Review and development of open space audit and strategy guidance and best practice

COMMISSIONED REPORT

Commissioned Report No. 625

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COMMISSIONED REPORT
Summary

Review and development of open space audit and strategy guidance and best practice

Background

This research was commissioned to support SNH's review of open space audit and strategy progress. It set out to identify best practice with regard to developing more holistic open space strategies; to understand the extent to which the current generation of strategies are integrated with other plans, policies and strategy; and, to determine how they can most effectively be translated in to action on the ground.

In addition, the project developed an inventory of existing guidance and a 'wayfinder' guide to assist practitioners in extracting best value from these documents.

Main findings

−   The current guidance framework covers most of the key topics necessary to deliver effective audits and strategies, but it is highly disaggregated and not easily accessible. There are key weaknesses with regard to making strategic / policy links and promoting delivery 'on the ground'.
−   The age of most of the guidance is the key limiting factor to the delivery of more 'holistic' and integrated strategies, as few documents make links to the wider benefits delivered by open spaces and the values attached to them by users.
−   Partly as a result of a lack of appropriate guidance, the current generation of open space strategies are not wholly effective in making links to other local authority strategic priorities or wider values and benefits of open space.
−   In general, communities have not been heavily involved in the audit process or the development and implementation of open space strategies, meaning that there is a disconnect between strategic priorities and local values.
−   Engagement with local authorities indicates that structural and governance issues have a critical impact on the 'deliverability' of open space strategies, and that wider engagement with other council services and external delivery partners is likely to add substantial value.
−   Local authorities are already demonstrating innovation in integrating open space with related topic areas in planning policy – specifically through supplementary planning guidance.
−   Adopting an ecosystems approach to understanding the benefits delivered by open space, and the wider interactions with social, economic and environmental interests, may be of value in future audit and strategy work.

- A need was identified for a 'wayfinder' guide to help practitioners navigate and extract best value from the existing guidance framework and was produced as part of this work.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

LUC was commissioned in November 2012 to conduct research into the existing suite of guidance available to local authorities to assist in the development of open space audits and strategies, and to develop a revised framework of guidance, to identify best practice and develop an e-resource.

This report represents a summation of our research, supplemented with the outcomes of consultation with a representative sample of Scotland's local authorities. It then outlines the key issues emerging from this process and presents options for the development of a revised guidance framework.

1.2 Context

Open space is a vital resource for a broad range of functions that includes direct activities such as formal and informal sport and recreation, play, nature conservation, access, conserving energy, and moderating climate, and less tangible or indirect effects such as improving health, facilitating urban renewal and attracting economic development. The multi-functional nature of open space requires careful planning, good design and effective management and maintenance.

Scottish Planning Policy 11 Open Space and Physical Activity (Scottish Government, 2007) (SPP11), published in 2007 required local authorities to take a strategic and long-term approach to planning and management of open space through the development of open space audits and strategies. Presently 30 of the 32 Scottish local authorities have made some degree of progress in the open space audit and strategy process, with the level of involvement from local authorities varying from initial commitments to undertake audits through to fully adopted strategies.

As progress in developing these strategies has continued, a new generation of expertise and experience has emerged in Scotland. In the absence of a best practice framework or guidance document, a variety of approaches to open space strategy development have been adopted by local authorities. As approaches to audit and strategy development have evolved over time, a number of issues have emerged.

Firstly, the concepts of green networks and green infrastructure (both at a strategic and a local level) have emerged as major drivers for open space provision. The increasing recognition of the importance of open space and green infrastructure is reflected in national priorities, with the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) identified as a national project within the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 2 (Scottish Government, 2009). This undoubtedly adds weight to the importance of open space strategies but may also create challenges in translating regional scale priorities and concepts into local priorities and projects that are deliverable on the ground. Furthermore, the relationship between open space planning and management and the concepts of green networks and green infrastructure may also be leading to some confusion among local authority practitioners, or at least to differences in approach. The result can be a separation of policy on open space (within Local Development Plans and statutory supplementary planning guidance) from broader, non-statutory strategies for green network development.

Secondly, the issue of ownership of the open space strategy can influence the quality and effectiveness in delivery of the strategy. Where ownership is closely linked with a single council service, there is a risk that the content of the strategy will be focussed on that service's area of expertise and responsibility. Where planning departments take the lead, the

focus may be broader – given the strategic rather than operational focus of development planning - although it is possible that some of the important linkages to other council and partner agency functions may be overlooked or underemphasised. This suggests that open space audit and strategy processes should be 'owned' and steered by a broad range of council and partner agency interests. This in turn can present challenges in terms of 'selling' the importance of open space planning and delivery to council services that may not previously have regarded the issue as relevant to their specific remit but equally may challenge perceptions of operational responsibilities.

Thirdly, strategies with a high level focus can be difficult to translate into practical recommendations and actions, meaning that there is a risk that they stall with little influence on outcomes. On the other hand, strategies with a focus on detailed actions and implementation on the ground may miss key opportunities to build delivery into a wider range of other plans, strategies and other documents.

Finally, there are significant differences between open space strategies driven principally by Planning Policy and those that are more strongly influenced by priorities for green networks and green infrastructure (driven by Integrated Habitat Network Plans/ River Basin Management Plans/ Flood Risk Management Strategies). This may partly reflect the emergence of the latter concepts in the period since SPP11 and the accompanying Planning Advice Note 65 (PAN65) were published, although, it may also be a reflection of people's greater familiarity with 'open space' planning and the broader interpretations that can be applied to green networks and green infrastructure.

Clearly there is a need to share knowledge and best practice, to develop support links between authorities experiencing similar issues, and to improve links to local plans and other strategies. At the same time there is potential to reflect a range of new concepts, drivers, structures and techniques to ensure that strategies realise opportunities to deliver the widest range of benefits possible.

Against this background, Scottish Natural Heritage commissioned LUC to develop a framework and best practice guidance document for producing more holistic open space audits and strategies aimed at local authority practitioners.

1.3   Aims and objectives

The aims of the project are as follows:

- To identify best practice on development of a more holistic approach to open space strategies;
- To identify how open space strategies should relate to other strategies and plans; and,
- To determine how they can most effectively be translated into action on the ground.

In addition, the project was required to generate:

- An inventory and evaluation of existing guidance and best practice on the open space audit and strategy process;
- Develop a 'one-stop-shop' e-resource for local authority practitioners and others to use, that links to all of the available guidance and best practice case studies.

1.4 Project steering group

A project steering group was convened to assist in the direction of the project, act as a sounding board for draft research and provide feedback on outputs. This comprised representatives of:

- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Scottish Government Built Environment Directorate
- Scottish Government Environment and Forestry Directorate
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Falkirk Council

The report authors would like to thank the project steering group for their input and insights.

1.5 Structure of the report

The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- **Section 2**: Review of existing policy and guidance
- **Section 3**: Local authority review – presenting the methodology, process and outcomes of primary research conducted with a sample of Scotland's local planning authorities
- **Section 4**: Developing revised guidance– summarising the key issues with the existing guidance; highlighting potential solutions; proposing additional topics for inclusion; setting out options for delivery; drawing conclusions and making recommendations
- **Section 5:** Evaluation and conclusions – an evaluation of the research; overall conclusions; how the work is to be disseminated

2. REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the results of a comprehensive review of currently available guidance on open space audits and strategies. In line with the project brief, it seeks to understand and identify any shortcomings and limitations within the guidance suite and their implications for delivery of more holistic audits and strategies.

2.1.1 Background

As thinking in relation to open spaces, and their place within national and local policy frameworks has evolved, a substantial suite of advice and guidance has emerged to assist practitioners in:

- understanding the importance of the open space resource;
- conducting audits to assess the location, type, quality and quantity of provision;
- develop standards for quality, quantity and accessibility;
- create strategies; and,
- to drive delivery.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) 11: *Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space* (Scottish Development Department, 1996)*,* published in June 1996, represented the beginning of this process in the formal sense. Although the policy recommendations of this document were adopted relatively rapidly in then-emerging development plans, the process/methodological guidance had rather less impact. Kit Campbell Associates' report for the Scottish Executive, *Rethinking Open Space,* (Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2001) highlighted these issues and prompted an overhaul of the policy and guidance framework – contributing to the publication of the first edition of Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65: *Planning and Open Space* in 2003 (Scottish Executive, 2003). Subsequent updates, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 11: *Open Space and Physical Activity* and the accompanying revision of PAN65, were published in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

PAN65 (*ibid.*) is therefore the key piece of national advice for practitioners, and sets both the tone and practical framework for understanding, protecting and enhancing open spaces in Scotland. Having been in place for around 10 years (five years in its current iteration), it can be assumed to have 'bedded in', with the majority of Scotland's local authorities having made at least some progress against open space planning objectives.

In the interim, a range of other guidance products have emerged from a range of sources to augment and expand on that provided by PAN65 (*ibid.*), or in response to similar policy imperatives in other parts of the UK.

In recent years, although open space has remained an important strand of national and local policy, the emergence of multiple related agendas, notably climate change adaptation – influencing thinking around green infrastructure/green networks, sustainable water management, and habitat connectivity – has changed the context in which open space strategies are developed and must operate.

2.2 Review methodology

The desk review sought to collate the current suite of relevant guidance available to practitioners in Scotland, and undertake a critical analysis of the following:

- Scope and focus of documents;
- Provision of technical advice with regard to:

- Quantitative and qualitative audits;
- Developing standards for open space;
- Developing appropriate and deliverable open space strategies;
- Links to development planning processes;
- Links to other strategic objectives;
- Delivery mechanisms; and,
- Key limitations to developing more holistic, better-integrated strategies.

The results of this process are presented in full for the government-issued guidance products, as the key measure against which open space audits and strategies can be judged. For the remainder of the suite, results are synthesised and presented thematically for accessibility – with the review of each document presented as a matrix in Appendix 1.

2.3 Policy context

2.3.1 Scottish Planning Policy

Paragraphs 149-158 of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (Scottish Government, 2010a) strongly encourage local authorities to take a strategic and long-term approach to planning and management of open space through the development of open space audits and strategies.

Role and content of audits and strategies

Under the provisions of SPP (*ibid.)*, audits should take account of the quality, community value, accessibility and use of existing open space, not just the quantity. Using the information from the audit, the SPP (*ibid.*) directs local authorities to prepare an open space strategy which should detail the vision for new and improved open space and address any deficiencies identified in the audit.

SPP (*ibid.*) highlights the importance of open space audits and strategies in defining which open spaces are '*valued and functional*,' making direct links between these criteria and the presumption against development on such spaces (*op cit.* para 153). Similarly, spaces that can be '*brought into…use to meet a need identified in the open space strategy'* are afforded similar protection – further raising the significance of robust audits and strategies in providing an evidence base for protecting existing or potential resources. Although the same paragraph does provide something of a get-out clause[1] for planning authorities, the overall intention would appear to be a restatement of audits and strategies' role in providing a rigorous evidence base for policy development and implementation (*ibid*).

Standards

Paragraph 154 calls for planning authorities to develop standards for open space provision (quantity, type, quality and accessibility), particularly with regard to delivery in parallel with new development, for inclusion in Local Development Plans (LDP) or supplementary guidance (SG)[2] (*op cit.*).

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[1] in that it states that "*Open space which is not identified in the strategy but which is valued and functional or contributes to local amenity or biodiversity should also be protected.*"

[2] Where the term 'supplementary guidance' (SG) is used, this should be taken as relating to statutory Supplementary Guidance within the meaning of Section 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended; and Regulation 27 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008. All other instances will be referred to as 'supplementary planning guidance' (SPG)

Delivery

As national planning policy, SPP (*op cit.*) is inevitably concerned principally with securing compliance in local policy frameworks and ensuring consistent and fair decision-making. Discussion of delivery is therefore largely limited to these contexts, highlighting the importance of collaborative working between planning authorities and developers to deliver spaces that can meet current needs, adapt to future changes and have suitable management structures in place to secure their future in perpetuity.

SPP (*op cit.*)also restates the responsibility of local authorities to protect and enhance open spaces in their ownership, and reminds them of their statutory duty to provide allotments where there is proven demand.

Links

SPP (*op cit.*) is intended to be read as a whole, therefore open space enjoys significant – and well-articulated – links to a wide range of policy objectives, not least access, green networks, biodiversity, transport and design.

2.3.2   National Planning Framework 2

National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2) (Scottish Government, 2009) is much too strategic to contain detailed content with regard to open space. However, its value is stressed at a number of points in relation to:

- contributing to sustainable communities (para. 78);
- environmental enhancement (para. 92); and,
- potential value to regeneration projects (para. 187 and 195).

This illustrates the cross-cutting nature of open space with regard to national strategic priorities, and its potential to contribute equally to social, economic and environmental objectives.

Central Scotland Green Network

Perhaps the principal interaction with the open space agenda from NPF2 (*op cit.*) is the designation of the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) as a 'National Development.' Strategic and local development planning authorities are required to reflect NPF2's recommendations in policy and proposals, and to treat the principle of 'National Developments' as being established[3]. This designation, and the accompanying programme of action jointly led by SNH and Forestry Commission Scotland, has had a radical effect on the level of awareness of green networks in Scotland more generally – and within the CSGN area more specifically. The agenda has enjoyed significant political and financial support, reflecting its ability to delivery multiple social, environmental and economic benefits.

While a significant proportion of the CSGN Development Fund will undoubtedly have gone towards enhancing open space resources, the focus on CSGN actions could potentially be diverting attention from the more strategic approach to open space promoted by SPP (Scottish Government, 2010a) and PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008). Similarly, the drive to develop 'green network strategies' – principally among local authorities in the Glasgow

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[3] This issue is not triggered as such by CSGN as it is not strongly site-specific, unlike the more traditional 'grey' infrastructure National Developments such as the additional Forth Crossing or strategic airport enhancements.

and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan area[4] – may also have diverted resource from open space work already underway.

CSGN is retained as a proposed National Development in the Main Issues Report and Draft National Planning Framework 3 (Scottish Government, 2013a).

External factors

It must be noted that, since the publication of PAN65 in 2008, local authorities across the UK have experienced a significant period of financial constraint and consequent contraction in staffing – the effects of which are ongoing at the time of writing.

The pressure on planning service staffing and available funds for non-statutory work should therefore be seen as the key limiting factor on implementation across this time horizon – and all inferences should be viewed against this context.

2.3.3   SPP Consultation Draft (April 2013)

Developed through the SPP review, begun in September 2013, the Consultation Draft SPP (Scottish Government, 2013b) was published on 30th April 2013 as this report was being finalised.   While the key policy messages with regard to open space remain largely unchanged, the draft SPP places a stronger emphasis on 'green infrastructure' as an over-arching means of delivering open space, access and green network enhancements. Paragraph 158 restates the need for Local Development Plans to be informed by '*up-to-date open space audits and related strategies*' (*op cit.*).

The most interesting aspect of the draft, with regard to open space, is the proposition made in paragraph 163. In line with the broadly design and place-led approach proposed by the draft SPP, it suggests:

"The design of new green infrastructure [presumably including open space] should take account of the principles of successful places, be well integrated with existing access and habitat networks, fit-for-purpose and capable of being adapted to accommodate the change needs of users" (*op cit.*).

Although in itself, this would appear uncontroversial, the accompanying consultation question implies that a design and place-led approach to new green infrastructure provision could supersede the existing standards-based approach employed by most authorities and the subject of recent research commissioned by SNH (greenspace scotland, 2012; 2013a & b).

2.3.4   UK Government policy

National Planning Policy Framework

NB. *NPPF applies only in England, but is included to provide the wider context for the Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) Companion Guide (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002) discussed below.*

Published in March 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012) embodies in policy the significant changes made to the planning system in England (and Wales) by the current government.   It substantially streamlines the previous suite of planning policies and reframes their content to reflect the principles of 'localism' defined in recent legislative change.

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[4] To deliver the GCV Green Network – the regional precursor to the supra-regional CSGN

With regard to open space, NPPF restates the now-revoked PPG17 approach to assessing the provision of open spaces, sports and recreation facilities and the opportunities for new resources. Like SPP (Scottish Government, 2010a), it maintains the need to understand:

- Local need;
- Quantitative provision;
- Qualitative provision; and,
- Local surpluses.

This is very sparsely-framed, leaving the detail to the PPG17 Companion Guide *(Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002)*, discussed below, which remains in force. However, NPPF does introduce an additional open space protection measure – that of 'Local Green Space' – that can be designated through local and neighbourhood plans (although it states that the designation '*will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space*'). The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land (*Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012)*.

While creating some potential hostages to fortune, it is an interesting development as it places a more explicit emphasis on the value placed on open space by communities.

2.4   National guidance

2.4.1   *Planning Advice Note 65: Open Space*

Introduction

PAN65, across its two iterations (Scottish Executive, 2003; Scottish Government, 2008) , has been the key document with regard to open space planning in Scotland for the last decade. The current iteration was developed to support the 2007 revision of SPP11 (Scottish Government, 2007). While the current, consolidated Scottish Planning Policy (Scottish Government, 2010) contains no major policy changes from SPP11, there are some minor misalignments where SPP11 contained detail that SPP does not (for example, relating to identified surpluses and deficiencies in provision, and the need for standards) (*op cit.*).

Functions of the guidance

It interprets the policy requirements of SPP11 (*op cit.*) and provides advice for practitioners on:
The functions of the planning system with regard to open space:

- Protecting valued areas, and ensuring appropriate provision with, or close to, new development;
- The interactions with the planning policy framework;
- The broad values attached to open space;
- Open space typologies;
- Links to design and placemaking;
- Developing open space strategies, including conducting audits;
- Requirements for development plan policies;

- Interactions between open space strategies and development management; and,
- Approaches to securing appropriate delivery, management and maintenance of open spaces in parallel with new development.

The breadth of topics that PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) is required to cover, in a manner that is appropriate and relevant to all of Scotland's planning authorities, represents a significant challenge.

Quantitative audit

PAN65 sets out the requirement for planning authorities to '*record the type, functions, size…*[and] *location'* of open spaces through the audit process (*op cit.*). However, it does not advise on:

- scoping the audit (e.g. defining locally-appropriate size or typological cut-offs beyond which spaces will not be considered);
- practical considerations, such as:
  - indicative time and resource implications of undertaking and audit;
  - essential technical capabilities / capacity (i.e. availability of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and appropriately-skilled staff with sufficient capacity)
- opportunities to integrate information already held by other departments;
- appropriate minima for quantitative data collected for each space; and,
- appropriate means of determining the significance of quantitative data on open spaces, e.g.:
  - relationship of size to function;
  - relationship of quantitative factors to context.

While the quantitative audit is, at least in theory, a relatively simple part of the process it establishes the baseline upon which the rest of the process is based. The importance of rigour in establishing this framework is therefore critical – but is perhaps underplayed by PAN65, along with the opportunities for quantitative audit data to add value to the work of other council services.

Qualitative audit

The advice provided with regard to the qualitative components of the audit process is similarly high level, suggesting authorities record the condition, levels of use and maintenance requirements of open spaces.

Qualitative indicators, such as quality and condition of facilities, are suggested as means of ranking spaces' fitness for purpose – however, no guidance for developing locally or typologically-specific 'fitness for purpose' criteria is provided. The document highlights the need for community views on the value of open spaces to be taken into account, but similarly no advice with regard to appropriate means of engagement is included.

The potential for involving consultants, amenity groups or residents' associations in auditing is raised but not expanded on, with the exception of indicating the need for guidance from local authority staff. Inclusion of information on the advantages, and potential pitfalls, of each would have been a useful addition.

Setting standards for open space

PAN65 sets out the development of standards for open space principally as a means of assessing current and future need, rather than an overarching measure of quality, value and/or significance. It is suggested that a 'standards-based approach' to understanding need

is most appropriate for types of space where either demand is difficult to quantify or that need is broadly the same everywhere (*op cit.*). It should be noted that SPP11 (Scottish Government, 2011; para. 34-39) contained some detail with regard to measures of quality and accessibility, the higher level information in SPP omits much of this useful information – creating a gap between the policy and the advice in PAN65.

Against the current policy backdrop, PAN65 therefore does not include advice on some of the wider potential and utility of standards for open space. It does acknowledge that standards will necessarily be locally and typologically specific, and suggests that a tripartite approach should be adopted, dealing with quality, quantity and accessibility. Again, little information is provided to assist local authorities in developing these standards. The variation in social, economic and environmental conditions between – and within – Scotland's local authorities, in addition to that between open space types, settlement types and character, planning context and local authority priorities, clearly prevents a prescriptive approach. However, this very complexity necessitates guidance to secure a measure of consistency, particularly where standards form part of development plan policy and are therefore required to provide certainty for developers, decision-makers and communities alike.

Strategy development

PAN65 sets out the purpose of open space strategies, and outlines the broad content for strategy statements following a relatively clear cascading structure, namely:

- a coherent vision for open space;
- clear policies; and,
- the priorities for action.

In common with the rest of the document, these high level recommendations are not backed by more comprehensive description of what might make for a good open space strategy, or indeed the intended audience for the finished article.

Usefully, the document highlights the need for authorities to set out the deficiencies in, and problems with, the open space resource – providing the evidence for their choices, and what this means for stakeholders. Underpinning the presumption against development, paragraph 32 clearly indicates the risks of not developing a strategy with regard to the potential impacts of ad hoc losses to speculative development (*op cit.*).

It also expresses some of the benefits of developing a strategy, with regard to: awareness-raising; providing an evidence base for land allocation/disposal; rationale for investment decisions; and, as a vehicle for partnership working with external partners and stakeholders. The last point is interesting as, although SPP11 stressed the need for open space strategies to be corporate documents, drawing in a range of relevant council services, this message is less prominent in SPP. (It is assumed that this is purely a function of the more condensed approach to policy embodied by that document.) It is restated at paragraph 20 of PAN65, but is not expanded upon (*op cit.*).

Useful detail is provided with regard to the potential role of communities in developing the strategic priorities to be reflected in strategy documents, highlighting the need to consider:

- local opinions on need and future development;
- the differing needs and interests of the area's various communities (ethnicity, ability, age, gender etc.); and
- appropriate means of accessing representative views of communities.

The information provided for all aspects of strategy development is useful, but the discursive approach to presentation and a slight lack of clarity with regard to process and content is potentially less helpful to authorities.

Links to development planning

Building on the requirements of national policy (Scottish Government, 2007; 2010), PAN65 sets out the role of development plans in protecting and promoting high quality open space, and the opportunities for key spaces and networks to be acknowledged in Strategic Development Plans (SDP) and LDPs (Scottish Government, 2008). While it reiterates the policy of protecting important open spaces from development, it qualifies this with an acknowledgement of the potential need for trade-offs to deliver better value. Useful information on policy requirements is provided, helping to promote a measure of consistency of the influence of open space strategies on development plan policies, particularly with regard to the on- or off-site provision of open space in parallel with new development (*op cit.*).

PAN65 indicates the potential for supplementary guidance to promote the site-specific importance and requirements for open space (e.g. through development briefs and masterplans) and refers to the opportunity for SG to set out local open space standards in more detail (*op cit.*).

Again, the PAN does not cover process in detail – particularly with regard to the potential interactions and synergies between the processes of developing LDP evidence base to contribute to the Main Issues Report (MIR) and open space audits and, crucially, community engagement programmes.

Links to other strategic priorities

In general, the links between PAN65 and other relevant strategic priorities are not extensively developed, particularly with regard to their implications for the planning and delivery of audits or the means of optimising these links in policy/strategies. A useful box, following paragraph 6, does highlight the other relevant documents in the then-contemporary suite of NPPG/SPPs and PANs but their potential influence – other than with regard to design – is not fully developed in the remainder of the document (e.g. that is the only reference to the potential cultural value of open spaces) (*op cit.*).

Depending on their status and content, open space strategies can be held to be qualifying plans/programmes for the purposes of Section 5 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, triggering the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment. Inclusions of references to this potential requirement would have been helpful to authorities in scoping/costing the work required to deliver robust audits and strategies.

Delivery

As a Planning Advice Note, the document is principally concerned with the protection of existing resources and the delivery of new or enhanced provision through the planning system. A range of mechanisms for securing appropriate management and maintenance of new open space resources are provided which have some wider applications.

It is recognised that the constraints imposed by the form and context of PAN65 limits the potential for discussion of wider delivery mechanisms. However, the inclusion of some advice with regard to the delivery of audits and strategies – such as ensuring that objectives, policies and priorities are framed at a level that can be translated into effective ('SMART') action plans and delivered on the ground – may have been useful inclusions.

This is echoed in some of the survey results set out in Section 3 of this report, which indicates that some authorities have had difficulty pitching their strategies at an appropriate level.

The focus on delivery through planning, while obviously the appropriate main focus of PAN65, perhaps constrains thinking with regard to more locally specific measures and opportunities.

Key limitations to developing more holistic, better-integrated strategies

In general, PAN65 does not provide guidance on some of the issues that can influence the success of open space audits and strategies – and may be central to delivering a more holistic approach. There is little advice with regard to the governance and management issues created by the 'corporate' approach originally required by SPP11 – a factor that may increase in significance in developing more holistic strategies. Similarly, although the guidance touches on the potential role of third parties in contributing to the development of audits and strategies, it does not provide any detailed advice on how to manage or reconcile such contributions, for example:

- ensuring consistency and balance in user-generated audit information; and,
- ensuring consultant-generated material is properly influenced by local knowledge.

It establishes sound principles, which continue to be relevant, but the presentation of the document does not lend itself to efficient and effective planning of the process. While it is acknowledged that this is likely to differ between local authorities, a steer in this regard – potentially in the form of a simple flowchart or table – would be a helpful addition to future guidance, and could map out:

- Key stages;
- Interactions and dependencies;
- 'critical path' for community engagement, SEA processes and LDP stages/deadlines;
- Opportunities for partnership;
- Broad timings / potential resource implications;
- Sources of funding for audit and strategy preparation; and,
- Delivery mechanisms and sources of funding.

As noted above, the discursive presentation of the guidance often means that it is less explicit, clear and accessible than it could be with regard to:

- Process;
- Key outcomes;
- Scales of analysis, prioritisation and action planning; and,
- Translating audit/strategy findings into robust and enforceable policy.

In developing more holistic audits and strategies, the range and depth of subject matter is likely to expand, making clear planning and a comprehensive understanding of interactions more significant.

It should be noted that none of the issues above represent fatal flaws in the document – rather opportunities to add value that are far easier to identify with the benefit of hindsight, and in the context of local authority feedback on their experience of developing and using audits and strategies. Crucially, PAN65 contains no requirements that would restrict the development and delivery of more holistic audits and strategies, and lays the foundations for

a wider-ranging approach through the links already drawn to green networks and, through *Designing Places,* to place-making.

2.4.2   PPG17 Companion Guide

Introduction

'*Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17*' ('the PPG17 Companion Guide') (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002b) is, broadly, the English equivalent of PAN65. It was published in September 2002 by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Communities and Local Government since May 2006). Published before the previous UK government's ambitious reforms of the English and Welsh planning systems, embodied in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, its structure and presentation reflect a public policy climate concerned less with 'streamlining' advice and guidance than with detailed content. That it has survived unchanged for more than a decade –through two root-and-branch overhauls of the English planning system – is testament to its continuing utility and influence.

Functions of the guidance

The Guide (*op cit.*) is intended to provide Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) with an authoritative account of the principles, process and outcomes required of PPG17 (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002a) open space assessments[5], along with advice on community engagement and delivery through the planning system.
Structured in four main parts, it maps out:

* Guiding principles and concepts underpinning effective planning and delivery;
* Including general considerations, such as resource implications
* A five-step process for undertaking local assessments [audit equivalents];
* A suggested framework for implementation of policies and provision standards; and,
* Tools and techniques to assist authorities in undertaking assessments and drafting policy.

The guiding principles are particularly useful in setting the tone for the development of local needs assessment and delivery of appropriate policy, and the five key attributes of open space (accessibility, quality, multi-functionality, primary purpose and quantity). Like PAN65, the Guide defines an indicative typology of open spaces for authorities to apply and adapt).

In addition, the Guide (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002b) establishes the key differences between open spaces in urban and rural areas, and provides advice on how this might influence auditing, community views/aspiration, policy and delivery.

The PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*) sets out the rationale for undertaking local assessments and suggests a logical methodology based on a process of:

* Identifying needs;
* Setting standards;
* Identifying deficiencies; and,
* Developing a strategy and related policies.

It then goes on to provide advice on the process of initiating a 'local assessment,' which can be summarised as follows:

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[5] PPG17 assessments also require consideration of indoor sports facilities – however, this is not discussed further as this does not form part of the recognised audit/strategy process in Scotland.

- Bringing together the relevant local authority departments (planning, leisure services, grounds maintenance and education), and local interest groups, including those representing minorities and hard-to-reach groups.
- Planning the assessment process, explicitly linked to the preparation of the development plan and other relevant strategies.
- Gathering existing baseline information.
- Understanding the implications of national and local policies and strategies.
- Reviewing existing policies and provision standards.
- Understanding community attitudes and aspirations.

Quantitative audit

The PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*) provides a breakdown of the steps that the auditing process should follow, with advice on scoping the process, focussing on information that is critical rather than 'nice to have' but potentially costly and not strictly required to deliver the necessary outcomes. The range of information authorities should consider collecting is provided as a detailed appendix to the Guide. Similarly, the chapter dedicated to tools and resources provides advice to assist authorities in controlling the cost of auditing and strategy development.

While the process 'on the ground' is left to the authority to determine, the Guide provides a relatively comprehensive model scope, including consideration of facilities outside the authority's boundaries that may be particularly significant for local people. To this end, the Guide promotes cross-boundary cooperation between authorities to ensure the local resource is properly understood – and to facilitate burden-sharing with regard to setting benchmarks.

Given the age of the document, it provides little useful technical advice on recording or analysing the quantitative information as GIS was much less widely available at the time of publication – although its potential is acknowledged. (Therefore advice with regard to defining 'catchment areas' for resources and distance thresholds is necessarily rudimentary, and potentially less valuable than much of the rest of the guidance.)

Qualitative audit

The PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*) draws an important distinction between the *quality* of open spaces and their value[6] – highlighting the need to consider both, ideally separately – and provides advice to help authorities develop appropriate benchmarks for both. Measures of quality are related back to pre-existing approaches, notably Green Flag. Authorities are advised to use the process of developing their vision for open space as the basis for locally-appropriate measures of quality, referring back to recognised national benchmarks.

In terms of providing a means of understanding and recording the value of open spaces, the PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*) adds an additional layer of information from that generated by the PAN65 approach – and has the potential to deliver more holistic strategies that acknowledge the wider social, environmental and economic role of the resource.

The interaction between quality and value is also discussed at length, with useful examples (e.g. where an apparently low quality space is highly valued by local residents due to, for instance, lack of other provision or key cultural associations). The PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*) also suggests that authorities could pursue the 'Quality of Life Capital' approach as a means of engaging with communities and understanding the values attached to open

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[6] Although largely related to community values in this context, this could equally be extrapolated to apply to other social, economic and environmental values.

spaces – presenting a more collaborative and holistic approach to understanding what is important about open spaces, and why[7].

Setting standards for open space

Chapter 6 of the PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*) provides detailed advice on developing appropriate quantity, quality and accessibility standards for open space. Like PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008), the form and context of the document largely limit discussion of standards to benchmarking provision of new spaces in parallel with development – albeit in significantly greater detail. In addition to those topics outlined above, it suggests authorities may also wish to define standards for:

- Minimum acceptable sizes of open space delivered through development;
- 'Site area multiplier' (a minimum area figure for a particular type of open space provision by which development site areas should be multiplied to indicate the overall space required);
- Normalised capital, establishment and maintenance costs; and,
- Design.

With regard to spatially-driven standards, specifically accessibility, the advice is rather dated given the technical capabilities generally available to planning authorities in 2002 (but represented a substantial advance over the simple ward-by-ward quantitative approach that had been widely used previously). Readers are referred to the English Nature 'Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) (English Nature 2002; see also Natural England, 2010) and the Sport England playing pitch and facilities plan models to develop typologically specific standards.

The following chapter of the document then sets out an approach to applying the standards in practice, largely through development management processes. Much of this information is still relevant and can readily be applied in current work. This section of the document is particularly useful with regard to the financial realities of developing and applying standards to be delivered through development management. Although the indicative figures should be adjusted for today's economic conditions, and to take into account inflation (particularly construction inflation) since 2002, the general principles remain sound.

Strategy development

Preparation of strategy documents is less of a focus of the PPG17 Companion Guide (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002b), with outputs anticipated to be supplementary planning guidance or development plan policy. Instead, the document provides advice on evaluating the strategic options emerging from the auditing process. Usefully, local authorities are advised to develop the criteria for selection based on the policy requirements of PPG17 (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002a) and other relevant national and local policy and strategies – optimising the potential of open spaces to contribute to a wide range of agendas.

Extensive advice on drafting appropriate planning policies is included, covering the main issues likely to arise in relation to development.

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[7] The 'Quality of Life Capital' / Quality of Life Assessment (QoLA) approach was developed jointly by the Environment Agency, English Heritage and the then-Countryside Agency and English Nature (now Natural England). Support was withdrawn for the approach in 2008 as evaluation work indicated that the approach had not been widely adopted and had largely been superseded by changes in the planning system. In many ways, however, QoLA presaged the more holistic way of looking at the benefits delivered by the environment expressed in the ecosystems approach.

Links to development planning

As noted above, the main focus of the PPG17 Companion Guide (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002b) is enabling authorities to prepare a robust evidence base for development plan policies and/or supplementary planning guidance. Usefully, it encourages authorities to consider the synergies of the development planning and open space assessment processes – potentially helping to reduce costs by integrating work streams and ensuring the evidence and policy is provided at the optimal juncture.

Given the strong planning focus of the document, the level of detail incorporated with regard to the drafting of policy is particularly useful – although there is a relatively weak spatial element to this, reflecting its age.

Links to other strategic priorities

The PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*), most notably through its consideration of the wider values of open spaces, establishes quite effective links to a range of other policy areas. Although somewhat dated, the principle of integration is clear.

Delivery

As noted above, the key delivery mechanism for the recommendations of the PPG17 Companion Guide (*op cit.*) is the planning system, specifically the development management process. Consequently, a substantial amount of detail is provided in relation to the application of provision standards, rates of developer contributions and development policies. It therefore has a stronger focus on implementation than PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008).

Key limitations to developing more holistic, better-integrated strategies

The age of the document is the main obstacle to uncritical use, in that some of the technical advice is outdated and the planning and public policy context has evolved substantially since it was published.

Although strictly applicable only to England, it contains much that is relevant to Scottish authorities – with the more detailed process-related information helpfully addressing gaps in PAN65 (*op cit.*). However, it appears that its influence on open space work in Scotland has been relatively limited, which may reasonably assumed to be a product of the separate planning systems.

2.5 Wider guidance framework

2.5.1 Introduction

This section of the report reviews the suite of guidance that has emerged from a range of sources over the last decade. Rather than include detailed – but highly repetitive – reviews of each document in turn, the outcomes of the review process are summarised below, following a brief account of the key drivers for guidance publication and an assessment of the main sources of this material.

2.5.2 Drivers for publication

Much of the guidance suite responds directly to topics raised in either PAN65 (*op cit.* or the PPG17 Companion Guide (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002b), addressing perceived deficiencies, adding detail or assisting users to make the links between open space and other agendas. Similarly, other products have emerged (or been refined) to cater to the needs and opportunities of specific types of open space, such as 'natural greenspace'

or playing fields. The emergence of other, related, policy agendas – particularly green networks – has also contributed to the suite at both the national and regional level, providing thematic and context-specific advice to practitioners. Similarly, the changing policy and public finance landscape has necessitated updates to advice to reflect realities.

The non-governmental guidance tends to have been published on an ad hoc basis, reflecting the outcomes of research work or in response to identified needs, rather than working to an agreed strategic programme. There is, therefore, substantial repetition and redundancy contained within the suite – although this is largely a product of advice emanating from a range of sources and the need for internal consistency and completeness in individual products.

2.5.3   Sources of guidance

Guidance products have emerged from a range of sources including:

- Public bodies:
    - CABE Space;
    - Mayor of London;
    - Natural England;
    - **sport**scotland / Sport England.

- Regional / local delivery bodies:
    - Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership / Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority;

- Third sector:
    - greenspace scotland;
    - GreenSpace;
    - Woodland Trust;
    - Green Flag[8].

2.6   Thematic review of wider guidance framework

2.6.1   Introduction

This section of the report provides an assessment of the guidance framework against the key topic areas required for successful audit and strategy preparation. It synthesises the results of a comprehensive review process, summarised in a matrix as Appendix 1.

2.6.2   Scope and focus of existing guidance

The majority of existing guidance is focussed on process rather than outcome. Guidance therefore is mainly concerned with assisting local authorities in undertaking audits and producing strategies. Significantly less emphasis is placed on advice for using the products generated to add value to policy, helping focus delivery or providing a framework for action or decision-making.

Much of the Scotland-specific guidance has focussed on particular aspects of the audit process – for instance, separate greenspace scotland documents dealing with quality assessment and developing standards. They are intended to expand on aspects of PAN65

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[8] The Green Flag scheme is owned by the Department for Communities and Local Government, but is licenced to Keep Britain Tidy – a charity – in partnership with GreenSpace, the National Housing Federation and the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens.

(Sottish Government, 2008), providing practitioners with valuable detail to aid interpretation of requirements and aid delivery.

Broadly, these products have a tighter focus on *greenspace* rather than the more wide-ranging definition of open space contained in SPP/SPP11 (Scottish Government, 2010; 2007) and PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008). In parallel with the emergence of green networks as a national and local priority, civic spaces, streetscapes and areas of hard landscaping – regardless of their quality or value to communities – have been somewhat neglected. This issue may also have been exacerbated by Historic Scotland's very tightly-defined statutory role and Architecture and Design Scotland's largely reactive engagement with the development management process. In any case, such spaces are relatively poorly served by the existing [Scottish] guidance framework. This is less of an issue in more recent English material, such as the CABE Space/Mayor of London *Open Space Strategies: Best practice guidance* (CABE Space and the Mayor of London, 2009) ('the CABE Space / Mayor of London guidance') which reflects a more balanced vision of the values attached to open spaces and their wider contribution to the urban environment.

2.6.3 Technical advice

Quantitative audit

There appears to be a general implication that the quantitative aspects of the audit are relatively straightforward – which indeed they are – but their efficacy depends on rigorous data collection and effective recording in a manner that facilitates easy retrieval and analysis.

The greenspace scotland/Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGNP) *Greenspace Quality – a guide to assessment, planning and strategic development (2008)* ('The Quality Guide') provides outline information on the quantitative aspects of the audit process, in parallel with the assignation of typological information. However, discussion of the range of quantitative analyses possible, their potential to add value – and the limits of inference – is limited. The CABE Space/Mayor of London guidance (CABE Space and the Mayor of London, 2009) contains similarly sparse treatment of the topic. While this is not a major issue, there may be advantages in providing a description of the minimum levels of analysis required, and the potential for related spatial analyses.

greenspace scotland's *Urban Greenspace Mapping and Characterisation Handbook* (2010) provides technical GIS advice on extracting open space information from Ordnance Survey 'MasterMap' polygon layers, interpreting aerial photography and recording land uses / functions of open space (using the PAN 65 typology. Where technical capabilities and capacity exists, this provides a suitable approach to defining the baseline from which an audit can be conducted.

Qualitative audit

In England, the dominant measure of open space quality is the Green Flag Award, licenced to Keep Britain Tidy by the Department for Communities and Local Government. It is therefore a nationally supported and recognised benchmark – and one which is increasingly used in Scotland. The manual for applicants (Greenhalgh and Parsons, 2006)establishes eight main criteria against which quality can be assessed:

- A welcoming place;
- Healthy, safe and secure;
- Well maintained and clean;
- Sustainability;

- Conservation and heritage;
- Community involvement;
- Marketing; and.
- Management.

Within these headings, 27 sub-criteria provide the means of detailed assessment. The system is targeted toward assessment and awards for individual parks – rather than acting as a tool for assessment for the wider open space resource. Assessments are then submitted to Green Flag, with follow-up site visits by independent assessors to confirm the scores, highlight good practice and make recommendations for improvement – culminating in either the awarding of Green Flag status, or provision of feedback on requirements to meet the standard. The key strength of Green Flag is the measure of independence in confirming – or otherwise – the assessment of open space managers. It has become a nationally recognised quality mark, and is seen as a useful accolade, particularly with regard to articulating the benefits to, and securing buy-in from, elected members. However, securing accreditation carries a significant cost. While the assessment criteria can be applied without attracting this charge, users obviously lose the benefit of external appraisal. However, it is relatively strongly focussed toward parks and more formal open spaces, limiting its potential application.

GreenSTAT– a visitor survey system developed by GreenSpace – presents a rather different approach. It captures user-generated qualitative information on open space provision, quality and use (very widely used in England and Wales – only three authorities in Scotland currently using it). It makes use of the PPG17 typology and provides opportunities to benchmark against emerging national and regional standards (through comparison against other authorities' GreenSTAT scores).

The greenspace scotland/GCVGNP quality guide is particularly influential in Scotland, establishing a suite of five measures of quality against which open spaces can be scored. This generates an overall 'fitness for purpose' aggregate score for each space, which can then be used to analyse the resource in more detail[9].

Both the gs/GCVGNP and Green Flag methodologies and metrics conflate open space quality with values to a certain degree.

Values audit

The introductory sections of PAN65 highlight the broad social, environmental and economic value of open spaces. However, with regard to incorporating 'value' within audit processes, this is largely confined to understanding the value placed on open spaces by communities – leading to a strong focus on the functional value of open space (i.e. how it performs as an open space of a particular type, and how important it is to local users in this context). This is obviously a critical aspect of the auditing process, but potentially misses something of the special character of spaces and how they interact with wider networks and provision.

The Quality Guide (greenspace scotland / GCVGNP, 2008) does discuss some of the suite of wider values of open space, principally biodiversity, but this is not carried through to the assessment methodology – except in relation to optional assessments of community values. This is perhaps unsurprising as the guidance is largely concerned with quality. Green Flag touches on the issue, but it is partly conflated with the process of quality assessment – but as it is largely intended as a site-specific assessment this is probably less of an issue. It does, however, incorporate a wider range of metrics, including biodiversity,

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[9] The scoring methodology was developed by LUC and applied in audits for East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Argyll and Bute, before being adopted by greenspace scotland

heritage/conservation, landscape, water management and patterns of community use – in addition to using the values as a tool to market and enhance open spaces.

Currently, only the CABE Space/Mayor of London guidance (2009) explicitly sets out the need to understand the wider value of open spaces, reflecting the PPG17 Companion Guide's (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002b) acknowledgement of the concept and the wider-ranging involvement in the development of the guidance (and the scope of CABE Space and the Mayor of London's institutional interests). It encourages authorities to examine sites':

- Recreational values;
- Cultural and historic values; and,
- Sustainability and ecological values.

While it is recognised that many spaces will not have recognisable/measurable values in each category, these criteria represent a potentially important means of understanding:

- Motivations for public use (e.g. cultural / historical associations or assets' importance for particular species);
- Community priorities for enhancement (e.g. desire to restore locally important heritage assets, rather than more 'obvious' functional/quality-led improvements);
- Contribution to wider character, sense of place and environmental quality; and,
- Potential for resistance to disposal if sites identified as being 'surplus' against quantitative / qualitative measures.

Setting standards

The current guidance framework places a strong emphasis on the development of appropriate standards for assessing open space provision. From 'Rethinking Open Space' (Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2001) onwards, this has formed a key element of most discussions of audits, strategies and wider policy integration.

Benchmarking is an important means of understanding local priorities and the action required to secure and enhance open space provision. In 2005, research produced for the then-Scottish Executive sought to frame the current state of practice and debate around open space standards, and define minimum quantitative standards for provision in parallel with new development (Scottish Executive Development Department, 2005)[10]. It also recommended the provision of guidance on setting qualitative standards and condition monitoring. Although PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) provides an outline approach to setting standards, and indicates where a standards-based approach to understanding open space requirements may be appropriate, it does not provide any clear guidance with regard to how authorities should go about developing and setting such metrics.

It is widely acknowledged that appropriate standards should be context-specific, and may vary significantly between, or even within, local authority areas to ensure they reflect the character of local open space provision and surrounding environmental conditions. Therefore providing definitive guidance on how standards should be developed, how they should relate to settlement, demographic and environmental considerations, is difficult.

The CABE Space/Mayor of London's guidance (2009) provides useful advice with regard to setting quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards. In England, the '*Access to Natural Greenspace Standard*' (ANGSt) (Natural England, 2010)[11] – based on studies of the

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[10] Recommendations were not carried through to the revised version of SPP11 (2007)
[11] ANGSt was originally published in the early 1990s, and reviewed in 2008 and republished in 2010.

distances people would travel to access 'natural' environments – provides a powerful tool in assessing current levels of provision, and planning for enhancement. ANGSt is designed to be used in parallel with Natural England's Visitor Service Standards (for NNRs, Country Parks and LNRs) and the Green Flag standard for quality[12]. This provides a useful framework with which appropriate benchmarks can be established – although it is obviously type-specific.

Other widely applied standards-based approaches also focus on particular aspects of the open space typology, including the Fields in Trust standards for outdoor sport, recreation and play (formerly the 'six acre standard') and the Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard (Woodland Trust, 2010).

Recent standards research and guidance

Developing and applying standards has traditionally been an obstacle to full compliance with SPP/PAN65 requirements for open space planning, and a major issue for planning authorities. greenspace scotland/Scottish Natural Heritage have recently published research into the development of standards for open space and associated guidance for developing standards (greenspace scotland, 2013a; 2013b). Working with three 'pathfinder' authorities in the first phase and two in the second phase, the project has developed a framework that can be used by local authorities to set local open space standards. This work suggests that the model is sufficiently robust to allow local authorities that are very diverse in nature to set locally appropriate standards. Unlike the majority of existing approaches to standards, it applies equally to new and existing open space provision.

The proposed model features a tripartite standard composed of accessibility, quality and quantity standards, which need to be used together to understand local needs. It comprises two components:

- An area-wide standard covering all spaces in and around urban settlements (both new developments and existing areas), which sets the benchmark against which individual settlements and developments can be compared.
- A series of settlement descriptions or 'accounts' outlining the mix, distribution and quality scores of open spaces in each settlement – this allows managers to identify priorities for action and planners to identify both what mix of spaces they should require from developers and the open space priorities for developer contributions.

It provides a context-sensitive standard for new developments which takes account of the amount of open space in the surrounding area.

The approach places a much stronger emphasis on spatial/statistical analysis of audit data to better understand existing provision and define need more systematically – but also in a manner that is more sensitive to local conditions and characteristics. While it should be noted that the guidance provides a basic approach (using Euclidean / 'as the crow flies' buffers from properties), there is a reasonably strong emphasis placed on the use of network analysis to provide more accurate indications of accessibility. While this is potentially valuable, there is relatively little acknowledgement of the significant costs attached to the necessary software[13], and the need for appropriately qualified staff.

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[12] It should be noted that Green Flag standards can only be used as a benchmark for certain types of space

[13] Network analysis is not a standard part of basic commercial GIS packages and must be purchased as a separate extension licence at considerable cost – even under public sector software agreements. It also requires specialist knowledge to extract best value from the software – although this could reasonably be shared between local authority services.

The study has identified a number of challenges with regard to the development and application of council-wide standards, particularly where local settlement morphology, character and context represent a constraint on the amount of open space that currently exists or could be provided. Interestingly, this appears to be refocusing attention on the role and functionality of streets and 'hardscapes' as public spaces, in addition to encouraging creative approaches to enhancing public access to functional or semi-private open space (such as golf courses and institutional grounds[14]).

The approach has significant potential to assist authorities in delivering a problematic – but critical – aspect of the open space planning process, and should also help to deliver consistency between new and existing spaces. It is interesting that the draft SPP (discussed at 2.3.3 above) appears to be pulling back from the standards-based approach set out in previous iterations, which may establish tensions in rolling out the implementation of this guidance. It should, however, be noted that the draft SPP sets no explicit barriers to such an approach, which could readily be used as a 'sense check' against more organic, design and place-led approaches.

Strategy development

Building on the requirements established by PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) and PPG17 (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002a) respectively, existing guidance products provide outline advice on form, structure and content of open space strategies – although this is generally relatively high level.

The Quality Guide (greenspace scotland/GCVGNP, 2008) contains a short description of the role and broad function of the [greenspace] strategy, and includes very useful detail on developing an action plan to assist in delivering the identified strategic aims, objectives and priorities. Helpfully, it also highlights the value of performance indicators and developing monitoring and review arrangements to drive continuous improvement – in addition to ensuring the profile of open space is maintained.

The CABE Space/Mayor of London guidance (2009) is more explicit, providing a list of required topics that neatly define the likely structure of an open space strategy. Further detail is provided with regard to the functions, content and status of the action plan – highlighting the potential for strategies to be adopted as supplementary planning documents (SPD)[15], with action/delivery plans sitting below them, outwith the development plan (as they will inevitably contain items that relate to non-planning matters and should not, therefore, be included in SPD). In addition, helpful advice on the potential constraints on delivery that should be reflected in action planning is provided – for instance, with regard to planning for variable income streams (e.g. from Section 75/106 obligations or grant aid) and interactions with other statutory processes.

Engagement with stakeholders and the public forms an important aspect of most guidance on strategy development – although where it comes in the programme, and its extent, does vary. The Quality Guide (greenspace scotland/GCVGNP, 2009) proposes a three-level approach undertaken following the audit, engaging at a settlement/community level; authority-wide; and at a strategic level with partners, funders and elected members. However, no suggestions are made with regard to consulting on draft strategies. This is

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[14] Although rights of responsible access under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 apply to golf courses, but are specifically excluded from school grounds and playing fields, when these are in use

[15] Term for non-statutory planning guidance forming part of Local Development Frameworks in England, as defined by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 – this system of development planning has now been revoked by the Localism Act 2011 and the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which supersedes PPS12

perhaps a function of the guidance being less planning focussed, and therefore less concerned with standard local authority processes of consultation and committee cycles. The stronger planning focus of the CABE Space / Mayor of London document (2009) effectively fills this gap, providing an outline list of consultees, in addition to setting out opportunities for integration with other local authority priorities and processes.

2.6.4   Links to development planning

As the links to the planning process are relatively well developed in the national guidance framework, relatively few of the third party guidance products have a strong focus on planning.

Natural England's '*Nature Nearby'* (Natural England, 2010) provides a short summary of how green infrastructure relates to the planning policy framework, and the opportunities for ANGSt standards to contribute to the assessment and delivery of greenspace provision.

As noted above, the CABE Space / Mayor of London guidance (2009) provides the most comprehensive account of the interactions between open space audits and strategies and the planning process (potentially reflecting the stronger emphasis in PPG17).   The opportunities for streamlining and integration are woven throughout the guidance, from developing the evidence base to drafting policies and adoption of SPD.   While there are some key differences between the Scottish and English systems, the principles for integration in the guidance generally hold true.

However, it would be useful for updated guidance in Scotland to highlight the Main Issues Report stage of LDP development as a key opportunity for assessing existing provision, need, values and community aspirations.   This could also help to reduce the effects of 'consultation fatigue' for local people, in addition to optimising resource use for local authorities.

2.6.5   Links to other strategic objectives

As a significant proportion of the guidance products are either thematic or subject-specific, they generally draw a range of good quality links to wider strategic objectives including:

- Health improvement;
- Biodiversity;
- Green networks / green infrastructure;
- Water management; and,
- Cultural heritage.

However, coverage is not uniform with some guidance – for instance Natural England's '*Nature Nearby*' (2010) focussing on biodiversity (although this, and the associated ANGSt standards, can be considered to be pointing at least part of the way towards an approach that takes account of ecosystem services).   The Woodland Trust's '*Space for People*' (Woodland Trust, 2010) provides strong links to physical and mental health, ecosystem services, climate change adaptation and biodiversity. While couched in terms of the value of woodland and related open spaces, the general principles apply to most open spaces – although the mix of ecosystem services / benefits to communities may differ.   Although Green Flag is largely a site-specific approach to assessment, as noted above, it does promote a broad view of the value and quality of open space, which draws in a wide range of considerations. '*Health Impact Assessment of greenspace: a guide*' (NHS Health Scotland, *et al.* 2008) focuses entirely on understanding the health benefits of people's interactions with open spaces.

The CABE Space/Mayor of London guidance (2009), as the most recent publication, has perhaps the strongest suite of links to the widest range of priorities – including the ecosystems approach (albeit at a high level, and without incorporation in assessment methodologies). It also outlines the opportunities for synergy at a strategic and operational level.

2.6.6 Delivery

Relatively few guidance products have a strong delivery element. While this frequently reflects the subject or process focus on documents (e.g. those concerned with quality assessment or standards, rather than covering the whole process), this may have influenced to a minor extent some of the issues authorities have experienced in trying to implement the current generation of strategies.

Given the context of the national guidance, links to delivery through planning are the most widely explored – reinforced through the quality and standards focus of a proportion of the guidance. Even then, these links are not always fully developed with little consideration of the realities of integration with development plans, application of standards through the development management process or indeed the risks of tying delivery – particularly with regard to enhancement of existing resources – too closely to development. Similarly, there is no discussion of the potential tensions created by a reliance on an essentially market-led approach to delivery of public goods.

With the exception of the CABE Space/Mayor of London guidance (2009), no document currently explores the full range of potential delivery mechanisms. Again, this reflects the subject-specific nature of much of the suite. However, the aforementioned document devotes a whole chapter to delivery, covering:

- Promoting the strategy to local people, including through the media;
- Managing ongoing partnership;
- Delivery through the planning system;
- Delivery through community engagement;
- Management and maintenance;
- Resourcing, including:
    - Local authority capital and revenue funding;
    - Provision of space or funds through development management;
    - Local area agreements;
    - Commercial activities;
    - Joint funding / grant aid; and,
    - Support in kind.

Particularly useful advice with regard to the issues of financial planning, negotiating funds and budgeting for staff time is also provided. As described in Section 3 of this report, some authorities have experienced difficulty in translating the priorities set out in open space strategies into action on the ground, therefore drawing practitioners' attention to this resource will be particularly important.

2.6.7 Monitoring and evaluation

Only the CABE Space/Mayor of London guidance (2009) and the Quality Guide (greenspace scotland / GCVGNP, 2008) provide detailed guidance on establishing a monitoring framework for open space strategies and actions plans. This represents a critical aspect of the process, and is key to securing longer term buy-in for members, partners and stakeholders – in addition to commitments of funding. Broadly, the guidance suggests that monitoring can take the following forms:

- Monitoring against national indicators;
- Monitoring against internal indicators:
  - Progress against actions;
  - Spend against capital and operational investment programmes;
- Changes in resource characteristics (quantity, quality, accessibility);
- Changes in use / value of open spaces;
- Customer satisfaction and perceptions;
- Including user-generated information;
- Annual review / 'health check'; and,
- End-of-life review and evaluation.

A potentially critical aspect that appears to be missing in this regard is an assessment of the likely resource implications of monitoring open space strategies and action plans. This effectively provides the evidence for future investment, and should not be neglected – even though resource constraints are likely to affect these tasks (as 'back office' tasks) before it affects action on the ground.

2.6.8 Key limitations to developing more holistic, better-integrated strategies

The current suite of guidance is tailored to reflect national policy considerations and to deliver on the key themes set out in SPP (Scottish Government, 2010) and (PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) or, in the case of English material, PPG17 (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002a)). This has delivered a range of capable documents that focus on the process of delivering aspects of audits and strategy, rather than understanding the key links and opportunities to add value for communities. Similarly, the disaggregated nature of the guidance framework as a whole is potentially unhelpful as practitioners are required to cover a lot of ground to understand the state of the art and then synthesise the material to develop a locally appropriate way forward.

Any broadly standardised typological approach will inevitably create issues where spaces or functions are a potentially poor fit with the framework. Although there is flexibility built in from PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) down, in that authorities are encouraged to adapt the classifications to suit their area, many may find this difficult as no guidance is provided on how best to approach this. Similarly, the introduction of 'Scotland's Greenspace Map' has reinforced this typology and could potentially discourage authorities from adopting a more locally appropriate approach due to the convenience and significant resource savings of a ready-made dataset.

At present, the approaches to open space promoted by the Scottish guidance framework is, as noted above, strongly orientated towards 'greenspace,' rather than adopting PAN65's broader-based definitions. This has potentially reduced the attention paid to urban civic spaces and streetscapes, with several authorities producing audits and strategies focussed solely on greenspace. However, greenspace scotland's recent 'pathfinder' projects into open space standards has reaffirmed the value and importance of civic spaces, particularly in settlements where existing open space provision is low, and is unlikely to ever increase, due to settlement morphology or landscape setting (greenspace scotland, 2013a; 2013b).

While the guidance framework is largely sound, its general lack of operational detail – with the notable exception of the CABE Space / Mayor of London guidance (2009) – meaning that practitioners are often left with difficult decisions to make, but are largely unsupported.

It should be noted that the CABE Space / Mayor of London guidance (ibid)represents an evolution of previous guidance that has been rigorously tested since 2004, and also benefits

from delivery by the comparatively well-funded and resourced GLA and the national agency for the built environment, with high level input from the full range of partner agencies. It is also the only document that provides top-to-bottom advice on the whole process, from planning an audit to delivery on the ground.

The guidance is inevitably focussed towards practitioners, and their content is therefore predisposed to produce practitioner-centric strategies. Although extensive engagement with local people is promoted, there is little attention paid to ensuring open space strategies are documents that communities and individuals can access, understand and identify the potential for grass-roots delivery measures[16]. Similarly, the guidance offers comparatively little for the private sector – other than understanding the process and rationale behind the standards of open space their developments may be required to deliver. There may be significant value in fostering stronger links to the design agenda, potentially through any updates of '*Designing Places*' (Scottish Executive, 2001) or '*Designing Streets*' (Scottish Government, 2010b)[17].

2.7 Conclusions of desk-based review and recommendations

The following section summarises the key issues emerging from the review of the published suite of guidance, and provides short recommendations for inclusion in future guidance.

2.7.1 *Promoting a holistic approach?*

Individually, the documents in the current suite of guidance are not wholly effective in promoting a holistic approach to open space audits and strategies. However, taken as a whole the necessary topics are covered to enable local authorities to adapt the available tools and develop audits and strategies that capture more holistic information and draw effective links to related policy and strategies. It is likely that some level of interpretation and/or signposting will be required to help authorities extract best value from the existing guidance, in order to secure a level of consistency.

More recent documents acknowledge the wider values and interactions of open space, but this is not explicitly carried through to recommended audit methodologies, or accorded a specific place in the process of developing strategies.

2.7.2 *Integration*

Individually many of the current guidance products contain relatively limited links to other key policy agendas or other relevant strategic and operational council documents. However, when viewed in the round, the major issues are covered – although this requires substantial research effort on the part of practitioners. In particular, links to green networks and green infrastructure are well integrated and, as illustrated in the following chapter, have proved influential in current strategies.

The age of key documents is the principal limiting factor in providing stronger interactions with more recent concepts, notably ecosystem services, which while touched on, is not expanded in meaningful detail. (In 2009, relatively little work on 'operationalizing' the concept had been done, therefore its capacity to influence assessment approaches, or delivery mechanisms, was very limited.)

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[16] CABE Space has produced '*It's our space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space*' – but this is mainly concerned with scoping and delivering grant-funded/capital projects with a significant construction element (CABE Space, 2007).
[17] *Designing Places* was published in 2001 and contains little advice on open spaces or landscape design more generally

Providing links to wider local authority work is often missing, or covered only cursorily, in most guidance. This immediately sets up a tension between policy and delivery which, when coupled with relatively little strategic engagement with delivery partner departments, has the potential to affect delivery. Local authority experience, set out in the following chapter, confirms this as a potentially significant issue.

2.7.3 Delivery

As noted above, much of the guidance is relatively sparse with regard to delivery (although the CABE Space / Mayor of London guidance (2009) contains a specific section on the subject). Action planning – the critical means of translating strategic priorities into interventions on the ground – is generally not well covered, creating the potential for actions to be effectively undeliverable if poorly framed. The impact of this is likely to be intensified where authorities have not involved delivery partners in the development of the strategy.

Delivery mechanisms unrelated to planning are also potentially underdeveloped, particularly with regard to the opportunities for community action.

2.7.4 Existence of 'best practice'?

As the current guidance framework is quite mixed with regard to age, content and focus it is difficult to identify individual documents as examples of 'best practice.' The CABE Space / Mayor of London guidance (2009) comes closest to representing a more holistic view of the process and outcomes of open space audits and strategies – but is not well-aligned with the opportunities and processes of the Scottish planning system.

2.7.5 Summary of key issues for consideration in updated guidance

The following issues are drawn out and summarised from the analysis above, with recommendations that could be delivered through the guidance produced as part of this project.

Divergence from SPP / PAN65 focus

The process of divergence from the original scope and focus of PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) in subsequent Scottish guidance represents a potentially important issue that may have contributed to the propagation of a less – rather than more – holistic approach to open space. This perhaps also reflects the origins of key pieces of guidance, most notably the greenspace scotland / GCVGNP guidance (2008). While undoubtedly the most useful piece of Scottish guidance, it should be acknowledged that it was developed to cater to a particular need, and promote the delivery of the project partners' objectives – namely greenspace and green networks. Open spaces, and the process of auditing and strategy development, have therefore become increasingly divorced from consideration of the wider built environment.

Recommendation:
The updated guidance framework could usefully restate the need for consideration of *all* types of open space. Further explanation of the value and importance of civic spaces would be welcome, along with stronger practical links to design, heritage and place-making.

Purpose and audience of strategies

The PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) definition of the purpose of open space strategies is relatively limited, being principally aimed at local authorities and their strategic partners – and this is largely replicated in the wider suite of guidance. Although the outputs of the process will inevitably have a level of technical content, the guidance does not encourage

local authorities to consider communities as a potential audience, nor a potential source of action at the space-specific level[18].

Similarly, developers are currently an arm's-length audience for strategies, with little of relevance beyond standards for new provision. The development and adoption of open space SG/SPG clearly addresses this issue, ideally providing decision-support tools (e.g. understanding potential for development to generate demand, and necessitate on, or off-site delivery), standards and design advice.

There is perhaps a need to provide advice on how authorities might seek to develop more holistic, locally appropriate strategies that recognise the range of benefits delivered, and interests involved in, open space.

Recommendation:
Encouraging authorities to take a wider view of who, and what, open space audits and strategies are for – and their potential to add value to a range of agendas – should be a priority. This will help deliver more holistic, and ultimately more useful, strategies.

Missed opportunities in links to planning

Most of the guidance does not make effective links with the key opportunities presented by the development planning process (such as tying in to the Main Issue Report). Similarly, the opportunities and requirements for translating the priorities of open space strategies into appropriate planning policy and guidance are not fully developed. This is partly a product of the age of some of the guidance, developed before the reformed Scottish planning system was either in force or bedding down. Although balance within the guidance suite is helpful (and an over-reliance on planning is a risk, as noted above), it is important not to lose sight of the critical mechanisms for protecting and enhancing open space.

Recommendation:
The updated guidance framework could provide advice, potentially in diagrammatic form, indicating the optimal relationship between the LDP and open space audit/strategy processes – along with other opportunities for efficiency and integration (e.g. climate change adaptation plans, flood risk management, Conservation Area Appraisal).

Closer links to the process of assessing sites proposed for development, potentially through the SEA, could look more strategically at the implications for open spaces. In parallel with the auditing process, priorities for protection, enhancement and delivery of new provision could be identified in parallel with land allocations.

SG/SPG offers an excellent and potentially cost-effective means for local authorities to draw together issues, summarise the relevant technical reports and strategies (e.g. open space, green networks, playing fields, allotments, playspace) and set out key policies and criteria for decision-making.

There may be significant benefits in making such links explicit to ensure that developers are appropriately informed of the value that can be added to their schemes through well planned and designed open spaces – and the criteria against which schemes will be assessed. Such guidance would not, however, be the appropriate locus for information not directly related to planning.

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[18] Some authorities have produced area (e.g. Neighbourhood Partnership-specific) action plans, providing a more locally-accessible format for disseminating planned enhancements – although these do not highlight opportunities for local people/groups to take part

Practical advice on design and delivery

Stronger and more practical links to the design and place-making agendas could provide local authorities and the private sector with additional guidance on translating minimum standards for provision into attractive, multi-functional open spaces. This could help to give wider life and meaning to standards for new open space provision – as well as directly promoting the types of facilities and enhancement that communities and authorities want to see.

The current guidance suite provides relatively little detail with regard to delivery mechanisms. In parallel with the missed opportunities in relation to development planning, this potentially reduces the effectiveness of strategies in making links to means of 'making things happen.'

Recommendation:
Although some delivery options will often be locally-specific, guidance could usefully highlight:

- Key mechanisms;
- Potential partners (who should already have been engaged in developing the strategy);
- Thematic sources of funding (e.g. Woodland - FC 'Woods In and Around Towns');
- Opportunities for links to ongoing local authority programmes/action; and,
- Potential sources for design cues and information.

Similarly, it may be useful to explore the opportunities for landscape and open space design guidance, delivered through SG/SPG, which links to minimum standards of new provision in development plans.

Keeping up with technology

Earlier items in the guidance framework are substantially out of date with regard to the technology and techniques available to record, process and disseminate open space data.
The availability of GIS has expanded significantly even since the publication of PAN65 (*op cit.*), creating the potential for more sophisticated analyses of distribution, on-the-ground accessibility[19], and relationship to other environmental assets and processes (including ecosystem service delivery) – in addition to facilitating easier and more stable database integration. Similar advances in mobile computing means that on-the-fly editing and attribution of open space data could be a realistic option for future audits – cutting down on overall survey and audit data processing time.

However, authorities cannot be assumed to have universal access to either the most up-to-date packages or the necessary expertise to make optimal use of functionality, given the significant costs attached. Similarly, although there are relatively few commercial off-the-shelf GIS products used in local authorities, it cannot be assumed that authorities will all make the same choices – therefore any technical guidance must be generic to all GIS[20].

The availability of Scotland's Greenspace Map to all local authorities will be a major benefit for those planning future audits – providing a ready-made baseline that can be edited and

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[19] Based on network analysis of actual walking distances, which is more able to reflect barriers to access (such as road crossing, poor path quality etc.)
[20] ESRI ArcGIS and Pitney Bowes MapInfo are the two industry-standard applications – Network analysis tools for both are potentially costly 'extensions' that are not available as part of the basic licence. A number of free, open source products are also available that may become increasingly attractive as local authorities seek to reduce expenditure.

'tagged' with appropriate information. Acknowledging this resource in guidance, along with providing a basic workflow for sourcing and making best use of this data should be a priority for updated guidance.

Recommendation:
While technology is a key aspect of the audit process, and guidance should reflect a best practice approach to its use, care should be taken to ensure that it does not exclude authorities that do not necessarily have access to the latest software or hardware.

Guidance could therefore define general principles, rather than setting out strict criteria that should be adhered to, and should focus on analyses that form part of the critical path to delivering robust audits. Options and achievable minimum standards may be a way forward. The opportunities for labour-saving cooperation between council departments should also be highlighted.

It may be appropriate to keep technical advice separate, in a modular web-based format, which can be more frequently – and cheaply – updated, rather than being embedded in future guidance products.

3.   LOCAL AUTHORITY REVIEW

3.1   Introduction

It should be noted that the function of this research is not to assess the 'quality' of local authorities' open space audits and strategies. It does not therefore provide any judgements on the efficacy of individual strategies – beyond the information contributed directly by respondents.

3.2   Aims and objectives

The study brief required that a review of existing open space audits and strategies, along with follow-up discussions with a representative sample of local authorities was conducted to examine:

- The approach taken in making links to other strategies and plans;
- Making links to the newer concepts of green network/green infrastructure priorities/strategies (including integrated habitat network models, river basin management plans, flood management plans etc.), climate change strategies and commitments and ecosystem services;
- The role of supplementary planning guidance; and,
- The way strategies are translated into action on the ground.

In addition, published documents were reviewed, and survey respondents asked questions, to determine:

- the level of penetration of the existing guidance framework in current practice;
- the extent to which existing strategies can be considered to be 'holistic'; and,
- approaches to and progress against delivery of priorities.

3.3   Methodology

3.3.1   Introduction

The methodology outlined below was developed to provide a representative cross-section of current and recent practice in open space planning within the resource constraints of the project. It balances sample size against the depth of questioning and responses from authorities at a range of stages in the process.

3.3.2   Desk-based review of published material

A rapid desk-based review of all publicly available open space audits and strategies was conducted to determine:

- The stage in the process of each local authority;
- The date each stage was completed;
- The status of published documents (e.g. draft, consultation draft, adopted);
- The departments / services responsible for strategy development and delivery;
- Whether third parties (consultants, community agents etc.) were used in preparation?;
- Visible relationships to wider priorities (as outlined above); and,
- Integration with planning policy and other strategies.

This also provided the opportunity to map this information to add a more rigorous spatial dimension to the sampling strategy, as indicated below. A map summarising the stage each local authority had reached in the process, as of December 2012, is included as *Figure 3.1* and ***Error! Reference source not found.*** below.
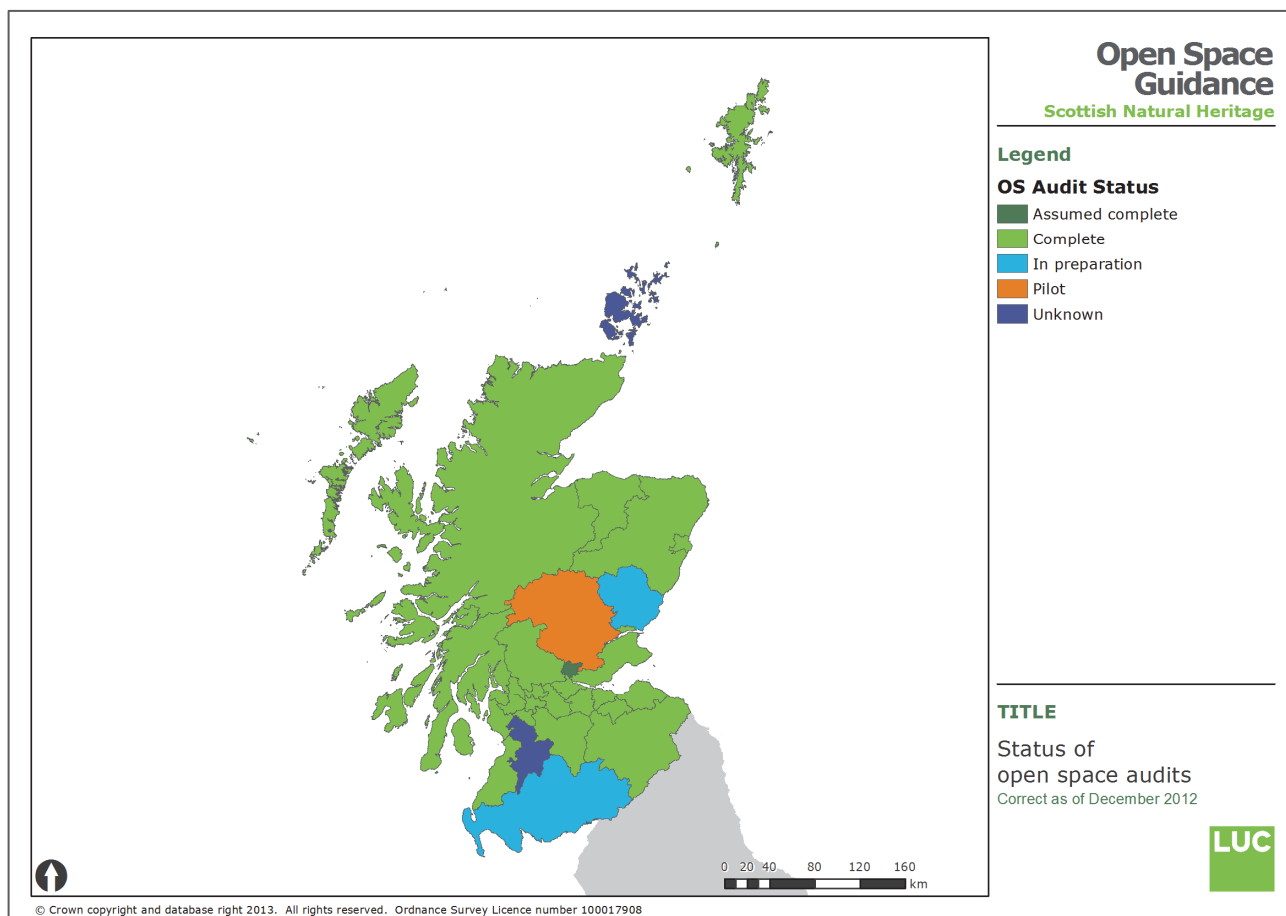
**Figure 3.1: Status of open space audits**
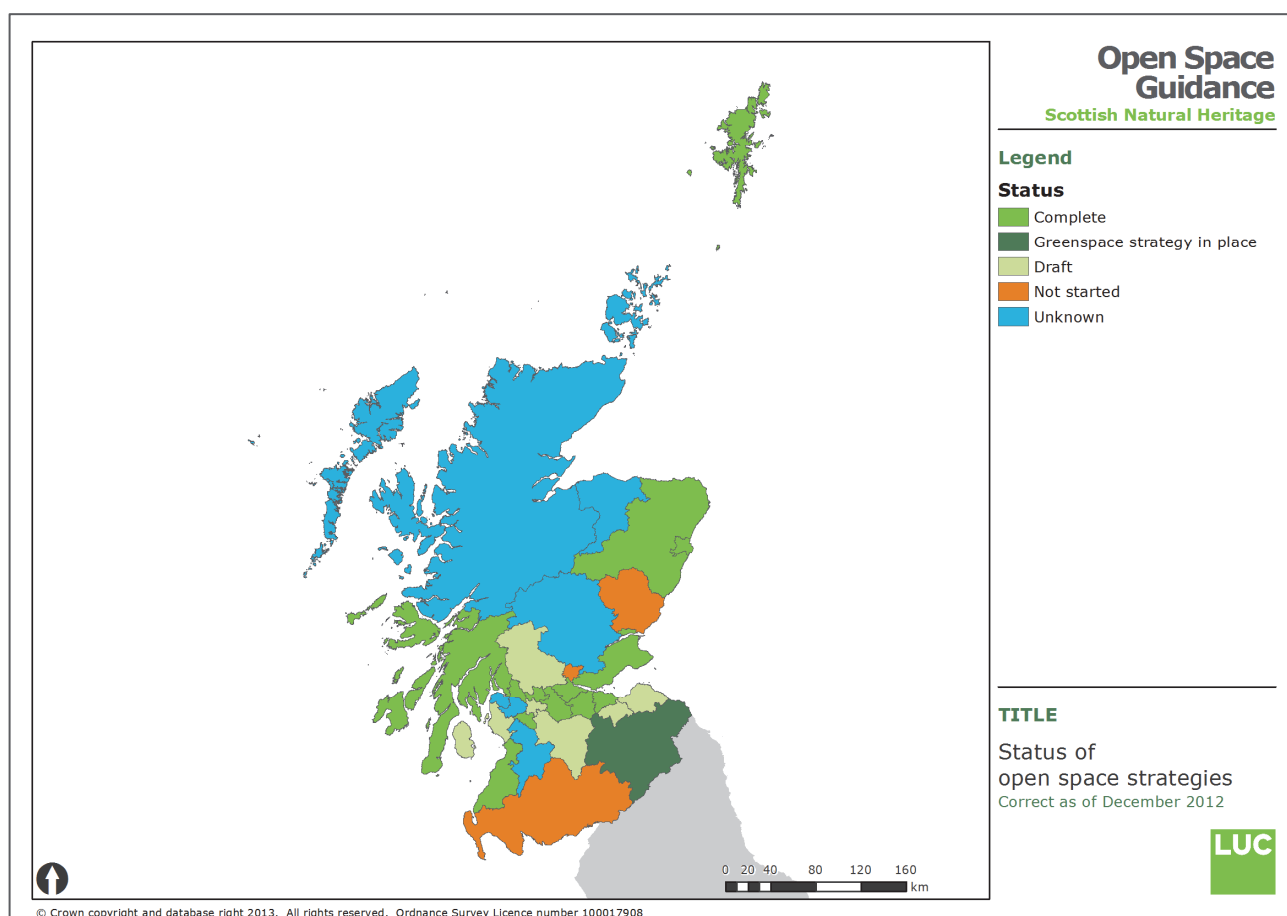
Figure 3.2: Status of open space strategies

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3.3.3 Sampling strategy

The findings of the review process outlined above – and summarised in Appendix 2 – were cross-referenced with the geographical location, and the key social economic and environmental conditions of authorities to produce a sample that:

- Provided an appropriate mix of urban and rural authorities;
- Included participants at a range of stages in the process of auditing and strategy production;
- Included major cities; and,
- Ensured key drivers for change and action were captured (SDPs, CSGN).

A sample size of 10 authorities was agreed with the project steering group, and an appropriate selection made from the suitable candidates, resulting in the sample group detailed in *Table 3.1* below and mapped in **Error! Reference source not found.**.

Table 3.1: Sample group of local authorities

Local authority		Location / attributes	Comments
1	City of Edinburgh	CSGN; Metropolitan; Cross-authority ownership (planning & parks); Audit and strategy complete; Steering group members.	Both have good links across services and to wider approaches to greenspace (e.g. CEC Green Flag parks; Falkirk Green Space Initiative, CSFT, Helix etc.)
2	Falkirk	CSGN; Urban and peri-urban; Audit and Strategy complete; In process of revising audit – potential to feed lessons in to project?; Links to SAQP-winning greenspace work; Steering group members.	
3	Dumfries and Galloway	Rural, with some larger settlements; Audit in preparation;	Capturing the experience of a 'late adopter' – but one that is probably benefitting from lessons learned elsewhere and the existing suite of guidance (cf. 'early adopters' having to develop bespoke approaches); Standards project 'pathfinder' authority, Phase 2.
4	Fife	Urban / rural split; Audit and strategy complete.	Good mix of large and small settlements, and interesting combination of New Town (Glenrothes), 'Garden City' (Rosyth) and older settlements, some with significant recent

| Local authority		Location / attributes	Comments
			expansion; Standards 'pathfinder' authority, Phase 1.
5	Inverclyde	Urban and peri-urban; Significant social exclusion/multiple deprivation; CSGN; Audit complete, no strategy in place.	Small, peri-urban authority with significant social exclusion / deprivation; Strong links to GCVGN; Green Network Strategy etc. in place.
6	Aberdeen City	Urban; Non-CSGN / central belt; Audit and Strategy complete; Links to EU INTERREG- funded greenspace work.	Important to capture approaches used in the four SDP core cities; First authority with adopted LDP – open space well integrated.
7	Glasgow	CSGN; Metropolitan; Audit complete, draft strategy.	Important to capture approaches used in the four SDP core cities; Bigger issues with deprivation/dereliction etc; Standards project 'pathfinder' authority, Phase 2.
8	Dundee	Urban; Non-CSGN; Audit and Strategy complete.	Important to capture approaches used in the four SDP core cities.
9	Perth and Kinross	Urban and rural; Audit pilot study – no further progress.	Still very early in the process – would be useful to understand how this is being tackled in comparison to the other big rural authorities (big open space resource in Perth itself).
10	Argyll and Bute	Rural with some larger settlements; Audit and Action Plan complete – settlement based.	
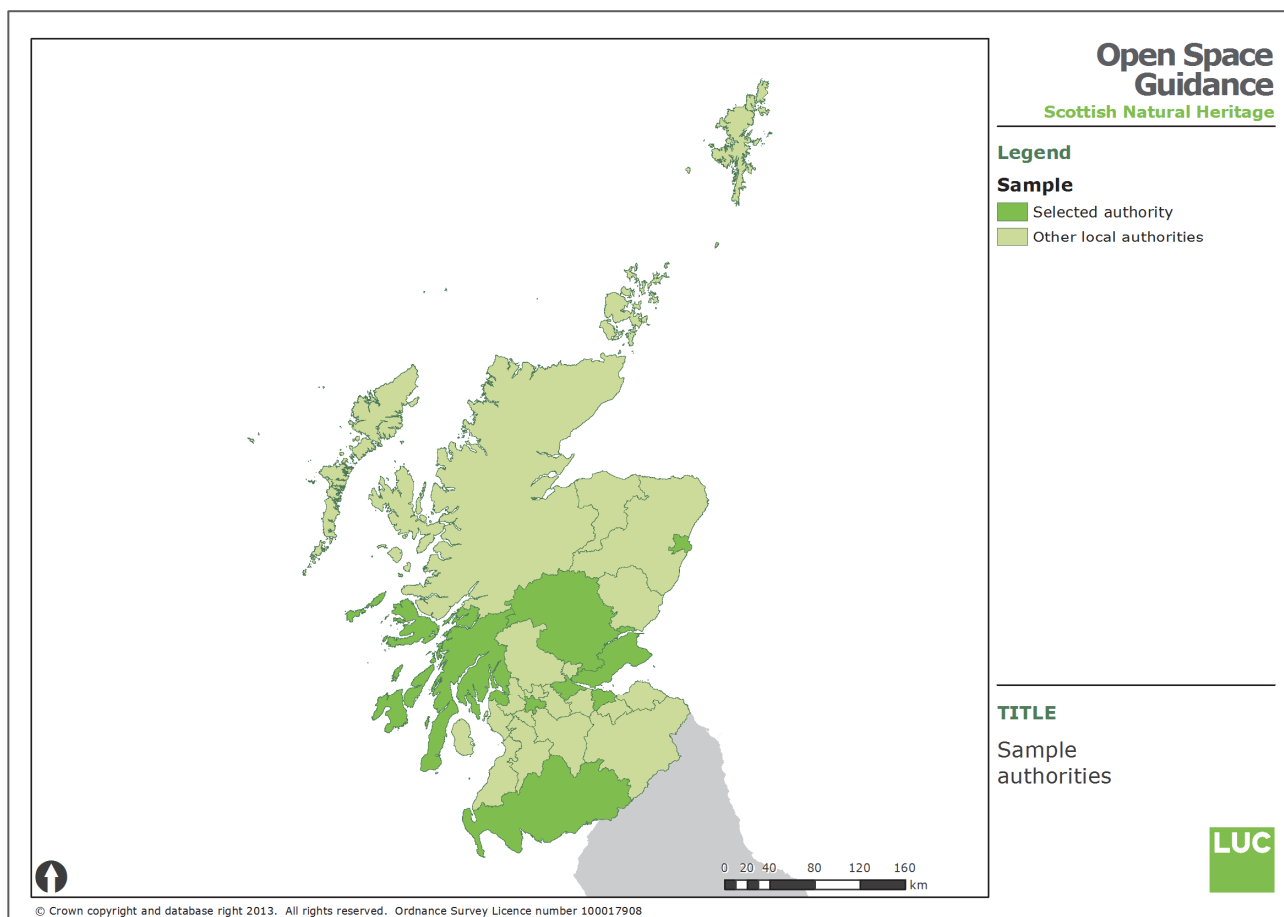
Figure 3.3: Distribution of sample authorities

3.3.4 Online survey of local authority officers

A comprehensive online survey (see Appendix 3) was prepared to capture the full range of authorities' experience with regard to:

- Selection of audit methods, open space typologies and sources of guidance;
- Audit approach, qualitative and quantitative techniques and standards development;
- Stage in the process;
- Project governance and 'ownership';
- Engagement with internal and external partners and stakeholders;
- Community engagement;
- Interactions with other plans, policies and strategies;
- Practicalities of audits, including barriers, resourcing and the role of external agents;
- Mechanisms for implementation;
- Monitoring and review; and,
- Opinions regarding needs for improvement.

This process was intended to provide a snapshot of authorities' experience, and provide an indication of how more holistic approaches are being – or could be – embedded in current practice.

Following the selection of sample authorities, an introductory email was sent to appropriate contacts, setting out the purpose and scope of the project and the nature of the survey. The survey was conducted between December 2012 and February 2013, taking longer than anticipated due to a slow response rate – partially due to interactions with key periods of public holidays. Eight authorities completed the survey in detail, with two others providing partial responses.

3.3.5 Follow-up discussions

Detailed follow-up discussions were conducted with the six authorities that had completed both the audit and strategy to extract additional information with regard to:

- Translating strategies into action on the ground:
    - Departments / services involved (and their role in developing the strategy)
    - Progress against priorities / actions?
    - Any impact from different leads, priorities or action type?
- Monitoring and evaluation of strategies.
- Identifying elements of the strategy that have been most successful in delivering action, and the reasons for this.
- Identifying elements of the strategy that have been less successful, and the reasons for this.

This process was also critical to identifying the policy and strategic interactions of existing strategies, and the emerging approaches to unifying related policy areas and delivering more holistic outputs.

Respondents were given the option to remain personally anonymous; to preserve their and their authority's anonymity; or to make their responses wholly public. Therefore authorities are only identified in line with respondents' wishes, and then only where necessary – for example in illustrating particular issues or good practice. No respondents are named.

3.3.6 Collation and analysis

The data extracted from the online survey and the follow-up discussions was then collated, with quantitative illustrative material prepared where appropriate, and analysed to extract the key messages in relation to the research objectives.

3.4 Survey results – introduction

This section of the report summarises the responses of local authority officers, illustrating their experiences of delivering the relevant components of the audit and strategy development process.

Results are structured following the main stages of the process. Interim conclusions are presented against each stage with regard to the implications of the survey findings for delivering more holistic audits and strategies, emerging approaches to integration and any implications for future guidance.

3.5 Survey results – audit processes

3.5.1 Typology

While the majority of respondents made use of the PAN65 typology (Scottish Government, 2008), only one appears to have applied it in a wholly unmodified form – with the majority adapting the typology to better fit local circumstance. One respondent used a bespoke system of classification (which, although relatively closely related to the existing standard typologies, provides a more helpful distinction between public and restricted access open spaces – which are a particular issue for the authority in question). Although the process of modification appears to often have been a problematic process, it does suggest that authorities now have appropriate frameworks in place as a foundation for future action.

3.5.2 Quantitative audit

The majority of respondents made use of PAN65 (*ibid.*) in developing their approach to the quantitative aspects of auditing (although two did not), supplemented by additional advice from PPG17 (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002a) and its associated Companion Guide (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002b) (in the case of two authorities), as well as the Quality Guide (greenspace scotland/ GCVGNP, 2008) and mapping methodology guides
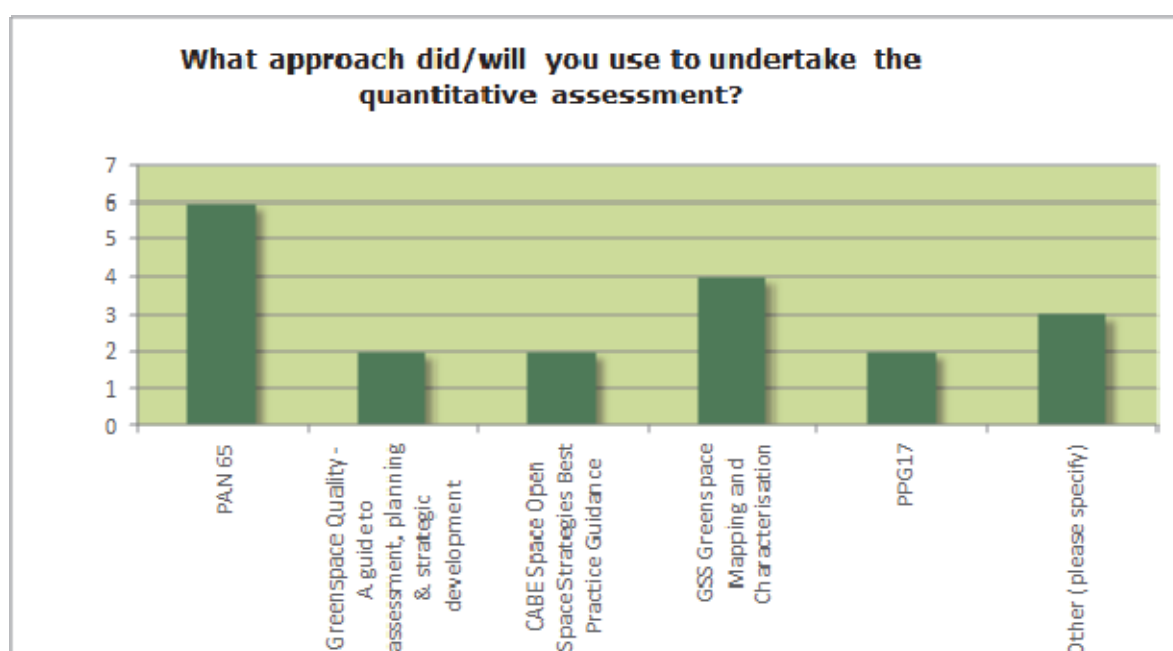

Figure 3.4: Chart showing approach to quantitative audit

(two authorities), with three authorities developing at least partly bespoke approaches to quantitative auditing, as indicated in *Figure 3.4*. (It should be noted that most respondents used more than one guidance product in developing their approach.)

It is encouraging that respondents are 'cherry-picking' from a range of guidance products to help develop the most appropriate approach – although it also suggests that none of the existing suite is fully able to meeting authorities' needs. While similar diversity exists in the guidance applied to undertaking qualitative assessment of open space resources, a stronger strand of bespoke approaches emerges – with in-house / consultant-generated methods figuring prominently (as illustrated in *Figure 3.5* and *Figure 3.7*). However, it should be noted that these tend to be towards the earlier end of the temporal spread for audits (2005-6), before the production of the influential Quality Guide (greenspace scotland / GCVGNP, 2008).
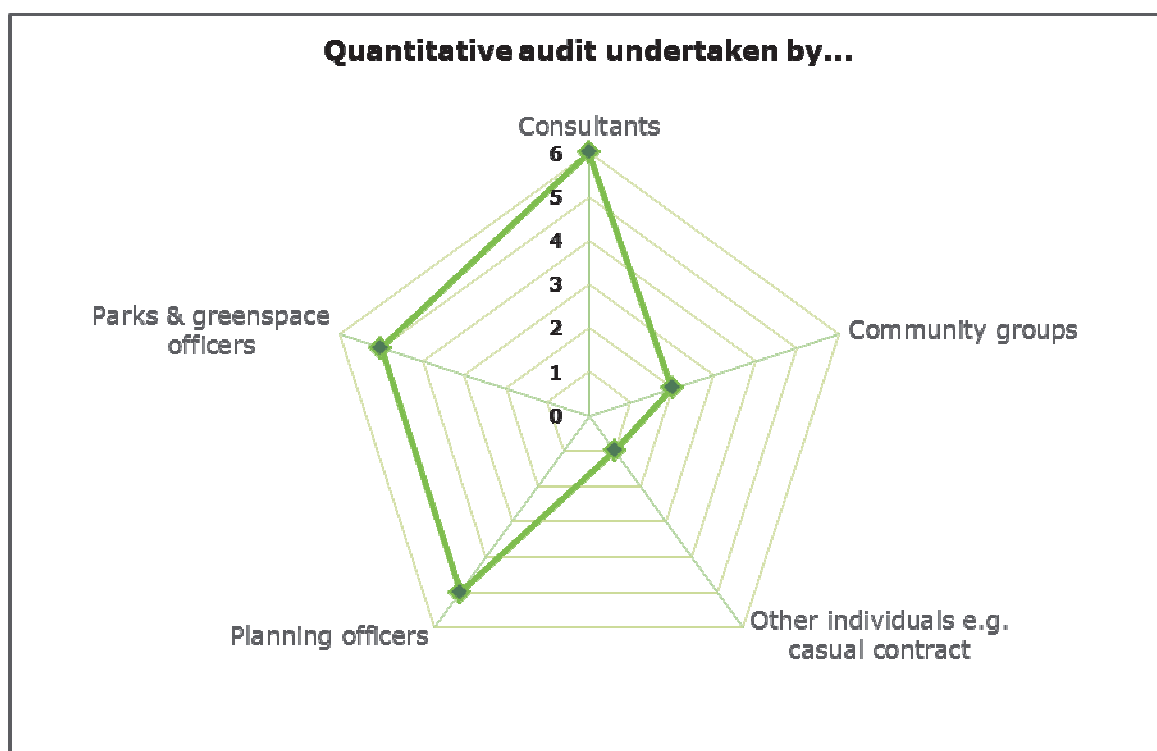

Figure 3.5: Chart indicating participation in quantitative audits

As *Figure 3.5* above indicates, a range of actors were involved in respondents' quantitative audits. Only two of the eight respondents that answered the relevant question did not make use of consultants (although one respondent indicated that little of the consultant's analysis was used in published versions of the audit). However, only two authorities directly involved communities in this process.

Of the eight respondents that answered the relevant question, three audited every open space within their area regardless of size, with the other five applying either a standard minimum size threshold (generally the recommended 0.2ha) or, in two cases, typology-specific size thresholds. The decision to screen out smaller spaces was generally taken to reduce the resource implications of subsequent qualitative auditing, with authorities developing generic policies to cover small open spaces (generally areas of amenity grassland). Conversely, although small open spaces are often considered to skew the results of accessibility analyses, one respondent encountered problems with their adopted threshold, in that it omitted small but locally significant spaces from the dataset (as indicated in *Figure 3.6* below).
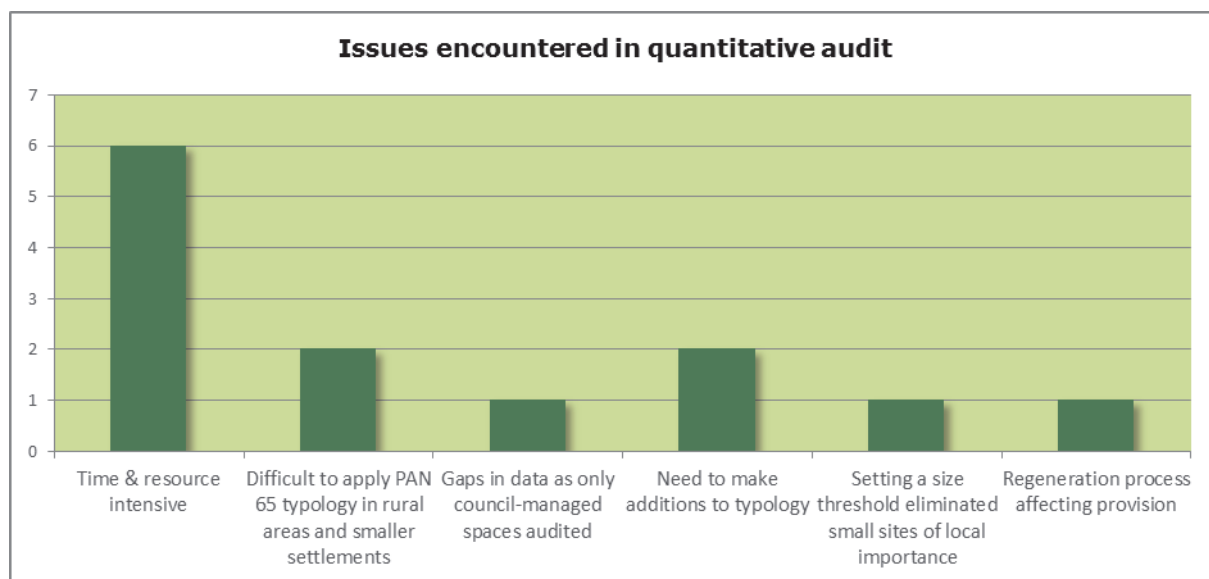
Figure 3.6: Issues encountered during quantitative audit process

All but one of the respondents reported encountering problems at this stage in the process, necessitating reassessment of the approach – such as the application of area threshold, or additions to the typology – as illustrated in *Figure 3.6*.

The costs associated with the auditing process was by far the most significant issue encountered, suggesting that additional guidance with regard to accurately defining the scope, process and resource implications may be helpful. Similarly, over half of the respondents reported issues with their adopted typology, either causing perceived gaps in the data or necessitating alterations. It may therefore be helpful to provide advice on how to avoid typological issues and to adapt the PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008) typology to local circumstances.

With regard to typological issues, four respondents were of the opinion that ground-truthing at this stage in the process (by individuals with detailed local knowledge) would be helpful in providing more accurate classifications than solely desk-based processes.

However, respondents appear to be satisfied with the eventual outputs of the audit process – but also that, in general, the data appears to confirm what the authorities already suspected with regard to distribution, level of provision and accessibility.

In response to the question 'What would you do differently?' respondents raised the following issues (only one indicated that they were fully content):

- **Importance of consulting on the audit:**
  - *"classification involves value judgements, and is not solely a technical process";*
  - *"More involvement from the other departments…and communities."*
- **Problems with end-user application of audit data** – while the mapping and data collection was effective, the system used to store and interrogate the information does not allow detailed spatial or operational analysis.
- **Value of Scotland's Greenspace Map data** – but necessity for specialist knowledge and training in its use.
- **Importance of establishing a clear vision, process and outcomes for the audit:**
  - *"Need for clearer understanding of the outcomes…before embarking on the study. Many different approaches were used then changed during the process"*

3.5.3 Qualitative audit

As PAN65 (*op cit.*) provides little information on the qualitative aspects of the audit process, respondents made use of a range of available guidance and external expertise (see *Figure 3.7*). Three authorities employed consultants to develop and deliver the qualitative audit; two indicated that they developed in-house approaches to measuring quality and the remaining three used a combination of the available guidance (with a single authority using only the Quality Guide (greenspace scotland / GCVGNP, 2008)). It should be noted that the more recent audits, and those in preparation, relied on the available guidance rather than external consultants – potentially indicating a good level of confidence in the established methodologies.

Of the seven respondents that had completed the qualitative audit, four indicated that they believed it had been successful, while a further two believed that their adopted approach was 'somewhat successful' and indicated that they had encountered some significant issues. A single authority reported that their (consultant-generated) approach to qualitative auditing was unsuccessful.
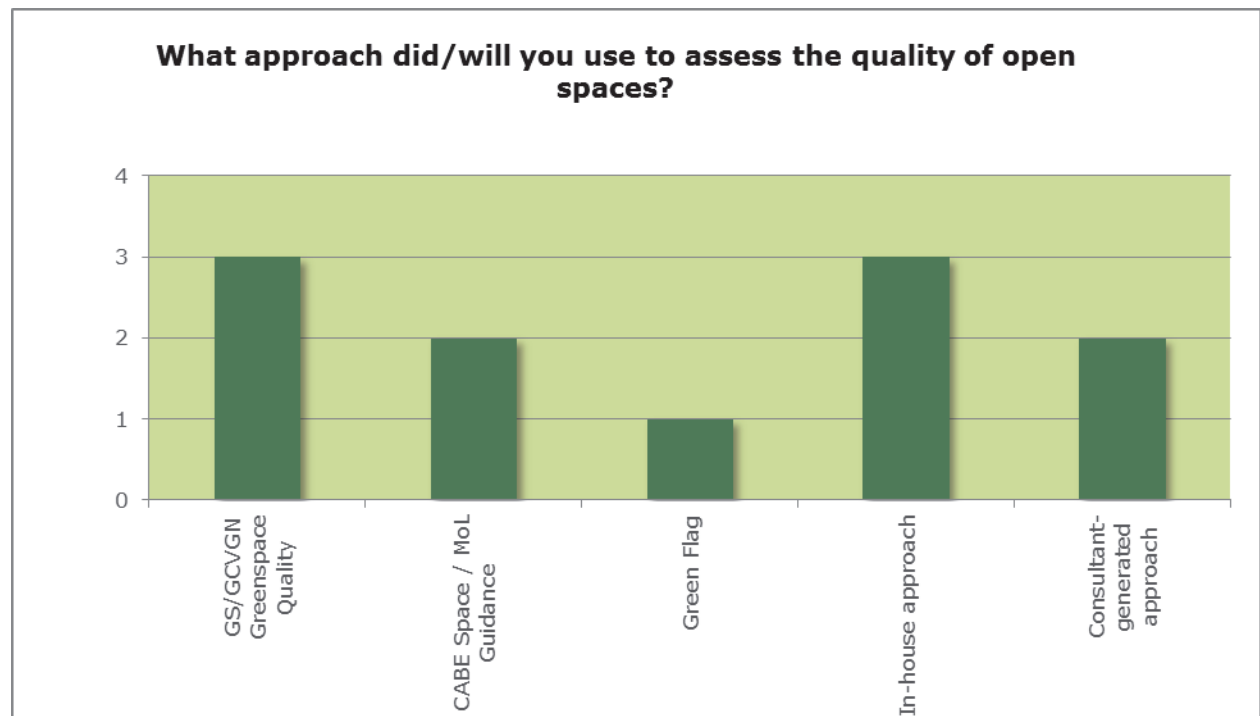

Figure 3.7: Approach to qualitative audit

How successful was your approach to the qualitative audit?

- Successful
- Somewhat successful - problems encountered
- Unsuccessful
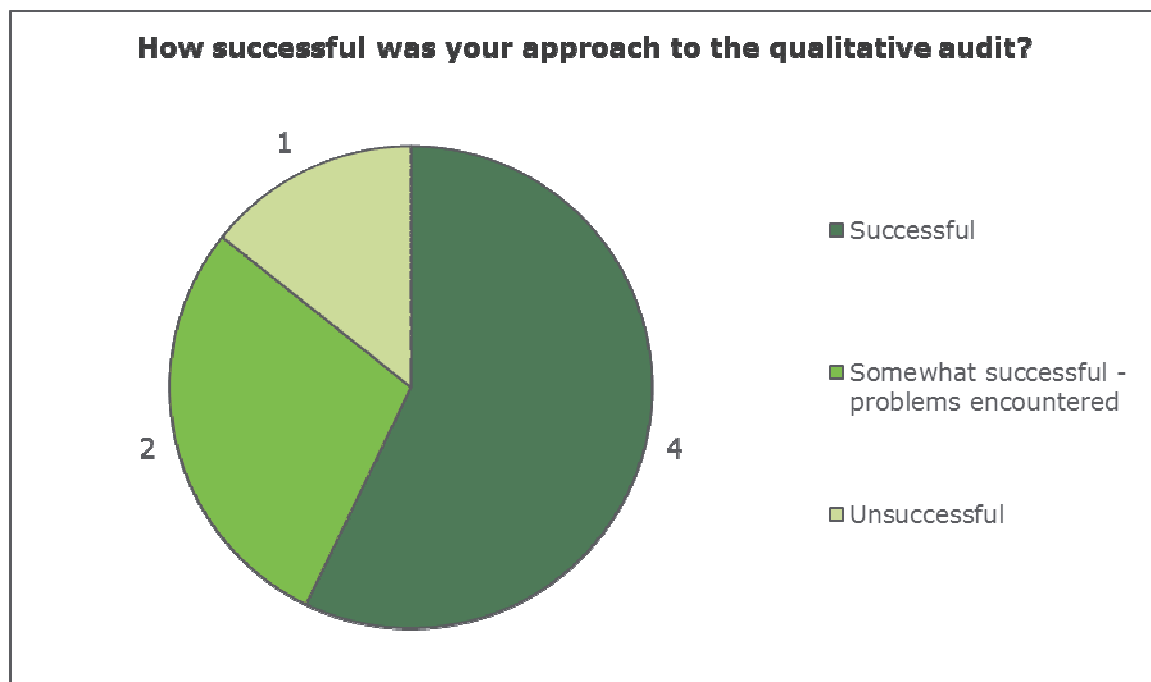
Figure 3.8: Success of qualitative audits

Respondents reported a range of problems with the outcomes of qualitative auditing, but the most significant related to:

- The subjectivity of quality scores;
- The variation between scores assigned by different auditors; and,
- A lack of local knowledge in the audit team.

In addition to causing considerable frustration to the authorities in question, these issues also pose problems for development and delivery of more holistic strategies. Any additional components to the qualitative assessment (e.g. ecosystem service delivery; community values; green network functions) would require similarly subjective judgements, and could be equally skewed by poor local knowledge or inconsistency. However, the majority of respondents indicated that they believed that more active community consultation early in this process could help to balance the scoring and ensure that the full range of benefits delivered by each space is accurately captured. As *Figure 3.9* below indicates, the majority of authorities did not undertake community consultation at this stage in the process.

One respondent noted that their authority was investigating the potential to, "*train and use 'on the ground' staff - e.g. maintenance staff, to undertake audits on a regular basis*", in addition to developing locally specific scoring methodologies to counter lack of equivalence across the authority area.
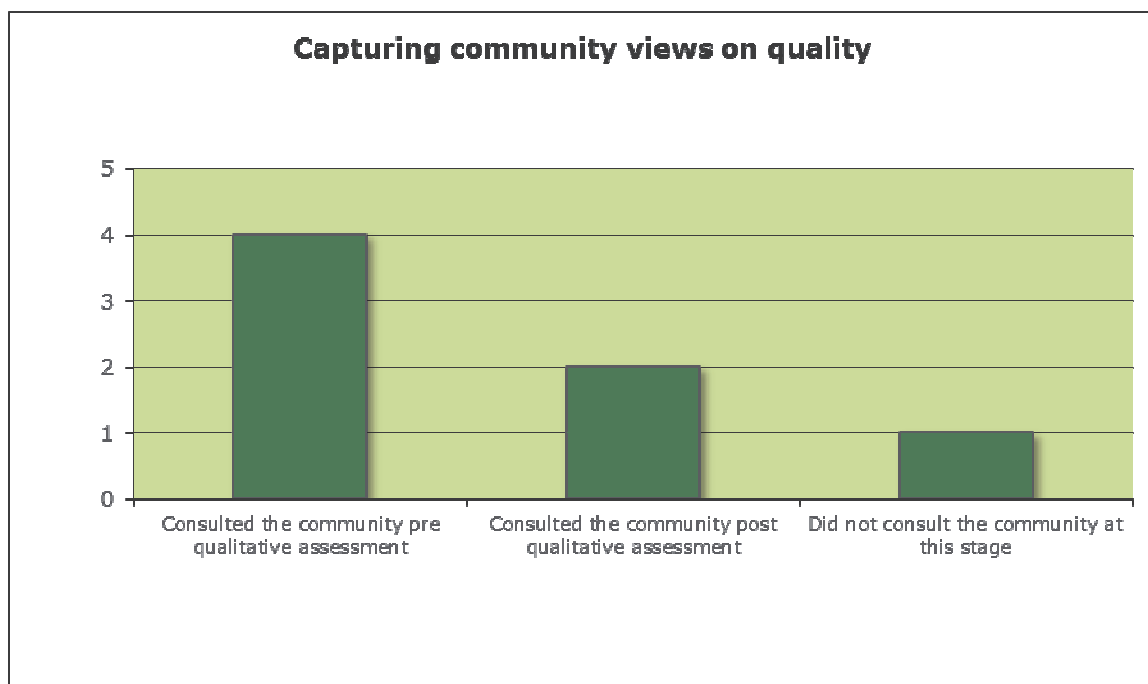
Figure 3.9: Consultation at qualitative audit stage

Authorities that undertook consultation at this stage reported that, in general, the process provided very valuable feedback, often necessitating significant edits to the audit data due to superior local knowledge on quality, use and value. Only one respondent, Aberdeen City Council, indicated that their authority had consulted neighbouring authorities to address cross-boundary issues.

With regard to authorities' satisfaction with the qualitative audit process, there was an almost even split between those who were 'satisfied' and those who were only 'somewhat satisfied.' Of those with more positive experiences, particular successes were recorded in relation to the use of 'community agents' in capturing local knowledge and in applying more proportionate simplified scoring to certain types of space (e.g. amenity greenspace; green corridors). Conversely, others felt that, although the selected methodologies were easy to apply, their results were not always particularly meaningful. However, neither of the authorities used the qualitative approaches set out in guidance.

Interim conclusion:
Ensuring consistency in assessment and scoring is likely to be even more important if authorities adopt a more holistic approach to auditing, particularly with regard to the values attached to open spaces and their capacity to deliver ecosystem services. Consultation should ideally be a part of this process, but would assume greater significance – particularly in considering the values attached to open space.

In terms of authorities currently delivering holistic results, outputs are potentially constrained by the topics covered in the measures of quality that have been used. However, some authorities (e.g. Aberdeen and Fife) have already developed supplementary planning guidance that draws together open space and green infrastructure planning issues.

3.5.4   Standards

The development of standards for open space provision is a key requirement of SPP and PAN65 – but has traditionally represented a significant challenge (Scottish Government,

2010; 2008). There is strong agreement that current guidance falls short in providing appropriate advice on developing robust, appropriate local standards for open space.

Five of the sample authorities have developed standards for open space provision using a combination of pre-existing and in-house approaches – although not all have quantity, quality and accessibility standards in place. greenspace scotland has played an important role in supporting authorities (three of those developing standards) in delivering locally appropriate standards.

greenspace scotland/Scottish Natural Heritage published the results of their study into the development of a framework for standards in May 2013, which provides a detailed account of the issues surrounding the subject (greenspace scotland, 2013a; 2013b). This report does not, therefore, seek to duplicate or contradict the outcomes of that work. As indicated above, it proposed a more flexible and locally-sensitive approach to developing standards that should address many of the concerns raised by authorities.

Interim conclusion:
It is possible that, as part of more holistic open space strategies, additional standards (beyond those proposed in the new greenspace scotland guidance) may be required – for instance with regard to performance against climate change adaptation objectives, habitat connectivity or ecosystem service delivery. As techniques for valuing ecosystem services are currently in their infancy, it is unlikely that such standards or metrics could reasonably be produced in the short to medium term.

The tension between the proposed national approach to developing standards and the draft SPP should be carefully monitored, and consultation responses examined closely, to determine authorities' opinions on how best to take this issue forward.

3.6 Survey results - strategies

As noted above, it is not the function of this project to assess the quality of authorities' open space strategies. Therefore results and inferences are limited to matters relating to integrating open space strategies with wider agendas, plans and policies; the potential implications of findings with regard to delivering more holistic strategies; and how strategies are currently translated into action on the ground.

3.6.1 Governance

The majority of polled authorities' audit and strategy work has been led by the relevant planning service, with a minority driven by parks and greenspace services. A single respondent indicated that a consortium of departments jointly led the process (see *Figure 3.10*).

All of the authorities polled brought together a range of services to contribute to / consult on audit and strategy development as illustrated by Figure 3.11 – although the level of active involvement varies considerably.
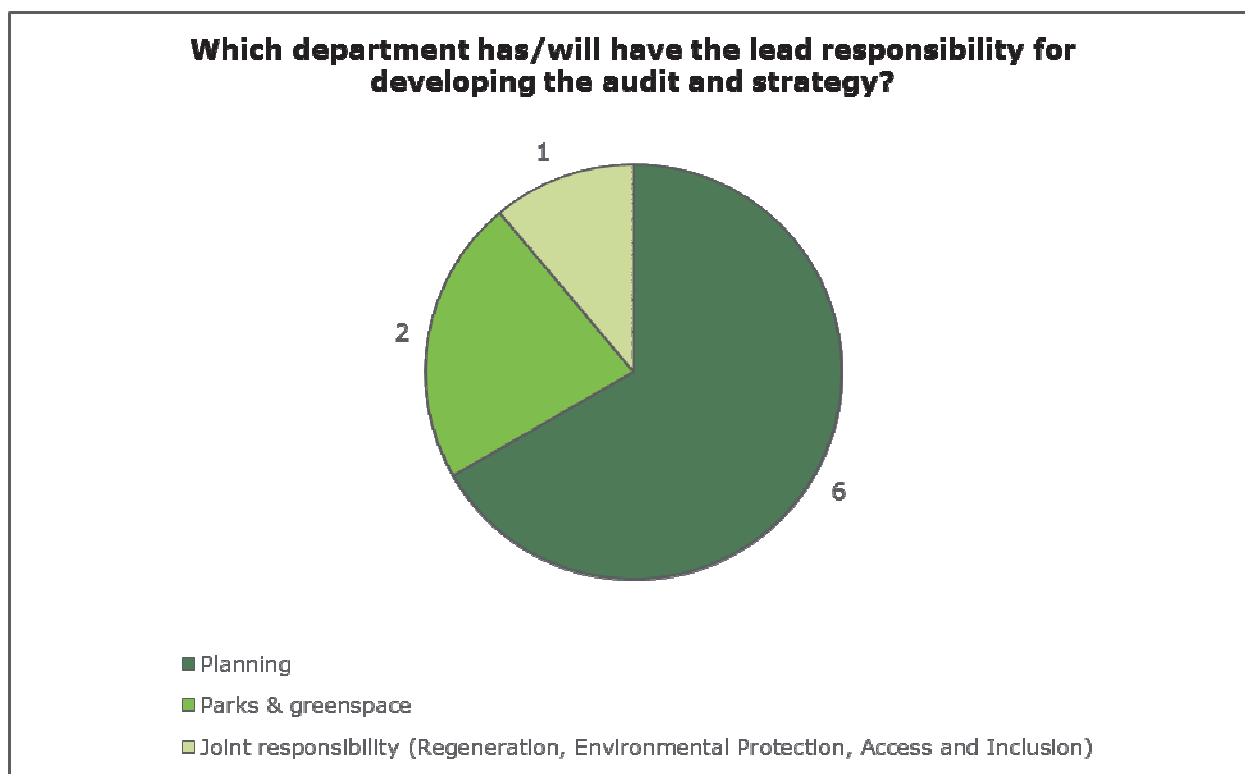
Figure 3.10: Departments leading audit and strategy development
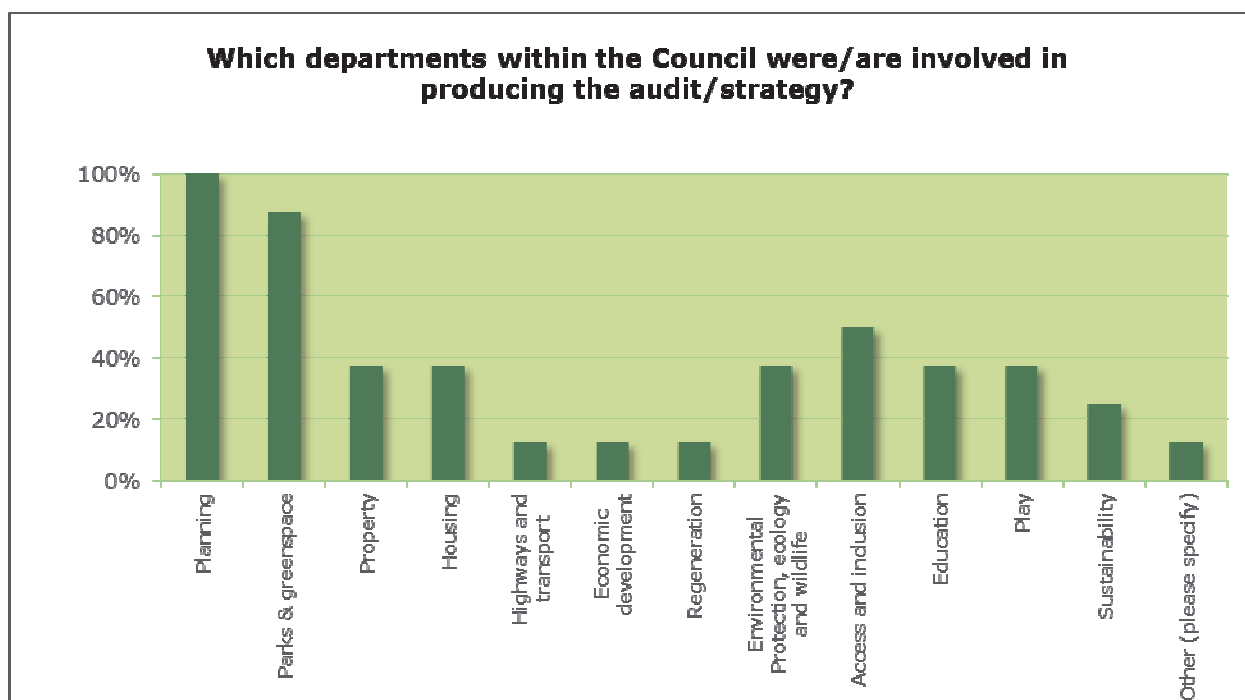
Figure 3.11: Departments involved in audit / strategy process

Most authorities also established a steering group or partnership bringing together key stakeholders, often from outside the local authority, to help shape the vision for open space in the area. While this generally focussed on public bodies (e.g. SNH, local NHS Trusts, Communities Scotland), third sector organisations – notably local greenspace bodies and sporting organisations – were occasionally involved.

This partnership approach is promoted by PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008), particularly with regard to setting the strategic tone and vision for the process, and in delivering the strategy. There are clear advantages to a broad-based partnership approach, ensuring that the 'key players' with regard to local open space buy in to the process from the outset. Given the breadth of aspiration for open spaces, and the diversity of interests amongst stakeholders, some level of tension may be likely.

Anecdotal evidence quoted in previous research has suggested that there is occasionally a perception that open space audits have the potential to highlight 'bad news' within authorities, for example indicating that a significant area of open space is of poor quality / insufficiently managed (greenspace scotland, 2008). However, the consultation did not indicate that this had been an issue in forming or maintaining partnership between services – suggesting that this may either be an isolated opinion, or that progress has been made in countering negative attitudes. Indeed, authorities appear to be working hard to secure more effective integration, with one respondent organising Open Space Strategy 'corporate awareness sessions' to reinforce the links with other strategic documents and areas of council business.

Interim conclusion:
Currently, planning departments are the key players driving the development of open space audits and strategies – but the survey responses suggest that cross-authority engagement and working is taking place (but that it remains a challenge). Although it is not always clear the extent to which this has shaped the priorities set out in strategies, it does indicate that authorities have been able to put the appropriate mechanisms in place to secure and maintain engagement.

This is likely to have substantial positive implications for delivering more holistic outputs – as some authorities are already doing – as it encourages integration and will highlight opportunities to combine or streamline strategic outputs.

3.6.2   Integration

The current generation of open space audits and strategies demonstrate a range of influences and links – although these are not consistent across the country.

Figure 3.12: Influences on open space strategies

As *Figure 3.12* illustrates, authorities have taken a very wide range of policy and strategic documents into account in the preparation of open space strategies. This reflects both the range and complexity of the requirements placed on authorities, but also the extent to which integration is already high on the agenda.

The Strategy links to:

Figure 3.13: Policy and strategic links established in the open space strategy

The Strategy informs:
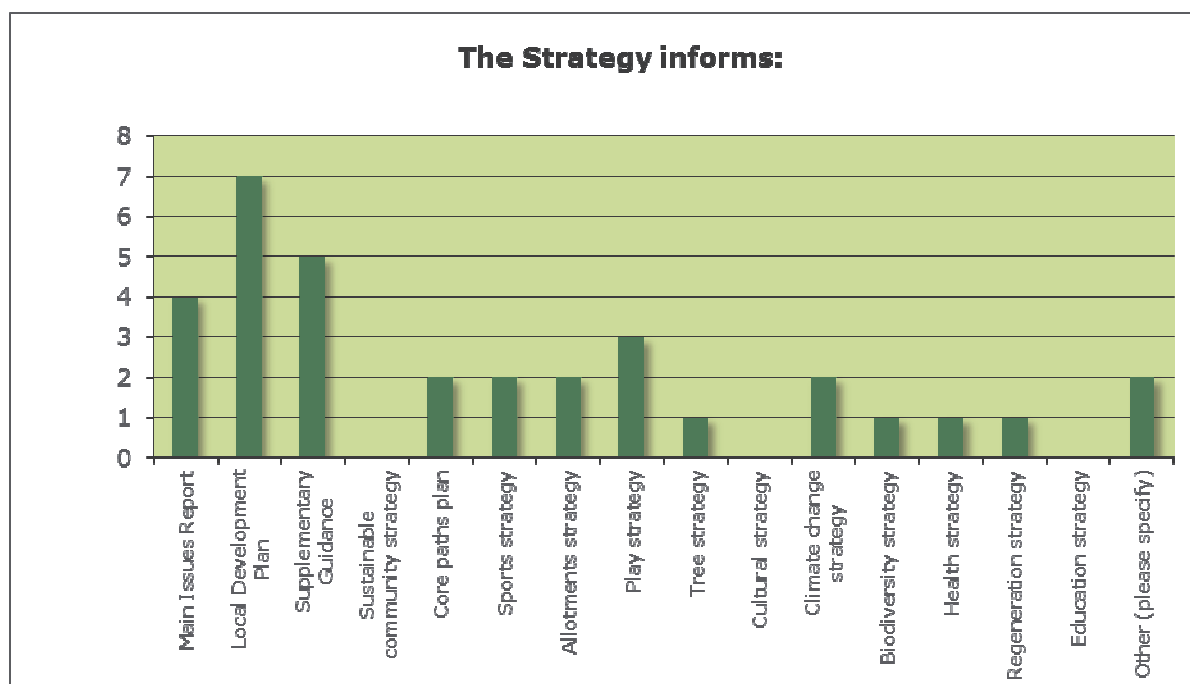
Figure 3.14: Policy and strategy informed by the open space strategy

Similarly, as *Figure 3.13* above indicates, authorities are also making a very wide range of links from their open space strategies to other areas of statutory and strategic responsibility. There is the potential for many of these agendas to have a significant influence on the strategic and site-specific priorities established in open space strategies – therefore just understanding the full internal context of the strategy is a substantial task. Open space strategies also appear to be having a meaningful influence on other policy and strategies, as illustrated in *Figure 3.14*. This is particularly encouraging as it suggests that, at least in the authorities polled, there may be interest in greater integration and opportunities for simplifying / streamlining strategic outputs.

Green networks / green infrastructure have significant unifying potential, promoting consideration of open spaces are part of wider environmental systems and facilitating links to access, water and flood management, climate change adaptation etc.

Links to development plans

As indicated above, the majority of respondents' strategies will, or already do, have an influence on the development plan –providing part of the evidence base, providing minimum standards for open space provision or as source documents to which developers are referred.

Four authorities indicated that their open space strategies had influenced the LDP Main Issues Report (MIR). As local authorities' principal opportunity to engage with communities on the future of their local areas, the MIR is perhaps *the* key means of integrating open space with the full range of planning and development issues. There are also significant opportunities to streamline consultation processes to limit fatigue, optimise use of resources and promote holistic thinking within the authority.

Loss of resourcing and changes in staffing were reported as causing setbacks with regard to ongoing integration. This was partly seen as resulting from a loss of 'ownership' of the strategy, causing a loss of momentum. However, some respondents indicated that work was ongoing to integrate open space more effectively with other key planning issues – for example, identifying synergies between strategic water management and open space.

Links to development management are further considered in the Delivery section of this report.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Three authorities have already prepared planning guidance relating directly to open space. Neither deal solely with open space – instead they incorporate a range of closely related issues. They are:

- **Aberdeen City Council Open Space SG** (statutory SG to the adopted LDP)
  - incorporates green network development priorities; open space standards; playspace standards; specific guidance for natural greenspace and green corridors; allotments; management and maintenance; audit mapping illustrating gaps in existing provision.

- **Fife Green Infrastructure SPG** (consultation draft SPG)
  - incorporates advice on green infrastructure in the local context; advice on integrating green infrastructure in new developments through: design principles, policies, design guidance and management arrangements;
  - uses open space standards for accessibility and size; and,
  - sets out requirements for specific facilities (e.g. playspace).

- **Public Open Space, Falkirk Greenspace and New Development** (adopted SPG)
    - provides guidance on standards for delivery of new open space through development;
    - uses open space strategy standards for size, accessibility and types of space;
    - provides worked examples of calculating necessary provision and commuted sums; and,
    - includes design guidance, drawn from a range of sources.

In addition, the recently-published draft **Edinburgh Design Guidance** sets out the Council's requirements with regard to publicly accessible open space provision through new development, making strong links to wider green infrastructure and design issues. It restates the standards established in the Open Space Strategy (for accessibility, size and quality), integrated within wider design considerations.

These documents, and others in preparation, illustrate the extent to which authorities are already taking a more holistic and integrated approach to using the information delivered by open space audits and strategies. What should be recognised is that authorities are identifying the key issues for their area and using these as the unifying framework for information on open space and a wide range of other considerations. Interestingly, although Fife Council reported that development planning was 'not a particularly strong driver' for the Strategy – instead indicating a focus on Community Planning – they have still made the key links and established the relevant standards in planning guidance[21].

Interim conclusion:
Authorities are already demonstrating innovation in their approaches to using the outputs of their open space audits and strategies to add value across the planning service. This is particularly encouraging with regard to the promotion of more holistic approaches – as future updates are likely to be developed with a clearer vision of these, and other, interactions that could usefully be built into the process from the outset.

The inclusion of open space standards etc. in SPG clearly provides substantial benefits to authorities with regard to setting out clear expectations for developers, potentially ensuring:

- Standards and priorities are clear from the outset;
- Opportunities and requirements for open space can be highlighted at pre-application stage, ideally securing a stronger influence on emerging design solutions;
- Open space is placed on an equal footing with other design considerations, securing better landscape design and ensuring civic and green spaces are more than just the 'space left over after planning'

Similarly, use of SPG means that more detail can be provided than in the LDP itself – and that documents can be more readily updated if there is a need to respond to significant policy change or local need/opportunities outside the development plan cycle.

These examples are used to illustrate emerging good practice in the guidance outputs from this project.

3.6.3 Links to other strategic priorities

Green infrastructure / green networks

As already indicated above, the natural links between open space and green infrastructure have already fostered a significant degree of integration within planning. This is not confined

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[21] Fife was the one strategy that was led from within Parks and Greenspace, rather than planning.

to authorities within the Central Scotland Green Network area, with Aberdeen leading the way in incorporating green infrastructure within both the proposed SDP and adopted LDP.

The benefits of close integration in consideration of open spaces and wider green networks are clear. However, ensuring that the full range of benefits delivered by open spaces is captured will be a key consideration – and clearly some types of open space will not form part of the green network. Like, for example, Forestry and Woodland Strategies, open space audits and strategies are perhaps best viewed as part of the 'green network toolkit' that are intended to operate at a different resolution to green network strategies. GIS datasets gathered in the process of auditing open space (including Scotland's Greenspace Map that has been derived from the open space audit data from the 32 local authorities) can play an important role in informing analysis and prioritisation of action.

Parks and greenspace management

Authorities reported a spectrum of integration with the strategic aspects of open space management. While some links were well developed, with relevant staff involved in the development of audits and strategies – in addition to taking the lead of a significant proportion of delivery – others indicated that securing buy-in and influencing strategic and operational policy has been more challenging. This appears to have resulted, at least in part, from a conflict in the resolution at which strategy priorities have been developed, often making it difficult to scope or justify interventions on the ground. However, as noted above, authorities are actively countering emerging issues through engagement with other council services.

Open space strategies appear to be successfully influencing subject-specific implementation plans and strategies, particularly in some metropolitan authorities, where allotment strategies; sports facility strategies; and, local environmental enhancement programmes all draw on the findings of the open space audit and strategy.

Ecosystems approach

As a relatively recent development in public policy thinking, none of the strategies reviewed deal explicitly with open spaces' delivery of ecosystem services. Work in relation to understanding, mapping and valuing ecosystem service delivery is still at an early stage, with a range of approaches currently being tested – including in work sponsored jointly by SNH and SEPA.

Innovative work undertaken for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership has begun to use green infrastructure (based on detailed hydrological analyses) as a unifying feature in developing site-specific urban design solutions[22]. These studies provide a useful illustration of how an ecosystems approach – albeit targeted quite specifically towards delivery of particular services – can have significant benefits in delivering more sustainable and attractive places. While these studies are strongly site-specific, rather than local authority-wide, the unifying potential of ecosystem services is attractive.

Although still in the early stages, the delivery of Flood Risk Management Plans and strategies across Scotland is likely to provide a significant use of open space audit data – and a major opportunity for the benefits delivered by green infrastructure to be more widely recognised. At present, this issue is not expanded upon in sample open space strategies – but as flooding is such a major issue across the country, authorities are likely to be receptive to positive means of reducing risk that can deliver wider benefits. Understanding the contribution of open spaces to water retention, catchment response rates and flood risk will

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[22] GCVGNP 'Integrating Green Infrastructure' studies

require either significant additional site work, or use of qualitative and typological information gathered in audits to enable the application of generic calculations by type, land cover and area.

Cultural heritage, built and historic environment

In general, the links between open spaces and culture are potentially under-developed – and were not strongly referenced by respondents as a priority. As noted above, this could potentially be symptomatic of the disconnection between open/greenspace and the built environment. Open spaces of all kinds play a fundamental role in shaping the character and distinctiveness of our settlements; whether village greens, major parks or tree-lined river corridors cutting through townscape. While thinking about green networks represents a step-change in understanding and planning for greenspace, there is a risk that the 'grey bits' in between are sometimes forgotten.

Although two respondents indicated that their open space strategy had been informed by the relevant cultural strategy, there was no evidence of reciprocal links – suggesting that there is a similar lack of wider appreciation of the potentially valuable cultural and historic role of open spaces.

Inevitably, this issue is likely to be considerably more significant for authorities containing historic cities, towns and villages – as understanding the heritage and cultural significance of open spaces is critical for securing appropriate management. Equally, ensuring that such spaces continue to evolve to meet the needs of communities is key to ensuring their continued longevity.

The development of community resources, such as Placecheck and the 'Action with Communities in Rural England' community planning toolkit provide some useful tools to help local people to engage with townscape and planning issues – within which open space is a key component. There is likely to be significant potential – and some savings with regard to scarce resources – in encouraging communities to take a stronger role in providing contextual and qualitative information. This could assist in:

- Ensuring local people have a much more meaningful role in contributing evidence to local authority audits and strategies – moving from *consultation* to *participation*
- Making stronger links to:
  – Community aspirations for their places
  – Character and sense of place
- Driving community-led delivery of enhancement (e.g. through Climate Challenge Fund, CSGN or Heritage Lottery funding)

The tools outlined above also help to address the urban – rural divide outlined above, and could perhaps provide a more appropriate means to understanding the role and potential of open spaces outside urban areas.

Interim conclusion:
It is clear that authorities are delivering integration of open space strategies in areas where links are most readily apparent, and are either priorities in the wider policy framework or are particularly locally important. It is likely that 'holistic' open space strategies will look quite different depending on local context – although it is likely that green infrastructure and water management will be key issues nationwide, and therefore represent key opportunities to promote integration.

3.7 Survey results – delivery

Information on delivery of strategies was obtained through semi-structured interviews with local authority respondents.

3.7.1 Influencing local authority action

The majority of respondents indicated that their strategies had been successful in delivering action through operational parks and greenspace management programmes. Approaches have varied with regard to prioritisation, with some authorities targeting the 'easy wins' (such as raising the quality of lower-scoring spaces) to bring up overall standards, while others have concentrated on key projects and proposals identified as high priority in the strategy. One authority reported that all the high priority actions in the strategy had been taken forward to delivery, while others were naturally more circumspect citing resource issues as the primary barrier to delivery.

In addition to delivery of interventions on the ground, one authority reported that they had taken forward community capacity-building work, feeding in to delivery of physical enhancements. Others reported that the open space strategy had driven the development of more detailed thematic strategies, based on need identified in the audit – for example development of a Playspace Strategy and review of local authority provision. Similarly, the use of strategies by Parks and Greenspace services to understand and prioritise investment decisions represents an important 'win.'

Some authorities, because of the large numbers of open spaces / density of population, have developed neighbourhood-specific delivery plans, making the implications and priorities for communities more accessible. While the authority in question reports that, while in the current iteration no actions are assigned community leads, there are aspirations to devolve ownership for interventions to community groups in future rounds of action planning.

However, an authority reported that, as their strategy contained no information with regard to prioritisation, ownership, funding or timescales for action, translation into action has been particularly challenging – although they are currently engaging with internal stakeholders and undertaking a review of the strategy to address these issues. Another had less significant issues with maintaining momentum, but which he believed had contributed to issues in securing buy-in from other departments. Similar issues were recounted in relation to elected members' priorities and demands for action not according with those identified in the strategy.

Interim conclusion:
The most positive outcome in relation to local authority delivery is that, in most cases, open space strategies have been adopted as active, working documents that are influencing delivery – justifying the considerable resources deployed in their development.

Issues appear to relate at least in part to the planning and development of the strategies themselves, where content does not meet the needs of internal partners.

3.7.2 Influencing decision-making

Private sector action

As the majority of the delivery of new open spaces is driven by private sector investment, ensuring that the needs, opportunities and priorities for open space are considered is a key function of open space strategies.

Only one authority raised the issue that the ongoing sluggishness in the development sector was affecting the delivery of the strategy priorities – although this is presumably an issues in many areas.

It appears that open space strategies in their own right are not directly influencing developers – but local authorities are putting in place a range of mechanisms to ensure that standards and priorities are clearly expressed – generally in supplementary planning guidance as indicated above. Only one authority, Aberdeen, reported developing proactive tools to engage with developers to help them understand open space and green network requirements. They are also developing a package to attract businesses to secure investment for the management of open space resources. This will translate the strategy's key actions into options for business to adopt to assist in the delivery of corporate social responsibility (and presumably PR) aims. While this is an interesting and potentially exciting application of open space strategy information, and delivery of action, it is likely that Aberdeen's unique economic position is the key factor in making this approach a viable option.

Development management

In discussions, respondents indicated that strategies are being well used by development management colleagues in making decisions, defining developer contributions, and in advising developers on requirements and opportunities to contribute to green networks. However, it is difficult to discern the extent or effectiveness of this influence on planning decisions – and contacts were not well-placed to make such judgements.

The development of SPG and robust LDP policies based on open space strategies appears to be well embedded in many authorities – although respondents indicated that they were aware of difficulties still being encountered. For instance, one reported that colleagues often had difficulty getting developers to adhere to the standards set out in their SPG, and that it was also challenging to foster a focus on quality, as well as quantity, of provision.

Interim conclusion:
Although development management is a critical delivery mechanism, it is unlikely to have a significant effect on the delivery of a more holistic approach to strategy development. Instead, the approach to decision-making will become more holistic in parallel with the policy outcomes of open space strategies. The key limiting factor that should be considered is the need for outputs to be strictly related to the purpose of planning, ensuring that policies are robust.

In any case, planning decisions are influenced by the full range of applicable local and national policy, therefore the key drivers for change in open space (e.g. green networks, flood risk) should already be taken into account. The emergence of more holistic strategies can, however, help to make apparent to decision-makers the wider uses and values of open space.

3.7.3   Delivery of a holistic approach on the ground?

Local authority practice appears to be demonstrating a reasonable degree of integration, which is manifestly influencing action on the ground. It is important that the current generation of strategies are being actively used and tested, as this can only pave the way for more effective integration of the next round – which indicates that, even without additional guidance, they are likely to demonstrate further integration of strategic objectives.

The extent to which interventions are genuinely 'holistic' is hard to gauge without detailed examination of individual sites and recent enhancement work. It would appear that the

principal barrier to holistic practice in delivery is the often highly disaggregated operational responsibilities of council departments and services. This can result in significant distance between the originators of the strategy and the officers undertaking the work, and the potential for dilution of the original purpose.

The mix of delivery mechanisms currently employed is, perhaps inevitably, heavily weighted towards local authorities' management of their own estates, and the private sector providing new spaces to cater to created demand. The increasing significant of delivering climate change adaptation interventions, employing a range of funding – from SRDP in rural areas to CSGN and Climate Challenge Funds in towns – may begin to create additional drivers for intervention. Indeed, the CSGN development fund has provided significant resources for community-led action across central Scotland. Initiatives such as this are likely to help diversify the drivers and mechanisms for delivery. Future generations of open space strategies could therefore take stronger cognisance of the potential for meaningful community-led intervention as part of a more holistic, inclusive approach.

Interim conclusion:
The responses from local authorities suggest that delivery is strongly influenced by internal priorities of delivery services. Within the confines of a desk-based study, it is difficult to draw conclusions on the success of individual interventions, and determine whether opportunities for synergy / more 'holistic' practice have been fully explored.

However, at least some respondent authorities are engaged in a range of green infrastructure and similar projects that are influencing the management and development of open space.

3.8   Conclusions of local authority review

3.8.1   Promoting a holistic approach?

The evidence suggests that local authorities are leading the way with regard to developing more holistic approaches, with many advancing further than the current guidance framework proposes. This is by no means uniform, and there remain substantial issues that can usefully be addressed – particularly in relation to the structural issues that can hamper effective internal collaboration and partnership.

Structural issues

It is likely that planning departments will remain as the lead partner in developing strategies for most authorities, given open space's status in planning policy – and the necessary strategic overview provided by the development planning process, and the skills mix of staff. There is, however, a need to optimise the opportunities provided by the development plan process – particularly tapping in to the research, assessment and consultation processes driving MIRs. This in itself would be a key driver for a more holistic view, inevitably involving wider consideration of infrastructure, housing, natural heritage, the built environment, climate change and a host of other policy areas.

Recommendation
A restatement of the advantages of a corporate approach to open space planning may be required, with associated high-level advice on where to find the best information on putting together a partnership, securing buy-in and driving delivery.

Securing wide-ranging support for strategy development and taking ownership of delivery actions will be the principal means of delivering integration and an holistic approach – matching the right expertise and interests with the appropriate delivery mechanisms.

Community engagement

Moving towards a more holistic approach is likely to require more extensive, better integrated and more effectively timed community and stakeholder engagement process to ensure that contributions are optimised and influence the audit and strategy effectively.

It is clear from authorities' experiences that meaningful engagement prior to, and during, the qualitative phase of the audit is critical to optimise the impact of local knowledge, values and priorities.

Recommendation:
'Signposting' to best practice guidance on community engagement, and developing communication strategies, should feature in updated guidance. There are significant opportunities within authorities to learn from other, statutory, consultation processes – identifying key community structures or individuals that function as 'gatekeepers' to sources of local knowledge and opinion.

Ensuring that community values are accurately reflected in strategies must be a priority if outputs are to be truly holistic and effective.

Methodologies and standards

The approaches authorities have applied in developing their strategies present no significant barriers to future inclusion of additional metrics to capture a wider range of values – although the potential requirement for additional standards may represent a future problem. As techniques for valuing ecosystem services resolve, there may be opportunities to revisit these approaches.

What is clear is that authorities require certainty with regard to audit methodologies, and the appropriate guidance to ensure that they are consistently and rigorously applied, to help avoid the suite of issues reported by the survey respondents. It does appear that, once adapted to local circumstances, most approaches have provided reasonably robust results – and that if the learning gathered during the last round of audits is applied, the bulk of issues will be avoided in future. However, it will be important that any future guidance relating to any additional requirements of the auditing process are comprehensively 'road tested' in advance, in a similar manner to current standards work, to ensure they are robust.

Recommendation:
The approaches to undertaking audits and developing strategies are, as previously stated, largely robust. Authorities are already adept at modifying approaches to suit local circumstances, therefore wholesale revision of the existing guidance would be disproportionate. However, there is a need for advice on understanding local priorities and incorporating these within existing frameworks.

It is probably too early to attempt to incorporate metrics for ecosystem service delivery – but adding consideration of broad social, environmental and economic values should be readily achievable, and would represent an important step in understanding the wider significance of open spaces.

3.8.2 Policy and strategic integration

While the existing guidance framework contains little concrete advice with regard to translating open space strategy outcomes into policy, authorities have had little difficulty in this regard. Some have employed creative approaches to dissemination, integrating policy

across topic areas in a single document. This is undoubtedly attractive, and good evidence of the development of holistic approaches – but the appropriate solutions will be strongly context-specific.

Local authority experience indicates that there has been relatively little integration with formal LDP processes – although this is probably related to timings as much as any other factor. While the opportunities for integration with MIR research and consultation processes are undoubtedly attractive, there may be insurmountable resource implications where the same staff would be involved in both plan and open space strategy work which may need to be acknowledged.

SPG is currently the preferred means of delivering more integrated policy with regard to open space, and should be promoted as such – with the relevant links in the development plan where adoption as statutory SG is desirable.

Recommendation:
Local authorities are leading the way with regard to developing more holistic policy, and existing examples of SPG could usefully be employed as examples of emerging good practice.

Although there are issues with coverage in the current guidance framework, these do not appear to have hampered authorities – therefore drawing attention to the benefits of SPG and signposting to good practice should be sufficient.

3.8.3   Delivery

The current generation of open space strategies have been reasonably successful in driving delivery, with authorities' experiences varying substantially. Clearly, open space strategies are being taken seriously and implemented across departments, although experience indicates that this could be secured earlier and more effectively.

The reliance on development remains a fundamental issues – but opportunities exist to continue to deliver enhancement at a range of scales, separate from developer contributions.

Recommendation:
Framing the priorities and actions in the current generation of strategies has been an issue – therefore signposting to the delivery section of the CABE Space guidance would be useful (as the only significant piece of delivery-focussed guidance).

Securing the involvement of delivery partners from the outset should ensure that the strategy is suitably detailed, and actions are assigned to owners, are SMART, prioritised and, where possible, costed.

3.8.4   Best practice

While no single authority demonstrates a fully holistic 'best practice' approach to audit and strategy development, there are key examples of emerging good practice that can be used to illustrate aspirations for greater integration. These are as follows:

- Edinburgh Open Space Strategy:
  - integrated approach to open space and green network priorities
  - local action plans to facilitate community engagement and action
  - links to planning and design guidance
- Aberdeen Open Space SG:

- Good example of statutory supplementary guidance
- Links open space and green(space) network delivery priorities
- Brings together open space, play and sport strategy outputs
- Links to proactive approaches to engage with the private sector
- Fife Green Infrastructure SPG:
  - Draws extensively on greenspace strategy
  - Sets the context for emerging standards work
  - Key example of non-planning-led approach
  - Integrated approach to design

Recommendation:
The examples of emerging good practice outlined above be highlighted in the associated guidance product. Monitoring and evaluating the success of these documents / approaches may be valuable in providing pointers for future refinement.

3.9   Informing new guidance

'The key findings and recommendations above have been taken forward to inform the development of a new guidance product, (see Appendix 4 of this report). These are summarised in Section 4.2 below.

4. DEVELOPING REVISED GUIDANCE

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report sets out the requirements for revised guidance on open space audits and strategies, to deliver a more holistic approach.

As previously discussed, the majority of the content of the existing framework is basically sound – but no one document embodies a best practice approach, or could be held to deliver truly holistic results.

4.2 Shortcomings to be addressed

The issues set out below were identified in the literature and local authority review processes, and have been re-arranged to follow the broad process and structure of audits and strategies.

It should be noted that none of the issues identified, either alone or in combination, would appear to warrant a significant overhaul of national guidance. Similarly, as much of the existing third party material remains sound, it is anticipated that the latter stages of this project will focus on developing an overarching 'wayfinder guide' document that directs practitioners to relevant sources – providing updates or interpretation as required.

4.2.1 Structural issues

Changes in fiscal and policy situation

The majority of the existing guidance was developed prior to the current period of financial constraint. There may be a need to acknowledge the changed financial realities facing authorities in both the development and delivery of strategies.

Governance and 'ownership' issues

Authorities' experience indicates that governance is a key issue in terms of delivering more holistic – but also robust and workable – strategies. However, this is well covered in the Mayor of London/CABE Space guidance (2009), which should be drawn to the attention of a wider readership and interpreted for the Scottish context.

Narrow focus

Although PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2009) itself takes an holistic view of open space, subsequent Scottish guidance products have narrowed the focus towards greenspace – potentially reducing the opportunities for wider integration and holistic consideration of open spaces.

It may be worth restating this message at a high level, and briefly articulating the functional benefits of civic space and streetscapes – and their potential to contribute to green infrastructure through street trees etc.

4.2.2 Audit process issues

Task allocation

While it will be for authorities to determine the best approach for their circumstances, it may be helpful to signpost examples where council services have shared the workload of audit and strategy development / updating to illustrate the mutual benefits of participation.

Similarly, highlighting existing examples of good practice where authorities have made use of extensive community engagement to fulfil tasks, or employed community agents to gather data will be useful.

Community engagement

There are existing examples of good practice with regard to community consultation in Scotland, most notably Argyll and Bute's settlement-specific approach, and Inverclyde's 'community agents' used to capture information on community values.

Standards

Reference to the recently-published greenspace scotland / SNH research and guidance on developing open space standards will address the key issues, providing a more flexible and locally-specific approach (greenspace scotland, 2013a; 2013b).

The consultation draft Scottish Planning Policy (Scottish Government, 2013b), published in April 2013, sets out an alternative, design-led, approach to 'green infrastructure' delivery. Along with the stronger focus on place in the draft, this potentially represents a major shift away from a standards-based approach and should be reflected in the revised guidance.

4.2.3   Strategy development

Lack of clarity in necessary / desirable outcomes

Scoping of audit processes and striking the right strategic balance has proved to be a challenge for authorities, with consequent impacts on internal buy-in and options for delivery. Again, the CABE Space/Mayor of London guidance (2009) provides very clear criteria for scoping and delivering key tasks and should be highlighted as best practice.

Action planning

While approaches will vary depending on partners, delivery mechanisms and authority character, highlighting key guidance and existing examples of good practice – particularly Edinburgh's neighbourhood partnership-level action plans – will be particularly useful.

4.2.4   Delivery

Influencing policy and decision-making

Experience indicates that this is not a significant barrier, and that authorities have coped well. However, it may be useful to provide a 'worked example' of how open space policy and standards have been applied in development management.

Streamlining with LDP process

Some additional guidance is required, in relatively simple diagrammatic form, detailing the key opportunities for streamlining the open space planning process with LDP development – particularly targeting the MIR as the principal focus for consultation and understanding community values.

Role of supplementary planning guidance

As local authorities are already innovating in this regard, highlighting the available good practice would be useful.

4.3   Additional topics to include

4.3.1   General advice on the benefits of taking a holistic approach to open space

Setting the tone for the rest of the document, an introduction for practitioners establishing:

- The rationale for adopting a holistic approach to open space;
- The benefits for authorities, communities and developers; and,
- The key differences to existing approaches.

4.3.2   Ecosystems approach

As noted above, it may be too early to propose the wholesale incorporation of an ecosystems approach to open space planning. However, it may be advantageous to invite consideration of the main benefits delivered by strategic or 'premier' spaces – or indeed those threatened with development – to test the approach against holistic open space objectives.

4.3.3   Townscape character, heritage and place-making

The development of community resources, such as Placecheck, 'Knowing your Place' and the 'Action with Communities in Rural England' community planning toolkit provide some useful tools to help local people to engage with townscape and planning issues – within which open space is a key component.   There is likely to be significant potential – and some savings with regard to scarce resources – in encouraging communities to take a stronger role in providing contextual and qualitative information. This could assist in:

- Ensuring local people have a much more meaningful role in contributing evidence to local authority audits and strategies – moving from *consultation* to *participation;*
- Making stronger links to:
- Community aspirations for their places;
- Character and sense of place; and,
- Driving community-led delivery of enhancement (e.g. through Climate Challenge Fund, CSGN or Heritage Lottery funding).

The tools outlined above also help to address the urban – rural divide outlined above, and could perhaps provide a more appropriate means to understanding the role and potential of open spaces outside urban areas.

4.3.4   Reinforcing participative planning

The active engagement of communities in a meaningful dialogue should be a key element of updated guidance.   Approaches to consultation have varied considerably between authorities, but the level of active engagement appears to be mixed – with some respondents reporting low levels of participation.

There is a clear opportunity to better support local authorities in engaging with communities, moving from consultation on products to a conversation on what is important, the processes of change that are affecting their area and how they aspire to manage that change. It must be acknowledged that intensive engagement carries a potentially significant cost; therefore carefully managing and streamlining engagement to tackle several subjects is potentially the most appropriate route.   Community Planning Partnerships may therefore be important sources of advice and may help to coordinate action to reduce duplication and avoid consultation fatigue.

4.3.5   Potential role for Strategic Environmental Assessment

Most authorities have undertaken Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of their open space strategies as, depending on their content, they can reasonably be held to conform to the definition set out in Section 5 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

A brief review of the associated Environmental Reports produced suggests that the SEA process could be used much more effectively to add value to open space strategies – particularly with regard to the assessment of alternatives and scenario planning for different approaches to implementing the strategy.

4.4   Delivering revised guidance

As noted above, the outcomes of the research process and local authority engagement suggested that the existing suite of guidance was largely fit-for-purpose – but lacking in a few key areas. The project steering group were presented with a range of possible options for delivering a revised guidance framework, as required by the project brief.
These were as follows:

- **'Light-touch' unifying framework**
  – Signposting to and interpreting existing resources.
  – Providing a framework to make more effective links between open space audits and strategies and other policy agendas within local authorities.
  – Advising on the means of building internal partnerships and engaging effectively with external partners and stakeholders.
  – High level advice on approaches to community participation.
  – Providing case studies illustrating examples of best practice.

- **'Critical' unifying framework**
  – Providing a clear steer as to which resources represent – or are closest to – an agreed vision of 'best practice'.
  – Setting out a recommended approach to linking open space audits and strategies with development of other local authority strategic work.
  – Providing a template for partnership and consensus-building.
  – High level advice on approaches to community participation.
  – Providing case studies illustrating examples of good practice.
  –
- **Modular framework of collated best practice**
  – Developing separate, but linked, concise guides dealing with:
  – Scoping, planning and delivering a locally-appropriate audit
  – Engaging with communities and promoting participation
  – Understanding and optimising the links between open space audits/strategies and wider policy agendas
  – Developing open space strategies
  – From data to delivery: making links between audit and strategy products and means of delivering open space enhancement

- **Single, national best-practice approach to open space audits and strategies**
  – A stand-alone document setting out the preferred top-to-bottom approach to open space planning.

Given that the research, and local authority responses, indicated that the majority of topics were already covered in reasonable detail, the project team's preferred option was to

develop a light-touch 'wayfinder' guide. As the steering group were in agreement, this approach was taken forward, combining elements of options 1 and 2.

4.4.1 'Wayfinder guide'

The 'wayfinder guide' was developed through an iterative process in consultation with the project steering group.

It is structured to reflect the key steps in the process of planning, undertaking and delivering open space audits and strategies, setting out the key issues, providing context and linking to existing guidance. It also seeks to fill 'gaps' in the advice provided in the existing guidance framework, set out in Chapter 2 of this report.

Case studies are provided as examples of good practice, illustrating the approaches taken by local authorities in response to particular issues and demonstrating the value added. These are as follows:

- Liverpool Green Infrastructure Strategy – demonstrating the benefits of applying an ecosystems approach to planning and managing open spaces;
- Argyll and Bute Communities Greenspace Audit – illustrating the benefits of extensive and meaningful local engagement;
- Edinburgh Open Space Strategy – exploring a neighbourhood-level approach to action planning, and highlighting the benefits of internal partnership working in delivering action on the ground
- Aberdeen City Open Space Supplementary Guidance – illustrating the benefits of putting the outcomes of open space audits and strategies on a statutory footing through statutory supplementary guidance (to the Aberdeen City LDP).

The finished product can be found at the link in Appendix 4.

5.   EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1   Introduction

This concluding section of the report sets out a brief evaluation of the methods employed in undertaking the work, brings together the findings of the research and maps out the next steps for the project outputs.

5.2   Research evaluation

5.2.1   Introduction

The methods employed in conducting the research were tailored to the available time and project budget, with the aim of achieving a relatively narrow (c.30% sample), but deep, examination of the state of practice in Scotland's local authorities.

The use of questionnaires, followed up with semi-structured interviews is standard practice and is held to provide an appropriate balance of quantitative (albeit statistically insignificant) data and detailed qualitative feedback.

5.2.2   Desk review

An initial rapid survey of progress of local authorities in developing open space audits and strategies was undertaken in order to understand:

- Progress since the most recent 'State of Scotland's Greenspace' report (greenspace scotland, 2012);
- Any visible spatial trends (e.g. urban – rural split);
- Enable selection of 10 sample authorities at varying stages in the process.

An in-depth review of the 17 key guidance documents in common usage was undertaken, providing the basis of section 2 of this report, and summarised in the matrix provided as Appendix 1.

The desk review process was wholly straightforward and presented no significant obstacles. It is therefore unlikely that substantial improvements could have been made.

Sample selection

While it was beneficial to obtain a range of perspectives from authorities at varying stages in the process – thus picking up those making use of more recent guidance products – there may also have been merit in dealing only with authorities that had completed their strategies. This could have provided a slightly more complete picture of the issues involved. However, the project team are content that the findings are robust insofar as they apply to the sample group.

5.2.3   Local authority review

Online survey

The online survey was prepared in line with available best practice guidelines and carefully tailored to the intended audience. Questions were embedded with 'skip logic' to ensure that respondents were only presented with relevant supplementary questions and progressed through the process as quickly as possible.

While the results were very useful, on balance the questions posed were too numerous, in some instances too detailed, and perhaps not related closely enough to the key research

questions of the project – particularly with regard to delivery. However, it was felt that obtaining this more comprehensive baseline provided a strong basis for further engagement.

Direct engagement

The semi-structured interviews held with participant authorities were successful in drawing out salient details – and ensuring a stronger focus on the key research questions. As there was an opportunity to review the outcomes of the first phase of survey work before embarking on the second, it was possible to frame the talking points to ensure that any gaps were filled effectively.

Although it was originally anticipated by the client that direct engagement was to be partly implemented through a workshop for participant authorities, this idea was set aside due to:

- logistical issues of securing a suitable date and venue to enable all parties to attend;
  - no allowance was made in the project budget to cover participants' travel;
- the need to draw out authority-specific information – rather than engage in generalised discussion; and,
- the desire of almost all respondents to remain anonymous:
  - Anonymity ensured that respondents could be more open with regard to the potential shortcomings in their authority's approach or delivery mechanisms.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Introduction

Thinking in relation to open space planning in Scotland has evolved significantly since the original publication of PAN65 (Scottish Executive, 2003). Substantial progress has been made in relation to authorities undertaking audits, preparing strategies and delivering action on the ground. It should be recognised that, like any 'first attempt' at delivering policy objectives, there are inevitably some issues with the ways in which various stages in the process have been conducted. In part, this reflects the phased emergence of the current guidance suite, with 'early adopter' authorities having to rely more heavily on bespoke approaches developed by consultants or in-house. As the gaps in the guidance suite have gradually been filled, authorities have had access to a more complete – if highly disaggregated and duplication-heavy – picture of good practice.

The findings of this research indicate that the current suite of guidance is largely fit for purpose in delivering open space audits and strategies *as defined in current policy.* However, authorities would be required to expend substantial effort (broadly equivalent to the literature review undertaken as part of this project) to extract the most relevant information, in addition to the time spent synthesising this information and translating it into a locally appropriate solution.

5.3.2 Developing more holistic open space strategies

Currently, no open space strategy exhibits a truly 'holistic' approach that considers the wider benefits delivered by open spaces and the values ascribed to these assets by communities.

Authorities have understandably concentrated on developing strategies that are fit for the purpose defined in PAN65 (Scottish Government, 2008), and the relatively narrow process focus of most subsequent guidance products has not encouraged a broader view of the resource. Similarly, it is likely that the number and range of issues encountered in the auditing and strategy development process has played a role in stifling creativity in this regard.

This is perhaps the area in which the current guidance framework is most lacking, as relatively few links are explicitly drawn to the key areas in which open space audits and strategies could capture additional information, principally:

- The social / cultural, environmental and economic values attached to open spaces; and,
- The benefits delivered by open spaces, including ecosystem services.

Traditional approaches to auditing, and by implication strategy, standards and policy development, will only be partially successful if only part of open spaces' value is assessed. The relative lack of community engagement early on in the process also potentially divorces the strategic outputs from what is truly important about the open space resource for local people – beyond the intrinsic value of open space in its own right.

5.3.3   Relationships to other strategies and plans

The existing guidance framework does provide some pointers to integration with other plans and strategies (beyond the obvious requirements for development plans). Green networks and green infrastructure are perhaps the key links expressed from PAN65 (*op cit.*) onwards. Authorities have adopted a range of approaches to making these links in policy, with some developing multi-functional planning guidance that provides integrated advice on green networks, green infrastructure and open space. In this respect, they are well ahead of what is set out in existing guidance, and will provide key examples for colleagues – as well as illustrating the 'wayfinder' guide produced through this research.

The draft SPP (Scottish Government, 2013b) offers some interesting opportunities for integration, particularly with regard to the adoption of a more strongly design and place-led approach to planning in general, and new open space provision in particular. Design is clearly a key factor in successful open spaces – as illustrated by Edinburgh's Draft Design Guidance – which is currently overlooked by much of the guidance.

5.3.4   Delivering action on the ground

Authorities have applied a range of approaches to action planning and delivery, from the settlement or neighbourhood level to authority-wide. However, results appear to have been mixed in terms of translating priorities into action on the ground.

The majority of existing guidance provides relatively sparse information on delivery, beyond the mechanisms available through the planning system. This, combined with little advice on implementing a robust partnership approach to developing strategies, has resulted in significant variance in how 'deliverable' authorities believe their strategies to be. This is particularly important where a range of delivery partners are identified, but have not necessarily been involved in developing the action plan elements of open space strategies. This has sometimes resulted in a poor fit with operational requirements or policies.

Ultimately, guidance can only provide so much assistance in this regard. Practitioners will always be required to understand and overcome the interpersonal and structural barriers to action, which may be substantially different between authorities. Similarly, the drafting of a vision, aims and objectives for open space, and especially the supporting action plan, will necessarily require a level of cooperation and understanding of partners' operational requirements and constraints.

As noted above, existing guidance is strongly focussed on delivery through the planning system. While this is obviously a key mechanism, there is perhaps a need for more careful alignment with priorities for local authority owned/managed spaces and ongoing programme, in addition to opening up delivery options to communities and the third sector. This may be

particularly significant during periods of low development activity, during which developer-funded action may cease.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Guidance

The guidance outputs from this project, while bringing together the best of the current framework, should be considered to be a temporary fix. It will inevitably require monitoring and updating should new guidance products emerge. Similarly, there may be some merit in augmenting the guidance with advice on appropriate landscape and green infrastructure design guidance for application outside the masterplanning / settlement expansion context[23]. This will be particularly significant should the draft SPP's (*op cit.*) design-led approach to open space provision proceed to adoption. It will be important to support authorities in understanding and applying this approach, as not all have in-house landscape architects and few are likely to be able to commit to additional resources. It may also be advisable to undertake some testing – either hypothetical or 'real-world' – of how this might be applied in a range of contexts. This would, however, require significant engagement with other public bodies, including Historic Scotland, Architecture and Design Scotland and a representative sample of planning authorities.

5.4.2 Further research / monitoring

The findings of this study are inevitably limited by the fact that only a sample of authorities was assessed. While the results are considered to be representative of the general picture, there will inevitably be outliers to this pattern.

Similarly, the findings of this research project represent a 'snapshot' of progress and issues, therefore period monitoring of the following issues may be helpful in providing time-series data, and an impression of evolving practice:

- Authorities' progress in developing / revising audits and strategies;
- Open space policy content of emerging development plans and supplementary planning guidance:
  - Understanding the impact of revised guidance on standards;
  - Implementation of more design-based approaches (depending on content of finalised SPP);
  - Integration of open space with other policy agendas;
  - Use of strategies and standards in informing land allocations.

- Examining a selection of development management casework involving open space to assess:
  - The application and efficacy of open space policies and standards;
  - Delivery against strategy / action plan objectives: potentially looking at a sample of strategies working with authorities to unpick issues and assess impacts on the ground.

Monitoring the efficacy of the 'wayfinder guide' may be advisable to determine whether authorities find it useful, and whether the recommendations with regard to the wider potential of audits and strategies have any impact.

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[23] This is reasonably well covered in *Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking* (Scottish Government, 2011)

5.5 Dissemination

This research report and the associated guidance (Appendix 4) are to be published on the Scottish Natural Heritage web site, in line with standard practice for commissioned reports.

It is anticipated that guidance assessment and inventory matrix (Appendix 1), the guidance product (Appendix 4) and the literature review (section 2 of this report) will also be made available as an e-resource on the SNH open space web pages, and through Scotland's Environment Web (SEWeb).

A 'Sharing Good Practice' event is scheduled for 13th August 2013, bringing together the outputs of this project and greenspace scotland's recent open space standards work, which will be a key opportunity for dissemination of the new guidance. This event will also provide a valuable opportunity to 'test' the guidance against local authority officers' knowledge and experience.

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APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Key

| Some links to topic |
| Strong links to topic |

	Commentary	Audit process							Standards				Strategy development							Wider links							Delivery		
		Technical advice	Typology	Quantitative	Qualitative	Needs assessment	Partnership	Open space values	Quantity	Quality	Accessibility	Making key policy links	Governance	Vision and strategic framework	Community engagement	Translation to policy	Action planning	Delivery mechanisms	Monitoring & evaluation	Green infrastructure	Ecosystem services	Water management	Design & place-making	Biodiversity	Health & well-being	Culture and heritage	Design	Management / maintenance	Through DM
Scottish Government Scottish Planning Policy 2010	Sets the policy context in which open space audits and strategies operate – and should contribute to. Coverage of open space substantially condensed from SPP11, but core messages remain largely consistent (wording no longer strictly compels LPAs to undertake audits – 'should' rather than 'must'[24])								Tacit	Tacit	Tacit									Elsewhere in SPP									
Scottish Government Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65: Planning and Open Space 2008	PAN 65 was published to support SPP11, rather than SPP, therefore it relies on some detail that is no longer present in the core policy. It establishes the wider rationale for developing audits and strategies and highlights key interactions with other policy areas (design, transport, housing, green networks, water management etc.); Provides a model typology for open space auditing/classification and defines the requirements for audits. Typology potentially problematic – but intended to be adapted for local context. PANs not intended to be prescriptive, so relatively light-touch with regard to process; intended outcomes relatively clear – although links to development planning and management less well developed (e.g. with regard to role of SPG, framing policies / standards).	Minimal						Highlights need to capture community values/aspirations – examples provided																					
Department for Communities and Local Government Assessing needs and opportunities: A companion guide to planning policy guidance 17 (PPG 17) 2001	Published as the companion guide to the now-revoked PPG17, the practice guide is the English equivalent of PAN 65, although it provides substantially more detail (and also includes indoor sports and recreation facilities). Additional useful detail includes information in relation to planning and scoping the audit process and early engagement with communities. Useful worked examples and good practice case study examples are provided for each stage throughout the guide. Recommends using the concept of 'effective catchment', which is defined as the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users, in determining the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the audit.	See Appendix A for description of different types of open space	Recommends including all open space irrespective of ownership/public access	Useful example provided																									

[24] Para. 151 of SPP, vis. Para 23 of SPP11

	Commentary	Audit process							Standards				Strategy development							Wider links							Delivery		
		Technical advice	Typology	Quantitative	Qualitative	Needs assessment	Partnership	Open space values	Quantity	Quality	Accessibility	Making key policy links	Governance	Vision and strategic framework	Community engagement	Translation to policy	Action planning	Delivery mechanisms	Monitoring & evaluation	Green infrastructure	Ecosystem services	Water management	Design & place-making	Biodiversity	Health & well-being	Culture and heritage	Design	Management / maintenance	Through DM
CABESpace / Mayor of London Open Space Strategies: Best Practice Guidance 2008	Published in 2009, this document provides practical advice on all stages of the open space strategy process. There are also examples of strategies in action from around England, reflecting different themes. The guide recommends that all types of open space (except private gardens) are assessed, irrespective of ownership and public access. It identifies a six stage process for preparing an open space strategy. Each stage identifies tasks to be undertaken, and an approximate timescale of completion.			PPG17 typology with sub categories of each PPG17 type	Recommends that qualitative audit is tailored to local circumstances			Existing & potential wider values of each site should be considered in the value audit	Assessed as area of open space per thousand population	Recommends Green Flag Award, Sports England, & Play England quality standards	Recommends identifying catchment areas and using ANGsT		Encourages the formation of a steering group		●	Overarching policy protecting open space should be included in LDF core strategy			Recommends linking performance indicators to LDF & national indicators	●	●			●	●			●	
CABESpace It's Our Space: A guide for community groups working to improve public space 2007	This guide is primarily targeted at communities wishing to develop open space sites rather than local authority practitioners developing open space strategies.																												
Green Flag Raising the Standard: The Green Flag Award Guidance Manual Updated 2009	The Green Flag Award Scheme is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in England & Wales. Updated in 2009, the Green Flag Award Manual provides clear guidance on what constitutes a good green space and how it can be achieved. Although it doesn't explicitly mention open space strategies, the guide may be useful for LA's endeavouring to upgrade derelict /underperforming open spaces to high quality open spaces. In summary, this document primarily focuses on quality standards.									●						●				●				●	●			●	

Key:
Some links to topic
Strong links to topic

	Commentary	Audit process							Standards				Strategy development							Wider links							Delivery		
		Technical advice	Typology	Quantitative	Qualitative	Needs assessment	Partnership	Open space values	Quantity	Quality	Accessibility	Making key policy links	Governance	Vision and strategic framework	Community engagement	Translation to policy	Action planning	Delivery mechanisms	Monitoring & evaluation	Green infrastructure	Ecosystem services	Water management	Design & place-making	Biodiversity	Health & well-being	Culture and heritage	Design	Management / maintenance	Through DM
greenspace scotland / Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership — Greenspace quality: A guide to assessment, planning and strategic development — 2008	The Guide provides practical guidance in developing a greenspace strategy, greenspace audit and monitoring and evaluation framework. It stipulates that the process is iterative, with the need to establish early in the process a Strategic Framework that can help direct the audit and set the foundation for the strategy and partnership working. The links to the Development Plan, Community Plan and other strategies, plans and processes are of particular importance. The document primarily focuses most of its detail on the stages involved in undertaking a greenspace audit.	Provides spatial mapping technical advice	PAN 65 typology, potentially with sub categories if required	Provides a useful checklist for auditing sites	Identifies quality criteria/indicators & provides worked examples		Encourages early development of a Strategic Greenspace Partnership						Strategic Greenspace Partnership & Greenspace Working Group		■				■					■				Land Audit Management System & provides indicators for assessing customer	
Scottish Executive — Rethinking Open Space — 2001	This research document, published by the Scottish Executive, indicated that the recommendations of NPPG 11 had not been acted upon by local authorities, with few having prepared open space strategies. It provides advice on the management and planning approach that should be taken for different types of open space. The research informed the 2003 publication of PAN 65 Planning and Open Space.		□						□	□	□		□	□		□			□										
Natural England — Nature Nearby: Accessible natural greenspace — 2010	Although the ANGSt model was developed in the early 1990s, it was felt that more guidance was required to explain how the stand should be applied. This guidance, produced in 2008, fulfils that requirement. Natural England propose three key standards for high quality greenspace: (1) Access to Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt). (2) Visitor Service Standards. (3) Greenspace Quality Standard. Primarily an accessibility standard (using distance thresholds), with quantitative hierarchy of open space. The standard applies to natural/semi-natural spaces.									■	■																		
Scottish Executive — Minimum standards for open space — 2005	Published in 2005 by the Scottish Executive, this document informed the review of the NPPG 11. It concluded that: (1) Only parts of the PAN 65 typology are covered by the standards, (2) The '6 Acre Standard' is widely used with little consistency, (3) There is no		□					□	□	□	□																		

Key:
□ Some links to topic
■ Strong links to topic

		Audit process							Standards				Strategy development							Wider links							Delivery		
	Commentary	Technical advice	Typology	Quantitative	Qualitative	Needs assessment	Partnership	Open space values	Quantity	Quality	Accessibility	Making key policy links	Governance	Vision and strategic framework	Community engagement	Translation to policy	Action planning	Delivery mechanisms	Monitoring & evaluation	Green infrastructure	Ecosystem services	Water management	Design & place-making	Biodiversity	Health & well-being	Culture and heritage	Design	Management / maintenance	Through DM
	recognised qualitative standard for open space. The report identifies good practice examples of Scottish projects/LA's demonstrating where the use of existing standards or approaches has helped to deliver quality open space and identify the reasons for this happening.		some					some	some	some	some																		
Sportscotland School playing fields planning and design guidance 2006	This document extends Sportscotland's series of design guides for school sport facilities. It provides advice on calculating space requirements for playing fields and guidance on detailed layout, design, specifications and maintenance for both primary & secondary school playing fields.								some																				
Woodland Trust Space for People: Targeting action for woodland access 2010	The Woodland Trust Woodland Access Standard is based on a similar principle of accessibility to the Natural England ANGSt: (1) that no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size, and (2) that there should also be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km roundtrip) of people's homes. This is primarily an accessibility standard (using distance thresholds), with quantitative hierarchy of open spaces. This standard applies to natural/ semi-natural spaces.										strong									strong	some			some					
greenspace scotland Making the links – Greenspace for a more successful and sustainable Scotland 2009	In 2009, greenspace scotland published this document which demonstrates that greenspace can make an important contribution to a healthier, safer & stronger, wealthier & fairer, smarter and greener Scotland. Each chapter of the document contains case studies and research material, which link to Government policy and other policies and research.											some								some	some	some	some	some	some				
greenspace scotland Health Impact Assessment of greenspace: A guide 2008	This guide provides an overview of best available scientific evidence on the health impacts of greenspace (both positive and negative), and guidance on preparing a health impact assessment of greenspace. A number of case studies are provided throughout the report. It relates more to health impact assessments of greenspace rather than the open space strategy process.											some													strong				

Key
Some links to topic
Strong links to topic

	Commentary	Audit process							Standards			Making key policy links	Strategy development							Wider links							Delivery		
	Key: Some links to topic / Strong links to topic	Technical advice	Typology	Quantitative	Qualitative	Needs assessment	Partnership	Open space values	Quantity	Quality	Accessibility	Making key policy links	Governance	Vision and strategic framework	Community engagement	Translation to policy	Action planning	Delivery mechanisms	Monitoring & evaluation	Green infrastructure	Ecosystem services	Water management	Design & place-making	Biodiversity	Health & well-being	Culture and heritage	Design	Management / maintenance	Through DM
Fields in Trust (formerly National Playing Fields Association) Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play 2012	This document supersedes all previous editions of 'The Six Acre Standard'. Previous versions were criticised for been primarily concerned with quantitative standards, with only qualitative and accessibility recommendations provided. Revised benchmark quantitative standard recommendations for outdoor sports and outdoor play are: (1) Playing Pitches (ha per 1000 population): urban 1.15ha, rural 1.72ha, overall 1.20ha. (2) All Outdoor Sport (ha per 1000 population): urban 1.60ha, 1.76ha, overall 1.60ha. (3) Children's Playing Space (ha per 1000 population): designated equipped playing space 0.25ha, informal playing space 0.55ha, and children's playing space 0.80ha. The document applies to outdoor sport and children's play spaces only. It also details a hierarchy of children's play facilities LEAPs (Local Equipped Areas for Play), NEAPs (Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play) and LAPs (Local Areas for Play).								[Quantity]	Outdoor sport – Technical Performance Quality Standards. Play space – Children's' Play Council Quality Assessment Tool	Pitches – 1.2km from major residential areas. Tennis & bowls – 1 court/green within 20mins. Play space – LAPs 100m, LEAPs 400m,																		
greenspace scotland Developing Greenspace Standards: Framework and pathfinder projects 2012	This report presents the findings of a research project investigating the development of open space standards in three local authorities (Fife, North Ayrshire and West Dunbartonshire). In the absence of a framework or guidance on developing standards, a number of different approaches to developing standards were applied by the authorities before an approach to standards development in Fife (the 'Fife Model') was adopted by all three authorities. The Fife model provides a useful working guide for local authorities who are about to develop open space standards. Although it should be noted that there are a number of outstanding issues which will require further consideration before it can be used as a 'standard for open space standards'.								Recommends that a quantity standard is specific to each LA & requires testing before finalised. – example	The Model suggests the adoption of a threshold score somewhere between 60 and 70%.	Necessary for LA's to decide to use either the network analysis approach or the direct line approach.																		
Scottish Government Green Infrastructure: Design &	This document provides an overview of green infrastructure as well as setting out some key design issues & techniques for incorporating GI into place-making at all scales. It relates																			●							●		

	Commentary	Audit process							Standards				Strategy development							Wider links							Delivery		
		Technical advice	Typology	Quantitative	Qualitative	Needs assessment	Partnership	Open space values	Quantity	Quality	Accessibility	Making key policy links	Governance	Vision and strategic framework	Community engagement	Translation to policy	Action planning	Delivery mechanisms	Monitoring & evaluation	Green infrastructure	Ecosystem services	Water management	Design & place-making	Biodiversity	Health & well-being	Culture and heritage	Design	Management / maintenance	Through DM
Placemaking 2011	more to effective masterplanning rather than the open space strategy process.																			■							■		

Key

Some links to topic

Strong links to topic

APPENDIX 2: LOCAL AUTHORITY PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING OPEN SPACE AUDITS AND STRATEGIES

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
Aberdeen City Total Open Space: 3,471 ha Total Open Sites: 479 *(Not including private gardens or sites under 0.2 ha)* The results of the audit show that Aberdeen has many high quality, well used public parks and open spaces although these tend not to be very evenly distributed across the City. The most densely populated areas, particularly the city centre has the least open space, with limited opportunities to create more.	**Audit 2010 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Full PAN65 typology mapping; Quality audit: Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Adopted Open Space Strategy & Action Plan 2011-2016**	North East	Aberdeen City occupies for the most part, undulating land between the mouths of the River Don and the River Dee. Beyond the outskirts of the city centre are a number of commuter settlements. While some 50% of the city is open countryside (used for arable farming or grassland), one third of its land area is urban.	Medium – 10.1%	Brownfield sites and regeneration areas	Lead partner is Aberdeen City Council (various departments) Other partners are Aberdeen Greenspace, Scottish Natural Heritage, Aberdeen Play Forum, Community Councils, Forestry Commission, NHS, Greenspace Scotland, and SEPA An Environmental Policy and Monitoring Group will monitor the progress of the Strategy	Aberdeen City Council	Consultation was undertaken at three workshops attended by community, business and agency stakeholders. Further community consultation was carried out through six local events as well as several meetings with specific stakeholder groups.	Aberdeen's Green Space Network Green Flag Awards	Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan North East Scotland Biodiversity Action Plan, FWS for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Joint Health Improvement Plan Aberdeen Local Plan 2008 Proposed Aberdeen LDP Aberdeen City's Nature Conservation Strategy **Open Space Supplementary Guidance** has been prepared in parallel with this Strategy	Audit 2010 Strategy Open Space SG
Aberdeenshire Total Open Space: 3,000 ha Aberdeenshire has may high quality open spaces with sites under private ownership scoring the highest rating while sites where ownership is unknown are scoring the lowest.	**Parks and Open Space Strategy (Dec 2006)** **Audit 2008 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Full PAN65 typology mapping; Quality audit: Undertaken by University students through questionnaires, used own assessment scoring methodology)* **Approved Open Space Strategy Dec 2010** **Update and Review Feb 2010** **Revised Open Space Strategy Jan 2011** (approved)	North East	Aberdeenshire lies between the Grampian Mountains and the North Sea and is characterised by several rural towns and villages	Low – 1.3%	Sustainable development (protecting the coastline, greenbelt), economic regeneration	Lead partner is Aberdeenshire Council	Aberdeenshire Council	Open Space Audit was subject to consultation with communities -within each Community Council area, communities were asked to highlight areas where improvements may be beneficial	None identified in Strategy	Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 Aberdeenshire LDP 2012 Core Paths Plan Sports and Active Lifestyles Strategy Aberdeenshire Community Plan Housing Strategy Part III of the Open Space Strategy constitutes **Supplementary Guidance** on open space for Aberdeenshire LDP	Audit 2008: http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/parks/open_space_audit/space_strategy_audit.asp Strategy 2010: http://wwwdev.aberdenshire.gov.uk/parks/ApprovedPandOSpacesStrategy.pdf Feb 2010 Review: https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/green/OPEN%20SPACE%20STRATEGY%20-%20Feb10.pdf Revised Strategy 2011: http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/ldp/DocumentR2ParksandOpenSpaceStartegyapproved27January2011.pdf
Angus Total Open Space: Unknown	An Open Space Audit is **currently being undertaken** by Angus Councils' Neighbourhood Services department (according to the MIR published in Nov 2012)	North East	Angus has a scenic character that varies from the rugged highland area in the northwest to the highly cultivated Strathmore valley and the long narrow coastal plain. One third of the area is hilly countryside and over 45% of the land is arable or improved grassland.	Low – 4.2%	Housing, flooding, renewable energy development	-	-	-	-	Work is advancing on both the audit and strategy and when complete **will inform the Proposed LDP (Summer 2013)**	-
Argyll & Bute Total Open Space:	According to the Action Plan 2010-	Western	Argyll & Bute consist of a mix of urban communities, remote rural	Low – 8.2%	Flooding, coastal erosion, renewable	Lead agency is Argyll & Bute Council. SNH is also	Audit carried out by consultants	Unknown (No link to audit)	Unknown (No link to audit)	According to the Action Plan 2010-	Unknown (No link to audit)

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[25] SIMD 2009 Local share of the 15% most deprived areas
[26] Open Space Strategies link to the following national policies, plans and strategies unless otherwise stated:
- National Planning Framework
- Scottish Planning Policy 2010
- PAN 65: Planning and Open Space

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
Unknown (No link to audit)	2012 which accompanies the Adopted Local Plan 2009 and the Structure Plan 2002, the **Open Space Audit** of the six main towns is **complete** although there is no link on A&B Council website.		mainland, and twenty five inhabited islands		energy development	identified as a partner to deliver the Strategy				2012 which accompanies the Adopted Local Plan 2009 and the Structure Plan 2002, the completion of the **OSS is identified as a priority action** Audit will identify open spaces for the **proposed LDP** and will be **linked with supplementary guidance on open space**	
Cairngorm National Park Total Open Space: Unknown	According to the Adopted Local Plan 2010, the CNPA will work with other authorities to produce an open space audit and strategy. No further details on progress are available on the Authority's website. Supplementary Planning Guidance on Open Space 2010	North East	Cairngorms National Park covers an area of over 4,500 km² in Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highland, Angus and Perth & Kinross regions. The park covers the Cairngorms range of mountains, and surrounding hills and contains vast amounts of forests, rivers & lakes with 40% of the area designated as important for nature heritage.	-	Conservation of natural and cultural heritage	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Supplementary planning guidance
City of Edinburgh Total Open Space: 3,503 ha of which 1,955 ha are publically accessible *(Pentland Hills Regional Park, farmland, beaches, and open spaces less than 500 sqm are all excluded from the audit)* Results of the audit show that Edinburgh has good quality open space with 2 in 5 spaces surveyed as 'good', and half rated as 'fair'.	**Audit 2009 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Full PAN65 typology mapping; Quality audit: Range of sources)* **Adopted Open Space Strategy 2010** Strategy is supported by 12 Action Plans, one for each Neighbourhood Partnership Area	Central Belt	The capital and second largest city situated in the east of the Central Lowlands between the Firth of Forth and the Pentland Hills.	Medium – 10.6%	Sustainable transport, lack of suitable sites for housing	Lead body is City of Edinburgh Council, departments involved are Services for Communities/ Transport / Culture and Sport Other partners include developers, Edinburgh World Heritage, East Neighbourhood Team, Waterfront Edinburgh Some actions will be implemented through Neighbourhood Environment Programmes	City of Edinburgh Council	Consultation on Open Space Audit (May – July 2009) – Public exhibitions, workshops, questionnaire survey	Edinburgh Green Belt Central Scotland Green Network Lothians and Fife Green Network Green Flag Awards	Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan 2015 Open Space Framework for Edinburgh 2005 Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan Access Strategy 2003 Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy 2006 Play Strategy for CEC 2009 Edinburgh BAP 2004-2009 Edinburgh Core Path Plan 2008 Edinburgh City Local Plan 2010 Directly linked to and referenced in the **Single Outcome Agreement** Informed **LDP Main Issues Report** and will also inform the proposed LDP Will inform the preparation of the **Play Strategy and Allotments Strategy**	Audit Strategy Action plans
Clackmannanshire Total Open Space: Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	No information on Audit or Open Space Strategy. Open Space Framework 2011	Central Belt	Situated between the Ochil Hills to the north and the River Forth to the south. It largely comprises a lowland plain forming the valleys of the River Forth and the River Devon. The rich alluvial soils of the area support valuable agricultural land and coal mining.	High – 20.3%	Economic and environmental regeneration	Lead bodies have not been identified in the audit/strategy although it is assumed that Clackmannanshire Council as the planning authority, a major landowner and land manager, will have a crucial role to play in the	Clackmannanshire Council	Consultation on Framework (January 2011- March 2011) – Questionnaire. Document was consulted alongside the MIR.	Central Scotland Green Network Green Flag Awards	Existing Clackmannanshire Local Plan Main Issues Report for new Local Development Plan Clackmannanshire BAP 2003-2008 Clackmannanshire	Open Space Framework

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
						delivery of the Framework				Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy 2010 Core Paths Plan 2009 Local Transport Strategy Single Outcome Agreement	
Dumfries & Galloway Total Open Space: Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	No information on progress of Audit.	Southern	Dumfries & Galloway is located on the south west coast. The rolling hills of the Southern Uplands are drained to the Solway Firth by the rivers Nith, Annan and Esk whose valleys form the three districts of Nithsdale, Annandale and Eskdale.	Low – 4.7%	Renewable energy development, housing, flooding	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	According to the new LDP progress report, Knight Kavanagh & Page are commissioned to undertake the audit.	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	According to the MIR 2011, open space is identified as a policy issue which will be reviewed in the new LDP. LDP policies will be developed from the results of the Open Space Audit and Strategy.	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)
Dundee City Total Open Space: 1,393 ha Dundee City was one of the first authorities to develop an open space strategy Dundee City has a wide diversity of public open spaces which account for 28% of the urban area.	**Audit (complete) Adopted Open Space Strategy & Action Plan 2008-2011** (Used the greenspace LEAP framework to identify outcomes of the Strategy. Developed a two-tier Public Open Space Hierarchy: city-wide and local) Currently in the process of developing the second iteration of the strategy (with greater partner involvement and community focus)	North East	Dundee City lies on the north shore of the Firth of Tay with the Sidlaw Hills to the north and the Carse of Gowrie to the west. The City developed as a port and manufacturing centre.	High – 30.7%	Urban deprivation, community regeneration	Lead bodies are Dundee Partnership for the Environment and Dundee City Council (various departments) Other partners include Neighbourhood Partnership Networks, Greenspace Scotland, Community Councils, SNH, FCS, LBAP Urban Subgroup, Dundee Open Space Strategy Group, NHS, Local Community Groups	Dundee Partnership	A Public Open Space working group and a Dundee Partnership for the Environment working group have been set up to coordinate consultation with stakeholders, agencies, and the community.	Developing the Dundee Greenspace Network is an aspiration of the OSS Green Flag Awards	SPP11 – Physical Activity and Open Space Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001 Dundee Council Plan 2003-2007 Dundee – A City Vision 2006 Dundee Community Plan 2005-2010 Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2005 Dundee Core Path Plan 2008 Joint Health Improvement Plan 2005-2008 Directly linked to the **Single Outcome Agreement**	Strategy 2008-2011: http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/uploaded_publications/publication_957.pdf Action Plan: http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/uploaded_publications/publication_956.pdf
East Ayrshire Total Open Space: Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	Unknown (No links to the Audit or Strategy)	South West	Predominantly rural (nearly 70% of land devoted to agriculture) with some large towns (Kilmarnock and Cumnock) and villages	Medium – 19.5%	Mineral extraction, economic revitalisation, renewable energy development, flooding	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)	East Ayrshire LDP: Main Issues Report (Oct 2012) The MIR identifies the East Ayrshire Open Space Audit & Strategy as key components in identifying open space within the region and will incorporate the policies and recommendations contained within the Audit & Strategy into the PLDP	Unknown (No link to Audit or Strategy)
East Dunbartonshire Total Open Space: 1,082 ha Total Public Greenspace Sites: 205 East Dunbartonshire was one of the first authorities to develop an open space strategy	**Audit 2004 (complete) Adopted Greenspace Strategy & Action Plan 2005-2010** Currently in the process of developing the second iteration of the strategy (with greater partner involvement and community focus)	Central Belt	Over 75% of land is used for farming while the remainder contains many of Glasgow City's commuter towns and villages as well as the city's suburbs	Low – 3.1%	Housing	Lead bodies are the Greenspace Working Group and East Dunbartonshire Council (various departments)	Ironside Farrar Ltd	Community consultation was achieved by using a number of methods, targeting key stakeholders and user groups through Scottish Participatory Initiative facilitated community events the Citizens Panel questionnaire and a Primary School Questionnaire	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network	Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan 2000 Community Plan 2000 Local Plan 2005 LBAP 2004 Access Strategy 2002 Sustainable Development Strategy 2003 Local Housing Strategy Emerging Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network	Strategy & Action Plan

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
										Strategy	
East Lothian Total Open Space: 1,408 ha Total Open Sites: 209 *(Not including private gardens or sites under 0.4 ha)* Overall, the Council area enjoys a good supply of high quality parks and opens spaces. However, variations exist in supply/quality with the larger urban areas to the west of the region having more poor quality open spaces compared to the eastern settlements.	**Audit 2009 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Full PAN65 typology mapping; Quality audit: Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Draft Open Space Strategy 2012-2022** (January 2012)	Central Belt	East Lothian is bounded by the west by the City of Edinburgh, to the north by the estuary of the River Forth, to the east by the North Sea and to the south by the Lammermuir Hills. Over 77% of the area is given over to arable farming, woodlands and grassland with the remainder consisting of urban settlements.	Low – 2.5%	Flooding, housing, transport infrastructure	Open Space Steering Group will coordinate actions and the involvement of external organisations.	Consultants - Ironside Farrar Ltd	2009 Audit included consultation with local communities and stakeholder groups through six facilitated workshops. A further stage of consultation on the draft Strategy has been undertaken during the statutory consultation period.	Central Scotland Green Network Green Flag Awards	SESplan Proposed Plan East Lothian Local Plan 2008 East Lothian BAP Environment Strategy Heritage Strategy Economic & Regeneration Strategy Core Path Plan East Lothian Coastal Tourism Strategy Directly linked to the **Single Outcome Agreement**	Draft Strategy & Action Plan
East Renfrewshire Total Open Sites: Over 200 The distribution of types of greenspace for East Renfrewshire illustrates a high proportion of amenity greenspace for housing as is typically found across most settlements. However, woodland, semi natural and open/ semi natural spaces are the second largest categories of greenspace, which is a distinctive feature of East Renfrewshire in comparison with other settlements.	**Audit 2008 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Full PAN65 typology mapping; Qualitative audit: Bespoke method of assessing quality of open space)* **Audit Addendum 2009 (complete) Adopted Greenspace Strategy 2008-2012**	Central Belt	Predominantly high quality agricultural land (71% of land devoted to agriculture) characterised by several large towns	Low – 4.2%	Housing, renewable energy development	Lead body is Greenspace Steering Group comprising representatives of all the relevant service areas within East Renfrewshire Council. Other partners include SNH, FCS, Communities Scotland, Paths to Health and Scottish Enterprise.	Prepared for SNH and ERC by LUC Consultants	Community views were gathered through a questionnaire which was distributed to all community councils and tenants and residents associations. Consultation was also undertaken with relevant Council departments. SNH, FCS, Carts Greenspace, GCV Green Network were also consulted.	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Green Flag Awards	SPP11 – Physical Activity and Open Space Glasgow & Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006 East Renfrewshire Local Plan 2003 East Renfrewshire Replacement Local Plan 2006 East Renfrewshire Outdoor Access Strategy East Renfrewshire Regeneration Plan 2005 LBAP for East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde 2004 Informed **LDP Main Issues Report** and will also inform the proposed LDP	Audit 2008: http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1036&p=0 Audit Addendum 2009: http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1025&p=0 Adopted Greenspace Strategy: http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1035&p=0
EileanSiar Total Open Space: 13.14 ha Total Open Space Sites: 28 *(Not including crofting, farmland, Lews Castle Grounds or areas under 0.25 ha)* Significant levels of open space of which all are accessible with minor exceptions.	**Audit Feb 2010 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Full PAN65 typology mapping; Qualitative audit: Bespoke method of assessing quality of open space)* Progress of Strategy is unknown	North West Islands	Remote, rural settlements	Low – 0.0%	Inappropriate development, mineral extraction, coastal erosion and flooding	Unknown (Limited information provided in Audit)	Unknown (Limited information provided in Audit)	Unknown (Limited information provided in Audit)	Unknown (Limited information provided in Audit)	SPP11 – Physical Activity and Open Space Audit informed the **2012 Adopted LDP**	Audit
Falkirk Total Open Space: 9.6 ha/1000 people Overall, Falkirk open space sites scored well in relation to accessibility, health and well-being, cleanliness and maintenance, biodiversity and	**Audit 2006/07 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: FC commissioned consultants to map their open space typology and distribution using the National Greenspace mapping methodology.*	Central Belt	Situated in the heart of Central Scotland, Falkirk occupies a pivotal position between Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling in the valley of the River Forth. The area is characterised by a network of large towns and villages (mostly post-industrial settlements)	Medium – 10.2%	Housing, flooding, regeneration	Lead body is Falkirk Council (Development Services and Community Services) An Open Space Steering Group has also been in operation for the duration of the strategy preparation comprising Falkirk Council, SNH, Forth Valley GIS, Greenspace	FC appointed EDAW to undertake a qualitative assessment of open space. Forth Valley GIS carried out a quantitative audit on behalf of FC	EDAW was responsible for consultation activities which included workshops, exhibitions, questionnaires, and regular meeting with Steering Group Members	Green Flag Awards	SPP 11: Open Space and Physical Activity Falkirk Council Strategic Community Plan 2005-2010 **(OSS informed the Community Plan)** FC Structure Plan 2007 FC Local Plan **(OSS informed the LP)**	Strategy Modifications

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
conservation, and cultural heritage.	*Qualitative audit:Bespoke method of assessing quality of open space)* **Approved Open Space Strategy 2010-2015** (with modifications) **Supplementary Planning Guidance 2011**					Scotland, Central Scotland Forest Trust, Communities Scotland and NHS Forth Valley				Informed **2011 SPG on Open Space** (more up-to-date than OSS, refers to Falkirk's IHN and CSGN, likely that SPG will become statutory guidance as part of the new LDP) Links with other strategies including BAP, FWS, Housing, Health Improvement Plan, Regeneration Outcome Agreement	Supplementary Guidance
Fife Total Open Space Sites: 454 *(above 0.4 ha)* The main finding of the Audit was that 59% of the residents had access to quality greenspace. Results varied across Fife: Glenrothes had high ratings for quantity, quality and access; Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline have good networks but below average open space sites; clear link between social inequality areas (e.g. Methil, Sinclairtown, Templehall) and low quality of open space.	**Greenspace Audit July 2010 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: 112 settlements were mapped and PAN65 greenspace types were used to divide open spaces into categories. Qualitative audit: Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Adopted Greenspace Strategy 2011-2016**	Central Belt	Fife is a peninsula with a coastline of 170km bounded by the Firth of Forth to the south and the Firth of Tay to the north and is characterised by a number of towns and villages	Medium – 12.1%	Flooding, housing, regeneration	Responsible for the delivery of the Strategy is the Greenspace Task Group (of the Fife Environment Partnership) Lead bodies include Fife Council (Leisure & Cultural Services, Early Years Strategy Group), Fife Coast and Countryside Trust, and NHS Fife	Fife Council	Consultation was through the People's Panel survey (run by Fife Council, 3,000 on the panel). Questionnaires were completed by members of the panel, and people of varying ages from each settlement in Fife	Central Scotland Green Network Green Flag Awards	SESplan and Tayplan Fife Community Plan 2007 **Informed 3 LP's** (Adopted St Andrews and East Fife LP, Adopted Mid Fife LP, and Adopted Dunfermline and West Fife LP) **Informed Draft SPG on Green Infrastructure** Fife LBAP 2009-2011 Core Path Plan Fairer Fife Framework 2008 Fife Joint Health Improvement 2007-2010 Generations of Change – Cultural Strategy 2009	Greenspace Audit Greenspace Strategy
Glasgow City Total Open Space: 5,205 ha The distribution of space across the city consists of a range of larger natural open spaces towards the periphery with smaller more formal areas nearer the city centre. Natural/ semi natural open spaces and green corridors make up approximately 40% of the total open space resource, with public parks and gardens responsible for a further 20%. Sports areas within the city represent 15% of the total and golf course provisions are at 9%.	**Audit (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Used National Greenspace mapping; Qualitative audit: Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Consultative Draft Glasgow Open Space Strategy 2011** Progressing with Final Open Space Strategy	Central Belt	Situated astride the River Clyde in the west Central Lowlands, Glasgow is Scotland's largest city.	High – 43.1%	Economic and environmental regeneration, health & wellbeing, social exclusion	Lead bodies are Glasgow City Council (numerous departments) and Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGNP). It should be noted that the Strategy does not contain an action plan identifying specific partners/agencies responsible for delivering the Strategy. Although the document does refer to partnership working between GCC & GCVGNP with landowners, developers, and other public bodies.	Consultants URS and AECOM	The consultation period for the GOSS and its SEA took place from October-December 2011. The consultation process included a mixture of web based, postal, visual media and face to face presentations, briefings and workshops.	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network GCVGNP Green Flag Awards	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Structure Plan 2005 GCVGNP publications Adopted Glasgow City Plan 2009 Environment Strategy and Action Plan 2006-2010 Glasgow Cultural Strategy 2006 LBAP **Links with the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan: Main Issues Report (2010)**	Draft Strategy
Highland Total Open Space: Unknown	**Interim Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Developments 2009 Highland**	North West	Highland Council encompasses the north west of Scotland, some of the islands of the Inner Hebrides and a deeply indented fjord-like coastline. Less than 2.5% of the land is devoted to arable farming while more than 26%	Low – 5.5%	Economic growth	Not identified in Audit	Not identified in Audit	Not identified in Audit	Not identified in Audit	Audit will be used to identify allocated sites in the preparation of **Local Development Plans** Greenspace Audit 2010 supports the	Supplementary Guidance on Open Space

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
	Greenspace Audit 2010 (complete) *(Quantity Audit – Used full PAN65 typology mapping, Quality Audit – Two methods, one for larger settlements [Greenspace methodology] and smaller settlements [Council's own methodology])* Progress on the development of the Strategy is unknown		comprises heater moorland and peatland. One of the least populated regions in Europe.							implementation of the **SG on Open Space** and **the Interim SG on Green Networks**	Audit 2010
Inverclyde Total Open Space: Unknown Inverclyde Council were faced with resource limitations, particularly in terms of officer time, so in the short term the Council have set their strategic open space priorities through the Local Development Plan Main Issues Report. A more developed OSS will be developed at some stage.	**Open Space Audit 2008 (complete) Open Space Survey Methodology 2010** Information from the Audit and the Land Use Survey was combined to give a clearer picture of the provision of open space in Inverclyde) Progress of Strategy is unknown	Central Belt	Main towns (Greenock, Port Glasgow & Gourock) are on the coastal plain. Over half of the land is used for agriculture, most of which is grassland and peatland.	High – 39.1%	Economic and environmental regeneration, health & wellbeing, social exclusion	Lead bodies are Inverclyde Council and Inverclyde Green Network Steering Group. Members of the SG include Riverside Inverclyde, Communities Scotland, SNH, Clyde Muirshiel Regional park Authority, Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS, Scottish Enterprise, Lower Clyde Greenspace and the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership	Audit was prepared by Land Use Consultants	Audit 2008 - Four workshops involving stakeholders and community representatives were held on the themes Health, Biodiversity & Environment, Enterprise Development and Sustainable Communities. In the Pre Main Issues Report Engagement exercise, an opportunity was given to all interested parties to express their views relating to open space.	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership CSGN	SPP11: Open Space & Physical Activity Inverclyde Corporate Plan 2007-2011 Glasgow & Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006 Open Space Survey Methodology constituted a background report which **informed the LDP MIR 2011 and will inform the PLDP**	Open Space Survey Methodology
Loch Lomond &Trossachs NP Total Open Space:2,843 ha (including the administrative area of Stirling Council) Although Stirling Council are not the planning authority for this area, the Council still has open space and management responsibilities within the administrative area of the National Park.	**Audit 2009/2010 (complete)** *(Quantity Audit – Used full PAN65 typology mapping, Quality Audit – Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Open Space Consultation (Summer 2010) Draft Open Space Strategy 2012-17**	Central Belt	Loch Lomond &Trossachs National Park covers an area of over 1,865 km² in Stirling, West Dunbartonshire, Perth & Kinross and Argyll & Bute regions. The park contains Loch Lomond, 21 munros, 20 corbetts, two forest parks, and 57 designated special nature conservation sites.	-	Conservation of natural and cultural heritage	Lead body is the Open Space Steering Group - Stirling Council (various departments), Stirling Community Planning Partnership, BTCV, Scottish Wildlife Trust, SEPA, and NHS Forth Valley Partnership	Stirling Council	Two phases of public consultation: Initial web-based consultation and exhibition consultation – between Nov 2011 and Feb 2012 (28 events held). The Open Space Strategy was consulted upon in parallel with the draft Local Development Plan.	OSS will directly link with the Central Scotland Green Network and will provide a mechanism for the delivery of the national CSGN objectives at a local level Green Flag Awards	Loch Lomond and Trossachs Local Plan 2011 Will inform the emerging Loch Lomond and Trossachs Development Plan (MIR expected 2013)	Strategy
Midlothian Total Open Space: Unknown (No link to Audit or Draft Strategy)	**Audit 2009 (complete)** Open Space Strategy is in progress - Draft Midlothian Open Space Strategy and Action Plan presented at Planning Committee on 13/11/2012	Central Belt	Borders the south-east of Edinburgh City and contains many commuter towns and villages	Low – 3.6%	Renewable energy development	Unknown (No link to Audit or Draft Strategy)	Audit undertaken by Ironside Farrar Ltd	Unknown (No link to Audit or Draft Strategy)	Unknown (No link to Audit or Draft Strategy)	Unknown (No link to Audit or Draft Strategy)	Unknown (No link to Audit or Draft Strategy)
Moray Total Open Space: Unknown (No link to Audit)	**Open Space Audit 2008 (complete)** Progress of Strategy is unknown	North East	Moray stretches from the Cairngorm Mountains northwards to a coastal lowland plain, the Laigh of Moray, and is bisected by the River Spey which flows northwards to the North Sea	Low – 0.9%	Economic development, housing, renewable energy development	In 2008 a steering group was convened to take forward the OSS development process. No further details are provided whether this is still the case.	Unknown (No link to Audit)	Audit 208 - Public views were gathered using questionnaires	Unknown (No link to Audit)	Unknown (No link to Audit) Audit not referred to in the new LDP MIR November 2012	Unknown (No link to Audit)
North Ayrshire	**Open Space Audit**	South West	Located in the south west region	High- 25.1%	Regeneration,	Unknown (No link to Audit	In-house	Unknown (No link to	Central Scotland	Identified as a priority	Unknown (No link to

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
Total Open Space: 4,198 ha In comparison to national figures on open space, North Ayrshire has a higher percentage of green corridors and amenity spaces.	**(complete)** *(Quantity Audit – Used full PAN65 typology mapping, Quality Audit – Council land only [limited typologies] using Land Audit Management System [therefore only covered maintenance and condition)* Draft Open Space Strategy is currently under internal consultation.		of Scotland, and borders the areas of Inverclyde to the north, Renfrewshire to the north-east and East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire to the east and south respectively. Towns in the north (Largs, Fairlir, and West Kilbride) are affluent commuter towns, while some towns in the south experience levels of high unemployment.		economic development,	or Draft Open Strategy)	development of OS Strategy. Put on hold to accommodate work on Local Development Plan. The LDP is expected to be produced in early 2013.	Audit or Draft Open Strategy)	Green Network	linked to the LDP process. Following publication of the PLDP, Supplementary Guidance on Open Space Standards will be produced.	Audit or Draft Open Strategy) Information derived from:
North Lanarkshire Total Open Space: Unknown	**Open Space Strategy Workshop Report 2003 Open Space Strategy 2004** OSS 2004 makes a number of recommendations: An Open Space Audit should be undertaken to assess the provision of open space in North Lanarkshire. A standard Open Space typology is adopted by all agencies involved in the supply, management and use of open space.	Central Belt	Located to the east of Glasgow in central Scotland, North Lanarkshire extends southwards from the Kilsyth Hills to the River Clyde and contains much of Glasgow's suburbs and commuter towns and villages.	High – 21.5%	Regeneration, health & wellbeing, economic growth	Open Space Strategy Steering Group consisting of NLC (various departments), CSFT, Homes for Scotland, NHS Lanarkshire, SEL, SNH, and Strathclyde Police	Initial OSS Workshop Report produced by Kit Campbell and Associates OSS 2004 by North Lanarkshire Council	OSS recommends that all agencies involved in the management & maintenance of open space develop mechanisms for working with communities, sports teams and voluntary organisations	GCVGN CSGN Integrated Habitat Network GCVGN Partnership Green Flag Award	Directly links with Single Outcome Agreement	Strategy
Orkney Islands Total Open Space: Unknown	No progress reported on Orkney Islands Council's website for the Open Space Audit and Strategy	Northern Islands	Remote, rural settlements	Low – 0.0%	Coastal erosion, flooding, renewable energy development	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	According to the Development Plan Scheme, the OSS will be SG to the new LDP once complete	Unknown
Perth & Kinross Total Open Space: Unknown	PKC trialled an Open Space Audit in Crieff in 2005 No further details on whether an Audit has been undertaken Council wide	North East	Largely rural region accommodating several principal towns and villages. The area stretches from Loch Leven in the south to the Grampian mountains in the north, and from Loch Tay in the West to the Lomond Hills in the east	Low – 4.0%		Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	The LDP MIR 2010 states that it will incorporate the findings of the Open Space Audit into the local development plan. The LDP Proposed Plan (January 2012) states that it intends to publish supplementary guidance on the open space provision in Perth & Kinross	Unknown (No link to Audit/Strategy)
Renfrewshire Total Open Space: 3,967 ha	**Open Space Audit (complete)** Progress of Strategy is unknown	Central Belt	Borders the south-west of Glasgow, and contains many of Glasgow's commuter towns and villages	Medium – 19.2%	Economic and environmental regeneration, health & wellbeing	Lead bodies have not been identified in the audit although it is assumed that Renfrewshire Council as the planning authority, a major landowner and land manager, will have a crucial role to play in the delivery of the Strategy	Renfrewshire Council and external consultants.	Public views were gathered using surveys – 1,600 responses. Audit recommends that further detailed consultation be undertaken when particular projects or actions are worked up.	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network	SPP11 Open Space and Physical Activity Glasgow & Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006 Renfrewshire Local Plan Local Biodiversity Action Plan Access Strategy Core Path Plan Informed **LDP Main Issues Report 2011** and will also inform the proposed LDP	Audit

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
Scottish Borders Total Open Space: 948.57 ha The overall quality of most open spaces in the Scottish Borders is of high quality and high value due to excellent standards of maintenance.	**Audit and Consultation Report 2008 (complete)** *(Quantity Audit – Used full PAN65 typology mapping, Quality Audit – Assessed using the methodology in the Kit Campbell Report 'Rethinking Open Space')* **Green Space Strategy 2009 SPG on Green Space October 2009**	Southern	Extensive rural area characterised by a number of historic industrial towns (settlements only comprise 3% of the Borders area)	Low - 3.8%	Renewable energy development, economic growth, housing	Scottish Borders Council is the lead body in delivering the Strategy. Other key partners include: Forest Enterprise, Borders Sport and Leisure Trust, SNH, Sports Scotland, Community Councils, NHS Borders, Registered Social Landlords, and Sports Clubs.	Consultants were commissioned to audit over 500 sites.	The local community have been engaged through the following four methods: urban and rural stakeholder consultations; discussions with Scottish Borders Council staff; community councils and village hall committees; and resident on-line consultation.	None identified in Strategy. At present SB have no Green Flag parks.	Scottish Borders Development Plan 2005 SB Strategy for Physical Activity, Sport and Physical Education 2006-2011 New Ways Partnership New Ways Environmental Strategy Directly links to **Single Outcome Agreement** Green Space Strategy informed the development of the **SPG on Green Space** Informed **LDP Main Issues Report 2012** and will also inform the proposed LDP	Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance
Shetland Islands Total Open Space: Unknown	According to the Proposed Local Development Plan 2012, the Council have undertaken an Open Space Audit and Strategy (no link to audit or strategy). Details of the identified open spaces in the LDP will be included in the forthcoming Supplementary Guidance on Open Space.	North Eastern Islands	Remote, rural settlements (Shetland comprises over 100 islands of which 15 are inhabited)	Low – 0.0%	Economic growth, aging population	Unknown (no link to audit or strategy)	Unknown (no link to audit or strategy)	Unknown (no link to audit or strategy)	Unknown (no link to audit or strategy)	Unknown (no link to audit or strategy)	Unknown (no link to audit or strategy)
South Ayrshire Total Open Space: 4,748 ha *(Not including beaches/coastlines)*	**Audit 2011 (complete)** *(Quantity Audit – Database by Greenspace was initially used and following this the areas were then classified based upon PAN65 open space types; Quality Audit – Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Adopted Open Space Strategy 2012 (Sept 2012)**	South West	South Ayrshire rises eastwards from the Firth of Clyde into the western Southern Uplands. Its principal settlements – Ayr, Troon, Maybole, Givan, Prestwick and Ballantrae- lie in its coastal plain. Agriculture is a major economic activity in the uplands.	Medium – 12.9%	Housing, economic growth	Lead bodies have not been identified in the Strategy although it is assumed that South Ayrshire Council as the planning authority, a major landowner and land manager, will have a crucial role to play in the delivery of the Strategy	South Ayrshire Council	Draft Open Space Strategy was out for consultation for a six week period from 23rd Jan 20120 to 4th March 2012. Consultation with the public was through survey questionnaires (556 responses received).	Central Scotland Green Network	OSS will contribute to the aims and objectives of the Central Scotland Green Network, Ayrshire and Arran Forestry Woodland Strategy, South Ayrshire Street Tree Policy, draft Core Paths Plan, Leisure Facility Strategy and will also **inform the preparation of the proposed LDP**	Audit & Strategy
South Lanarkshire Total Greenspace: 2,225 ha	**Audit 2002 (complete)** *(Pilot exercise was designed and implemented within North Hamilton and Blantyre Social Inclusion Partnership area. This model was then used Council wide to identify open space provision)* **Greenspace Draft Strategy 2010-2013**	Southern	Borders the south-east of Glasgow City and contains many of Glasgow's suburbs, commuter towns and smaller villages	Medium – 13.1%	Economic and environmental regeneration, health & wellbeing	Lead body is South Lanarkshire Greenspace Partnership comprising SLC, SL Leisure Trust, SNH, FCS, SEPA, Central Scotland Forest Trust, Greenspace Scotland, GCS Green Network Partnership, SL Greenspace Partnership, SL Sustainability Partnership, Strathclyde Police, NHS Lanarkshire and other stakeholders	South Lanarkshire Council	Community consultation exercises included a questionnaire that was circulated to all participants on the Councils' "Citizen's Panel" supplemented by facilitated sessions with focus groups. The Community Planning Partnership formed the focus for the engagement and generation of partner buy-in to their strategic vision in the development of their strategy. As a	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network	National Planning Framework 2 (2009) SPP11 Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space (now replaced by SPP 2010) PAN65: Planning and Open Space Glasgow & Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006 South Lanarkshire Local Plan 2009 Joint Action for Health Improvement in South	Draft Strategy

Authority	Strategy publication date/stage	Geographic location	Settlement characteristics	Socio-economic[25]	Key local issues	Project governance	Execution	Engagement and involvement	Relationship with GN / GI projects	Relationship with planning and other policy documents[26]	Web link to strategy documents
								result, the OSS is directly embedded within the activities of the CPP.		Lanarkshire 2008 SLC Sustainability Strategy 2007 SL Community Plan 2002 Audit was used to identify priorities for greenspace in the **2009 SL Local Plan**	
Stirling Total Open Space:2,843 ha (including Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park)	**Audit 2009/2010 (complete)** *(Quantity Audit – Used full PAN65 typology mapping, Quality Audit – Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Open Space Consultation (Summer 2010) Draft Open Space Strategy 2012-17**	Central Belt	Situated in the Midland Valley of Central Scotland, Stirling is bounded to the south by a series of hills that include the Campsie Fells, Fintry Hills and Gargunnock Hills. To the north the area stretches beyond the Carse of Forth into Highland Perthshire. Over 20% of the land is woodlands or forest and 10.5 % is arable. The remainder, apart from 1.6% of urban or rural settlement is rough grazing, wetland or moorland.	Low – 6.4%	Housing, economic growth, renewable energy development, flooding	Lead body is Open Space Steering Group - Stirling Council (various departments), Stirling Community Planning Partnership, BTCV, Scottish Wildlife Trust, SEPA, and NHS Forth Valley Partnership	Stirling Council	Two phases of public consultation: Initial web-based consultation and exhibition consultation – between Nov 2011 and Feb 2012 (28 events held). The Open Space Strategy was consulted upon in parallel with the draft Local Development Plan.	OSS will directly link with the Central Scotland Green Network and will provide a mechanism for the delivery of the national CSGN objectives at a local level Green Flag Awards	OSS forms a key delivery mechanism for the **Stirling Single Outcome Agreement** Links with **Main Issues Report** Outcome of the OSS will inform the planning policy context for the **Stirling LDP** Links with **SG on Developer Contributions** and **SG on Green Infrastructure**	Strategy
West Dunbartonshire Total Open Space: 2,474 ha Open Space Sites:241 *(Not including spaces less than 0.2 ha)* In comparison to national figures on open space, West Dunbartonshire has a higher percentage of natural/semi-natural spaces and amenity greenspace.	**Audit August 2011 (complete)** *(Quantity Audit: Consultants carried out quantity audit – data brought into line with the PAN65 typology mapping; Quality Audit: Consultants carried out quality audit using their own methodology (data deemed to be problematic in its initial form)* **Adopted Open Space Strategy 2011-2021**	Central Belt	West Dunbartonshire is in central Scotland and lies to the northwest of Glasgow between Loch Lomond and the River Clyde and contains many of Glasgow City's commuter towns and villages as well as the city's suburbs	High – 26.3%	Economic and environmental regeneration, health & wellbeing, social exclusion	Lead body is West Dunbartonshire Strategic Greenspace Partnership. Partners include WDC, West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership, West Dunbartonshire Heritage Ltd., Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network, West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society, Dunbartonshire Biodiversity Partnership	Knight Kavanagh & Page and West Dunbartonshire Council	Consultation with over 50 stakeholders including key individuals, interest and community groups, WDC officers, and agencies	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Green Flag Awards	National Planning Framework 2 (2009) Scottish Planning Policy (2010) PAN 65: Planning and Open Space Glasgow & Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006 Glasgow and Clyde Valley SDP – Proposed Plan 2011 West Dunbartonshire Corporate Plan 2011/15 West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010 West Dunbartonshire Sports Strategy 2009 and Sports Pitch Strategy 2009 Draft Dunbartonshire LBAP **Identified as a priority to the LDP process**	Strategy: http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/1999212/os_strategy_august_2011-_amendments_december_2011.pdf
West Lothian Open Space Sites: 750 *(Not including spaces less than 0.2 ha)* Overall, West Lothian has a good hierarchy of open space (with limited gaps) that is broadly capable of meeting community needs, in terms of the quantity and accessibility of open space.	**Audit 2004 (complete)** *(Quantity audit: Full PAN65 typology mapping; Quality audit: Assessed using guidance from Greenspace Scotland)* **Adopted Open Space Strategy 2005-2015 Draft Interim Report 2010**	Central Belt	Situated to the west of Edinburgh with a short coastline on the Firth of Forth, West Lothian is centred on the settlements of Bathgate, Armadale, Whitburn, Mid Calder and Livingston.	Low – 8.1%	Housing	Lead body is the Open Space Strategy Group comprising of West Lothian Council (various departments), SNH, Paths for All Partnership, Health Education Board for Scotland, Greenspace Scotland, SportScotland, Central Scotland Forest Trust, and NET's & Land Services.	Ironside Farrar prepared the Open Space Strategy in close consultation with the Client Steering Group	West Lothian Open Space Workshop – June 2004 – consultation with WLC officers, and stakeholder groups WLC NET's Land Services were involved in local consultation with Community Councils and community groups Community consultation was limited. WLC will link further consultation with consultation process for Local Plan	Central Scotland Green Network	Re-thinking Open Space 2001 Minimum Standards for Open Space 2005 CABEspace guidance documents WL Local Plan 2009 WL Sports Pitch Strategy 2005 WL Access Strategy 2000 WL LBAP 2000 WL Health Enhancing Physical Activity 2004 **Identified as a priority to the LDP process**	Strategy: http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799514/1842967/1878896 Interim Report: http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799514/1883813/2224364

Open Space Audit/Strategy Questionnaire

Scottish Natural Heritage has commissioned LUC to conduct a piece of research entitled "Review and development of open space audit and strategy guidance and best practice".

The aim of this research is to identify good practice in open space audit and strategy development from Scottish planning authorities and identify further guidance and support needs. The questionnaire will focus on capturing progress made; the approaches taken; barriers & challenges encountered; and any learning outcomes in relation to the development of open space audits and strategies.

As one of the sample 10 local authorities chosen to help us with this research we invite you to complete the following questionnaire.

Participant information

Name	Click here to enter text.
Organisation and Role	Click here to enter text.
Address	Click here to enter text.
City/Town	Click here to enter text.
Post Code	Click here to enter text.
Email address	Click here to enter text.
Phone number	Click here to enter text.

Which of the following privacy options would you prefer?   Choose an item.

Your area

What are the main issues affecting your area? Choose an item.
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

What is the total open space provision (in hectares) within your local authority area?
Click here to enter text.

Overview of strategy progress

What stage of the process are you currently at?

Choose an item.

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

If you have not begun preparing the audit, are there any specific reasons why?

Choose an item.

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

As your authority has not yet begun work on open space planning, you are in a unique position to help us. It would be very useful to understand the level and form of guidance would be most appropriate to help you through the process - and also for SNH to better understand the barriers facing local authorities. If you would be willing to help us further, please indicate below and we will be in touch.

Yes   ☐

No   ☐

When did you begin preparing the open space audit? Click here to enter a date.

When did you complete the audit? Click here to enter a date.

When is/was the consultation period for the draft strategy?

Start of consultation   Click here to enter a date.

End of consultation   Click here to enter a date.

What is the time frame the strategy will cover? Click here to enter text.

When did you adopt the open space strategy? Click here to enter a date.

When did you begin the second iteration of the strategy? Click here to enter a date.

What time frame will the second iteration of the strategy cover? Click here to enter text.

Project governance

Which departments within the Council were/are involved in producing the audit/strategy?

Planning	☐
Parks & greenspace	☐
Property	☐
Housing	☐
Highways & transport	☐
Economic development	☐
Regeneration	☐
Environmental protection	☐
Access & inclusion	☐
Education	☐
Play	☐
Sustainability	☐
Other	☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Which department has/will have the lead responsibility for developing the audit and strategy?
Choose an item.
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Has/will a partnership or steering group been/be formed?

Yes	☐
No	☐

If so, please give the name of the partnership or steering group and list who are/will be members and their role and organisation.
Click here to enter text.

Audit – Quantitative Assessment

When undertaking the audit did/will you employ the use of:
Consultants ☐
Community groups ☐
Other individuals, e.g. students ☐
Local authority planning officers ☐
Local authority parks and greenspace officers ☐
Other ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

What approach did/will you use to undertake the quantitative assessment?
PAN 65 ☐
Greenspace Quality – A guide to assessment, planning & strategic development ☐
Open Space Strategies Best Practice Guidance ☐
Greenspace Mapping & Characterisation ☐
Planning Policy Guidance 17 (classification of typology is different to PAN 65) ☐
Other ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

When identifying different types of open spaces did/will you use:
PAN 65 typology of open spaces ☐
Bespoke classification of open spaces ☐
Semi-bespoke classification combining existing criteria and scoring guidance alongside locally developed criteria and methodologies ☐
Other ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Why did you use a bespoke method of assessment? What types of open space did you include?
Click here to enter text.

What type of open space did/will you exclude form the quantitative assessment?
Private grounds and gardens ☐
Civic space ☐
School grounds ☐
Hospital grounds ☐
Beaches ☐
Open space not maintained by Local Authority ☐
Other ☐
If other, please state. *Click here to enter text.*

Did/will you:
Assess all sizes of open space ☐
Apply a threshold to the size of open space assessed ☐
Identify a 'representative sample' of open space in a small number of areas ☐
Other ☐
If other, please state. *Click here to enter text.*

What are the main types of open space in your area which have been identified in the audit?
Public parks and gardens ☐
Private gardens or grounds ☐
Amenity greenspace ☐
Play space for children and teenagers ☐
Sports areas (e.g. playing pitches, golf courses, etc.) ☐
Green corridors (e.g. green access routes, riparian routes) ☐
Natural/semi-natural greenspace (e.g. woodland, open semi-natural space, etc.) ☐
Allotments and community growing spaces ☐
Burial grounds ☐
Other functional greenspaces (e.g. caravan parks, etc.) ☐
Civic space ☐
Other ☐
If other, please state. *Click here to enter text.*

Was this approach successful? Choose an item.
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Did you encounter any problems/barriers with using this approach?   Choose an item.

What were the problems/barriers you encountered?
      Time and resource intensive   ☐
      Difficult to apply PAN 65 typology in rural areas and smaller settlements   ☐
      Only open space sites that are in the ownership of the local authority were audited leading to gaps in the data   ☐
      Beaches, which provide a valuable open space resource, are not identified in PAN 65 typology   ☐
      Lack of local knowledge of the primary function of open space sites   ☐
      Setting a size threshold eliminates smaller open space sites which may be of local importance   ☐
      Other   ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

How could this be improved?
     Apply flexibility to setting size thresholds for auditing to reflect local context   ☐
     Audit all open space typologies   ☐
     Ground truthing of data by individuals with local knowledge   ☐
     Other   ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Has the audit provided any new insights/understanding in relation to the amount, type or location of open space that you were previously unaware of? Has it identified any deficiency of particular types of open space? Please explain.
Click here to enter text.

What worked well/ what would you do differently?
Click here to enter text.

Audit – Qualitative Assessment

Who undertook the actual qualitative assessment?
  Consultants   ☐
  Community groups   ☐
  Other individuals, e.g. students   ☐
  Local authority planning officers   ☐
  Local authority parks and greenspace officers ☐
  Other   ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

What approach did/will you use to assess the qualitative value of open space sites?
  Greenspace Quality – A guide to assessment, planning & strategic development ☐
  Open Space Strategies Best Practice Guidance ☐
  Green Flag Award ☐
  Land Audit Management System (LAMS) ☐
  In-house approach ☐
  Consultant-generated approach ☐
  Other ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Was this approach successful? Choose an item.
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Did you encounter any problems/barriers with using this approach? Choose an item.

What were the barriers/problems you encountered?
      Time and resource intensive ☐
      Scores reliant on the subjectivity of the assessor ☐
      Different assessors interpreted the assessment methodology differently ☐
      Lack of local knowledge ☐
      Difficulty in adapting/tailoring the guidance methodology to provide a locally relevant approach to the assessment ☐
      Assessment of sites resulted in unwieldy results ☐
      Assessment methodology form guidance was not tailored to suit local priorities and open space provision ☐
      Assessment resulted in skewed results as the core/primary function of open space sites was not taken into account ☐
      Other ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

How could this approach be improved?
      Selecting an assessment methodology that is tailored to suit local priorities and provision of open space ☐
      More upfront consultation with local communities to help identify core/primary site functions in advance of auditing ☐
      Assessment scores should be weighted in favour of their core/primary functions for each space ☐
      Assessors should be trained to reduce the risk of differing interpretations of the assessment methodology being applied ☐
      Train students/community groups to assess the open space provision rather that local authority staff ☐
      Other ☐
If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Who was involved in deciding/developing the methodology?
Click here to enter text.

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How have you recorded and interpreted the data?
Click here to enter text.

Did you gather data in relation to community aspiration/need as part of the quality assessment process?

Consulted the community pre qualitative assessment ☐
Consulted the community post qualitative assessment ☐
Did not consult the community at this stage ☐
Other ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

What benefits (if any) did you experience having consulted with the community pre/post qualitative assessment? Click here to enter text.

Has the assessment provided any new insights/understanding in relation to the quality of the open space that you were previously unaware of?

Click here to enter text.

Were you satisfied with the assessment process and methodology?

Yes ☐
Somewhat ☐
No ☐

Was this approach easy to implement?

Yes ☐
Somewhat ☐
No ☐

What worked well/ what would you do differently?

Click here to enter text.

Open Space Strategy Development

How/was the open space strategy development coordinated? Who was/is involved?

Click here to enter text.

How were/are wider strategic and delivery partners involved?

Click here to enter text.

How did you develop your aims/core vision?

Click here to enter text.

How has/will the audit data informed/inform the priorities, aims and outcomes of the strategy?

Click here to enter text.

How have other stakeholders informed the priorities, aims and outcomes of the strategy?

Click here to enter text.

Open Space Strategy Development - Consultation

Who did you consult with when producing the open space audit and/or strategy?
Click here to enter text.

What methods did you use to get this information?

Consultative events ☐
Consultative workshops ☐
Focus groups ☐
Questionnaires ☐
Other ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

At what stages of the process did you consult? Click here to enter text.

Did you consult on the open space strategy…

As part of the Main Issues Report for the Local Development Plan ☐
As part of another plan/strategy ☐
On its own ☐
Other ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Did you consult with any adjacent authorities to establish what work they may have done in preparing an Open Space Strategy and any cross boundary issues?

Click here to enter text.

Open Space Strategy Development - Standards

How are you developing standards for existing and new open space?

Click here to enter text.

Have you developed your own local standards or used an existing approach/methodology?

Click here to enter text.

How do they relate to the needs /gaps/information identified by the open space audit?

Click here to enter text.

Is more support required to assist in the development of local open space standards?
Click here to enter text.

Open Space Strategy Development – Relationship with other plans/strategies

What was used (will be used) as an evidence base for producing the Open Space Strategy?

Audits/surveys/monitoring of previously adopted strategies e.g. green/open space strategy, housing land audit, etc. ☐
Local development plan evidence base and consultations ☐
Usage surveys of local parks/play fields ☐
Other ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

The Strategy is **informed by**:

Supplementary planning guidance ☐
Sustainable community strategy ☐
Core paths plan ☐
Existing parks and greenspace strategy ☐
Sports strategy ☐
Allotments strategy ☐
Play strategy ☐
Tree strategy ☐
Cultural strategy ☐
Climate change strategy ☐
Biodiversity strategy ☐
Health strategy ☐
Regeneration strategy ☐
Education strategy ☐
Other ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

The Strategy **links to**:

       Single Outcome Agreement   ☐
       Main Issues Report   ☐
       Local Development Plan   ☐
       Supplementary Guidance   ☐
       Local Plan   ☐
       Supplementary planning guidance   ☐
       Sustainable community strategy   ☐
       Core paths plan   ☐
       Existing parks and greenspace strategy ☐
       Sports strategy   ☐
       Allotments strategy   ☐
       Play strategy   ☐
       Tree strategy   ☐
       Cultural strategy   ☐
       Climate change strategy   ☐
       Biodiversity strategy   ☐
       Health strategy   ☐
       Regeneration strategy   ☐
       Education strategy   ☐
       Other   ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

The Strategy **informs**:

       Main Issues Report   ☐
       Local Development Plan   ☐
       Supplementary Guidance   ☐
       Sustainable community strategy   ☐
       Core paths plan   ☐
       Sports strategy   ☐
       Allotments strategy   ☐
       Play strategy   ☐
       Tree strategy   ☐
       Cultural strategy   ☐
       Climate change strategy   ☐
       Biodiversity strategy   ☐
       Health strategy   ☐
       Regeneration strategy   ☐
       Education strategy   ☐
       Other   ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Please explain how wider strategy links/priorities have been established/incorporated into the Strategy.

Click here to enter text.

Does the strategy link with green networks or green infrastructure priorities/strategies?

          CSGN   ☐
          Green Belt   ☐
          Flood management plans   ☐
          Integrated habitat network models   ☐
          River basin management plans   ☐
          Other   ☐

If other, please state. Click here to enter text.

Please explain how it relates to the green network/ green infrastructure projects.

Click here to enter text.

Were you satisfied with the strategy development process?

          Yes   ☐
          No   ☐

What worked well/ what would you do differently?

Click here to enter text.

Open Space Strategy Implementation

Have you prepared
A single action plan ☐
Several settlement/neighbourhood action plans ☐

Why did you choose this method?
Click here to enter text.

Who was/is involved? (How were/are wider strategic and delivery partners involved?)
Click here to enter text.

How will implementation of the action plan be coordinated?
Click here to enter text.

Open Space Strategy Monitoring and Reviewing

How often is the action plan reviewed? Click here to enter text.

What monitoring and evaluation arrangements are in place? Have you completed any consultations or surveys with local people to gauge the level of use or user satisfaction with the open space strategy/ specified projects in the action plan?
Click here to enter text.

Learning Outcomes

Has the strategy led to any specific improvements or successes? e.g. green flag awards
Click here to enter text.

Are there any areas of your audit (either quantitative or qualitative assessments) or strategy development process that could be communicated to others within good practice guidance?

Click here to enter text.

In retrospect would you employ a different approach to governing the project? e.g. adopting a more collaborative approach.

Click here to enter text.

Thank you very much for your time

If you would like to be kept informed of progress on this project, or would be keen to participate in forthcoming events, please respond accordingly below.

Keep me informed by email ☐

Would be willing to participate in more detailed interviews ☐

Would be willing to attend a workshop session ☐

APPENDIX 4: WAYFINDER GUIDE

The ' "Wayfinder Guide" to the preparation of Open Space Audits and Strategies' is available on the SNH website on the 'Open space audits and strategies e-resource' page:

http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/greenspace-and-outdoor-access/open-space-audits-and-strategies/eresource/.

www.snh.gov.uk

recycle

Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad