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Planning Design Economics

RESEARCH ON PUBLIC OPEN

SPACE AUDITS

On behalf of the Welsh Assembly
Government

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2.0 GLOSSARY

Abbreviations

CABE	Commission for Architecture of the Built Environment
CIC	Community Interest Company
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
CoSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
DCfW	Design Commission for Wales
FIT	Fields in Trust (previously NPFA)
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GSA	Group Settlement Area
LAP	Local Area for Play,
LEAP	Local Equipped Area for Play.
LDP	Local Development Plan
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MUGAs	Multi-Use Games Areas
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
NPFA	National Playing Fields Association (now FIT)
NLP	Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPA	National Park Authority
POS	Public Open Space
POSA	Public Open Space Assessment
PPW	Planning Policy Wales
SCC	Scottish Sports Council
SCW	Sports Council for Wales
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TAN	Technical Advice Note
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association

3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Loss of playing fields

- There is no comprehensive up-to-date database of public open space either held centrally or that can be aggregated from existing Local Authority studies. As a result it is not possible to assess the rate of change in provision of Public Open Space across Wales.
- There is no evidence available in relation to the loss of smaller playing fields. It has not been raised as an issue of particular concern by local authorities although the value of lowering the threshold for consultation was noted. Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners consider that lowering the threshold would provide an effective break on the loss of such playing fields where this is a problem.
- Analysis of Sports Council for Wales consultation records suggests that national and local development plans are being effective in preventing the loss of valued playing fields.

Interview & Questionnaire findings

- Local Planning Authorities expressed a number of problems associated with a severe lack of resources in terms of: a) people to undertake the assessment, b) in-house skills and c) technological resources. These issues were compounded for rural Local Planning Authorities.
- Interviews with Local Planning Authorities revealed some uncertainty over the requirement to consult with the Sports Council for Wales. Hence there is a need to clarify this requirement for authorities. Nevertheless a review of the Sports Council for Wales database revealed that there have been 100 applications for development affecting playing fields in the last five years. Of these 9 were granted in the face of an SCW objection. However in the majority of these cases alternative provision for was made to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.
- Open space typologies listed in Technical Advice Note 16 are generally considered to be adequate although greater clarification is required in terms of qualifying '*countryside areas*'.
- Problems were identified with the provision of new open space in local authorities where new development was small scale and on-site provision of playing fields

was unrealistic. Section 106 agreements are key mechanisms by which new public open space can be provided or improved. Locally determined public open space thresholds should be incorporated into development plan policies in order to ensure adequate new provision or improvements are provided where necessary.

LPA Open Space Assessment Methodologies

- The methodologies employed by Local Planning Authorities were understood to focus on three broad typologies – formal recreational open space, informal recreational open space and natural greenspace.
- Qualitative issues were generally not assessed in any detail. Qualitative issues are of critical importance as quantitative shortages can often be addressed through improvements in qualitative provision. This is particularly the case in relation to playing pitches e.g. where better drainage can lead to increased hours of use.
- Recording multi-functional spaces was a recurrent problem for Local Planning Authorities. A number of different methods of dealing with this issue were highlighted. Useful good practice is already available in relation to PPG17 in England and also produced by Commission for Architecture of the Built Environment: Space amongst others. This could be supplemented by further advice on recording multi function areas.
- Indoor recreational and sport facilities were not included in any Public Open Space Assessment and were not planned to be included.
- The ‘National Playing Field Association’ standard was a central tool utilised by most Local Planning Authorities. In the past it has provided a clear benchmark against which existing recreational provision could be assessed. Some questions were asked about its appropriateness in the current age as different forms of recreation become more popular and in the light of demographic change. National Playing Field Association (now Fields In Trust) are in the process of reviewing this standard.
- The Countryside Council for Wales toolkit is also being rolled out. The methodology employed means that it has potential for the basis of comprehensive public open space assessments across all typologies. The emerging Natural Greenspace Assessments should be reviewed in detail to consider the extent to

which they can form the basis for a common all Wales Public Open Space assessment methodology.

- Whilst the use of Public Open Space standards (e.g. National Playing Field Association) are generally supported in terms of providing a clear basis for assessing existing provision and development plan policy they will not necessarily reflect local circumstances. There are particular difficulties in applying existing national standards in rural areas.

Good Practice & Recommendations

- It is suggested that a more creative approach to the assessment and provision of children's' play requirements needs to be considered beyond traditional Local Areas for Play, Local Equipped Areas for Play and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play. This may go beyond land use planning issues including the potential for ranger programmes and greater use of natural and semi natural facilities.
- Additional guidance should be provided on establishing local derived standards of recreation and open space provision. These standards should take account of qualitative aspects of provision particularly in relation to issues such as children's' play.
- Local knowledge and good inter-departmental relations were found to be a clear asset in undertaking Public Open Space audits.
- The requirement for Public Open Space assessments to inform Local Development Plans would provide the basis for monitoring the changing pattern of open space provision across Wales. This will improve the information base for Local Development Plan policy formulation and consideration of individual planning applications. It could potentially also result in the production of a national database if appropriate.
- Open Space Assessments will only be of real value if they can be measured against meaningful locally derived assessments of need. Once this has been done the opportunity exists to produce corporate Open Space. These should be corporate cross-cutting documents that address wider issues for instance, such as health, biodiversity, amenity, recreation and flood risk. Local Development Plans provide the vehicle for implementing the land use elements of these Open Space Strategies.

- The production of corporate Open Space Strategies will bring additional community and sustainability benefits beyond the land use based open space assessments.

4.0 INTRODUCTION

4.1 Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) have been appointed by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to undertake research into Public Open Space Assessments (POSAs), specifically the audit process and to clarify current methods of monitoring open space across Wales.

Terms of Reference

4.2 The WAG's Specification (Annex 2) set out the initial research objectives for this study. These required the research to:

- Classify types of open space, including playing fields over 0.2 hectares, based on the contents of the revised Technical Advice Note (TAN) 16, for the purpose of measuring such provision.
- Consider how Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should measure these open spaces in preparing an Open Space Assessment.
- Research the current provision of these class types in Welsh LPAs.
- Use five sample LPAs to establish whether the overall provision of open space, on a 5-year comparison, is increasing or decreasing.
- Provide useful, practical information for LPAs on how to undertake Open Space Assessments.
- Establish a baseline of data which LPAs and Sports Council for Wales (SCW) can use.
- Produce statistical information which can be used to inform future consideration of policies affecting open space provision.

4.3 In the early stages of the research, it became clear that a number of the study objectives would be only partially attainable due to the lack of up-to-date studies and the wide variation in the type and quality of records available from LPAs. As a result, and with agreement from WAG, the study has placed a greater emphasis on the review of Public Open Space Audit methodologies and the extent to which lessons can be learnt which will benefit future studies. It is intended that this will provide a more consistent base for future Public Open Space Assessments and that it will thereby contribute to more comprehensive and up-to-date studies across Wales.

Report Structure

4.4 This research report is organised into the following parts:

- Section 5 outlines the research methodology;
- Section 6 examines the planning and wider policy context which surrounds POSAs and the Development Plan approach assumed by Welsh LPAs;

- Section 7 includes the review of existing research and outlined good practice case studies from around the United Kingdom (UK);
- Section 8 details the viewpoints of specific stakeholders involved in this research;
- Section 9 presents a summary of the questionnaire results and findings
- Section 10 includes more specific statistics from the SCW relating to circumstances of public open space loss;
- Section 11 outlines the broad methodologies employed by LPAs and includes a number of case study examples and recommendations based on these findings;
- Section 12 discusses the various LPA viewpoints concerning the draft TAN16 open space typologies as well encountered issues such as multi-functionality and indoor spaces.
- Section 13 reviews issues surrounding planning obligations.
- Section 14 discusses the links between this study, Open Space Strategies, monitoring practises and Local Development Plan Policy
- Section 15 provides useful, practical information for LPAs and provides some concluding comments and recommendations, identifying any avenues for further research.

5.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires LPAs to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area. Accordingly the overarching objective which guides this research is to strengthen planning advice to help Welsh LPAs in fulfilling this requirement in respect of public open space and recreational areas. The research will lead to the provision of useable and pragmatic guidelines for best practice in how to review the supply of public open space, both quantitatively and qualitatively for Welsh LPAs.

5.2 The research methodology was organised into four stages.

- Stage 1: Literature Review
- Stage 2: Interviews with Open Space Stakeholders
- Stage 3: Interviews with pilot LPAs
- Stage 4: LPA Questionnaire

Stage 1: Literature Review

5.3 This initial stage sought to consider the policy context which guides the practice of undertaking a POSA, specifically the audit stage. The review summarised the existing planning policy context in Wales relating to open space and considered the subsequent approach adopted by Welsh Development Plans. This consideration of the planning policy context was supplemented by a review of the wider ranging National Policy Initiatives associated with inter-related themes of physical exercise and children's play as well as the wider governmental strategic priorities for Wales. This review, served to highlight the policy background within which future POSAs should be prepared.

5.4 Open space assessments have been a feature of the planning system in England and Scotland for a number of years. As a result we drew up a review of existing guidance as well as experience of practical implementation in England and Scotland. This involved an examination of 'Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' (PPG17, July 2002) and 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17' (September 2002). A review of best practice in Scotland was also undertaken, this included a review of 'National Planning Policy Guideline 11: Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space' (NPPG11, June 1996) and the Scottish Executive's 'Rethinking Open Space – Open Space Provision

and Management: A Way Forward' (2002). A review of other related guidance and advice was also undertaken as part of this stage of the project.

Stage 2: Stakeholder Interviews

5.5 Consideration of stakeholder views with knowledge and experience in this area was sought to supplement the views of national government and local authority personnel. A number of stakeholders involved in the promotion of public open space in Wales were identified. These included:

- Play Wales
- Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
- Sports Council for Wales (SCW)
- National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) now known as Fields in Trust (FIT)¹

5.6 Face-to-face interviews were helpful in understanding the practical experience of key stakeholders in relation to assessing the existing supply of public open space and also in obtaining any suggestions or advice these organisations might have to help LPAs in undertaking POSAs. In addition, the interviews identified the data each organisation had recorded on open space in Wales to supplement the research.

5.7 Data captured by the SCW and NPFA relating to planning applications involving a loss or threat to an existing playing field and/or open space were analysed. CCW also provided additional information on which LPAs had undertaken an Accessible Natural Greenspace Assessment and strategic data mapping different natural open spaces on an all-Wales level.

Stage 3: Pilot Local Authority Interviews

5.8 Following a telephone survey undertaken to establish each authority's progress in undertaking a POSA, five pilot LPAs were identified for in-depth study. These pilot authorities provide a good representation of the LPAs throughout Wales i.e. in terms of their nature – urban or rural and geographical location and the subsequent challenges which these authorities face in undertaking POSAs.

5.9 The pilot authorities that were selected for more in-depth analysis were:

- Caerphilly County Borough Council

¹ To avoid confusion and for the purposes of this report, FIT will be referred to as the NPFA from this point onwards.

- Cardiff Council
- Conwy County Borough Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Pembrokeshire County Council

5.10 A standard interview schedule was used to guide all face-to-face interviews, as follows:

Figure 5.1: Example Interview Schedule

- Confirmation of the auditing methods employed, including:
 - the types and size of open spaces recorded
 - the methods employed for recording data (both quantitative and qualitative)
 - which departments undertook the study and when
 - the current practices of monitoring open spaces
- Any identified problems, areas of improvement or good practice methods used
- Opinions, encountered problems, thoughts and ideas for improvement
- The following material was also requested from the LPA:
 - A copy of all Public Open Space Assessments produced.
 - A record of how much open space is currently present in each LPA (by typology) and records of which might give an indication of how this has changed in the last 5 years.
 - A record of how many planning applications the Sports Council for Wales have been consulted on, coupled with their application reference numbers.
 - A record of how much open space (by typology) has been lost over the last 5 years.
 - A record of the current and past losses to date of open space in the authority.

Stage 4: Local Planning Authority Questionnaire

5.11 The questionnaire was sent to all LPAs in Wales (see Appendix 1) not involved in the pilot study. All 17 LPAs and 3 National Park Authorities (NPAs) that were consulted responded to the questionnaire, although some authorities provided incomplete responses. The quality of responses tended to reflect the level of information held by the authority and the amount of open space monitoring that had been undertaken.

5.12 The results from the questionnaire were used to establish the following:

- The current POSA methods and open space monitoring methods employed by Welsh LPAs
- LPA opinions on the typology included in the draft TAN16
- The progress of POSA throughout Wales
- Consultation with SCW and views on increasing this consultation remit

5.13 As well as seeking factual information, the questionnaire was structured to include open-ended questions to allow LPAs to offer general comments, identify problems or possible ideas to improve the Open Space Assessment process.

6.0 POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 This section outlines the Welsh policy context in relation to open space provision and the subsequent Development Plan approaches in respect of open space as set out by Welsh LPAs. It reviews the shift in philosophy away from a quantitative, often 'NPFA dominated' approach towards a more comprehensive, qualitative assessment of open space typologies.

Existing planning policy context in Wales

6.2 The existing planning policy context in Wales comprises:

- Planning Policy Wales (PPW, March 2002);
- Adopted TAN (Wales) 16: Sport and Recreation (March 1998); and
- Draft TAN (Wales) 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (July 2006).

6.3 PPW sets out the Assembly Government's land use planning policies. It charges the planning system with ensuring adequate provision of land (and water) resources for the purposes of formal and informal sport and recreation; taking account of the need for recreational space and current levels of provision it requires that such spaces should be attractive, accessible, safe and well maintained. Paragraph 11.1.9 of PPW seeks to ensure that adequate land and water resources are allocated for formal and informal sport, taking account of the need for recreational space, current levels of provision and deficiencies, and the scale and nature of any impact of formal and informal sport and recreation activities upon the local context .

6.4 Against this broad national plan, the adopted TAN16 deals specifically with sport and recreation. The adopted TAN16 does not prescribe national standards for recreational provision and views the process of standard-making as a LPA duty, having regard to local circumstances. The adopted TAN16 makes no reference or requirement to carry out POSAs and calls for locally generated standards; however the document clearly identifies the NPFA 'Six Acre Standard' document as a basis for standard-making. By definition, this promotes an approach which examines certain types of open space – Outdoor Sport and Children's Playing Space (typologies defined by this study as formal recreational space). In addition, although the NPFA 'Six Acre Standard' (latest version 2001) promotes an approach which examines factors besides the space requirements of the standard such as quality, distribution, location and accessibility, many LPAs only made use of the space requirement standard which subsequently resulted in a focus on quantitative assessments.

- 6.5 The new draft TAN16 represents a move away from the approach assumed by the adopted TAN16 and seeks to bring the guidance up-to-date and in line with policy outlined in PPW.
- 6.6 The draft document encourages planning authorities to undertake a POSA, stating that thorough POSAs are an integral way in which the objectives set out in PPW can be achieved. Nevertheless NPFA's 'Six Acre Standard' is still recognised as a helpful addition for formulating standards of provision. The draft TAN16 essentially represents a shift in philosophy away from NPFA standard approaches towards a more evidence-based local, qualitative and quantitative assessment of provision and need.
- 6.7 Preliminary research found that, rather than creating their own standards, a large majority of Welsh LPAs rely on the national standard promoted by the NPFA. Figure 6.1 below provides an examination of the various LPA documents which we understand to be currently used for development control purposes in Wales. Although this is not an exhaustive examination most documents used the NPFA as a basis for standards of new open space provision and a number of Welsh LPAs referred to the NPFA standard in the actual wording of their open space policy. In other cases, authorities were a little less dependent on this standard and generated their own standards using evidence obtained from Open Space Surveys. A total of 23 out of 25 LPAs and NPAs in Wales included a policy which sought to protect open space or particular typologies of open space against development within the documents surveyed.
- 6.8 This approach clearly reflects the guidance as it stands at present. If the new draft TAN16 comes forward it will require a significant change in approach with the emphasis on LPA's defining more locally relevant standards in relation to quantitative and qualitative provision. These standards should be informed by POSAs and should relate to wider corporate Open Space Strategies.

Figure 6.1: Review of documents being used for development control purposes (adopted and emerging development plan documents) for each of all 25 Welsh LPAs and NPAs²⁾

LPA DEVELOPMENT PLAN	OPEN SPACE POLICY TYPOLOGIES				
	PROTECTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE ³	CRITERIA BASED POLICY FOR NEW PROVISION ⁴	SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS ⁵	STANDARDS FOR NEW OPEN SPACE PROVISION ⁶	OTHER SPECIFIC POLICIES ⁷
Blaenau Gwent Blaenau Gwent Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (Adopted 6 th July 2006)	✓	✓	✓		✓
Bridgend Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (Adopted 12 th May 2005)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Caerphilly Council Approved Unitary Development Plan' (April 2003) (approved in its present form for all planning purposes, but further preparation work has stopped)	✓		✓	✓	✓

² This is not an exhaustive review and does not include *all* adopted development plan documents, simply those which we understand to be currently used for development control purposes.

³ *Protection of public open space* – these policies sought the protection of specific types of public open space against development.

⁴ *Criteria-based policy for new provision* – these policies required new open spaces or extensions to existing open spaces to accord with certain criteria. Criteria included e.g. accessibility, appropriate scale etc.

⁵ *Site specific allocations* – these policies related to specific areas of existing public open space or sought to allocate new areas of public open space.

⁶ *Standards for new open space provision* – these policies included details relating to the area and type of open space required in development such as housing.

⁷ *Other specific policies* – these policies related to themes such as golf, equestrian facilities and canals.

LPA DEVOLPMENT PLAN	OPEN SPACE POLICY TYPOLOGIES				
	PROTECTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE ³	CRITERIA BASED POLICY FOR NEW PROVISION ⁴	SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS ⁵	STANDARDS FOR NEW OPEN SPACE PROVISION ⁶	OTHER SPECIFIC POLICIES ⁷
Cardiff Cardiff Unitary Development Plan placed on deposit in October 2003. (formally ceased work on the UDP in May 2005 to begin work on the LDP)	✓		✓	✓	✓
City of Cardiff Local Plan (Adopted January 1996)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Carmarthenshire Carmarthenshire Unitary Development Plan (Adopted 19 th July 2006)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ceredigion Ceredigion Unitary Development Plan (Proposed Modifications Version 2006)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Conwy Draft Conwy UDP (Consultation Draft April 2001, it will be considered where appropriate in deciding planning applications, work ceased on the plan in 2004)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Colwyn Borough Local Plan (Adopted 1999)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Llandudno / Conwy District Plan (Adopted 1982)	✓			✓	✓

OPEN SPACE POLICY TYPOLOGIES					
LPA DEVELOPMENT PLAN	PROTECTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE ³	CRITERIA BASED POLICY FOR NEW PROVISION ⁴	SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS ⁵	STANDARDS FOR NEW OPEN SPACE PROVISION ⁶	OTHER SPECIFIC POLICIES ⁷
Denbighshire Denbighshire Unitary Development Plan (Adopted July 2002)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flintshire Flintshire Unitary Development Plan (Proposed Changes, November 2006)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gwynedd Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (Pre-Inquiry Proposed Changes September 2005)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Isle of Anglesey Ynys Môn Unitary Development Plan (Further Proposed Changes, March 2003 & Proposed Changes 2001) (resolved to stop work on the UDP and move to the preparation of the LDP. Some parts of the UDP (which will not be adopted) can be retained as interim guidance for taking development control decisions during an interim period while work on the new LDP advances).	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ynys Môn Local Plan (1996)	✓				✓

LPA DEVELOPMENT PLAN	OPEN SPACE POLICY TYPOLOGIES				
	PROTECTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE ³	CRITERIA BASED POLICY FOR NEW PROVISION ⁴	SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS ⁵	STANDARDS FOR NEW OPEN SPACE PROVISION ⁶	OTHER SPECIFIC POLICIES ⁷
Merthyr Tydfil Merthyr Tydfil Borough Local Plan (Adopted Version May 1999) (Work on U DP ceased in September 2000 to make way for the preparation of the LDP)					✓
Monmouthshire Adopted Monmouth Borough Local Plan (May 1997)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Neath Port Talbot Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan (Proposed Modifications, June 2007)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Newport Newport Unitary Development Plan (Adopted May 2006, 1996- 2011)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pembrokeshire Pembrokeshire Council and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Joint UDP (2006)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Powys Powys Unitary Development Plan (Pre-Inquiry further proposed changes 2006)	✓	✓		✓	✓

	OPEN SPACE POLICY TYPOLOGIES				
LPA DEVOLPMENT PLAN	PROTECTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE³	CRITERIA BASED POLICY FOR NEW PROVISION⁴	SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS⁵	STANDARDS FOR NEW OPEN SPACE PROVISION⁶	OTHER SPECIFIC POLICIES⁷
Rhondda Cynon Taff					
Rhondda Cynon Taff (Rhondda) Local Plan (Adopted 1998)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rhondda Cynon Taff (Cynon Valley) Local Plan (Adopted 2004)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Rhondda Cynon Taff (Taff Ely) Local Plan (Adopted 2003)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Swansea					
Swansea Unitary Development Plan Pre-Inquiry Modifications (July 2006)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Torfaen					
Adopted Torfaen Local Plan (July 2000) (work on the UDP ceased in May 2000, to commence preparation of LDP)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Vale of Glamorgan					
Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan April 2005 (1996-2011)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wrexham					
Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (1996-2011, Adopted February 2005)	✓			✓	✓

	OPEN SPACE POLICY TYPOLOGIES				
LPA DEVOLPMENT PLAN	PROTECTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE³	CRITERIA BASED POLICY FOR NEW PROVISION⁴	SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS⁵	STANDARDS FOR NEW OPEN SPACE PROVISION⁶	OTHER SPECIFIC POLICIES⁷
Brecon Beacons National Park Brecon Beacons National Park Interim Unitary Development Plan (approved for Development Control purposes March 2007)				✓	
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Pembrokeshire Council and Pembrokeshire National Park Joint UDP (July 2006)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Snowdonia Eryri Local Plan (Adopted Version November 1999) (Work on the UDP ceased in October 2003 at its deposit stage to make way for the LDP)	✓	✓			✓

Wider Policy Initiatives

6.9 Besides planning policy, POSAs and the wider practice of planning for open space is couched within wider Welsh policy context. An understanding of the ways in which POSAs fit into the broader policy context is important in ensuring that they can meet broader objectives relating; for example to health and well-being, social inclusion and education.

One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales. An agreement between the Labour and Plaid Cymru Groups in the National Assembly (27th June 2007)

- 6.10 This document forms an agreement between Wales' coalition parties - Labour and Plaid Cymru Group. It aims to deliver a progressive, stable and ambitious programme for government over this Assembly term.
- 6.11 Pursuing improvements in the nation's health forms an important theme of the agreement. Intertwined with this aim, specific objectives relating to sport and physical activity are prominent. For example, the agreement seeks to provide more resources for physical education in schools, promote the retention of school playing fields and develop opportunities for schools and colleges to work with local sports clubs and to invest in sports coaching.
- 6.12 The document indicates that seven out of ten people in Wales do not undertake enough physical activity to gain any health benefits. Consequently, it seeks to encourage greater participation by people of all ages and social backgrounds in grassroots sport. Recognising that all physical activity is beneficial to health, the coalition supports greater participation in cycling and walking, and encourages the people of Wales, of all backgrounds, to enjoy the natural environment.

Climbing Higher: The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Sport & Physical Activity (January 2005)

- 6.13 This is the Welsh Assembly Government's long-term strategy for sport and physical activity. It sets out its strategic direction in Wales for the next twenty years and recognises the importance of sport and physical activity by seeking to place such themes at the heart of Welsh life and Government policy within the next 20 years.
- 6.14 The document demonstrates a synergy with other policy documents, namely the 'Countryside Council for Wales Providing Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities' (June 2006). For example environmental targets 11 and 12 seek to ensure that 95% of people in Wales will have a footpath or cycle-path within a ten minute walk and that no one should live more than a six-minute walk (300m) from their nearest natural green space.

Countryside Council for Wales: Providing Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities. A Practical Guide to Assessing the Resource and Implementing Local Standards for Provision in Wales (June 2006).

- 6.15 This toolkit was established by CCW and is currently being implemented. The purpose of the guidance is to set out the principles of the Accessible Greenspace Standards model in order to help LPAs in identifying the current level of provision of accessible natural greenspace and to assist with the production of local standards and targets.
- 6.16 The toolkit outlines a six-step process with worked examples whereby LPAs can begin to assess current provision of natural greenspace, including guidelines on how to distinguish between natural and non-natural greenspaces. Following on from this initial assessment of provision, the toolkit outlines the method by which LPAs may assess the accessibility of the identified natural greenspace. The output should be a map of accessible greenspaces which can then be compared with a locally generated standard, founded upon the CCW national standard.

Welsh Assembly Government Play Policy (October 2002), Children and Young People: Rights to Action (November 2000) and Play Policy Implementation Plan (February 2006)

- 6.17 'Children and Young People: Rights to Action' (November 2000) was written in light of the commitment made during the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The document sets out seven core aims for children and young people, one of which relates to Play, Leisure, Sporting and Cultural Activities. This aim, which seeks to increase the types of place where children can play while continuing to safeguard their safety, is of particular relevance to this study.
- 6.18 Following the publication of the earlier Action Plan in November 2000, the Welsh Assembly Government Play Policy was published in October 2002. This policy document sets out the Government's recognition of the importance of play and their commitment that society should seek every opportunity to support it.
- 6.19 The Play Policy Implementation Plan (February 2006) explains how the principles in the Play Policy document will be implemented. This Implementation Plan seeks to encourage more play provision, provide more guidance on what constitutes quality play opportunities and outlines a commitment to work with practitioners, communities and children to develop standards for a wide variety of play provision.

Shaping the Way We Work, Live and Play: Practical Guidance on Delivering Sustainable Development through the Planning System (Welsh Local Government Association, May 2007)

- 6.20 This commissioned research was undertaken by the Building Research Establishment, Green Balance and Cardiff University, to provide practical guidance on how local planning authorities can make a difference and ensure promotion of more sustainable forms of development. It forms part of the Association's wider work on developing a Sustainable Development Framework for Welsh Local Government.
- 6.21 This document sets out a series of suggestions and guidance which reflect emerging and current good practice across the UK concerning various topics such as 'health and wellbeing – open space', 'sustainable energy' and 'placemaking'.
- 6.22 In the research section on open space, the report recognises the importance of open space for physiological and psychological benefit and well-being. In reference to the potential role of planning the research identifies the role that open space assessments assume in ensuring a strategic approach to provision and enhancement of different types of public open space is adopted.
- 6.23 The report includes two case studies to illustrate two local authority policy approaches to public open space provision. One approach has produced a hierarchy of open spaces, their types and characteristics, and the distance from homes that each type of space should ideally be. Whilst another local authority has developed a Supplementary Planning Guidance which provides developers with the minimum standard of provision of private outdoor space likely to be regarded as adequate to meet the perceived requirements of occupants of dwellings, setting out requirements as to the shape and position of all private outdoor space in regard to such matters as daylight and sunlight, fumes and noise from roads or other adjacent development. It also sets out access requirements and privacy considerations.

Community Strategies

- 6.24 Following the Local Government Act 2000, all LPAs in England and Wales have a duty to prepare a community strategy for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. In doing this, the LPA must consult and seek the participation of appropriate persons.
- 6.25 The National Assembly for Wales has issued statutory guidance on the preparation of community strategies to all local authorities (National Assembly for Wales (2001)

'Preparing Community Strategies'). This states that community strategies should deliver a number of specific objectives:

- To encourage an integrated approach which addresses the social, economic and environmental well-being of local communities and contributes to sustainable development.
- To provide a forum for debating local needs priorities and aspirations.
- To provide a mechanism for integrated planning and resourcing of local needs by all agencies acting locally.
- To inform Assembly priorities and their local implementation.
- To assist Council's in developing corporate priorities.
- To underpin applications for funding and support

(Source: National Assembly for Wales 2001)

6.26 The first Community Strategies were published in 2004. They consider issues relevant to this study such as health, children and young people, environment, sport, leisure and culture. Future POSAs will need to consider the targets set out in each respective community strategy. Consideration of the strategy and issues raised during forum discussions relating to local need will be especially useful in the latter stages relating to the assessment of need and the establishment of open space standards.

Summary

6.27 An appreciation of the wider policy context which surrounds POSAs is important. The issue of open space provision is a cross-cutting subject which is involved in wider debates such as health, recreation and bio-diversity and not just land-use planning. As result of this unique position, POSAs should form part of a wider, corporate Open Space Strategy which is interdepartmental in approach and used to deliver wider health, recreation, bio-diversity objectives.

7.0 REVIEW OF EXISTING RESEARCH

7.1 POSAs have been a feature of the planning system in England and Scotland for a number of years. An examination of relevant research documentation and planning policy therefore provides an important opportunity for lesson-learning to better the Welsh approach.

English Practice

7.2 The English approach to POSAs is outlined through a number of documents. The central document is 'PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' (July 2002). This overarching policy document sets out the method by which LPAs should maintain an appropriate quantity and quality of open space in relation to identified local need.

7.3 A Companion Guide, 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17', was published in September 2002. This seeks to build on examples of existing good practice, set out how the LPAs can use the planning system to help deliver these facilities and consider the best value regime and management and maintenance of publicly owned open spaces.

Best Practice Auditing

7.4 PPG17 states that LPAs should undertake audits of existing open space, sports and recreational facilities; the use made of existing facilities; access in terms of location and costs (such as charges); and opportunities for new open space and facilities. It states that such audits should consider both the quantitative and the qualitative elements of open space, sports and recreational facilities. Particular importance is attached to quality as this allows LPAs to identify potential opportunities for increased use through better design, management and maintenance.

Open Space Typologies

7.5 The English typology of Public Open Space is outlined in Annex 2 of PPG17 and included in figure 7.1 below. The guidance note states that this typology (or variations of it) should be used by LPAs when preparing assessments of need and audits of existing open space and recreation facilities.

7.6 It states that LPAs should recognise that most areas of open space can perform multiple functions, and should take account of the various functions of open space

when applying the policies in this document. These various functions are divided into six categories relating to:

- Strategic functions,
- Urban quality,
- Promoting health and well-being,
- Havens and habitats for flora and fauna,
- As a community resource and
- As a visual amenity.

Figure 7.1: English Typology of Public Open Space

“The following typology illustrates the broad range of open spaces that may be of public value:

- i. parks and gardens - including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens;*
- ii. natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces - including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows) wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (eg cliffs, quarries and pits);*
- iii. green corridors - including river and canal banks, cycleways, and rights of way;*
- iv. outdoor sports facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces and either publicly or privately owned) - including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas;*
- v. amenity greenspace (most commonly, but not exclusively in housing areas) - including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens;*
- vi. provision for children and teenagers - including play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops, and other more informal areas (eg 'hanging out' areas, teenage shelters);*
- vii. allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms;*
- viii. cemeteries and churchyards;*
- ix. accessible countryside in urban fringe areas; and*
- x. civic spaces, including civic and market squares, and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians;”*

(Source: Annex 2 of PPG17)

Local assessments – guiding principles

- 7.7 The companion guide to PPG17 outlines a set of key attributes of open space and sport and recreation provision. The guide states that accessibility is normally first in

importance, although it acknowledges that inaccessible open spaces can embody amenity, environmental and biodiversity value.

- 7.8 Quality is another key attribute which depends on the needs and expectations of users and the design, management and maintenance of space. It can therefore be summarised as equating to the fitness for purpose. In this context a clear idea of the purpose of open space is required. However, establishing such a purpose is made difficult by the fact that open spaces are often viewed as being multi-functional, and serving a range of purposes to different groups of people. Recognising this complexity, the guide recommends the identification of a primary purpose so that each space is counted only once in an audit of provision.
- 7.9 The final key attribute, quantity, is usually measured in terms of the amount of provision; for example, the area of open space or the number of pitches or the allotments. However, the guide highlights the over-simplistic nature of this technique, as the capacity of some areas of open space may depend upon its specification. For example, higher specification playing pitches can accommodate a larger number of matches per week than those that are less well equipped. In light of this, the guide states that *“it is sometimes possible to address an identified quantitative deficiency in provision by improving the specification, or quality, of existing facilities”*.
- 7.10 The companion guide is careful to distinguish the difference between quality and value of provision. For example a high quality facility or open space may be sited in an inaccessible area and as such, may be of less value than a more accessible but lower quality space. By contrast, a run-down or derelict facility in an accessible location or distant from other provision may be immensely valuable.

Best Practice Monitoring & Loss

- 7.11 The companion guide includes very limited guidance on best practice of monitoring and loss although it does highlight the requirement to keep the database up to date.

Examples of English Practice

- 7.12 The majority of authorities in England that have undertaken audits of open space have followed the guidance in PPG17, including both the typology and the methodology set out in the PPG17 Companion Guide. A number of examples are set out below. These have been selected on the basis of their providing examples of alternative approaches to undertaking Open Space Assessments:

Stratford

Stratford-on-Avon District Council carried out an audit of open space in Stratford-upon-Avon and the main rural centres within the district in 2005. The definition of open space applied in the audit reflected the PPG17 typology and NPFA definitions. The methodology for carrying out the audit was based on guidance from PPG17 and sought to assess public open space provision against the NPFA standards and the typologies in PPG17. The audit sought to identify either a surplus or deficit of public open space within the survey area and was used to provide the basis for a Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on the Provision of Public Open Space.

Stratford District Council found that it was more straightforward to produce a quantitative figure of open space against the NPFA standard than against the wider PPG17 typologies as this guidance does not produce a set standard in the same way as the NPFA. The audit therefore largely focused on an assessment of recreational space and adopted an open space standard that divided this space into four types:

- Youth and Adult Use;
- Children's Play Areas;
- Incidental; and
- General Use.

The analysis gave the District Council a clear picture of the amount, type and distribution of open space provision in and around Stratford-upon-Avon and highlighted a deficit of provision across the district. No formal qualitative analysis of the spaces was undertaken although comments were made regarding the value of particular spaces and the number and location of spaces that are of a poor condition.

London Borough (LB) of Southwark

LB Southwark's audit in 2004 involved identifying all open space in the borough, whether in public or private ownership (excluding private gardens). A desk study identified open spaces using aerial photographs and data on each site over of 0.3ha was recorded by GIS.

Site surveys using a hand-held computer were undertaken using a standard form to gather information on the quality of provision and the data collected was added to the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) database. LB Southwark provided a clear definition for each typology to ensure consistency when assessing open spaces.

GIS was used to analyse the data and establish areas of deficiency for different types of open spaces and the database has been used as a management tool by Southwark Council to determine the need for investment, to assess management and maintenance and to record changes in quality over time.

Cherwell

Cherwell District Council published an Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment Audit and Strategy in August 2006. The audit, undertaken by PMP Consultancy Ltd, was carried out in accordance with the requirements of PPG17 and encompassed all the typologies set out in the guidance. However, quantity standards were only set for the following typologies:

- children and young person play space;
- allotments and community gardens;
- parks and gardens; natural and semi-natural;
- formal sports provision; and
- amenity greenspace.

Cherwell's approach included a qualitative survey of open spaces within the district, as well as quantitative audit.

A series of consultation exercises were carried out involving the local community to establish the views on open space provision among users and non-users in Cherwell. The key methods adopted included:

- drop in sessions (often held at local supermarkets);
- household survey (5000 surveys were sent to random addresses across the District);
- young people's internet survey (taking place in all schools in Cherwell);
- sports club survey; and
- internal consultation (council staff from Planning, Landscape Services, Sport and Recreation, and Environmental Services)

Views were sought on open spaces and sports facilities in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility. The surveys included questions on vandalism, litter-dropping, anti-social behaviour, noise, dog fouling, accessibility, site access, and usage. Residents' aspirations for open spaces were also sought and respondents were invited to discuss their ideal features for the type of open space that they used most frequently.

Despite being resource intensive, these qualitative assessments provided Cherwell District Council with a substantial amount of statistical evidence about the local community's opinions on open spaces and sports facilities.

Scottish Practice

- 7.13 The Scottish policy approach to POSAs is outlined in NPPG11 'Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space' (1996). This is supplemented by PAN65: 'Planning and Open Space' (2003), which provides a greater level of detail to LPAs on the assessment of quality and quantity of open spaces. Between the publication of NPPG 11 in 1996 and PAN65 in 2003, consultants Kit Campbell Associates of Edinburgh were commissioned by the Scottish Executive, in collaboration with Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Enterprise, Sport Scotland and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA), to research the planning, design and management of urban open space over the period from April 2000 to January 2001. The document, 'Rethinking Open Space – Open Space Provision and Management: A Way Forward', was published in 2002.

Best Practice Auditing

- 7.14 One key criticism of planning legislation outlined in 'Rethinking Open Space' was the lack of a widely agreed typology. In an effort to amend this, the later published PAN 65 includes a typology of spaces, based on the classifications recommended in this earlier research. This typology is set out in Figure 7.2.
- 7.15 It is recognised that open space may serve a range of functions and consequently some areas, particularly informal spaces, may not fit neatly into this typology. In addition, it is understood that an appreciation of the hierarchy of open spaces can help local authorities to understand the various functions that each space performs and to decide on their respective levels of importance – strategic, local and neighbourhood.

Figure 7.2: The Scottish Open Space Typology

Type	Description	
	Public parks and gardens	Areas of land normally enclosed, designed, constructed, managed and maintained as a public park or garden.
	Private gardens or grounds	Areas of land normally enclosed and associated with a house or institution and reserved for private use.
	Amenity greenspace	Landscaped areas providing visual amenity or separating different buildings or land uses for environmental, visual or safety reasons i.e. road verges or greenspace in business parks, and used for a variety of informal or social activities such as sunbathing, picnics or kickabouts.
	Playspace for children and teenagers	Areas providing safe and accessible opportunities for children's play, usually linked to housing areas.
	Sports areas	Large and generally flat areas of grassland or specially designed surfaces, used primarily for designated sports i.e. playing fields, golf courses, tennis courts, bowling greens; areas which are generally bookable.
	Green corridors	Routes including canals, river corridors and old railway lines, linking different areas within a town or city as part of a designated and managed network and used for walking, cycling or horse riding, or linking towns and cities to their surrounding countryside or country parks. These may link green spaces together.
	Natural/semi-natural greenspaces	Areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with residual natural habitats or which have been planted or colonised by vegetation and wildlife, including woodland and wetland areas.
	Other functional greenspaces	Allotments, churchyards and cemeteries.
	Civic space	Squares, streets and waterfront promenades, predominantly of hard landscaping that provide a focus for pedestrian activity and make connections for people and for wildlife, where trees and planting are included.

(Source: PAN 65)

- PAN 65 lists a number of essential elements which should be included within the Open Space Audits. These include:

- Type;
- Size;
- Condition;
- Location;
- Maintenance requirements of the spaces;
- Levels of use;
- Qualitative indicators – ranking quality and condition of facilities, public safety and security; and
- Addition information might include: ownership or flooding history.

7.16 With regards to labour resources, external bodies such as amenity groups, residents' associations and consultants, under the director of local authority staff are suggested as possible parties who may be able to carry out audit work. The use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to record this data is promoted.

Best Practice Monitoring

7.17 PAN65 makes minimal additional reference to the need for on-going monitoring other than by highlighting the need for regular audit collections and up-dates.

7.18 The Scottish Sports Council (SCC) has statutory consultee status under Article 15 of the General Development Procedure Order (Scotland) 1992. As part of this role, councils are instructed to notify the SCC at an early stage on preparation of development plans and on planning application proposals for:

- Developments involving new provision, or loss, of major sports facilities;
- Residential developments of 300 dwellings or more likely to generate a need for new recreational provision; and
- Mineral development which may present opportunities for recreation.
- Major sports facilities include indoor swimming pools, indoor sports centres, indoor bowling centres, indoor tennis centre, ice rinks, golf courses, indoor and outdoor shooting centres, velodromes, stadia, water, air and motor sports facilities, a water body of more than 2 hectares and any proposed sports facilities with a capital value over £250,000.

7.19 Paragraph 47 of the NPPG 11 states that there should be a presumption against redevelopment of any (public or private) playing fields or sports pitches.

7.20 'Rethinking Open Space' (2002) identified a lack of take-up in preparing open space strategies amongst Scottish LPAs. Between the publication of the NPPG in 1996 and the middle of 2000 only three Scottish LPAs - had prepared open space strategies for their areas which sought to integrate planning, design and management, reflecting the advice set out in this National Policy Guidance. These were Dundee, Glasgow

and South Ayrshire. Although there are few examples of recent open space audits in Scotland, the studies examined below add to the range of methodologies that have been employed by LPAs in England to monitor open space provision within their locality

Examples of Scottish Practice

Dundee City Council

Dundee City Council published its Public Open Space Strategy in 2000 following an Open Space Audit. The audit focused on country and city parks in order to inform a major investment programme for park upgrades. The main outcome of the Open Space Audit and Strategy was the development of the 'Dundee Standard', which sets open space standards for different city zones. The application of this standard has identified open space deficiencies throughout the city. Subsequently, the Council developed the idea of an "Open Space Hierarchy" to target improvements to parks where they are most needed and where they would be of most benefit. The Council are currently developing guidelines to suggest the type of facilities required, the most suitable size for different types of open space and the maximum distance from people's homes in order to provide a fair distribution of parks across the City. The Scottish Executive recognised key lessons from the Dundee Open Space Strategy and particularly highlighted the Council's strong internal partnerships, their clear structure for establishing standards and their development of locally relevant policies, actions and targets.

South Ayrshire Council

South Ayrshire Council published a 'Parks and Public Open Spaces Recreation and Landscape Strategy' in 2001 which was based on an audit of the area's parks, grounds and open spaces. The use of GIS was central to this research.

The Parks and Environment Department began by transferring information from existing paper maps into the GIS and giving each area a unique identifier, linked to the Council's asset database. Digital air photographs were used to capture more detailed information about the type and location of the spaces. This was found to provide an effective way of recording the quality of the Council's open space and ensuring that the data would be widely available to all Council staff. A review of the function and use of existing open space was also undertaken and input into the GIS as part of a Parks and Public Open Spaces Strategy.

Glasgow City Council

A Strategic Best Value Review and Implementation Plan for Glasgow's city parks and open spaces was published in 2005. The review was undertaken by Land Services within Glasgow City Council with the support of other Council Services, external organisations and members of the public. The review took over 18 months to complete and was predominantly qualitative in nature.

Extensive consultation exercises were core to the review process and involved 9 separate elements, as follows:

- Employee consultation (involved a range of methods such as information bulletins, a Land Services newsletter, employee workshops and employee briefing sessions)
- Inter Service Workshops (involving representatives from various Council services)
- Public Consultation (involved press articles, radio and newspaper advertising, poster campaign, Parks review website, on-line chat room - a detailed analysis of the responses was carried out by an independent research company)
- Schools Consultation (questionnaire was produced and circulated to all Glasgow schools)
- Focus Groups (Equalities (including ethnic minorities), seniors, young people, allotments and environmental Sustainability, Friends of Groups)
- Trade Unions
- Key Issues Working Groups (over 50 members of Staff from Glasgow City Council)
- Elected Member Sounding Board
- Steering Group (members of Land Services staff)

Views on issues such as safety and security, dog fouling, the availability of activities and facilities, staffing within parks, ecology and environment were assembled in the consultation process.

Based on the findings from the analysis of the consultation and research, 8 principal recommendations supported by 138 Key Actions were formed. These related to matters such as delivering a clear commitment to encourage greater use of parks, introducing a range of measures to deliver service improvements in line with the Council's key objectives and customer expectations and developing and

enhancing the range of facilities and amenities within parks through partnership working and other approaches. The recommendations and key actions referred to above provided Glasgow City Council with an Implementation Plan on how to improve the quality and effectiveness of the parks and open spaces service in Glasgow.

The Scottish Executive recognised key lessons from the City of Glasgow Council's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy in particular Glasgow City Council's support of a more natural approach to maintenance, through Pond Naturalisation Projects and a review of grass maintenance.

A large number of the tasks and targets identified were to be carried out within existing resources through restructuring the organisation and redirecting existing budgetary resources. However any major new capital works in parks required specific Council capital funding, supported where possible by other partners and external funding.

Related UK Research and Advice

- 7.21 There are numerous related pieces of research which supplement planning policy and provide the justification for some policy approaches.

Children's Play Council – More than just swings and roundabouts: planning for children's play (Children's Play Council 2002)

- 7.22 This research was formulated for a wide range of groups including LPAs, elected members, local partnerships, developers, housing associations and voluntary sectors.
- 7.23 The document is grounded upon the fundamental principle that children and young people are legitimate users of the environment and that they should be involved in deciding how, where and when play spaces are supplied. A checklist is included to ensure that agencies make the most of the resources available in developing effective, sustainable outdoor play space. In addition to this, the research discussed the usefulness of quantitative spatial standards and evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of such standards, as summarised below:

Advantages of standards

- *provide a starting point for determining levels of provision;*
- *easy for planners, politicians and the public to understand;*
- *set clear targets for space that allow comparisons and measure improvement;*
- *can improve quality;*
- *can help to protect spaces from development threats;*
- *can support equitable allocation of funding and resources;*
- *support provision of play space in new developments.*

Disadvantages of standards

- *may discourage creativity;*
- *may have a weak theoretical basis;*
- *may be inflexible and unable to take account of local circumstances;*
- *application is difficult in areas where land uses are largely fixed;*
- *may be applied automatically without checking against local needs or wishes;*
- *may work against local participation;*
- *can be difficult to capture some important factors (such as location)*
- *may take little account of quality;*
- *it may be unclear whether there is a minimum, desirable or optimum standard.*

7.24 The paper concludes that standards can play a useful role in planning and protecting space. However more work is needed to explore the use and effectiveness of existing standards in order to understand how standards are best applied and formulated.

Green Space, Better Places: Final Report of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce (2002)

- 7.25 The document explores the issue of declining and neglected parks and green spaces. It identified underinvestment as a key cause, although it also highlights other origins such as the loss of priority status and resources, slow response to changing demands and poor public image. The report outlines a number of recommendations to overcome these challenges for the future. These include training and skills, better information and data, and a greater role for partnership working involving voluntary groups and business, volunteers and users. In turn this needs to be complemented by a good policy framework within which all decision-makers can operate and work collaboratively. Recommendations were made at national and local government levels.
- 7.26 The reports recommendations outline plans to set up a national agency to implement the good practice examples more broadly. Other proposals sought to secure funding from Section 106 agreement contributions, from the central and local plan government and lottery funding. In addition, the report also suggests better promotion of private sector involvement and calls for joined-up thinking between national and regional providers, local authority planners and other local stakeholders.

CABE Space

- 7.27 CABE Space is part of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and was set up in May 2003. to champion high quality urban green spaces in England. The body has published a number of research papers relating to Open Space, the most relevant of which are included below:
- ***CABE Space - Spaceshaper. A user's guide (published 2007)*** - is a practical toolkit designed to measure the quality of a public space. The toolkit provides a questionnaire to be filled out by participants during a site visit to the space. The questionnaire captures people's perceptions by rating the site against 41 characteristics, grouped into the eight sections:
 - *access*: finding your way and getting about.
 - *use*: what activities and opportunities the space has to offer.
 - *other people*: how the space caters for different needs.
 - *maintenance*: how clean and cared for the space is.
 - *environment*: how safe and comfortable the space is.

- *design: and appearance*: what the space looks like and what it's made from.
- *community*: how important the space is to local people.
- *you*: how the space makes you feel.

Following completion of the questionnaire on-site, the results are inputted into the Spaceshaper software. The most important part of the whole process is the resultant discussion between those with the knowledge of what it is like to use the space and those whose job it is to manage it.

- ***CABE Space – Start with the Park First (published 2005)*** – outlines the various lessons learnt from around the globe in terms of providing, planning, managing and designing green spaces.
- ***Physical activity and the built environment (published October 2006)*** – outlines research undertaken to investigate the links between physical activity and the built environment. The paper presents research which outlines the cost of obesity and the opportunities of providing open space nearby. For example, research has found that most sustained exercise is taken during the course of everyday activities, such as travelling to work and going to the shops. It therefore concludes and recommends that our built environment should provide a network of routes and destinations that maximise the potential for activity on foot or by bicycle, rather than by motorised transport. In addition recent research conducted for CABE Space found that residents of Norwich who live near a park are four times more likely to walk or cycle to work than those for whom a park is less accessible.
- ***CABE Space – Green Space Strategies: a good practice guide (published 2004)*** - A Green Space Strategy sets out an authority's vision for using its green space and the goals it wants to achieve, as well as the resources, methods and time needed to meet these goals. The process of completing a Green Space Strategy is related with POSAs as both considers the location and characteristics of existing parks and green space, in order to remedy any deficiencies and make strategic links between networks of spaces. According to this document, a comprehensive Green Space Strategy should include certain categories of green space. The categories outlined in the document are identical to the typologies included in the draft TAN16, except that the 'civic space' typology which is

included in the draft TAN16 document is excluded from the *CABE Space* document.

Design Commission for Wales (DCfW)

- 7.28 Similar to CABE, the Design Commission for Wales is national organisation established and core funded by the National Assembly for Wales. Its mission statement is to:

“champion high standards of architecture, landscape and urban design in Wales, promoting wider understanding of the importance of good quality in the built environment, supporting skill building, encouraging social inclusion and sustainable development”.

- 7.29 The DCfW upholds a role in scrutinising the architecture, landscape and urban design of particular, mostly large-scale development. As part of the various design schemes, open space and recreation provision is an integral consideration and therefore DCfW does provide an advisory role in this respect.

Summary

- 7.30 The policy context associated with undertaking POSAs is wide ranging. This section has investigated the related research undertaken by both academics and stakeholders, complemented by a review of selected case studies in England and Scotland.
- 7.31 Comprehension of the interface between research, policy and practice is integral in order to create a document which will be useful to the widest audience, including National Government, LPA staff, researchers and stakeholders alike.

8.0 STAKEHOLDERS INPUTS

8.1 This section outlines the findings from the various meetings with stakeholders and makes a number of recommendations for monitoring and undertaking POSAs.

Information held by other stakeholders

8.2 As part of the research, a number of face-to-face interviews were conducted with identified stakeholders associated with POSA audits, as follows:

- Play Wales
- Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
- Sports Council for Wales (SCW)
- National Playing Field Association (NPFA)

Play Wales

8.3 Play Wales is charitable interest group which offers advice, guidance and support on all children and young people play environments. They have been involved in the drafting national guidance such as the 'National Play Policy' (2002) and 'Welsh Assembly Play Policy Implementation Plan' (February 2006).

8.4 Play Wales provides helpful guidance on the needs of children and young people today, outlining the types of open space which would fulfil their needs and suggesting ideas and practical case studies on how these spaces can best be delivered and maintained. This type of information will be useful to LPAs when establishing priorities for play in corporate Open Space Strategies.

8.5 In addition, Play Wales have also been influential in establishing the policy context surrounding the issue of open space. in particular it has, highlighted the need for POSAs to complement its context and build on established governmental objectives outlined in key documents such as 'Climbing Higher: The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Sport & Physical Activity' (January 2005)' and 'Plan for Wales 2001'.

Consultation Records

8.6 Play Wales is not identified as a statutory consultee under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995. Therefore it does not hold

any consultation information relating to the loss of open space or existing areas of open space.

Open Space Provision

- 8.7 Despite this lack of consultation records, Play Wales is helpful in identifying the requirements for new open spaces for children. In particular it has emphasised the importance of 'playable spaces' as spaces that best meet the needs of children today. Importantly, the stakeholder highlighted the importance of informal play spaces such as woodlands and highlighted the established need for an increase in such spaces. Similarly, formal play spaces such as playgrounds are still viewed as important although representatives wanted to encourage open space providers to be more creative that has traditionally been the case.
- 8.8 Representatives identified a good practice case study whereby Forestry Commission land in Torfaen was made available for children's education under the Forest Schools Programme. Children were permitted access to the area under supervision by a teacher or qualified Play Officer.
- 8.9 Another very successful scheme was located in the community of Stratford Green in the Vale of Glamorgan. It started as a pilot project in the summer of 2006 when the Council's Housing Officer contacted the Play Development Officer following a consultation with young residents, which called for more play provision. As a result, Play Rangers⁸ worked on open space to facilitate a variety of play opportunities including arts, den building and sports.
- 8.10 The local Tenants and Residents Association sought to continue this provision, the result being an extended project, for equipment being stored in a local garage by the Housing Division. Community residents have since undertaken play training, and are now volunteer Play Rangers, operating with support from the Play Development Officer.
- 8.11 Play Ranger projects are emerging throughout Wales. Whilst play workers support children to play in their communities, parents value the presence of a qualified adult and in some cases projects have proven to support communities to reclaim space

⁸ 'Play Rangers' are qualified play workers who work with children and young people in a local park or public open space to facilitate children's play. They are 'detached workers' who can bring equipment and encourage children to make more use of parks and open spaces in their communities. They operate on an 'open access' principle, which means that children are free to come and go as they please; there is no charge and no registration is required. Children and young people are encouraged to use the sessions in the way that they choose with freely chosen, self directed play being the key to service provision (Source: Play for Wales, Summer 2007).

which might have traditionally not been used for children's play and also to enable children to and to develop a range of important skills to play more independently.

Recommendations

8.12 Following the interview, the following recommendations were identified:

- Seek to complement wider WAG guidance in undertaking a Public Open Space Strategy.
- Highlight the importance of informal spaces for recreational opportunities.
- Promote more creative approaches to children's play provision.
- Provide 'playable spaces' which reflect the needs of children and young people today.

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)

8.13 The Countryside Council for Wales is the Government's statutory advisor on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and the opportunity for outdoor enjoyment in Wales and its inshore waters. As part of this role, CCW undertake research and provide grants to those involved in working in these areas.

8.14 Central to this theme of open space, CCW published a toolkit called 'Providing Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities. A Practical Guide to Assessing the Resource and Implementing Local Standards for Provision in Wales (June 2006)'. This toolkit intends to help ensure that everyone in Wales has easy access to natural green space.

8.15 CCW recommends that provision should be made at least 2ha of accessible natural greenspace per 1,000 population according to a system of tiers into which sites of different sizes fit:

- No person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace,
- there should be at least 1 accessible 20ha site within 2km from home,
- there should be 1 accessible 100ha site within 5km and
- there should be 1 500has site within 10km.

8.16 CCW state that the standard is aspirational and that LPAs should seek to meet the provisions of the standard, although it is recognised that this is not always possible in some urban contexts. These standards were officially adopted by English Nature in

England in 1996, following publication of Research Report No. 153, 'Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities - a Review of Appropriate Size and Distance Criteria', in 1995 and publicising of the standard through the leaflet 'A Space for Nature' in 1996. A review of the standard was undertaken in 2002 by Pauleit, Slinn and Handley ('Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards in Towns and Cities: A Review and Tool-kit for their Implementation') implementation guidance was developed.

- 8.17 LPAs are encouraged to provide an evidence-based approach to identifying the natural green space. LPAs undertaking a Greenspace Strategy in accordance with the guidelines set out in the toolkit are supplied with a grant and as a result CCW have a record of those LPAs undertaking Greenspace Strategies as well as a wealth of information for LPAs relating to how to undertake a Greenspace Strategy. CCW have confirmed that they have allocated £8000 (an estimated 50% of total costs) per LPA, however this money is only available for a limited period.

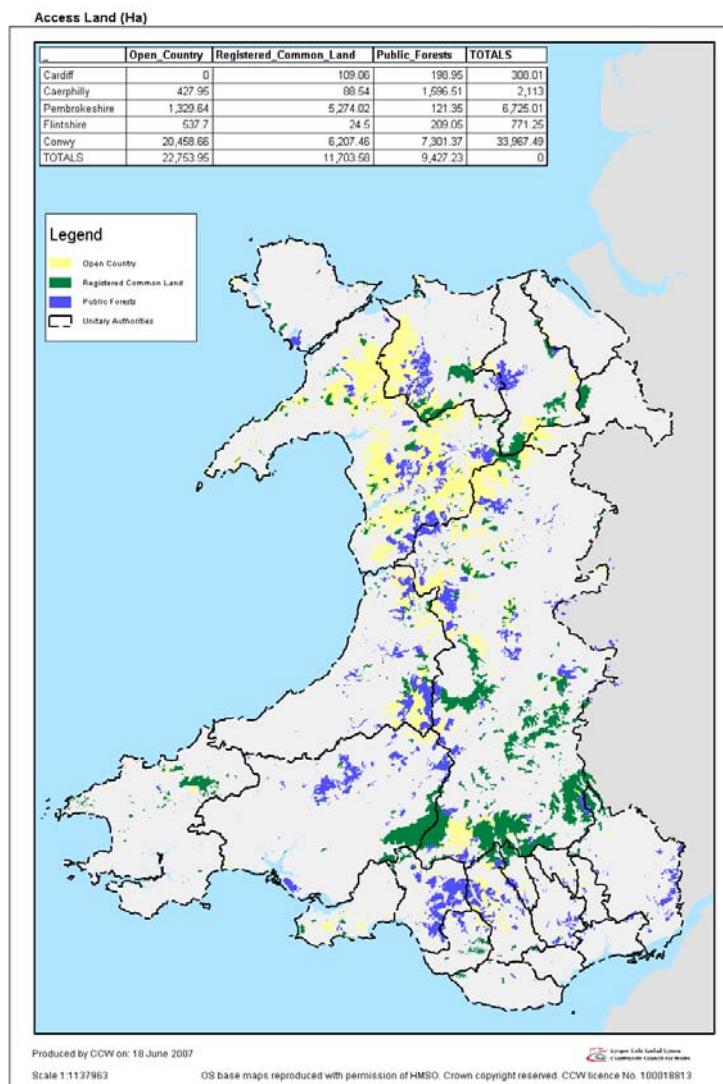
Consultation Records

- 8.18 The organisation is a statutory consultee under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 and is consulted on all planning applications which have an ecological or landscape impact. This consultation remit includes some open spaces such as woodlands, green corridors and natural green spaces but also a vast number of other planning applications not related to public open spaces. This report did not undertake an assessment of CCW records in relation to this aspect.

Open Space Provision

- 8.19 CCW hold a range of up-to-date, strategic information relating to the location and size of 'public forest', 'open country' and 'common land' which are accessible to the public. This data is illustrated in figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1: CCW map indicating access to land



Source: Countryside Council for Wales

Recommendations

8.20 Following the interview, the following recommendations were identified:

- Examine the possibility of utilising the CCW toolkit as a basis for POSAs

National Playing Fields Association

8.21 The NPFA is an independent UK-wide organisation dedicated to protecting and improving outdoor sports and play spaces and facilities. Its central aim is to ensure that everyone has somewhere nearby to go for healthy outdoor activities. In order to achieve this aim, NPFA has established a national minimum standard (referred to as the 'Six Acre Standard') for outdoor playing space. This document, discussed in more

detail below, is presently under review and is currently timetabled for release in January 2008.

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) Regulations: the Six Acre Standard; Minimum Standards for Outdoor playing Space, NPFA 2001.

- 8.22 The NPFA 'Six Acre Standard' document provides guidance to local authorities, developers, consultants, community organisations and others who wish to ensure that the existing provision of outdoor playing space is sufficient to meet the needs of local residents.
- 8.23 Specifically in relation to the audit stage of POSAs, the document highlights the need to have a clear understanding of the definition of 'outdoor playing space' as distinct from 'open space'. The document explains the role of facilities in parks. It is careful to state that where areas are used for a variety of purposes its primary function should be measured in order to prevent double counting. In addition, pocket parks (small areas of open space with planting that are provided within a development) and casual areas of play within a housing area (not including car parking, roadside verges and other small, or narrow, incidental areas) are included in the definition.
- 8.24 However, some ambiguity exists in the definition of what is and what is not included. Parks (except for clearly defined areas within them for sports, games, practice and play) are stated as being excluded from this definition although pocket parks are included. This distinction is not be as clear in practice and may lead to implementation problems.
- 8.25 The NPFA recommends a minimum standard for outdoor playing space of 2.4 hectares (6 acres) for 1000 people. This standard is made up of two elements
- a) Outdoor Sport and
 - b) Children's Playing Space.
- 8.26 The definition and the space requirement for each typology is included in Figure 8.2 below.

Figure 8.2: Breakdown of the NPFA Standard

<p>A</p> <p>Outdoor Sport:</p> <p>1.6 hectares</p> <p>(4 acres)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Facilities such as pitches, greens, courts, athletics tracks and miscellaneous sites such as croquet lawns and training areas, owned by local authorities, at all tiers; ii. Facilities described in (i) within the education sector which are available for public use by written agreement; iii. Facilities described in (i) within the voluntary, private, industrial and commercial sectors, which serve the leisure time needs for outdoor recreation of their members, or the public. <p>NOTE:</p> <p>Included within the standard for outdoor sport is a specific allocation of 1.2 hectares (3 acres) per 1000 people for pitch sports.</p>	<p>B</p> <p>Children’s Playing Space</p> <p>0.8 hectares</p> <p>(2 acres)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Designated areas of children and young people containing a range of facilities and an environment that has been designated to provide focused opportunities for outdoor play; ii. Casual or informal playing space within housing areas.
<p>MINIMUM STANDARD</p> <p>Total Playing Space</p> <p>2.4 hectares</p> <p>(6 acres)</p>	

8.27 In addition to a space requirement, the document also recognises that other factors such as quality, distribution, location and accessibility are also important and should be considered as such.

Consultation Records

8.28 Although the NPFA is not a statutory consultee as defined under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 the organisation is often consulted in circumstances where an outdoor sport and/or children’s play space is under threat. NPFA keep a record of all the information they acquire on playing fields that are under threat, including those that they are directly consulted on and those found through more informal means such as newspapers and notifications from SCW or members of the public. However, NPFA do not have a comprehensive

national database for losses of playing fields whilst they can provide details of particular cases across Wales. This is generally anecdotal in nature.

Typology of Open Space

- 8.29 NPFA believe that the typology in draft TAN16 is too broad. They indicated that both the SCW and NPFA struggle to identify the types of space which they should be consulted on, other than the 'provision for children and teenagers'. In addition, it was suggested that authorities sometimes apply the six-acre standard to all types of open space, even though it was constructed specifically for outdoor sport and children's play and space.
- 8.30 NPFA recommended the 'Active Places' interactive system as a method of collating and sharing data⁹. This online resource contains an interactive map of all sports facilities in England and allows users to search for and gain information on eleven types of sports facilities.

Recommendations

- 8.31 Following interview, the following recommendations were identified:
- 'Active Places' should be used more widely for information-sharing and collating data.
 - Encourage good working relationships between stakeholders, researchers, providers of open space, LPA staff and members of the public.
 - Need to achieve a better method of monitoring loss of open space and methods of follow-up to planning applications which involve a threat to playing fields.
 - Review new NPFA standards when published.

Sports Council for Wales

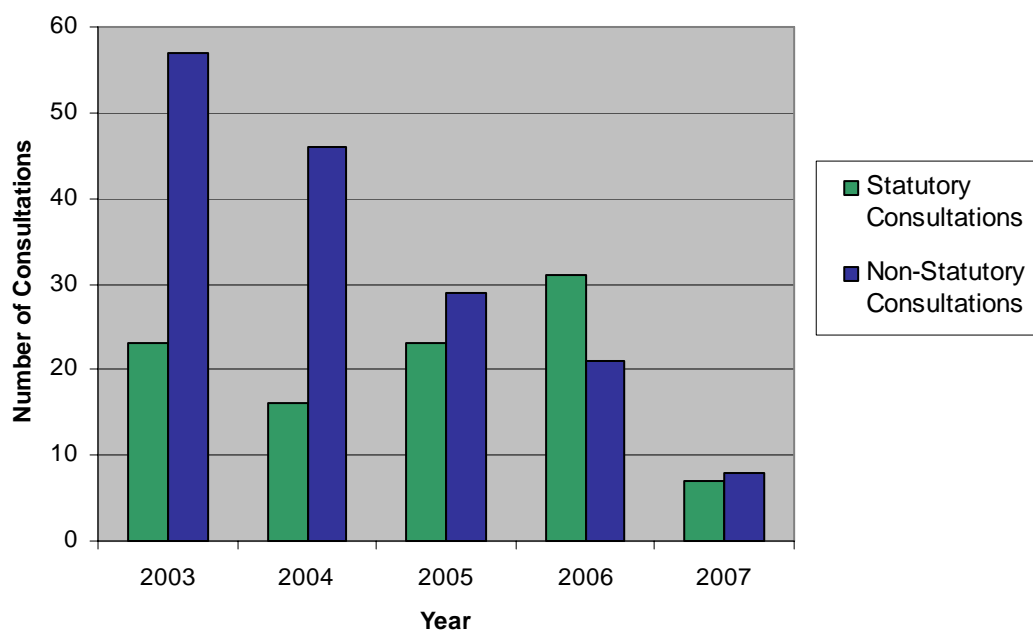
- 8.32 The Sports Council for Wales is the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and active lifestyles. It is the main adviser on sporting matters to the Welsh Assembly Government and is responsible for distributing funds from the National Lottery to sport in Wales.

⁹ To view the 'Active Places' interactive system visit <http://www.activeplaces.com/>

Consultation Records

- 8.33 The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 requires that Local Authorities in Wales consult with the Sports Council for Wales before the granting of planning permission for development, which may have a detrimental effect on the provision of playing fields.
- 8.34 SCW currently keep records of all applications that they are asked to consult on, including those not directly relating to playing fields. Figure 7.3 below displays the number of statutory and non-statutory consultations received by SCW since 2003.

Figure 8.3: SCW Statutory Consultations



- 8.35 The records show that the number of planning applications sent to SCW under the GDPO has remained reasonably consistent, with two applications per month received on average during the last five years. SCW have also received five additional consultations on average every month relating to other sport and recreation planning applications and development plan consultations. However, the current trend apparent in Figure 8.3 above, shows that consultations to SCW have become increasingly focused on statutory cases, a trend that is expected to continue during 2007.
- 8.36 The shift in focus in terms of consulting with SCW for statutory purposes only could reflect LPA's increased understanding of the Sports Council's role and the statutory requirement to consult. However, feedback received from both SCW and LPAs suggest that a level of confusion still remains over the Sports Council's role by Local Planning Authorities.

- 8.37 More than one council suggested that they were more likely to consult NPFA than SCW, as NPFA had approached the authority directly about being involved in the consultation of applications relating to playing fields. This shows a slightly concerning failure to discharge statutory obligations. NPFA and SCW have a good working relationship and tend to share the information they acquire, so in the past this has helped to address any shortfall in LPA consultations. However, most importantly it does highlight the need to ensure that Local Planning Authorities clearly understand the role of the Sports Council and what is expected of them in terms of statutory consultation procedures. Under the terms of the GDPO, consultation is mandatory and LPAs must operate on this basis.
- 8.38 SCW are gaining confidence that Local Planning Authorities are consulting them with regards to playing field applications, although they still recognise a need to approach authorities directly when they have not been consulted. Very few councils keep comprehensive records of their consultations with the Sports Council so there is a lack of certainty from the LPAs as to whether they are adhering to the statutory requirements.

Expanding SCW Consultation Remit

- 8.39 Although there is currently a statutory requirement only to consult with SCW on applications involving playing fields, some authorities consult with them on broader applications relating to recreational space such as MUGAs and sports centres.
- 8.40 SCW consider the typology in draft TAN16 to be too broad for them to easily identify the types of space which they would like to be consulted on outside playing fields. They would be interested in widening their remit to incorporate all formal sport and recreational spaces, including swimming pools and golf courses but the current typology divides a number of these categories into separate open space types making the achievement of this aspiration relatively difficult.
- 8.41 SCW would wish to be consulted on most elements of Part D of the draft TAN16 Typology of Open Space. This includes most outdoor sports facilities such as tennis courts, golf courses and athletic tracks. However, in order for this requirement to be met there would need to be a clearer definition of those types of space which can be classed as formal or informal recreational spaces as opposed to amenity space. For example, consultation on some types of parks would only be appropriate if the use and value of the space could be established. This would require LPAs to include more qualitative methods of analysis in their Open Space Assessments. Levels of funding

and resources would also need to be addressed if the statutory requirement to consult on playing field applications increased to cover additional forms of recreational space.

Future Development

- 8.42 SCW is planning to set up an 'Active Places' database following the development of the 'Active Places' interactive database by Sports England. The current facility in England is intended to hold information on all recreational space and facilities and will include interactive mapping facilities to allow users access to the location and details of sports and recreational facilities.
- 8.43 The Welsh system is likely to be developed in phases, with the first phase involving the building of a database holding information on sports halls, swimming pools, squash courts, athletics tracks, bowling rinks, golf courses and AstroTurf pitches. The success of this database is reliant on the availability of accurate data and as such, grass pitches could not yet be included in the system as this information is not currently available in Wales.
- 8.44 The full potential of the 'Active Places' system operating in Wales will only be realised if accurate information can be obtained on recreational space and facilities across the Country. The completion of formal Public Open Space Assessments by Welsh Local Planning Authorities could be a major contributor to the development of this database. In addition, Local Planning Authorities need to work in collaboration with the Sports Council for Wales (and vice versa) to provide a fuller picture about provision on a national basis.

Recommendations

Monitoring Consultations and Data Recording

- 8.45 In the short term, further monitoring of the planning applications which the Sports Council for Wales are asked to consult on, particularly those to which they submit an objection, would enhance the current database. Following the progress of the applications to their determination would not only be important in ensuring that LPAs are adequately discharging their statutory responsibilities and providing accurate records of the extent to which the Sports Council's recommendations are taken into account, but would also generate exact figures on the applications which have resulted in a loss of playing fields. Until an efficient monitoring system is in place, such information will not be readily available.

- 8.46 The development of the 'Active Places' database by SCW will result in a valuable resource on recreational space for Wales. It is recommended that this process is encouraged and that formal links between all Welsh LPAs and SCW are established to enable data sharing.

Expanding the Consultation Remit of SCW

- 8.47 One of the central issues to arise from the study consultations, particularly with the pilot authorities, is the need for clarity with regards to the role of SCW in the planning process. Local Planning Authorities need to be clear as to exactly what they are required to consult SCW on and to retain records on this process to ensure compliance with the regulations.
- 8.48 With regards to consultations outside of the statutory requirements, local authorities should be given clear guidance as to whether the matter is within the Sports Council's remit or not. Whilst SCW have expressed an interest in increasing their statutory consultation role to encompass all formal sport and recreational spaces, consideration needs to be given to the level of resources which SCW would be able to commit to planning research and whether their expertise and local knowledge would presently be sufficient to deal with the increased workload. SCW currently need to consult with local governing bodies and development officers to obtain advice on local areas and the quality of open spaces before they can fully respond to consultations. This process would need to be substantially increased to match the increased volume of consultations that would be associated with a further widening of their level of involvement in the development control process.
- 8.49 Whether or not the remit of SCW is widened or not, there is a definite need for the role of SCW to be clearly communicated to all Welsh planning authorities in the short term to enable the full benefit of this resource to be realised.

9.0 QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND FINDINGS

- 9.1 This section provides a summary of the results and findings derived from the national questionnaire undertaken between May and July 2007. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.
- 9.2 A questionnaire was sent via post to each Local Planning Authority throughout Wales, in the case of the five pilot LPAs a questionnaire was completed in accordance with the answers given as part of face-to-face interviews, therefore presents a 100% response rate. The findings of this questionnaire are set out in this chapter.

Open Space Typologies

- 9.3 Figure 9.1 overleaf shows which Open Spaces are recorded by each council. The large majority of authorities held some form of information on the following types of open space:
- parks and gardens (20 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) - 80%;
 - outdoor sports facilities (24 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) - 96%;
 - green corridors (21 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) – 84%
 - provision for children and teenagers (21 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) – 84%
 - amenity greenspaces (15 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) – 75%
 - natural and semi natural greenspaces (19 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) – 76%
- 9.4 Information on allotments, community gardens, city farms (16 LPAs / NPAs out of 25 – 64%), cemeteries and churchyards (16 LPAs / NPAs out of 25 – 64%) was held to a lesser extent, whilst information on civic spaces and accessible countryside in urban fringe areas were least frequently recorded.

Figure 9.1		Q1: Types of Open Spaces <i>(*this table has been formulated on the answers supplied in the questionnaire only)</i>									
		Parks & gardens	Natural & semi-natural greenspaces	Outdoor sports facilities	Green corridors	Civic spaces	Amenity greenspaces	Provision for children & teenagers	Accessible countryside in urban fringe areas	Allotments, community gardens, city farms	Cemeteries & churchyards
1	Blaenau Gwent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Bridgend			✓			✓	✓			
3	Caerphilly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Cardiff	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	Carmarthenshire	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
6	Ceredigion			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
7	Conwy	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
8	Denbighshire	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
9	Flintshire	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Gwynedd	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
11	Isle of Anglesey	✓	✓		✓		✓				
12	Merthyr Tydfil	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
13	Monmouthshire	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
14	Neath Port Talbot	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	Newport	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16	Pembrokeshire	✓		✓				✓			
17	Powys	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
18	Rhondda Cynon Taf	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
19	Swansea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
20	Torfaen			✓				✓			
21	Vale of Glamorgan	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	
22	Wrexham	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
23	Brecon Beacons National Park			✓	✓			✓			
24	Snowdonia National		✓	✓	✓						✓

	Park										
25	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
	TOTAL	20(80%)	19 (76%)	24(96%)	21 (84%)	6(24%)	15 (75%)	21 (84%)	4 (32%)	16 (64%)	16 (64%)

- 9.5 In one case the respondent stated that information was held in relation to the listed typologies although this information was not explicitly obtained as part of an Open Space Audit. For example certain information on greenspaces was sometimes recorded as part of the Environment and Conservation Department undertakings whilst information concerning parkland was almost certainly recorded by the Parks Maintenance Division. Although it was clear further work will need to be completed in order to make this information fully relevant to an Open Space Audit the existence of this baseline data is encouraging and provides a good foundation to commence further POSA work.
- 9.6 Most respondents were satisfied that the draft TAN16 typology list was appropriate in terms of the types of open spaces present in their respective areas. A number of suggestions for additional typologies were made. Most frequently were for countryside areas and common land. We suggest that these typologies should be considered for inclusion in the draft TAN16 list but only where these spaces are located within or immediately adjacent to urban areas.

Progress of Open Space Assessment

- 9.7 The findings from the questionnaire, coupled with the interview findings confirmed that six authorities (out of a total of twenty-five) have undertaken an open space audit in the last five years. However only one LPA has completed a comprehensive, up to date audit (encompassing greenspace, formal recreational space and informal recreational space).

Open Space Audit Methodology

- 9.8 All LPAs included or sought to include site visits as a component of their current or future audit methodology. Aerial photographs were often used and cross-referenced with maps. Audit information is commonly stored and displayed in GIS format.
- 9.9 Out of the LPAs who had undertaken some form of Open Space Audit the following types of information were most frequently recorded (see Figure 9.2):
- Type of space (22 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) – 88%
 - Location of space (22 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) – 88%
 - Size of space (21 LPAs / NPAs out of 25) – 84%
- 9.10 Quality (6 LPAs / NPAs out of 25 – 24%) and usage of open space (5 LPAs / NPAs out of 25 – 20%) was most infrequently included in all completed audits. The large majority of respondents did not record additional data, although one LPA is seeking to

record ecological value, connectivity and geological information as part of their forthcoming audit. A number of LPAs are pending commencement of an Open Space Audit and therefore they were unable to comment at this stage as to what information was to be recorded.

- 9.11 In most cases monitoring and holding information on open space provision was the responsibility of a number of departments. Usually this consisted of a collaborative effort between the Planning, Leisure and Parks Departments in their various forms. A number of authorities reported this responsibility to lie with one department – Planning, whilst seven respondents stated that responsibilities were shared between two or more departments.
- 9.12 Most authorities did not or planned not to employ a minimum area threshold when auditing open spaces. For those authorities that do use a threshold, 0.2 ha was most commonly used.
- 9.13 Thirteen out of twenty LPAs / NPAs were able to state how many applications have been passed to the Sports Council for Wales. The application count ranged from zero to seven applications and in most cases, less than two applications were subject to SCW consultation.
- 9.14 In relation to the possible increased consultation remit of SCW, most LPAs were in agreement that this was a preferred option. However a variety of concerns were raised in this regard. The most frequently mentioned concerns related to a worry that the SCW may not be able to cope with this increased workload and that the quality of guidance might suffer as a result. In addition to this some LPAs were concerned that increased SCW involvement would lead to increased delays in their ability to turn around planning applications and/or progress development plans.

Figure: 9.2		Q6: What type of information is recorded? <i>(table has been formulated on the answers supplied in the questionnaire only)</i>								
		Type of Space	Location of Space	Size of Space	Ownership	Facilities	Accessibility	Usage	Quality of space	Other
1	Blaenau Gwent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
2	Bridgend	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
3	Caerphilly	✓	✓	✓			✓			
4	Cardiff	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	Value
5	Carmarthenshire	✓	✓	✓						
6	Ceredigion	✓	✓	✓						
7	Conwy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
8	Denbighshire	✓	✓	✓						
9	Flintshire	✓	✓	✓		✓				
10	Gwynedd									
11	Isle of Anglesey		✓	✓						
12	Merthyr Tydfil	✓	✓	✓						
13	Monmouthshire	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	Neath Port Talbot	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Newport	✓	✓	✓						
16	Pembrokeshire	✓	✓	✓						
17	Powys	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
18	Rhondda Cynon Taf	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
19	Swansea	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			Ecological & geological value, connectivity
20	Torfaen	✓	✓					✓		
21	Vale of Glamorgan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	Photographic records
22	Wrexham	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
23	Brecon Beacons National Park									

24	Snowdonia National Park	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			Boundaries plotted on OS Map Bases
25	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	✓		✓						
	TOTAL	22 (88%)	22(88%)	21 (84%)	9(64%)	11(44%)	11 (44%)	5 (20%)	6 (24%)	

Conclusion

- 9.15 The questionnaire was extremely useful in gaining an insight into the issues and concerns of Welsh LPAs in terms of POSAs. The findings of the national questionnaire directly fed into the discussion and interpretation in sections 9 and 10.
- 9.16 It is clear that whilst many authorities have some information on POS this has not been there is no comprehensive and up to date data set of POS in Wales. Varying methodologies have been used to assess the supply of POS and there is little consistency in the types of POS recorded.
- 9.17 LPAs have generally recoded POS in an ad hoc manner to inform their development plan preparation or to assist in the production of supplementary planning guidance.
- 9.18 It does not appear that there has been any formal attempt by LPAs to assess the demand for the various forms of POS or whether there is a balance between the supply of and demand for different forms of recreational space and POS more widely.

10.0 LOSS OF OPEN SPACE

10.1 Given the undoubted importance of Public Open Space as an element of the urban realm and as a facilitator of improved activity levels and health standards its loss should be a matter of some considerable concern. There is a general concern about increased pressure for the release of public open space for other forms of development, particularly housing, a use that, by its definition actually serves to increase demand for open space. In this section, we consider the extent to which there has been a significant loss of major open space and the extent to which planning policy has been successful in resisting such proposals.

SCW Objections

10.2 The Sports Council for Wales records show that between 2003 and April 2007, it received a total of 100 statutory consultations relating to development affecting playing fields. Of these applications, the Sports Council for Wales sustained just 21 objections (see Figure 10.1 below).

Figure 10.1: SCW Statutory Consultation Figures

Year	Statutory Consultations*	Objections Made by SCW
2003	23	4
2004	16	4
2005	23	5
2006	31	8
2007 (to April)	7	0

**These figures do not include objections made by SCW which were later withdrawn – usually due to the provision of additional information from the applicant, which confirmed that the playing fields would not be harmed.*

10.3 The outcome of planning applications is not consistently monitored by SCW so there are no accurate figures regarding the loss of playing fields to development or the extent to which the Sports Council's recommendations are taken into account by LPAs. However, as part of this research study, the consultation records provided by SCW since 2003 were followed up in order to establish how the applications to which the Sports Council objected were subsequently determined.

10.4 Following this research, it was found that out of the 21 planning applications that were objected to by SCW, 9 were approved by the Local Planning Authority. The remaining 12 planning applications objected to by SCW were either withdrawn by the applicant/agent, refused by the Local Planning Authority or remain undetermined.

10.5 Figure 10.2, shows that there were two overarching reasons for the approvals on the applications. Firstly, that the loss of playing fields was compensated for by the extra investment that would be available for improvements to existing facilities. Secondly, there was considered to be adequate open space provision in the area to justify the loss of the playing fields.

Figure 10.2 Outcome of Approved SCW Objection Applications

Local Planning Authority	Application Details	Reason for Application Approval
Gwynedd County Council	C03A/0183/11/AM Sports ground with car parking and associated facilities, relocation of Bangor City Football club on playing fields, land at Holyhead Rd	The developer sought to provide a new playing field facility therefore loss of open space did not provide a reason for officer's objection.
Torfaen County Borough Council	03/P/08737 Residential development at John Fielding house and part of Llantarnam comprehensive school. Outline application	Part of the proposed development was located on a playing field but a Section 106 agreement outweighed this loss by investing into open space off-site.
Swansea County Borough Council	Ref: 2004/2163 Construction of two storey community primary school with vehicular access from Greenfell Park Road and car parking on Maesteg Park	Community uses proposed as part of the development i.e. changing rooms for the remaining sports pitch, new school, library and community rooms was viewed to outweigh the loss of the 2 existing football pitches.
Gwynedd County Council	CO4A/0199/14/R3 Proposed new school development at Cae Cerfig, Caenarfon	Alternative playing field was provided off-site. The new field is better quality in terms of drainage and gradient, but smaller than the playing field lost.
Wrexham County Borough	Ref: P/2005/0249 Outline application for residential development and construction of new vehicular access and pedestrian access. Barracks Field, Bryncabanau Road, Wrexham.	It was considered that the playing field was no longer needed by the school as it had moved to Cefn Road. The disposal of part of the field would fund improvements to the rest of the site such as upgraded changing facilities and better drainage.
Carmarthenshire Council	W/06874 and W/06863 Class A1 retail development, petrol filling station, car parking, associated facilities and servicing at Land at Five Fields, Carmarthen	The Council considered that the loss of the formal recreational open space would be compensated for in the provision of a new improved facility on an existing recreational area on the edge of Carmarthen.
Flintshire County Council	CTB/042370 Erection of a care home at Hafan Glyd Residential Home, Shotton Lane, Deeside, CH5 1QU	The playing fields were declared as surplus to requirements by the Director of Education, Children's Services and Recreation and there was judged to be adequate open space provision remaining in the community to satisfy demand.
Torfaen County Borough Council	06/P/13838(W) New Roman Catholic primary school for 210 pupils at school playing fields, Conway Road, Pontypool.	The applicant submitted information demonstrating that the recreational space in the locality was well above the minimum NPFA standards.

		The loss of the playing fields was accepted due to the existing provision in the area.
Pembrokeshire County Council	06/0446/PA Residential development on land adjacent to Pennar football Club, St Johns Road, Pembroke Dock	This application involves a movement in the location of existing playing fields (approximately 200m). The new playing fields are the same size and quality compared with the existing open space. In addition, a planning condition was included in the permission which required the new open space provision to be built within 6 months of development completion.

10.6 The low number of applications that were approved, against the SCW objection suggests that National Planning Policy or SCW views are generally being observed and are only rarely being rejected. Even where planning applications are being allowed against the advice of SCW it would appear that there are other material considerations to support these decisions. In the cases listed above the majority of developments have made provision for new facilities in accordance with national policy guidance as set out below:

PPW Policy 11.1.11

All playing fields whether owned by public, private or voluntary organisations, should be protected except where:

- *facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;*
- *alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available;*
or
- *there is an excess of such provision in the area.*

10.7 We do have a concern that the lack of up-to-date evidence base of supply or any analysis of local recreational requirements that it will currently be difficult for LPAs and SCW to come to a view on whether there is a surplus of provision in a particular area. It is particularly important therefore that where this is used as a justification for the loss of POS that there is up to date evidence to support this case.

10.8 Whilst there was a lack of data from local authorities on open space loss, anecdotal evidence from the councils suggests that loss of playing pitches is not considered to be a major issue at present. This would appear to be supported by the SCW data.

10.9 It should be noted that this analysis has only considered sites of 0.4ha or above i.e. the statutory consultation threshold. As a result it is not possible to assess the extent

of loss of smaller playing fields, although no specific examples of loss were brought to our attention as part of this exercise. However some concerns were raised regarding smaller formal recreational spaces such as mini pitches and that such spaces do not have the protection that larger football pitches have.

- 10.10 Should the threshold for definition of a playing field be reduced it would appear that the existing policy mechanisms are robust enough to ensure that valued playing fields would be retained.

11.0 METHODOLOGIES FOR MEASURING OPEN SPACE

Introduction

- 11.1 This section outlines a review of consultation on the Open Space typologies included in the draft TAN16. In addition, this chapter also outlines the general POSA progress made by Welsh LPAs and the broad methodologies employed by each.
- 11.2 The results in figure 11.1 are based on the answers received from the national questionnaire. The table shows the extent to which Open Space audits have been carried out in Wales, throughout the last five years. One LPA has completed a comprehensive (encompassing greenspace, formal recreational space and informal recreational space), up-to-date audit, whilst five other LPAs have completed an up-to-date audit albeit with variations in the scope of typologies recorded. Cardiff Council were identified as being furthest into undertaking an Open Space Audit and therefore, this chapter includes numerous examples from this audit. It also draws upon other studies that have been commenced.
- 11.3 Six up-to-date audits have been completed in the last five years; of these audits formal recreational space was most frequently recorded, whilst natural greenspace was least regularly recorded. Nevertheless despite the lack of completed audits, fifteen LPAs are currently undertaking a POSA audit or are at least planning to undertake some form of POSA audit in the near future. This illustrates the recognised importance of Open Space across Welsh LPAs and the guidance in the draft TAN16.
- 11.4 In very broad terms, the various methodologies employed for measuring open space are made up of two elements – qualitative and quantitative. The former relates to methods which sought to undertake subjective, value judgements about the condition of the space and perceptions of it whilst the latter seeks undisputed facts in terms of the amount of space. Two case study examples are used to illustrate these two methodological strands. Cardiff is used to illustrate a qualitative assessment whilst Flintshire has been used as an example of a quantitative audit. A review of these two studies is helpful in highlighting the clear differences in these two approaches.

Figure 11.1: Progress in Auditing Open Spaces throughout the 22 Welsh LPAs and 3 NPAs in the last 5 years

LPA	Spaces covered in respective POSAs			Additional Comments
	Greenspace	Formal Recreational Space	Informal Recreational Space	
Blaenau Gwent	*			A Greenspace Strategy is currently being prepared. The Council have plans to complete an open space assessment.
Bridgend		✓	✓	Two separate audits were completed; one relating to outdoor sport and another relating to children's playing space.
Caerphilly	*	*	*	Nearing complete of a Greenspace Strategy which was used as a basis for a wider POSA.
Cardiff	*	*	*	POSA is nearing completion. A draft has been completed.
Carmarthenshire				No formal audit has been completed.
Ceredigion				No formal audit has been completed. Some information was gathered as part of the Council's 2001 Leisure Strategy provided a list of Council maintained play and leisure facilities.
Conwy		✓	✓	A series of audits have been completed.
Denbighshire				No formal audit has been completed.
Flintshire	*	*	*	Near completion of an audit.
Gwynedd				No formal audit has been completed. Plans to complete one in 2007/8 or 2008/9.
Isle of Anglesey		*		Last audit was completed in 2001, this concentrated on formal recreational spaces.
Merthyr Tydfil		✓		Audit of playgrounds and playing fields only.
Monmouthshire				No formal audit has been completed although the Council has plans to complete one.
Neath Port Talbot	*	*	*	An audit is currently being completed.
Newport		✓		A number of outdoor play space audits have been carried out and are in the process of being carried out.
Pembrokeshire				No formal audit has been completed although the Council has plans to complete one.
Powys				No formal audit has been completed although the Council has plans to complete one.
Rhondda Cynon Taff	*			Currently undertaking a Greenspace Audit and planning on undertaking a more general Open Space Audit.

LPA	Spaces covered in respective POSAs			Additional Comments
Swansea		*	*	An audit is currently being prepared
Torfaen				No formal audit has been completed although a brief is currently being constructed for consultants.
Vale of Glamorgan				No formal audit has been completed although the Council has plans to complete one.
Wrexham	✓	✓		Completed a Greenspace Strategy. A basis audit covering formal spaces has been completed too.
Brecon Beacons National Park				No formal audit has been completed although the Council has plans to complete one.
Snowdonia National Park		*	*	Currently completing an audit.
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park				No formal audit has been completed.

Quantitative Case Study: Flintshire

Flintshire County Council's Planning and Leisure Services Departments undertook a quantitative Open Space Survey in 2005. This was an internal study, the findings of which were intended for use by these departments to support existing and future development plan policies in the assessment of development proposals and in open space management and funding decisions. As the study has not been formally approved by the Council, it is not therefore an official document or policy statement at this time.

The study did not include a qualitative assessment nor did it involve the community. Rather, this quantitative study was envisaged to be the first step in taking stock of existing open space provision and further work associated with a qualitative assessment and community involvement were intended to be undertaken at a later date.

The audit recorded a wide range of open space typologies, from incidental roadside verges to children's play space, which were located within or immediately adjacent

to settlements. Recorded settlements ranged from large urban centres such as Mold to large industrial areas such as Deeside Industrial Park and very small villages such as Padeswood. In the course of identifying open spaces it was often necessary to distinguish between open spaces and open countryside. The study sought to exclude those areas which were clearly related to the open countryside by virtue of an agricultural use or other related use, albeit that the Council evidently found this distinction difficult in some areas.

This can be a common difficulty in more rural areas where the urban/rural fringe may not always be apparent.

For each open space the Council recorded the location of the open space, its typology and its area in hectares. Appendix 2 includes an example of a GIS map which was generated to illustrate some gathered data.

Information concerning the quantity of existing open space, coupled with the population of each settlement was used to calculate how well (in quantitative terms) existing provision serves the local population. The Council's adopted the 'Six Acre Standard' for children's play, sport and recreation needs were used as benchmarks against which to judge existing provision and thereby to highlight any local surplus or deficit.

An important point which the Council recognise as a shortcoming of their survey is the limitation of using the 'Six Acre Standard'. Despite being nationally accepted and widely used the six acre standard does not consider all types of open spaces and focuses only on areas of children's play space (both formal and informal) and outdoor sport and recreation space. It does not allow for the recording of spaces such as allotments, natural greenspace and amenity open space. These types of open space were recorded as part of the Flintshire study but could not be considered as part of the standard and could therefore not be assessed in terms of local surplus or deficit.

Qualitative Case Study; Cardiff

A qualitative theme formed an important aspect of Cardiff's Open Space Audit. The audit is due to be completed in November 2007. It utilised a customised form to evaluate the following themes:

- **Quality of open space:**
 - general characteristics,
 - external accessibility,
 - internal accessibility,
 - safety and security,
 - appropriate planting and biodiversity,
 - woodland,
 - areas of water (excluding fountains and ornamental ponds) ,
 - meadow areas,
 - signage and interpretation,
 - facilities,
 - management and maintenance
- **Value audit:**
 - nature conservation designation
 - contribution to local amenity
 - contribution to recreation and well being
 - biodiversity value
 - cultural and community value

Firstly a site inspection was undertaken by Council representatives for all identified open spaces (a copy of the survey form is set out in Appendix 3). A numerical value of between 4 and 0 was allocated to each site for each theme; 4 were defined to equal excellent whilst 0 equalled very poor. If a section of the survey was not relevant, it was omitted so as not to skew results. Overall scores were calculated for value and quality.

The Cardiff methodology was developed by Kit Campbell and was undertaken by three council representatives over a period of six-months. The local community were not involved in the assessment.

The Council were able to make comparisons between different sites using the numerical values, as long as the sites were designated in the same category (e.g. public parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green space and green

corridors). Appendix 4 contains an example of a quality-value graph which was constructed for visual amenity green space. Each individual open space is represented by a symbol. The respective percentage value (indicated on the x-axis) and quality (indicated on the y axis) scores for each open space is plotted on the graph to show the relationship between value and quality for each space. Interestingly, on average open spaces in Cardiff appear to have scored slightly higher in terms of their value than in quality. This type of graph may be useful to identify individual open spaces which may be of a poor quality but highly valued or vice versa. In both cases, this information would better inform where future improvements would be most appropriate and could therefore be used to help correct resources valued.

Implications of case studies examples

- 11.5 Both case studies have broadly highlighted the deviation in methodologies employed and the variety of stages authorities are at in terms of developing these methodologies throughout Wales. In addition to highlighting the relative merits and composition of qualitative and quantitative studies, they demonstrate a number of further points that are relevant to POSAs.
- 11.6 Flintshire's rural perspective provides a valuable insight into the types of problems open space audits create for such areas. Difficulties were identified in relation to the distinction between open space and open countryside, the relevance of adopted standards to all typologies of open spaces and the question of which urban centres should be included. These issues should be addressed in governmental guidance and specific reference should be given to them in the rural context.
- 11.7 Cardiff's approach was insightful in terms of understanding how quality and value can be assessed. Very few authorities had attempted to undertake such a comprehensive quality and value assessment and therefore Cardiff's approach provides a good lesson-learning experience. In each audit (quality and value) Cardiff have included a wide-range of considerations which makes for a detailed assessment of each open space. However we have some reservations as to how successful a value audit can be in the absence of a user survey. Nevertheless, Cardiff appears to have been successful whilst acting within realistic resource confines.

Broad methodologies

11.8 The observed variation in methodologies of POSA audits, is essentially based on three broad categories of open space:

- Formal Recreational Space (e.g. playing fields, children's play area, skate parks)
- Natural Green Space Strategies (e.g. green corridors, nature reserves, country parks)
- Informal Recreational Space (e.g. parkland, civic spaces, allotments or derelict open land)

11.9 These methodologies are considered in turn with specific case study examples below

Formal recreational space (e.g. playing fields, children's play area)

11.10 This methodology concentrates on formal recreational spaces – essentially, outdoor sport and children's play space as defined by the NPFA 'Six Acre Standard'. The typology includes open spaces such as school playing fields, children's playgrounds and skate parks.

11.11 The NPFA standard was most frequently used as a benchmark for comparing public open space provision by local authorities. Most of the open space audits using the NPFA standard have focused on recording the more quantitative aspects of space such as the location, type and size, while the more qualitative aspects - access, usage, facilities and quality of space were less frequently recorded by this type of studies. In most cases, studies were undertaken through desk-based surveys using maps and aerial photos which were then backed up with site visits by council employees augmented by the application of local knowledge. The data was then presented on a GIS system.

11.12 LPAs favouring this method of data collection generally viewed the quantitative assessment of open spaces as being far less subjective than the analysis of more qualitative aspects of open space. The recording of quantitative data was considered to consist of a more factual gathering of physical and geographical information and avoiding the engagement of more subjective issues relating to the condition and value of spaces, which are more open to interpretation. Quantitative data was also straightforward to compile and assess, with data trends clearly observable when comparing studies. However the significant costs associated with obtaining reliable qualitative data such as surveys, user counts and community engagement exercises have tended to discourage the more detailed aspects of assessment.

- 11.13 The use of the NPFA standard as a benchmark for assessing open space provision was recognised as a longstanding, unambiguous standard, which is trusted by LPAs, many of whom were uncertain as to how to develop their own local standard. Such benchmarks were highly valued by LPAs and have proved influential in determining which methodology LPAs employed in their audits.
- 11.14 Nevertheless, despite the prevalence of this methodology, many LPAs have recognised its shortcomings. For example, whilst a playing field might be large and have facilities for football games, the area may suffer from anti-social behaviour problems such as graffiti, litter or dog fouling. This may significantly devalue the open space for the community but there is no capacity for this to be recorded via this audit methodology. In short, whilst the quantitative elements of this approach are important and are appreciated, it is recognised that there needs also to be a greater focus upon qualitative features of formal recreation space in POSA.
- 11.15 The NPFA 'Six Acre Standard' has been in existence for many years. It is also questioned the extent to which the standard reflects current recreational requirements and patterns of participation – particularly with an aging population.

Case study example: Bridgend

This type of methodology was adopted by Bridgend Council. The Council has so far undertaken two separate audits, one which examined children's play space and another which examined outdoor sport. Both definitions are based on the NPFA 'Six Acre Standard' and both documents are envisaged to form part of any future Open Space Assessment and wider Open Space Strategy.

Children's play space was calculated on a Group Settlement Area (GSA) basis within the County Borough. Each GSA is delineated by the Council, based upon the existing settlements identified and the links between them, accessibility and ward definitions within the County Borough. Each of the 13 GSA's (Figure 11.2) identified compare the 2001 census population with the actual provision of Children's Playing Space. This comparison provides an overall assessment which identified a deficit or surplus of facilities within each GSA.

Figure 11.2: 13 GSAs in Bridgend County Borough.

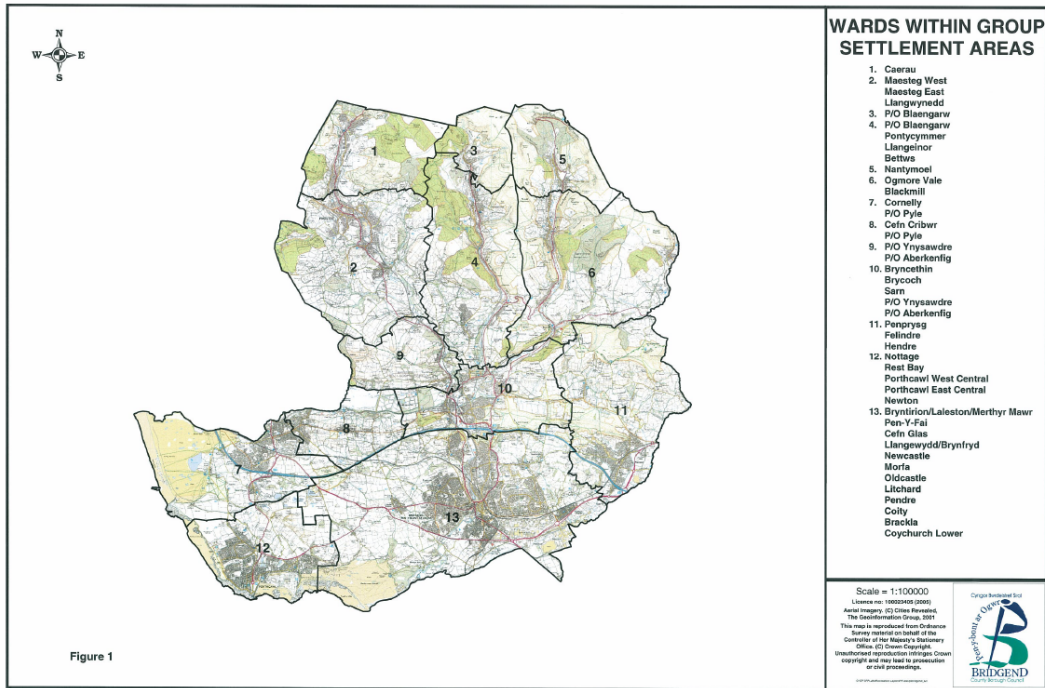
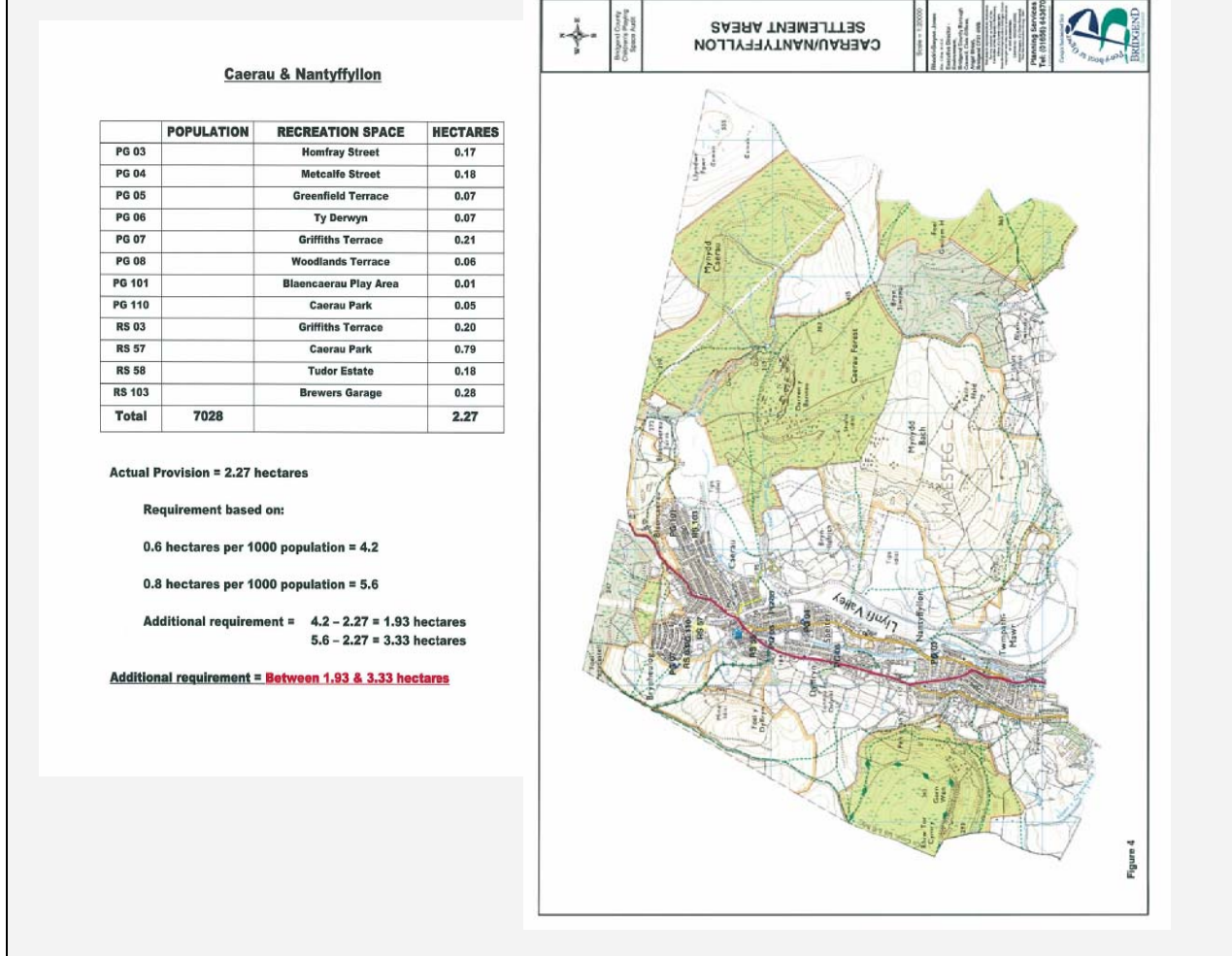


Figure 11.3 overleaf includes a sample analysis of children’s play spaces in the Caerau / Nantymoel GSA. All facilities are identified, coded, area noted and indicated on the map. The combined area is compared with the suggested NPFA standard and future need.

Figure 11.3: Sample GSA Analysis



Natural Green Space Strategies

- 11.16 This methodology examines natural green spaces only, culminating in an ‘Accessible Natural Greenspace Study’ which feeds into a policy and management response in the form of a ‘Greenspace Strategy’. This methodology is set out in detail by CCW in their ‘Providing Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities: A Practical Guide to Assessing the Resource and Implementing Local Standards for Provision in Wales’ document (referred to in this report as the CCW Natural Greenspace Toolkit). This methodology seeks to only assess natural greenspaces such as country parks, beaches, woodlands, commons and nature reserves.
- 11.17 This type of POSA has been undertaken by several LPAs, encouraged in part by the funding supplied by CCW for undertaking an Accessible Natural Greenspace Study. Some LPAs had chosen to combine their resources and have commissioned a joint Greenspace Provision Report e.g. Heads of the Valleys authorities (which comprises Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Torfaen)

11.18 In most circumstances this type of assessment was completed alongside another POSA audit which examined formal recreational spaces. However Caerphilly County Borough Council has sought to adapt this methodology and use it as a basis for compiling a more comprehensive POSA audit, broadening the study's remit beyond just natural greenspace. It is this scope for adaptation and the incorporation of different approaches which may prove valuable in undertaking more comprehensive POSA audits in the future.

11.19 The CCW Natural Greenspace toolkit seeks to provide a standard for natural greenspace which can be used as a benchmark and applied to local situations to help LPAs identify the appropriateness of current provision of accessible natural greenspace. The advocated methodology incorporates six steps:

Step 1: Inception

11.20 This stage is associated with all the decisions required prior to undertaking a study. This may involve determining the team responsible for implementation, allocation of staff and financial resources or determination of scope and timescale of the project.

Step 2: Mapping Candidate Sites

11.21 The next step in the methodology seeks to identify and map candidate sites. The initial stage in mapping candidate sites is to determine the location and extent of existing areas of open space that might qualify for assessment. This is undertaken through the implementation of a site survey complemented by local knowledge. The toolkit suggests using an Ordnance Survey MasterMap to identify prospective areas, which should then be cross referenced with aerial photographs and site survey data.

11.22 The most difficult and subjective element of this step was focused on the process of filtering out relevant natural greenspaces from the other areas of public open spaces which do not fit into this 'natural greenspace' category. Candidate sites make up two categories – pre-qualifying sites (sites that have an existing designation e.g. Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or National Nature Reserve (NNRs) and potential sites (all other sites thought to potentially meet the requirements of the model).

11.23 As all open space is initially captured there is clearly potential to use this information to inform a wider POSA beyond a natural greenspace assessment. This is a clear benefit of this approach and offers a major benefit in contributing towards a more comprehensive understanding of the local context.

Step 3: Is A Candidate Area Natural?

11.24 This stage of the process involves examining the 'candidate' sites in order to determine whether or not to consider them to be natural.

11.25 LPAs expressed concern with this assessment concerning the degree of 'naturalness.' Although the toolkit does provide a full definition of natural open spaces the requirements of the model it is still subjective and some LPAs have identified problems in undertaking this stage. One LPA in particular found it difficult to distinguish which areas could be deemed natural or non-natural. They considered this wide scope for interpretation to significantly devalue the methodology.

Step 4: Is a Natural Area Accessible

11.26 This stage of the advocated methodology examines whether the identified natural areas are accessible. The toolkit specifies five categories of accessibility:

- **“Full access** – entry to the site is possible without restriction
- **Conditional access** – a right of entry exists which is subject to or affected by one or more restrictions or conditions that may affect the quality of the natural experience enjoyed by the visitor
- **Proximate access** – there is no physical right of access but the site can be experienced from its boundary, where a close-up visual and aural experience of nature may be available
- **Remote access** – No physical right of access exists and the proximate experience is limited, but the site provides a valuable visual green resource to the community along a number of distinct sightlines and at distance
- **No access** – No physical right of access exists and views of the site are largely obstructed”

(CCW Toolkit, 2006: page 21)

11.27 The toolkit recommends that an accessibility check be conducted on all of the identified greenspaces. This was seen to mainly be undertaken as a desk-based assessment.

11.28 One other concern with this approach is its reliance on a desk-based research. Whilst this is useful in terms of cost and resources, the accuracy of this analysis may have been compromised especially when this study is undertaken without detailed local knowledge of the area. For example, it is very difficult to analyse the access constraints, quality of open space or its nature i.e. natural or non-natural without actually visiting the sites. In addition, there was a view that this assessment under values urban greenspace and the health and bio-diversity importance of 'man-made' or other 'non-natural' environments.

Step 5: Analysing Provision

11.29 This stage compares the results with the CCW standards for natural green space.

Step 6: Developing the Policy & Management Response

11.30 CCW indicate that it is for local authorities to determine local responses to areas with low provision. In accordance the toolkit outlines a preferred mechanism for policy delivery in the shape of 'Greenspace Strategy' that would set out the results of the implementation of the model and the policy response to it, in a manner fully integrated with other areas of policy, such as for formal town parks and playing fields.

11.31 The case study below illustrates an example whereby an 'Accessible Natural Greenspace Study' was completed and a policy and management response was formulated in the shape of a 'Greenspace Strategy' which is currently in a draft format.

Case Study Example: Wrexham

Wrexham completed an Accessible Natural Greenspace Study in 2004. This was used as part of the evidence-base to create a Green Network Strategy for Wrexham (currently in a draft format, April 2006). The strategy sought to build on, and fit in with, existing studies and strategies in order to provide a framework for protection, development, design, management and maintenance of greenspace / green networks in Wrexham.

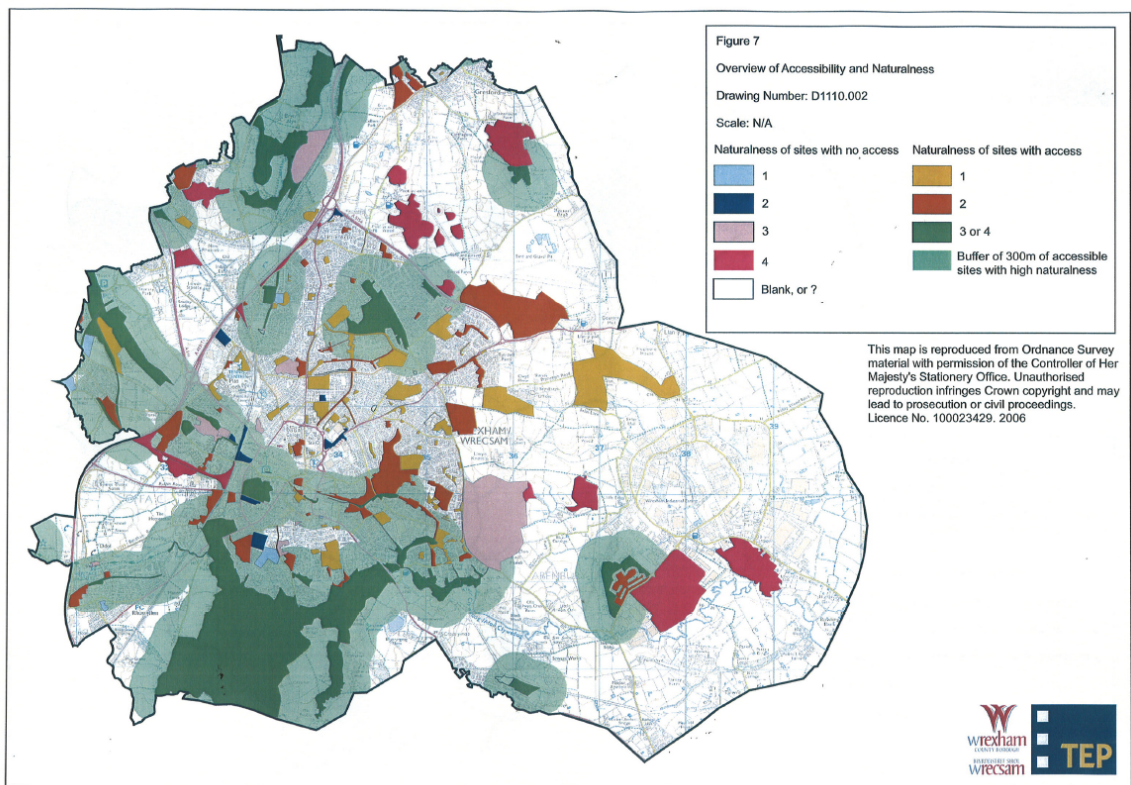
In order to develop the initial Draft Green Network Strategy (April 2006) all sites surveyed as part of the Wrexham Accessible Natural Greenspace Study (2004) were mapped and colour-coded to show their level of naturalness as identified in the 2004 study. Naturalness in the context of the 2004 study was assessed on a scale from 1-4, with 1 being least natural, and 4 being most natural. This was stated to *“not be an exact science, although sites which had an acknowledged high or outstanding biodiversity value were automatically entered as level 4”*. In addition to this *“the assessment of other sites was not made by a biodiversity specialist, but a large sample of sites was also cross-checked by an ecologist, and the public perception of naturalness was also taken into account where available”*.

As well as naturalness, each site’s accessibility and linkages, as determined by the Accessible Greenspace Study (2004) were taken into account and mapped. Using this evidence base and a consideration of the function of the space (recreation, wildlife, network, cultural or landscape) as defined in the 2004 study,

the Draft Green Network Strategy identifies six priority areas, future requirements and action points. These priority areas were identified by applying CCW's greenspace standards.

Figure 11.4 below illustrates the way in which accessibility and naturalness (as originally collated by the Accessible Natural Greenspace Study, 2004) was mapped and illustrated in Wrexham's Draft Green Network Strategy (April 2006).

Figure 11.4: Wrexham overview of accessibility and naturalness



Informal Recreational Space (e.g. civic spaces, allotments or derelict open land)

11.32 This open space typology offers the greatest variation in how this was measured. It includes informal recreational spaces such as linear routes for walking or cycling, civic spaces, allotments, incidental grass verges and derelict open land. In most instances, open land and allotments were included in POSA audits although other informal recreational spaces such as incidental grassed areas and civic spaces are less frequently included. These are spaces which may not be defined as natural greenspaces nor referred to as formal recreational spaces but they are nevertheless still of value.

11.33 Face-to-face interviews revealed that LPAs felt that undertaking audits of informal recreational spaces causes problems of:

- how to record their multi-functional nature
- which open spaces were informal recreational space rather than natural open spaces and
- confusion due to the lack of firm benchmarks as means of guidance for the assessment of informal recreational spaces.

Case Study Example: Flintshire

In addition to considering other open space typologies, Flintshire Council recorded informal recreational spaces such as former railways, incidental highway verges and allotments. Such spaces were classified under the broad category of 'other spaces'. The total area of 'other spaces' was then listed alongside 'outdoor youth and adult space' and 'children's playspace'. Total provision of the two latter categories is subsequently compared with the minimum requirement to illustrate whether there is a surplus or deficit. This analysis of provision was not however undertaken for other space.

Lessons for rural LPAs

11.34 The envisaged resource requirement associated with undertaken POSAs has been found to particularly discourage rural authorities from undertaking audits. Potential issues :

- What is a reasonable travel time in a rural area?
- What is an acceptable level of public open space provision for a rural town, village and hamlet?
- How should assessments deal with the seasonal increased in public open space need due to tourism?
- What types of Public Open Space should be provided in small settlements
- Provision of Public Open space is not necessarily high up in the political agenda in rural areas.
- Has to deal with the role of the open countryside alongside for the need for public open space

11.35 New guidance needs to take account of the rural perspective. It must stress the need, especially in rural locations, to derive locally relevant standards open space which reflect the local circumstances. For example Pembrokeshire Council representatives stated that during the summer months the population doubles as a result of tourism and therefore recreational needs increase during this period.

Conclusion

11.36 This research has found that progress in undertaking Open Space Audits is limited; only six Welsh Local Planning Authorities have completed some form of Open Space Audit in the last 5 years. Nevertheless, most authorities were aware that it was an increasingly important issue which will require greater attention in the future.

11.37 Beyond the overarching qualitative and quantitative approaches, audit methodologies were found to largely include three broad categories of open space:

- a) formal recreational space,
- b) natural greenspace and
- c) informal recreational space.

11.38 The first broad methodology related to formal recreational space and was most frequently adopted by authorities. This approach was often quantitative in nature - recording largely non-subjective aspects of formal recreational spaces such as size, typology, location and available on-site facilities. However the absence of a qualitative aspect meant that the analytical depth of this methodology was limited.

11.39 Formal recreational space was generally then measured against the NPFA standard to assess the extent to which there was adequate level of provision.

11.40 The extent to which natural greenspace was assessed was far more variable. CCW has recently produced comprehensive guidance that is increasingly being taken up by authorities and appears to provide a valuable basis for undertaking rigorous and consistent assessments. The early stage of the CCW programme means that we have only been able to review the initial pilot study.

11.41 The CCW methodology initially reviews all forms of open space. The potential exists therefore for this approach to form the basis for comprehensive studies which then distinguish between formal recreational space, natural greenspace and informal greenspace.

- 11.42 Lastly, informal recreational space was least frequently recorded and included the greatest variation in methodological approach. In a small number of instances the location, size and nature of informal recreational spaces such as incidental grassed areas was recorded. Allotments and open land were recorded more frequently and in greater detail i.e. both qualitatively and quantitatively.
- 11.43 The current position is that there is no clear and widely used methodology for undertaken POS assessments in Wales. This reflects the absence of any clear guidance in this area in Wales. Some LPAs have followed the guidance accompanying PPG17 in England and have generally found this useful. There still remain some problems in relation to issues such as categorisation of sites and their multiple use.
- 11.44 Analysis has generally been undertaken more widely where there is a readily known and understood benchmark e.g. the NPFA standard. It remains to be seen the extent to which the CCW benchmarks and methodology will be taken up by LPAs in the preparation of their Local Development Plans.
- 11.45 The use of standardised methodologies with accompanying best practice guidance would undoubtedly assist LPAs in undertaking or co-ordinating assessments. This will be important if WAG decided that it is necessary to develop a national database that is consistent across Wales. The CCW advocated methodology offers a potential starting point for the collection of data in quantitative terms which could be combined with existing good practice guidance in England in relation to recreational space.
- 11.46 The above analysis concentrates on the assessment of supply it does not attempt to assess the extent to which LPAs have sought to devise local standards for provision of play or open space i.e. demand for public open space.
- 11.47 NPFA is currently reviewing its standards whilst the CCW standards are relatively new. Whilst these are helpful and provide a degree of certainty to local authorities, developers and the community alike they are essentially quantitative measures.
- 11.48 It is our view that a more flexible and imaginative approach is required in the formulation of authority wide open space strategies that are locally distinctive. Play Wales in particular is promoting a move away from traditional thinking about the provision of children's play space which we believe should form part of future local authority strategies. The forms of play provision sought would not necessarily fit neatly into the existing methods of analysis as greater use of ranger services and access to natural play resources are encouraged.

- 11.49 NPFA standards reflect traditional pitch based sports. Whilst these will remain important going forwards consideration needs to be given to other forms of recreational requirements and also the changing demography. It may be that there would be greater recreational benefits to a wider number of people through the provision of new circular walks than the creation of an additional playing field.
- 11.50 In summary undertaking regular and rigorous public open space assessments will only be of real benefit if they can then be compared against a proper understanding of local recreational and open space requirements. This comparative exercise needs to be reflected within an Open Space Strategy with the land use elements including new requirements set out in the Local Development Plan.

12.0 DEALING WITH OPEN SPACES – CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Introduction

12.1 This section identified a number of challenges faced and addressed by POSA. Using this understanding as a basis the chapter highlights key areas for future action and attention.

Views on existing classifications

12.2 The vast majority of Local Planning Authorities surveyed were satisfied that the open space typologies included in the draft TAN16 appropriately covered all of the open space in their respective areas. However the following typologies were listed as possible additions:

- Countryside areas e.g. picnic sites and amenities
- Common land
- Sites with un-implemented planning permission
- Equestrian facilities open to the public
- World Heritage Sites
- National Nature Reserves

12.3 Out of this list, common land was most frequently identified as an open space which was not considered to be appropriately covered by the draft TAN16. It should be noted that whilst commons are not set out as a specific category in the draft TAN they are referred to in the typology specifically under the natural or semi-natural greenspace heading. However it is clear from the survey that this has not been picked up by some authorities.

12.4 Similarly countryside areas were also promoted for inclusion as a typology despite their inclusion in the draft TAN16. NLP support this approach where these spaces directly adjoin or are functionally connected to an urban area. It may be beneficial to provide further guidance on the form countryside that should be considered to fall within this definition.

12.5 We consider that National Nature Reserves would already be covered by natural and semi-natural greenspaces in any event. Whilst the CCW methodology automatically identifies these as natural greenspaces we do not think it necessary to base the typologies on such national designations.

- 12.6 On the same basis we do not consider that 'World Heritage Sites' should automatically be included as a typology. Instead the POS elements within such a site would be identified and categorised using one of the existing typologies.
- 12.7 The inclusion of domestic garden space and grass verges within the broader 'amenity greenspace' typology was also viewed as problematic. Respondents voiced concern that these areas were difficult to quantify and assess quality. A further issue is also whether private gardens should be considered by public open space assessments as, by their nature, they are intrinsically private – both in ownership and access.
- 12.8 It is accepted that private gardens can add to a sense of spaciousness in a local area and contribute to its character. It may be that there is a case for different standards for amenity space or informal open space depending on the characteristics of a particular area.
- 12.9 We have reservations about the inclusion of private gardens in POSAs, both due to the complexities of so doing and due to the nature of such space. Nevertheless in preparing Open Space Strategies the nature of particular residential areas including private gardens may be important in developing play strategies.
- 12.10 Similarly, respondents highlighted potential issues associated with recording open spaces which change according to the seasons e.g. ice rinks, out-door swimming pools. We would recommend that the focus in these cases should be a consideration of the primary use of such spaces, although its multi – functional status and character should be acknowledged and reflected in the POSA analysis.

Multi Functional Spaces

- 12.11 Face-to-face interviews with the five pilot LPAs raised further issues with this defined open space typology. Authorities who had undertaken some form of open space audit had encountered problems when deciding how to record multi-use open spaces. For example, parks often encompassed several types of space such as woodlands, tennis courts, children's play areas and formal gardens, which are all categorised independently within the typology. In addition to this, the same area of parkland can be multi-functional in the sense that the area can be used for a variety of uses e.g. kite flying, playing football or local amenity.
- 12.12 In some circumstances, LPAs have sought to redefine and combine some previously separate typologies of open space (as defined in draft TAN16) according to their primary purpose. This approach was demonstrated in Cardiff's 1999 assessment. As part of the preparation of the LDP Cardiff Council intends to undertake a

comprehensive review of these categories to allow for the multifunctional nature of open space. However this initial approach is insightful to examine.

12.13 Figure 12.1 illustrates the five broad typologies which were used in order to define Cardiff's open spaces.

Figure 12.1: Aggregated Open Space typologies defined by Cardiff

Typology	Primary Purpose
<i>Amenity Open Space</i>	An area of a minimum size of 0.08ha. It includes grassed areas such as incidental verges and rough grasslands; woodlands including scrub but only in the built up area; ornamental gardens; equestrian facilities; but not church yards; railway verges where landscaped and golf courses with rights of way within the vicinity.
<i>Informal Recreational Space</i>	This is an area which although not specifically marked out for informal active recreational activities, can accommodate informal active recreation and children's play. It must have a minimum size of 0.08ha and have a relatively flat uninterrupted grassed area. This area can contain incidental shrub and tree planting providing this does not inhibit the area's recreational function.
<i>Formal Recreational Space</i>	This is an area which is marked and laid out for formal active recreational purposes. It includes areas such as pitches, greens, courts athletic tracks and training areas. It will include facilities which are ancillary to the open space, such as changing rooms and toilets, where these contribute to the use of the open space. Those areas not included in this category are golf courses, water used for recreation, indoor sports or leisure centres and car parks.
<i>Children's Play Areas</i>	A public area which is specifically intended for children's play which must include fixed play activities such as swings and slides and a grassed or surfaced playspace. This category also includes outdoor play equipment that is part of a Council owned play centre.
<i>Educational Open Space</i>	This is an area of recreational land which is within the grounds of an educational establishment and used for formal recreation. It must have a minimum size of 0.08ha. This category does not include yards or hard surfaces unless they are laid out to accommodate formal recreation.

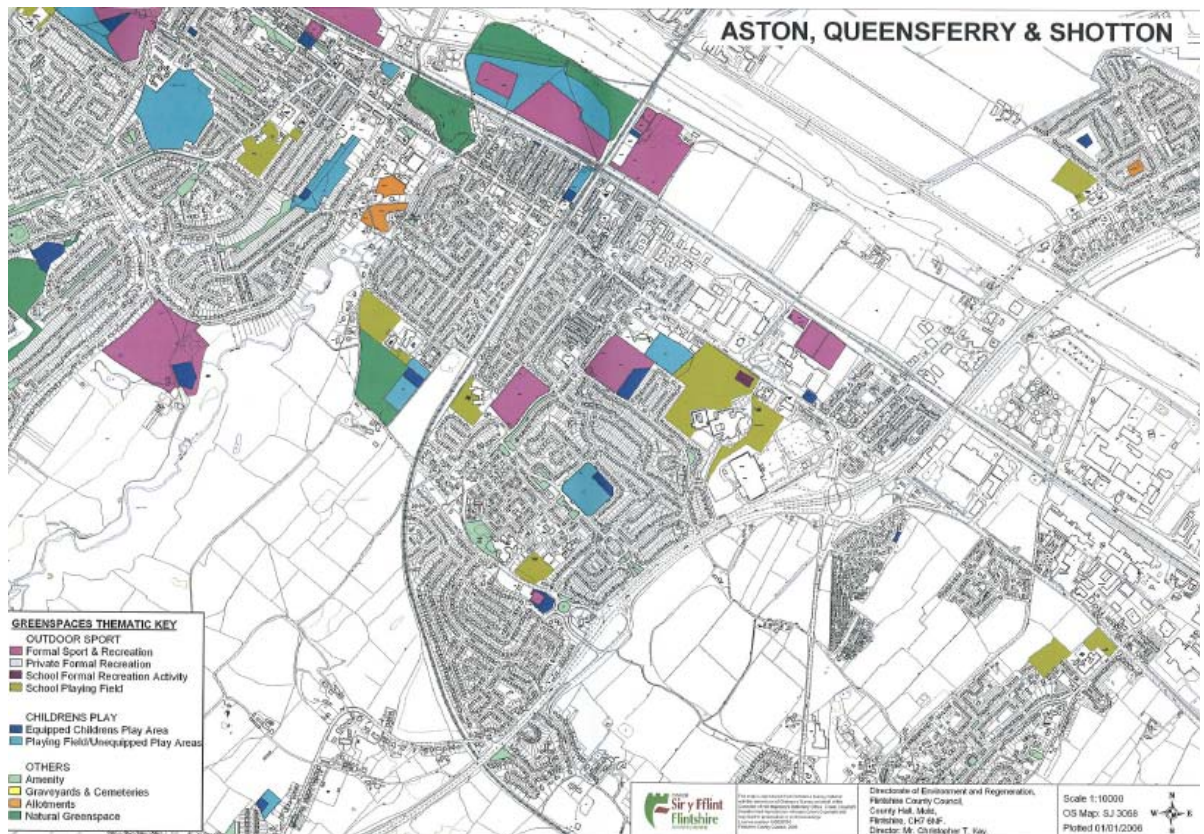
Source: Cardiff Open Space Assessment (November 2007)

12.14 In the first instance, all open spaces within Cardiff were defined according to one of the above typologies albeit that in some circumstances a number of different typologies are assigned to the same space. For example a large city park such as Roath Park in Cardiff may contain several different areas of open spaces such as a children's playground (children's play), an area of relatively flat uninterrupted grassed area (informal recreational space) and a designated area for games (formal recreational space). The various typologies (defined according to their primary purpose) of all the smaller spaces which make up this wider city park are

subsequently recorded. Appendix 5 includes a copy of the excel sheet which illustrates this method of recording.

- 12.15 This desegregation approach was adopted by other pilot LPAs such as Conwy and Flintshire. Figure 12.2 includes an example of the maps which were formulated by Flintshire Council to show the location, area and type of open space within the LPA area.
- 12.16 Despite the recognised shortcoming of using such broad typologies – namely that it still does not account for the multi-functionality of particular spaces within larger parks, this approach would seem to be the most appropriate in order to take full account of the variety of open spaces located in each LPA. However some authorities found it difficult to distinguish the primary function of spaces, especially when areas are informal in nature. As a result, LPAs have requested clearer definitions and explanations of each open space category to assist with this process.
- 12.17 An important point of deviation from other examined audit methodologies relates to the second element of the Cardiff Assessment which sought to record quality and value. It was at this stage that an entire open space such as Fairwater Park was assessed as one multi-functional space, inclusive of all its individual elements and purposes.
- 12.18 LPAs need to be aware that surveys based on primary use may show deficiencies in particular types of space that do not exist in practice. For example one ward may have a significant area of playing fields but few informal open spaces. As a result an analysis based on primary use may indicate a shortfall of informal open spaces which does not exist in practice as such pitches are invariably utilised for informal recreation as well as being of amenity value for their openness.
- 12.19 Open spaces in reality are multi-functional and therefore a case can be made for recording all these uses. It can be argued that this may lead to double counting in quantitative terms but that it more accurately reflects the reality of usage and may presumably create a more accurate record of the supply of open space and consequently need.
- 12.20 Nevertheless, it is difficult and perhaps even impossible to record *all* the different uses such spaces could feasibly be used for and in any event, this may result in the (false) perception of the amount of open space that is available in any particular area.

Figure 12.2: Map of open spaces in Aston, Queensferry & Shotton, Flintshire.



Size of Space

- 12.21 Few LPAs had sought to set a minimum area threshold in their open space assessments; for example Flintshire did not define any level of threshold as the Council wanted to remain unrestricted and sought to include all open spaces, particularly those in smaller settlements which may not necessarily be identified if a threshold were in place.
- 12.22 By contrast Cardiff adopted a minimum size of 0.25ha for amenity open space, informal recreational space and educational open space. This threshold reflects the size specified in CCW's greenspace toolkit and Cardiff's Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). All formal recreational space and children's play areas were included irrespective of their size.
- 12.23 Based on the experience of LPAs in Wales, we would recommend that the setting of minimum area thresholds (if appropriate) should be carried out at the local level. Urban and rural authorities may need to set significantly different thresholds for capturing open spaces in their assessments and any standard threshold set across Wales would not be practical for this reason.

- 12.24 Additionally, it is important that open spaces of local value, whatever their size, are captured in order to ensure that these spaces can be protected and managed. Some LPAs may find there is merit in setting individual thresholds for different types of open space included in their assessment to ensure that smaller areas within particular types of open space are captured. However, this would add complexity to the process of undertaking the POSA which must be taken into account.
- 12.25 This will create problems in constructing a nationally consistent database. However, in our view it is more important that surveys are locally relevant rather than nationally consistent.

Indoor Facilities

- 12.26 Indoor facilities such as public and private gymnasiums, indoor football courts and swimming pools were not included in any of the Open Space Assessments identified. It is undisputed that these facilities do help to meet a sport and recreational need and therefore should be included as part of some form of assessment of sport and recreational facility supply, however they are not open spaces. Whether these spaces are included in Public Open Space Assessments or whether they form a separate document is debatable and the scope of the assessment should be clarified at the onset.
- 12.27 If the study is seeking to extend beyond an open space assessment to act as a full sport, leisure and recreational study then it should include such uses. However, if it is merely looking at open space it should exclude such uses. Whilst wider studies are useful and important and LPAs will need to consider the leisure facilities in their area, our view is that POSA should not be adopted as the mechanism by which sites such as gyms, indoor football pitches and swimming pools should be assessed to do so would add to the complexity of POSA and would dilute its focus upon the core open space issues.

13.0 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Policy Context

- 13.1 Planning Obligations (Section 106 agreements and unilateral obligations) are an important method by which new open space is provided and funds for new or improved open space secured.
- 13.2 Appropriate guidance is set out on negotiating planning obligations in Planning Policy Wales and Circular 13/97 Planning Obligations. Government guidance acknowledges that it is reasonable for developers to be required to make a contribution towards the provision, upgrading and/or maintenance of recreation space, although this should be related in scale and kind to the proposed development. PPW states that planning obligations should only be sought where they are necessary to make a proposal acceptable in land use planning terms.

Key Issues

- 13.3 From the pilot studies and review of current practice a number of key issues were identified in relation to negotiating planning obligations. These included:
- Evidence base;
 - Thresholds;
 - On site or off-site provision;
 - Contribution to new provision or improvements to existing;
 - Use of supplementary planning guidance
 - Commuted sums & maintenance
 - Community Infrastructure Levy.

Evidence Base

- 13.4 Our review of development plan policies indicates that most local planning authorities have development plan policies in place for seeking appropriate provision of additional public open space. The main concern we have highlighted however, is the lack of a robust evidence base on which to underpin appropriate planning obligation negotiations.

- 13.5 Councils should be able to point to robust and up to date evidence that will identify areas of shortfall and surplus; whether new provision is required; what is the most appropriate form of provision and; where should it be provided. This evidence base will not only assist the local authority in negotiations it will provide greater transparency to developers and the general public.
- 13.6 It is evident that a new level of clarity is required in terms of the approach individual LPAs intend to take in respect of public open space requirements and provision. This can only be done in an informed manner if public open space assessments have been undertaken.

Thresholds

- 13.7 There was little consistency in terms of thresholds applied within existing and emerging development plan policies. This is not necessarily a problem given the differing context for development and open space provision between rural and urban authorities. The main issue is the need to provide certainty about the circumstances in which planning obligations for public open space will be sought.
- 13.8 A clear threshold should be established within LDPs in terms of the size of development that would generate a planning obligation for public open space provision.

On-site or off-site provision

- 13.9 It is clearly preferable that adequate public open space and associated play facilities should be provided in kind on-site within larger developments. In most instances we found that there was little resistance to provision although there was negotiation on the precise form. The main problem issues that we have identified relate to public open space provision on smaller sites particularly in relation to playing field provision.
- 13.10 A significant proportion of new development in Wales is on sites of less than 1ha or 30 units or under. Whilst this scale of development may incorporate a small local play facility it can not realistically provide the whole range of open space provision in accordance with NPFA standards. As a result the larger more formal provision will need to be met off-site.
- 13.11 We were advised by one of the pilot authorities that whilst they were successful in obtaining contributions towards off site improvements they found it difficult to identify sites on which to provide the new facilities. This is particularly likely to be an issue where local authority land holdings are limited.

13.12 The Planning Obligations Practice Guide in England provides a number of case studies in the use of obligations. Whilst it should be noted that there is a different planning obligations circular in England 05/2005 many of the best practice principles remain common. Case Study 2.5 in the Practice Guide refers to the policy approach taken by Worcester City Council towards pooled contributions. This relates to sites of 10 or more dwellings and seeks a contribution towards a variety of forms of open space provision including the cost of land acquisition. The appropriate provision will then be secured on sites acquired by the Council.

13.13 Whilst the approach adopted by Worcester appears to have merit some care is required to ensure that the resultant provision is accessible to the developments that have contributed towards it. Another area of concern with pooled funds is the timescale within which contributions are used and the difficulty from a developers perspective in tracking when and how their money has been spent.

Qualitative Improvements

13.14 One of the weaknesses of the existing evidence base that we have already referred to is the lack of qualitative data on existing facilities. It is apparent that significant improvements in levels of provision may be secured through additional investment in existing facilities, particularly playing fields, rather than necessarily seeking additional quantitative provision.

13.15 It is hoped that the next generation of public open space assessments will provide more detailed evidence in relation to qualitative issues and the extent to which demand can be met from improvements to existing provision. The form of provision is also important, for example an all weather pitch will cater for a significantly higher amount of games per week than an equivalent grass pitch.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

13.16 Development plans should set out the basis for negotiation planning gain for open space, SPG will need to accord with the development plan policy. Where possible going forwards LDP policies should identify those residential allocations where additional public open space provision will be sought and also seek to allocate new dedicated public open space as appropriate

13.17 Relatively few local authorities have up to date SPG to provide an informed basis for negotiating planning obligations. We would expect SPG to become more prevalent once development policies become adopted and on the back off public open space assessments currently underway.

- 13.18 In order to positively inform planning obligation negotiations SPG should set out in reasonable detail the scale and form of contributions being sought and the mechanism by which it is to be delivered and maintained. This should include guidance on the on potential capital costs as well as the scale of commuted sums towards on-going maintenance. These costs will need to be clearly justified and regularly reviewed and updated.
- 13.19 By setting out guidance on the scale and potential cost of planning obligations for open space the developer is more likely to be able to take this into account up front before land values become established.
- 13.20 Planning obligations should set out clearly the phasing of the delivery of public open space and in all cases where financial contributions are to be made, it should detail the timing and arrangements for such payments as well as the requirements on the part of the LPA to spend the money as directed. In the event that any or all of the money provided is not spent within the established time frame, provision should be made for its return.

Commuted Sums & Maintenance

- 13.21 Commuted payments should be sought which could be used to ensure on-going maintenance of open spaces of an adequate standard. This payment would normally be made to the LPA which would then be required, in conjunction to relevant other Council departments, to ensure that it is used for the intended purposes.
- 13.22 SPG will need to make clear whether local authorities are likely to adopt new public open space and the standard of provision that will be required for adoption.
- 13.23 In some cases, Community Interest Companies (CIC) are being established to manage new development areas including the open spaces areas. As CICs become an increasingly common feature of new development proposals, consideration should be given to their role in delivering and managing public open space, either alongside or in place of the LPA.

Community Infrastructure Levies

- 13.24 Planning obligations should not be sought to address existing deficiencies in public open space provision. These deficiencies will need to be addressed through traditional Council spending programmes. The recent Planning Bill introduces a proposed Community Infrastructure Levy, the aim of which is to capture some of the increased land value arising from grants of planning permission and use it towards the provision of new community infrastructure.

13.25 If the Bill does come forwards in Wales then the potential exists for an additional funding stream to implement schemes identified through local authority public open space strategies.

14.0 MONITORING PROVISION AND RATES OF CHANGE GOING FORWARD

- 14.1 One of the central limitations of LPA records on open space is that the data often consisted of a stand-alone study which could not be compared with data gathered in previous surveys. This issue has prevented LPAs forming an historical times series of their data which would show how open space in a locality has developed over time.
- 14.2 Information gathered as part of an open space assessment captures only a snapshot of open space at the time of the survey. To remain as a meaningful tool, this information needs to be updated regularly so that an accurate picture of open space in the local area is maintained. Without such a time series, LPAs will have no evidence base to determine whether the open spaces are meeting community needs and if they are being sufficiently protected or not.
- 14.3 Planning for future monitoring should form a key part of all open space assessments and should be designed in unison with the central POSA methodology. This process will improve the overall methodology established by the LPA for undertaking open space audits, making it clear, systematic and easy to replicate in order for accurate future monitoring to take place.
- 14.4 It is understood that methodologies will be subject to change over time, as new techniques of data collection and best practice come forward. Data must therefore be gathered and stored in a flexible format to enable reliable comparisons with future survey data. The storage and analytical capabilities of GIS should be recognised as part of this process.

Cardiff

- 14.5 Cardiff has proposed to review 10% of all its spaces annually to ensure that all sites are reviewed over a 10 year period. The capturing of new sites will also occur as part of this process. Cardiff anticipates that by setting ongoing, manageable targets, the records on open space will remain up-to-date.

Flintshire

- 14.6 Flintshire are currently considering a number of options for future monitoring of sites and are looking at the possibility of updating their audit every two years. A clear, standardised methodology would become even more critical in such circumstances, not only to prevent any ambiguity on the part of different data collectors but also to overcome any lack of local knowledge.

Links between study, Public Open Space Strategies and Local Development Plan policy

- 14.7 The results of the LPA's open space audits provide evidence of open space supply which forms a part of a wider Public Open Space Assessment. In addition, the final assessment should form an integral part of a much wider, corporate level, inter-departmental Public Open Space Strategy. This wider, corporate role could be through Local Authority Community Strategies.
- 14.8 This tiered arrangement seeks to foster connections between different levels of governance as well as between different council departments. This framework will better allow for a fuller appreciation of open space issues in terms of interrelations at a local scale as well as and the current supply and needs of the community in relation to open space. It is important authorities focus on local requirements, rather than simply relying on set national standards, like the NPFA.
- 14.9 In turn the results of the audit and wider assessment of public open space will highlight the issues which matter to the local community and allow for LDP policies to be of maximum relevance to the local community.
- 14.10 In addition, evidence based POSA should enable Section 106 contributions to be more targeted to local requirements as identified in the assessment, rather than simply a straightforward contribution on a more generalised NPFA basis.

15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

15.1 By way of a summary, the following recommendations are drawn from the evidence gathered in the research.

Draft TAN16 Open Space Typologies

15.2 The vast majority of LPAs agreed that the draft TAN16 typologies were appropriate. No significant change should be made to the typologies in the draft TAN16. However **we recommend further consideration to the merit of including a more detailed definition of some forms of open space for further clarity. Further thought should be given to the precise definition of appropriate countryside areas and the consideration of private gardens.**

15.3 In addition, due to the confusion expressed by LPAs in categorising open spaces with multiple functions, when undertaking an audit **we suggest that further guidance in relation to this issue should be included in the draft TAN16 based on primary function. Appreciation that spaces perform more than one function will also need recognition when assessing audit results e.g. formal recreational space may also be used for informal activities.**

Qualitative Issues

15.4 The majority of audit methodologies employed by Welsh LPAs focused on a quantitative approach recording relating to the size, type and location of an area of open space and little else. Very few LPAs sought to audit open spaces via qualitative means and thereby have no assessment of the 'fitness for purpose' of open space in the authority.

15.5 A qualitative focus adds another dimension to an audit and can include an assessment of usage by the local community, an analysis of the quality of facilities or the value of the space to the community and access and travel time to the spaces. These issues are important in building up a comprehensive picture of open space throughout an authority to enable an accurate record of all open space, its fitness for purpose and its local value. The collection of this data is key to highlighting whether there is an over supply or deficit of high quality, valued open space within an authority and in helping to manage and maintain such spaces appropriately in the future.

15.6 **NLP recommend that new guidance should highlight the importance of the qualitative element of open space.**

- 15.7 Where formal recreational surveys are undertaken they often show a quantitative shortfall. It may be that this can be largely addressed by focusing on qualitative improvements e.g. better drainage.

Further research into the merit of the CCW Greenspace Strategy

- 15.8 The CCW toolkit looks to have the capacity to become a tool for capturing and assessing *all* public open space and not just natural greenspace. As a result it may be that this could be the basis for future POS assessments in Wales, encompassing all open spaces not just natural greenspace.
- 15.9 CCW has also identified standards of Greenspace accessibility that provide a useful benchmark, although the suitability of these again need to be tested in practice.

Interdepartmental relationships and local knowledge

- 15.10 Those councils which appeared to have the most success in carrying out open space audits, were those who had a good working relationship with other departments which were involved in open space, sport and recreational facilities within the authority. In most councils, records on open spaces are held across a number of different departments who each have responsibility for a different aspect of managing the open spaces and accompanying facilities. It is clear that a corporate approach will significantly improve the quality of the open space assessment.
- 15.11 Whilst the key focus of this study is upon the land use planning elements of open space assessments this is only one aspect of these studies. **Open Space assessments should be used to inform the production of corporate Open Space Strategies that address wider cross cutting objectives such as health, biodiversity, flood risk etc. This approach would reflect the cross cutting agenda already being promoted by the Welsh Assembly Government and can be linked into established Local Authority Local Community Strategies.**
- 15.12 Local knowledge and inter-departmental communication was an important asset in the assessment of open spaces. Local knowledge was found to be a resource-saving tool whereby open spaces could be easily identified and assessed. **Combining existing pools of departmental data e.g. records of existing playground facilities or reports of instances of vandalism and graffiti, also improved the efficiency of data compilation as part of the audit.**
- 15.13 **LPA's should be encouraged to utilise sources of local knowledge where possible.**

Consistency in Approach

- 15.14 There were a number of instances among LPAs with historical records on open space and earlier open space studies that had been carried out over a period of time, but which could not be compared with recent studies due to changes in methodology. This significantly devalued the usefulness of the audits with regards to calculating the change in open space provision over a time series. A consistent methodology needs to be maintained in order to allow for comparison. However, changes which constitute methodological improvements also need to be permitted. **Local planning authorities need to establish a robust, comprehensive methodology which incorporates enough flexibility to allow for updates to data and methods overtime, but which will also allow a good comparative time series to be built.**

Further Study

- 15.15 This study solely examines the 'audit' stage of POSAs. Although this forms an important section of the research, the establishment of need and setting standards form an equally important phase.
- 15.16 In addition to this, **further assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the use of benchmarks would provide a good basis for deciding upon future methodologies and in particular whether new informal recreational open space benchmarks should be created.**

16.0 APPENDIX

Appendix 1: NLP Questionnaire

Appendix 2: GIS Thematic Map Example

Appendix 3: Multi-functional Greenspaces: Quality and Value Audit

Appendix 4: Quality-Value Open Space Graph

Appendix 5: Sample Open Space Typology Recording

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WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT: OPEN SPACE SURVEY

Please help the Welsh Assembly Government plan for future guidance on open space provision by answering the following questions.

Recording Open Space

1. Please indicate which types of Open Space are recorded to some degree by your council.

parks and gardens – e.g. urban parks, country parks and formal gardens.

civic spaces – e.g. civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians.

natural and semi-natural greenspaces – e.g. woodlands, grasslands, derelict open land and rock areas.

amenity greenspace (most common around housing areas) – e.g. informal recreation areas, village greens, domestic gardens.

outdoor sports facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces and either publically or privately owned) – inc. tennis courts, sports pitches, golf courses, playing fields.

provision for children and teenagers – e.g. play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops and other more informal areas.

green corridors – e.g. river and canal banks, cycleways and rights of way.

accessible countryside in urban fringe areas

cemeteries and churchyards

allotments, community gardens, city farms

2. Does the typology listed above (from Draft TAN 16) appropriately cover all of the open space in the authority area? (If not, please list additional categories)

-
-
-
-
-

3. Has any form of formal Open Space Audit been completed in the last 5 years or is such an assessment in the process of being prepared?

4. **If so, what methodology was/is being employed in carrying out this assessment?**

5. **What stage is the study at and would it be possible for us to obtain a copy of the relevant documentation (either partially or fully completed)?**

6. **What type of information is recorded in relation to open space?**

Type of space	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality of space	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location of space	<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
Size of space	<input type="checkbox"/>	Usage	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ownership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional data gathered? – please describe:

7. **How is this information collected?** e.g. site visits by council employees, use of secondary data – maps and aerial photographs.

8. **In what format is this information held?** e.g. GIS; Excel Spreadsheet; database; paper form.

9. **Would we be able to view this information?**

10. Which department(s) is/are responsible for monitoring open space provision or holding information on open space?

11. How regularly are the records updated and how far do the records go back?

12. Are losses of open space recorded as part of this process? If so, how are these measured?

Measuring Open Space

13. What is the minimum size of open space your authority measures e.g. 0.2ha and above; 0.4ha and above? Why is this threshold used?

14. If your authority only measures spaces above 0.4ha, would measuring spaces of 0.2ha and above present any resource, management or data issues?

Statutory Consultees

The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order 1996 requires, in Wales, consultation with the Sports Council for Wales, before the grant of planning permission for development which may have a detrimental effect on the provision of playing fields.

15. How many applications have you consulted the Sports Council for Wales on in the last five years? Where available, please supply the relevant planning application references.

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

16. Does your authority foresee any problems if the Sports Council for Wales were to increase their consultation remit to include a wider typology of open spaces beyond just playing fields (such as those listed in Q1)? Please expand your answer.

Further Comments

Please continue comments on additional sheets if required.

About You

Name and Job Title: _____

Local Authority and Department: _____

Contact Telephone Number: _____

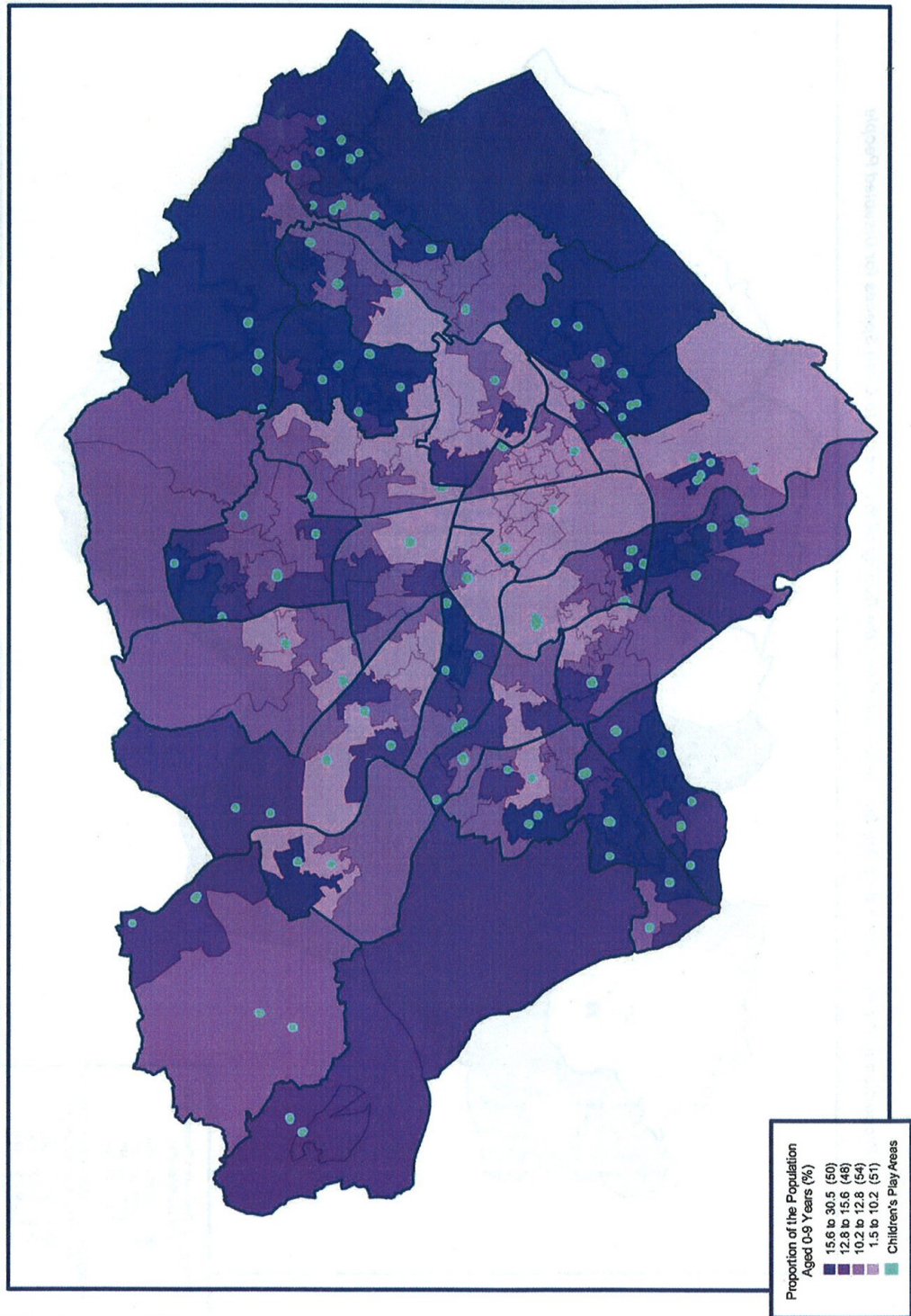
Email Address: _____

Thank you for your time and your valuable comments.

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE STAMPED
ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED TO DAVINA POWELL AT NATHANIEL
LICHFIELD AND PARTNERS BY 15TH JUNE 2007.



Appendix ii.
The Location of Children's Play Facilities and the Proportion of the Population Aged 0-9 Years at Lower Super Output Area Level in Cardiff



(Source: Cardiff Council, Open Space Assessment November 2007)

Appendix i.

Sample Form

Multi-functional Greenspaces: Quality and Value Audit		Overall quality rating	NR
(Amenity greenspaces; natural and semi-natural greenspaces; parks and gardens; churchyards and cemeteries)			
Scoring: 4 = excellent; 3 = good; 2 = average; 1 = poor; 0 = very poor; blank = not applicable			
Greenspace Reference			
Quality Audit	Score	Summary scores	
General characteristics			
Welcoming, uplifting and apparently safe, with a distinct identity			
Reasonable privacy for the occupants of adjacent properties			
External Accessibility			
Clear entrances			
Appropriate entrance signage			
Accessible from neighbouring streets/parking by wheelchair			
Adequate signage for rights of way			
Secure cycle ramps at entrances			
Adequate parking (at least adjacent to main entrance)			
Designated disabled parking			
Easy access from main entrance to nearest bus stop			
Internal Accessibility			
Internal paths link up with external streets/other greenspaces on desire lines			
Well-drained, surfaced internal paths suitable for wheelchairs			
General accessibility for people with disabilities (e.g. no steps)			

(Source: Cardiff Council, Open Space Assessment, November 2007)

Safety and Security					
Informal surveillance from neighbouring properties	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adequate safety measures adjacent to areas of water (e.g. signs, lifebelts)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adequate lighting if night-time use is allowed.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Secure boundaries which prevent unauthorised vehicle access.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Appropriate Planting and Bio-diversity					
Mix of tree types	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Usefulness of grassed areas (e.g. for kickabouts, Frisbee, sitting, jogging)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Range of plants or shrubs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Horticultural interest	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Range of habitat types	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Woodland					
<i>Woodland in this space?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Good mix of tree types and age structure	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Native species only	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Presence of Ancient woodland	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Good understorey and adequate ride management	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Evidence of active management (e.g. Thinning and ride establishment)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Presence of veteran trees	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adequate and well maintained rights of way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Areas of Water (excl. fountains & Ornamental Ponds)					
<i>Areas of water in this space?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
no alien invasive species present	<input type="checkbox"/>				
suitable safety features (e.g. buoyancy aids, warning signs)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Control of angling	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Measures to attract waterfowl and wetland resting birds	<input type="checkbox"/>				
evidence of active management of the water resource	<input type="checkbox"/>				
evidence of measures to control pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>				
evidence of measures to control flooding	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Evidence of active public use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Meadow Areas					
<i>Meadow areas in this space?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Presence of rare or threatened grassland types	<input type="checkbox"/>				
evidence of active management of established grassland	<input type="checkbox"/>				
evidence of management to prevent weed or scrub invasion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Signage and Interpretation					
Suitable, well located interpretive boards	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Clearly signed rights of way	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Information on Friends Groups	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Site leaflet	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Suitable publicity for guided walks or events programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Suitable internal signage	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Details of owners and contact points clearly displayed	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Interpretation of historical associations	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Interpretation of flora and fauna	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Facilities					
Adequate litter bins	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Catering facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Public toilets (M, F, disabled)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Equipped play facilities (details on separate sheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sports facilities (details on separate sheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Youth activity facilities (details on separate sheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Public art	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Bandstands	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ornamental fountains	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Drinking fountains	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Café	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Well distributed street furniture appropriate to the use of the site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Management and Maintenance					
Freedom from litter	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Freedom from vandalism and graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Freedom from dog fouling	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Freedom from dangerous materials (e.g. broken glass)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Freedom from erosion	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Condition of car park surfaces	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Condition of grassed areas	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Condition of tarmac paths/paved areas					
Condition of stone paths/surfacing					
Condition of boundary fences					
Condition of internal fences					
Condition of changing rooms					
Condition of other buildings (e.g. toilets)					
Condition of horticultural areas					
Condition of trees and wooded areas					
Condition of litter bins					
Condition of furniture (seats, signs etc.)					
Condition of lighting					
Overall quality rating					
VALUE AUDIT					
Nature Conservation Designation					
Ramsar site					
SSSI					
LNR					
SNCI					
Historic Gardens Register					
Conservation Area					
Green Flag					
Ancient Monument					
Contribution to Local Amenity					
Views into site					
Views out of site					
Contribution to appearance of the neighbourhood.					
Relation to adjacent or linked spaces					
Value as a noise buffer					
Value as a visual screen or buffer					
Relationship to adjacent buildings					
Contribution to Recreation and Well - being					
Value of informal recreation opportunities provided by the site					

Value of formal recreation opportunities offered by the site					
Attractiveness to people of all ages					
Value in terms of potential health benefits					
Value as a green corridor for people					
Biodiversity Value					
Adjacent sites create wildlife corridors and visual links					
Range of habitats on the site					
Opportunities for public enjoyment of nature					
Value as a green corridor for wildlife					
Naturalistic landscape					
Presence of rare or threatened habitat (e.g. heathland, species rich meadow)					
Presence of rare or threatened species					
Cultural and Community Value					
Historical and archaeological value					
Social importance of the site within its neighbourhood					
Strategic Value of Site					
Contribution to regeneration					
Contribution to enhancing a densely developed area					
Contribution to local air quality and amelioration of pollution or flooding					
Overall Value Rating					

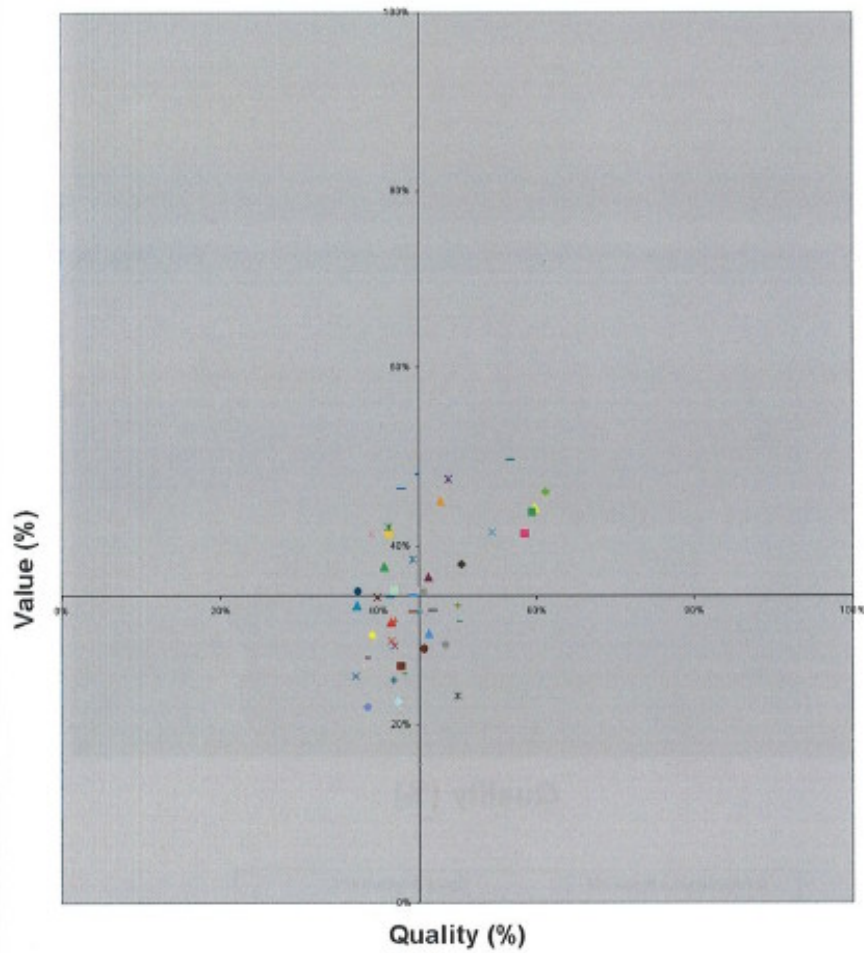
...Appendix i. Continued

Allotments Strategy: Quality and Value Audit

Scoring: 4 = excellent; 3 = good; 2 = average; 1 = poor; 0 = very poor

Strategy reference	<input type="text"/>		
Number of allotments on the site	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Number of plots vacant / %age occupied	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
	Not Applicable (enter 0)	Number of access points	Score (enter 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4)
			Summary scores
Gates and Boundaries			
Access points	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Condition of Gates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Fence type suitability	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Fence Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Hedge Species	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Hedge Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Facilities			
Information Notice Boards Suitability	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Information Notice Boards Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Brick Cubicles Sufficient number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Brick Cubicles Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Community Shed Suitability	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Community Shed Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Toilets and Washing Facilities Suitability	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Toilets and Washing Facilities Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Infrastructure			
Access routes within the site Suitable Surface	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Access routes within the site Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Parking Adequate provision	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Parking Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Water Supply Suitability	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Water Supply Condition	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Growing Conditions			
Top Soil	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Waterlogging	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Weed infestation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Shading	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Human Activity			
Vandalism	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Composting organised	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Composting on Individual Basis	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Overall Rating	<input type="text"/>		

Visual Amenity Green Space



Each shape represents an Open Space in Cardiff.

(Source: Cardiff Council, Open Space Assessment November 2007)

HEATH	MapInfo ID	Site Name	Site Type	Site Area (Hectares)	General Characteristics Summary Score (%)	External Accessibility Summary Score (%)	Internal Accessibility Summary Score (%)	Safety and Security Summary Score (%)	Appropriate Planting and Bio-Diversity Summary Score (%)	Woodland Summary Score (%)	Areas of Water (excl. fountains & Ornamental Ponds) Summary Score (%)	Meadow Areas Summary Score (%)	Signage and Interpretation Summary Score (%)	Facilities Summary Score (%)	Management and Maintenance Summary Score (%)	Overall Quality Rating (%)	Nature Conservation Designation Summary Score (%)	Contribution to Local Amenity Summary Score (%)	Contribution to Recreation and Well-being Summary Score	Biodiversity Value Summary Score (%)	Cultural and Community Value Summary Score (%)	Strategic Value of Site Summary Score (%)	Overall Value Rating (%)
	FL07	Allensbank Road Cemetery	Amenity	13.78	63	75	75	50	88				0	25	70	56	0	55	38		75	58	45
	FL10	Gabalfa Interchange	Amenity	0.13	75	50	75	50	13						56	53	0	30	38			33	25
	FL04A	Grove Place Allotments	Amenity	1.65																			
	FL04B	Grove Place Allotments	Amenity	1.69																			
	FL08A	Heath Park	Formal	5.39	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08B	Heath Park	Formal	6.10	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08C	Heath Park	Amenity	9.86	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08D	Heath Park	Formal	6.27	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08E	Heath Park	Formal	0.33	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08F	Heath Park	Children's Play	0.19	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08G	Heath Park	Formal	4.23	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08H	Heath Park	Formal	4.16	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08I	Heath Park	Amenity	0.73	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08J	Heath Park	Formal	0.21	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08K	Heath Park	Informal	1.23	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08L	Heath Park	Amenity	0.48	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL08M	Heath Park	Amenity	0.52	63	45	58	56	75	75	38		13	81	65	57	25	68	85	75	75	75	67
	FL05A	Llwynfedw Gdns	Formal	0.15	88	58	67	88	65				50	75	75	71	0	39	65	25	50	50	38
	FL05B	Llwynfedw Gdns	Formal	0.18	88	58	67	88	65				50	75	75	71	0	39	65	25	50	50	38
	FL05C	Llwynfedw Gdns	Amenity	0.49	88	58	67	88	65				50	75	75	71	0	39	65	25	50	50	38
	FL09	North of Interchange	Amenity	0.95	50	35	83	33	31						63	49	0	35	50			42	32
	FL01	St Brioc Road	Informal	0.27	50	46		50	15				0	0	75	34	0	25	50	25	75	58	39
	FL06	St Edwen Gardens	Amenity	0.39	63	58		33	30				0	0	72	37	0	45	44	31	75	67	44
	FL02	St Angela Road	Amenity	0.28	63	46		50	17				38	0	56	38	0	40	38			58	34
TOTAL				59.66	65	49	63	57	62	75	38		18	65	66	55	15	56	71	61	71	66	55

(Source: Cardiff Council Open Space Assessment November 2007)