



DUMFRIES AND
GALLOWAY COUNCIL

Local Development Plan

Adopted 1st December 2014



Open Space Strategy

Dumfries and Galloway Open Space Strategy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this document

1.1 The Dumfries and Galloway Open Space Strategy is a five year plan (2014-2019) that will inform decision making on open space and present the vision for new and improved open space and how existing valuable and valued areas are to be protected. It will also set out how Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC) will invest in and manage the open space in its area. Specifically, one of its main aims is to ensure that the majority of residents in the region have access to good quality open space. This will involve a flexible approach, with a focus on establishing multi-functional space where one space can serve the needs of different users and uses and on improving connectivity between residential areas and existing spaces and the wider green network.

1.2 The Strategy will help to understand supply and demand for open spaces, to identify deficiencies, to secure new provision, and to improve quality through better management. This document incorporates results gathered from the Dumfries and Galloway Open Space Audit and both the Strategy and Audit will be reviewed and updated every five years. The spatial elements of the Strategy will feed into the Local Development Plan (LDP) and associated Supplementary Guidance on Open Space which will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

1.3 This Strategy serves as an umbrella framework under which other Council strategies for specific types of open space (such as burial grounds, play areas and sports pitches) will sit. The Strategy mainly focuses on general “publicly usable” open space that is within or immediately adjacent to the larger settlements in the region, rather than the larger green network found in the forest parks, coastal areas and so on. Work on developing a wider Green Network Strategy is identified as a future action in this Strategy. In the meantime, this Strategy aims to complement other plans and strategies such as Open Outdoors (Dumfries and Galloway’s Outdoor Access Strategy 2012-2017) which aims to increase and improve

access to the wider countryside. An important part of this document will set out the Council’s standards for open space, identifying the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space that each settlement should aim to achieve.

Why is Open Space important?

1.4 Dumfries and Galloway has a wealth of open space within and around its towns and villages ranging from formal parks (such as Dock Park in Dumfries and Station Park, Moffat) to a vast network of green corridors and natural and semi-natural spaces, including forest walks and bike trails on the edge of settlements like Dalbeattie. Good quality open spaces that are safe, well managed and accessible can make a strong contribution towards the quality of life of local people and should be a source of community pride. They improve the appearance of towns and villages, and provide for informal recreation, sport and play and so contribute to enhancing people’s physical and mental health, as well as providing space for learning, socialising and relaxing.

1.5 Open space can also incorporate important historic and cultural elements that provide local communities with a sense of place. Where they incorporate semi-natural elements, they provide habitats for wildlife and bring people closer to nature. Their economic importance is often overlooked but well designed and maintained open space can reduce vandalism, provide excellent locations for events, draw tourists and encourage more people to live and work in the area. The Strategy will contribute to DGC’s Single Outcome Agreement and several of the Council’s Priorities and Commitments, which are listed in Section 2.19.

2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND VISION

Vision for open space

2.1 DGC will work with the public, private and voluntary sectors to develop and maintain: *“a network of high quality, sustainable open spaces that meet local needs, enhance quality of life, support a healthy and diverse range of natural habitats and contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of the whole community”*.

2.2 These outputs can be delivered across the whole range of open space types, from small local amenity spaces to larger facilities such as parks. A key aim will be to make the most of existing resources by: **increasing connectivity** and by making existing or any new spaces **multi-functional**.

Connectivity: by ensuring that open spaces are well-connected, they will be able to support greater levels of physical activity (including more active travel), to contribute to wider green and habitat networks as well as perform a flood management function.

Multi-functionality: given the pressures on spaces and resources, it is important that the spaces are designed, managed and promoted to perform as many functions for as many user groups as possible – for example Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) should provide a useful community space as well as an engineering solution.

2.3 The overall outcome of the Strategy is to maintain (or increase where possible) reasonable quantity, accessibility and quality of publicly usable open spaces - especially wider connectivity and multi-functionality - to help achieve the vision. This will ensure that there is sufficient open space provision of appropriate quality, within easy walking distance from people’s homes which is linked by paths and green corridors.

Open Space Strategy Objectives

2.4 The specific objectives which come under the overall outcome are as follows:

- Objective 1: maintain or increase (where necessary and possible) the amount of open space with the aim of meeting the publicly usable open space quantity and accessibility standards [set out in the Open Space Strategy];
- Objective 2: avoid fragmentation of existing open space networks;
- Objective 3: increase / enhance connectivity between open spaces and between these and residential areas;
- Objective 4: maintain or increase (where necessary and possible) the quality of existing spaces and ensure that new spaces are of good quality;
- Objective 5: ensure new open space is made as multi-functional as possible, serving a number of different uses and aim to improve multi-functionality of existing spaces.

2.5 These objectives will complement and support those found in other Council projects and strategies, such as the Access Strategy, and an Action Plan relating to them can be found in Section 6.



What are the other purposes of the Strategy?

2.6 As well as establishing a vision and identifying targeted actions, there are a number of other benefits of producing a strategic document to guide the future of Dumfries and Galloway's open space resource. These will help to ensure that a coordinated approach is taken to meet Dumfries and Galloway's open space needs whilst protecting and developing the region's network of open spaces. The other purposes of the Strategy are to:

- Support and inform the strategy and policies of the LDP and Supplementary Guidance on Open Space;
- Set the framework for addressing issues of deficiencies in open space provision / facilities and recommending cost effective improvements that meet local needs and the subsequent provision of open space required in new developments (this will be set out in more detail in the Supplementary Guidance); in this way, it will assist in making decisions on planning applications, for example by providing the justification for seeking contributions from developers for open space when planning permission for development is granted;
- Provide a prioritised framework for future investment;
- Support bids for capital investment and/or external funding opportunities;
- Set a basis for management and maintenance;
- Provide an effective means of co-ordinating the policies of different Council Services with responsibility for open space and in liaising with relevant public, private and community interests;
- Provide a focus for consultation, liaison and engagement with other relevant public service, private sector and community interests;
- Develop linkages with other local social, economic and environmental policies and objectives.



Definitions and Typologies of Open Space

2.7 There are a number of different terms used throughout this document, all with slightly different meanings (the term open space will be used in this Strategy because it covers all the different types of space, rather than just vegetated / planted spaces):

Greenspace: vegetated areas of open space such as playing fields, parks, allotments and cemeteries and green corridors like paths, disused railway lines, rivers and canals, derelict, vacant and contaminated land which has the potential to be transformed.

Open Space: refers to open land or areas that are vegetated or paved / hard landscaped within and on the edge of settlements. It includes greenspace, open land and public/civic space (for example town squares, market places, amenity land, sports areas and children's play areas).

Green Networks: a strategic network of existing and proposed green spaces and green corridors (see typologies below for a definition) within and around settlements (including open space found within settlements), linking out into the wider countryside. The network can include woodland and other habitats, active travel routes, greenspace links, watercourses and waterways, providing an enhanced setting for development and other land uses and improved opportunities for outdoor recreation and cultural activity.

Open Space Typologies used in the Audit

2.8 The Open Space Audit identified open space sites within or adjacent to the 48 settlements included in the survey work. Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65 sets out a typology for open space and this has been adapted for use in the Dumfries and Galloway Audit as follows (see Table 1 for definitions):

- Allotments and community growing spaces
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries
- Civic space
- Green corridors
- Semi-natural / Natural greenspaces
- Children's play areas
- Parks and gardens
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Other functional greenspace

For the purposes of devising the open space standards, these typologies have been further broken down into "publicly usable" (Table 2) and "limited use" open spaces (Table 3).



Table 1: Open Space Typologies identified in the DGC Open Space Audit

<p>Allotments and community growing spaces</p> 	<p>Areas of land for growing fruit, vegetables and other plants, either in individual allotments or as a community activity.</p>
<p>Amenity Greenspace</p> 	<p>Grassed or landscaped areas providing visual amenity or separating different buildings or land uses for environmental, visual or safety reasons and used for a variety of informal or social activities such as sunbathing, picnics or kickabouts. The Audit has generally only included more functional and usable areas of amenity space not, for example, grass verges along transportation routes etc.</p>
<p>Cemeteries</p> 	<p>Includes burial grounds and churchyards. Churchyards are encompassed within the walled boundary of a church and cemeteries are burial grounds outside the confines of a church.</p>
<p>Children's play areas</p> 	<p>Areas providing safe and accessible opportunities for children's play, usually linked to housing areas. Can also include provision for older children and teenagers, such as youth shelters and skateparks.</p>
<p>Civic space</p> 	<p>Squares, streets and waterfront promenades, predominantly of hard landscaping that provide a focus for pedestrian activity and can make connections for people and for wildlife.</p>

Table 1: Open Space Typologies identified in the DGC Open Space Audit

<p>Green corridors</p>		<p>Routes including canals, riverbanks, cycleways, rights of way, disused railway lines and grass verges linking different areas within a settlement as part of a designated and managed network and used for walking, cycling or horse riding and which allow movement of wildlife along them. They can link settlements to surrounding countryside and link different green spaces together. They can often be seen as links that have been identified as being valuable to the realisation of the Green Network. Their principal characteristic is, or will be, connectivity.</p>
<p>Outdoor sports facilities</p>		<p>Large and generally flat areas of grassland or specially designed surfaces, used primarily for designated sports (including playing fields, golf courses, tennis courts and bowling greens).</p>
<p>Parks and gardens</p>		<p>Areas of land normally enclosed, designed, constructed, managed and maintained as a public park or garden. These may be owned or managed by community groups.</p>
<p>Semi-natural / Natural greenspaces</p>		<p>Areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with residual natural habitats or which have been planted or colonised by vegetation and wildlife, including woodland and wetland areas.</p>
<p>Other functional greenspace</p>		<p>May be one or more types as required by local greenspace circumstances or priorities. For example, this may include small school grounds (not playing fields) or institutional grounds which are not public amenity space.</p>

2.9 PAN65 also includes “private gardens and / or grounds” within the typology. However, such spaces have not been included within the DGC Audit as they are not considered to contribute to open space and are difficult to identify in a dispersed rural region characterised to a large extent by lower density housing. Additionally, whilst beaches and coastline are not specifically included in the definition of open space, the strategy recognises they are inherent to what the residents and visitors to Dumfries and Galloway consider to be their open space resource. Where such spaces are found within or adjacent to the relevant settlements, they have been classified as “Semi-natural / Natural Greenspaces” in the audit.

The location, type and size of open space the Strategy will cover

2.10 The Strategy will mainly focus on open space that is:

- within or adjacent to the 48 settlements designated as Regional, District and Local Centres in the Proposed Local Development Plan (LDP) as listed below:

Annan	Glenluce
Auchencairn	Gretna
Braehead/ Kirkinner	Holywood
Canonbie	Johnstonebridge
Carsphairn	Kirkcolm
Castle Douglas	Kirkconnel
Closeburn	Kirkcowan
Creetown	Kirkcudbright
Crossmichael	Langholm
Dalbeattie	Leswalt
Drummore	Lochmaben
Dumfries	Lockerbie
Eaglesfield	Moffat
Eastriggs	Moniaive
Ecclefechan	New Abbey
Garlieston	New Galloway
Gatehouse of Fleet	Newton Stewart
Glencaple	Palnackie

Penpont	St.John’s Town of Dalry
Port William	Stranraer
Portpatrick	Thornhill
Sandhead	Twynholm
Sanquhar	Whithorn
Springholm	Wigtown

- within villages (as identified in the LDP Supplementary Guidance on Open Space);
- generally above a size threshold of 0.2 hectares (smaller spaces may be included if locally significant);
- “publicly usable”, as set out in Table 2. These are considered the spaces that provide a community function and can be multi-functional. They are often the types of spaces that could be expected to be provided or enhanced as part of new development. Table 3 highlights those spaces that are considered of “limited use” in relation to the definition of public usability found in this Strategy.

It should be noted that, in individual cases, there will be spaces which fall into a “limited use” open space typology but are in fact publicly usable – for example, some school and institutional grounds will provide public access and use. Equally, there will be some spaces which, whilst they fall under one of the general “publicly usable” categories, may not in reality provide functional or accessible space. Where possible, these cases will be highlighted in the appropriate settlement statements (which are set out in the Supplementary Guidance on Open Space) and allowances made for these specific spaces in any analysis of local provision and need.

Table 2: Open Space Typologies – “Publicly Usable”

Type	Full open access? (when assessing quantity / accessibility standards – see Section 2.11-13)
Amenity greenspace	Yes
Children’s play areas	Yes
Civic space	Yes
Green corridors	Yes
Semi-natural / Natural greenspaces	Yes
Public parks and gardens	Yes
Outdoor sports facilities (unlimited access)	Yes Sports areas with full open public access have been defined as those that are accessible at any time (e.g. not fenced off or locked / do not require payment, pre-booking, membership etc.) such as public playing fields.
Outdoor sports facilities (limited access)	No Sports areas that do not have full open public access are defined as those that, for example, are locked when not in use / require booking / payment / are restricted to certain users etc. (including school playing fields, sports pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens).
Allotments and community growing spaces	No Most of this type of provision in Dumfries and Galloway is in the form of allotments where, although they are recognised as an important community resource, use is generally restricted to plot holders only.
Other functional greenspace	Depends on type of space, usually no

Table 3: Open Space Typologies – “Limited use” open space

Type	Description
Burial grounds	Includes churchyards and cemeteries. Although any member of the public is usually able to visit such spaces without restriction, the sensitive and specific nature of these areas means that they have not been included as publicly usable space.
Restricted Outdoor Sports areas	Sports areas which have restricted access e.g. private ownership, require specific membership etc. Examples include golf courses and sports club / team pitches and grounds.
Other restricted space	Although, technically, most land in Scotland is publicly accessible under the Land Reform Act (2003), for the purposes of this Strategy and the open space standards, other spaces that are considered to have “restricted” public use have been identified, including: building / institutional grounds e.g. hospital grounds; restricted natural space e.g. open water; agricultural fields and any other ground that is generally not easily accessible to members of the public due to restricted physical access / private ownership and so on.

Types of open space used in identifying standards

2.11 The framework of standards set out in this Strategy is designed to be locally flexible allowing the context of any open space, or any proposed development, to be taken into account. To do this, the structure of local standards is made up of:

- **A quantity standard**

Defined as the “ideal” quantity of open space per 1000 people and allowing decisions to be taken on how much new space needs to be provided in any development, based on existing provision. This will focus on publicly usable space which has full open access to all (see Table 2).

- **An accessibility standard**

Defined in relation to a five minute walk to the nearest publicly usable (and open to all) open space.

- **A quality standard**

Defined as an expected level of quality required from any new space and a target for managing all spaces.

2.12 The quantity, accessibility and quality standards for open space will apply only to those spaces that are considered “publicly usable”. For the quantity and accessibility standards, this will be further refined to only apply to those spaces that are fully free and accessible (i.e. “full open access” as specified in Table 2). This is roughly defined as space that any member of the public can access at any reasonable time without pre-booking, membership requirements, special permission and so on. Whilst the Strategy recognises the importance of all types of open space, the reason for this distinction when identifying quantity and accessibility standards is to ensure that the Council’s open space standards prioritise those spaces that provide the most benefit to the most people.

2.13 For example, when initially calculating the quantity of open space within a settlement to demonstrate whether there is a deficiency or surplus of open space, this will not include open space which has restricted physical access or limited opening hours, entrance or usage fees, the need to pre-book, membership conditions and other similar limitations. This may apply to, for example, allotments and locked sports areas such as public tennis courts which, whilst they may be provided for the community, their use is relatively limited. Including such spaces in the calculation of the amount of open space in an area would not be a true reflection of how much accessible open space is really available. This will be especially useful for the purposes of the LDP when determining open space requirements as part of a planning application. This distinction is only for the purposes of identifying where need is greatest in the first instance, it does not restrict the type of open space which may eventually be provided, or where funds may be directed. More details are set out in Section 3, Open Space Standards.



National and Local Policy Context

National policy context

Policy requirements set out in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

2.14 SPP 2014 states that “Planning should protect, enhance and promote green infrastructure, including open space and green networks, as an integral part of successful placemaking” and that “Development plans should be based on a holistic, integrated and cross-sectoral approach to green infrastructure. They should be informed by relevant, up-to-date audits, strategies and action plans covering green infrastructure’s multiple functions”.



2.15 It goes on to state that the LDP should identify and protect open space identified in the open space audit and strategy as valued and functional, or which are capable of being brought into use to meet local needs.

Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

2.16 This Act is a significant piece of legislation for open space. As well as requiring Local Authorities to create a Core Path Plan, Section 13 of the Act states that: “the Council as Access Authority will assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction any route, waterway or other means by which access rights may reasonably be exercised”.

2.17 Other relevant national guidance:

- Greenspace Scotland advice notes and publications including “Greenspace Quality: guide to assessment, planning and strategic development”
- Scottish Government, A Walking Strategy for Scotland
- Scottish Government, Designing Streets
- Scottish Government, Equally Well
- Scottish Government, Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking
- Scottish Government, National Physical Activity Strategy
- Scottish Government, Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65: Planning and Open Space
- Scottish Government, Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight
- Scottish Natural Heritage, Green Networks in Development Planning
- Scottish Natural Heritage, Open Space Audit Guidance
- Transport Scotland, Cycling Action Plan for Scotland

Local policy context

2.18 Local Development Plan policies:

Overarching Policies Section:

- Policy OP2: Design Quality of New Development (particularly, the need to increase connectivity to nearby places, paths, streets and open space; and to ensure any open space required is of high quality, appropriate and integrated and provides linkages to the wider green network)
- Policy OP3: Developer Contributions

Housing Section:

- Policy H2: Housing Development in Villages (particularly the need to ensure any proposals would not lead to the loss of open space)

Natural Environment Section:

- Policy NE7: Trees and Development
- Policy NE12: Protection of Water Margins

Infrastructure Section:

- Policy IN8: Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Community Facilities Section:

- Policy CF2: Green Networks
- Policy CF3: Open Space
- Policy CF4: Access Routes

Transport Section:

- Policy T5: Former Transportation Routes



Links with Other Strategies

How does the Open Space Strategy link with wider Council objectives?

2.19 The Strategy will contribute to and support the following Council objectives:

Council Priorities and Commitments

DGC agreed a revised set of Council priorities on 1 October 2013. The following Priorities relate to the Open Space Strategy:

- ***“We will provide a good start in life for all our children”***

To provide a good start in life for all our children, we will: invest in and maintain our school estate; carry out a review into the school facilities charging policy, with a view to providing local people with greater access to school buildings.

- ***“We will support and stimulate our local economy”***

To support and stimulate our local economy, we will: maximise developer contributions as part of our planning process.

- ***“We will protect and sustain our environment”***

To protect and sustain our environment, we will: further develop quality formal and informal play space, investing in parks and safe urban greenspace and establish a dedicated fund to replace play park equipment.

Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013-2016

The following priorities from the SOA relate to the Open Space Strategy:

- Priority 1: We will provide a good start in life for all our children

Ambitions and actions relating to Priority 1:

1.1 All our children will have the best possible health and wellbeing.

- Priority 3: We will care for our older and vulnerable people

Ambitions and actions relating to Priority 2:

3.2 Older and vulnerable people will be enabled to optimise their health and wellbeing (we will increase the physical activity levels of older and vulnerable adults by promoting a range of physical activity opportunities and increasing knowledge, confidence and skills).

- Priority 6: We will protect and sustain our environment

Ambitions and actions relating to Priority 6:

6.1 We will be a carbon reducing region (we will reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption; we will increase the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport).

6.4 Our landscape, natural and built environment will be sustainably managed (we will make the most of our communities' natural assets; our communities and visitors will be involved in the management and use of our landscape and heritage; local residents and visitors will be encouraged to enjoy our landscape and heritage; the natural habitats and species in Dumfries and Galloway will be protected and managed; our children will use the natural environment as an integral part of their learning).

2.20 The Open Space Strategy will also have important links with other Council / Regional Strategies as listed below:

- Access Strategy (Open Outdoors, Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor Access Strategy, 2012-2017)
- Active Travel Strategy (pending)
- Allotment Strategy (pending)
- Burial Grounds Strategy (pending)
- Carbon Management Plan 2 and Climate Change Action Plan

- Child Healthy Weight Sustainability Framework (2011)
- Community Plan (2009)
- Core Paths Plan
- Cultural Strategy (2009)
- Forestry and Woodland Strategy (2014)
- Leisure and Sport Strategy (2006-2010)
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2008)
- Local Development Plan and associated Supplementary Guidance (due 2014)
- Local Housing Strategy (2012)
- Local Transport Strategy (2011)
- Physical Activity Strategy (2008-2011)
- Play Equipment (Playspace) Strategy (pending)
- Regional Transport Strategy (2008)
- Sports Pitch Strategy (2006-2011)

this Service. They will work with other Services to make sure that all mapping and associated geographical information relating to the open space audit is accurate and kept up to date.

- **Countryside Services:** the Access Team provide advice and strategy for outdoor access and countryside asset management, paths (including the Core Path Plan), environmental education, Local Nature Reserves and countryside sites, Biosphere Reserve and countryside interpretation and promotion. Examples of their work includes: ensuring statutory access rights to most land and inland water, providing a strategic framework for planning, managing and developing outdoor access, maintaining and updating the Core Path Plan and implementing path development projects.
- **Development Management:** work closely with developers and other Council services to ensure that suitable levels of open space provision and environmental standards are built into new developments to meet the needs of both new and existing residents and users of this development.

Who in the Council is involved with open space?

2.21 Much of Dumfries and Galloway's urban open space is owned and managed through the Council although there are a number of differing Service responsibilities and influences on open spaces across the local authority area. The main Services that are connected with some aspect of open space, and who will be most involved with the implementation of this Strategy are as follows (more on the role of these Services can be found in Section 6):

- **Business and Technology Solutions:** management of Ordnance Survey (O.S.) mapping is undertaken by the Geographical Information System (GIS) team who come under



- **Development Planning and Environment:** Development Planning prepares the land use context for the promotion of economic development, environmental improvement, countryside access, and open space issues. Audit information on open space distribution and quality will be maintained in support of the LDP. With the assistance of specialist advisors, the LDP must identify and protect open spaces which are valued and functional and provide the policy basis for the provision of new open space. The Environment team within this section also deals with specialist environmental advice including conservation, archaeology, landscape, and biodiversity. The Sustainable Development Team's workload includes topics such as energy and carbon management and climate change. Open space plays an important role in climate change mitigation.
- **DGFirst:** Roads, Neighbourhood and Contracted Services and Environmental Services are responsible for maintaining the physical environment and the wellbeing and maintenance of community infrastructure and neighbourhoods. This includes the maintenance of managed areas such as parks, sports grounds, school grounds, play areas and amenity open spaces. There are over 260 play areas within Dumfries and Galloway and most play areas in public areas and private developments, after adoption by the Council, are managed and maintained by DGFirst. They are also responsible for burial services and grounds maintenance. Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide allotments where there is proven demand.
- **DG Health and Wellbeing:** A joint unit between NHS Dumfries & Galloway and Dumfries and Galloway Council. The main purpose is to commission actions to improve health and reduce health inequalities, including promoting physical activity.
- **Education:** services are concerned with providing opportunities for all children and young people to participate in physical activity and sport both within schools and in the wider community. The School Estate Management section articulates the property-related needs of the Service, including work relating to school playing fields and outdoor facilities. The aim is to make best use of school resources such as enabling the creation of pathways from the school to the wider area; they also work in partnership with schools and the wider community to draw together local resources to increase physical activity levels.
- **Infrastructure and Commissioning:** their role includes strategic asset management, programme management and commissioning of work, including commissioning of public open space infrastructure and burial services.
- **Integrated Transport and Commissioning:** Sustainable Travel are involved in promoting and implementing active travel schemes such as cycling and walking promotion, for example through the use of green corridors and cycle paths.
- **Property and Architectural Services:** their prime function is safeguarding the Council's long term interests in property and land assets and they provide for all strategic property advice through a range of core services which respond to identified needs and make best use of approved resources. Council-owned land asset records are held by Property Services; they also provide the Council with a comprehensive property service managing all sales, acquisitions and leases of property, including open space, as well as managing and maintaining corporate property information including the asset register. They are responsible for asset management, for example ensuring that surplus open space of low quality is put to better use. Effective asset management should lead to increased efficiencies and asset performance.
- **Sports Development;** Leisure and Sports facilities: based within the Community and Customer Services section, they provide opportunities for all residents of the region to participate in sport; they also promote safe and enjoyable participation in outdoor activities and foster an appreciation of and respect for the natural environment.

Green networks – how will these develop in the future?

2.22 Open space in isolation does not offer as many benefits as when it can be joined up as part of a green network. These networks can help to enhance the area's biodiversity, quality of life and sense of place. A green network also provides the setting in which high quality, sustainable development can occur. The LDP includes green network considerations and the Outdoor Access Strategy also supports the role of the green network in the region.

2.23 Dumfries and Galloway potentially has a vast network of green spaces across its entire area but for the purposes of this Strategy, there is a focus on those parts of the network which are within close proximity to settlements where they can be relatively easily accessed by the local population. Green networks which provide opportunities for physical activity and access to the outdoors, and increase accessibility within settlements and to the surrounding countryside, will be promoted and safeguarded through the LDP.

2.24 The recent work carried out on the region-wide open space audit and the Core Path Network (as well as emerging national good practice on green networks) provides an opportunity to develop this concept further. Work on developing a wider Green Network Strategy is identified as a future action in this Strategy.



3. OPEN SPACE IN DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY: Open Space Audit and Standards

Open Space Audit Methodology

3.1 Scottish Planning Policy requires planning authorities to carry out a comprehensive open space audit and develop an associated strategy for their area which will inform the LDP. The open space audit provides the essential baseline understanding of open space assets across the local authority area. The essential elements of an audit are to record the type, functions, size, condition and location of open spaces and to provide some insight on levels of use and fitness for purpose. The process should also identify community views on the value of open spaces and aspirations for their future role.

3.2 The Dumfries and Galloway Open Space Audit was carried out between 2010-2013 on a settlement by settlement basis and included a total of 48 settlements across the region (see under section 2.10 for a list of settlements). These settlements were chosen as they have a specific Inset Map in the LDP and have been categorised as Regional, District and Local Centres.

3.3 This audit information has helped to form the basis of an assessment of current and future

needs and has been used to inform the standards set out below, as well as the advice contained in the Supplementary Guidance on Open Space. Over 1000 sites across the 48 settlements in the region were included in the audit, including over 600 “publicly usable” spaces. There is no national methodology to audit open space but it is recommended to assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of open spaces and to consult with the public. Many towns and villages have good networks of open space and have large amounts of usable space within easy reach of residents. For others, however, the audit shows that there is very little provision of usable open space or there are large parts of the settlement that are not within the accessibility standard of a five minute walk to usable space over 0.2 hectares.

3.4 The Audit is available on the Council’s internal GIS and maps showing the location and typology of open spaces have also been produced to accompany this Strategy. These can be found in the Annex to the Strategy (this can be found in a separate document published alongside the Strategy). Please note that the maps in the Annex show all typologies of open space, including publicly usable and limited use spaces.





3.5 Open space in the villages which do not have inset maps in the LDP will be identified in the Supplementary Guidance on Open Space, mainly for the purposes of protecting them from inappropriate development (subject to LDP policy CF3). Whilst these open space sites have not been formally audited and are therefore not able to be subject to the standards set out below, the principles from this Strategy and the Supplementary Guidance can still be applied to decisions on open space in these smaller settlements.

Setting Open Space Standards

3.6 The following standards will set a benchmark against which settlements can be assessed in relation to open space. This will enable the Council to identify where there may be issues with open space and is particularly useful for Development Management when making decisions on open space provision for new development. The standards described here will be supplemented by a series of specific settlement statements found in the Supplementary Guidance on Open Space, a planning document which will accompany the LDP. These statements will set out in greater detail the particular characteristics

of individual places, how the general standards may be applied and also highlight opportunities to be flexible in interpreting the standards. For example, a settlement may not physically be able to meet the various quantity and accessibility standards due to constraints such as main roads, topography etc. The settlement statement can therefore be used to explain that rather than insisting on new space when new development is proposed, the accessibility of existing space may be able to be improved (e.g. by providing better linkages between spaces and residential areas) to ensure that more people can use them. Alternatively, it may suggest that existing spaces are made more multi-functional to again increase the potential use of the space, maximising the capacity of what already exists.

3.7 Where it is demonstrated that the minimum quantity and accessibility standards are being met by existing provision, then raising the quality of that provision may be required instead of, or as well as new provision. This concept is particularly important because it is possible to increase the amount of publicly usable space in an area by ensuring that 'unusable' open space typologies become more usable. This could include the creation of multi-functional sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) or creating streets which function as civic spaces for people rather than as roads for traffic. In some cases it might simply be about ensuring that school grounds, for example, are (and stay) accessible for public use.

3.8 To be successful in improving the quality and sustainability of settlements in the region, open space standards should be 'challenging but achievable'. Therefore the standards identified aim to represent an improvement on the current position but not one that is so large as to be unachievable. The expectation should be that the open space resource will get 'better' so, depending on local circumstances, this might involve changes in quantity, quality and/or accessibility. The way to meet any improvements to standards of open space will primarily be through developer contributions or external funding.

Quantity

3.9 The Quantity Standard sets a 'target' amount of open space that would be expected in settlements within Dumfries and Galloway and is expressed in terms of hectares of open space per 1000 people. This will be used as a benchmark against which individual settlements can be compared and allows for the identification of priorities for open space provision. This element of the standard begins to take account of local context and allows a different set of actions to be taken depending on whether the area under consideration has more or less publicly usable open space than the Council-wide Standard.

3.10 The quantity standard is developed from an analysis of the current levels of "publicly usable" open space which is open for all (see Table 2) in each of the 48 settlements included in the Audit, using the latest population figures. This standard is of particular value in determining the open space requirements for new developments (either in terms of new open space within the development or for determining developer contributions to be used for improving existing spaces). The quantity standard is based on an understanding that there will be settlements with an under-provision of open space and others with an over-provision of open space (often unusable 'green deserts' or vacant and derelict sites).

3.11 There are no national standards to audit the quantity of open space so a regional figure was identified. In Dumfries and Galloway, the standard has been identified as **6 hectares of publicly usable open space per 1000 population**¹.

3.12 Appendix 1 provides the results of the quantity analysis, as well as the accessibility analysis which is described below. This shows that whilst many settlements have a very large amount

of open space available for public use, a significant number fall well below the standard. There is also a very wide variation in the quantity of publicly usable open space between settlements, from 0.12ha per 1000 people (Palnackie) to over 78ha per 1000 (Gatehouse of Fleet). Individual settlement statements in the Supplementary Guidance will go some way to address these discrepancies, for example they may highlight opportunities where previously unusable space can be made more functional and accessible or where existing path networks (which may not have been identified in the audit) can be included as part of the consideration of open space needs.

Using the quantity standard

3.13 There are two main uses for the quantity standard:

- **Existing spaces**

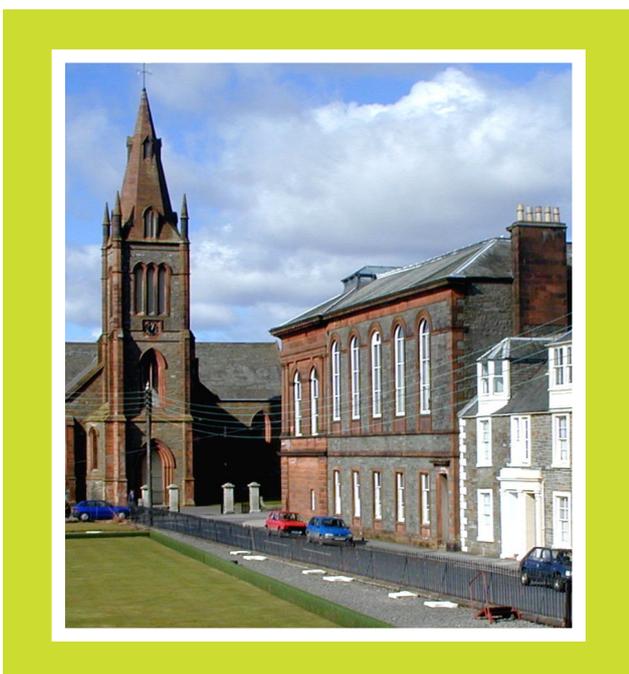
Applying it to the existing open space resource allows for the identification of areas of surplus (where it may be possible to use some of the lower quality spaces in another way) and of deficit where the creation of publicly usable open space is a priority.

- **New spaces**

In determining a planning application for housing, where a development is proposed in an area that has less publicly usable open space than the quantity standard, then the developer will be required to provide open space within the development equivalent to the quantity standard (whilst also meeting the accessibility and quality standards). See policy CF3 in the LDP for more details.

1. This amount is roughly based on a "median" figure identified through analysis of the amount of publicly usable space identified in the Audit per 1000 people in each of the 48 settlements i.e. the figure which roughly half the settlements are above and half are below. The median figure was approximately 6.7 hectares per 1000 which has been rounded down to 6 to help to ensure a more achievable target. The "average" amount of open space across all the settlements was not used as several settlements have an exceptionally large amount of open space, even when removing the extreme figures at either end. Therefore, using the average amount as a standard was seen to create an unrealistic target for many settlements to reach.

3.14 Where the development is in an area which has more publicly usable open space than the quantity standard, then it is usually only necessary for the developer to ensure that the accessibility standard is met (and that any new spaces that are required meet the quality standard).



Accessibility

3.15 There is no national standard for auditing access but, generally, the accessibility standard is expressed as a walking distance threshold from every home to a publicly usable, fit for purpose open space of a minimum size. In Dumfries and Galloway, this has been set as a target of every household in the 48 settlements included in the Audit being a **5 minute walk from a publicly usable open space site of at least 0.2 hectares in size which is open for all** (see Table 2). The settlement statements in the Supplementary Guidance on Open Space will set out the accessibility analysis in more detail.

3.16 Generally, in an urban design context, a 5 minute walk is considered to equate to a distance of 400 metres “door to space”. This has been approximated by setting the standard as an “as

the crow flies” buffer set at 75% of the walking distance i.e. 300 metres. As more data becomes available on entrance points of open space etc., it may be possible to use a “network analysis” approach to more accurately measure accessibility which will take into account roads and other walking barriers. For the time being, however, the figure used for this accessibility analysis will be based on an “as the crow flies” distance. This data will be supplemented with consultation with local officers when required.

3.17 0.2 hectares has been chosen as this is the size of space where spaces start to become multifunctional and active use can be accommodated, for example 0.2 hectares is big enough for a “kick about” pitch or other informal play.

3.18 The detailed settlement statements will be able to highlight how any accessibility deficiencies could be addressed. For example, it would recommend that the developer of any potential housing sites should provide new space to contribute towards addressing the deficiency of space. It may also highlight core or other paths in the area which help to increase access to open space and where developer contributions could create linkages with the existing path network, or where there may be opportunities to increase public use of space which is currently not accessible.

Using the accessibility standard

3.19 By applying the accessibility standard to the existing open space resource, it is possible to identify those areas which do not meet the standard. In these areas, creation of new spaces (and/or improved access to existing spaces) is a priority. Any new development in such an area would be required to provide accessible multi-functional open space or to create better links to existing spaces if they are nearby. Any resources available for open space (whether from developer contributions or other sources) should be applied to addressing the accessibility shortfall.

3.20 Where a development (residential or otherwise) reduces accessibility to open space for neighbouring areas, this must be factored into the design to ensure that the accessibility standard continues to be met. In some circumstances, a simple access solution may dramatically reduce the amount of open space needed to meet the accessibility standard.

The accessibility standard overrides the quantity standard. In circumstances where a settlement or neighbourhood has a relatively high level of open space but some houses do not meet the accessibility standard this must be addressed.

Results from the quantity and accessibility analysis

3.21 A brief summary of the results of the accessibility analysis are shown in Appendix 1, along with the quantity results. Many settlements do have some gaps in provision i.e. there are areas that are not within a 5 minute walk of publicly usable space of at least 0.2 hectares, while some have poor accessibility as well as low overall provision. Others, however, are fully provided for in relation to access so, as long as any new proposal can continue to meet the accessibility standard, any development here may need to focus on improving the quality of existing space rather than providing new additional space.

3.22 In the majority of cases, the lack of provision should be able to be addressed through the provision of open space which would be provided as part of new development, or through improving linkages with existing spaces, wider networks or by making spaces that are currently closed to the public more accessible – such as opening up school playing fields for wider community use.

3.23 As the accessibility results are based on an “as the crow flies” buffer, not taking account of physical barriers such as rivers, railways, main roads or lack of access points, more detailed analysis and further consultation with local officers will be required to specifically determine required

additional provision or accessibility improvements. More detail on the accessibility analysis of the settlements will be provided in the individual settlement statements in the LDP Supplementary Guidance on Open Space.



Quality

3.24 In many areas, the biggest open space challenge relates not to quantity but to the quality of spaces. Any new spaces created in an area should be of an acceptable quality and have management in place to ensure that this quality is maintained. Equally, management of existing open spaces needs to target quality shortfalls.

3.25 All spaces should, wherever possible, be multi-functional so in all considerations of open space, for example when deciding on developer contributions, there will be an objective of increasing multi-functionality of spaces to maximise their contribution to quality of place and the benefits that they provide to local communities. Increasingly, there is also a recognition of the benefits of incorporating green infrastructure functions, such as water management, into new and existing open spaces. These aspirations are also included in Scottish Planning Policy. It may, therefore, be desirable to incorporate these concepts into any quality considerations.

Quality Assessment in Dumfries and Galloway

3.26 Some quality analysis has been undertaken of open space sites included in the Audit. However, it has been recommended that the methodology used in this initial analysis should be revised and improved. A full quality assessment will therefore be undertaken of open space sites over 0.2 hectares in subsequent audit reviews.

3.27 Once a comprehensive quality scoring system has been put in place, it would be expected that all publicly usable open space should meet a "good" quality standard. In the meantime, it will be possible to assess quality of existing spaces through consultation with local officers working, for example, in neighbourhood services, grounds maintenance, sports and leisure and community services. Data can also be taken from existing assessments (such as Land Audit Management Systems - LAMS) which the Council already carry out for play areas, parks and gardens. The use of

this data and specific consultation will be carried out as and when necessary. For example this may be done as part of a planning application when deciding whether new development should either provide new open space or, if there is sufficient open space already but of a poorer quality, contribute towards the improvement of existing space.

Using the quality standard

3.28 The quality standard has two main uses:

- Existing spaces

Assessing the quality of the existing open space resource allows an identification of where investment is needed to make improvements. This can be built into the management priorities for specific spaces and can also be used to target investment from developer contributions. In some cases, where spaces are seen as being of poorer quality, there may be a need to review what this space is being used for and whether it might be better managed for some other function.
- New spaces

Where new spaces are created, these must be of an acceptable quality and have arrangements in place to ensure that this quality is sustained over time:

 - all new spaces should be designed to meet an acceptable quality standard and arrangements must be made to ensure that management is in place which can be expected to maintain this standard in the long term;
 - the quality standard applies to open space within and outwith the new development – where local open space is not of a good quality but the new development is only required to provide the minimum or intermediate quantities of open space, developer contributions should also be sought and applied to improving local quality.

4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Overview

4.1 To identify the attitudes and needs of the broader community, a survey was undertaken with local residents in 2011. This online questionnaire was hosted on the Council's website and was publicised in the local press and media. Participants were invited to complete a short questionnaire consisting of 15 questions. Key issues covered included: current usage of open spaces; reasons for usage/non-usage of open spaces; time taken/distance travelled to open spaces and attitudes to open spaces (e.g. adequacy, quality, accessibility).

4.2 A summary of the results are presented here for information and the specific findings have been used to help inform the objectives, priorities and action plans set out in this Strategy as well as the settlement statements found in the LDP Supplementary Guidance on Open Space.

Public Consultation Results Summary

4.3 In total 695 responses were generated with the greatest proportion of respondents living in Dumfries. The survey provides a robust sample of both users and non-users of provision across the area.

4.4 The most popular typology to be visited on a frequent basis was footpaths / cyclepaths, with over a third (35.7%) of respondents stating that they visit such provision more than once a week, considerably higher than the next nearest typologies of natural areas (19%), public parks (17%) and grassed amenity areas on housing estates or recreation grounds (17%). The everyday accessibility of these kinds of open spaces (e.g. as walking routes) are likely to contribute to the higher level of regular usage.



4.5 Beaches and churchyard / cemeteries tend to be visited on a less frequent basis i.e. less than once a month. It is not likely that this reflects the quality of these types of open spaces but is a reflection on the uses associated with these typologies, given their characteristics. For example, visitors to churchyard/cemeteries are likely to be tending to a grave, a practice most often carried out a few times a year on specific occasions. A visit to the beach may also be more frequent during the summer months or during holidays.

4.6 A high proportion of respondents never visit allotments and teenage/youth provision, with 78.1% and 67.3% respectively stating this. This is likely to reflect the niche use of such types of provision and/or in some specific examples a lack of actual provision. The latter appears to be the trend for the more populated settlements in Dumfries and Galloway. For example, 75.6% of respondents from Kirkcudbright identify they never access allotment provision. Audit findings support this as it shows there is currently no provision in the area. However, consultation highlights that demand exists, as a local group is looking to create a new allotment site for individuals registered as interested in holding a plot.

Reasons for visiting provision

4.7 The most popular reason for visiting open spaces in Dumfries and Galloway is to exercise with over two thirds (69.9%) of respondents citing this. This is followed by 51.4% stating the main reason is to take a shortcut/pleasant route. This also corresponds with why footpaths/cycle paths are a popular type of open space.

4.8 The variety of uses for open spaces is evident from the results. A diverse range of activities take place, from taking children to play/ use play areas (47.6%) and for family outings (46.6%) to observing wildlife (41.2%) and to relax/ contemplate (41.4%). All these indicate not only the variety in use but also the value placed on these spaces as focal points for local communities.

Reasons for not visiting

4.9 Respondents which state they have not visited any open space provision were asked what the main reason is preventing use. The most common reason (41%) is that they are too busy to visit provision. This is followed by a smaller percentage (27.1%), which state facilities are not maintained or are in a state of disrepair.

Importance of open space

4.10 The majority of respondents (62%) rate open spaces as being very important, with a further 29.2% rating provision as quite important. Only 7.4% consider open space as being either not very important (6%) or not at all important (1.4%).

Rate of availability of provision

4.11 The majority of typologies are rated as having a good level of availability. In particular footpaths/cyclepaths (39.9%), nature areas (39.7%) and churchyard/cemeteries (36.7%) are viewed as having a good level of availability. In addition, beaches receive a very good rating.

4.12 Allotments (19.3%) and teenage provision (15.4%) are the only open spaces to receive a very poor rating for availability. This is likely to be a result of the apparent low levels of availability identified through the audit for both types of open space. Both of these types of open space are identified as being in demand. For allotments this is demonstrated by the number of people on waiting lists for each site and for teenage provision by the frequent desire identified via community consultation.

Rate of quality of provision

4.13 Similar to results for availability, most typologies are rated as being of either good or average quality. Nature areas (36.8%), footpaths / cyclepaths (35.5%) and churchyard/cemeteries (32.2%) are viewed as being of a good quality. Teenage provision is the only typology to receive significant negative ratings in terms of quality. A total of 18.9% and 14.8% respectively view provision as being either poor or very poor for quality.

5. CHALLENGES

Auditing open space and setting standards in a diverse, rural area

5.1 Dumfries and Galloway covers a very large geographical area, typified by large numbers of small dispersed settlements, often displaying diverse characteristics, located within open countryside. This poses challenges for identifying specific open space areas as, in many cases, sites can be very large with no clear distinction between publicly usable and less accessible space (for example, forest parks may contain a series of paths but the entire forest itself is not necessarily usable).

5.2 Much of the established methodology on open space auditing is based on larger urban areas where it is usually easier to distinguish open space from the wider built environment and where there are much larger populations. The audit data therefore has to be used with an understanding that not every piece of potentially usable space may have been captured within the audit. Equally, some areas of open space may have been included which are not fully usable or accessible. This is often because some areas are very large and cannot realistically be checked in their entirety.

5.3 There have also been challenges in devising realistic standards in the region. There are large variations between the size and characteristics of settlements and between each area's open space resource. What is reasonable to expect in the larger settlements would not be reasonable in the smaller places which do not have the size of population or age structure to justify the provision of a wide range of open space typologies.

5.4 This challenge has been greatly helped through close collaboration with Greenspace Scotland who have assisted the Council in developing a set of standards that can be used in a rural authority such as Dumfries and Galloway. This has provided a flexible approach using a mixture of standards and the recognition that different settlements may require different

approaches. This has led to a focus on trying to create spaces that are multi-functional and connected, rather than struggling to provide every type of possible space.

Budget pressures

5.5 Much of the open space that is currently maintained by DGFirst on behalf of the Council is maintained to a high standard. However, in the current financial climate it is realistic to anticipate that there will be a reduction in the standard of maintenance within certain areas of open space. There will be exceptions to this, for example, where grant conditions dictate a certain level of maintenance. Any reduction in maintenance will be subject to appropriate consultation at community level.

Wider Economic Downturn

5.6 Although it is recognised that, as well as social and environmental benefits, there are economic returns on investing in open space (for example, it improves an area's image, helping to attract and retain new residents and businesses), inevitably, the recent economic downturn has placed pressure on developers to reduce development costs, including the costs associated with open space. Developers are usually either required to contribute to improvements to existing space or provide entirely new space. In the latter case, not only are there costs involved in developing the open space and any associated infrastructure and equipment in the first place but the area used for this reduces the amount of overall space available for building. House-builders may also be reluctant to have to add open space costs onto the final price of their units or require residents to enter agreements to be financially responsible for long term maintenance, as it could deter potential buyers.

Adoption and Maintenance

5.7 Both public and private sector budget pressures create difficulties relating to

maintenance commitments. It will be the Council's preferred approach that new open space provided as part of development will be adopted by the Council, subject to the procedure set out in the LDP Supplementary Guidance on Open Space which will require money from the developer for future maintenance (see also Action Plan table in Section 6.8).

Ageing population

5.8 The region is particularly characterised as having an ageing population with one of the highest numbers in Scotland of people aged 65 and over (21.8% of the total population fall into this category, with nearly half of these being older than 74), compared to the national average of 16.8% aged 65 and over.

5.9 An ageing population means that open space requirements will need to change and adapt. Open space provision needs to reflect the needs of the ageing population whilst still enabling them to lead active and independent

lives. Increased availability of seating, handrails at steps and slopes, and extending the provision of disabled access, are among factors that merit consideration. A shortage in the availability of public conveniences has been highlighted as a significant barrier to the use of parks and gardens by the elderly. Safety and perceptions of safety are also important.

5.10 The delivery of quality open space suitable for use by different age groups can best be addressed through the identification of these issues at an early stage in the planning process, particularly in terms of how and where future needs of the elderly are to be met. The concept of 'lifetime neighbourhoods' should underpin development so that open space accessible for the elderly is given as much consideration as children's play areas and sports facilities. Again, there also needs to be an emphasis on making spaces that are multi-functional and adaptable, that can respond to the needs of different sections of the population.



6. PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLANS

6.1 This section of the Strategy sets out the process for the commissioning and delivery of open space, action plans for the implementation of the Strategy objectives and also action plans for specific types of open space.

Open Space Strategy Implementation and Delivery

6.2 The following sub-section will briefly outline the main Council roles in the implementation and delivery of open space and the various mechanisms by which open space can be provided.



Commissioning and Delivery process

6.3 Dumfries and Galloway Council have a Strategic Commissioning and Delivery Framework which is implemented across Council Services and with external commissioning partners. In simple terms, commissioning is a process of assessing the needs of people in an area, designing and

then securing appropriate services – with a “commission” being the end result of this. This procedure ensures that the aspirations and priorities of the Council and the community are reflected in the range of services provided. This is done primarily by providing an evidence based system to demonstrate that the best quality service has been provided within the resources available.

6.4 In relation to open space, the Infrastructure and Commissioning Service are responsible for commissioning DGFirst to provide and install any new or improved facilities or equipment that is required (possibly as part of a developer contribution agreement) and undertake management and maintenance of Council-managed spaces. This involves grounds maintenance (planting, landscaping, grass cutting etc.), equipment replacement, repairs and so on. DGFirst are seen as an internal delivery partner, in addition to various Private and Third Sector organisations, depending on the specific commission. A key element of the Commissioning process is the agreement of the budget to be made available to support the delivery of the commissioned service. The budget for the service should be agreed based on the outcomes sought and the assessed need, as well as taking into consideration the level of funding available and the need to deliver budget savings.

Delivering through the planning system

6.5 As is stated throughout the Strategy, the planning process and the decisions made as part of it will have a key role in delivering new and improved open spaces both through policy in the LDP and Supplementary Guidance relating to open space, and through related Development Management decisions requiring the provision or improvement to open space. The standards set out in this Strategy will inform this process.

6.6 This form of delivery will always, necessarily, be reactive and the provision of open space through these channels can only be as a result of new development being proposed,

agreed and built. This is dependent on the overall economy, developer interest in the region and the scale of development. It also relies on a supportive policy framework that enables development to produce good quality spaces that meet the needs of the population and the development and the negotiating skills of the people making planning decisions.

Delivering through community engagement

6.7 In some cases, the provision of new or improved open space is prompted by the efforts of local community groups in identifying needs and working with others to obtain funding or other resources. Examples of this in Dumfries and Galloway include the Dalbeattie Community Allotments Association who were able to garner

community support as well as local sponsorship and donations in order to secure planning permission for the large, popular allotment site on the edge of the town. The Council will provide policy support for the provision of new open space, such as allotments, with the framework for this being set out in LDP policy CF3: Open Space.

Action Plans

Action Plan for Implementation and Delivery

6.8 The table overleaf sets out how the Council will manage and invest in the open space in its area, along with related actions. It also contains two aspirational approaches which the Council may wish to investigate during the lifetime of this Strategy.



Table 4: Action Plan for Implementation and Delivery of Open Space

Task / Subject	Explanation	Responsible DGC Sections	Action required
Management, maintenance and adoption arrangements and costs	This will be essential to the quality of open space in future years and should consider the changing usage and needs of open space, the overall protection of amenity value and biodiversity whilst encouraging recreation. Any new development must follow the relevant guidelines for the provision of open space as will be set out in LDP Supplementary Guidance (SG) on Open Space. The procedure for maintenance and adoption will also be set out in SG. <i>An important proposed change to the previous adoption procedure is that when agreeing to adopt new open space provided as part of new development, the Council wish to receive a capital sum based on 25 times the annual maintenance costs of the areas involved (this was previously set at 12 times annual costs).</i>	Development Planning; DGFirst; Infrastructure & Commissioning.	<p>Establish formal commissioning and delivery procedure for open space;</p> <p>Where possible, identify and record ownership / management of all open space contained in Audit;</p> <p>Agree procedure for maintenance / adoption of open space to be set out in SG.</p>
Monies received from Developer Contributions / Section 75	Developer contributions towards open space will be sought as part of planning permission for certain types of development. A Section 75 Agreement may be used to achieve this.	Development Management; Development Planning; Legal; Finance.	Requirements for developer contributions will be set out in the LDP Supplementary Guidance on Developer Contributions and SG on Open Space.
Monies received from external sources such as Heritage Lottery Fund	An example of this is the successful bid made to the HLF for Dock Park in Dumfries. HLF gives grants from a share of money raised by the National Lottery for Good Causes and the Dock Park scheme used this to improve the facilities available in the park and create more activities.	Community & Customer Services; DGFirst; Economic Development.	<p>Progress Dock Park project;</p> <p>The Council will continue to identify funding opportunities for open space improvements, including working with external partners to secure provision.</p>

Task / Subject	Explanation	Responsible DGC Sections	Action required
Updating and maintaining open space audit	Although it is not expected that there will be major changes in the amount of open space from the baseline audit position in the foreseeable future, the audit will need to be regularly reviewed and updated to take account of any new minor open spaces and changes to existing spaces. A quality assessment procedure will also need to be developed and implemented through future audit updates.	Development Management; Development Planning; DGFirst; Technology Solutions.	Development Planning to monitor and record provision of new open space with assistance from Development Management who may advise of new open space provided as part of development; Development Planning to manage future audit processes and any changes required to standards; DGFirst to supply any required information such as quality assessment data; Technology Solutions GIS team to update mapping.
Proposed Actions / Ideas to Progress			
Sale of open space in Council ownership	It is proposed that a proportion of money from sale of open space currently in Council ownership should be retained to be spent directly on improving other pieces of open space in the area.	Property Services to liaise with Infrastructure & Commissioning and Legal.	Explore possibility of establishing a formal protocol for ring-fencing monies from sales of Council owned open space; Take proposed approach to the relevant Committee for approval.
Framework for future investment	It is proposed that future investment should come under the framework set out by the Commissioning Model.	DGFirst; Infrastructure & Commissioning.	Bid to be supported through the Capital Investment Strategy. To be taken to Policy and Resources Committee to seek funding in support of new Council Commitment to "Further develop quality formal and informal play space, investing in parks and safe urban greenspace and establish a dedicated fund to replace play park equipment".

Action Plans for meeting the Strategy Objectives

6.9 As stated in the Vision section, the overall outcome of the Strategy is to maintain (or increase where possible) reasonable quantity, accessibility and quality of open spaces - especially wider connectivity and multi-functionality. This section will now outline in more detail the five specific objectives that accompany this overall outcome:

Objective 1: maintain or increase (where necessary and possible) the amount of open space with the aim of meeting the publicly usable open space quantity and accessibility standard

6.10 Planning policy, contained in the LDP (particularly CF2: Green Networks, CF3: Open Space and CF4: Access Routes; and associated Supplementary Guidance on Open Space and on Access Routes) and Development Management decisions have a key role in delivering this objective through ensuring the provision of appropriate additional open space in new development, protecting existing open space and increasing access to wider green networks. This is also strongly linked to the vision and specific objectives and actions set out in the Council's Access Strategy (Open Outdoors). In areas with particularly low provision, other public land could help to increase open space.

6.11 It is also important that alongside trying to ensure adequate space is made available, that the many benefits of open space are effectively promoted to increase use amongst residents.

Action 1: Create a Quantity Standard based on the open space audit

This has been set out in this Strategy.

Action 2: Create an Accessibility Standard based on the open space audit

This has been set out in this Strategy.

Action 3: Produce Supplementary Guidance to support open space policies in the Local Development Plan

This will be a key document for development policy and management on the provision of open space. It will support LDP policy CF3: Open Space and provide additional guidance on how to apply the standards set out in this Strategy to new development proposals. It will also contain detailed settlement statements giving an individual overview of each area, highlighting particular deficiencies in open space or where there are surplus areas and also opportunities to enhance existing spaces. This will also provide planning application guidance, information on the developer contribution process and guidelines on the provision and expected quality of different types of space.

Action 4: Increase the quantity of open space where needed and, in particular, prioritise addressing the lack of open space in the settlements with very low provision

This will be dependent on additional open space being provided as part of new development but also on identifying where existing spaces can be better accessed or made more publicly usable. This may involve, for example, providing new or better access routes or linkages from residential areas to wider green networks. For settlements that have been identified as having very low provision, issues may be able to be addressed through identifying opportunities to make use of wider open space and links to established path networks but in many cases, new open space should be provided. Developer contributions or external funding will be required.

Action 5: Increase publicly usable open space on school land

Work with DGC's Education Services to increase access to school grounds in settlements where the quantity of open space is low.

Action 6: Work with landowners, Community Councils and other community and interest groups to increase public access to land which is currently not accessible or not generally perceived to be accessible

This may simply be a question of raising awareness of land / routes that are not currently explicitly accessible but could be better used or could involve creating linkages to previously inaccessible land such as via a new path or bridge - or installing signage, gates, information boards and so on.

Action 7: Widely advocate the benefits of open space for health and wellbeing and physical activity (including walking and cycling)

The benefits of open space and the positive impacts on health and wellbeing including improved mental health should be promoted. This will involve a number of Services working together and with partners in the NHS and within the community. Also work with these partners on integrating open spaces with active travel / walking / cycling networks. This objective will have close links with the Access Strategy objectives.

Action 8: Address issues identified in the public consultation

The public consultation revealed that there were some issues with the availability of certain types of space, in particular allotments and teenage provision. There was also a quality issue with teenage provision. The consultation also found that the second most common reason that people have for not visiting open space are that facilities are not maintained or are in a state of disrepair.

Action 9: Prepare and implement a Green Network Strategy

As stated earlier, this region has a potentially vast green network throughout its entire area. Work is on-going to try to formally identify and map those areas which are seen to form part of this "green network". Council services will work together and with other key partners such as SNH to develop the green network concept in this region with the aim of eventually developing a Strategy.

Objective 2: avoid fragmentation of existing open space networks

6.12 This objective works alongside Objective 3 by ensuring that existing networks of open space, green corridors and the wider green network are not affected by any development that may fragment or obstruct them. This is both to ensure that people are able to easily access different areas (e.g. having a continuous walking link between spaces) and also to ensure that wildlife habitats and biodiversity corridors are not inhibited. This

will be supported by LDP policies GF2: Green Networks ("[Development] proposals in areas which form part of the green network should seek to avoid fragmentation of a network), CF3: Open Space (presumption against development of protected open space), CF4: Access Routes and associated Supplementary Guidance on Access Routes (the Council will not grant planning permission to proposals which would result in the loss of access routes unless satisfactory alternatives can be provided). The work of the Council's Access team in implementing the requirements of the Land Reform Act will also be critical here.

Objective 3: increase / enhance connectivity between open spaces and between open spaces and residential areas

6.13 Accessing paths and cycleways was found to be the most cited reason for visiting open space in the public consultation carried out as part of the Audit so, as well as avoiding fragmentation (Objective 3), it is also important to increase and enhance connectivity between open spaces and other land uses. This will be supported by LDP policies CF2: Green Networks (development

proposals within green networks should improve connectivity, where appropriate); CF3: Open Space and Supplementary Guidance on Open Space (new development should seek to enhance connectivity wherever possible) and CF4: Access Routes and associated Supplementary Guidance (new development should consider access early on and incorporate new and enhanced opportunities for access, linked to wider networks; any other new or enhanced routes will also be supported).

See Objective 1 Actions.

Objective 4: maintain or increase (where necessary and possible) the quality of existing spaces and ensure that new spaces are of good quality

6.14 This can be achieved through developer contributions as part of the grant of planning permission. This could occur, for example, when it is decided that additional open space is not necessarily required as part of new development

(there may already be a large amount of accessible open space nearby in the settlement) but it would be more beneficial to improve existing spaces. LDP policies OP3: Developer Contributions and associated Supplementary Guidance (which sets out general conditions on securing monies) and CF3: Open Space and associated Supplementary Guidance (which contains specific advice relating to open space) will both help to ensure funding to improve quality.

Action 1: Create and implement a quality standard

Some open spaces may be below a reasonable quality. This should be addressed by developing and implementing a quality standard so that all publicly usable space is a reasonable standard and have an ultimate aim for all to be of good quality.

At the moment, there is no approved quality standard for open spaces across the region, due to the lack of quality assessment data and also because of the uncertainty that the Council face in relation to maintenance budget cuts and other financial pressures. This may mean that, in relation to maintaining or increasing quality, certain types of open space may need to be prioritised – for example, parks and gardens, children’s play areas and youth provision. Grassed areas of incidental space or roadside verges etc. may not need to meet the Council’s quality standard although the Council will strive to ensure that previously functional space still retains a level of access (for example, existing paths are still maintained or walking routes are mown to provide access through and within spaces).

Action 2: Council services to work together and with other groups to identify and prioritise necessary quality improvements

Responsible services should develop a list of priority open space areas which would benefit from improvements in quality. This will be useful both to establish spending priorities and when negotiating with developers during planning applications.

See also Objective 1 Actions.

Objective 5: ensure new open space is made as multi-functional as possible, serving a number of different uses and aim to improve multi-functionality of existing spaces

6.15 Multi-functionality serves a number of purposes, including increasing the range of open space types available to people, whilst also reducing the burden on developers in providing additional open space. For example, if one space can provide a number of functions, such as SuDS being located within amenity space which can be used for informal play, active travel and which also has biodiversity / landscaping / aesthetic /

screening value, then this reduces the amount of land which would need to set aside for open space if all these functions had to be provided for separately. This also reduces maintenance requirements. Multi-functional spaces are also adaptable and can be changed to suit different user groups, particularly important when taking into account demographic changes such as an ageing population (see the “Challenges” chapter).

6.16 Alternatively, open space could be managed in such a way as to serve different functions or users at different times of the day – for example, school grounds and sports facilities could be made available for community use outside school hours.

Action 1: Determine current deficiencies in particular types of open space and seek to identify opportunities where spaces can be made multi-functional

This applies both when considering the provision of new space – the Council will work with developers to carefully consider how to maximise the potential of any open space they need to provide – and when prioritising action to improve existing spaces. This should take into account the characteristics of the existing population and predicted future residents.

Action 2: Increase public use of open space on school land

Work with Dumfries and Galloway Council’s Education Services to increase access to school grounds outside of school hours in settlements where there is a deficiency of publicly usable open space.

Action 3: Identify unused or underused areas of space that could be used for other purposes

This may include, for example turning unused amenity space into productive space for growing food or for community gardens. The Council could work with community groups providing advice or helping them to identify sources of help or funding. Where a proposal could lead to the loss of an outdoor sports facility, **sportscotland** would be a statutory consultee and the relevant provisions of Scottish Planning Policy would apply.

See also Objective 1 Actions.



Action Plans for Specific Open Space Types

Allotments

6.17 Allotments encourage people to take up gardening and benefit from the satisfaction of growing fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers. Having an allotment allows gardeners to exercise in the open air and the companionship of others to share their interest with. Recently, there has been an upsurge in interest in allotments, especially from people concerned about good quality, sustainably grown, local food. The public consultation undertaken as part of the audit identified that allotment provision was felt to be low and that there was a demand for these in some areas.

6.18 An Allotment Strategy for the Dumfries and Galloway region is currently being developed. This should help to provide a more efficient management system across the region and help to reduce waiting list times. The Strategy could also help to improve communication between site managers, the Council and any potential plot holders.

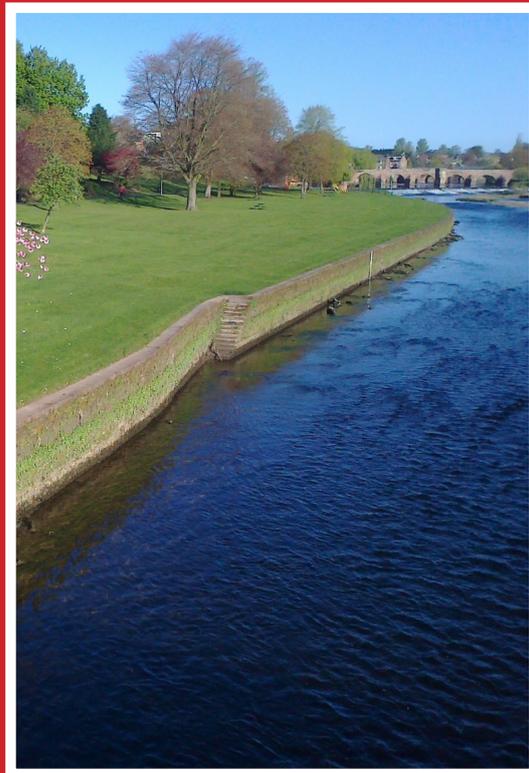
Amenity greenspace

6.19 Amenity spaces can serve a wide variety of purposes from a purely visual function to providing informal play or recreation space or locations for SuDS features and other practical uses, for example to act as a buffer between houses and a busy road. Such spaces are usually grassed areas and can range in size depending on their function. For Council-managed areas, DGFirst will be responsible for grass cutting and general landscaping. New spaces may be required as part of new development proposals.

Cemeteries

6.20 The primary purpose of this type of open space is for burial and quiet contemplation but also for the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity. As well as the value placed upon them by families of the deceased they offer many benefits, for example providing sanctuary for wildlife and places for people to reflect

undisturbed. They are often cherished for the historic value they can provide, being respected for their part in creating a historic landscape. Whilst such spaces are recognised as an important asset, for the purposes of this Strategy and the open space standards they do not fall under the “publicly usable” category and activity relating to cemetery provision will be addressed in a separate Burial Grounds Strategy.



Children's play areas

6.21 There are over 260 play areas within Dumfries and Galloway. Most play areas in public areas and private developments, after adoption by the Council, are managed and maintained by DGFirst. The Council carry out routine inspections of both the equipment and the areas around play equipment and clean up litter and glass to address any health and safety concerns. Actions relating to play facilities will be addressed in a separate Play Strategy.

Civic Spaces

6.22 There are a variety of civic spaces across the region ranging from the Midsteeple / Plain Stanes area of Dumfries town centre to smaller spaces such as Adamson Square in Creetown and new spaces which have been developed as part of wider renewal projects such as George Street in Stranraer.

6.23 The provision of new civic spaces is not specifically required through new development by planning policy as they will usually be provided as part of urban design proposals and not in response to provision standards. However, where it is identified that such space would be beneficial – for example as part of a wider regeneration project, the Council will work with developers and community / civic groups to develop such space.

Green Corridors

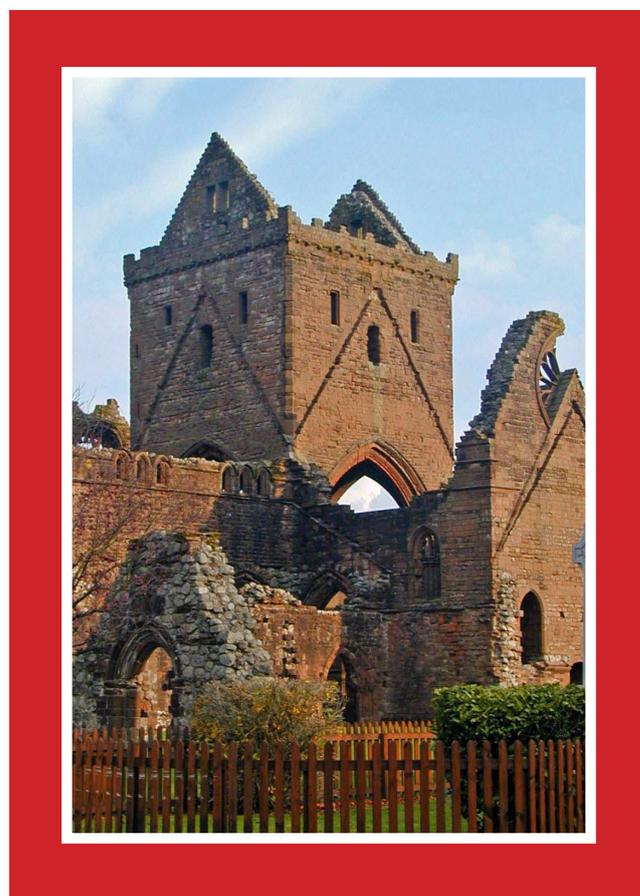
6.24 There is an increasing realisation of the wider benefits to both humans and the natural environment in connecting green spaces as part of a network i.e. for people to walk or cycle through, and for increased biodiversity. The community consultation undertaken as part of the Audit also show that such spaces, especially paths and cycleways are the most popular type of open space to visit. This consultation also revealed that these areas are seen as well provided for and of good quality. The current network is extensive and well-integrated with the surrounding countryside. The areas of countryside bordering Dumfries and Galloway's settlements provide a landscape setting for them, although not all of it is publicly or easily accessible.

6.25 The LDP has a policy which seeks to protect wider green networks from fragmentation (policy CF2) and more specifically it has a policy which prevents development that would compromise the ability of former transport routes (such as disused railways) to be used as an active travel or recreation route (policy T5). The Core Path Plan will also identify and promote many routes which will include parts of the green corridor network.

Outdoor Sports Facilities

6.26 The Audit identified a wide range of facilities under this typology including MUGAs (Multi-Use Games Areas), playing fields, sports pitches, bowling greens and tennis courts, as well as golf courses. The leisure and sporting activities that these spaces accommodate bring enjoyment and health benefits to many people in all areas of the region. Local sports clubs and the voluntary sector are at the heart of community life in many towns and villages. The Council is responsible for many leisure and sport facilities across the region and also provide support and guidance to a number of community sports facilities managed by trusts and voluntary organisations.

6.27 Actions relating to outdoor sports are addressed in the Council's Leisure and Sports Strategy (which includes a specific objective of "improving awareness of physical activity opportunities available in the region's natural and



built open spaces”). Actions relating specifically to sports pitches will be addressed in the Council’s updated Sports Pitch Strategy which is currently being prepared. This will be supported by the Open Space Strategy.

Parks and Gardens

6.28 This typology can be defined as an open space designed and managed as a park for a range of informal recreational uses and enjoyment. The region has a wide range of such spaces, from the larger formal parks such as Agnew Park (Stranraer), Garries Park (Gatehouse of Fleet), Station Park (Moffat), Lochside Park (Castle Douglas) and Dock Park (Dumfries) to smaller “pocket parks”, memorial gardens and so on.

6.29 One of the most significant recent developments in relation to the region’s parks has been the major redevelopment of Dock Park which has benefited from substantial funding from the

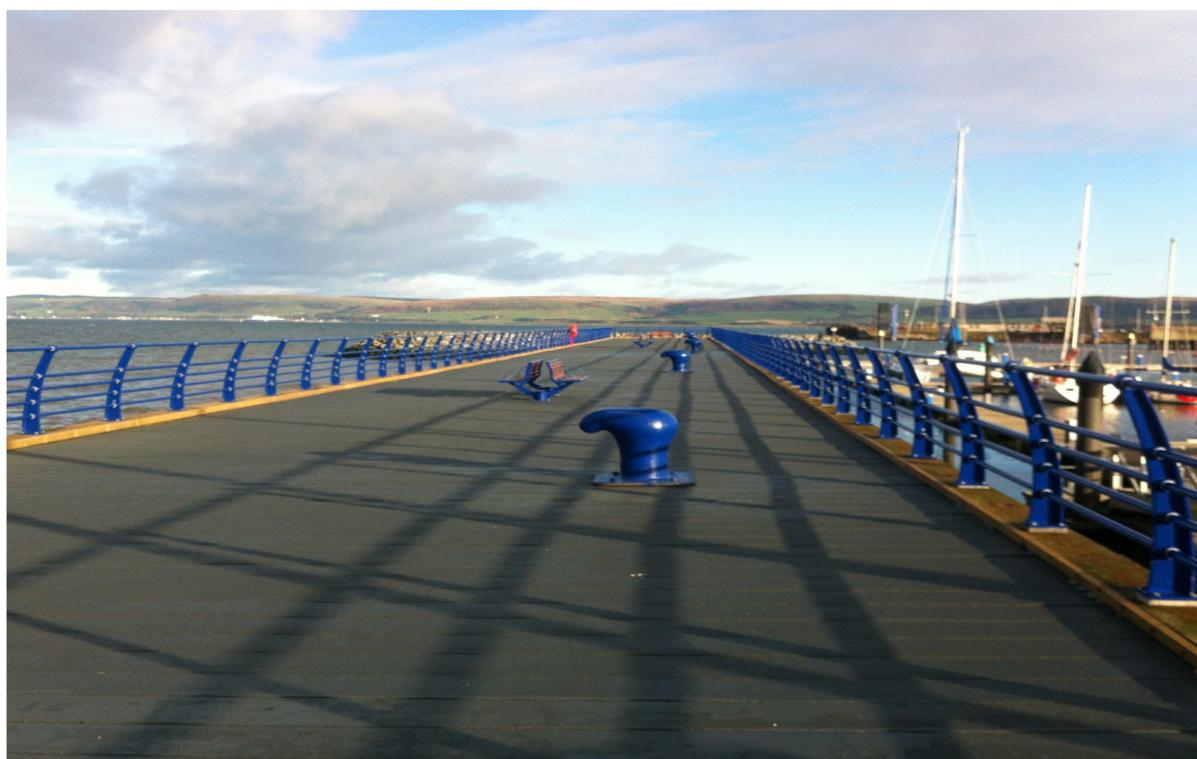
Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the ‘Parks for People’ scheme. The main aims of the project were to:

- increase and extend the range of activities
- conserve and improve the heritage value
- increase the range of volunteers involved
- increase knowledge and skills of Park volunteers and users, and
- improve management and maintenance.

6.30 These aims complement national and regional strategies, as well as local strategies for Dumfries and Galloway. The Council will continue to seek funding opportunities for improvements to public parks and gardens.

Semi-natural and Natural greenspace

6.31 Such spaces can include a wide variety of different types of vegetated land from full or partial woodlands, wild flower meadows to coastal areas. These types of spaces are important not just



for the biodiversity benefits they provide but also for their visual quality and as an opportunity for people to connect with the natural environment and as an educational resource.

6.32 Some of these areas will be covered by specific natural heritage and landscape designations such as Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Scenic Areas and so on but for those which may not be specifically designated but are still worthy of protection, wider open space and green network policies will seek to protect them. Specifically in relation to woodland management, the protection of woodland and trees within open spaces and public realm should be a key long term management task. Trees are an important part of the amenity and biodiversity of any green space and should include the consideration of existing and new Tree Preservation Orders.

Other Areas of open space requiring strategic direction:

Small Areas of Maintained Open Space not Included in the Audit

6.33 Open space which is not necessarily identified in the Audit but which can be demonstrated as being valued and functional or contributing to local amenity or biodiversity may also require protection and enhancement. Some of these areas will provide value and usage potential which will vary depending on size, location and the type of settlement they are located in. These spaces could hold potential to improve the amenity and townscape of settlements.

Areas under Maintenance Review

6.34 As highlighted in the "Challenges" section, due to budget restrictions there may be a number of spaces, often incidental spaces or grass verges which were previously maintained by DGFirst, which may now be subject to a reduced maintenance or grass cutting programme. If such spaces are large areas which previously served a practical function, such as dog walking, the Council may maintain some access to these by



continuing to ensure there is a path or access route through meaning they can still be used as part of the path or wider green network.

Privately Owned Open Space

6.35 Management and maintenance issues may arise in relation to non-Council owned open space. The Council will work with other landowners and stakeholders to ensure appropriate maintenance, for example through arrangements with third parties.

Areas important for Climate Change mitigation / adaptation

6.36 Many open spaces located within flood plains and close to watercourses may come under pressure from rising water levels and increased rainfall. This will lead to new features and flood defence elements and possible redesign and re-evaluation of open space typologies. The Council will support work on projects which seek to develop the role of open space for the purposes of climate change adaptation and mitigation. For example, the Council have carried out some work with Greenspace Scotland exploring the "Climate Change Parks" concept which looks at the potential for changes in the design and management of greenspace and public spaces to contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

7. MONITORING

7.1 This strategy will be monitored to see whether it is having the effect that Council are aiming for or whether it should be updated as a result of changing circumstances. The monitoring and review procedures will include key performance indicators:

Table 5: Monitoring of Open Space Strategy

Indicator	Who is responsible for collecting data?	Relevant Strategy Objective
Amount of new open space created	Development Planning / Management (as part of policy / development monitoring); Infrastructure and Commissioning; DGFirst.	Objective 1
Number of new access routes / points created	Development Planning / Management (if part of a planning application); Infrastructure and Commissioning; DGFirst; Access team.	Objective 2 & 3
Improvements made to existing open space as a result of developer contributions	Development Planning / Management (as part of policy / development monitoring); Infrastructure and Commissioning; DGFirst.	Objective 4
Number of people using open space	Customer satisfaction surveys; Sport and Leisure; Access team.	Objective 1, 3, 4 & 5
Quality results from future audits – has quality improved/declined?	Development Planning through review of audit.	Objective 4 & 5
Funding received for improvement of open space	Service in receipt of funding; Development Planning to survey Services.	Objective 1, 4, 5
Satisfaction with quality of open space	Customer satisfaction surveys; Sport and Leisure; Access team.	Objective 4

APPENDIX 1: Settlement Findings and Priorities for Action

The following table provides a brief outline of the results from the quantity and accessibility analysis of the Open Space Audit. The open space standards set a target of 6 hectares of publicly usable open space per 1000 population and that every household should be within a 5 minute walk of a publicly usable space of at least 0.2 hectares. More detail on specific priorities and potential opportunities will be set out in the Settlement Statements found within the Supplementary Guidance on Open Space. Please note that the location and typology maps accompanying this Strategy show all open space typologies, whilst the comments in this Appendix on quantity and accessibility only relate to publicly usable space (see Table 2 in the main document).

Appendix Table A: Settlement findings and priorities for action

Settlement	Hectares per 1000 population	Significant Accessibility issues?	Settlement findings and priorities for action
Annan	3.8		For the size of the population, Annan has been identified as having a deficit of publicly usable open space. It has a good provision of parks and gardens with one of the largest parks in the region at Everholm Park and also a large number of play areas. The accessibility analysis shows that parts of the west of the settlement have poor accessibility to open space. Some gaps in provision to the south of the town. Specific priorities: any new larger scale development should provide additional open space.
Auchencairn	9.84		Good range and quality of open spaces including allotment provision. Plans for the construction of an access track and paths for Auchencairn village link park and nature garden have recently been submitted which should further increase the quality and accessibility of provision. Good accessibility coverage apart from far west and infill area around High Barn. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space to serve immediate vicinity.
Braehead / Kirkinner	1.89	Yes	Falls short of quantity standard with only one central publicly usable space (playing field). This creates gaps in accessibility to north and south of settlement. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional adequate space, with a range of typologies.
Canonbie	8.38		The open space in Canonbie meets the standard for quantity and provides a good range of types of space. Virtually all covered for accessibility but may be inappropriate to include large area of land to west as publicly usable. Specific priorities: ensure new development provides open space that has benefits for the wider community and links with existing spaces and the wider green network.

Settlement	Hectares per 1000 population	Significant Accessibility issues?	Settlement findings and priorities for action
Carsphairn	1.58	Yes	Although of good quality and high amenity value, there is only one area of publicly usable space and this is under 0.2ha. Falls well below quantity standard. Specific priorities: as a minimum, new housing development should provide additional space if possible, especially to serve residents to the north / west of the settlement.
Castle Douglas	4.97		Falls short of quantity standard and some accessibility gaps to east and west of town centre and to the north. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space and ensure green corridor linkages with existing open space and between residential areas and facilities.
Closeburn	3.8		Falls short of quantity standard. Full accessibility coverage currently although could be issue with residents living to east of A76 easily accessing open space on the other side of the road. Specific priorities: ensure new development has safe links with existing open space.
Creetown	6.72		There is a good range of typologies including civic space at Adamson Square. Good coverage to north although some accessibility issues to publicly usable space in the south. Specific priorities: for those areas lacking access, improve links to wider green networks / paths and new housing development will need to provide additional space.
Crossmichael	23.79		Good variety of open space, including woodland and core path access. Virtually full accessibility coverage. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Dalbeattie	53.91		Large amount and very good variety of open spaces, including formal park, allotments and extensive forest and woodland recreation opportunities, including proximity to one of the Seven Stanes mountain bike trails. Good accessibility coverage apart from areas to the west. Specific priorities: improve quantity or access to open space in the west e.g. explore possibility of opening up new school facilities to wider community.
Drummore	4.68		Falls below quantity standard, gap in access to east of settlement but there are opportunities to access the coast in this area. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional open space.
Dumfries	9.72		As expected for a town of this size, there is a good range of types of open space, including cycle paths and walking opportunities along green corridors such as the River Nith walkway. Some gaps in accessibility but mostly covered. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.

Settlement	Hectares per 1000 population	Significant Accessibility issues?	Settlement findings and priorities for action
Eaglesfield	6.05	Yes	The main area of publicly usable open space is found in the centre of the settlement and with Eaglesfield having a long, linear development pattern there are issues with accessibility to this both to the far west and in some parts of the eastern half of the town – although there are core paths and other networks to the east. Specific priorities: Try to ensure a better distribution of open spaces throughout the settlement and or to increase access to wider spaces or green networks.
Eastriggs	1.69		Overall, falls below quantity standard. The main areas of publicly usable open space are located in the centre of the settlement which creates accessibility gaps to the east and west and also at Lowthertown which is separated from Eastriggs by the railway and main road. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional open space.
Ecclefechan	4.01	Yes	Falls short of quantity standard and whilst there is a relatively large area of open space to the north / west of the settlement (Haggs Park), there is little to no provision in the eastern parts. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Garlieston	2.76		There are a range of open space types in the settlement although overall falls short of the quantity standard and there is a gap in identified provision around the harbour area. Specific priorities: increase links to wider green network, especially to the east.
Gatehouse of Fleet	78.55		Large and varied amount of open space, including access to woodland and other core paths. Good accessibility coverage apart from area to far north. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Glencaple	14.97		Some quality issues with existing space. Full accessibility coverage. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Glenluce	17.1		Good central provision of open space and full accessibility coverage. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet accessibility requirements.

Settlement	Hectares per 1000 population	Significant Accessibility issues?	Settlement findings and priorities for action
Gretna	2.92		Overall falls short of quantity standard and gaps in accessibility to east and west of Gretna and central area adjacent A75 / A74(M). Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Hollywood	1.27	Yes	Whilst there is a good quality play area to the north of the settlement, this is somewhat separate from the rest of the settlement and not overlooked by surrounding houses. No provision over 0.2 hectares and overall falls well below quantity standard. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Johnstonebridge	12.28		Provision currently mainly consists of semi-natural / natural space. Accessibility is mainly covered apart from very northern end of settlement. Specific priorities: new housing or other development to provide additional variety of space, especially where accessibility is an issue.
Kirkcolm	1.9		Full accessibility coverage although falls well below quantity standard. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Kirkconnel	40.86		Large amount of open space and full accessibility coverage although large areas of "green desert" which may not be of high quality. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet accessibility requirements.
Kirkcowan	5		Falls below quantity standard. There is good provision of amenity space and children and youth provision to the north of the settlement but a gap in provision to the southern part of settlement. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Kirkcudbright	13.85		Good amount and range of provision but gaps in accessibility to far south. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space; possibly improve links to St. Mary's Isle or Barhill Woods; explore potential for allotment provision.
Langholm	16.55		Good range of provision but large accessibility gap to south / east. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Leswalt	51.79		Very good amount and range of types of open space, including community nature area and full accessibility coverage. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.

Settlement	Hectares per 1000 population	Significant Accessibility issues?	Settlement findings and priorities for action
Lochmaben	3.89		Falls short of quantity standard and gaps in accessibility to west and north east, although wider green networks are available. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space; increase access to path network, or increase public accessibility of non-public spaces.
Lockerbie	25.2		Good amount and range of provision but gaps in accessibility to north and south of town and also other areas. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Moffat	25.06		Good range of provision and meets quantity standard overall but lack of accessibility to east of town. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Moniaive	19.77		Good range of open space types and full accessibility coverage. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
New Abbey	5.50		Falls short of quantity standard and gap in accessibility to south of Ingleston Place but any future development could increase space. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space if possible or contribute to improving existing space or access to existing space.
New Galloway	7.84		Meets quantity standard but only one central space so gaps in provision to north and south of settlement. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Newton Stewart	18.85		Good range of open space sites and good accessibility coverage apart from some small pockets. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Palnackie	0.12	Yes	Falls significantly short of quantity standard with no provision of sites over 0.2 hectares. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space and provide better links with any surrounding green networks.

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Settlement	Hectares per 1000 population	Significant Accessibility issues?	Settlement findings and priorities for action
Penpont	14.14		Meets quantity standard and full accessibility coverage, apart from small area to far west. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Port William	12.46		Meets quantity standard but gap in provision to north of settlement. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space; improve access to wider green network / coastal paths.
Portpatrick	5.82		Falls just short of quantity standard but accessibility mostly covered apart from top north of settlement. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space
Sandhead	19.71		Good range of open space types, including beach and shore paths. Accessibility mostly covered although plantation land between the settlement and the A716 is not really accessible as on a very steep slope. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Sanquhar	6.06		Accessibility mostly covered although some gaps in provision in area around High School and other small pockets. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Springholm	5.06		Accessibility gap in provision to north of settlement and falls short of quantity standard. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
St John's Town of Dalry	1.5		Falls short of quantity standard. Good quality play area and one central publicly usable space but gaps in provision at east and west of settlement. However, there is access to Southern Upland Way from these areas. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Stranraer	6.72		Large gap in provision to centre of town, south of the town centre and at Blackparks Industrial Estate and other areas. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.

Settlement	Hectares per 1000 population	Significant Accessibility issues?	Settlement findings and priorities for action
Thornhill	22.16		Good provision and accessibility coverage except to far south. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.
Twynholm	6.67		Full accessibility coverage apart from extreme ends – although much of this is made up of garden ground. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Whithorn	4.27		Falls short of quantity standard and gap in accessibility coverage to north of settlement. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.
Wigtown	5.34		Falls short of quantity standard but full accessibility coverage. Specific priorities: new housing development to provide additional space.

ANNEX 1: Dumfries and Galloway Open Space Audit Maps (separate document)

Please refer to separate document which contains a series of maps showing all the identified open space typologies within the 48 settlements included in the Dumfries and Galloway Open Space Audit.

