

**An Open Spaces Strategy for the  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
2006 - 2016**

# Contents

Section 1	<b>Introduction</b>	page	4
Section 2	<b>Scope and purpose of the Open Spaces Strategy</b>	page	8
Section 3	<b>Tower Hamlets in context</b>	page	10
Section 4	<b>Policy and strategic framework</b>	page	14
Section 5	<b>Assessment of open space provision</b>	page	29
Section 6	<b>Community views and needs assessment</b>	page	40
Section 7	<b>The Way Forward</b>	page	50
Section 8	<b>Year 1 Action Plan</b>	page	61

## Appendices

Appendix 1	<b>Maps 1- 20</b>	Supplement
Appendix 2	<b>Definitions of open space</b>	page 71
Appendix 3	<b>Heritage and history of Tower Hamlets' parks and open spaces</b>	page 73
Appendix 4	<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation</b>	page 80
Appendix 5	<b>Sports facilities in parks and open spaces</b>	page 82
Appendix 6	<b>Analysis of parks and open spaces by size</b>	page 83
Appendix 7	<b>Quality scores for parks and open spaces – numerical order</b>	page 87
	<b>Parks and open spaces in alphabetical order by site name</b>	page 92
	<b>Glossary of Terms and Web Links</b>	page 96

# Section 1: Introduction

## The Council's Vision, Community Plan and Strategic Plan

### **Vision**

- 1.1 The Council's vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets. It is a vision that is shared by all partners in the Tower Hamlets Partnership, which comprises residents, the Council and other public service providers, businesses, faith communities and the voluntary and community sector.

### **Community Plan**

- 1.2 The five major themes of the borough's Community Plan set out the means by which the vision will be delivered. These are to make Tower Hamlets:

- A better place for living safely
- A better place for living well
- A better place for creating and sharing prosperity
- A better place for learning and leisure; and
- A better place for excellent public services

### **Key Priorities of the Community Plan**

- 1.3 The Council has identified 12 key priorities for action within these five themes. These provide the focus for service delivery. They are:

#### **Living Safely**

1. Building Safer and Stronger Communities
2. Improving the Environment

#### **Living Well**

3. More Homes of a Decent Standard
4. Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Children and Adults

#### **Creating and Sharing Prosperity**

5. Developing the Local Economy
6. Reducing Poverty

#### **Learning, Achievement and Leisure**

7. Improved Educational Attainment
8. Increased Participation in Leisure and Cultural Activities

#### **Excellent Public Services**

9. More Effective Staff
10. More Effective Council Services
11. Improved Equality of Opportunity
12. Increased Democratic Participation and Engagement

## **Strategic Plan**

- 1.4 The Strategic Plan sets out the aims and objectives for delivering services and improvements against the Themes and Key Priorities.
- 1.5 Under the key priority of creating a better place for learning, achievement and leisure, the Strategic Plan states that the Council wants to improve the provision and quality of public open space, and that an Open Space Strategy will be prepared in order to achieve this. The Open Space Strategy provides a policy and structural framework for future provision and improvements, and has been prepared so as to be consistent with the Council's Community Plan Themes and Draft Local Development Framework (LDF).

## **Government support on the development of Open Space Strategies**

- 1.6 The National Government has recognised the important role that parks and other green space has in underpinning people's quality of life. Through revised guidance on Planning Policy, and through agencies such as CABI Space, the Government has identified the manner in which good quality, well designed and managed spaces can support an urban renaissance, promote social inclusion and community cohesion, improve peoples' health and well-being and support more sustainable development.
- 1.7 Parks and open spaces are a key public amenity, providing for a wide range of recreational, social and cultural activities including sports, walking, play, outdoor events and other more passive forms of recreation. Tower Hamlets' parks and green spaces already provide for a wide range of local needs, however, a clear set of priorities is required to manage the conflicting demands on the limited open space available.
- 1.8 The Best Value Review of Parks and Play Services was completed in June 2003. As part of the review process, a basic assessment of open space provision was carried out. This identified that:
- twelve out of the seventeen wards in Tower Hamlets have no green space larger than five hectares in area
  - several of the areas of the borough with the least amount of green space are also the areas with the highest levels of deprivation
  - ethnic minority groups, and in particular people from the Bangladeshi community have some of the poorest access to nearby green space and green features
- 1.9 The review concluded that the development of a Green Space Strategy was essential to ensure that people in all areas of the Borough should have safe and easy access to local provision wherever they live, work and spend their leisure time. This strategy ensures that the best use is made of the resources available, and that improvements are targeted where they are most needed. It sets out the Council's intentions and policy framework for open spaces over the next ten years. Key actions have been identified following a review of current provision and needs. The proposed actions support the priorities identified within the Community Plan.

- 1.10 The preparation of this Strategy has followed the Mayor's best practice guidance of the London Plan "Guide to preparing Open Space Strategies" (March 2004)

### **Consultation on the draft Open Spaces Strategy**

- 1.11 In preparing this Strategy, the Council has taken account of the needs of local people as expressed through local consultations and research. The Strategy reflects the views and comments of a wide range of groups and key stakeholders. Consultation on the draft strategy proposals took place between March and May 2005. The Council wrote to tenants' and residents' groups, community groups, parks Friends' groups and public bodies with an interest in open space issues with a copy of the draft strategy and maps. A public meeting was held to present the key findings and open space issues in Tower Hamlets. In addition, responses to consultation carried out for the preparation of the Local Development Framework have been incorporated into this Strategy. The Council will continue to engage with the local community and regularly monitor public opinion. It will carry out an annual survey of views on the provision of public parks and open spaces and will publish findings on the Council web site. **Action Plan Point 5.1**

### **Benefits of parks and open spaces**

- 1.12 The Government has recognised that sustainable communities need good green spaces. Parks and open spaces offer many benefits for people and communities, the environment, wildlife, the local economy. They are freely accessible to everyone in the community on equal terms; they promote community cohesion (by providing meeting places and events and festivals) and social inclusion. They improve the health and well being of individuals, supporting active, healthy lifestyles. They enhance the visual appearance of the Borough and encourage tourism as well as inward investment to benefit the local economy.
- 1.13 Parks and open spaces are the places that help people define and connect with their local community and are valuable cultural assets in their own right. Some are the remaining fragments of the medieval landscape of the area, or are important designed landscapes or contain historic features of great heritage significance. The Borough's parks and open spaces play host to a wide variety of cultural events and festivals throughout the year, which attract many thousands of visitors. They are used for education by schools, universities, volunteer groups and individuals monitoring wildlife or taking part in guided walks and talks. The subject areas include the environment, sports, history, design and nature conservation; participants include children, young people and adults.
- 1.14 They offer peace and quiet and the opportunity to enjoy semi-natural landscapes and contact with nature. They are the only places that offer significant wildlife habitats in Tower Hamlets. They improve air quality by removing dust and adding oxygen, they reduce summer temperatures, reduce the run-off into drainage systems during storms. They provide attractive, routes for pedestrians and cyclists as alternatives to busy roads.
- 1.15 Parks and green spaces offer the chance for children to run and play freely in natural surroundings or to have fun in formal play facilities. They provide the

principal opportunities for a wide range of formal and informal outdoor sports that are used by thousands of local residents every year.

**In Summary**

- 1.16 The quality, amount, and access to open space are key issues that impact on the ability of the Council and its partners to deliver the shared vision.**
- 1.17 These issues are directly relevant to all five Community Plan themes and these have been used to focus the actions and recommendations of the Strategy.**
- 1.18 The Strategy directly addresses and sets out clear strategic approaches in relation to the findings of the Best Value Review of Parks and Play Service.**
- 1.19 This Strategy has been developed with the input of a wide range of key community stakeholders. It sets out proposals for continuing community dialogue during the implementation and further development of detailed actions.**

## **Section 2: Scope and purpose of the Open Spaces Strategy**

### **Scope**

The Mayor of London's Best Practice Guidance on Preparing Open Space Strategies has been followed in the preparation of this Strategy. All open space has a value to the community and contributes to the environmental quality of an area. Open space in Tower Hamlets has been identified and assessed, whether or not it is publicly accessible or has a defined recreational role. In addition, public open spaces within 1.2 km of the boundary in neighbouring boroughs have been assessed, in accordance with the Guidance.

### **Definition of Open Space**

2.1 The London Plan provides a definition of 'Open Space', and this has been used in the preparation of this Strategy:

- "All land use in London that is predominantly undeveloped other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use. The definition covers the broad range of open space types within London, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, partially restricted or restricted."

For the purpose of producing an Open Space Strategy, the definition does not include private residential gardens or incidental areas, such as road verges, or streets (unless these form part of a link in the open space network). The Strategy also follows national, regional and local policy including Council plans and priorities. It provides:

- an assessment of current needs and future demographic trends
- an assessment of the quantity, quality, availability and accessibility of the spaces and their capacity and suitability to meet both current and future local community needs

2.2 A key task for the Council is to establish local standards for open space provision. This strategy identifies a minimum standard of provision of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population (based on NPFA benchmark standards) and no net loss of open space. The Council will seek to increase open space provision through the Borough's Local Development Framework (LDF) and Area Action Plans (AAP).

### **Purpose**

2.3 To enable the Council and its partners to:

- have a better understanding of the needs and aspirations of local people
- map the supply of open space in terms of its quantity and distribution, its quality and its accessibility



- provide a framework to help focus investment where it is needed
- protect open space with effective policies
- comply with the requirements of the Government policy, the London Plan and with good practice
- deliver improved parks and open spaces for the residents, workers and visitors of Tower Hamlets

#### **In Summary**

**2.4 The Strategy follows closely the guidelines set down by the GLA and is guided by a clear set of objectives. It establishes minimum standards for the protection and provision of open space.**

## Section 3: Tower Hamlets in context

**Section 3** provides a background to the borough of Tower Hamlets, and includes information on its history, economy, landscape and people. Key challenges are identified that have implications for the future provision of open space.

### Location and development background

- 3.1 Tower Hamlets, covers an area of less than 8 square miles. The Thames forms the southern boundary (the London Boroughs of Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark are Tower Hamlet's riparian neighbours) with the London Boroughs of Newham to the east, Hackney to the north and the City of London to the west. It has a population of over 200,000, which is growing rapidly with an increase of over 35,000 since 1991. Tower Hamlets now has one of the highest population densities in London and one of the highest levels of high-rise housing. These two facts have a profound implication for the provision, role and quality of open space in the Borough.
- 3.2 Its proximity to the City of London has meant that the Borough's economy has undergone major structural change with significant growth in the financial services sector. A large proportion of development in London is now taking place in Tower Hamlets, building on the success of Canary Wharf. The London Plan<sup>1</sup> anticipates that a large number of new jobs will be created in the area over the next 10 years. GLA Economics<sup>2</sup> indicates that jobs will have increased by 121,000 by 2016 from those available in 2001. These trends are set to continue with planned expansion in Canary Wharf, the City Fringe and Leaside resulting in one of the highest daytime workforce densities in the UK.

*SEE MAP NO.1: Index of Multiple Deprivation. (All maps can be found in the separate map appendix).*

### Social Demographics<sup>3</sup>

- 3.3 About three-quarters of children living in Tower Hamlets are in low-income families. Unemployment rates (approx. 11%) are significantly above London and national rates. The London average is 7% and the national average 3.6%. The percentage of claimants who are long-term unemployed (over 6 months) is significantly higher than for both inner London and England.
- 3.4 Tower Hamlets has a notably youthful population. 22% of the population is under 15 years old, compared to 18% for inner London and England. Moreover, the 20-34 year old age group represents 34% of the total population compared to 20% for England.

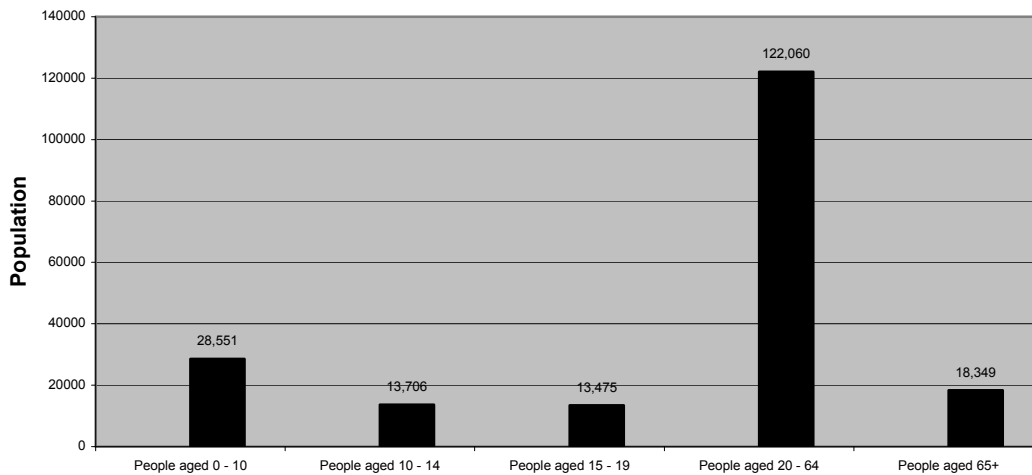
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<sup>1</sup> The Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy for London, February 2004

<sup>2</sup> GLA Economic Current Issues Note 4, Summer 2005

<sup>3</sup> Scott Wilson Business Consultancy, Final Report to LBTH July 2005, using 2001 Census data

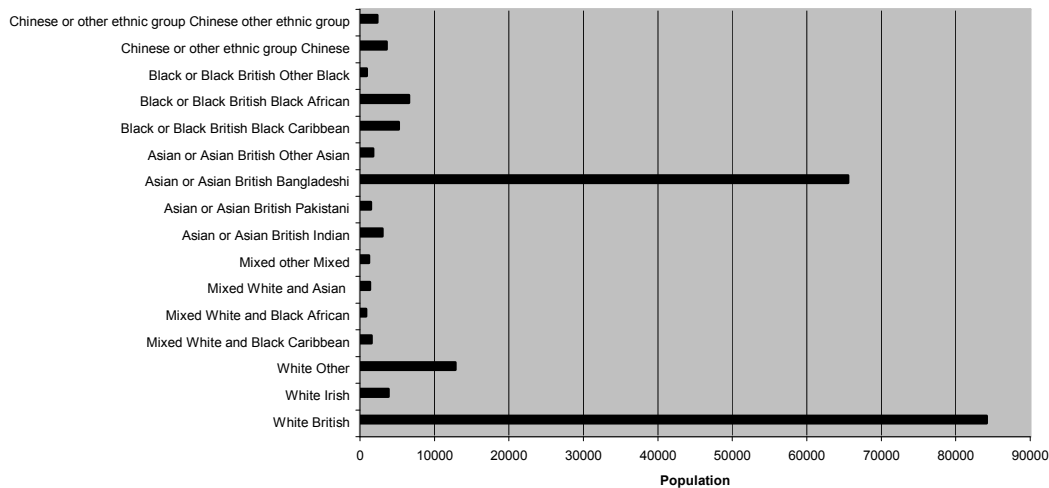
**Age Distribution of Population**



**Figure 1: Age Distribution of Population of Tower Hamlets (2001 census figures).**

3.5 Tower Hamlets’ population is ethnically diverse. The latest census data identifies almost half (48%) of the population is made up of minority ethnic groups. The largest of these groups is the Bangladeshi community, comprising 34% of the population. It is the largest single minority ethnic population of any London borough. There are also sizeable Caribbean and African groups including a growing Somali community. Another defining feature of the population is the high percentage of the under 16-year old age group which is from predominantly minority ethnic groups.

**Ethnic Composition of Population**



**Figure 2: Ethnic composition of Population of Tower Hamlets (2001 census figures).**

3.6 Of the 19 Tower Hamlets wards, 13 are amongst the 3% most deprived wards in England and Wales. The population has relatively high levels of adult and infant mortality compared to Greater London, and England and Wales. The percentage of the working age population receiving incapacity

benefit is also higher than national and regional figures. There are a relatively high number of children and young people with multiple disabilities.

- 3.7 Overcrowded housing is a problem in Tower Hamlets; 29% of households are registered as overcrowded compared to 24.6% for inner London and 7% nationally, consequently demand for housing significantly exceeds supply. The high proportion of households on housing benefit is indicative of the relative levels of poverty.

#### **Open Space and the character of the urban landscape in Tower Hamlets**

- 3.8 The Borough has many open spaces that contribute to the wider landscape character or structure of Tower Hamlets, including Victoria Park, Mile End Park and Millwall Park / Mudchute Park and Farm. The significance of these sites in landscape terms is recognised with their designation as metropolitan open land (MOL) and their contribution to the Townscape Character Assessment set out in the Council's Street Design Guide (2002). Other open spaces also contribute to the urban form of Tower Hamlets, including the docks, canals and rivers. These spaces have framed or even created the urban grain of the Borough. The Borough's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Local Nature Reserves also perform important structural roles as wildlife corridors.

#### **Open Space and Tourism**

- 3.9 Tower Hamlets has many parks, gardens and open spaces that are visited and enjoyed by tourists, bringing a boost to the local economy. Visitors to the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood make good use of Museum Gardens. Trinity Square Gardens is a key gateway site for Tower Hamlets. It is used by a large proportion of the visitors to the Tower of London, and by visitors to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Merchant Navy memorials. Victoria Park and Mile End Park attract visitors from all over London and further afield. Large numbers of tourists visit Island Gardens to take in one of the best views in London, of the river and Greenwich. Many of these parks host some of the biggest and best attended festivals in the UK.

#### **Implications for open space provision**

- 3.10 Tower Hamlets has a comparatively young and very diverse population. Parks and open spaces must be developed and improved to provide for a wide range of uses and needs. In particular, the social, educational and recreational needs of young people need to be improved.
- 3.11 The health benefits of regular exercise and access to green spaces is well established; poor health and inequality in the Borough can in part be ameliorated by increased and better use of its open spaces.
- 3.12 As a densely populated Borough with large numbers of residents without access to a private garden and a rapidly increasing daytime workforce those open spaces that exist need to be of the highest quality and support an increasing range of demands. The speed and scale of regeneration and development in the borough presents both opportunities and challenges in relation to the provision of adequate, good quality, sustainable open spaces.

3.13 Open space and particularly parks are playing an increasingly important role for tourism by providing some of the most striking images of the Borough and an important infrastructure to support some of the largest festivals and events in the UK. The potential for open spaces to contribute to economic regeneration must continue to be developed.

3.14 Parks and Open spaces and the activities delivered within them play a major role in supporting community cohesion. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities already contribute to the many events and festivals held in the Borough's Parks and the Council is committed to developing services that encourage greater use of open spaces by all sections of the community.

#### **In Summary**

**3.15 Existing Open Space is a scarce and already over stretched resource that will come under much more demand pressure in then next decade due to significantly increased residential and daytime densities.**

**3.16 As a result of this, the open spaces that do exist must be upgraded to cope with these often competing demands and in particular to take account of the following :-**

- **The need to use these spaces much more effectively to directly address the boroughs significant health inequalities and encourage healthier lifestyles including sport.**
- **The needs of a growing population of young people**
- **The demands of the festival programme (fundamental to community cohesion and important to tourism) on the open spaces that provide many of the venues.**
- **Biodiversity and sustainability.**

## Section 4: Policy and Guidance context

**Section 4** describes the national, regional, sub-regional and local policy context and their influence on this open space strategy.

### National policy and guidance

#### Urban Green Spaces Task Force

4.1 The Urban Green Spaces Task Force was established by Central Government to develop proposals to improve urban parks, play areas and green spaces. It made 52 recommendations to the Government. Their report “Green Spaces, Better Places”<sup>4</sup> emphasises the diverse value of urban open spaces. The Task Force states, “The Government and local authorities working through local strategic partnerships should make it a priority to provide high quality parks and green spaces to serve the needs of people in disadvantaged areas. This objective should be at the heart of regeneration and renewal programmes which target such areas.”

4.2 Three key priorities were identified:

- Local authorities should carry out an assessment of need and an audit of provision. An ‘urban open space typology’ was defined, to enable comparison across local authorities
- Local authorities should develop a strategy for green space provision including locally determined provision standards
- A national agency to be established to co-ordinate strategies and champion the cause

#### ‘Living Places – Cleaner, Safer, Greener’

4.3 The Government’s report “Living Places – Cleaner, Safer, Greener”<sup>5</sup> included a response to the Urban Green Spaces Task Force. This report challenged those bodies responsible for public spaces (its remit was wider than parks and public open spaces) to:

- adopt a holistic approach and see the public realm as a network
- end creeping deterioration through incremental decisions or lack of action
- recognise the importance of high quality open spaces for disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- respond to changing patterns of demography and development

4.4 This report led directly to the establishment of CABE Space as the national championing role for the development of open space.

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<sup>4</sup> Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, May 2002

<sup>5</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister October 2002

### **Other Government initiatives and Floor Targets.**

- 4.5 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is responsible for delivering Floor target PSA 8 – Liveability. This means that it will lead on the delivery of cleaner, safer, greener public spaces and the improvement of the built environment in deprived areas and across the country, with measurable improvement by 2008.
- 4.6 A key element of this target is the recognition of the Green Flag awards scheme with its eight criteria for good parks management, as a measure of achievement. The scheme is managed on the Governments behalf by the Civic Trust. It has established a national standard for best practice in parks provision and management. Other key measures for public spaces are the standard of cleanliness and the level of satisfaction of residents with local parks and open spaces.
- 4.7 Floor targets for other Government departments also have a bearing on the provision of good quality open spaces. The Department of Health has targets aimed at improving the general health of the population including a specific target to tackle obesity. In addition to sharing the obesity target, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has targets to increase the take up of sporting opportunities by school children and other target groups.
- 4.8 The Government also promotes the Beacon Council theme of Improving Urban Green Space. Initiatives aimed at raising the profile of public spaces and improving the way in which they are managed have also been developed through the charity Green Space and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) for local government.
- 4.9 The Governments proposals for the Crossrail project may have a significant impact on open spaces particularly Stepney Green and Mile End Park. Construction could also effect Stepping Stones Farm in Stepney and disrupt local football provision. The Council will seek alternative temporary provision during the construction process.
- 4.10 The East London Line Extension, with construction planned for 2006 to 2009, will have a considerable impact on the open space at Allen Gardens. This will result in the closure and relocation of Shoreditch Station for rail use, which could offer an opportunity to extend the range of facilities available for park users.

### **Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 17 on Planning, Sport and Recreation<sup>6</sup>**

- 4.11 The Government published PPG17 in 2002. The policy guidance stresses the roles of open space as supporting an urban renaissance, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion and promoting sustainable development. The policy guidance requires robust assessments of need as well as audits of the number, quality and use of existing open spaces to be undertaken. Open spaces cannot be disposed of or planning permission granted without such assessments having been carried out.

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<sup>6</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2002

- 4.12 PPG17 requires Local Authorities to set local open space standards, including quantitative, qualitative and accessibility thresholds. It states that Local Planning Authorities should formulate effective planning policies to protect open space and ensure adequate provision of high quality open spaces, and that Local Planning Authorities should seek opportunities to remedy deficiencies in provision in terms of quantity, quality or accessibility.
- 4.13 Other PPG and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) that affect the planning context for open space include Housing (PPG3), Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9), Transport (PPG13) and Flood Risk (PPG25).

## **Regional policy and guidance**

### **The London Plan**

- 4.14 The Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Mayor of London published the Plan in 2004. The Plan sets out a Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, and specifically identifies the role for public open spaces. It sets out an open space hierarchy (see page 33 paragraph 5.12) by size and accessibility standards. The London Plan states that every Londoner should be able to access a local park or open space within 400 m of their home (about 5 minutes' walk) and within 1.2 km (about 20 minutes walk) of a District Park. It stresses:

- the value of open space
- the need to protect metropolitan open land, locally important open space, green chains and important wildlife habitats
- its support for improved access to and connections between spaces
- the need to create new open spaces and improvements in existing provision where there are deficiencies
- the need to ensure equal access
- the need for boroughs to prepare open space strategies
- the value of the Blue Ribbon Network (the rivers, canals, docks and other water links and spaces in London) for linkages, biodiversity and recreation

### **Other relevant GLA / Mayoral Strategies**

- 4.15 The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (2002) sets out the Mayor's policies for promoting biodiversity in green spaces and encouraging public access to and appreciation of nature. To realise this goal, the Mayor seeks to survey all open spaces and wildlife habitats in London, identify areas of deficiency of access to natural areas, develop good practice guide for enhancing the biodiversity for green spaces and promote sustainable management of parks and open spaces. The Tower Habitats Partnership produced the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (adopted 2004) and its Parks,



Gardens and Burial Grounds Habitat Action Plan in accordance with this strategy.

- 4.16 The Children and Young People's Strategy (2004) promotes access to a range of play, recreational and leisure opportunities and highlights issues of importance to these groups such as the lack of safe areas for play and the safety of the wider public realm. It encourages Boroughs to adopt Play Strategies.
- 4.17 "London: Cultural Capital – Realising the potential of a world class city" (March 2004), promotes the cultural benefits of open space as an important resource for providing a range of opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds, and underlines how London's open spaces contribute to its cultural identity.
- 4.18 "Connecting Londoners with trees and woodlands - The London tree and woodland framework" (March 2005), sets out how trees and woodlands contribute to the life of London. Trees are a valuable environmental resource, enhancing both health and quality of life for local residents. They contribute towards the Borough's visual amenity and general environment, filtering pollutants from the air and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. They also provide shelter, shade, screening and habitat for wildlife. Trees improve the appearance of the Borough, attracting both residential and commercial investment.
- 4.19 Tower Hamlets has a tree population of approximately 50,000 trees. The oldest trees in the Borough were planted 150-200 years ago, though two thirds of all borough trees are less than 25 years old. The majority of the Borough's trees (78%) are owned and managed by the Council, though an increasing proportion are transferring from direct Council ownership and management to Social Landlords through a Housing stock transfer process. The management of Council owned trees is currently shared between several departments (66% Parks and Highways, 10% Housing, 2% other municipal areas).
- 4.20 Tower Hamlets is recognised for its cutting edge approach to involvement of the local community in tree planting and open space improvement projects and has a good record of tree planting in recent years. There are however, a number of challenges, which could affect the Borough's future tree stock including:
- potential loss of trees through development, due to inappropriate design, construction methods and practices
  - increased vulnerability of trees following transfer from Council stewardship to other land owners
  - tree loss or damage due to antisocial behaviour, vehicle damage, pests and diseases
  - adverse conditions related to environmental changes such as rising water table and extreme weather conditions
- 4.21 The management of the tree population is a very long-term issue and commitment. The need for a Tree Management Plan has been identified in

order to ensure the Borough adopts a consistent corporate approach to the future protection, provision and management of trees. This will compliment the Mayor of London's Tree and Woodland Framework for London. **Action Plan Point 1.5**

## Sub-regional policy and guidance context

### Thames Gateway London Partnership (TGLP) and East London Green Grid and Thames Strategy East

4.22 As part of the East London Green Grid, TGLP has been co-ordinating the Green Grid programme for East London. The Green Grid concept serves to implement the aims of the Mayor's London Plan by providing the sub-regional framework for open space enhancement. It identifies where stakeholders will be able to shape their policies and actions to deliver projects to the strategic network as an integral part of achieving social and economic regeneration. The Green Grid also supports the vision identified in the government's Creating Sustainable Communities: Greening the Gateway Strategies for the Thames Gateway.

4.23 The East London Green Grid is an inter-linked network of multi-functional green spaces and public rights of way, which contribute to the environmental enhancement of East London and enable the creation of sustainable communities within the Thames Gateway. Delivering the Green Grid will involve the creation of new public areas and the enhancement of existing parks and green spaces. The Green Grid concept is not designed to displace current open space projects or programmes, but to strengthen the awareness and support for their delivery and management under a single strategic banner. **Action Plan Point 3.2**

4.24 The Vision for the East London Green Grid is:

*'A living network of parks, green spaces, river and other corridors connecting urban areas to the river Thames, the green belt and beyond.'*

The objectives of the East London Green Grid are to:

- Deliver new and enhance existing public spaces that promote vibrant, sustainable landscapes for East London communities
- Provide high-quality strategic public areas along the river tributaries and green areas
- Provide a diversity of leisure, recreational uses and landscapes for people to escape, relax, learn, play and enjoy, and promote healthy living
- Manage water collection and flood risk with multi-functional spaces
- Provide beautiful, diverse and managed green infrastructure to the highest standards for people and wildlife

4.25 The Green Grid can be delivered both through the planning system and through strategic projects that will contribute to the function of a strategic network.

4.26 The Thames Strategy East has been prepared by the Thames Estuary Partnership as landscape and urban design guidance for the Thames from Tower Bridge to its estuary. This document will guide the design of riverfront developments including open spaces.

**Lea Valley and the Olympic Park**

4.27 The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will lead to the creation of a 200 hectare park along the river Lea, mainly in Newham, stretching from Hackney Marshes to the River Thames.

4.28 An audit of the open space in the Olympic Zone concluded it is generally of poor quality, fragmented and with poor access. It is proposed that the quality of the open space is improved, joined up, and access increased by a number of land bridges including three across the river Lea into Tower Hamlets.

**Local Policies and Strategies**

4.29 Where relevant the following key documents and strategies have been analysed and taken account of through out the strategy.

**Local Development Framework (LDF) - (consultation documents published 30.9.2005)**

4.30 The LDF is a series of documents detailing the core strategy and vision for the future development of Tower Hamlets, site allocations for development, and detailed policies and proposals relating to specific areas of change through the Area Action Plans. The LDF and the associated local Planning Policies will have significant influence on the future protection and provision of open space across the Borough.

**Table 1 sets out the Local Development Framework’s policies on Open Space and how it seeks to achieve the Community Plan’s objectives.**

<b>Open Space and the Natural Environment (OSN Policy No.)</b>			
<b>Community Plan Theme</b>	<b>Policy (OSN) contributing to the theme</b>	<b>Key Indicator</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<i>A better place for living safely: have a more pleasant, welcoming and sustainable environment</i>	OSN1 The Natural Environment	No net loss of sites of nature conservation importance.	Biodiversity protected and enhanced in the Borough.
<b>A better place for living safely: have a more pleasant, welcoming and sustainable environment.</b>	OSN2 Open Space	No net loss of open space.	Greater use of public and open spaces.
<b>A better place for living safely: have a more pleasant, welcoming and sustainable environment</b>	OSN3 Landscaping and Trees	Net gain in tree plantings.	A greener environment.
<b>A better place for</b>	OSN4 The Blue	No loss of the Blue	Increased

<b>living safely: have a more pleasant, welcoming and sustainable environment</b>	Ribbon Network	Ribbon network.	enjoyment of the water environment.
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### **Leaside Area Action Plan Preferred Options Paper**

- 4.31 The current provision of public open space in Leaside is 0.4 per 1,000 population (2005 position), with all parts of the AAP area experiencing an open space deficiency, which is most acute in the Bromley-by-Bow, Ailsa Street and the Aberfeldy Estate environs. Whilst Victoria Park lies to the north of the area, a particular concern is the access to and availability of small and district parks meeting more local needs. Presently the only significant pieces of open space meeting these needs are at Langdon Park, Jolly's Green, Grove Hall Park and Bob's Park behind the Bromley-by-Bow Centre. None of these existing parks is large enough to provide full size sports pitches.
- 4.32 The new housing developments will significantly increase the population in the area (by around 10,285 people) and place increased pressure on existing open space. A vital part of the AAP is to designate and help deliver new open space to fully address the Council's Development Control policy OSN2, which seeks to protect, improve and increase the provision of all types of open spaces in the Borough including accessibility to and within open spaces.
- 4.33 As part of the plans for the Olympic and Paralympic Games a continuous green park is proposed that runs alongside the River Lea, in Newham, from Hackney in the north to Leamouth Peninsula and the River Thames in the south. There are further strategic proposals to deliver a new district park within the south of Leaside to meet demand for a district park within the south of the Lower Lea Valley in Tower Hamlets. This park will serve residents of Leaside in Tower Hamlets and Newham. Additionally, the River Lea and the canal network within Leaside provide a valuable local asset that is currently under-utilised with restricted access caused by industrial developments. New developments will be expected to enhance accessibility to these water resources, these include:
- The promotion of a district park in the south of the area as a new area of strategic open space. The open space needs to include both active recreation facilities (including sports pitches and court provision) as well as areas more specifically designed for passive recreation. Links across the River Lea should be developed to enhance access to the park for residents from Newham
  - Provision of a new linked green open space along the River Lea from Fish Island down to Leamouth Peninsula. Developments on frontages to watercourses will be expected to facilitate pedestrian access to the river's edge, and enhance views to the river
  - Improvement of existing open spaces at Langdon Park with new provision of active recreation facilities, and at Jolly's Green, Bromley-

by-Bow Centre and Grove Hall Park to provide an improved and more valuable open space resource for local communities

- The promotion of small publicly-accessible parks within development proposals
- Enhancement of The Greenway to improve access to Victoria Park
- Ecological enhancement and protection of East India Dock Basin
- Promote the enhancement of existing and creation of new footways with associated landscaping along all watercourses, particularly along the northern towpath

The table below is taken from Appendix B of the Leaside Area Action Plan for Preferred Options. The table indicates the potential development outputs for major sites in Leaside, specifically the number of residential units and area of open space. The table has been used to estimate the future population and the need for social and community facilities such as open space. The document is currently undergoing a process of consultation.

Ref. no.	Development Site	Date	Residential Units	Open Space (ha.s)
LS8	St Andrew's Hospital	2010	785	0.32
LS11	Bow Lock	2010	102	0.33
LS14	Ailsa Street	2010	354	0.36
LS18	Blackwall Trading Estate	2010	126	0.30
LS19	Lanrick Road	2010	167	0.23
LS5	Hancock Road	2014	0	0.48
LS6	Tesco site	2014	538	0.95
LS7	Imperial Street	2014	140	0.10
LS17	Leven Road Gasworks	2014	195	5.57
LS13	Gillender Street	2014	0	0.55
LS15	Nairn St.& Hays Depot, Leven Rd Factory	2014	240	0.38
LS23	Orchard Place North	2014	978	1.26
LS24	Orchard Place South	2014	504	0.99
LS1	Fish Island North	2020	0	0.71
<b>Permitted Schemes</b>				
LS2	Fish Island East		919	3.3.
LS4	Fish Island South		0	0.8
<b>Totals</b>			<b>5,969 including all proposed residential units</b>	<b>17 hectares</b>

**Table 2: development sites with their proposed open spaces within the Leaside area**

Note - only those sites with an identified open space output are included here. Further information on the proposed sites can be found in the Planning document 'Preferred Options: Leaside Area Action Plan'.

**City Fringe Area Action Plan Preferred Options Paper:**

4.34 A key issue at present is the relative lack of open space within the City Fringe, together with poor access to some of the existing open spaces and

the general need to improve environmental quality in key areas. A related issue is the need to improve physical connections across the City Fringe and neighbouring areas, particularly to access community facilities in the middle of the borough to the east of the City Fringe.

- 4.35 At present there is approximately 23 hectares of publicly accessible open space in the City Fringe, giving an existing provision of around 0.5 hectares per 1,000 population, which is low.
- 4.36 There are likely to be limited opportunities to create major new green spaces in the City Fringe to transform the level of provision. The Council will seek additional publicly accessible open space by expanding existing spaces and creating new spaces to ensure that the current standard of 0.5 hectares per 1,000 population is retained and where possible exceeded. **Action Plan Point 3.1**
- 4.37 The spatial strategy envisages the creation of nearly 7 hectares of new and improved public open space within the City Fringe. Based on an additional population of around 11,500 people, this would create 0.53 hectares of public open space for each additional 1,000 people. In total, provision of 30 hectares of public open space for a future population of around 54,500 people would represent a standard of 0.5 hectares per 1,000 people. **Action Plan Point 3.1**
- 4.38 In addition to quantitative provision of open space, key issues are the quality, attractiveness, accessibility and potential range of uses associated with new and existing public spaces. The Council will encourage new ways to provide open space and leisure uses in the City Fringe. **Action Plan Point 3.1.** Possible measures to improve the quality of public and private open space in the City Fringe are set out below:
- promotion of small ‘pocket parks’ within development proposals, particularly higher density office and residential schemes in the west of the area
  - the identification of areas where improvements to the quality of streets, through planting, surfacing and street furniture, could contribute significantly to the overall ‘open space’ network within the area. Priority locations for environmental improvement are; the Highway, in association with redevelopment of News International Site; Aldgate Gyratory in association with redevelopment proposals; and, along Commercial Road, Whitechapel Road and Commercial Street
  - encourage greater use of existing open space through investment in more formal leisure provision in locations such as Allen Gardens
  - promote the ecological value of existing open spaces where appropriate, particularly in less accessible locations, including railway viaducts and embankments

- 4.39 In addition to publicly accessible open space, the Council will promote innovative approaches to the provision of private amenity space in new developments, including use of larger balconies and roof gardens.

The table below is taken from Appendix B of the City Fringe Area Action Plan for Preferred Options. The table indicates the potential development outputs for major sites in City Fringe, specifically the number of residential units and area of open space. The table has been used to estimate the future population and the need for social and community facilities such as open space. The document is currently undergoing a process of consultation.

Ref. no.	Development Site	Date	Residential Units	Open Space (ha.s)
CF1	Mildmay Hospital	2010	240	0.1
CF12c	Aldgate Gyratory mixed	2010	196	0.3
CF5	Old Truman's Brewery	2010	0	0.8
CF20	News International	2014	1212	1.2
CF2	Bishopsgate Goodsynd	2020	1917	0.6
CF3	Bishopsgate East	2020	679	2.0
CF12b	Aldgate Gyratory office	2020	0	0.8
CF12a	Goodmans Fields	2020	1064	0.8
<b>Permitted Schemes</b>				
CF17	Old Bishop Challoner School	2010	369	0.1
<b>Totals</b>			<b>7,204 including all proposed residential units</b>	<b>7</b>

**Table 3: development sites with their proposed open spaces within the City Fringe area**

Note - only those sites with an identified open space output are included here. Further information on the proposed sites can be found in the Planning document 'Preferred Options: City Fringe Area Action Plan'.

#### **Isle of Dogs Area Action Plan Preferred Options Paper**

- 4.40 The current (2005) provision of public open space on the Isle of Dogs is 1.1 hectares per 1,000 population. The principal areas of open space are Millwall Park, Mudchute Park and Farm, Island Green and Sir John McDougal Gardens. New housing and office development will generate the need for public open space and amenity space and will therefore need to contribute to the provision of new open space.
- 4.41 A key issue at present is the relative lack of opportunity to increase the amount of open space within the Island, together with poor access to some of the present open spaces and the general need to improve environmental quality in key areas. The spatial strategy therefore proposes a range of possible measures to improve the intensity of use of existing open space coupled, where possible, with opportunities to increase the quantity of public and private open space in the Island as part of larger development opportunities.
- 4.42 The identification of areas where improvements to the quality of streets, docks and river frontages through planting, surfacing and street furniture,

could contribute significantly to the overall 'open space' network within the Island. Priorities for environmental improvement are:

- the greater use of open space through investment in leisure provision in locations such as Millwall Park and Sir John McDougal Gardens;
- Promote the ecological value of existing open spaces where appropriate, particularly in less accessible locations, including railway viaducts and embankments;
- In addition to publicly accessible open space, the Council will promote innovative approaches to the provision of private amenity space in new developments, including use of larger balconies and roof gardens

4.43 All housing and employment development in the Isle of Dogs will be expected to make a (financial) contribution to the provision of open space in the area consistent with the obligations requirements detailed in Core Strategy CS25.

The table below is taken from Appendix B of the Isle of Dogs Area Action Plan for Preferred Options. The table indicates the potential development outputs for major sites in isle of Dogs, specifically the number of residential units and area of open space. The table has been used to estimate the future population and the need for social and community facilities such as open space. The document is currently undergoing a process of consultation.

Ref. no.	Development Site	Date	Residential Units	Open Space (ha.s)
ID10	Westferry Road	2010	79	0.3
ID14	Site 9-3 Millharbour	2010	83	0.1
ID43	Site 8 World Trade Centre	2010	0	0.4
ID2	Billingsgate Market	2014	737	0.4
ID4	Klein's Wharf	2014	54	0.1
ID5	Wood Wharf	2014	1520	1.0
ID7	Skylines Harbour	2014	376	0.3
ID9	ASDA	2014	730	0.6
ID11	London Arena	2014	974	0.4
ID21	Glengall Bridge	2014	653	0.3
ID27	Manilla / Byng Street	2014	607	0.2
ID1	North Quay	2020	0	0.5
ID6	Associated Press Print Works	2020	310	1.2
<b>Permitted Schemes</b>				
ID16	Reuters, Blackwall Yard	2020	705	0.5
ID34	Indecon Court, 20 Millharbour (outline planning permission)	2020	431	0.4
<b>Totals</b>			<b>12,206</b>	<b>8</b>

**Table 4: development sites with their proposed open spaces within the Isle of Dogs area**

Note - only those sites with an identified open space output are included here. Further information on the proposed sites can be found in the Planning document 'Preferred Options: Isle of Dogs Area Action Plan'.



### **Local Area Agreement (LAA)**

- 4.44 The Council is committed to the development of a LAA with the other stakeholders in the Tower Hamlets Partnership. The LAA builds upon the priorities set out in the Community Plan and seeks to accelerate improvements in outcomes for local people, with a particular focus on; Economic Regeneration; Healthier Communities; Older People; and, Children and Young People. These outcomes are also key aspects of the Open Spaces Strategy and Action Plan.
- 4.45 The draft LAA contains aims to create and enhance inclusive, cohesive, sustainable communities. It will build on the positive opportunities available to the community from investment in the ‘new City’ at Canary Wharf and the Thames Gateway. The LAA will use the build-up to the Olympics and Paralympics as a vehicle, along with a continuing focus on arts and cultural activities, for engaging and uniting the community, particularly through the promotion of healthy living and increased engagement in physical and sporting activities. These activities can be supported and enhanced through the use and improvement of the Borough’s open spaces. **Mid Term Action Point 7.2.5**
- 4.46 The draft LAA seeks to strengthen community engagement and user participation to effect change. Although the priorities identified for the LAA are common across the Borough, ward and Local Area Partnership (LAP) profiles show that the different areas within the Borough face different challenges, this is particularly true in respect to open space provision. In addition, the delivery of improved outcomes will require the effective and efficient targeting of resources. This in turn demands good quality information about the needs of individuals, as well as communities, that can be tracked through and followed up over an extended period of time. The LAA will build on existing work in implementing local management and LAP Action Plans and developing targeted and user-focused services, reflecting the Excellent Public Services priorities of the Community Plan. The research underlying the Open Space Strategy will be used to inform local planning and resource targeting.
- 4.47 The LAA offers increased opportunities for the voluntary and community sector, in its widest sense, to be involved in agreeing priorities and delivering outcomes through third sector commissioning processes. The sector also has a particular role in working with hard-to-reach groups, such as those not in education, employment or training. The Local Area Partnerships are a key vehicle for community engagement; their role in developing this engagement and influencing service delivery will be strengthened.
- 4.48 The Council has a good record of engaging the third sector in open space management and provision. Currently 15% of open space by area is managed in partnership with a third sector organisation. Examples include:
- Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park at the Cemetery Park
  - 3 City Farms at Allen Gardens, Stepney Green and Mudchute Park
  - Trees for Cities at King Edward Memorial Park
  - Bromley by Bow Centre at Bromley Recreation Ground (Bob’s Park)

4.49 The Council will continue to build on this strength, and develop this programme as part of the LAA.

#### **Open Space and Extended Schools**

4.50 An extended school is one that offers a range of services to pupils, their families and the wider community over and above teaching the school curriculum during the normal school day. They aim to:

- Help raise educational achievement in schools, and meet social, health and other community needs
- Develop partnerships in the community that will expand services to meet their particular priorities
- Provide activities for vulnerable groups where services are limited in the local area
- Promote community cohesion by building links with the wider community.

4.51 There are seven main areas of work undertaken by an extended school:

- Study Support, eg. breakfast clubs, holiday programmes
- Sports and Arts, eg. community sports and arts activities
- Health and Social Care, eg. exercise classes for parents
- Lifelong Learning, eg. literacy, language and numeracy skills training
- IT and Family Learning, eg. computer classes for parents
- Childcare, eg. after school childcare
- Other

4.52 Currently nearly all schools in Tower Hamlets, whether primary or secondary, offer services in one or more area; over half of schools offer services in four or more areas. By 2010 the council aims that every school will move from offering extended activities to becoming an extended school. From 2006/07 it is intended that each LAP area will have a lead extended school for all the schools in that LAP. This school will have an extended school co-ordinator.

4.53 Part of the school co-ordinator's work will be to audit the services in the area so as to find out what opportunities are or could be available. This audit will include the open space in the area. The services offered by an extended school do not have to be on the site of the school itself. Extended schools offer significant opportunities for open space that include:

- Holiday programmes within parks, and their promotion to schoolchildren and their parents/carers
- Play areas that are welcoming to schoolchildren
- General space for schoolchildren to use, many of whom may live in overcrowded conditions (29% of households in Tower Hamlets live in overcrowded conditions, compared with 7% across England).

#### **Other relevant policies, strategies, initiatives and programmes**

5.54 The following policies, strategies, initiatives and programmes influence the provision, facilities, qualities and activities provided within public parks and open spaces:

- Local Implementation Plan (Transport); improving access to open spaces
- Cultural Strategy (2003); improving cultural cohesion and community usage of open spaces
- Sports Strategy “Seizing the Moment” (1999); identifying sporting needs and priorities for open space development
- Strategic Framework for Play (in preparation); providing a strategic approach to play service and facility provision
- Healthy Lifestyles programme; encouraging and supporting active use of open spaces
- Crime reduction and anti social behaviour initiatives; reducing crime and ASB, improving open spaces, and tackling negative perceptions
- Street Design Guide (2002) and Cleaner Safer initiatives; defining and improving standards in the public realm
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Public Sector Agreement (PSA) programme; identifying key priorities and standards for public space management
- Corporate Performance Assessment; performance criteria and targets affecting open space provision, quality, services and facilities
- Young People’s Community Plan; guiding the development of services for young people

#### **In Summary**

- 4.54 Central and regional governments are directing local authorities to take a strategic approach to the development of open space and biodiversity and seek to protect open space via the planning system.**
- 4.55 Open space has been identified as a key element for achieving Floor Target PSA 8 - Liveability.**
- 4.56 Open Space must play a clearly defined and prominent role in helping to achieve government targets on improvements to public health (e.g. obesity) and exercise opportunities for children.**
- 4.57 Any adverse impact of Government transport policy on open spaces in the Borough (e.g. Cross rail and East London Line) must be properly mitigated.**
- 4.58 The Council’s Open Space Strategy must link effectively with the Thames Gateway London Partnership, the East London Green Grid, Thames Strategy East and the 3 Area Action Plans.**
- 4.59 Close working with the Olympic authorities will be necessary to ensure that residents of Tower Hamlets benefit from the opportunities for new open space that this brings particularly in the Lea Valley.**
- 4.60 The Draft Local Development Framework Policies seek the following :-**

- **No net loss of open space (based on an overall provision standard of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population) or sites of nature conservation importance (442 hectares)**
- **A net gain in tree planting**
- **No loss of the blue ribbon network.**

## Section 5: Assessment of open space provision

**Section 5** sets out what is known of the current open space provision in Tower Hamlets. This assessment is based on the findings of detailed desk and field research. Qualitative and quantitative audits of sites have provided a clear picture of the sites, their accessibility, functionality, condition and potential.

### Background

#### Methodology

5.1 The Scott Wilson Business Consultancy was appointed to develop and implement a research programme to support the development of an Open Space Strategy for the Borough. They undertook the following tasks to understand the supply of open space in Tower Hamlets.

- Review of current site information on parks and open spaces
- Desk-top study to identify all parcels of open land<sup>7</sup> from existing sources of information, cross checked from aerial photos and ground verified
- Classification of all open spaces
- Site verification
- Identification of degree of public accessibility
- Consideration of size threshold (see below)
- Quality audit of sites with public access
- Refinement of PPG17 typology to take local characteristics into account

#### Classification and typology

5.2 The Strategy considers all open land in Tower Hamlets whether in public or private ownership, in use or derelict. Map 2 “Borough Framework Map”, shows all of the borough’s open space, including rivers, docks, canals and burial grounds. In accordance with the Mayor’s Guidance on Preparing Open Space Strategies, private gardens are not been included. An assessment of housing amenity land was carried out to identify land that currently provides a publicly accessible open space or play ground.

5.3 This study has identified various types of open space based on the Open Spaces Typology set out in PPG 17, as advocated by the Mayor’s Guidance on preparing Open Space Strategies. This means that the Tower Hamlets’ data is compatible with national and regional data collection and monitoring.

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<sup>7</sup> For this purpose, open space does not include private gardens or most areas of housing open space, except where it is obviously publicly accessible and in effect serves as a local park. School sports grounds that exceed 0.3 ha have been included. It includes all open land, including rivers, basins and canals whether in public or private ownership, in use or derelict.

Some categories have been sub-divided to suit local circumstances, again as the PPG and Mayor's Guidance permits.

5.4 As a result of the above the allocation of sites by type has been undertaken in accordance with their primary purpose, although many sites are multi-functional in practice. For example, Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park is identified by the typology as a burial ground but the Council acknowledges that it is also a public park and a local nature reserve / woodland.

5.5 Table 5 presents a breakdown of the Borough's open spaces by typology:

PPG 17 & GLA Typology	Local Typology	Number of sites
Parks and gardens	Major parks ***	3
	Local parks ***	53
	Square or garden ***	42
Provision for children and teenagers	Playground ***	14
Natural and semi-natural urban green space	Ecological (equating to semi-natural spaces), where a site's primary function is wildlife habitat; none of these sites in Tower Hamlets is publicly accessible	8
Amenity green space	Housing open space	6
Green corridors	The canals function as green corridors but are classified here as civic / water front (see below) since these are particularly important in Tower Hamlets	Nil
Accessible countryside	None in Tower Hamlets	Nil
Outdoor sports facilities	Outdoor sports facilities (all in school grounds, therefore not fully accessible to the public without specific agreement)	7
Brownfield land	Brownfield land (note no sites >0.3 ha. were found; there are operational open spaces such as car parks and gas works which have not been included)	Nil
Churchyards and cemeteries	Burial grounds ***	20
Allotments, community gardens and city farms	Allotments / city farms ***	7
Civic space	Civic space / water front	31
	<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>

**Table 5: Open space typology and number of sites per type**

Note \*\*\* = sites that have been counted towards the Tower Hamlets open space provision standard.

## Assessment of quantity

### Open Space Standards

- 5.6 The adequacy of open space provision has traditionally been assessed by comparing the area of open space to the total population within a given geographic area. PPG 17 states that local authorities should set local standards for open space provision and that these should be incorporated into development plans.
- 5.7 A key issue for this strategy is what open space provision standard is appropriate for an inner London Borough like Tower Hamlets. To understand the adequacy of overall provision, the Council compared actual provision with the National Playing Field Association Standard 2.4 hectares per 1000 population. This standard has long been used as the national benchmark for open space provision and is still used for comparison. The standard was developed to quantify the amount of open land required for the sports and play needs of local communities and it therefore focuses on green space that is fully accessible to the public and that can be used for these purposes. Therefore, not all types of open space can be counted as contributing towards this type of provision.
- 5.8 Therefore certain types of open space have been excluded from the calculation, specifically canals, docks and river spaces, etc. Map 13 “Publicly Accessible Open Space, excluding Water Space” provides a visual representation.
- 5.9 Using 2001 census data it has been determined that the average provision of open space across the Borough is 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population. This is half the NPFA standard of 2.4 hectares. The total area of open space and the population within each ward has been calculated using the GIS. Map 17 “Open Spaces per 1,000 Population by Ward” shows the approximate value based on the centre of each ward (2003 boundaries).
- 5.10 The current provision of 1.2 hectares per thousand of population does not take into account the transient populations of workers, students and visitors who also use Tower Hamlets’ open spaces. For example, the Council knows that workers from Canary Wharf make use of local sports facilities such as ball games areas and grass pitches, adding to demand and to wear. This issue needs to be addressed when planning for future pitch provision. **Action Plan Point 4.2**

### Blue Ribbon Spaces

- 5.11 The London Plan defines Blue Ribbon spaces as London’s system of rivers, canals and water bodies (which includes docks and basins). In London as a whole, water and water spaces are scarce and valuable assets but Tower Hamlets has many such spaces. They have been mapped and identified on Maps 3 - 11 as civic and water spaces and total roughly 250 hectares of space. [There is a similar amount of open space with unrestricted access for land-based activities such as play and sports uses -249 hectares.]

- 5.12 The Blue Ribbon spaces greatly contribute to the urban form and landscape character of the Borough as well as to its biodiversity and recreational resources. These Blue Ribbon spaces cannot be counted towards the green space provision standard since this standard is compiled to measure the provision of open space suitable for such activities as play and field sports.

**Open Space distribution and accessibility**

- 5.13 The GLA has adopted a Public Open Space Hierarchy to categorise publicly accessible open spaces (see Table 6 below). The Council has used this approach to analyse accessibility to local parks (within 400 m of people’s front doors, about 5 minutes’ walk) and to major parks (within 1.2 km, about 15 minutes’ walk). In addition, as required by the GLA guidance, the study area was extended for 1.2 km beyond the Borough’s boundaries to identify district and local parks larger than 0.3 hectares with catchments that carry across into Tower Hamlets. Audits of the condition and quality of those sites were carried out.

<b>Open Space category</b>	<b>Size guideline (hectares / hectares)</b>	<b>Distances from homes to open spaces</b>
Regional	Over 400 ha.	8 km
Metropolitan	60-400 ha.	3.2 km
District / major parks	20-60 ha.	1.2 km
Local parks	2-20	400 m
Small local parks	0.4-2 ha.	400 m
Pocket parks	Under 0.4ha.	400 m
Linear open spaces	Variable	Where feasible

**Table 6: London’s Public Open Space Hierarchy** (source London Plan Feb. 2004)

- 5.14 Using the GLA hierarchy, maps have been developed that indicate the parts of the borough that are deficient in publicly accessible open space (see Maps 13 to 16). It is evident that some parts of the Borough have exceptionally low provision of open space for residents. The west of the Borough (within which the City fringe Area Action Plan lies) has a very low provision of 0.5 hectares of open space per 1000 population. This equates to about one fifth of the NPFA standard (2.4 hectares).
- 5.15 The Leaside Area Action Plan area currently has even less provision of open space than this low score, at 0.4 hectares per 1000 population. It is anticipated that this area will be transformed as part of the wholesale redevelopment of the area and the Olympic Park.
- 5.16 Physical and perceived barriers prevent people from using open spaces in their area. There are many barriers to accessibility in Tower Hamlets. Physical barriers such as “lines of severance” including canals, rivers, railways and major roads fragment the Borough (See Map 12). However, there is an active programme of work being undertaken by the Council’s Transportation and Highways Section that will address many of these issues. Lack of disabled facilities can also act as a barrier for some residents. There is a programme of work being undertaken to improve access and comply



with Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995. Social barriers impeding open space use include territorial behaviours (particularly with young people), fear of crime, low travel thresholds, poverty and lack of knowledge of existing spaces and the services they provide. **Action Plan Points 1.6 and 5.1**

- 5.17 Tower Hamlets has a large number of small open spaces scattered over the borough (see Map 2). The larger open spaces (major or district parks) are unevenly distributed, and can be found in the Isle of Dogs, Victoria Park in the very north with Mile End Park running down the middle of the borough. Three quarters of the Borough’s parks and gardens are less than 1.0 hectare in size. A full size football pitch takes up roughly three-quarters of a hectare (2 acres). As examples Museum Gardens and Island Gardens are each roughly one hectare in size. Parks this small can only offer a limited range of facilities with no provision for field sports.
- 5.18 As part of the site audit process, an access criterion was attributed to each site, in order to provide a robust base for analysis of deficiency. Table 7 summarises the distribution of open spaces by access. Traffic light colours are used on the associated Map number 18, to provide a visual representation of the degree of access to the public.

<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>No. of Sites</b>
Green = Unrestricted access : Sites available to everyone at all times although there may be restrictions between dusk and dawn	157
Amber = Partially restricted access: the public may require an appointment or prior arrangement to use these grounds	15
Red = Restricted access: sites that are normally out of bounds to the general public	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>

**Table 7: Open Spaces in Tower Hamlets by Access (see Map 18)**

**Note: in addition there are a further 19 sites with unrestricted access outside the borough but within 1.2 km of the boundary that Tower Hamlets residents can use.**

- 5.19 Maps 3 to 11 show the Borough’s open spaces, accessibility and their type. Map 3 “Borough Framework Map” shows the Borough’s Open Spaces and Maps 4 –11 “LAP Framework Plans” shows the same information by Local Area Partnership area in more detail.

## Access to parks and open spaces

- 5.20 The Mayor's London Plan deems district or major parks to be 20 hectares or more in size. The distribution of parks of this size is particularly uneven in Tower Hamlets. Only two of the Borough's parks actually meet this threshold; Victoria Park and Mile End Park. Millwall Park and the Mudchute Park and Farm can also be counted as a district / major park since together they provide a large number of facilities and wide range of landscapes for people to enjoy.
- 5.21 Accessibility to major parks is restricted from some areas due to significant physical barriers (Victoria Park, Mile End Park and Millwall Park) using 1.2 km catchments, as set out in the London Plan's open space hierarchy. Where a site has a barrier near its boundary (as at Victoria and Mile End Parks with their canal boundaries) the mapping was refined to calculate the zone of influence from the entrance points to the site. The results are shown in Map 15. The map indicates that only about half (50%) of the Borough's residents have adequate access to the Borough's major parks. Residents in the west and the east of the borough live well outside the standard 15 minutes walking time to a major park.
- 5.22 A number and variety of obstacles limit or prevent access to local parks in Tower Hamlets, such as major roads, railways, rivers and canals. Many of the publicly accessible open spaces are small and awkwardly sited without reference to where residents live, a factor that tends to aggravate inequality of access. Map 14 shows residents' accessibility to local parks. This indicates that considerably less than half the residents of Tower Hamlets (43%) live within 5 minutes walk of a local park. **Action Plan Point 1.6**
- 5.23 The Local Implementation Plan for Transport (LIP) includes proposals for establishing a number of green chain walks. These walks provide links between a number of small local spaces, creating more unified and integrated open spaces. This is particularly important for providing access to open spaces for children and young people who need to be able to benefit from local provision that they can access independently.
- 5.24 The LIP contains a programme for increasing cycle parking provision at key destinations across the Borough, and this will include parks and open spaces. The LIP also contains proposals for a new DLR station at Langdon Park, which will improve access to the park particularly from the west. **Action Plan Point 1.6**
- 5.25 It is believed that there is a net inflow of visitors into the borough making use of parks (especially Victoria Park), however, the recent KMC survey of users indicates that about 12% of Tower Hamlets' residents make some regular use of parks outside the borough.

### **Access by public transport**

- 5.26 The Mayor's Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies states that park users can be expected to make bus journeys of up to 4.8 km or 15 minutes to parks such as Victoria Park and rail or underground journeys of up to 5.9 km or 10 minutes.

- 5.27 The catchment areas of district and major parks are effectively extended by 400m close to bus corridors and train or underground stations. Map 16 “Public Transport Accessibility Levels” demonstrates that parts of the Borough have relatively low public transport accessibility. The Council has therefore mapped the borough’s parks and open spaces against Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL). This highlighted the poor public transport accessibility for the east of Victoria Park. The Stratford City and Olympic Park developments may offer long term solutions on public transport accessibility.
- 5.28 The Mayor’s initiative offering free travel to 14 – 16 year olds contributes to improving access to open space.

#### **Access to sports pitches**

- 5.29 There are no playing fields in Tower Hamlets that are owned by sports clubs or schools. The Parks and Play Service is therefore principle provider for field based sports in Tower Hamlets. In addition to provision in parks and open spaces, there are ball games facilities at Mile End Stadium and at the Whitechapel and John Orwell Sports Centres; the Borough’s leisure management contractor manages these facilities.
- 5.30 The Council will be carrying out a full assessment of playing pitch needs in line with the methodology recommended by Sport England. **Action Plan Point 4.2**
- 5.31 Many schools have small multi-use games areas and a few have larger sports areas that could help address some of the sport access issues caused by structural deficiencies in open space provision. As they are part of the schools’ premises, they have restricted access. The feasibility of sharing use of such pitches out of school hours in areas of open space and particularly of pitch deficiency needs further examination. The development of shared use agreements for such facilities should be pursued where appropriate. **Action Plan Point 4.2**

#### **Access to play facilities**

- 5.32 The Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH) has been commissioned by the Council to produce a guidance document to be called "Strategic Approaches to Planning for Play in Tower Hamlets". All of the Borough's play sites are in the process of being audited and quantity, quality and access issues as well as demand will be fully explored in the guidance. Once this proposed guidance has been adopted, its findings and recommendations will be incorporated into future editions of this Strategy; the Council intend to do this by the time of its first review in late 2006. **Action Plan Point 4.1**

#### **Access to Housing Amenity Land**

- 5.33 Housing Choice presents a range of challenges and opportunities for the development and management of open space in the Borough. Access to Housing amenity land is partially restricted, although in practice only estate residents tend to use it. Much of this space is fragmented and laid to grass, limiting its practical use by residents. The future remodelling of these estates

offers opportunities for improving the quantity and quality of open space provision and public access to it.

### **Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Housing Amenity land**

- 5.34 Some areas of Housing Amenity land are already managed, maintained and developed by RSLs. Through the Housing Choice programme, further significant areas of land may transfer to RSL responsibility.
- 5.35 RSLs are overseen by boards and in the case of many of the RSLs in Tower Hamlets, these boards have either significant or majority resident representation. The boards oversee developments and maintenance standards. RSLs are accountable to both the Housing Corporation and the Audit Commission for their general performance, and to the local authority in respect of the contractual offer made to tenants about what they will deliver. The Council oversees that they meet these commitments.
- 5.36 These mechanisms play a part in ensuring that RSLs perform well on a range of indicators including horticultural standards. The Council will, through the Local Development Framework and this Strategy, seek to ensure that Housing Amenity spaces are managed and developed to meet local needs, and compliment and enhance open space and play provision. **Action Plan Point 2.1**

### **Access to allotments and community gardens**

- 5.37 Allotments in Tower Hamlets are managed by community groups in six locations, some of which are on land held by Housing (Development and Renewal Directorate) and some by the Parks and Play Service (Environment and Culture). The sites in parks and open space land include those at Stepping Stones Farm, Mudchute and Ackroyd Drive. There are others at Cable Street Community Gardens (at sites in Cable Street and Glamis Road), Reeves Road and Prospect Walk adjacent to Meath Gardens, where land ownership is fragmented.
- 5.38 An increasing number of parks and open spaces (including open spaces on housing amenity land) provide small plots in community gardens where individuals can grow herbs and vegetables. These provide a valuable resource for people to make social contact as well as healthy, outdoor activity. This type of activity is also recognised as a valuable contributor to social cohesion. However a corporate approach is needed across the Council to standardise the terms and conditions governing activities of community garden and allotment societies. **Action Plan Point 5.2**
- 5.39 The Council will seek to increase opportunities for people to grow their own food on public open spaces where this will not have an adverse impact on other users or facilities and where ground conditions permit.

## **Quality Audit**

### **Site selection and methodology**

- 5.40 The Mayor's Guidance suggests that the condition and quality audit of open spaces should be applied to sites over 0.4 hectares; PPG 17 suggests 0.2

hectares. A large number of sites in Tower Hamlets fall between 0.3 and 0.4 hectares, some of which the Council considers to have significant facilities. The Council has therefore commissioned an independent audit of all its own public open spaces and other spaces that exceed 0.3 hectares (0.75 acres) in size. In addition to the qualitative aspects of each space, the audit also gathered management information on use, roles and facilities.

- 5.41 This quality and management audit was carried out by Scott Wilson Consultants. The physical, visual, psychological and functional aspects of each site were assessed and scored against pre-determined evaluation criteria. The physical qualities of the sites were assessed by looking at the signage, lighting, access, vegetation, site furniture, boundaries, footpaths, architectural features, maintenance, biodiversity and play facilities. Other factors such as convenience, condition, usefulness, and appropriateness also contributed to a sites quality score. Where no feature was present, a score of zero was recorded. The better the quality of the site, the higher the score achieved.
- 5.42 Social features such as sense of personal security and evidence of vandalism were also considered. Personal security was assessed in relation to visibility, degree of isolation, exit options, hidden corners, visual links and accessibility. A summary assessment was made using a five-point scale ranging from threatening to comfortable. Vandalism was assessed on a similar scale with a score of 5 going to a site with no obvious vandalism and a score of 1 for generally extensive vandalism.
- 5.43 Aesthetic qualities were judged by reference to scale, enclosure, texture, colour, diversity, unity, stimulus and pleasure. Again, evaluation criteria were developed to guide scoring for each quality.

#### **Evaluation of findings**

- 5.44 Overall quality scores have been derived for each space assessed. The quality score is a key criterion for identifying the sites that are in most urgent need for investment. The distribution of spaces relative to quality is shown graphically in Map 18.
- 5.45 The quality assessments show that there is a marked variation in quality of open space across the borough. Quality does not appear to be related to type of site, with most types represented amongst the best and worst performing sites. Nor is quality related to size, location or management of the site. Quality is, however, strongly related to investment with sites such as Mile End Park and Weavers Fields showing the benefit of investment over the last 5 or so years. This data will be used to target investment more accurately, by identifying the features and factors that most strongly affect a site's performance. **Action Plan Point 5.1**
- 5.46 Mile End Park, Millwall Park, King Edward Memorial Park, Weavers Fields and Bromley-by-Bow (Bob's) Park are just some examples of good sites that are generally well equipped to meet local needs.
- 5.47 Examples of sites identified as being in need of improvement are Allen Gardens, Bartlett Park, Jolly's Green and Stepney Green Gardens. A list of

proposed investment criteria (including quality scores) and an assessment of improvement priorities for consideration by the LAPs is set out in section 7.

## **Assessment of open space provision**

### **In Summary**

- 5.48** The Strategy survey identified 191 sites of which 19 had restricted access (normally out of bounds to the public).
- 5.49** Three quarters of the boroughs parks are less than the size of a single football pitch.
- 5.50** Tower Hamlets is deficient in open space against the National Playing Field Association and the GLA accessibility thresholds for major and local parks.
- 5.51** The west of the Borough (0.5 hectares per 1000 population) and the Leaside area (0.4 hectares per 1,000 population), have the lowest area of open space. Anticipated increases in residential density and daytime working community will put further pressure on these sites.
- 5.52** The NPFA standard does not take into account water recreation space. As a riparian borough with a considerable amount of dockland and canal waterways there is the potential to develop local standards and targets that include these important recreational resources. Local standards (hectares per 1,000 population) would also facilitate the inclusion of housing amenity land and would recognise the need to work closely with RSL's to maximise the potential for developing quality open space.
- 5.53** The north east area of the Borough has the worst public transport accessibility provision in relation to access to major park facilities. The Boroughs Draft Local Implementation Plan (for Transport) contains proposals that are compatible with the aims of the Open Spaces Strategy, and will address the issue of improving access to the Borough's major parks. Public transport access to the north east of the Borough can be immediately improved through signing and additional information about existing services such as Hackney Wick Station on the North London Line.
- 5.54** Crossrail may impact adversely on park and sport pitch provision during its construction phase. In these circumstances the Council would work to ensure that this disruption is kept to a minimum, and that any longer term impacts are mitigated and that alternative temporary provision is provided where possible.
- 5.55** The limited size of much of the park infrastructure is limiting the ability of the Council to increase accessibility to the more popular field sports. Those sites that can accommodate grass pitches are heavily used, allowing no recovery time for the pitch surfaces. Whilst this can be remedied by the adoption of more synthetic pitches there would be a

**negative impact on biodiversity and sustainability. Any sport investment programme would need to take sustainability into account.**

- 5.56 Quality of open space varies considerably across the Borough. A consistent approach to investment and quality assurance (e.g. Green Flag standard) is required to guide future planning.**
- 5.57 Further work is needed to determine the level of unsatisfied demand for field sports and allotments and the potential for increasing public access to school facilities.**
- 5.58 Children's play provision is a vital component of the public open spaces. The Council is preparing a strategic framework for play development and will integrate the recommendations into the open space strategy.**

## Section 6: Community views and needs assessment

**Section 6** provides information on how open space meets the needs of the community, and how the Council has identified the views, needs and aspirations of the borough's residents and other stakeholder in relation to open space provision.

### Community Views

#### Background

6.1 Tower Hamlets is home to a very diverse population with equally diverse needs and aspirations. Over recent years, specific information has been obtained by consulting and asking residents what they think of their parks and open spaces, in terms of quality of service, facilities provided, and overall provision.

#### Tower Hamlets Best Value Review (Cabinet: June 2003)

6.2 As part of the review of the former Horticultural Service, now the Parks and Play Service, Council officers carried out a considerable amount of user and non-user consultation. General questions were asked of the wider community through a number of mechanisms including; the Citizens Panel, external surveys of parks' users, direct consultation with tenants and resident associations, play groups, parents groups, and youth groups. The main findings are summarised below.

#### Main factors affecting general satisfaction in open spaces

6.3 64% of residents considered that the park or open space that they visited most frequently provided them with what they wanted. They identified the major reasons for dissatisfaction as being:

- Too few facilities (34%)
- Don't feel safe (26%)
- They're untidy (12%)
- They're not clean enough (11%)

#### Priorities for improvements and new facilities

6.4 Residents identified the following additional facilities they would like to see in parks:

- Toilets and baby changing facilities (28%)
- Children's play areas (19%)
- Drinking fountains (14%)
- Skateboarding / biking areas (7%)
- Formal gardens (7%)

6.5 Residents' top four preferred improvements to their parks were:

- Make it cleaner (22%)
- Maintain it better (18%)
- Control dogs (10%)
- Improve seating (10%)



### **Play needs**

6.6 Play areas also feature strongly in people's demands for improvements in parks, and for many their availability is a key reason for using parks. 64% of those questioned stated that they had children. They considered that their children mostly enjoyed:

- Swings (28%)
- Slides (25%)
- Playing Ball Games (16%)
- Climbing Frames and Adventure Equipment (13%)

### **Safety in parks**

6.7 61% of those consulted considered that they felt safe in parks. When asked what made them feel safer in parks and open spaces the top four responses were:

- More people using the park (24%)
- Identified Park-keepers (23%)
- More maintenance staff (17%)
- More openness (sight lines) (15%)

Vandalism and graffiti was considered to be a Fairly Big / Big Problem by 59% of respondents.

### **The Council's response**

6.8 In response to the findings of the consultation process, the Parks and Play Service implemented a number of changes to the way in which it manages the services. These included increased resources for parks cleaning and maintenance, more stringent dog controls, improved standards of maintenance in formal gardens, and the introduction of high visibility uniforms for parks staff.

6.9 The Council has also made significant improvements to the parks infrastructure and facilities. Recent projects have included several new and improved play areas, new and improved sports changing facilities, new toilets, and a new skateboard area. Practical measures to improve security and reduce anti-social behaviour have also been implemented with new anti-motorcycle gates, and the introduction of C.C.T.V. to three parks.

### **Parks and open spaces Annual Survey**

6.10 The Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) have endorsed a national methodology for market research that has been developed by the KMC Consultancy. This provides a standardised approach for local authorities, to obtain a range of customer views in relation to the provision of parks and open spaces. Approximately 30 local authorities nationally currently use the system including 9 London boroughs.

6.11 Overall satisfaction levels provide a general indicator of performance that can be used to check improvement over time, and to benchmark with other local authorities. The Government, through the Audit Commission use satisfaction levels as a key Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) for parks and open

spaces. There are many aspects of provision and maintenance that influence peoples' overall satisfaction with open spaces.

- 6.12 The KMC Consultancy has developed a standardised questionnaire that allows detailed analysis of the factors underlying overall satisfaction. This includes questions relating to:
- Most used park
  - Frequency and times of usage
  - Ease of access
  - Cleanliness
  - Standard of horticultural maintenance
  - Facilities provided
  - Security
- 6.13 The questionnaire has been adopted by a number of local authorities including Barnet, Brent, Croydon, Ealing Haringey, Islington, Newham and Waltham Forest. The first survey of Tower Hamlets was recently completed. The survey scoring system rates satisfaction scores as follows:
- 10 = Very Good
  - 8 = Good
  - 6 = Fair
  - 4 = Poor
  - 2 = Very Poor
- 6.14 An independent agency polled a representative sample of 1,000 residents for the Council. This first survey has revealed that the overall satisfaction level compares favourably against other authorities. Tower Hamlets scored 6.77 against a national average of 6.48 and a London average of 6.43.
- 6.15 The survey shows that the Council is performing well in areas such as:
- cleanliness
  - grass cutting
  - flowers and shrub beds
  - play areas
- 6.16 Performance is lower though still fair in relation to:
- seats
  - bins
  - signage
- 6.17 Some specific areas that are most in need of further improvement are:
- Provision and standard of toilets
  - Provision of car parking
  - Provision and quality of catering in parks
- 6.18 In addition to providing borough wide measures of satisfaction, data can be analysed in relation to specific parks where respondents have identified the park that they most use. This analysis will be used to help target resources to improve poorly performing parks and open space so that they are better equipped to meet the needs of local people.

**Table 8: Satisfaction Survey – all results received for individual parks and open spaces**

Major Parks	Satisfaction Score	Local Parks	Satisfaction Score
Mile End Park	6.86	Albert Gardens	6.00
Millwall Park	6.37	Arbour Square Gardens	8.24
Mudchute Park & Farm	6.58	Bartlett Park	6.24
Victoria Park	6.86	Beaumont Square Gardens	9.50
		Brickfield Gardens	6.88
		Bromley by Bow - Bob's Park	8.41
		Carlton Square Gardens	6.31
		Grove Hall Park	7.14
		Island Gardens	6.44
		Jesus Green	6.33
		Jolly's Green	5.39
		Kings Wharf	6.92
		Langdon Park	5.09
		Meath Gardens	7.20
		Museum Gardens	7.63
		Pennyfields Open Space	5.21
		Poplar Park	6.04
		Ravenscroft Park	6.18
		Ropewalk Gardens	5.78
		Shandy Park	6.17
		St.Dunstan's Churchyard	8.62
		St.George in the East	6.88
		St.John's Park	6.87
		Tredegar Square Gardens	7.17
		Trinity Gardens	6.77
		Vallance Gardens	7.82
		York Square Gardens	8.00

Larger Local Parks	Satisfaction Score
Allen Gardens	6.67
Bethnal Green Gardens	7.02
King Edward Memorial Park	6.78
Ropemakers Fields	7.44
Sir John McDougal Gardens	6.47
Stepney Green Park	6.47
Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park	7.13
Weavers Fields	6.42

- 6.19 From these results it can be concluded that Victoria Park and Mile End Park both perform at above average compared to the London average of 6.43 and the national average of 6.48, they provide for approximately one third of all parks users. Millwall Park and the Mudchute Park and Farm together constitute a Major Park. These areas are currently performing at just below average. The information obtained identifies areas for improvement.
- 6.20 Satisfaction levels for smaller, local parks and open spaces are high across a range of typologies, demonstrating that residents value the variety of provision. Some larger local parks, in areas where access to Major Parks is difficult, need to be improved to meet a wider range of needs.
- 6.21 The survey data provide a useful guide for the effective targeting of resources to aid improvements. The detailed data obtained from the survey will inform parks and open space management and improvement plans.  
**Action Plan Point 5.1**

- 6.22 The Council is committed to carrying out the survey on an annual basis in order to monitor year on year performance, and to inform service planning. This will clearly indicate the direction and rate of travel in terms of raising satisfaction levels.
- 6.23 Resident satisfaction in parks and open spaces is a BVPI under the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) framework, and is measured on a three-yearly basis. The Council's performance for 2003/04 was assessed at 57%. This places Tower Hamlets in the lower quartile for London.
- 6.24 The Council also participates in the annual ALG survey of a range of Council services. This indicates that satisfaction in Tower Hamlets parks and open spaces is improving more rapidly than the London average. However, in contrast to the more specific KMC survey it remains low compared to other authorities. **Action Plan Point 5.1**

## Assessing the level of demand

### General

- 6.25 A very general assessment of the level of demand can be drawn from the demographic data gathered through the National Census. From this the Council knows that there is a need to provide more and improved facilities for young people, to provide attractive spaces with activities and facilities that can help to enhance peoples health and general quality of life. It is also clear that the population will continue to grow, and that this will place additional demands on open spaces as a whole.
- 6.26 The changing resident and working population of the borough will increase demand for general open space and demand for existing facilities for sport and play. Local demand for open space is likely to soar by 2016, given the planned increase in population and local employment. The London Plan indicates that the population of Tower Hamlets will increase by at least one third between 2001 and 2016 (to roughly 260,000 people) and that employment will increase by some 80% over the same period (to 273,000 jobs).
- 6.27 The KMC survey indicates that approximately 83% of the borough's residents currently use parks, with 71% specifically identifying a Tower Hamlets park or open space as the one they most use. The number of users, and the frequency in which that they use the parks and open spaces translates to more than 12 million visits each year. **Action Plan Point 5.3**
- 6.28 Local demand for outdoor sports and recreational use of parks and open spaces is already high, given the young population and large amount of local employment. Demand for sports pitches cannot be fully met at present. The Parks and Play Service is currently unable to provide for 30% of the applications for football pitches for Sunday morning games and the grass pitches are badly affected by over-use.
- 6.29 There are many barriers that can prevent people from accessing open space. Around 80% of current visits to the parks and open spaces are made on foot.

Survey data indicates that a significant minority, some 17% of the borough's residents do not currently use parks or open spaces, whilst others restrict their use in some way. 13% of people feel that the parks and open spaces are unsafe or very unsafe (This is significant improvement on the level of security fears expressed in the Best Value Review Survey of 2002/3 that indicated fear levels at 26%). It is a service and strategic aim to improve physical access and to remove or address the barriers to usage. If the Council is successful in this regard, there will be a corresponding and significant increase in the level of usage. This will be additional to any increase arising from population growth.

### **Why people visit the parks and open spaces**

- 6.30 Parks and open spaces provide opportunities for a rich variety of formal and informal types of outdoor recreation. These opportunities include active and passive activities of all varieties, from organised sports, ball games, play, sitting, walking, running, water sports (e.g. at the Shadwell Basin), exercising, informal games to picnicking. The KMC survey asked people to identify the main reasons for visiting the Borough's parks and open spaces. The responses demonstrate the wide ranging demand and needs that these spaces provide for. The following table provides a summary of responses:

<b>Reason for visit</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
To relax	27.5
To take children to play	23.7
To exercise	16.1
As a shortcut	6.8
To meet with friends	6.1
To walk the dog	4.6
Family outing	4.4
To observe wildlife	3.1
To play sport or games	2.9
To play with friends	2.4
To see the events or entertainment	2.2
Educational reasons	0.2

**Table 9: Main reason for visiting parks and open spaces**

- 6.31 This table demonstrates that the most significant levels of usage are for relaxation, exercise and children's play. The list also highlights the areas of conflicting needs that the Council manages on a day to day basis. Clearly the parks and open spaces must be laid out and equipped to support the key uses, whilst also maintaining provision to meet the more diverse and specialised needs of the community.

### **When people visit the parks and open spaces**

- 6.32 The KMC survey confirmed that the most popular time of day for visiting parks is in the afternoon between 1.00pm and dusk, with approximately half as many people visiting between 9.00am and 1.00pm. Early morning visits and visits after dark were significantly less popular. Most people spend between 30 minutes and 2 hours in the park when they visit.

### **Which parks and open spaces do people visit the most?**

6.33 The KMC survey provides an assessment of the most popular parks in the Borough. This identified a strategic core of parks that attracted most visitors. Almost a third of respondents identified Victoria Park as their most used park followed by:

- Mile End Park
- Millwall Park
- Mudchute Park & Farm
- Bethnal Green Gardens
- King Edward Memorial Park
- Weavers Fields
- Stepney Green Park

This list demonstrates a strong correlation between the size, quality and range of facilities and the popularity of the park. Significantly, there are some medium sized parks that are not performing so well, with particularly low satisfaction in relation to facilities such as toilets, car-parking, cafeteria and play areas. Given the relative scarcity of parks and open spaces, these issues need to be addressed as a priority. **Action Plan Point 5.1**

### **Demand for play**

6.34 The Borough has the third highest density of people living in Inner London and a high child population. Close to 56 thousand children and young people aged 0-19 years live in the borough (2001 census). Many children live in overcrowded flats without gardens and above the ground floor. Tower Hamlets has one of the highest percentages of children in England and Wales.

6.35 Parks and open spaces provide some of the largest and best equipped play facilities in Tower Hamlets, from babies, toddlers and young children at the Children's Park and teenagers at the Adventure Park both in Mile End Park. There are 38 equipped play areas, 20 multi-use games areas, 7 One O'Clock Clubs and 2 Adventure Playgrounds (plus 3 more in the voluntary sector) in the parks and open spaces. In addition, all parks and open spaces offer space for free play.

6.36 Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH) has been commissioned by LBTH to develop a guidance document to be called "Strategic Approaches to Planning for Play in Tower Hamlets". This document will cover the benefits of play more fully, and any recommendations will need to relate to the Open Spaces Strategy. **Action Plan Point 4.1**

### **Demand for outdoor sports in parks and open spaces**

6.37 The survey shows that many individuals make use of the parks and open spaces for informal activities like Tai Chi, yoga, jogging, using trim trails, etc. There are undoubted problems of capacity to meet the demand for playing fields for outdoor sports. Few schools have their own pitches (although many have small-side ball games areas). The only grass playing fields in Tower Hamlets are those in parks, which have to provide for schools' use as well as demand from residents and office workers. See Appendix 5 for sports facilities in parks and open spaces. Some Borough schools have good

quality playground and outdoor facilities that have the potential to provide for wider community needs, but many are not well provisioned. Such schools are dependent upon the use of public open spaces to meet the curriculum needs in relation to sports and environmental education.

- 6.38 By far the greatest demand for sport in parks and open spaces is for football played on grass. Between 70 and 80 teams book grass football pitches in parks every year. Through the Parks and Play Service's booking records and public feedback, the Council know that the borough has insufficient playing fields to meet demand. This is particularly the case for grass-based soccer, where demand is rising fast and already exceeds pitch availability at peak times.
- 6.39 The casual use of parks and open spaces by schools is not formally monitored but it is likely to be significant. Teachers bring children into parks for games such as rounders, impromptu athletics training and the like. Many sports clubs hold informal training sessions in parks, such as Bartlett Park, Weavers Fields and Millwall Park, without booking, for games such as football. Further research is required to determine demand and needs for these users. **Action Plan Point 4.2**
- 6.40 A relatively recent phenomenon is the growth in popularity of summer football. There are now established summer football leagues with some 30 teams playing a summer league in Victoria Park across 3 pitches every Sunday, and pressure to continue use of winter grass pitches into the summer at other parks. This continual use of the grass pitches is unsustainable, and a new approach to pitch provision is required if further increases are to be catered for and quality and safety are to be maintained.

#### **Demand for Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) football**

- 6.41 There is currently only one parks based ATP, located at Stepney Green Park. In addition there is one full size ATP, One 7-a-side ball games area and ten 5-a-side ball games areas at Mile End Stadium, and there is an ATP at the John Orwell Sports Centre in Wapping. These are managed and booked for use by the Council's Leisure Management Contractors.
- 6.42 The introduction of the additional small sided artificial pitches at the Mile End stadium has proved to be very successful. ATP's do require maintenance, but can support much more intensive usage than their grass counterparts. With organisations such as FIFA supporting the use of artificial grass pitches for international football usage, there are good precedents to extend this type of provision to a wider audience. This could also help relieve the pressure on other existing open spaces. The potential for ATP development must be considered within the broader context of open space needs and will form part of the sports pitch needs assessment.

#### **Demand for other field sports**

- 6.43 The parks and open spaces support a range of other sports and activities. Demand for provision for rugby and cricket has risen following the high profile success of the National sides. Potential exists to develop new facilities, such as a cricket centre of excellence with a traditional grass wicket provision. Such developments need to be considered and balanced against all other

usage of the parks. The Government has indicated that there should be an increase in the number of hours that school children spend engaged in sporting activities, and this may over time increase the demand for provision such as athletics in parks as schools respond to new curriculum targets.

## Conclusions

- 6.44 Demand for open space is already high and will increase given the transformation of the Borough planned by 2016 with its proposed increase in both population and employment. The nature of the demand may also change; for example, there is a growing demand for rugby. It is also likely that demand for higher quality provision and management will increase, along with increased demand for a wider variety of facilities for people to use on an active basis.
- 6.45 User surveys have highlighted the importance of play to a significant proportion of parks users. More detailed and specific analysis of Play and Sports provision is required and will be developed through the Strategic Framework for Play
- 6.46 Informal and personal sports and exercise also feature as a key activity. The Olympic and Paralympic Games, through the 5 Borough Sports Development Plan, are likely to stimulate an increased take up of all sports, and the parks and open spaces need to be prepared to support this demand. There is currently an unmet demand of 30% for grass pitches. Provision of football pitches limits opportunities for other sports activities. Artificial Turf Pitches can support high level of activity and more need to be provided. A sports pitch needs assessment will be carried out to establish a way forward for balanced and sustainable provision.
- 6.47 The Council aims to continue its improvements in the quality and provision of open spaces. The collection of detailed user views and satisfaction data has established baseline satisfaction levels. The adopted system supports performance benchmarking and a local level between parks, and externally with other authorities.
- 6.48 This database will be used to target resources and prioritise service delivery and improvements. Annual updates are required and will be carried out so as to provide a measure of improvement achieved and ensure that resources are being used effectively.
- 6.49 The database has confirmed the need for better facilities, especially toilets, car parking, cafeteria and play areas.
- 6.50 The parks and open spaces support an estimated 12 million visits per year, supported through a Council Parks & Open Spaces budget of £7m. At £0.58 pence per visit, this represents excellent value for money (The Council subsidy for Leisure Centres is £1.68p per visit, and for Libraries is £3.16 per visit).



### **In Summary**

- 6.51** As part of the research supporting this strategy an ILAM endorsed survey methodology used by 30 local authorities (including 9 London Boroughs) for benchmarking purposes was implemented via KMC consultancy. This found that:
- **83% of residents use parks generating around 12 million visits a year. Most use it as a place to relax (27.5%), take children to play (23.7%) and to exercise (16.1%)**
  - **The major parks are performing above or close to the London and National Average**
  - **Respondents considered LBTH parks to be performing well for cleanliness, grass cutting, flowers and shrub beds and play areas but less well for provision and standard of toilets, car parking and provision and quality of catering in parks**
  - **13% of people feel unsafe or very unsafe in parks and open spaces**
- 6.52** This survey will be repeated on an annual basis to benchmark improvements in public perception along with the ALG residents survey. This uses a different methodology and whilst demonstrating year on year improvement in satisfaction ratings puts LBTH below the London Average.
- 6.53** The open spaces are unable to meet current levels of demand for sports pitches and this unmet demand will increase as the population (resident and daytime) grows.
- 6.54** Tower Hamlets parks provide some of the largest and best-equipped play areas in the Borough and are the major provider of informal play space and opportunities in the Borough.

## **Section 7: The Way Forward**

**Section 7** sets out the strategic vision and policy recommendations for open space provision arising from the needs assessment and open space audits. These provide a clear framework for open space provision and improvement.

### **Overarching Outcomes**

**7.1** The Council and its partners have a commitment to improving the overall quality of life indicators for borough residents, as outlined throughout the community plan. The aim of the strategy is to deliver real benefits to local people and based on the findings of the strategy the following key overarching outcomes have been identified:-

**7.1.1 To improve the overall quality of current provision of open space within the Borough by having no poor quality sites as defined by the Scott Wilson quality assessment criteria.**

**7.1.2 To create wherever possible new publicly accessible open space by effective use of planning powers and obligations, especially in areas identified as deficient in open space.**

**7.1.3 To improve accessibility to existing and new open spaces through effective use of transport links; creation of green chains; building of bridges; creation of new entrance points to good quality parks.**

**7.1.4 To prioritise public safety in parks through designing out crime, introducing more CCTV and working collaboratively with partners, contractors and parks to staff to have a highly visible presence.**

**7.1.5 To maximise funding opportunities arising from planning obligation benefits; lottery applications; partnership funding and any other windfall opportunities in order to support the action plan.**

### **Objectives and actions**

**7.2** The following section details the objectives and actions that flow from the overarching outcomes listed above, and the analysis in the preceding chapters. Detailed targets for those actions that will be undertaken in 2006/7 are set out in the action grid in Chapter 8 and are summarised below. Also listed below are actions identified for delivery at either a mid-term (MT) 2009/10 or Plan Term (PT) 20015/16. A review of the strategy will be undertaken at the mid-term point, which coincides with the review of the Community Plan. New priorities will be added to the Strategy in light of new Community Plan priorities.

#### **7.2.1 A better place for living safely**

##### **Objective**

**To make parks and open spaces even cleaner and safer.**

##### **Actions**

- Develop and improve the Park Warden/Ranger service

- Further develop and implement the programme to reduce crime and anti social behaviour in parks and open spaces
- Let Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Contract
- Incorporate measures to design out crime into park management plans
- Develop the network of CCTV within parks and open spaces (PT)

### **Objective**

**To increase sustainability of open spaces within the Borough**

### **Actions**

- Implement the project to achieve Green Flag Awards for all major parks and key local parks
- Improve the biodiversity of the Council's parks networks
- Develop and implement a Borough Tree Management Plan

### **Objective**

**To improve accessibility to parks and open spaces**

### **Actions**

- Ensure safe cycling and walking routes to and through parks and open spaces
- Provide new and improved entrances to parks
- Develop new strategic gateways including bridges to parks and open spaces (PT)
- Provide accessible toilets in major and key parks (PT)

## **7.2.2 A better place for living well**

### **Objective**

**To safeguard and improve the quality and accessibility of valuable housing amenity land**

### **Actions**

- Work with the RSLs and other land owners to ensure that grounds maintenance standards are in line with BV199 targets
- Ensure that valuable Housing amenity land is covenanted to protect it from development on transfer to RSLs

### **Objective**

**To maximise the use of parks and open spaces as a resource to improve the health of the Community**

### **Actions**

- Increase the level of proactive healthy lifestyle activities into parks and open spaces
- Promote the use of parks and open spaces as a way to improve health and well being

## **7.2.3 A better place for creating and sharing prosperity**

### **Objective**

**To address open space deficiencies through the planning process and seek to maintain and if possible exceed the standard of provision of 1.2 hectares per thousand population**

**Actions**

- Local Development Framework to address the need for open space
- Draft policy to encourage developers to provide new public open space
- Develop planning guidance as necessary (PT)

**Objective**

**To ensure the Olympic Park and Millennium Quarter deliver open space accessible to the residents of Tower Hamlets**

**Actions**

- Input to Olympic Park planning process (MT)
- Encourage development proposals within the Millennium Quarter to provide high quality civic/open spaces in accordance with the MQ Masterplan (PT)

**Objective**

**Maximise the potential of the major open spaces to attract tourism and investment.**

**Actions**

- Contribute to the Thames Gateway East London Green Grid
- Integrate festivals and parks into the Borough Tourism and Regeneration Marketing strategies (MT)
- To undertake research into the economic value to the Borough of the park based festival programme (MT)

**Objective**

**To continue to represent the interests of local residents regarding the impact of various transport initiatives, (Crossrail, DLR station proposals and the East London Line extension)**

**Actions**

- Ensure adequate re provision of open space and sports capacity during construction (MT)
- Ensure adequate reinstatement of same or replacement of land lost (PT)

**7.2.5 A better place for learning and leisure**

**Objective**

**To fully exploit the potential of parks and open spaces to support education and children's services.**

**Actions**

- More young people encouraged to integrate with the parks user community
- Implement the findings of the Planning for Play Report

- Engage key stakeholders to explore how parks can assist with curriculum and social support. (MT)
- Develop school services at both Tower Hamlets ecology centres (MT)
- Carry out further research into the use of parks and open spaces by young people(MT)

### **Objective**

**Improve access to sport by developing new avenues of delivery.**

### **Actions**

- Promote greater public access to school outdoor sports facilities
- Carry out a playing pitch needs assessment
- Engage key stake holders to further open up access to water based leisure and sports activities (MT)

### **Objective**

**To increase training and employment opportunities in the open space business sector.**

### **Actions**

- Engage with Further Education partners to explore partnership potential

### **Objective**

**To increase opportunities for festivals and events in parks and open spaces.**

### **Actions**

- Develop a Festivals & Events toolkit for Third Sector organisations
- Manage potential conflicts between festival organisers, sports players and general parks users for use of scarce resources

## **7.2.6 A better place for excellent public services**

### **Objective**

**Improve the quality of existing open spaces.**

### **Actions**

- Reduce the number of poor quality open spaces across the Borough
- Improve facilities in line with Disability Discrimination Act requirements
- Programme detailed resident feedback on an annual basis

### **Objective**

**To increase community and third sector involvement in the management of open space.**

### **Action**

- Improve the management of allotment and garden societies on Council owned sites.
- Increase the number of sites managed by community and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations (PT)

## **Objective**

**To improve value for money, in terms of cost per visit to parks and open spaces, and to increase visitor numbers.**

## **Action**

- To develop a comprehensive Marketing Strategy for parks and open spaces
- To improve signage and site based information
- To increase usage of parks

## **Delivering the Strategy and Monitoring Performance**

### **Leading local delivery**

7.3 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister recommends that local authorities should provide community leadership in the provision and management of public open space. The Council has a key role in ensuring that all the organisations involved in its provision are brought together and work towards common and agreed outcomes. This will help to ensure that the best progress is made towards meeting local community needs.

7.4 In order to ensure effective partnership working the Council will play a lead role engaging with the Tower Hamlets Local Strategic Partnership and associated infrastructure. Responsibility for delivery of most of the strategic outputs rests with the Council and as such progress will be monitored and reported via the Council's Performance Management framework.

### **Keeping the Strategy relevant to local needs**

7.5 In preparing this Strategy, the Council has taken account of the current quantity and quality of provision, demographic and development trends, and the needs of local people as expressed through local consultation and research. Needs and views are expected to change over time. In order to ensure that it can respond to changing needs and deliver opportunities where they are needed, the Council will continue to engage with the local community and regularly monitor public opinion.

7.6 The Council will carry out an annual survey of views on the provision of public parks and open spaces and will publish findings on the Council web site. The Council will carry out specific consultation in relation to all major improvement projects in parks and open spaces.

7.7 The methodology and findings of the Open Space Strategy have informed the evolution of the Council's Local Development Framework, ensuring that proper account will be taken of community open space needs in relation to future development opportunities.

### **Empowering the community**

7.8 The Council will continue to encourage and support the development of parks 'Friends' groups and similar community parks groups. A Community Parks Compact will be established to provide a forum where all of the organisations involved in parks and open spaces can come together, share knowledge support and good practice, and influence the provision and development of public spaces across the Borough.

### **Making best use of resources**

- 7.9 Parks and open spaces attract funding from a number of sources. The Council provides revenue funding for general upkeep and maintenance, and capital funding for the provision of new or replacement facilities in the longer term.
- 7.10 The KMC satisfaction survey and the Scott Wilson quality audits demonstrate a direct correlation between the quality of open spaces and associated services, and the level of customer satisfaction and usage. This data will form the basis of a standardised methodology for assessing investment priorities for the parks and open spaces.
- 7.11 The Council has been investing significant sums of capital money in improving parks and play areas. It has increased the money available for maintaining parks infrastructure, providing CCTV, installing new signage, improving toilets and changing rooms, managing and maintaining trees and to support partnership working. The Local Area Partnerships have given parks and open spaces a high profile, and have allocated further funds for parks and play improvements.
- 7.12 The Council regularly reviews its spending priorities in order to ensure that money is spent effectively. By having a better knowledge of community priorities the Council can ensure that the best use is made of the finite resources available. The Council provides an Annual Service Plan for Parks and Open Spaces, showing how it is prioritising revenue expenditure and capital improvements to reflect the needs expressed by the community.
- 7.13 The Council has been very successful at attracting grant aid from a range of external sources. Where possible it seeks match funding from other sources to boost the value of its own investments. Major parks improvement projects such as those at Mile End Park, Trinity Square Gardens, Island Gardens, Millwall Park, Meath Gardens, and Weavers Fields have all benefited from such funding. The Council will continue to seek partnership funding and will develop and maintain a funding plan in relation to external funding sources.
- 7.14 Planning contributions provide a means of mitigating development impacts to ensure that developers contribute towards local facilities and infrastructure, where these directly relate to the proposed development - including its scale. This could include, amongst others, the provision of new open spaces and/or enhancements to existing open spaces, in response to any increased need arising from development.

### **Investment Criteria**

- 7.15 Parks and open spaces have achieved significantly better quality scores where they have been the recipients of capital and revenue investment over the last 3-5 years. These spaces also achieve better public approval ratings as measured in the recent satisfaction survey. The suggested criteria for identifying those sites with most urgent need for investment are:
- The number of users likely to benefit from the improvements (*based upon the size of the space; see Appendix 6*).

- Poor quality score as identified in the parks and open spaces audit updated in summer 2005 (see *Appendix 7*).
- Proximity of alternative high quality parks and open spaces within the catchment area of the park proposed for investment (see *Map 18*).
- Poor public satisfaction score as identified in the KMC Parks Performance survey (see *Table 8*).
- The index of multiple deprivation within the catchment area of the park proposed for investment (see *Map 1*).
- Level of overall deficiency of open space, compared to population, of the LAP area in which the open space is located (see *Map 17*).
- The need to conserve natural and cultural heritage and improve biodiversity (see *Appendices 3 & 4*).

7.16 In addition, the Borough will continue to take advantage of funding opportunities where these may give rise to parks and open space improvements that would not have arisen through the application of the above criteria.

#### **Open space provision and priority needs assessment by LAP**

7.17 LAPs have a key role to play in supporting and informing open space provision and improvements. The Open Space Strategy and its supporting information base has been used to prioritise existing open spaces that are in need of investment. LAP Directors and Steering Groups will be engaged to explore funding options and develop improvement projects. Using the investment criteria set out in paragraph 7.15, Key priorities for open space improvements for individual LAPs have been identified, and are set out below.

7.18 **LAP 1:** The area is dominated by small open spaces and has no Major Parks. The Grand Union Canal restricts access to Victoria Park (LAP5) and Mile End Park (LAP5/6). Meath Gardens is the largest park in the area, and has been identified as a park for further improvement. 5 open spaces are of a good quality, 9 are rated acceptable, and 8 are rated as in need of improvement. There are areas in the north east and in the south west of the LAP that lie beyond five minutes walk from any open space. The overall deficiency of open space in this LAP means that all existing sites are of strategic importance and are in effect investment priorities, however, the highest priority spaces for improvement are:

- Meath Gardens
- Allen Gardens
- Ravenscroft Park
- Middleton Green
- St. Matthew's Church Gardens

The following strategic improvements are also highlighted:

- Improved access to Victoria Park/Mile End Park
- Potential new open space provision negotiated through the proposed Bishopsgate development
- Potential new open space provision negotiated through any future development of the area surrounding the Oval and the adjacent gas works.



- 7.19 **LAP 2:** The area is isolated from any Major Park, but contains Bethnal Green Gardens and Weavers Fields that have both been identified as Key Borough Parks. The western section of the LAP has generally poor open space provision with areas beyond five minutes access to any open space. The priority spaces for improvement are:
- St. Bartholomew's Gardens
  - Bethnal Green Gardens (to achieve a Green Flag Award)
  - Weavers Fields Adventure Playground
  - Chicksand Ghat
  - Mallon Gardens
- 7.20 **LAP 3:**The area has some access to Mile End Park, though the Canal restricts free access. There is poor access to green space along the Mile End Road boundary to the west of the LAP area. An opportunity exists to develop a 'green hub' by linking the currently separate spaces of Stepney Green Gardens, Stepney Green Park, St. Dunstan's Churchyard, Whitehorse Road Park and Belgrave Street open space. To the west of the LAP, opportunities might be found to develop pocket parks or gain public space through road closures. The priority spaces for improvement are:
- Belgrave Street open space
  - Stepney Green Gardens
  - St. Dunstan's Churchyard
  - Whitehorse Road Park
  - York Square Gardens
  -
- 7.21 **LAP 4:** The LAP area has good access to waterside space, but has no ready access to any Major Park. Access to green space is poor in the west of the area, and in the area north of the DLR. The priority spaces for improvement are:
- Swedenborg Gardens
  - St. James' Gardens
  - Wapping Gardens
  - Albert Gardens
  - Gosling Gardens
- 7.22 **LAP 5:** The area benefits from access to Victoria Park and Mile End Park located to the north and west. However, green space provision elsewhere in the LAP area is poor. Opportunities may arise through the Olympic developments to provide some small spaces, or to develop and improve land currently designated for Housing Amenity purposes for the purpose of publicly accessible open space. The priority spaces for improvement are:
- Victoria Park
  - Four Seasons Green
  - Grove Hall Park
  - Tredegar Square Gardens
  - St. Mary's Churchyard (Bow Church)
- 7.23 **LAP 6:** Mile End Park provides a Major Park resource for residents in the west of the area. Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park provides a significant open

space and ecology resource. Some areas, however, have no ready access to open space, including the area to the south east bordering the canal. Open space development opportunities may arise in relation to the Fairfoot railway siding and the Bow Common Lane Gas Works. The Leaside Area Action Plan proposes a significant new park in the south end of the area and other new open spaces and access links. The Olympics development may also provide some new space. The priority spaces for improvement are:

- Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park
- Rounton Road Open Space
- Prospect Park
- Furze Green Open Space
- Ackroyd Drive

7.24 **LAP 7:** There is some restricted access to Mile End Park for residents in the west of the LAP area. Access to open space across the rest of the area is reasonable, though several significant barriers to access exist in the form of major roads and a canal. Opportunities may arise through the Olympic developments to provide some new space and to improve access across obstacles. The priority spaces for improvement are:

- Bartlett Park
- Pennyfields Open Space
- Jolly's Green
- Mile End Park – Brickfield Gardens
- St. Mathias Churchyard

7.25 **LAP 8:** The area has good access to waterside spaces but access to green space is poor in several areas. A Major Park needs to be developed at Millwall Park and Mudchute Park and this needs to be a key priority for the LAP. Opportunities exist to enhance the blue-green space linkages and develop routes between riverside to park, park to docks and dock to riverside. The Thames Path provides a key route through the LAP area. The priority spaces for improvement are:

- Millwall Park and Mudchute Park
- Cotton & Bazely Street Open Space
- Strafford Street Playspace
- Sir John McDougal Park
- St. John's Park

### **Measuring performance**

7.26 The measurement of performance and achievement is essential in order to ensure that the Council is providing effective and efficient services that meet the needs of the community. The ODPM has identified two criteria against which achievement in the provision of parks and open spaces will be measured. These are:

- The number of parks and open spaces with Green Flag Awards
- The level of public satisfaction in parks and open spaces (BV119e)

7.27 The Council has become one of the best performing authorities in London in terms of its success in gaining and retaining Green Flag Awards.

- 7.28 Satisfaction ratings in relation to the Borough's parks and open spaces continue to improve, but some surveys indicate that these are still low compared to other London boroughs. The Council aims to achieve continuing and year on year improvement in satisfaction levels for parks and public open space. By prioritising improvements that specifically address the areas of concern expressed through public consultation and quality audits, the rate of improvement should be maximised.
- 7.29 In order to identify key areas of concern, the Council will focus on a number of satisfaction indicators that are known to contribute to overall satisfaction levels. Performance will also be compared with other local authorities that participate in the KMC Performance Management scheme. The Council will monitor satisfaction in:
- cleanliness
  - grass cutting
  - sports pitches
  - shrub beds and flowers
  - toilets
  - car parking
  - play areas
  - seats and bins
  - signage
- 7.30 As part of the preparation of this strategy, the Council has developed a detailed methodology for assessing the quality of parks and open spaces. This provides a benchmark from which the effectiveness of improvements can be measured over the term of the strategy.
- 7.31 The London in Bloom Competition is part of the nationwide Britain in Bloom campaign organised by the Royal Horticultural Society. The organisation aims to improve horticultural excellence by encouraging communities to engage and compete in all aspects of horticulture. The Council participates in the London in Bloom competition every year. External judges visit the borough and judge the standards achieved in parks, open spaces, community gardens, businesses and private gardens. The Council has achieved a Silver Award for the last two years. The Council will continue to participate in the competition and promote horticultural excellence through its own Tower Hamlets in Bloom competition. It will aim to raise the standard of achievement in future years.

### **Service Plans**

7.32 The success and sustainability of parks and open spaces is dependent upon the provision of good quality services and a planned management and investment process. The Council will ensure that its plans for the management and maintenance of parks and open spaces continue to reflect Community Plan priorities and are set out in the respective annual Service Plans.

### **Developing management plans**

7.33 Site specific management plans help to ensure effective and efficient use of resources, support development planning, funding bids and long term sustainability. Detailed management plans have already been prepared for 10 parks. Where major improvements to parks and open spaces are planned, the Council will, as part of the design process, commission the preparation of further Management Plans. Management plans are an essential requirement for Green Flag Award applications. The Council will establish Management Plans for all of the Major Parks and for all key Local Parks.

## Section 8: Year One Action Plan (Jan. 06 – March 07)

**Section 8** is an action plan that shows how the strategy will be implemented in year one (2006/07). The plan also identifies how the strategy will be reviewed and revised in order to ensure that it is effective and remains relevant into the future.

<b>A Better Place for Living Safely</b>			
Action no.	Objective	Key activity	Progress Milestones
1.1	To make parks and open spaces cleaner and safer  <b>Contact Officer: Ray Gerlach. Cultural Services</b>	Let the Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Contract.	Cabinet approval of Award of Contract. July 06  Contract Implementation. October 06  Revise parks cleansing regimes to improve BV199 cleanliness scores for open space from 14% to 12% by March 07
1.2		Incorporate measures to design out crime in consultation with the LAPs	Implement anti-crime design measures in 5 parks by March 07
1.3		Further develop and implement the programme to reduce crime and anti social behaviour in parks and open spaces	Co-ordinated programme addressing drug use, illegal motor cycle use, gang violence, and other criminal and anti-social behaviour in parks by March 07  Number of people feeling unsafe or very unsafe in parks reduced from 13% to 11% by Sept 06
1.4		Develop and improve the Park Warden / Ranger Service	Complete the restructure of Cultural Services. April 06.  Implement new shift patterns to increase staff presence at key times of the day and at weekends. May 06.



<b>A Better Place for Living Well</b>			
Action no.	Objective	Key activity	Progress Milestones
2.1	<p>To safeguard and improve the quality and accessibility of valuable housing amenity land.</p> <p><i>Contact Officer: Ray Gerlach. Cultural Services</i></p>	<p>Work with the RSLs and other land owners service providers to ensure that grounds maintenance standards are in line with BV199 targets</p> <p>Ensure that valuable housing amenity land is covenanted to protect it from development on transfer to RSL's</p>	<p>Cabinet approval of Award of Grounds Maintenance Contract July 06</p> <p>Contract Implementation October 06</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>
2.2	<p>To maximise the use of parks and open space as a resource to improve the health of the Community</p> <p><i>Contact Officer: Paul Martindill. Cultural Services</i></p>	<p>Increase the level of proactive healthy lifestyle activities to parks and open spaces.</p> <p>Promote the use of parks and open spaces as a way to improve health and well being.</p>	<p>Deliver a corporate healthy lifestyles community parks programme starting April 06</p> <p>Healthy Parks Feature in East End Life and 'SPACE' by June 06</p> <p>Banner advertisement programme introduced May 06</p> <p>Develop a community gardening and horticultural programme in conjunction with third sector partners to compliment health rehabilitation September 06.</p>

<b>A Better Place for Creating &amp; Sharing Prosperity</b>			
Action no.	Objective	Key activity	Progress Milestones
3.1	<p>To address open space deficiencies through the planning process and seek to maintain and if possible exceed the standard of 1.2 Ha per 1,000 population</p> <p><i>Contact Officer: Owen Whalley, Development and Renewal with Ray Gerlach Cultural Services</i></p>	<p>Ensure that the Local Development Framework addresses the need for open space by incorporating, where relevant, the standards and policies set out in this strategy. Include policies that encourage developers to use space in innovative ways to provide new public open spaces.</p> <p>Draft policy to further encourage developers to use space in innovative ways to provide new forms of public open space.</p>	<p>Local Development Framework: Preferred Options: Completed for consultation September 2005. Submission Document: Scheduled for completion by October 2006. Examination in Public: Estimated to occur late summer 2007. Adoption: Estimated early summer 2008.</p> <p>Review and strengthen design guidance by March 06</p> <p>Review the role of Supplementary Planning Documents in furthering the Council's Open Space aspirations. Review completed March 07.</p>
3.2	<p>To maximise the potential of major open spaces to attract tourism and investment to the Borough.</p> <p><i>Contact Officer: Ros Brewer. Cultural Services</i></p>	<p>To develop the Boroughs contribution to the Thames Gateway East London Green Grid</p>	<p>Complete Green Grid Proposals for the Borough by June 06</p> <p>In partnership with Leaside Regeneration conduct a feasibility study of Victoria Park with a view to submitting a Heritage Lottery Grant Application. December 06</p>



<b>A Better Place for Learning, Achievement &amp; Leisure</b>			
Action no.	Objective	Key activity	Progress Milestones
4.1	To fully exploit the potential for Parks and open spaces to support educational and Children's services.  <i>Contact Officer: Oscar Ford. Cultural Services</i>	More young people encouraged to integrate with the parks user community  Implement the findings of the Planning for Play report	3 inter-generation events to encourage involvement and usage of parks by March 07  Deliver Year 1 actions March 07
4.2	To improve access to sport by developing new avenues of delivery.  <i>Contact Officer: Paul Martindill. Cultural Services</i>	Work to promote greater public access to school based sport facilities  Carry out playing pitch needs assessment using Sport England methodology	Two shared use agreements with schools by March 07  Technical brief prepared June 06  Survey implementation August 06  Report December 06
4.3	To increase opportunities for training and employment in the open space business sector through the parks service  <i>Contact Officer: Oscar Ford. Cultural Services</i>	Engage with Further Education partners and new contractors to explore potential for partnership education programme.	2 Training programmes set up with third sector partners by March 07
4.4	To increase opportunities for festivals and events in parks and open spaces  <i>Contact Officer: Steve</i>	Develop a Third Sector Events Toolkit  Develop a protocol to manage potential conflict between competing users for limited space resources.	Events Toolkit produced and launched by April 06  Protocol developed by April 06

	<i>Murray</i>	Incorporate management solutions to potential conflicts within parks' management plans as they are developed	As part of management plan programme; existing management plans to be updated as necessary for Green Flag entries for Jan 06
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<b>A Better Place for Excellent Public Services</b>			
Action no.	Objective	Key activity	Progress Milestones
5.1	To continue to improve the quality of the Borough's existing open spaces  <i>Contact Officer: Oscar Ford. Cultural Services</i>	Reduce the number of poor quality parks and open spaces across the Borough  To improve access arrangements and facilities in line with requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995  Programme detailed customer satisfaction survey on an annual basis	At least one park improved in each LAP by March 07  Analysis of ALG annual survey April 06 Training programme for staff to raise awareness and understanding of key issues for people with disabilities June 06 The formation of a Parks and Open Spaces Disability Consultation Group Oct. 06  Conduct KMC Survey Sept.06 Analysis of Survey published on the Council web site by November 06
5.2	Increase community and 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector involvement in the management of open spaces  <i>Contact Officer: Oscar Ford. Cultural Services</i>	To improve management of allotment and garden societies on Council Owned sites	Develop and implement a corporate standard for service level agreements with allotment and garden societies by March 07
5.3	Reduce the cost per visit to parks and open spaces in order to improve value for money  <i>Contact Officer: Oscar Ford. Cultural Services</i>	Develop a Marketing Strategy for parks and open spaces.  Improve signage and site based information  To increase usage of parks	Marketing Strategy produced and implemented by August 06  3 Parks with new entrance and information sign boards March 07  3 new events for 06/07 resulting in 30,000 additional visits Cost per visit reduced by 2% by March 07

## **Appendix 1: List of Maps 1 to 20**

<b>Map 1</b>	<b>Indices of multiple deprivation by ward</b>
<b>Map 2</b>	<b>Distribution of Open Spaces (including rivers, docks, and canals)</b>
<b>Map 3</b>	<b>Borough Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 4</b>	<b>LAP 1 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 5</b>	<b>LAP 2 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 6</b>	<b>LAP 3 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 7</b>	<b>LAP 4 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 8</b>	<b>LAP 5 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 9</b>	<b>LAP 6 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 10</b>	<b>LAP 7 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 11</b>	<b>LAP 8 Framework Plan</b>
<b>Map 12</b>	<b>Lines of Severance (waterways, railways, roads)</b>
<b>Map 13</b>	<b>Publicly Accessible Open Space (excluding water spaces)</b>
<b>Map 14</b>	<b>Accessibility to Parks</b>
<b>Map 15</b>	<b>Accessibility to Major Parks (Victoria Park, Mile End Park, Mudchute Park / Farm with Millwall Park)</b>
<b>Map 16</b>	<b>Public Transport Accessibility Levels (related to parks and open spaces)</b>
<b>Map 17</b>	<b>Open Spaces per 1000 (population by ward)</b>
<b>Map 18</b>	<b>Quality Scores</b>
<b>Map 19</b>	<b>The Borough's Key Parks and Open Spaces</b>
<b>Map 20</b>	<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation</b>

## **Appendix 2: Definition and designations of open space and provision standard**

### **DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE**

**The following definition is used in the London Plan and this Open Space Strategy:**

“All land use in London that is predominantly undeveloped other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use. The definition covers the broad range of open space types within London, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, partially restricted or restricted.”

The Mayor’s Best Practice Guidance requires boroughs to identify and analyse ALL open space, whether or not it is publicly accessible or has a defined recreational role. All open space has a value to the community and contributes to the environmental quality of an area.

For the purpose of producing an Open Space Strategy, the definition does not include private residential gardens or incidental areas, such as road verges, or streets (unless these form part of a link in the open space network).

### **TYPES OF OPEN SPACE**

#### **Public Open Space:**

The Mayor’s ‘Best Practice Guidance on Preparing Open Space Strategies’ defines Public Open Space as public parks, commons, heaths and woodlands and other open spaces with established and unrestricted public access and capable of being classified according to the open space hierarchy, which meets recreational and non-recreational needs. Public Open Spaces are usually but not always managed by local authorities.

#### **Publicly Accessible Open Space:**

This term is somewhat broader than Public Open Space as it embraces sites owned and managed by agencies other than the Council, including sites that are managed primarily for amenity to which the public has traditionally had access.

#### **Private Open Space:**

This is defined in the GLA Guidance as open space to which public access is restricted or not formally established but which contributes to local amenity or wildlife habitat or meets or is capable of meeting recreational or non-recreational needs. Includes company, school and club sports-grounds as well as private or restricted access gardens and housing amenity open space.

#### **Green Chains:**

The London Plan defines these as areas of linked but separate open spaces and the footpaths between them. They are accessible to the public and provide way-marked paths and other pedestrian and cycle routes. It is reasonable to think of these as being like beads on a necklace. It is not necessary for the routes to have continuous wildlife habitats along them.

#### **Green Corridors:**

These are relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment, which may be linked and may not be publicly accessible. They allow

animals and plants to be found further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension to the habitats of the sites they join.

## **DESIGNATIONS OF OPEN SPACE**

### **Metropolitan Open Land (MOL):**

This designation is unique to London and protects strategically important open spaces within the built environment. MOL is the same as Green Belt in terms of protection from development and serves a similar purpose. A number of criteria are used in the designation of areas of MOL:

- Land that contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area
- Land that includes open-air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport arts and cultural activities and tourism, which serve the whole or significant parts of London
- Land that contains features or landscape of historic, recreational, nature conservation or habitat interest, of value at a metropolitan or national level
- Land that forms part of a Green Chain and meets one of the above criteria

MOL covers the full range of open spaces and both public and private ownership. Council owned spaces designated as Local Open Spaces are listed in Appendix 6

### **Local Open Space (LOS):**

The Greater London Authority advises that this designation should cover all types of locally important open space and Boroughs should identify which spaces this designation applies to. The LOS designation is considered to continue the MOL designation at the local level. Council owned spaces designated as Local Open Spaces are listed in Appendix 6

## **PROVISION STANDARD FOR OPEN SPACE**

### **National Playing Fields Association Six Acre Standard**

This is a planners guide to ensure that sufficient land is set aside in appropriate locations to enable people of all ages, especially the young, to participate in outdoor play, games, sports and other physical recreation. The NPFA regards it as a minimum standard at 2.4 hectares (6 acres) per 1000 people. It comprises 1.6 hectares (4 acres) for outdoor sport and 0.8 hectares (2 acres) for children's play space. Blue ribbon spaces such as docks, canals and basins cannot therefore contribute to the standard.

It has long been recognised that the 2.4 hectare standard is unachievable within inner London, but allows boroughs to be compared across London and nationally. Both PPG 17 and the Mayor's Guidance recognise this by encouraging boroughs to establish their own local standard.

In addition Boroughs must consider access standards to both local and major parks (see para.s 5.20 and 5.21 page 33). The study indicates that only about half (50%) of the Borough's residents have adequate access to either a local or a major park.

## Appendix 3: History of parks and open spaces in Tower Hamlets, and their heritage significance

### The History of Parks and Open Space in Tower Hamlets

The parks and open spaces of Tower Hamlets have come about through a variety of processes. Some public open spaces were the result of deliberate design or policy, while others are the result of historic accident or expedience. There were broadly three periods during which public open space was created in Tower Hamlets. These moves were primarily to benefit people, rather than improve land or rental values. The first was the deliberate creation of **Victoria Park** in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the conversion of churchyards to public gardens and the most recent was in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century after World War 2.

Various open spaces are the result of late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century urban design, being planned formal gardens set in London Squares. As such they are protected by the London Squares Preservation Act, 1931. These sites include **Trinity Square Gardens**, **Arbour Square**, **Albert Gardens** and the little known **Oval** in Bethnal Green. See full list of protected London Squares below.

Many churchyards, particularly in the west of borough became public open spaces managed by the local authority. Having been closed to further burial use because they were overflowing, they were converted in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century into public gardens. In some parts of the borough these are the only open spaces. This process gave rise to **Christchurch Gardens**, **Altab Ali Park (formerly St Mary's Churchyard**, the original **White Chapel**) and **St George's Gardens**, amongst others.

The City of London and Tower Hamlets Cemetery was laid out in 1841 to relieve local pressure on burial space. The former Greater London Council obtained a by special Act of Parliament to close and turn it into open space in 1966. It was already neglected by the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, with over a quarter of a million bodies by 1889 and thousands more after that. The last 20 years has seen its unique character increasingly valued and the Friends of **Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park** now manage it as a wooded park and local nature reserve. It also has a unique cultural and historical heritage.

Parliament passed an Act in 1841 to create **Victoria Park**, following an outcry about the lack of parks in the East End and fears that disease would spread from the stinking industries and slum population of 400,000. The Government bought poor quality land that had been used for market gardens, grazing and gravel digging. The land was flat, with poor soil and little water but was cheaper than the alternative site near the Thames. Local people started to use the Park in 1843, before works were complete. The park never had a formal opening but was an instant success. The Metropolitan Board of Works took over the management of the park in 1887, followed by the London County Council in 1888, by the Greater London Council in 1965 and by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in 1986 (until 1994 with L.B. Hackney).

Some of the most curious spaces are the remnants of commons and greens. Stepney Green Gardens and the **Stepney Clock Tower** site are the last fragments of Mile End Green. The Metropolitan Gardens Association formally created the Gardens in 1872, the ground having been originally enclosed some time after 1669.

Mile End Waste, the open spaces to the north of Mile End Road, was originally also part of Mile End common land. **Bethnal Green Gardens, Paradise Row Gardens** and **Museum Gardens** comprise the remnants of the medieval Green or Poor's Land. The London County Council preserved **Bethnal Green Gardens** as a recreation ground in 1895 and the Government purchased the land for **Museum Gardens** for the Bethnal Green Museum in 1868. The Gardens, "laid out and for ever to be maintained as an ornamental garden" as required by the Act to permit its purchase, were opened in 1875.

The Greenwich Royal Hospital Commissioners acquired the site of **Island Gardens** in 1850 to protect the view from the rapid industrialisation and development of the Isle of Dogs in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The LCC laid the site out as a park in 1895.

**Mudchute Park and City Farm** was created in 1977 from a landscape of low mounds and former world war two gun emplacements. Much of the site had been used between 1875-1910 as the receptacle for mud dredged by pneumatic pipe from the Millwall Docks. By contrast **Millwall Park** seems never to have been built on except around the edges and was marsh land until converted to playing fields and a recreation ground by the LCC by 1919. It was the home of the original Millwall Football Club from 1889-1910.

**Mile End Park, Langdon Park, Jolly's Green, Bartlett Park, Allen Gardens, Weavers Fields** and sites such as **Ravenscroft Park** were conceived after the end of the second world war in 1945 to provide parks of various scales. Small parcels of land to create these parks were still being laid out with grass for the first time in 2005.

The gardens and squares of **Canary Wharf** set in a formal master plan show that even land developers can show an enlightened self-interest. Their open spaces set off the buildings, add both capital and rental value to the estate and give enjoyment to those who visit, live or work there.

### References

Philip Mernick and Doreen Kendall, "A pictorial history of Victoria Park, London E3" 1996, East London History Society

Bridget Cherry, Charles O'Brien and Nicholas Pevsner, "The Buildings of England: London 5: East" 2005, Yale University Press

Sally Williams, "The Inventory of Green Spaces – Tower Hamlets", London Parks and Gardens Trust in association with English Heritage, 2003

## **Heritage significance of parks and open spaces in Tower Hamlets**

### **London Squares in Tower Hamlets:**

(Information taken from adopted borough plan 1986)

- Albert Gardens (formerly Albert Square)
- Arbour Square
- Beaumont Square
- Carlton Square
- Ford Square
- Ion Square
- Mile End Green (Mile End Waste)
- Swedenborg Square (formerly Prince's Square)
- Rectory Square



- Sidney Square
- Stepney Green Gardens
- The Oval
- Trafalgar Gardens (formerly Trafalgar Square)
- Tredegar Square
- Trinity Square Gardens
- York Square

### **English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest in England and Wales:**

English Heritage has entered four Tower Hamlets' parks and gardens on this register:

- Victoria Park
- Island Gardens
- Boundary Gardens
- Museum Gardens

### **Listed structures in Tower Hamlets Parks and Open Spaces:**

Many sites also have listed buildings and structures and war memorials (such as Victoria Park and Boundary Gardens). Trinity Square Gardens contain the Commonwealth's war memorials to the Merchant Navy war dead of both world wars and the commemoration of the traitors executed at the Tower Hill scaffold.

### **The London Inventory of Historic Green Spaces - Tower Hamlets:**

This inventory was published in 2003 by the London Parks and Gardens Trust and supported by English Heritage. It lists 52 publicly accessible open spaces of historic interest in the Borough.

<b>Park or open space</b>	<b>Brief history notes</b>
Albert Gardens	Built 1840s; opened to public by LCC 1906
All Saints Churchyard	Built 1821-23; opened 1893 as public gardens by the MPGA
Altab Ali Park	Formerly the churchyard of St Mary's Church, the White Chapel.
Arbour Square	Built 1820s; opened to public by LCC 1904
Bartlett Park	Laid out 1950s as part of Festival of Britain's Lansbury Estate
Beaumont Square Gardens	Laid out c.1840; opened to public late 19 <sup>th</sup> century
Bethnal Green Gardens	Part of Bethnal Green "Poor's Land" trust; LCC opened site up to public 1895
Museum Gardens	ditto; EH register Grade II
Boundary Gardens	Laid out as centrepiece of Boundary Estate by LCC in early 1900s; EH register site Grade II
Bow Churchyard	Opened to public as garden by MPGA in late 19 <sup>th</sup>

	century
Brickfield Gardens	Former brickfield purchased compulsorily 1899 and opened to public 1904
Carlton Square Gardens	Laid out mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century, opened to public by MPGA 1885
Christ Church Gardens	Church built 1714-1729; small part opened to public as garden late 19 <sup>th</sup> century
Ford Square Gardens	Laid out 1820s; opened to public 1904
Globe Road Open Space	Remnant of former burial ground of 19 <sup>th</sup> century chapel; opened as garden late 19 <sup>th</sup> century by borough council
Grove Hall Park	Site of former asylum established c.1820; opened to public 1909 and extended 1930 with a convent garden
Ion Square Gardens	Original square c.1845; opened to public 1895 by MPGA; extension agreed with LCC 1953
Island Gardens	Opened in 1895 on land that the Admiralty saved from development to preserve the view of Greenwich; EH register Grade II
Jesus Green	Opened in 20 <sup>th</sup> century on site of cleared dwellings
King Edward Memorial Gardens	Opened 1922 on land bought by public subscription
Meath Gardens	Former burial ground laid out 1842 and opened as garden 1894 by MPGA and LCC
Mercers Burial Ground	Also known as Stepney Meeting House Burial Ground, laid out 1779 and opened to public as garden 1976
Mile End Park	First planned 1943 and included in Abercrombie Plan for Greater London 1944. Parts laid out as King George's Fields in 1952 on cleared bomb sites; LCC and later GLC continued to clear and lay out sites as open space until 1985. Millennium Commission landscape and building works 1995- to date
Mile End Waste / Green	Remnant of former medieval green
Museum Gardens	ditto and as Bethnal Green Gardens
Paradise Gardens	ditto and as Bethnal Green Gardens; EH register

Grade II

Poplar Recreation Ground	Former burial ground opened as garden 1867 by MPGA
Shandy Park	Former burial ground opened as garden 1885 by MPGA
Sidney Square Gardens	Laid out 1820s; opened to public by LCC 1904
St Anne's Churchyard	Laid out 1730; opened as garden 1887 by MPGA
St Bartholomew's Gardens	Former burial ground opened as garden 1885 by MPGA
St Dunstan's Churchyard	Church built by 1232, probably dating from 7 <sup>th</sup> century; former burial ground opened as garden
St George's Gardens	Church opened 1729; opened to public as gardens in 1875 via vestry and Metropolitan Board of Works
St James' Gardens	Former burial ground; laid out partly on land left over following construction of Rotherhithe Tunnel.
St John's Churchyard	Chapel of ease 1617; site bombed during WW2
St Leonard's Play Ground	Church built 12 <sup>th</sup> century, rebuilt 1842 and bombed in WW2; much of churchyard cleared for road
St Matthew's Churchyard	Church consecrated 1746, churchyard closed mid 1850s; opened as garden 1896
St Matthias Old Church	Former church of East India Company built 1776; churchyard open to public; abuts Poplar Recreation Ground
St Paul's Churchyard	Established 1656 as chapel of ease, parish created 1669, church rebuilt 1820; laid out as garden 1886 by MPGA; churchyard accessible only to school
Stepney Green Gardens	Remnants of Stepney Green, enclosed between 1669-1684; used for public hustings mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century; opened to public 1872 by Metropolitan Board of Works
Stepney Green Park	Formerly part of Mile End Green where Stepney Fair held late 17 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> century; enclosed 1694; built over as part of Clare Hall estate; site cleared of housing by GLC following WW2
Tower Gardens	Part of the Tower Liberties, governed by Tower until 1855; taken into care of local authority as gardens,

	managed by Historic Royal Palaces 1990s
Wakefield Gardens	Laid out 1992 over new London Underground station entrance; land originally donated as public open space for benefit of local people by the Wakefield Trust 1930s
Tower Hamlets Cemetery (Park)	Open fields until land consecrated for commercial burial ground 1841; was noted as containing 247,000 graves and neglected by 1889; many common public graves; bombed WW2; closed to burials by special Act of Parliament for GLC as public open space. Transferred to Tower Hamlets 1986 and became Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park 1990.
Trafalgar Gardens	Created as square late 18 <sup>th</sup> century, renamed Trafalgar Square 1809; central garden bought by Vestry of Mile End Old Town and opened to public 1885
Tredegar Square Gardens	Laid out 1828; original simple rectilinear layout replaced by former Bow Neighbourhood with circular forms in late 1980s.
Trinity Square Gardens	Laid out to designs by Samuel Wyatt for Trinity House at top of Tower Hill by private enclosure act in 1795. Contains Commonwealth War Graves Commission war memorials to merchant navy war dead of both world wars and memorial to Falklands merchant navy war dead (2005); also contains commemoration of executions at Tower Hill scaffold; restored 2002 with funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and Tower Hill Improvement Trust.
Vallance Gardens	Part is former Society of Friends burial ground; laid out 1880 as public garden; gardens reconstructed 2003
Victoria Park	Designed by James Pennethorne; opened 1845; site extended 1872; managed by Metropolitan Board of Works in 1887, transferred to LCC in 1889, then GLC in 1965 then Tower Hamlets in 1986; site much bombed in WW2 and not restored. EH register Grade II*
Wapping Gardens	Opened 1891 by Metropolitan Board of Works from cleared slum dwellings under "Artisans' and Labourers' Dwelling Improvement Act 1875; refurbished late 1980s.
Weavers Fields	Laid out in 1960s on land acquired and cleared of housing by GLC following bomb damage; site

intended to be much larger; extensive works to turn grassland into park during 1990s and early years of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

York Square Gardens

Site developed by Mercers Company in early 19<sup>th</sup> century; garden opened to public in LCC 1904; GLC bought site 1969.

**Notes**

GLC

Greater London Council

LCC

London County Council

MPGA

Metropolitan Public Gardens Association

## Appendix 4: Sites of importance for nature conservation

This schedule lists the sites assessed by the London Wildlife Trust for the GLA during summer 2004. This schedule of sites has the support of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and will be adopted as part of the Local Development Framework.

See Map 20

### Sites of Metropolitan Importance

M006	London's Canals
M031	River Thames and Bow Creek
M071	The Lea Valley
M117	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and The Soane's Centre
M133	Mudchute Park and Farm

### Sites of Borough Importance, Grade I

THBI01	The Greenway in Tower Hamlets
THBI02	Victoria Park
THBI03	Mile End Park
THBI04	East India Dock Basin
THBI08	Poplar Dock and Blackwall Basin

### Sites of Borough Importance, Grade II

THBII01	Millwall and West India Docks
THBII03	St Jude's Nature Park
THBII04	Cable Street Community Garden
THBII05	Stepping Stones Farm
THBII06	Spitalfields Farm and Allen Gardens
THBII07	The London Wall and walls of the Tower of London
THBII08	Spitalfields Viaduct
THBII11	Pinchin Street Disused Railway ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )

### Sites of Local Importance

THL01	St George in the East Church Gardens
THL02	Wapping Park
THL03	Old Railway at Fairfoot Road
THL04	Ion Square Gardens
THL05	Weavers Fields
THL06	Stoneyard Lane
THL07	Shadwell Basin
THL08	Swedenborg Gardens
THL09	Bancroft Road Nature Garden
THL10	St Leonard's Adventurous Playspace
THL12	Perring Community Garden

## Sites of Local Importance continued

THL13	Disused railway, Bow
THL14	Hermitage Basin
THL15	St Katherine's Dock
THL16	St Dunstan's Churchyard
THL17	St Anne's Churchyard, Limehouse
THL18	Wellclose Street Rough
THL19	St Paul's Churchyard, Shadwell ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL20	All Saints Churchyard, Poplar ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL21	Poplar Park and St Matthias Old Churchyard ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL22	Millwall Park ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL23	Cyril Jackson School Nature Area ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL24	St Luke's C of E Primary School Wild Area ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL25	Aberfeldy Millennium Green ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL26	Robin Hood Gardens ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL27	Meath Gardens ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL28	Ropemakers Field ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )
THL29	St Bartholomew's Gardens ( <i>proposed new designation</i> )

## Appendix 5: Sports facilities in parks and open spaces

PARK OR OPEN SPACE NAME	AP	BB	BG	CP	FSG	FT	HS	JG	MS	MU GA	RP	T	TM
ABBOTT ROAD OPEN SPACE										1			
BARTLETT PARK					2								
BETHNAL GREEN GARDENS		3										4	1
CANROBERT ST. OPEN SPACE										1			
GROVE HALL PARK										1			
HELLING ST OPEN SPACE										1			
KING EDWARD MEMORIAL PARK			1				1					4	
LANGDON PARK								1					
MEATH GARDENS					1					1			
MILLWALL PARK			1		3				3	1			
POPLAR PARK			1							1		2	
RAVENSCROFT PARK										1			
ROPEMAKERS FIELDS												2	
ROPEWALK GARDENS							1						
ST ANDREWS WHARF										1			
ST JOHNS PARK										1		2	
SCHOOLHOUSE LANE										1			
SHANDY PARK										1			
STEPNEY GREEN PARK	1				1								
TRAFALGAR GARDENS										1			
VICTORIA PARK			1	2	10			1	3			4	
WAPPING GARDENS										1		1	
WEAVERS FIELDS					2	1		1					

### KEY

AP = ARTIFICIAL PITCH  
 BB = BASKETBALL PITCH  
 BG = BOWLING GREEN  
 CP = CRICKET PITCH

FSG = FULL SIZE GRASS PITCH  
 FT = FITNESS TRAIL  
 HS = HARD SURFACE PITCH  
 JG = JUNIOR GRASS PITCH

MS = MINI SOCCER PITCH  
 MUGA = MULTI-USE GAMES AREA  
 RP = RUGBY PITCH  
 T = TENNIS COURTS

TM = TARMAC PITCH



## Appendix 6: Analysis of Council owned parks and open spaces by size (Council owned Metropolitan Open Land and Local Open Spaces)

LAP Area	Name of Park or Open Space	Address	Total Area In Hectares
	<b>Over 10 Hectares</b>		
4	Victoria Park	Grove Rd.	86.18
4	Mile End Park	Grove Rd/Burdett Rd.	29.36
8	Mudchute Park & Farm	Pier Street.	13.24
5	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park	Southern Grove	10.93
	<b>5 to 10 Hectares</b>		
8	Millwall Park	Stebondale Street	8.64
2	Weavers Fields	Viaduct Street	6.17
	<b>1 to 5 Hectares</b>		
2	Stepney Green Park	Stepney Way	4.62
6	Bartlett Park	Lindfield Street	4.62
4	Meath Gardens	Smart Street	3.92
2	Bethnal Green Gardens	Cambridge Heath Rd.	3.51
3	King Edward Memorial Park	Glamis Road	3.30
3	Wapping Canal System	Wapping	3.06
8	Sir John McDougal Park	Westferry Road	2.15
1	Allen Gardens	Buxton Street	1.97
2	St.Dunstans Churchyard	Stepney High Street	1.82
3	Ropemakers Fields	Narrow Street	1.80
6	Langdon Park	Bright Street	1.70
6	Poplar Recreation Ground	Hale Street	1.59
3	Wapping Woods	John Rennie Walk	1.58
4	Shandy Park	Harford Street	1.46
1	Vallance Road Gardens	Vallance Road	1.36
3	Wapping Gardens	Tench Street	1.26
1	Swedenborg Gardens	Wellclose Street	1.24
1	St.Georges in the East Churchyard	Cannon Street Road	1.19
5	Grove Hall Park	Fairfield Road	1.19
4	Furze Green Open Space	Furze Green Road	1.14

<b>LAP Area</b>	<b>Name of Park or Open Space</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Total Area In Hectares</b>
8	Island Gardens	Saunders Ness Road	1.12
2	Museum Gardens	Cambridge Heath Rd.	1.05
2	Ion Square Gardens	Warner Place	1.03
	<b>Under 1 Hectare</b>		
2	Ravenscroft Park	Ravenscroft Street	0.97
2	Belgrave Street Open Space	Belgrave Street	0.95
8	St.Johns Park	Manchester Road	0.95
6	All Saints Churchyard	Bazely Street	0.94
3	St.Annes Churchyard	Three Colt Street	0.90
2	Whitehorse Road Park	Whitehorse Road	0.89
2	St.Matthews Church Gardens	St.Matthews Row	0.83
6	Alton Street Open Space	Alton Street	0.83
6	Jolly's Green	Joshua Street	0.83
1	Rope Walk Gardens	Golding Street	0.82
2	Carlton Square Gardens	Carlton Square	0.78
7	Silvocea Wharf	Leamouth	0.77
4	Ackroyd Drive Open Spaces	Ackroyd Drive	0.70
2	Hardinge Street Open Space	Hardinge Street	0.64
3	Wapping Rose Gardens	Green Bank	0.63
5	Bromley Recreation Ground	St.Leonards Street	0.62
6	Pennyfields Open Space	Pennyfields	0.62
5	Rounton Road Open Space	Rounton Road	0.58
3	St.James Gardens	Ratcliffe Lane	0.56
2	Stepney Green Gardens	Stepney Green	0.53
5	Tredeggar Square Gardens	Tredeggar Square	0.51
1	Altab Ali Park	Adler Street	0.50
3	Trinity Square Gardens	Tower Hill	0.49
2	Pollard Square	Pollard Row	0.47
2	St.Bartholomews Gardens	Buckhurst Street	0.46
6	Abbott Road Recreation Ground	Abbott Road	0.42
6	Trinity Gardens	Upper North Street	0.42
4	Prospect Park	Devons Road	0.41
8	Great Eastern Slipway	Napier Avenue	0.41
2	Beaumont Square Gardens	Beaumont Square	0.40

<b>LAP Area</b>	<b>Name of Park or Open Space</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Total Area In Hectares</b>
2	Jesus Green	Quilter Street	0.37
2	Mansford Street Open Space	Mansford Street	0.37
4	Wyvis Street Open Space	Wyvis Street	0.37
2	Canrobert Street Open Space	Canrobert Street	0.34
2	Middleton Green	Middleton Street	0.34
6	Poplar Parkway	Castor Lane	0.32
2	Warner Green Open Space	Warner Place	0.30
2	Albert Gardens	Albert Gardens	0.28
2	Arbour Square Gardens	Arbour Square	0.27
5	Bow Churchyard (St.Mary's)	Bow Road	0.27
3	St.Johns Gardens	Scandrett Street	0.26
2	Boundary Gardens	Arnold Circus	0.25
2	Trafalgar Gardens	White Horse Lane	0.25
3	Wapping Green	Wapping Lane	0.25
1	Gosling Gardens	Bigland Street	0.24
3	Rectory Gardens	Commercial Road	0.24
2	Chicksand Street Open Space	Chicksand Street	0.23
8	London Yard	Amsterdam Road	0.22
1	Christchurch Gardens	Commercial Street	0.19
2	Mile End Road Verges	Mile End Road	0.19
5	Selwyn Green	Selwyn Road	0.19
3	Kings Wharf	Newell Street	0.18
8	Maconochies Wharf	Blasker Walk	0.18
2	Ford Square Gardens	Ford Square	0.17
3	Raines Mansions	Raine Street	0.17
4	Fern Street Open Space	Fern Street	0.17
2	Paradise Gardens	Paradise Row	0.16
3	Glamis Road Playground	Glamis Road	0.16
4	Twelve Trees Crescent	Devas Street	0.16
3	Hellings Street Playpark	Hellings Street	0.15
6	Stoneyard Lane Gardens	Stoneyard Lane	0.15
3	Waterside Gardens	Wapping High Street	0.14
4	Stonebridge Wharf	Carr Street	0.14
8	Caledonian Wharf	Caledonian Wharf Rd.	0.14
2	Sidney Square Gardens	Sidney Street	0.13

<b>LAP Area</b>	<b>Name of Park or Open Space</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Total Area In Hectares</b>
3	Carron & Continental Wharf	St.Katharines Way	0.13
8	Newcastle Drawdock	Saunders Ness Road	0.13
3	Vaughan Way Open Space	Vaughan Way	0.12
4	Bonner Hall Gate	Approach Road	0.12
1	Cavell Street Gardens	Cavell Street	0.11
2	Virginia Gardens	Virginia Road	0.11
1	Library Place	Cable Street	0.10
2	Mercers Burial Ground	Whithorse Road	0.10
3	Tower Hill Approach	Tower Hill	0.10
4	Hancock Road Open Space	Hancock Road	0.10
8	Compass Point	Mariners Mews	0.10
2	York Square Gardens	York Square	0.09
6	Cotton Street Open Space	Cotton Street	0.09
8	Castle Wharf	Orchard Place	0.09
3	Schoolhouse Lane Pitch	Cable Street	0.08
1	Mallon Gardens	Commercial Street	0.07
8	Johnsons Drawdock	Ferry Street	0.07
2	Stepney Clocktower	Stepney Green	0.06
6	Prestons Road Open Space	Prestons Road	0.05
7	Dockers Tanner Open Space	Dockers Tanner Road	0.05
2	White Horse Lane Open Space	White Horse Lane	0.04
8	Friars Mead Open Space	Friars Mead	0.04
8	Masthouse Terrace	Masthouse Terrace	0.04
2	Baxendale Street Gardens	Baxendale Street	0.03
2	Globe Road Open Space	Globe Road	0.03
2	Mile End Road Open Space	Mile End Road	0.02
3	London Wall	Tower Hill	0.02
7	Baffin Way Shrub Bed	Baffin Way	0.01
	<b>Total Area of Parks in Hectares</b>		<b>232.07</b>

## Appendix 7: Quality scores for parks and open spaces

The **first** schedule lists sites by site identification number and name and the **second** schedule lists the sites in alphabetical order. They give the number used in the in the GIS and the quality score derived by Scott Wilson Consultants, updated in August 2005. They audited all public open spaces managed by the Borough and other open spaces that have unrestricted public access and are larger than the 0.3 ha. size threshold. They did not audit the rivers, canals, river walks or wharves. Further open space parcels were identified during summer 2005 and given a TH prefix but not a quality score. Many of these have restricted access, such as private, closed Jewish burial grounds and schools outdoor sports facilities. These were identified so that the potential for public access agreements to improve access to open space in areas of deficiency can be assessed.

**Table of sites and quality scores in number order, sorted by type**

Site ID	Site Name	Local Typology	LAP	Hectares	Quality score
001	Millwall Park	Major Park	Area 8	8.75	87.30
002	Victoria Park	Major Park	Area 5	86.99	91.50
003	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	2.48	81.10
004	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	16.27	
005	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	6.83	
006	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	4.20	
007	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	0.88	
008	Pollard Square	Local Park	Area 1	0.47	
009	Poplar Park	Local Park	Area 7	1.57	85.50
010	Selwyn Park / Green	Local Park	Area 5	0.19	42.71
011	Archibald Public Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	0.33	44.60
012	Penny Fields	Local Park	Area 7	0.61	44.03
013	Stonebridge Wharf	Local Park	Area 3	0.14	43.19
014	Carlton Square Extension	Local Park	Area 1	0.65	42.81
015	Grove Hall Park	Local Park	Area 5	1.19	57.15
016	Shandy Park	Local Park	Area 3	1.46	58.47
017	Bromley-by-Bow Centre	Local Park	Area 6	0.50	79.09
018	Cotton Street / Bazeley Street	Local Park	Area 8	0.19	43.64
019	Prospect Park	Local Park	Area 6	0.42	34.01
020	Ravenscroft Park	Local Park	Area 1	0.97	53.72
021	Four Seasons Green	Local Park	Area 5	0.34	40.88
022	Meath Gardens	Local Park	Area 1	3.94	66.80
023	Stepney Green Park	Local Park	Area 3	4.63	75.70
024	Swanlea Park	Local Park	Area 2	0.55	70.83
025	Middleton Green	Local Park	Area 1	0.67	47.70
026	Wapping Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	1.27	48.80
027	Wapping Green	Local Park	Area 4	0.25	62.21
028	Allen Gardens	Local Park	Area 1	1.90	30.82
029	Warner Green	Local Park	Area 1	0.30	58.23
030	Rounton Road Public Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	0.56	54.01
031	Ion Square Gardens	Local Park	Area 1	1.03	59.54
032	Langdon Park	Local Park	Area 7	1.69	69.60
033	Jolly's Green	Local Park	Area 7	0.82	38.70
034	St. Johns Park	Local Park	Area 8	0.95	83.80
035	Jesus Green	Local Park	Area 1	0.37	59.21
036	Alton St Public Open Space	Local Park	Area 7	0.84	67.70

Site ID	Site Name	Local Typology	LAP	Hectares	Quality score
037	Furze Green Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	1.14	55.50
038	Stoneyard Lane	Local Park	Area 7	0.15	71.09
039	Sir John McDougal Gardens	Local Park	Area 8	2.18	71.10
040	Wapping Woods	Local Park	Area 4	1.59	61.37
041	Weavers Fields	Local Park	Area 2	6.31	90.10
042	Bethnal Green Gardens	Local Park	Area 2	3.52	80.20
043	Swedenborg Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	1.56	53.08
044	Bartlett Park	Local Park	Area 7	4.97	32.25
045	Fern Street Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	0.11	62.84
046	Whitehorse Park	Local Park	Area 3	1.38	64.90
047	Ropemakers Fields	Local Park	Area 7	1.80	69.55
048	Millwall Dock Open Space	Local Park	Area 8	0.45	80.85
049	Raine's Mansions	Local Park	Area 4	0.17	69.09
050	King Edward Memorial Garden	Local Park	Area 4	3.29	80.30
051	Lavens Road Park	Local Park	Area 7	0.59	45.19
052	Wapping Rose Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	0.61	66.43
053	Ropewalk Gardens	Local Park	Area 3	0.82	74.80
054	Mansford Street Open Space	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.24	32.59
055	Dockers Tanners Yard	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.05	N/A
056	Museum Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 2	1.07	66.41
057	Mallon Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.08	60.40
058	Trafalgar Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.25	77.30
059	Globe Road OS	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.03	50.46
060	Jubilee Park	Square/Garden	Area 8	1.13	67.96
061	Clocktower, Stepney	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.05	62.60
062	Cavell Street Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.11	N/A
063	Pomell Way	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.06	N/A
064	Carlton Square	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.14	55.87
065	Trinity Square Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.49	66.90
066	London Wall Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.21	N/A
067	Wakefield Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.09	N/A
068	Cabot Square	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.50	69.37
069	Waterside Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.14	75.76
070	Arbour Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.30	64.99
071	Hermitage Riverside Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.35	15.07
072	Arnold Circus	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.26	60.73
073	Albert Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.28	60.18
074	Belgrave Street Open Space	Local Park	Area 3	0.64	38.93
075	St. James's Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.59	51.43
076	Island Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 8	1.25	74.88
077	Kings Wharf	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.18	52.62
078	Rectory Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.24	70.90
079	Tower of London (Inner)	Water Front	Area 4	2.26	70.61
080	Three Colts Street / Mitre Street	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.03	N/A
081	Sidney Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.14	70.70
082	East India Dock Square	Water Front	Area 8	0.57	62.99
083	Stepney Green Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.51	35.01
084	Beaumont Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.43	69.50
085	Trinity Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.42	52.65
086	Tower of London Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.32	49.99

Site ID	Site Name	Local Typology	LAP	Hectares	Quality score
087	Westferry Circus	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.31	75.78
088	Paradise Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.16	57.01
089	Robin Hood Gardens	Local Park	Area 8	0.92	53.02
090	Baxandale Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.03	N/A
091	Tredegar Square Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 5	0.51	56.73
092	York Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.09	62.22
093	Queen Mother's Garden, Westferry Road	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.12	69.01
094	Ford Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.17	71.12
095	Limehouse Fields	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.11	
096	Virginia Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.11	63.00
097	Weavers Adventure Playground	Playground	Area 2	0.44	56.66
098	Hardinge & Lukin Street Playground	Playground	Area 4	0.12	24.03
099	Glamis Rd Adventure Playground	Playground	Area 4	0.15	64.82
100	St. Andrews Wharf Youth Project	Playground	Area 8	0.34	58.00
101	Hellings Street Play Area	Playground	Area 4	0.15	74.16
102	Strafford Street	Playground	Area 8	0.19	N/A
103	Attlee Youth and Community Centre	Playground	Area 2	0.29	49.99
104	Shacklewell (1 o'clock club)	Playground	Area 1	0.06	53.13
105	School House Kickabout	Playground	Area 4	0.07	33.41
106	Aberfeldy MUGA	Playground	Area 7	0.04	52.52
107	Tower Hamlets Cemetery	Burial ground	Area 6	11.50	37.81
108	St. Mary Bow	Burial ground	Area 5	0.27	82.99
110	Burial Ground	Burial ground	Area 1	0.38	34.59
111	St. George in the East	Burial ground	Area 4	1.61	48.39
112	St. Peter's Churchyard	Burial ground	Area 1	0.42	32.50
113	St. Bartholomews	Burial ground	Area 2	0.45	48.55
114	St. Johns Churchyard	Burial ground	Area 4	0.25	79.56
115	Altab Ali Park	Burial ground	Area 3	0.51	64.51
116	Christchurch Gardens	Burial ground	Area 2	0.19	49.53
117	St. Annes	Burial ground	Area 7	0.90	61.65
118	St. Matthews Old Church	Burial ground	Area 7	0.63	48.02
119	Mercers Burial Ground	Burial ground	Area 3	0.10	49.54
120	All Saints	Burial ground	Area 8	0.94	62.56
121	St. Matthews & St James	Burial ground	Area 1	0.83	39.27
122	St. Dunstons Church	Burial ground	Area 3	1.82	61.30
123	Old Railway at Fairfoot Road	Ecological	Area 6	0.74	22.22
124	East India Dock Basin	Ecological	Area 8	2.93	N/A
125	Ackroyd Drive Extension	Ecological	Area 6	0.71	48.30
126	Greenway	Ecological	Area 5	0.22	31.80
127	Gosling Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	0.24	35.19
128	Wyvis Street Open space	Local Park	Area 7	0.38	36.75
131	Jubilee Gardens	Housing Amenity Land	Area 3	0.30	52.67
137	Ackroyd Drive Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 6	0.17	48.33
138	Cable Street Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 4	0.57	49.53
139	Meath Gardens Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 1	0.37	42.99
140	Mudchute City Farm	Allotments / City Farm	Area 8	13.13	47.14

Site ID	Site Name	Local Typology	LAP	Hectares	Quality score
141	Reeves Road Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 6	0.36	31.11
142	Stepping Stones Farm	Allotments / City Farm	Area 3	1.50	57.77
143	Spitalfields Farm	Allotments / City Farm	Area 1	0.21	76.98
144	Millwall Dock	Water Front	Area 8	14.38	69.51
145	Johnsons Draw Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.07	N/A
146	Great Eastern Slipway	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.41	54.85
147	Masthouse Terrace Walkway	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.04	N/A
148	Regents Canal	Civic / Water Front	Area 2	6.80	N/A
149	Millwall Outer Dock Slipway	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.24	N/A
150	Blackwall Basin & Poplar Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	5.01	65.12
151	Limehouse Basin	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	3.14	58.41
152	London Yards	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.27	N/A
153	Castle Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.09	N/A
154	Compass Point	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.10	N/A
155	Maconochies Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.18	N/A
156	River Thames	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	359.15	N/A
157	Isle of Dogs Wharves	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	25.16	N/A
158	Caledonian Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.14	N/A
159	Limehouse Cut	Civic / Water Front	Area 7	4.28	N/A
160	River Lea	Civic / Water Front	Area 6	43.64	N/A
161	Tobacco Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	1.75	61.39
162	St. Katherines Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	4.19	75.43
163	Carron Continental Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	0.11	N/A
164	Shadwell Basin	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	4.13	45.62
165	Newcastle Draw Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.13	N/A
166	Hertford Union Canal	Civic / Water Front	Area 5	2.17	N/A
167	Lee Navigation	Civic / Water Front	Area 5	0.99	N/A
168	The Oval	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.07	N/A
TH001	Boundary Playground	Playground	Area 1	0.03	N/A
TH002	Shackelwell Street Playground	Playground	Area 1	0.11	N/A
TH003	Rhoda Street Green	Housing Amenity Land	Area 1	0.14	N/A
TH004	Chicksand Ghat	Playground	Area 2	0.23	N/A
TH005	Cephas Avenue Square	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.10	N/A
TH006	Roman Road Market Square	Civic / Water Front	Area 1	0.17	N/A
TH007	Braithewaite Park	Local Park	Area 7	0.44	N/A
TH008	Ming Street Open Space	Housing Amenity Land	Area 7	0.27	N/A
TH009	Chrisp Street Market Area 1	Civic / Water Front	Area 7	0.19	N/A
TH010	Chrisp Street Market Area 2	Civic / Water Front	Area 7	0.64	N/A
TH011	Abbott Road Gardens	Housing Amenity Land	Area 7	0.10	N/A
TH012	Aberfeldy Millennium Green	Local Park	Area 7	0.38	N/A
TH013	Tower Hill Terrace	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.11	N/A
TH014	Bigland Green Open Space	Playground	Area 4	0.23	N/A
TH015	Tower of London (Outer)	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	1.41	N/A
TH016	Twelve Trees Crescent Open space	Local Park	Area 6	0.16	N/A
TH017	Queen Mary University of London Burial Ground 1	Churchyard / Cemetery	Area 1	0.39	N/A
TH018	Queen Mary University of London Burial Ground 2	Churchyard / Cemetery	Area 1	0.34	N/A



<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Local Typology</b>	<b>LAP</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>Quality score</b>
TH019	The Blessed John Roche Catholic School (now closed)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 7	0.58	N/A
TH020	Langdon Park School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 7	1.46	N/A
TH021	Cubitt Town Junior and Infants School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 8	0.57	N/A
TH022	Jewish Burial Ground Brady Street	Burial ground	Area 2	1.09	N/A
TH023	St Paul's Way Secondary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 6	1.01	N/A
TH024	George Green School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 8	0.41	N/A
TH025	Sir John Cass's C of E Secondary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 3	0.37	N/A
TH026	Bow Common Lane Gas Works	Ecological	Area 6	0.88	N/A
TH027	Morpeth Secondary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 1	0.42	N/A
TH028	Canada Square	Square / Garden	Area 8	0.64	67.96

**Table of quality scores for parks and open spaces - alphabetical order by site name**

Site ID	Site Name	Local Typology	LAP	Hectares	Quality score
TH011	Abbott Road Gardens	Housing Amenity Land	Area 7	0.10	N/A
TH012	Aberfeldy Millennium Green	Local Park	Area 7	0.38	N/A
106	Aberfeldy MUGA	Playground	Area 7	0.04	52.52
137	Ackroyd Drive Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 6	0.17	48.33
125	Ackroyd Drive Extension	Ecological	Area 6	0.71	48.30
073	Albert Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.28	60.18
120	All Saints	Burial ground	Area 8	0.94	62.56
028	Allen Gardens	Local Park	Area 1	1.90	30.82
115	Altab Ali Park	Burial ground	Area 3	0.51	64.51
036	Alton St Public Open Space	Local Park	Area 7	0.84	67.70
070	Arbour Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.30	64.99
011	Archibald Public Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	0.33	44.60
072	Arnold Circus	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.26	60.73
103	Attlee Youth and Community Centre	Playground	Area 2	0.29	49.99
044	Bartlett Park	Local Park	Area 7	4.97	32.25
090	Baxandale Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.03	N/A
084	Beaumont Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.43	69.50
074	Belgrave Street Open Space	Local Park	Area 3	0.64	38.93
042	Bethnal Green Gardens	Local Park	Area 2	3.52	80.20
TH014	Bigland Green Open Space	Playground	Area 4	0.23	N/A
150	Blackwall Basin & Poplar Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	5.01	65.12
TH001	Boundary Playground	Playground	Area 1	0.03	N/A
TH026	Bow Common Lane Gas Works	Ecological	Area 6	0.88	N/A
TH007	Braithwaite Park	Local Park	Area 7	0.44	N/A
017	Bromley-by-Bow Centre	Local Park	Area 6	0.50	79.09
110	Burial Ground	Burial ground	Area 1	0.38	34.59
138	Cable Street Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 4	0.57	49.53
068	Cabot Square	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.50	69.37
158	Caledonian Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.14	N/A
TH028	Canada Square	Square / Garden	Area 8	0.64	67.96
064	Carlton Square	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.14	55.87
014	Carlton Square Extension	Local Park	Area 1	0.65	42.81
163	Carron Continental Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	0.11	N/A
153	Castle Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.09	N/A
062	Cavell Street Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.11	N/A
TH005	Cephas Avenue Square	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.10	N/A
TH004	Chicksand Ghat	Playground	Area 2	0.23	N/A
TH009	Chrisp Street Market Area 1	Civic / Water Front	Area 7	0.19	N/A
TH010	Chrisp Street Market Area 2	Civic / Water Front	Area 7	0.64	N/A
116	Christchurch Gardens	Burial ground	Area 2	0.19	49.53
061	Clocktower, Stepney	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.05	62.60
154	Compass Point	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.10	N/A
018	Cotton Street / Bazeley Street	Local Park	Area 8	0.19	43.64
TH021	Cubitt Town Junior and Infants School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 8	0.57	N/A
055	Dockers Tanners Yard	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.05	N/A
124	East India Dock Basin	Ecological	Area 8	2.93	N/A

082	East India Dock Square	Water Front	Area 8	0.57	62.99
045	Fern Street Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	0.11	62.84
094	Ford Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.17	71.12
021	Four Seasons Green	Local Park	Area 5	0.34	40.88
037	Furze Green Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	1.14	55.50
TH024	George Green School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 8	0.41	N/A
099	Glamis Rd Adventure Playground	Playground	Area 4	0.15	64.82
059	Globe Road OS	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.03	50.46
127	Gosling Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	0.24	35.19
146	Great Eastern Slipway	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.41	54.85
126	Greenway	Ecological	Area 5	0.22	31.80
015	Grove Hall Park	Local Park	Area 5	1.19	57.15
098	Hardinge & Lukin Street Playground	Playground	Area 4	0.12	24.03
101	Hellings Street Play Area	Playground	Area 4	0.15	74.16
071	Hermitage Riverside Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.35	15.07
166	Hertford Union Canal	Civic / Water Front	Area 5	2.17	N/A
031	Ion Square Gardens	Local Park	Area 1	1.03	59.54
076	Island Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 8	1.25	74.88
157	Isle of Dogs Wharves	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	25.16	N/A
035	Jesus Green	Local Park	Area 1	0.37	59.21
TH022	Jewish Burial Ground Brady Street	Burial ground	Area 2	1.09	N/A
145	Johnsons Draw Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.07	N/A
033	Jolly's Green	Local Park	Area 7	0.82	38.70
131	Jubilee Gardens	Housing Amenity Land	Area 3	0.30	52.67
060	Jubilee Park	Square/Garden	Area 8	1.13	67.96
050	King Edward Memorial Garden	Local Park	Area 4	3.29	80.30
077	Kings Wharf	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.18	52.62
032	Langdon Park	Local Park	Area 7	1.69	69.60
TH020	Langdon Park School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 7	1.46	N/A
051	Lavens Road Park	Local Park	Area 7	0.59	45.19
167	Lee Navigation	Civic / Water Front	Area 5	0.99	N/A
151	Limehouse Basin	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	3.14	58.41
159	Limehouse Cut	Civic / Water Front	Area 7	4.28	N/A
095	Limehouse Fields	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.11	
066	London Wall Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.21	N/A
152	London Yards	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.27	N/A
155	Maconochies Wharf	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.18	N/A
057	Mallon Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.08	60.40
054	Mansford Street Open Space	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.24	32.59
147	Masthouse Terrace Walkway	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.04	N/A
022	Meath Gardens	Local Park	Area 1	3.94	66.80
139	Meath Gardens Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 1	0.37	42.99
119	Mercers Burial Ground	Burial ground	Area 3	0.10	49.54
025	Middleton Green	Local Park	Area 1	0.67	47.70
003	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	2.48	81.10
004	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	16.27	
005	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	6.83	
006	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	4.20	
007	Mile End Park	Major Park	Area 6	0.88	

144	Millwall Dock	Water Front	Area 8	14.38	69.51
048	Millwall Dock Open Space	Local Park	Area 8	0.45	80.85
149	Millwall Outer Dock Slipway	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.24	N/A
001	Millwall Park	Major Park	Area 8	8.75	87.30
TH008	Ming Street Open Space	Housing Amenity Land	Area 7	0.27	N/A
TH027	Morpeth Secondary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 1	0.42	N/A
140	Mudchute City Farm	Allotments / City Farm	Area 8	13.13	47.14
056	Museum Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 2	1.07	66.41
165	Newcastle Draw Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	0.13	N/A
123	Old Railway at Fairfoot Road	Ecological	Area 6	0.74	22.22
088	Paradise Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.16	57.01
012	Penny Fields	Local Park	Area 7	0.61	44.03
008	Pollard Square	Local Park	Area 1	0.47	46.78
063	Pomell Way	Square/Garden	Area 2	0.06	N/A
009	Poplar Park	Local Park	Area 7	1.57	85.50
019	Prospect Park	Local Park	Area 6	0.42	34.01
TH017	Queen Mary University of London Burial Ground 1	Churchyard / Cemetery	Area 1	0.39	N/A
TH018	Queen Mary University of London Burial Ground 2	Churchyard / Cemetery	Area 1	0.34	N/A
093	Queen Mother's Garden, Westferry Road	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.12	69.01
049	Raine's Mansions	Local Park	Area 4	0.17	69.09
020	Ravenscroft Park	Local Park	Area 1	0.97	53.72
078	Rectory Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.24	70.90
141	Reeves Road Allotments	Allotments / City Farm	Area 6	0.36	31.11
148	Regents Canal	Civic / Water Front	Area 2	6.80	N/A
TH003	Rhoda Street Green	Housing Amenity Land	Area 1	0.14	N/A
160	River Lea	Civic / Water Front	Area 6	43.64	N/A
156	River Thames	Civic / Water Front	Area 8	359.15	N/A
089	Robin Hood Gardens	Local Park	Area 8	0.92	53.02
TH006	Roman Road Market Square	Civic / Water Front	Area 1	0.17	N/A
047	Ropemakers Fields	Local Park	Area 7	1.80	69.55
053	Ropewalk Gardens	Local Park	Area 3	0.82	74.80
030	Rounton Road Public Open Space	Local Park	Area 6	0.56	54.01
105	School House Kickabout	Playground	Area 4	0.07	33.41
010	Selwyn Park / Green	Local Park	Area 5	0.19	42.71
TH002	Shackelwell Street Playground	Playground	Area 1	0.11	N/A
104	Shacklewell (1 o'clock club)	Playground	Area 1	0.06	53.13
164	Shadwell Basin	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	4.13	45.62
016	Shandy Park	Local Park	Area 3	1.46	58.47
081	Sidney Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.14	70.70
TH025	Sir John Cass's C of E Secondary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 3	0.37	N/A
039	Sir John McDougal Gardens	Local Park	Area 8	2.18	71.10
143	Spitalfields Farm	Allotments / City Farm	Area 1	0.21	76.98
TH023	St Paul's Way Secondary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 6	1.01	N/A
100	St. Andrews Wharf Youth Project	Playground	Area 8	0.34	58.00
117	St. Annes	Burial ground	Area 7	0.90	61.65
113	St. Bartholomews	Burial ground	Area 2	0.45	48.55

122	St. Dunstons Church	Burial ground	Area 3	1.82	61.30
075	St. James's Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.59	51.43
114	St. Johns Churchyard	Burial ground	Area 4	0.25	79.56
034	St. Johns Park	Local Park	Area 8	0.95	83.80
162	St. Katherines Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	4.19	75.43
108	St. Mary Bow	Burial ground	Area 5	0.27	82.99
121	St. Matthews & St James	Burial ground	Area 1	0.83	39.27
118	St. Matthews Old Church	Burial ground	Area 7	0.63	48.02
111	St. George in the East	Burial ground	Area 4	1.61	48.39
112	St. Peter's Churchyard	Burial ground	Area 1	0.42	32.50
083	Stepney Green Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.51	35.01
023	Stepney Green Park	Local Park	Area 3	4.63	75.70
142	Stepping Stones Farm	Allotments / City Farm	Area 3	1.50	57.77
013	Stonebridge Wharf	Local Park	Area 3	0.14	43.19
038	Stoneyard Lane	Local Park	Area 7	0.15	71.09
102	Strafford Street	Playground	Area 8	0.19	N/A
024	Swanlea Park	Local Park	Area 2	0.55	70.83
043	Swedenborg Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	1.56	53.08
TH019	The Blessed John Roche Catholic School (now closed)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Area 7	0.58	N/A
168	The Oval	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.07	N/A
080	Three Colts Street / Mitre Street	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.03	N/A
161	Tobacco Dock	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	1.75	61.39
107	Tower Hamlets Cemetery	Burial ground	Area 6	11.50	37.81
TH013	Tower Hill Terrace	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.11	N/A
079	Tower of London (Inner)	Water Front	Area 4	2.26	70.61
TH015	Tower of London (Outer)	Civic / Water Front	Area 4	1.41	N/A
086	Tower of London Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.32	49.99
058	Trafalgar Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.25	77.30
091	Tredegar Square Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 5	0.51	56.73
085	Trinity Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 7	0.42	52.65
065	Trinity Square Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.49	66.90
TH016	Twelve Trees Crescent Open space	Local Park	Area 6	0.16	N/A
002	Victoria Park	Major Park	Area 5	86.99	91.50
096	Virginia Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 1	0.11	63.00
067	Wakefield Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.09	N/A
026	Wapping Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	1.27	48.80
027	Wapping Green	Local Park	Area 4	0.25	62.21
052	Wapping Rose Gardens	Local Park	Area 4	0.61	66.43
040	Wapping Woods	Local Park	Area 4	1.59	61.37
029	Warner Green	Local Park	Area 1	0.30	58.23
069	Waterside Gardens	Square/Garden	Area 4	0.14	75.76
097	Weavers Adventure Playground	Playground	Area 2	0.44	56.66
041	Weavers Fields	Local Park	Area 2	6.31	90.10
087	Westferry Circus	Square/Garden	Area 8	0.31	75.78
046	Whitehorse Park	Local Park	Area 3	1.38	64.90
128	Wyvis Street Open space	Local Park	Area 7	0.38	36.75
092	York Square	Square/Garden	Area 3	0.09	62.22

## Glossary of Terms and Web Links

<b>1 ha. / hectare</b>	Equivalent to 2.47 acres. A full size, senior football pitch takes up about 0.75 ha. of space. Island Gardens and Museum Gardens are both about 1 ha. in size.
<b>1.2 km</b>	This figure is used for open space planning since it is roughly equal to a 20 minute walk for most people. People with walking difficulties or with wheelchairs or children make take longer.
<b>400 m</b>	This figure is used for open space planning since it is roughly equal to a 5 minute walk for most people. People with walking difficulties, or with wheelchairs or children make take longer.
<b>AAP</b>	Area Action Plan; these have been prepared for the City Fringe, Leaside and the Isle of Dogs
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The variety of life on earth
<b>BME</b>	Black and Ethnic Minority communities
<b>CABE Space</b>	Commission for the Built Environment Space, established by the government as its response to the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce. It is the branch of CABE that deals with parks and urban open space issues. <a href="http://www.cabespace.org.uk/">www.cabespace.org.uk/</a>
<b>GLA</b>	Greater London Authority <a href="http://www.london.gov.uk/">www.london.gov.uk/</a>
<b>Green Grid</b>	East London Green Grid, the sub-regional framework for open space enhancements. The vision is 'A living network of parks, green spaces, river and other corridors connecting urban areas to the river Thames, the green belt and beyond.'
<b>HAP</b>	Habitat Action Plan. For Tower Habitats Parks and Burial Grounds HAP <a href="http://www.towerhabitats.org/">www.towerhabitats.org/</a>
<b>IDeA</b>	Government agency aims to help improve local authorities and develop the skills of people working on local government ; it runs the Beacon Council scheme which rewards excellence in particular service areas <a href="http://www.idea.gov.uk/">www.idea.gov.uk/</a>
<b>LBAP</b>	Local Biodiversity Action Plan adopted by Council January 2004 <a href="http://www.towerhabitats.org/">www.towerhabitats.org/</a>
<b>LBTH</b>	London Borough of Tower Hamlets <a href="http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/">www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/</a>
<b>LDF</b>	Local Development Framework
<b>Local Area Agreement (LAA)</b>	The Council is committed to the development of a LAA with the other stakeholders in the Tower Hamlets Partnership. The LAA builds upon the priorities set out in the Community Plan.
<b>NPFA</b>	National Playing Fields Association <a href="http://www.npfa.co.uk/">www.npfa.co.uk/</a>
<b>Olympic Park</b>	The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will lead

	to the creation of a 200 hectare park (nearly 500 acres) along the river Lea, mainly in Newham. It will be two and a half the size of Victoria Park.
<b>OSN</b>	The Open Space and the Natural Environment policies of the LDF are referenced as OSN 1-4
<b>PPG</b>	Planning Policy Guidance; government policy guidance on planning issues
<b>PPS</b>	Planning Policy Statements; PPGs are being replaced over time by PPSs
<b>PSA</b>	Public Service Agreements
<b>SINC</b>	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (as identified by the GLA and agreed by the Borough through the LDF
<b>TGLP</b>	Thames Gateway London Partnership
<b>Thames Strategy East</b>	Landscape and urban design guidance prepared by the Thames Estuary Partnership for the Thames from Tower Bridge to the Estuary