the provision of these facilities within the context of the applications for community projects.	SBC SC CC	M, L	Capital and revenue implications.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Increased participation in local sports.
7.3.13	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council with key partners, will seek to address any local deficit in playing pitch provision in the district, in particular Eyemouth.	SBC SC CC	M	Capital and revenue implications.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Increased participation in local sports.

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.3.14	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council will work with allotment tenants in developing and improving key allotment sites in the region, seeking external funding if possible and seeking to develop self management opportunities and establish models of best practice used elsewhere.	SBC CC	M	Capital and revenue implications; Staff costs.	• Health benefits to local people; • Local community empowerment; • Increased participation in allotment gardening.
7.3.15	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council will work in partnership with Community Councils to encourage them to improve existing allotment sites in rural areas, and investigate whether additional provision is needed.	CC SBC	S, M, L	Staff costs.	• Health benefits to local people; • Local community empowerment; • Increased participation in allotment gardening.
7.3.16	Strong, inclusive and safe communities Improved health and well being	The Council with local stakeholders, will aim to work with local schools more closely to achieve shared community goals and maximise the community use of school facilities. The partnership should also encourage the development of mini-soccer on appropriate school sites.	SBC ELLL SS SC	S, M, L	Staff costs; Revenue implications.	• Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Increased participation in local sports.

7.4 Environmental Protection

No.	Corporate Aim	Action	*Who	S,M,L Priority	Resource Requirements	Outcomes and Benefits
7.4.1	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council will seek developer contributions through Section 75 agreements to improve green space and will develop a system for "pooled" contributions towards the enhancement of the strategic network.	SBC SNH SS CC	S, M	Staff costs.	• Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. • Increased quality of the most important open spaces;
7.4.2	A protected and enhanced natural environment Improved health and well being	The Council will seek developer contributions through Section 75 agreements to improve play facilities, and will develop a system for "pooled" contributions towards the enhancement of play facilities in "strategic parks".	SBC CC	S, M	Staff costs.	• Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. • Increased quality of the most important open spaces;
7.4.3	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council will review those spaces classed as being of genuinely low quality and low value in the light of wider planning policies, taking account of accessibility, quality and value of alternative provision in the area and the resources available to the Council.	SBC CC	S, M	Staff costs.	• Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. • Identification of potential savings and efficiencies in relation to existing management and maintenance; • Local community empowerment;
8.4.4	A protected and enhanced natural environment	The Council will adopt more sustainable planting and maintenance practices, to inc. minimising inputs of non-renewable resources, pesticides and herbicides.	SBC SNH	S, M	Revenue implications on grounds maintenance.	• Increased biodiversity; • Enhancement of local open spaces.

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