

The City of London
Open Space Strategy
Supplementary Planning Document
2014



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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

This section introduces the City of London by describing the place, explaining its uniqueness and outlining the type of open spaces that exist today. It then goes on to set out the need for and purpose of the Strategy, the importance of open space and the key issues that need to be addressed within the 'Square Mile'.

2. Policy Framework

This section establishes the relevant policy framework which provides the context for the Strategy and helps inform its content.

3. Assessment of Need

This section summarises the City's characteristics relating them to the six distinct character areas identified in the City's Local Plan (North of the City, Cheapside & St. Paul's, Eastern Cluster, Aldgate, Thames & the Riverside and Rest of the City). It goes on to describe the 'supply' and 'demand' side of open space provision.

In terms of supply, the main findings are:

- There are 376 open spaces within the City;
- This totals approximately 32.09 hectares, of which 25.66 hectares is publicly accessible;
- Approximately 80% of the sites are less than 0.2 hectares in size;
- The existing ratio of publicly accessible open space to the weekday day-time population (workers, students, visitors and residents) is approximately 0.06 hectares per 1000;
- There are approximately 2,400 trees across the City;
- There are a variety of public and commercial sports and health and fitness facilities and play areas in the City; and
- 10 of the open spaces are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

In terms of demand, the main findings are:

- The existing weekday day-time population is approximately 424,000;
- The worker population (which accounts for about 92% of the day-time population) is mainly male, relatively young and largely white;

- The resident population is more varied in its characteristics, being generally relatively affluent, but with Golden Lane and Portsoken Wards falling within areas that are amongst the 25% most deprived areas in England;
- This weekday day-time population is expected to grow by around 52,000 by 2019;
- The City's communities are generally satisfied with the City's public gardens and spaces, but want more 'green' areas and trees, more natural planting to help biodiversity, more play space and activities for young people and better links between spaces.

This section then outlines an assessment of need, based on the above supply and demand factors. In summary:

- The existing level of publicly accessible open space is low in both absolute and relative terms;
- The quality of publicly accessible open space is generally high, but there are a number of challenges to maintaining these high standards;
- The whole of the City can be described as deficient in open space and there is the need for all types of open space throughout the City;
- There is a particular need for publicly accessible open space in the Eastern Cluster and Aldgate Key City Places.
- In the context of a growing week-day population it is considered that the most appropriate local standard is the maintenance of the existing City-wide ratio of publicly accessible open space per 1000 week day day-time population at 0.060 hectares.

4. Vision, Strategy and Delivery

This section sets out a vision for open space provision in the City and establishes a long-term strategy. It then sets out how the Strategy will be delivered and monitored using a five year Action Plan (Not included in this document).

The vision for open space in the City is as follows:

“The creation of a network of high quality and inspiring open spaces which helps ensure an attractive, healthy, sustainable and socially cohesive place for all the City's communities and visitors.”

The Strategy comprises the following 10 Strategic Objectives:

1. Maintain and increase public access to existing open spaces and enhance the quality of these spaces, in terms of both design and management.

2. Increase the amount of high quality publicly accessible open space in order to maintain the existing City-wide ratio of 0.06 ha per 1000 week day day-time population and focus efforts on creating additional publicly accessible open space in the east of the City, particularly in the Eastern Cluster and the Aldgate area.
3. Ensure that all open spaces are designed and managed to be safe and accessible to all and, where appropriate, enabling opportunities for different activities at different times of the day and year.
4. Provide, where appropriate, additional play opportunities (including equipped play areas) that are accessible to all, including disabled children, in existing and new spaces.
5. Ensure that existing and new spaces make a positive contribution to the biodiversity value of the City through appropriate plant choice and habitat creation.
6. Ensure that enhanced and additional open spaces accord with high standards of sustainable and inclusive design, construction and management and take account of the potential changes to the City climate, particularly the urban heat island effect.
7. Increase the provision of private and communal residential amenity space (balconies and roof terraces) and communal amenity green space for office workers (including indoor and outdoor gardens) in appropriate locations.
8. Effectively manage the temporary loss of any open space during construction projects and ensure that high quality open space of equivalent or greater size is established as soon as possible following the necessary works.
9. Manage open spaces to recognise their potential contribution to the improved health and well-being of City and wider communities.
10. Increase public awareness and understanding of the different types of open space in and around the City and encourage the City's communities to make the most of open spaces and to help maintain and improve them.

The delivery of this strategy is to be achieved by:

- Enhancing existing open spaces – developing a delivery strategy setting out priorities for different parts of the City;
- Enhancing the street scene – continuing to use the Environmental Enhancement Programme to deliver enhanced and additional open spaces (informed by area-based Environmental Enhancement Strategies);
- Securing public access to private spaces through Access Agreements;
- Developing planning policy and using the development management process to secure additional open space as part of new developments and using monies from the City Corporation’s Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Continuing to work in partnership with others;
- Increasing volunteering;
- Implementing a Marketing/Promotion Strategy;
- Promoting and implementing the Tree Strategy and;
- Promoting and implementing the Biodiversity Action Plan.

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This section introduces the City of London by describing the place i.e. the 'Square Mile', explaining its uniqueness and outlining the type of open spaces that exist today. It then goes on to set out the need for and purpose of the Strategy, the importance of open space and the key issues that need to be addressed. This section then summarises the approach that was taken in developing the strategy before, finally, setting out the structure of the remaining sections of the document.

1.2 The City of London Today

- 1.2.1 The City of London is an area like no other in the United Kingdom. Although it is little more than one square mile in size it is very densely developed, is the historic and civic centre of London, and is the heart of London's international financial, maritime and business centre. It is a leading driver of the London and national economies and provides employment for 400,000 workers who occupy approximately 9 million square metres of office floor space. It has a distinct, international, business character and it makes a major contribution to London's position as a 'world city'.
- 1.2.2 At the same time the City has many other roles and is an area of great cultural richness. It is home to around 9,000 residents. It is a major cultural centre, which includes the, Barbican Centre, the Museum of London and other arts venues and facilities. It is a visitor destination with 8.8 million visitors a year and is a centre of learning, containing schools and higher education institutions with around 29,000 students. It also contains shops and leisure facilities and is at the hub of a regional public transport network. Despite its prosperity, the City lies close to some of the poorest and most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK, notably near its eastern borders.
- 1.2.3 The City is the historic core from which the rest of London developed, which is evident in the many historic monuments, churches, buildings and spaces. These include buildings and areas of national and international significance, such as St Paul's Cathedral, Guildhall and Mansion House which symbolise its distinct character, and open spaces such as Finsbury Circus (publicly accessible open space since 1606).
- 1.2.4 In summary, the City of London is a unique place with distinct environmental, social and economic characteristics.

1.3 The City Corporation

- 1.3.1 The City is a unique and atypical place; as is the local authority that manages it. Older than Parliament, the City Corporation governs the smallest local authority area in the United Kingdom. The Lord Mayor of the City of London, Aldermen of the Court of Common Council and the elected Members who govern and administer the City do so on a non-party-political basis. The City Corporation is the local authority responsible for the financial and commercial heart of Britain and provides businesses and residents with local government services, including planning, housing, education, social services, environmental health and waste management and maintains most open spaces in the City, including many former churchyards. It is also responsible for the City of London's own Police Service, is a Market Authority, managing the major London meat and fish markets at Smithfield and Billingsgate, and is a Port Authority. The City Corporation built and manages the Barbican Complex which is recognised by the Mayor of London as one of a number of internationally important cultural institutions.
- 1.3.2 The City Corporation governs a small area; however, its activities extend beyond its administrative boundary managing over 4,000 hectares of open spaces for the benefit of London as a whole. These spaces are Epping Forest, the City Commons (commons within other boroughs that the City manages), Burnham Beeches, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park, West Ham Park and Bunhill Fields. Hampstead Heath alone has an estimated 10 million visitors a year. Epping Forest, Burnham Beeches and Highgate Wood are amongst fifteen City Corporation managed open spaces outside the City that received Green Flag Awards in 2012.

1.4 Open Space Management

- 1.4.1 The City Corporation's commitment to open space management dates back to the 1870s when it campaigned to retain public open spaces and common land that were being threatened by the expansion of London and house-building.
- 1.4.2 Two Acts of Parliament were passed in the 1870s that granted the City Corporation the right to acquire and protect land within 25 miles of the City for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. This far-sighted policy was the inspiration behind the later Green Belt movement, designed to protect the countryside around British cities from urban sprawl.

1.5 Open Spaces Department

1.5.1 All management of City owned parks and open spaces is carried out by the City Corporation's Open Spaces Department, which is divided into six Divisions:

- City Gardens;
- West Ham Park
- Epping Forest;
- North London Open Spaces - Hampstead Heath, Queens Park and Highgate Wood;
- Burnham Beeches; and
- City Commons - Ashstead, West Wickham, Stoke Common and Coulsdon Commons.

1.5.2 All of the sites managed by the Department that lie outside the City are legally protected as permanent open spaces, which prevent them ever being developed. With the exception of the City Gardens and Woodredon and Warlies Farm estate (Buffer Lands), all are funded from the City's own resources at no cost to the public.

1.5.3 The Director of Open Spaces is responsible for overseeing the overall management of the Department and agreeing objectives for each site with the individual Divisional Superintendents.

1.5.4 The City Corporation's Department of the Built Environment and City Surveyor's Department also have a role in managing the City Corporation maintained open spaces. The current split in responsibilities is as follows:

- Open Spaces Department – tree and green space management, and hard landscape maintenance within enclosed gardens only;
- Department of the Built Environment– maintenance of hard landscape on the highway and unenclosed public spaces; and
- City Surveyor's Department – maintenance of landscape infrastructure, e.g. railings, gates, walls, monuments and memorials, etc.

1.6 Open Space in the City

- 1.6.1 The range of gardens, plazas, disused churchyards and burial grounds that make up a large proportion of the City's open space mostly result from two significant historical events that affected the townscape and geography of the City: the Great Fire of 1666 and bomb damage caused during World War II. The devastation caused by both events created pockets of land that were not redeveloped and were retained as open spaces for the City's communities.
- 1.6.2 After the Second World War, some damaged churches were not rebuilt, they went out of ecclesiastical use and their ruins were kept and landscaped as public gardens. Christ Church Greyfriars, rebuilt by Wren after the Great Fire and the 19th century church of St Dunstan-in-the-East are two such examples.
- 1.6.3 The Disused Burial Grounds Act 1884 prohibits building on disused burial grounds except for enlarging the church. Subsequently, although remaining in ecclesiastical ownership, many were landscaped and opened for public use as gardens, and burials were discontinued. These areas are valuable open spaces and important in demonstrating the history of the City. Most churchyards are relatively small and provide secluded, intimate spaces and form essential foils to the hard urban landscape. Bomb damage also revealed stretches of the Roman and medieval City wall and Roman fort, which have been kept and gardens created. These areas are valuable open spaces and important in demonstrating the history of the City.
- 1.6.4 Disused churchyards, including the churchyard of St Paul's Cathedral, make up approximately a third of the total open space in the City. The high number of medieval churches, numbering 110 prior to the Great Fire, and their churchyards means that these spaces form an integral part of the total open space in the City.
- 1.6.5 Many of the open spaces in the City have great historic interest and amenity value and gardens and cultivated areas have long been part of the City's history and character. Many Livery Companies have gardens, some dating from the medieval period.
- 1.6.6 Finsbury Circus is considered to be the oldest public space in London, dating from 1606. Its oval plot is complemented by the surrounding buildings. The gardens of the Inner and Middle Temples have a 19th and 20th century layout and are medieval in origin, possibly dating from the 12th century when the Knights Templar established their base there. The Barbican landscaping is a group of public, communal and domestic gardens at different levels which are an integral part of the design of the Barbican Estate. All four gardens are on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

- 1.6.7 Historic green spaces are augmented by a growing number of hard ‘civic spaces’. The large day time population of the City places pressure on the limited amount of open space and the City Corporation is actively working with private landowners and developers to enhance highways and existing spaces and create additional spaces.
- 1.6.8 One of the key characteristics of the City of London is the unique and high quality of its open spaces. The numerous gardens, churchyards and areas of highway planting within the Square Mile are often smaller than 0.2 hectare, but are intensively used. For example, Finsbury Circus garden (approximately 0.51 hectares) received almost 1.4 million visits each year, before being temporarily closed and used for Crossrail works. The garden will be reinstated and landscaped and opened to the public in 2018.
- 1.6.9 The current level and quality of open space in the City of London needs to be considered in context. Open spaces within the Square Mile have increased significantly over the last 70 years. In 1927, there were just three surviving public open spaces, each of which had passed into the Corporation’s care some years before, plus a number of churchyards and disused burial grounds. Today, there are more than 376 open spaces in the City, not counting private gardens.

1.7 Need and Purpose

- 1.7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 expects all local planning authorities to prepare planning policies based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. In addition to this expectation the City Corporation wishes to promote a strategy that focuses on open space provision, sets overarching priorities and provides a framework for joint working within and across the following departments: Open Spaces, Departments of the Built Environment, City Surveyor’s and Community and Children’s Services.
- 1.7.2 This document sets out an integrated medium term open space strategy for the City of London for the 5 year period from 2014 to 2019. Its aims are to provide:
- A consistent approach to protecting and managing the City’s open spaces;
 - A framework for prioritising investments according to identified open space deficiencies; investment may come from the City’s Community Infrastructure Levy on retained Section 106 Planning Obligations.

- The evidence and direction for the policies on open spaces in the City of London's Local Plan and associated documents;
- A consistent and strategic approach to determining planning applications related to open space or those that may impact on open space provision;
- The delivery of better quality, easily accessible and more open space which keeps pace with the expected growth in workers, residents, visitors and students and meets the expectations of all the City communities.

1.8 Benefits of Open Space

1.8.1 The City Corporation commissioned a report 'Green Spaces: The Benefits for London (2013)' which identifies the following benefits that open spaces deliver:

- Economic Benefits – green spaces result in cost savings for government related to health expenditure, can attract businesses to locate and can encourage tourism;
- Health and Well-being – green spaces can play a role in promoting healthy lifestyles, reducing stress and preventing illness;
- Social Inclusion, community development – green spaces give people the chance to participate in design, management and care of local spaces, fostering local pride. They are places to socialise, and because access is free, provide an affordable alternative to other leisure activities as well as allowing children to develop socialisation and motor skills through play;
- Education and Lifelong Learning – green spaces provide an outdoor classroom for schools, and provide work experience and learning opportunities in environmental management;
- Environment and Ecology – green spaces help counter pollution, cool the air, increase biodiversity and provide wildlife corridors, serve as 'lungs' for towns and cities, absorb noise, and lessen rainwater runoff;
- Heritage & Culture – green spaces are part of the heritage and culture of local communities. They provide venues for local festivals and civic celebrations.

1.9 Key Issues for the Strategy

1.9.1 There are a number of recurring core issues that must be addressed in this Strategy, and in all future open space creation and improvement schemes, in order to ensure long-term sustainable open spaces. These include:

- Maximising opportunities to address deficiencies of open space where possible, consistent with other City Corporation objectives;
- Ensuring that all existing and new open spaces are varied, of high quality, and relevant to the needs of the local area including, where appropriate, access to play for all;
- Ensuring all open spaces are designed to be safe and inclusive, giving equal access and enjoyment to the sites and activities that take place;
- Considering the implications of increased demand for open space through new developments and increases in the day time population in the City;
- Ensuring that any inappropriate use of sites is 'designed out';
- Considering the long term maintenance costs of new open space, and identifying sources of funding at the design and negotiation stages;
- Ensuring that, where appropriate, all new schemes incorporate automatic irrigation and that where possible, simple irrigation systems are 'retro-fitted' into existing open spaces areas;
- Ensuring the careful choice of plants tolerant to drought and extremes of climate but balancing this with the requirement for native species in order to encourage diversity of wildlife;
- Ensuring that when planting street trees in new schemes, both species and size are appropriate to the location, resistant to disease, maximise biodiversity of stock and are in accordance with the aims and objectives of the City's Tree Strategy SPD;
- Developing and agreeing formal maintenance agreements for churchyards maintained by the City Gardens team;

- Improving the planned maintenance and refurbishment of hard landscape features within City Corporation maintained open spaces, including liaising with the City Corporation’s Access Officer to satisfactorily address accessibility issues and;
- Encourage community engagement through events, activities and volunteering.

1.10 How was the Strategy developed?

1.10.1 This Strategy has been prepared by officers at the City of London Corporation. As outlined above, the City is a unique place and whilst due regard has been had to national and regional guidance (as summarised in Section 2), the methodology adopted has been tailored to address the City’s distinct characteristics. This is discussed in more detail below.

1.10.2 **Definition of Open Space.** A consistent definition for the term ‘open space’ has been used since the City of London Open Spaces Audit 2002 defined the term “open space” as:

“Land which is not built on and which has some amenity value or potential for amenity value. Amenity value is derived from the visual or other enjoyment which the open space can provide, such as historic and cultural interest and value”.

1.10.3 This definition has been adopted for the purposes of this Strategy. It includes land in public or private ownership (regardless of whether there is public access) but excludes green roofs and walls, private residential gardens, sky gardens, balconies and atria. It also excludes the River Thames.

1.10.4 For the sake of completeness a list of green roofs and walls is also included in this document.

1.11 Scope of Strategy

1.11.1 This Strategy relates to open space within the City of London only and does not address open spaces that the City Corporation manages elsewhere. It utilises data on open spaces from the City of London Open Space Audit (2013), which was undertaken by the Department of the Built Environment between June and August 2012.

1.11.2 In accordance with the NPPF, the Strategy has addressed all open space and outdoor sports and play facilities, including those at the Sir John Cass Primary School, which is

run by a Trust with assistance from the City Corporation, and the two privately run secondary schools (City of London School and the City of London School for Girls). It also takes into account the use and future needs of the City's one public leisure centre at Golden Lane. It is estimated that the City has over 40 private gyms and health and fitness facilities but these have not been considered in preparing this Strategy.

1.11.3 Green roofs, green walls, sky gardens, balconies and atria have not been included as open spaces for the purposes of this document as they have not been recognised as protected open spaces in the planning process. The significance of these types of spaces continues to increase however as the City's population and visitor numbers increase.

1.11.4 The lack of playing fields means there was no need to undertake a playing fields assessment. However, open space strategies for adjoining boroughs are expected to do so and take account of demand from the City.

1.12 Overall Approach

1.12.1 The overall approach to preparing this Strategy can be summarised as follows.

- **Supply:** the City of London Open Space Audit (2013) established the existing supply of open space by identifying the amount of different types of spaces that exist using the typologies set out in the City's 2008 Open Spaces Strategy. Those additional open spaces which are approved and financially committed were then taken into account, to give a more thorough picture of the supply of open space in the City.
- **Demand:** the demand for open space was established by quantifying the existing day-time population and identifying, as far as possible, its characteristics and distribution across the Key City Places (defined in Section 3). The forecast growth in the City's day-time population was then identified. The other part of demand relates to local opinion, expressed as community expectations and preferences, and these were identified from a series of consultation exercises. Please see Appendix 2 for further details.
- **Assessment:** the assessment of need was based on the above supply and demand factors and was undertaken on the basis of quantitative, qualitative and spatial need (areas of deficiency and future spatial priorities).
- **Vision, Strategy and Delivery;** a vision for open space in the City is proposed, drawing on supply and demand and the assessment of need. This has informed the development of this Strategy, based on 10 key strategic themes. Delivery

mechanisms were then identified in order to implement the Strategy and a five year Delivery Plan, which does not form part of this SPD, developed to guide delivery.

1.13 Structure of Document

1.13.1 The remainder of this document is organised as follows:

- Section 2 identifies the Policy Framework and sets out the key relevant policy and guidance;
- Section 3 reports on an Assessment of Need, considering supply and demand factors and setting out an analysis of quantitative, qualitative and spatial need; and
- Section 4 outlines a vision for open space in the City, together with a Strategy and delivery mechanisms for realising this vision.

2. Policy Framework

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section establishes the relevant policy framework which provides the context for the Strategy and helps inform its content. This section is split into national, regional and local policy.

2.2 National Policy and Strategies

2.2.1 In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which consolidated existing national planning policy documents in England. It subsequently consolidated a wide range of existing planning guidance in a single online resource. This guidance supersedes guidance on open spaces used to inform The City of London Open Space Strategy 2008. The NPPF advises that “Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required”.

2.2.2 Enhancing Urban Green Space was published by the National Audit Office in 2006. The report recognised the serious challenges facing open spaces. Generally there has been a decline in quality, due to a lack of funding, loss of political support and status and a failure to meet the needs and expectations of communities. The Report looked at ways of reversing the decline through methods such as establishing a strategic policy framework for open spaces, increasing funding (securing funding external to local authorities), establishing partnerships, and greater community involvement in parks and green spaces.

2.3 Regional Policies and Strategies

2.3.1 **The London Plan:** In July 2011 the Mayor of London published the replacement of the Spatial Development Strategy for London known as the London Plan. The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031. In 2013 the Mayor published Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (REMA) and Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP). The London Plan seeks to protect and promote open spaces and recognises that the value of these spaces will increase as London becomes more compact and intensive in its built form. The following policies are particularly relevant:

2.3.2 **Policy 2.18 (Green infrastructure: The multi-functional network of green spaces)**

This policy states that the Mayor will work with strategic partners to protect, promote, expand and manage the extent and quality of, and access to, London's network of green infrastructure. This multifunctional network aims to improve biodiversity; natural and historic landscapes; culture; building a sense of place; the economy; sport; recreation; local food production; mitigating and adapting to climate change; water management; and the social benefits that promote individual and community health and well-being.

2.3.3 **Policy 3.6 (Children and Young People's Play and informal recreation facilities)**

The Mayor and appropriate organisations should ensure that all children have safe access to good quality, well-designed, secure and stimulating play and informal recreation provision incorporating trees and greenery wherever possible.

2.3.4 **Policy 5.10 (Urban Greening)**

The Mayor will promote and support urban greening, such as new planting in the public realm and multifunctional green infrastructure to contribute to the adaption to, and reduction of, the effects of climate change. The London Plan sets out an Open Space Hierarchy (Table 7.2), to ensure that a range of open spaces of different size, type and function are accessible to all.

2.3.5 **Policy 7.18 (Protecting Local Natural Space and Addressing Local Deficiencies)**

The Mayor supports the creation of new open space in London to ensure satisfactory levels of local provision to address areas of deficiency. The loss of local protected open spaces must be resisted unless equivalent or better quality provision is made within the local catchment area.

Table 1: London Plan: Table 7.2 Public open space categorisation

Open Space Categorisation	Size Guideline	Distance from homes
Regional Parks	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 km
Metropolitan Parks	60 hectares	3.2 km
District Parks	20 hectares	1.2 km
Local Parks and Open Spaces	2 hectares	400 m
Small Open Spaces	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 m
Pocket Parks	Under 0.4 hectares	Less than 400 m
Linear Open Spaces	Variable	Wherever feasible

2.3.6 **Other Mayoral Strategies and Guidance**

The London Plan sits alongside and is informed by a number of other relevant strategies (including the Biodiversity Strategy) and various relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance and Best Practice Guidance notes.

2.3.7 **Improving Londoners' Access to Nature (Implementation Report, February 2008)**

This demonstrates how the aim of improving access to nature can be achieved by identifying opportunities. It identifies a number of priority sites for reducing and alleviating areas of deficiency. None of these are in the City, but a number are nearby.

2.3.8 **Open Space Strategies (Best Practice Guidance, 2009)**

This Guidance was developed by the Mayor in conjunction with CABE and outlines the steps boroughs should take to understand supply and demand of open space, set local standards and identify deficiency and ways to address them.

2.3.9 The Guidance requires an Open Space Strategy to reflect the corporate aims of the Local authority. The Greater London Authority recognises that, to be effective, the relationship between the open space strategy and other strategies should be clearly defined. The link to the borough's Local Development Framework is crucial as it provides the policy framework needed for implementing the land use aims and objectives of the Strategy and policies for protecting biodiversity, enhancing nature

conservation, and the provision of open spaces and leisure and recreation facilities. The Guide advises categorisation of open spaces according to the London Plan Open Space Hierarchy (see above Table 7.2). This will enable a consistent approach across London to identifying open space deficiencies. The use of an open space typology to indicate the primary purpose of an open space is also suggested.

2.3.10 **All London Green Grid (Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2012)**

This provides guidance on implementing London Plan policies and focuses on identifying strategic open space opportunities. However, it does identify the whole of the City as being in the indicative deficiency areas in relation to District Parks, Local Parks and access to nature. The central part of the City is also identified as being within the indicative deficiency area in relation to Metropolitan Parks.

2.3.11 **Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation (Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2012)**

This document takes forward the aim of London Plan Policy 3.6 that all children should have safe access to good quality, well designed and accessible play facilities and that development should make provision for play. The SPG provides further guidance on identifying and auditing current provision, applying benchmarks and developing local standards.

2.4 **Local Policies and Strategies**

2.4.1 **City of London Local Plan (2014)**

The City of London Local Plan was submitted for inspection to the Secretary of State in May 2014 and contains Core Strategy policies which have already been adopted and more detailed Development Management policies which have been approved by committee and are expected to be adopted, following an Examination in Public, in early 2015. The following policies relevant to open spaces in the City are outlined below:

- Policy CS 9 (Thames and the Riverside)

To protect public access and river views along the riverside walk and securing completion of the riverside walk at Queenhithe.

- Policy CS 10 (Design)

Delivering improvement in the environment, amenities and enjoyment of open spaces, play areas, streets, lanes and alleys through schemes in accordance with public realm enhancement strategies.

- Policy DM 10.2 (Design of green roofs and walls)
To encourage the installation of green roofs on all appropriate developments and encourage the installation of green walls in appropriate locations.
- Policy DM 10.3 (Roof gardens and terraces)
To encourage high quality roof gardens and terraces where they do not adversely impact on residential premises and historic buildings and forms.
- Policy DM 10.4 (Environmental Enhancement)
The City Corporation will work in partnership with developers, Transport for London and other organisations to design and implement schemes for the enhancement of highways, the public realm and other spaces. Enhancement schemes should be of a high standard of design, sustainability, surface treatment and landscaping.
- Policy DM 10.8 (Access and inclusive design)
To achieve an environment that meets the highest standards of accessibility and inclusive design in all developments (both new and refurbished), open spaces and streets.
- Policy CS 19 (Open Spaces and Recreation)
To encourage healthy lifestyles for all the City's communities through improved access to open space and facilities, increasing the amount and quality of open spaces and green infrastructure, while enhancing biodiversity.
- Policy DM 19.2 (Biodiversity and urban greening)
Developments should promote biodiversity and contribute to urban greening.
- Policy DM 19.3 (Sport and Recreation)
To resist the loss of public sport and recreational facilities for which there is a continuing demand.
- Policy DM 19.4 (Play areas and facilities)
To protect existing play provision and seek additional or enhanced play facilities or space, particularly in areas identified as deficient.

2.4.2 **City of London Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015 (2009)**

The Plan identifies three different habitat types in the City; Vertical Habitats, City Gardens and Churchyards and the Thames Foreshore. Each area has been explored to identify the constraints and opportunities that they hold for biodiversity and Habitat Action Plans have been written for each.

2.4.3 **The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City (2008-2014)**

The overall vision is: “The City Together will work to support the City of London as a leading international financial and business centre in a way that meets the needs of its diverse communities and neighbours”.

2.4.4 The vision is based on five themes, one of which “Protects, promotes and enhances our environment”. The relevant objective in this theme is:

- To protect and enhance the built environment of the City and its public realm.

2.4.5 **City Streetscene Manual (April 2005)**

Part 1 of this manual summarises the City Corporation’s vision for the streetscene, including the principles for controlling change and informing street enhancement schemes. Part 2 contains a summary of the historical evolution of the City’s streets. Part 3 sets out detailed guidance on specific elements, including street furniture, ground surfaces and planting. Further updates are available on the City of London Corporation Website.

2.4.6 **Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (January 2007) and Update (2010)**

The Strategy aims to identify the priority risks associated with climate change and proposes adaptation measures which are designed to ensure that the City’s infrastructure and services cope under a changing climate. The key relevant recommendations for the City Corporation are to:

- Examine a range of incentives to encourage sustainable drainage systems, vertical habitats and green roofs.
- Consider requiring that rainwater harvesting systems are installed in gardens and large open spaces – flood ‘hotspots’ should be targeted as a priority initially.
- Install drought-resistant landscaping schemes and ‘low water gardens’ in open spaces that require minimal irrigation. They should also adopt water-efficient irrigation practices, such as moisture-sensitive and drip systems.
- When designing landscaping, choose the types and locations of trees carefully, considering how subsidence and root penetration will be affected by climate change.
- Maximise opportunities to plant trees, shrubs, grass and other soft landscaping features to reduce temperature and water run-off and to provide shade.

2.4.7 **City of London Tree Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2012**

The City of London Tree Strategy aims to increase City Corporation owned trees by 5% by 2019 and ensure that all trees in the City are managed, preserved and planted in

accordance with sound arboricultural practices whilst taking account of their contribution to amenity and the urban landscape for both current and future generations. The Tree Strategy sets out 11 objectives dealing with existing trees, the removal of trees, unauthorised works, tree planting and information sharing with an emphasis on planting large-canopied species wherever possible.

3. Assessment of Need

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section summarises the City's characteristics relating them to the five Key City Places and the Rest of the City identified in the City's Local Plan and City of London Open Spaces Audit Report 2013. It goes on to describe the 'supply side' by summarising the main findings of the City of London Open Space Audit (2013) before addressing the demand side in terms of the demographics of the week day day-time population and the opinions of open space users and potential users.

3.1.2 This report then outlines an assessment of need, based on the above supply and demand factors, in terms of quantitative, qualitative and spatial need (areas of deficiency and future spatial priorities). Finally, this section considers whether there are appropriate open space standards that should help determine the amount of space provided in the City in the future.

3.2 City Characteristics

3.2.1 The nature of the City, with its relatively small residential population and large workforce, means that it is not particularly helpful to place too much reliance on the Census data that is available at ward or super-output area levels as a basis for considering need at a sub-City level. Therefore for the purposes of this strategy, the City has been divided into six different Key City Places as shown in Figure 1 below.

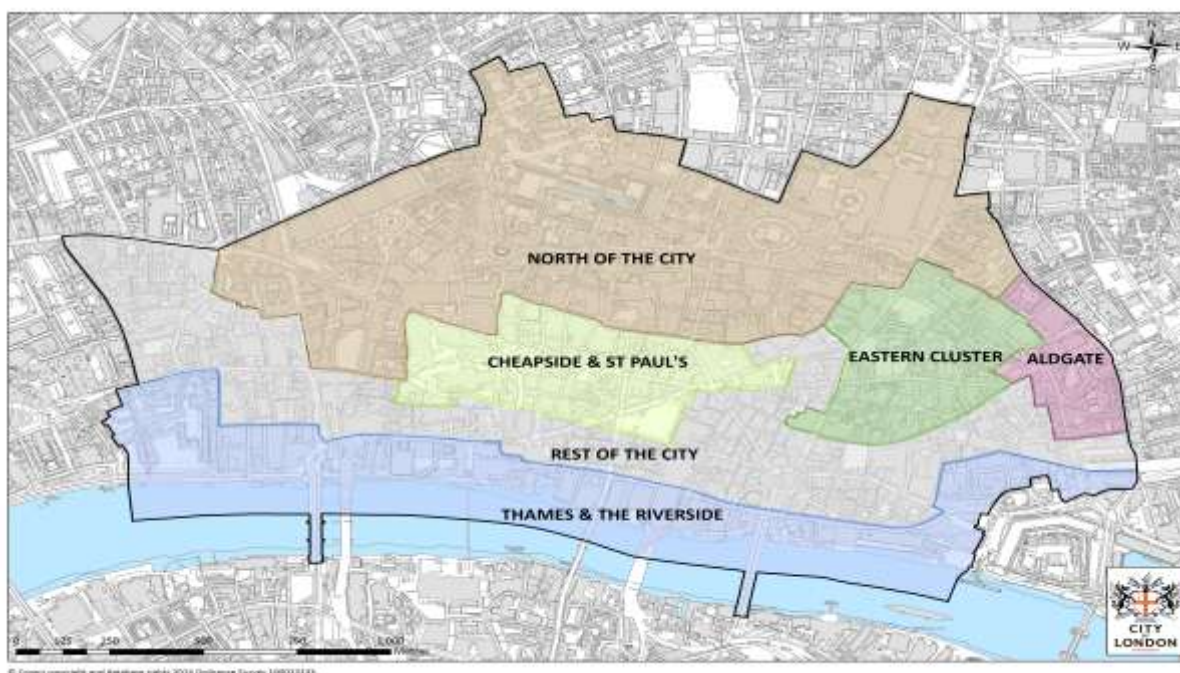


Figure 1: Key City Places

The City of London Local Plan 2013 contains policies for five Key City Places which will ensure the challenges facing those areas are met. Areas of the City which are not included in the Key City Places are classed as Rest of City. The Key City Places have the following characteristics:

- 3.2.2 **The North of the City**- includes residential estates at the Barbican and Golden Lane that include a large amount of open space, plus additional large spaces at the Broadgate office development. This area is the largest of the Key City Places and contains approximately half of the total open space in the City of London.
- 3.2.3 **Cheapside and St. Paul's** – reasonable levels of open space in and around the Cathedral and Paternoster, otherwise, the area is densely built up and primarily forms part of a retail area, but there is some open space provision at the Royal Exchange. Also, some smaller churchyard sites are present.
- 3.2.4 **Eastern Cluster**- primarily a business district, and therefore densely built up with a lot of high-rise development, but some of the recent construction schemes have included open space provision on privately owned land.
- 3.2.5 **Aldgate** – most open space is located within the residential estates of Middlesex Street and Mansell Street. The closure of the Aldgate Gyratory will result in a large new plaza being developed.
- 3.2.6 **Thames and the Riverside**- a linear open spaces framework (including the riverside walk) along the River Thames Embankment and large open spaces in the Temples precinct.
- 3.2.7 **Rest of the City** – There are no significant open spaces outside the Key City Places, but the area contains a number of smaller open spaces and private spaces.

3.3 The City of London Open Space Audit (2013) - Supply

3.3.1 A comprehensive audit of open spaces was carried out in the summer of 2012 by the Department of the Built Environment This was completed in general accordance with the Mayor of London's Best Practice Guidance, taking into account the particular characteristics of the City. For example, the City does not have any team sports pitches, obviating the need to carry out a playing fields assessment, and the predominance of Small Open Spaces (as defined in the London Plan's 'Public Open Space Hierarchy') means that the Audit focused on these types of space. The full findings of the Audit are set out in the City of London Open Space Audit 2013.

3.3.2 The Audit sets out information relating to the distribution and characteristics of open spaces within the City of London and builds upon a historical Audit series developed in 2002, and then reviewed in 2007. The 2007 Audit was undertaken in the context of the Mayor of London's best practice guidance to preparing Open Spaces Strategies 2004, which reflected government guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG 17), Planning for Open Space, Sports and Recreation and companion guide, 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities' The National Planning Policy Framework (issued in 2012) has replaced all of the PPG documents; however, the general principles in the 2007 Audit continue to provide a sound framework for the 2012 Audit.

3.3.3 The City of London Open Space Audit assessed each space and collected the following information:

- Size
- Spatial distribution
- Typology
- Restrictions on use
- Access for disabled people
- Seating
- Use of Sites
- Soft landscape features
- Hard landscape features
- Sports and play facilities
- Nature Conservation

3.4 Key Findings

3.4.1 The City of London Open Spaces Audit 2013 was carried out to fully understand the existing supply of open space in the City and a summary of the main findings is set out below.

3.4.2 Distribution of Open Space

Figure 2 shows the existing open space, by type, across the City.

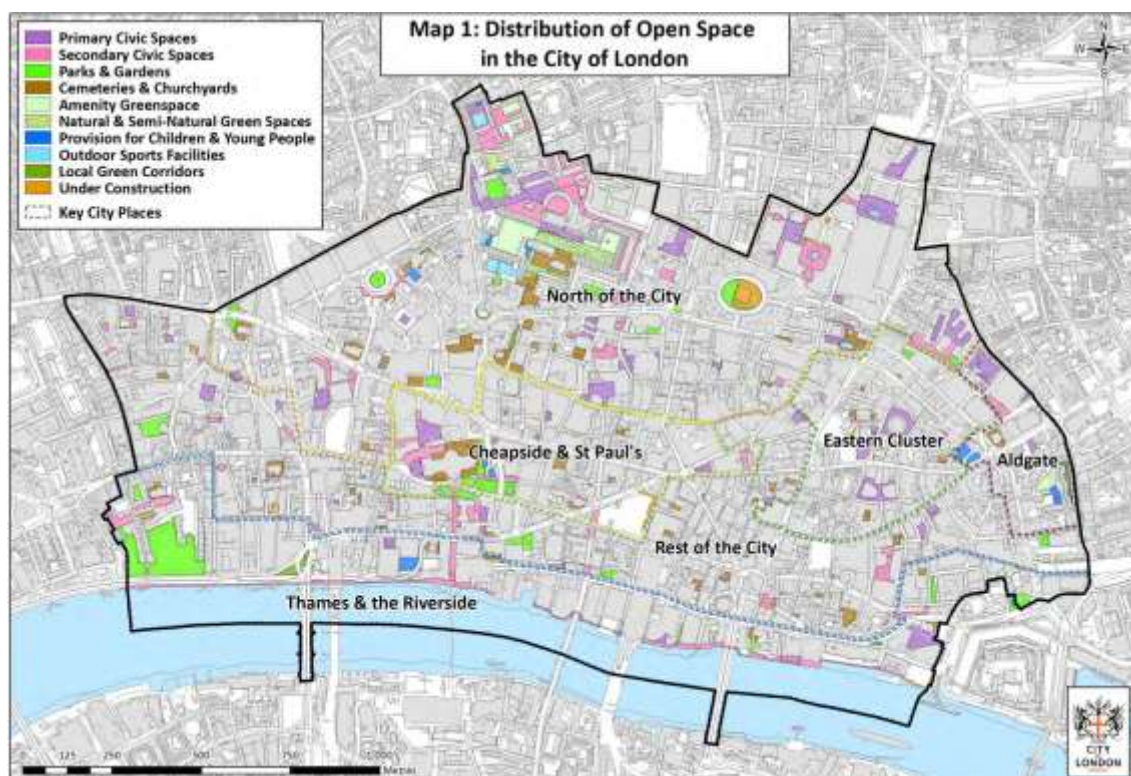


Figure 2: Existing Open Space (By Type) within the City

3.4.3 Size of Open Spaces

There are 376 sites of open space within the City of London. Overall there is approximately 32.09 hectares of open space of which 25.66 hectares is publicly accessible. As Figure 2 shows, approximately 80% of the open space sites within the City are less than 0.2 hectares in size and only 1% over half a hectare in size. The size band distribution reflects the densely built-up nature of the City. The four sites within the City that are greater than 1 hectare in size are the Middle Temple Gardens, Barbican Walkway System, Barbican Lakeside Terrace and the Riverside Walk along the Thames; these contribute 6.14 hectares of open space between them. The average size of open space sites is 0.12 hectares.

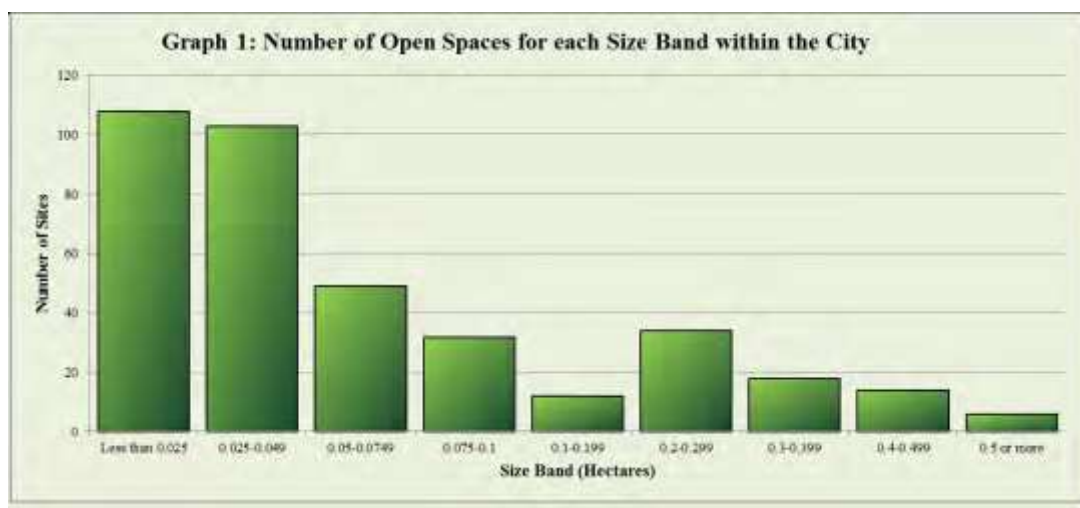


Figure 3: Size of Open Space Sites- [check combined categories]

3.4.4 The open spaces in the City are distributed within the Key City Place and Rest of the City areas as shown in Table 2 below. The North of the City contains just over half of all the open spaces in the City, due to the large amounts of space in the Barbican and Golden Lane estates and the Broadgate commercial estate. The Thames and the Riverside area has a significant amount of open space as it encompasses the riverside walk and the Temples legal precinct. The Aldgate and Eastern Cluster areas have the lowest percentages of open space but face pressure from increasing employment growth.

Table 2: Distribution of Open Space

	Percentage of Open Space	Total Size (Hectares)	Publicly Accessible (Hectares)
North of the City	51	16.53	12.02
Cheapside and St. Paul's	9	2.84	2.73
Eastern Cluster	4	1.18	1.06
Aldgate	4	1.33	1.09
Thames and the Riverside	19	6.17	5.32
Rest of the City	13	4.04	3.44
Total	100	32.09	25.66

3.4.5 Table 3 illustrates that the majority of open spaces within the City are civic, market squares and other hard-surfaced areas designed for pedestrians, with churchyards and cemeteries the second largest and amenity green space third. However, when assessing actual coverage parks and gardens are the second largest category for open spaces within the City. In terms of being fully publicly accessible, civic spaces and churchyards and cemeteries are the most accessible.

Table 3: Existing Publicly Accessible Open Space (PAOS) Provision by Key City Place (hectares).

	North of the City	Cheapside & St. Paul's	Eastern Cluster	Aldgate	Thames & the Riverside	Rest of the City	Total
Primary Civic Space	4.29	0.65	0.78	0.41	0.55	0.86	7.54
Secondary Civic	4.52	0.76	0.08	0.23	2.22	1.28	9.09
Parks and Gardens	1.19	0.49	0.05	-	2.13	0.72	4.58
Cemeteries and Churchyards	1.89	0.83	0.14	0.03	0.22	0.52	3.64
Amenity Green Space	0.08	-	-	0.24	-	0.06	0.38
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Spaces	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provision for Children and Teenagers	0.01	-	-	0.1	0.02	-	0.14
Outdoor Sports Facilities	0.04	-	-	-	-	-	0.04
Green Corridors	-	-	-	0.08	0.18	-	0.26
Total	12.02	2.73	1.06	1.09	5.32	3.44	25.66

3.4.6 The Audit demonstrates that the level of overall provision of publicly accessible open space within the City itself is low at just 0.06 hectares per 1000 week day day-time population. This is an insignificant change compared to the ratio in the 2008 City of London Open Spaces Strategy of 0.062 hectares per 1000. There has been an increase in the number of open spaces, but no change in the proportion of space available to the City's communities due to the increase in the City's day-time population.

3.4.7 The ratio of existing publicly accessible open space to 1,000 people varies considerably across the City. Figure 4 demonstrates that the Eastern Cluster is most deficient in open space, due to the high concentration of office workers in the tall buildings in a small geographic area. In contrast Figure 5 illustrates that the Aldgate Key City Place is most deficient in open space in terms of the City's residential population.

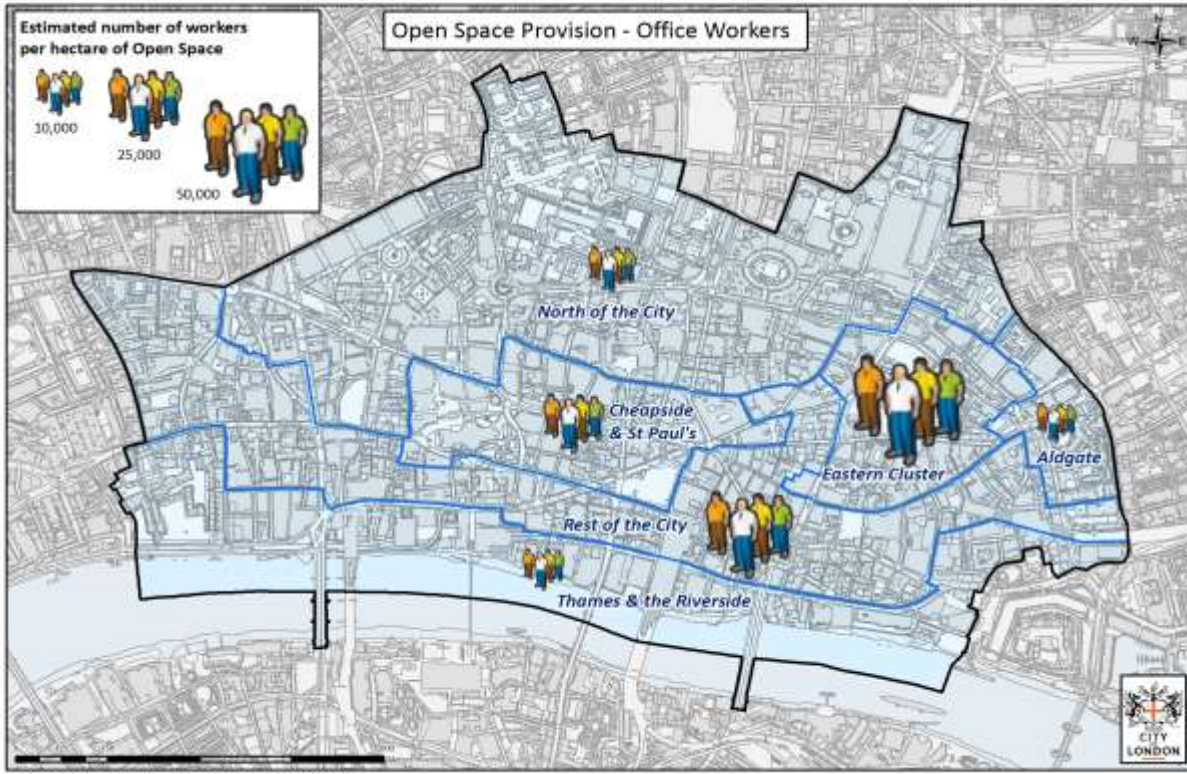


Figure 4: Open Space Provision – Office Workers

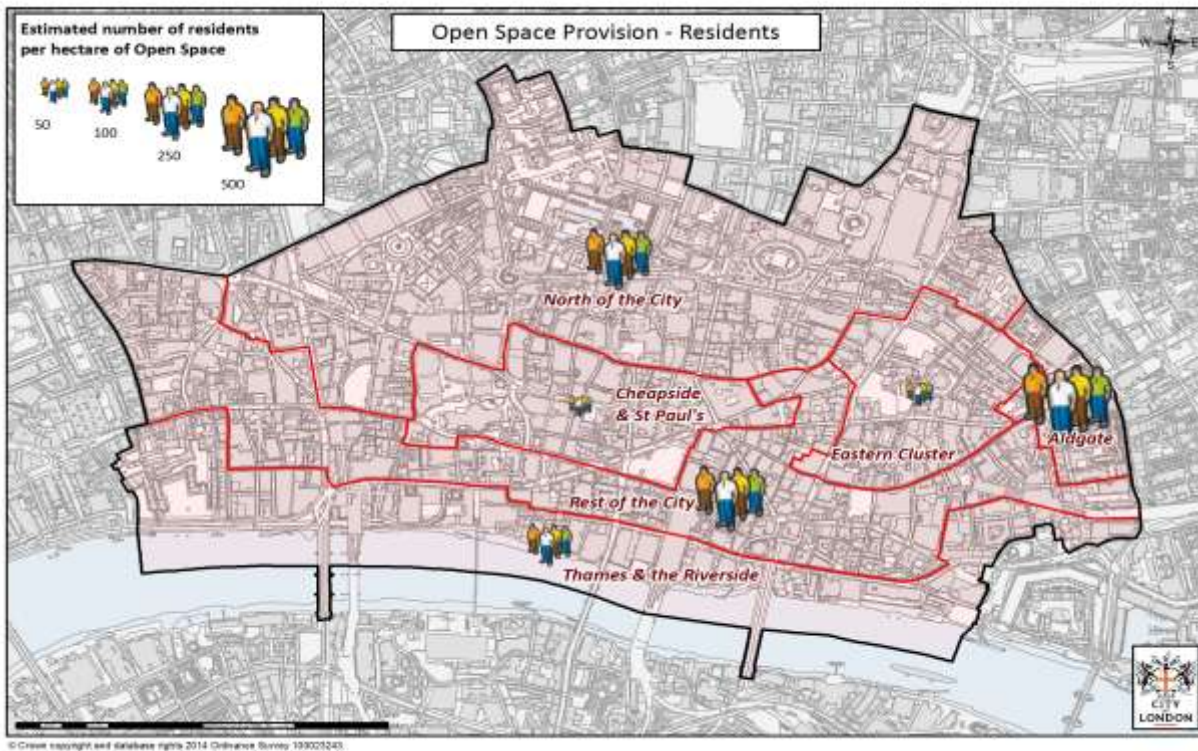


Figure 5: Open Space Provision –Residents

3.4.8 Disabled Access

- 3.4.9 The legibility and predictability of spaces, together with accessible signage and clarity of information (including visual contrast and tactile finishes), contribute to making spaces easy to find, navigate and enjoy by everyone, including people with a range of mobility, physical, sensory and/or cognitive impairments. Step-free access should be achieved where practicable, and the suitability of materials and finishes should meet diverse user needs, including ergonomic design of seating, visibility and means of appropriate handrail support for steps and ramps, and ensuring there are even light levels across principal walkways and circulation areas after dusk.
- 3.4.10 There is a continuing programme of auditing City Corporation-owned sites to identify and address open space accessibility issues, in line with the requirements and duties of the Equality Act 2010. These audits remain living documents to be reviewed regularly. At each enhancement or planned refurbishment, the opportunity is taken to review the current level of accessibility to see if any further improvement is possible or desirable.
- 3.4.11 The Open Spaces Audit found 29% of the City's open spaces are fully accessible to people with disabilities while 71% had partial or no access. All primary civic spaces, amenity green spaces and public outdoor sports facilities in the City provide the minimum of 800mm width access required for disabled people; for secondary civic space the percentage was 99%. The greatest deficiency was found in the parks and gardens, with only 51% meeting this requirement.
- 3.4.12 The assessment for disabled access is primarily based on whether the open space has sufficient wheelchair access, with the exception of secondary civic spaces, which has been assessed on whether a wheelchair user can easily travel from one point to another (e.g along a footpath), since their primary purpose is for pedestrian movement. To be considered accessible a space should have an entrance point at least 800mm wide and have steps no higher than 15mm; alternatively, this can be avoided by use of level ground or provision of either ramps or lift access. Future audits will assess the City's open spaces using enhanced criteria to gather more comprehensive data on accessibility.
- 3.4.13 In recent years there have been significant numbers of green roofs developed on top of buildings in the City of London. Green roofs have the potential to contribute to climate change adaptation by reducing surface water run-off and by improving building insulation, urban greening and biodiversity as well as providing amenity space. Extensive green roofs provide a more natural biodiverse environment and have environmental benefits while intensive roofs provide planting and can be used to provide landscaped amenity space for workers and visitors. Both types of roof contribute to the reduction of water run-off which assists in minimising local flooding

3.4.14 There are approximately 30 green roofs and 4 green walls in the City, as listed in Table 4. There are approximately 28 green roofs in the development pipeline which are expected to be built in the next few years.

Green Roofs		
120-122 Cheapside	Office	
5 Fleet Place	Office	
201 Bishopsgate	Office	
107 Cheapside	Office	
Bow Bells House, 1 Bread Street	Office	
125 Old Broad Street	Office	
22 Chancery Lane	Office	
Riverbank House 2 Swan Lane	Office	
1 New Change	Retail	
Guildhall North Block, Basinghall Street	Office	
Faraday Building, 136-144 Queen Victoria Street	Office	
King House, 2 Copthall Avenue	Office	
New Court, 7-9 St. Swithin's Lane	Office	
7 Copthall Avenue	Office	
125 Old Broad Street	Office	
200 Aldersgate Street	Office	
7 Pepys Street	Hotel	
Museum of London, 150 London Wall	Leisure	
52-56 Minories	Student Housing	
Finsbury Circus House, 12-15 Finsbury Circus	Office	
Milton Court, Barbican	Residential/education	
24 Monument Street	Office	
1 Poultry	Restaurant	
10 Queen Street Place	Office	
150 Cheapside	Office	
201 Bishopsgate	Office	
St. Bartholomew's Hospital	Hospital	
78 Cannon Street	Office	
2 King Edward Street	Office	
Unilever House, Victoria Embankment	Office	
1 Angel Lane	Office	
Green Walls		
4 New Street Square	Office	
52-56 Minories	Student Housing	

7 Pepys Street	Hotel	
20 Fenchurch Street	Office	

Table 4: Green roofs and walls

3.4.15 Green walls can bring many of the benefits of green roofs, and can improve the appearance of locations where there is limited opportunity for planting. To be successful they require careful design and installation and regular maintenance. There are 4 green walls in the City.

3.4.16 **Trees**

There are approximately 2,413 trees in the City on both public and private land, many of which are important in terms of visual amenity and biodiversity. Whilst there are about seventy different genera present, six of these account for about half of all the City trees. These include *Platanus* (Plane), *Tilia* (Lime), *Prunus* (cherry), *Acer* (Maple), *Carpinus* (Hornbeam) and *Betula* (Birch). One in seven of all trees is a London Plane, mostly *Platanus x hispanica*. ‘The right tree in the right place’ is crucial to ensuring that trees of appropriate species are planted.

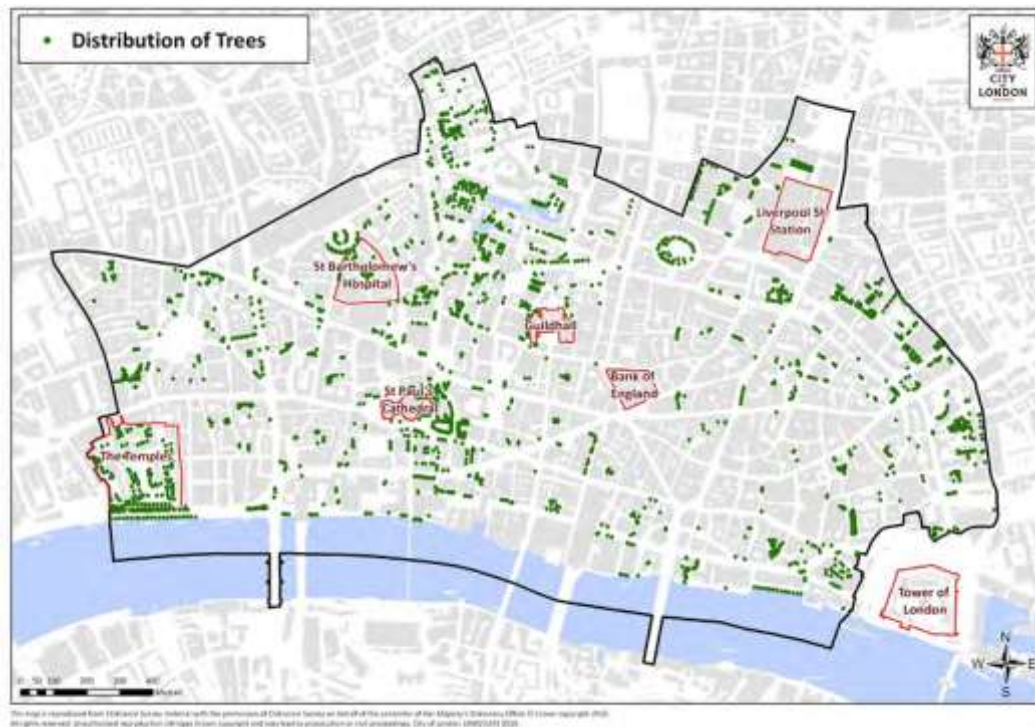


Figure 6: Existing tree cover across the City

3.4.17 Nature Conservation

Ten of the City's open spaces have been identified as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation using the criteria and procedures set out in the Mayor of London's Biodiversity Strategy. Of the ten sites, listed below, the Thames Foreshore is a Site of Metropolitan Importance, Temple Gardens, the Barbican and St. Alphage's Gardens are identified as Sites of Borough Importance (Grade II), while the remaining sites are identified as being of local importance.

Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | River Thames (area within the City of London) |
|---|---|

Sites of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2 | The Middle and Inner Temple Gardens |
| 3 | The Wild Garden at Fann Street |
| 4 | The Barbican Estate (various sites) |
| 5 | Barber-Surgeons' Hall Garden |
| 6 | St. Alphage Gardens |

Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

- | | |
|----|--|
| 7 | St. Paul's Cathedral Churchyard |
| 8 | St. Mary Aldermanbury Church Garden
(including Heminge and Condell Memorial Garden) |
| 9 | Cleary Gardens, Queen Victoria Street |
| 10 | St. Botolph-without-Bishopsgate Churchyard |

3.4.18 Sports Facilities

The City has the following public sports facilities:

- Golden Lane Leisure Centre (City Corporation run public facility providing a 20m x 8m swimming pool, 1 court sports hall, club rooms offering various uses and 2x outdoor tennis/netball courts);
- Sir John Cass Primary School (providing playgrounds with limited markings and a small sports hall. These facilities are currently used for sports development work, including coaching, but are not suitable for wider community use);
- City of London School (limited use by local schools and available to external hirers providing a 25m x 10m swimming pool, 2x court indoor facility and a large outdoor playground area);
- City of London School for Girls (limited use by external hirers providing a 25m x 10m swimming pool, diving pit, 2x court indoor facility and outdoor courts for tennis and netball);
- St Botolph's Churchyard (available for public use) providing 1 x tennis/netball court;
- Barbican (resident only multi-use area with lining for netball and tennis court, plus a cricket net);
- Ice rink and croquet lawn in the Broadgate office development (seasonal);

3.4.19 A review of public sports facilities in summer 20xx [update] by the City Corporation's Community and Children's Services Department revealed that most sites are well used and are operating at near capacity levels.

3.4.20 Play Provision

In terms of children and young peoples' play facilities, the City of London Open Space Audit (2013) considered the qualitative, quantitative and accessibility elements of play and informal recreation facilities in the City. The Audit found that there is 0.8 hectares (7,840 square metres) of open space provision for children and young people. Because the focus is on provision of amenities for residents and schools, 75% of this open space is closed to the public.

3.4.21 Most of the equipped play areas are on the City's housing estates and are not intended for use by the general public. Provision on the City's four residential estates is as follows:

- Barbican Estate – equipped playground in Thomas More Garden (multi-use play unit with slide, cradle seat swings, flat seat swings, roundabout, hopscotch, two spring animals, boat themed multi-play unit, see-saw and a ball court);
- Barbican Estate – equipped play area in Speed Garden (cradle seat swing and multi-use play unit with slide);
- Golden Lane Estate – small equipped play provision adjacent to Cullum Welch House (1 x multi-use play unit and spring bike within a 'play pit');
- Mansell Street Estate – equipped play area next to estate car parking (multi-use play unit with slide, cradle seat swings, flat seat swings, seated roundabout, hopscotch, two spring animals plus an outdoor ball court, which is used by Millwall Football Club for coaching sessions; and
- Middlesex Street Estate – small equipped play area (multi-use play unit and 'play mushrooms') plus outdoor ball court.

3.4.22 Play areas in open spaces open to the public can be found at Smithfield Rotunda, Tower Hill Gardens and Portsoken Street Gardens.

3.4.23 The reinstatement of Finsbury Circus offers an opportunity to incorporate play into the landscape by encouraging informal temporary play facilities rather than static play equipment. Across the City, stakeholders and partners will be encouraged to offer play opportunities in the form of organised play sessions and activities. For example, a Victorian Games Day will be held in July in Bunhill, paid for by external funding and delivered by professional play leaders. The purchase of a pool of non-fixed play equipment such as; hoops, croquet, giant Jenga that can be laid out temporarily at weekends and holiday periods in Finsbury Circus will be purchased when funding becomes available.

3.4.24 Tranquil Areas

- 3.4.25 The City's many open spaces provide an opportunity for rest and relaxation for workers, visitors and residents and the City Corporation is keen that the City's open spaces offer a tranquil environment for users. Opportunities will be identified for improving and enhancing the tranquillity and soundscape of open spaces during the planning or enhancements of new spaces.
- 3.4.26 The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that noise levels in gardens and recreation areas, which would include the City's open spaces, should be less than 55 dB LAeq during day time. Noise monitoring at selected locations in the City has revealed that only a few areas of the City fall below this level. These include Thames Walk, the centre of the Barbican and inside the boundary of the Mansell Street estate.
- 3.4.27 When considering what makes an open space tranquil, people's perception of the space, as well as noise levels can have an impact. Research by the City of Amsterdam has revealed that an area can be considered to be 'quiet' when it is around 6dBA lower than its surroundings. The absolute noise level seems less important. St Dunstan's in the East, has a noise level during the day of 63.7dB LAeqT. This is almost 9dB LAeq higher than the WHO recommended level yet the space scored very highly for tranquillity during monitoring.
- 3.4.28 In 2010, Environmental Protection UK published a report for the City of London called Quietening Open Spaces, Towards Sustainable Soundscapes for the City of London. The document details many suggestions for improving the tranquillity of a selection of open spaces in the Square Mile. The report details that the tranquillity of an area can be improved in a number of ways:

3.4.29 Reducing the noise at source

Examples include using quiet vehicles and machinery, encouraging non-motorised transport such as walking and cycling, smoothing traffic flow, redesigning street layout, traffic calming measures, quieter road surfacing and restricting traffic at sensitive times of day.

3.4.30 Modifying the sound pathway

This can be achieved in a variety of ways such as altering openings and entrances to block or attenuate sound pathways, enclosing noise sources, installing physical noise barriers as illustrated), earth bunds, or very dense (low) vegetation.

3.4.31 Mitigation at the receiver

Mitigation at the receiver could be achieved by reducing the area of acoustically reflective surfaces using materials that create sound, e.g. gravel paths that emphasise footfall, planting to attract insects and birds, the installation of water features and the installation of sculpture with sound.

3.4.32 Atria and Sky Gardens

Tall buildings have led to an increase in urban densities. Due to their size and scale, the impacts of tall buildings on their surroundings are greater than those of more conventionally sized buildings. The lack of public space in densely built areas can be counteracted in tall buildings through the use of sky gardens, atrium spaces and terraces. These structures can successfully extend high quality public amenity space. Given the projected rise in London's population and increasing moves to mixed use tall buildings, the use of these spaces is pertinent.

3.4.33 Smart working in Open spaces

Technological advances in recent years have resulted in different ways of working, including working on laptops and tablets out of the office environment utilising WiFi connections in cafes and open spaces. The City provides a free WiFi network and increased use of 3G and 4G mobile networks, which make working outdoors feasible.

Open spaces in the City could embrace these changes and allow for comfortable seating arrangements which would assist in "out of office" working practices. Open spaces in the City could be designed with the following features to maximise the ability for people to work on mobile devices.

- providing access to high speed wireless connection and touch screen information boards
- hard wearing swivel seats equipped with electrical outlets
- mini tables attached to the seats to rest a laptop or book

3.5 Supply of Proposed Open Space

3.5.1 The City Corporation has established the Environmental Enhancement Programme to enhance the street environment and create additional publicly accessible civic spaces. This initiative is discussed in some detail in Section 4 (Vision, Strategy and Delivery). Suffice to say here that it has a number of schemes under construction and others where funding and other pre-requisites have been secured and new civic spaces are due to be created.

3.6 Demand for Open Space: The City's Existing Population

3.6.1 The characteristics of the City mean that it has a very large influx of workers and students during the working week (Monday to Friday), with visitors also coming into the area throughout the week, and a relatively small resident population. This is an unusual situation which presents a number of unique challenges to assessing need and strategy development.

3.6.2 During the working week, workers, students, visitors and residents compete for access to and use of open space and sports and recreation facilities. Competition is at its peak at lunchtimes and after work during the summer months. For the purposes of this strategy, the week day day-time population has been used to identify the existing situation and assess need as this represents the 'busiest' scenario in terms of demand for open space.

3.6.3 The existing weekday day-time population has been estimated at around 424,000. The basis for this estimate is set out in Appendix 1: Methodology. In summary, this figure comprises:

- 370,000 workers
- 29,000 students
- 23,000 visitors; and
- 2,000 day time residents.

3.6.4 No information is available on the profile of students and visitors in the City. However, assessment of the 2011 Census reveals the following characteristics of the City's workforce and total resident population (City of London Residential Population Census 2011; Published May 2013).

City Workers:

- There are significantly more male than female workers;
- The workforce is biased towards younger workers (20-29 and 30-39 age groups), especially amongst women;
- The workforce is overwhelmingly white
- There is a very high proportion of workers in managerial or professional occupations;

Resident Population:

- There are slightly more males than females living in the City;
- There are relatively few families and children in the City. The majority of households are small and many comprise single persons.
- The City has a relatively old resident population which is expected to increase rapidly in the next decade.
- Life expectancy is expected to remain high amongst City residents.
- The City's population comprises a relatively large number of white people with low proportions of Asian or Asian British people and Black or Black British people;
- Unemployment levels are relatively low;
- A relatively high percentage of dwellings are not the household's main residence. Many view their City property as a second home, living there 5 days a week and at their family home at the weekend;

3.6.5 The City of London is a relatively affluent area ranking as the 88th least deprived area in the country and 6th least deprived in London in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. In contrast, all seven boroughs bordering the City (the City Fringe) are within the 10% most deprived boroughs in England. However, within the City boundaries, the distinct residential populations show a marked disparity in deprivation levels. According to the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation (2010) both districts of Barbican (East and West) are in the 15% least deprived areas in England. Golden Lane (comprising the Golden Lane local authority estate) is in the middle of the index and Portsoken (comprising the Middlesex and Mansell Street housing estates) is amongst the 25% most deprived areas.

3.7 Demand for Open Space: The City's Future Population

3.7.1 The City's week day day-time population is projected to increase by approximately 52,000 to around 476,000 by 2019. The basis of this projection is set out in Appendix 2: Methodology. In summary, the projected population will comprise:

- 414,000 workers (+44,000);
- 29,000 students (no change);
- 30,000 visitors (+7,000); and
- 3,400 residents (+1,400)

3.7.2 No information is available on the likely changes in the profile of workers, students and visitors. However, the projected increase in the overall resident population suggests an aging population.

Table 5 – Projected week day day-time population by 2019

	City
Existing Population	424,000
Projected growth	52,000
Projected Population	476,000

Note: Projected Population figures rounded to nearest thousand

3.8 Demand for Open Space: Local Opinion

3.8.1 Overall Approach

The City Corporation has sought to use and interpret the results of a number of recent consultation exercises; most linked with the preparation of other strategies, rather than duplicate effort and run the risk of causing consultation fatigue. Local opinion from the following community engagement events has been captured and has helped inform this strategy:

- Local Plan Consultation (2013);
- City Gardens (November 2012); and
- Residents Events (annually);

3.8.2 A summary of the results of this consultation is set out in Appendix 2.

Conclusions

The key conclusions that can be drawn from consultation are that the City's communities are generally satisfied with the City's public gardens and spaces but would like to see:

- More 'green' areas and trees;
- An increase in lawn areas for sitting;
- More natural planting to help biodiversity;
- More children's play equipment and opportunities for natural play;
- More sports equipment;
- More opportunities for volunteering including 'green gym' (biodiversity and gardening activities) activities;

3.8.3 This SPD has been the subject of consultation with a range of local people and other stakeholders. Consultation ensured that all sections of the City's communities had the opportunity to comment. An Equalities Impact Assessment and a Health Impact Assessment were carried out to measure the impact of this strategy on the City's communities.

3.9 Assessment Findings

3.9.1 Quantitative

As outlined above, the level of overall provision of publicly accessible open space is just 0.06 hectares per 1000 week day day-time population. This is low in both absolute and relative terms. The best comparison in London is the City of Westminster, which has a ratio of approximately 0.54ha per 1,000 week day day-time population (Westminster City Council Open Space Strategy, February 2007). However, this is in part due to the large royal parks that are a feature of the West End.

3.9.2 Qualitative

The quality of publicly accessible open space in the City is generally high. The City Gardens Team won consecutive Gold Awards in London and Britain in Bloom Royal Horticultural Society Awards as well as gold and silver awards for several pocket parks in the Small Parks Category in 2012. Middle Temple garden was awarded a prize for the Best Business Garden in the Discretionary Business Award.

3.9.3 Despite the high quality of the City's gardens, an annual London-wide benchmarking exercise undertaken by the London Parks and Green Spaces Forum demonstrated that the City Corporation's service costs were amongst the most efficient when compared against a number of other high profile open spaces throughout London.

3.9.4 Whilst the standards of horticulture are undoubtedly high, the audit also flags up present and future problems with garden infrastructure. Changes in legislation relating to disabled people, shrinking revenue budgets and wear and tear over time mean that

paths, steps and railings at some sites are beginning to show their age. Ongoing changes within the nature and population of the City in recent years have also highlighted a lack of play provision suitable for children of varied ages. Finally, ongoing maintenance costs of open space coupled with the need to meet continuously changing legislation also has had a further impact on green space provision.

3.9.5 **Areas of Deficiency**

The dense but scattered pattern of existing open spaces in just one Square Mile means that traditional techniques such as sieve maps and catchment areas do not help in identifying particular areas of quantitative open space deficiency. Therefore analysis of need has concentrated on the City as a whole and the six Key City Place sub-divisions.

3.9.6 The Mayor of London's SPG All London Green Grid Framework (2012) identifies the whole of the City as being in the indicative deficiency areas in relation to District Parks, Local Parks and access to nature.

3.9.7 Appendix 1: Typology sets out the amount of open space for the City as a whole and its six Key City Place areas. This demonstrates that the Eastern part of the City is relatively poorly provided for in terms of workers in the Eastern Cluster and residents in Aldgate. The projected growth in employment and residential growth shown in Appendix 2 means that the Eastern Cluster will be under more pressure for open space provision, as much of the increased employment will be located in the Eastern Cluster.

3.10 **Future Spatial Priorities**

3.10.1 The key spatial messages that emerge from this assessment are as follows:

- The need for all types of publicly accessible open space throughout the City
- The particular need for publicly accessible open space in the eastern part of the City;

3.10.2 **Standards**

It would clearly be inappropriate to seek to apply nationally recognised residential standards such as the National Playing Fields Association standard of 1.6 hectares per thousand people in the City context. However, there are benefits in setting an overall standard for publicly accessible open space in terms of (a) providing a quantitative standard for open space provision for new development (b) providing a target for overall provision across the City and (c) monitoring progress in meeting the target.

3.10.3 London Plan policy 2.18 is clear that that open space standards are best set locally. The City is perhaps the clearest example of the need for a locally derived standard. The expected growth in workers, visitors and residents will increase the demand for open

space in a place which has some of the highest land values anywhere in the UK. In this context, the most appropriate standard is considered to be the maintenance of the existing City-wide ratio of publicly accessible open space per 1000 week day day-time population at 0.06 hectares. In the context of a growing week-day population this is considered to be a challenging yet achievable local standard.

4. Vision, Strategy and Delivery

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section draws on the previous sections and sets out a vision for open space provision in the City and establishes a medium term strategy for achieving this vision. It then sets out how the strategy will be delivered and monitoring arrangements. A Five Year Delivery Plan is available in a separate document.

4.2 Vision

4.2.1 The vision for open space in the City is as follows:

“The creation of a network of high quality and inspiring open spaces which helps ensure an attractive, healthy, sustainable and socially cohesive place for all the City’s communities and visitors.”

4.3 Strategy

4.3.1 The vision is to be delivered by the following 10 strategic objectives:

1. Maintain and increase public access to existing open spaces and enhance the quality of these spaces, in terms of both design and management.

4.3.2 The first priority is to maintain and make the most of existing open space in the City, which is such a scarce and valuable resource. The City is the subject of intense development pressure and the City Corporation needs to use its powers as Local Planning Authority to manage change in ways that ensure open spaces are maintained and enhanced or provided in a better way.

4.3.3 A relatively large number of the Square Mile’s open spaces are either not open to the general public or are open only at certain times. For example, Temple Gardens provides a fantastic visual amenity for people working in, living in or visiting the area, but the gardens are only able to be used during a limited lunchtime period. Furthermore, some of the City Corporation maintained publicly accessible open spaces are only open during daylight hours and are closed at weekends during the winter. The challenge is to identify means of securing public access, on agreed terms, to more private open spaces and to increase the opening times of City Corporation maintained open spaces, particularly those close to residential areas.

4.3.4 Opportunities should continue to be taken to improve the quality of existing open space in the City by way of imaginative design solutions, the use of high quality and robust materials, the incorporation of public art, play and other features of interest and careful management. There is still considerable scope to rationalise the design and use of publicly accessible and private open spaces by working with users and owners to re-design and consolidate spaces to create more useful and attractive places.

4.3.5 Works to and the management of existing spaces need to be informed by a clear analysis of their context and an understanding of their historic value and historic associations. This will be particularly important for Gardens of Special Historic Interest and open spaces in conservation areas, but is an important consideration for all existing open spaces.

2. Increase the amount of high quality publicly accessible open space in order to maintain the existing City-wide ratio of 0.06 ha per 1000 week day day-time population and focus efforts on creating additional publicly accessible open space in the east of the City, particularly in the Eastern Cluster and the Aldgate area.

4.3.6 Established national and London-wide standards relating to open space and play provision are not appropriate for the particular circumstances of the City. The most realistic target in terms of the amount of publicly accessible open space is to use the existing level of provision as a benchmark and to aim to maintain the existing ratio of space to the day-time population. This is a challenging target given that the growth in employment anticipated in the City will require the creation of additional publicly accessible open space if the current ratio of 0.06 ha per 1000 week day day-time population is to be maintained up to 2019.

4.3.7 There are two main sources of increasing the amount of publicly accessible open space; securing public access to existing private space and securing additional publicly accessible space as part of new development. The first will entail a license or access agreement between the City Corporation and a private owner and may involve the need to carry out enhancement works and ensure suitable liability insurance cover against any future claims. The second will involve ensuring that, where appropriate, development schemes incorporate additional areas of publicly accessible open space and/or make a financial contribution through the Community Infrastructure Levy towards the creation of new civic spaces as part of the City Corporation's Environmental Enhancement Programme. There is a potential synergy between growth and open space provision; since taller buildings with small footprints provide opportunities for additional open space – helping to ensure that it is provided in locations where it is most needed.

4.3.8 The design and management of new publicly accessible spaces need to be informed by a clear analysis of their current context, both physical and social, and the area's historical value and associations.

4.3.9 There may be cases where the provision of temporary open space is possible, for example in larger phased developments where there is the opportunity to lay out

part of the site as temporary open space pending its redevelopment. This would be welcomed.

- 4.3.10 The existing distribution of publicly accessible open space and predicted distribution of growth in the week day day-time population (as set out in Section 3) demonstrate the need to concentrate efforts on increasing the amount of publicly accessible open space in the Eastern part of the City.

3. Ensure that all open spaces are designed and managed to be safe and accessible to all and, where appropriate, enabling opportunities for different activities at different times of the day and year.

- 4.3.11 In 2003, an accessibility audit was undertaken at all open space sites to address issues of compliance with the (then) forthcoming Disability Discrimination Act (2005). Whilst the audit praised good practice on many issues, it also highlighted a number of simple but key improvements that need to be made to many of the everyday items that form part of open space in the City. These include the height of seating, clarity of path/step edges, the addition of well-designed handrails and the installation of additional lighting. Although these issues are now being addressed at existing sites, each enhancement and new open space scheme will need to incorporate the principles of 'inclusive design' to ensure that spaces can be enjoyed by everyone, whatever their access needs. The principles of 'inclusive design' require open spaces to take account of all access needs by, for example, incorporating features that enable independent wheelchair users to access the space and incorporating tactile surfaces, scented plants and water features for blind and partially sighted users, i.e. diverse planting schemes. A recent example of where inclusive design principles have been adopted is the refurbishment of Cleary Gardens, which has been transformed into a sensory wine 'drinking' experience with the planting of scented flowers, shrubs and climbers to evoke the bouquets of wines from the Loire Valley in France.

- 4.3.12 All types of open space are in demand in the City and it is important that, where appropriate and viable, open spaces are designed and managed in ways which maximise the use of this scarce resource and facilitate different activities at different times for example volunteering, relaxation and informal play. An additional consideration is the need to raise the quality of certain existing open spaces by refurbishing hard landscape infrastructure and replacing over mature planting.

- 4.3.13 The City Corporation recognises the importance of both formal and informal play opportunities. The greatest pressure on City open spaces is during the working week, particularly at lunch time and early evening. Outside of these times, many

publicly accessible open spaces are relatively underused and provide an opportunity for children to make use of them for informal play. This is particularly important for spaces in or near the City's residential areas.

- 4.3.14 Open spaces should feel comfortable, safe and secure for all users, and contribute to a wider sense of safety and security at all times of the day and night. Misuse of, and damage to, open spaces can be mitigated by crime prevention through environmental design. Close joint working with the City of London Police Architectural Liaison Officer, and the application of the Association of Chief Police Officer's "Secured by Design" principles at the concept and design stages of all new open spaces, and early in the redesign of existing ones, will make for high quality, easier to manage open spaces for the City and the community. Continued cooperation with police in the management of these spaces will only enhance this.
- 4.3.15 Opportunities should be taken to incorporate features that encourage workers and residents to adopt a healthy lifestyle. In addition to spaces being conducive to children's play, opportunities should be taken to include facilities that help adults stay healthy. Wider promotion of self-guided and organised walks and green gym volunteering activities would assist health and well-being benefits.
- 4.3.16 The incorporation of sculptures, lighting and practical street furniture can help raise the quality of spaces and make them more distinctive and special. These features will be encouraged wherever practicable. Functional art work can also provide play-sensory (i.e. sight, touch, sound) equipment, offering alternative play where traditional play equipment may be inappropriate.
- 4.3.17 All new publicly accessible open spaces need to be 'fit for purpose'; that is to comprise suitably robust features and materials whilst maintaining comfort for the user, to benefit from acceptable levels of sunlight and a comfortable pedestrian wind environment, be physically accessible to all and to have appropriate management arrangements.
- 4.3.18 The high levels of use of spaces places a heavy demand on their maintenance. The long-term maintenance costs (including soft and hard landscaping and infrastructure services) of new open space must be considered at the design stage and sources of funding need to be identified and secured at this stage. Planning applications for proposals that involve the creation of additional open space should be accompanied by a 'Quality and Management Statement', demonstrating how these prerequisites are to be delivered for the particular spaces that are proposed to be provided.

4.3.19 The on-going 'Environmental Enhancement Programme', and other initiatives to increase the amount of publicly accessible open spaces will add to the maintenance responsibilities of the City Corporation. Following completion of each project, the City Corporation's Open Spaces Department takes on responsibility for maintaining the soft landscaping aspects of each scheme. Whilst every effort is made to reduce the eventual maintenance cost of new schemes at the design stage by, for example, introducing irrigation schemes and ensuring the careful choice of more drought-resistant plants to maximise water efficiency, this increases the burden of the maintenance budget and there is presently no additional budget provision for this following the initial five year establishment period. The City Corporation will consider the use of appropriate CIL receipts to part fund longer term maintenance of these spaces following the initial five year establishment period.

4.3.20 Ensuring a consistent and planned approach to hard landscape and infrastructure maintenance throughout the City of London's open spaces is a key issue. It is therefore essential that the City of London City Surveyors Department identifies at the earliest opportunity a realistic and prioritised plan to address the planned maintenance and refurbishment of hard landscape features within open spaces including the need to address accessibility issues.

4. Provide, where appropriate, additional play opportunities (including equipped play areas) that are accessible to all, including disabled children, in existing and new spaces.

4.3.21 In addition to ensuring that, where appropriate, new open spaces provide a safe and stimulating environment and informal opportunities for children to enjoy imaginative play, there is the need to improve formal play opportunities. The City Corporation's Play Partnership seeks to improve the provision of public play areas for children and young people. A number of opportunities exist for new or enhanced provision of formal equipped play areas on private (housing estate) land and in publicly accessible open spaces close to residential areas. These opportunities are to be pursued further under the auspices of the City of London Play Partnership. The potential sites that are identified are as follows:

- The Aldgate Plaza will provide informal play features in the form of water features.
- Finsbury Circus will provide informal play in the form of sculpture, water and trails.

5. Ensure that existing and new spaces make a positive contribution to the biodiversity value of the City through appropriate plant choice and habitat creation.

- 4.3.23 When asked for their opinion, workers and residents consistently prioritise the provision of green space (as opposed to 'hard' landscaping). Evidence shows that green infrastructure reduces stress and supports a sense of well-being. The City will prioritise the provision of green publicly accessible open space and protect and promote the provision of green private open space where practicable.
- 4.3.24 Likewise, trees can help 'lift' the quality of spaces and will be incorporated into the design of schemes wherever practicable, taking account of the difficulties in planting trees when above utilities infrastructure. There is a need to ensure that when planting street trees, both species and size are appropriate to the location, and that species choice is informed by the City Tree Strategy SPD, particularly with regards to deficiencies of certain species or a lack of succession in certain areas of the City. Although an instant impact is often desirable and large trees (up to 90cm girth) are sometimes specified by landscape architects, such specimens are unlikely to thrive long-term. The intense maintenance for these specimens necessitated by poor substrata and growing conditions within the City make them an unrealistic long-term prospect. For these reasons, the Open Spaces Department specify a maximum planting girth of 35cm (Diameter at Breast Height or DBH) where auto-irrigation is installed, and 25cm DBH at any other locations. Every opportunity should be made to ensure that trees are planted in '*Mother Earth*' in order to reduce watering and to maximise benefits and enhanced appearance of the final specimen.
- 4.3.25 Around 40% of trees in the City are in private gardens or other privately owned and managed land and the City Corporation will encourage owners to maintain and care for these trees. The City Corporation has powers as a Local Planning Authority to control works to trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order and trees in Conservation Areas. Trees may also be the subject of planning conditions.
- 4.3.26 In terms of biodiversity, the priority is to enhance the value of existing City Corporation managed sites of Local Importance and improve the biodiversity value of three additional sites so that they too can become sites of Local Importance. The three sites are: Postman's Park, St. Dunstan's in the East and Whittington Garden. This will be achieved by increasing the number of bird and bat boxes and appropriate wildlife feeders in these gardens, increasing the amount of native and wildlife-enhancing planting and habitats such as natural water features, adopting

maintenance practice to avoid disturbing wildlife at key times of the year and constructing log piles for Stag Beetles. Not restricted to the areas named above, these good practice measures (additional bird and bat boxes, water features for bathing birds, bird feeding stations and even small apiaries where feasible) will be implemented at other City Open Spaces sites.

- 4.3.27 Enhancing biodiversity will be a key consideration for the City Corporation when improving existing open spaces that it manages and in approving the design and management of additional spaces, including the specification for additional trees. The City Corporation will be guided by its Biodiversity Action Plan (2010-15) for habitats (City Gardens, Vertical Habitats – walls, balconies, terraces and roofs - and the Thames foreshore) and species (black redstart, peregrine and sparrow) which set out practical measures for improving wildlife in the Square Mile. It is also important to enhance and create linkages (i.e. ‘green corridors’) between open spaces in the City and with open spaces in neighbouring boroughs to facilitate the movement of plants and animals between these spaces. This is relevant to Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 9. Key to the delivery and monitoring of these objectives will be the use and support of volunteers and expert organisations, in order to advise on, and implement, regular survey work.
- 4.3.28 Around 25% of existing open space is private or has restrictive use. Individual private residents and businesses can make a big contribution to enhancing the biodiversity value of the City by improving the way they manage their gardens and roof spaces.
- 4.3.29 Wherever possible the City Corporation will favour the use of tree species which help to sustain wildlife. All trees support insect life which provides food for birds and some species of bat. Native tree species are of most value as they will have evolved together with animals which depend on them, but some non-native species are also successful in attracting insects. For birds, trees provide places to nest and staging posts for migrant species.

6. Ensure that enhanced and additional open spaces accord with high standards of sustainable and inclusive design, construction and management and take account of the potential changes to the City's climate, particularly the urban heat island effect.

- 4.3.30 The City Corporation's Sustainability Policy (2006- updated 2012) and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2007- updated 2010) provide important guidance for existing and proposed open spaces. The design, construction and management of all

open spaces need to ensure that high standards are achieved in terms of environmental sustainability. To ensure a robust approach, a Sustainability Audit should be undertaken for all major projects. This will help take into consideration the following:

- Specifying hard landscaping materials (such as paving) that is both sustainably sourced, and permeable;
- Ensuring the careful choice of more drought-resistant plants to maximise water efficiency, but balancing this with the requirement for native species in order to encourage diversity of wildlife;
- Ensuring that all new 'enclosed garden' schemes incorporate automatic irrigation and where possible, simple irrigation systems are 'retro-fitted' into existing open spaces areas, utilising harvested water where feasible;
- Continue to replace all free-standing wooden planters with more long-lived materials in order to cut down on the use of timber preservatives;
- Ensuring that new planters include reservoir tank irrigation systems and water retentive granules to cut down on watering;
- Incorporating porous paving and other forms of Sustainable Drainage where appropriate;
- Creating areas of shade to maximise *cooling through planting*;
- Continuing to use falconry as a tool for controlling the numbers of pigeons; and
- The use of materials from renewable sources

7. Increase the provision of private and communal residential amenity space (balconies and roof terraces) and communal amenity green space for office workers (including indoor and outdoor gardens) in appropriate locations.

- 4.3.31 The clear priority is to provide more and better quality publicly accessible open space. Such space provides an important place for different people to meet and socialise, helps social cohesion and should be encouraged. However, the provision of private and communal residential amenity space and communal amenity space for office workers would help take the pressure off the limited amount of publicly accessible space and should be increased, subject to amenity and security considerations.

8. Effectively manage the temporary loss of any open space during construction projects and ensure that high quality open space of equivalent or greater size is established as soon as possible following the necessary works.

- 4.3.32 The Crossrail Project, which commenced in 2010, will bring much benefit to the City and is strongly supported by the City Corporation. However, the proposals have

resulted in the 'temporary' loss of Finsbury Circus for at least five years whilst it is being used as a works site. The City Corporation will continue to work closely with local stakeholders and the Crossrail Project to minimise the adverse effects of works on existing trees and to agree with the Crossrail Project an appropriate detailed design and specification for a replacement open space and an appropriate timescale for the reinstatement of the facilities.

9. Manage open spaces to recognise their potential contribution to the improved health and well-being of City and wider communities.

- 4.3.33 There are several ways in which open spaces can help improve the health of the City's communities. These include designing planting to mitigate the effects of air pollution, allowing people to relax and exercise and providing opportunities for community cohesion through volunteering activities.

10. Increase public awareness and understanding of the different types of open space in and around the City and encourage the City's communities to make the most of open spaces and to help maintain and improve them.

- 4.3.34 Open spaces in the City are the focus of a number of events during the year and the City Corporation already supports programmes to encourage communities to make use of these spaces and sports facilities and to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- 4.3.35 The location and variety of open space available in the City will continue to be promoted extensively. This will include explaining the value of the growing number of civic spaces to help people appreciate the role such spaces have in the City's network of spaces and the opportunity there is for them to help increase the overall amount of open space. At present, this is achieved through the City of London website, information signs at each City Corporation-maintained open space, a bi-monthly newsletter, the provision of free site leaflets and self-guided walks leaflets. The City Corporation will continue to work with its partners to do this and will look to further support volunteering projects so that City workers and residents can take an active role in maintaining and improving their own environment.
- 4.3.36 Ongoing consultation and engagement with both users and non-users of open space in the City is also an essential element in understanding demand for certain types of open space and the perception of its quality. In addition to the City-wide residents, workers and City executive surveys undertaken by the City Corporation, it is important that the Open Spaces Department continues with its existing engagement programme through on-site comments cards, dedicated site surveys and its annual satisfaction questionnaire.

4.3.37 Continue to raise public awareness and challenge standards through entry into regional and national competitions such as *In Bloom*, *London Garden Squares* and *Green Flag*.

There are approximately 26 open spaces within 400m of the City in neighbouring Boroughs. The City Corporation is currently working in partnership with neighbouring Boroughs and Transport for London at;

Aldgate: The reconfiguration of the current Aldgate Gyratory to include a new landscaped green space and additional tree planting has come about as a result of wide consultation and partnership working with Transport for London and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Bunhill Fields: This site is located in the London Borough of Islington and requires additional funding to restore areas of the burial ground as well as extending and enhancing amenity opportunities for users of the site. Consultation and partnership working with local residents and the London Borough of Islington will take place to seek external funds.

4.4 Delivery

4.4.1 This part of the section looks in detail at issues relating to implementing the Strategy.

4.4.2 Enhancing Existing City Gardens

The Open Spaces Department maintains a rolling work programme for the refurbishment and improvement of their open spaces throughout the City, subject to available funding. Although this includes a wide spread of sites throughout all areas of the City, phasing will be reviewed to ensure the plan reflects the spatial priorities outlined in this strategy. Typically, the refurbishment of at least two open spaces is achieved each year through the work plan.

4.4.3 The Open Spaces Department (City Gardens Team) is to develop its work plan into a delivery strategy, setting out priorities for different parts of the City and identifying sources of funding to deliver these priorities.

4.4.4 Enhancing the Streetscene

This initiative was introduced briefly in Section 3, when outlining proposed additional open space. Originally established with £1 million funding from the City Fund (see

below), the Environmental Enhancement Programme will be funded from financial contributions secured by way of the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 funds recovery.

- 4.4.5 Working in partnership with businesses, developers and other agencies, the Environmental Enhancement Team in the City Corporation's Department of the Built Environment manages the delivery of enhanced streets and spaces and the creation of additional 'civic spaces'. The Team is proactive in its delivery of high quality, challenging and contemporary new public space projects ensuring the highest quality public realm for the City's communities. To date, over 95 schemes have been successfully implemented.
- 4.4.6 The Environmental Enhancement Team has divided the City into 16 sub-areas and is developing Public Realm Enhancement Strategies for each of these areas. To date, ten Strategies have been prepared and the intention is to develop a Strategy for all of the sub-areas.
- 4.4.7 **Securing Public Access to Private Spaces through Access Agreements**
Publicly accessible space of all types are heavily utilised in the City. It is important, therefore, that the City Corporation continues to negotiate public access to existing and proposed new private spaces. Access to new private spaces should be secured as part of granting planning permission for new development and the negotiation of formal maintenance agreements for all churchyards maintained by the City Gardens team provides the opportunity to increase public access.
- 4.4.8 **Developing Planning Policy and Managing Development**
Section 2 sets out the existing and emerging planning policy framework for protecting and creating open space and leisure facilities in the City.
- 4.4.9 The City Corporation, as local planning authority, will use the development management process to protect existing spaces from inappropriate development and facilitate the creation of additional open spaces. This will include entering into agreements with developers when granting planning permission for new development to:
- Secure improvements to existing open spaces as part of new development;
 - Secure the provision of new open space as part of new development;
 - Ensure public access to new open space where appropriate;
 - The Community Infrastructure Levy will be used to provide financial contributions towards the improvement of existing open spaces and/or the creation of new publicly accessible open spaces 'off-site' and the maintenance of soft landscaping of new on-site publicly accessible spaces.

4.4.10 Continuing to work in Partnership with others

The City Corporation will continue to use its funding to best effect and work in partnership with specific businesses and developers, regional, national and international organisations, to lever in additional funding and expertise to deliver this Strategy. Key partnership organisations include:

- City of London Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership;
- City of London Play Partnership;
- Safer City Partnership;
- City Fringe Partnership;
- City of London Police
- Proactive East London;
- London Marathon Charitable Trust;
- Bridge House Estates Trust;
- The Mayor of London's agencies (Greater London Authority and Transport for London);
- Department for Communities and Local Government;
- European Union.

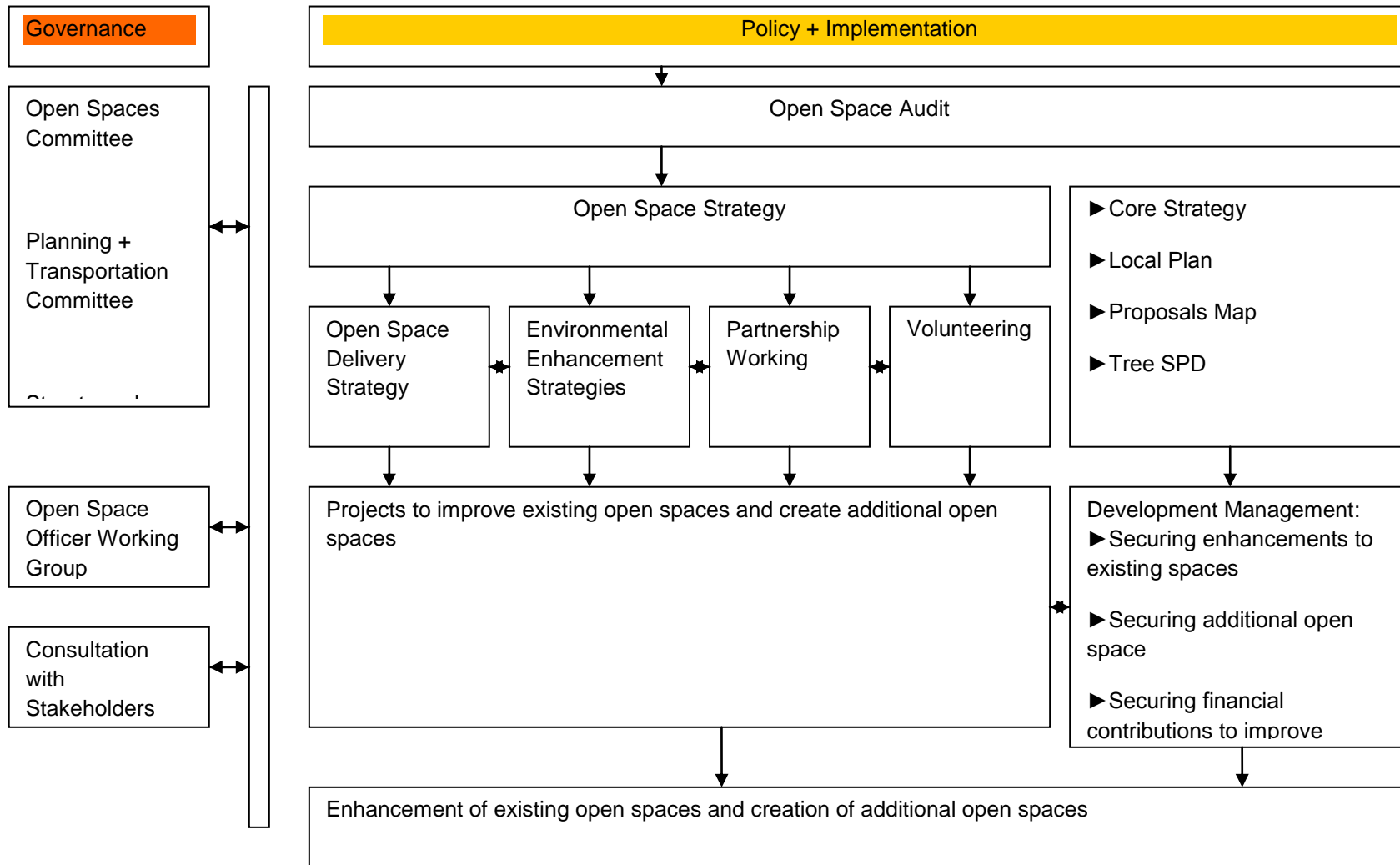
4.4.11 Increasing Volunteering

The City Corporation currently works closely with and supports the work of the Friends of City Gardens whose core aim is to promote and enhance the City's gardens and open spaces in line with the City Corporation's own aims and objectives. Since the groups inception in 2013 the friends have successfully secured external funds from small grant schemes and sponsorship as well as engaging a variety of different user groups to take part in a range of activities and events in the City's gardens. 2014 will be the first year the group will lead on the City in Bloom campaign, (part of the wider Royal Horticultural Society in Bloom Campaign) which encourages schools, businesses and the wider community to actively take part in enhancing and celebrating the green spaces within the 'Square Mile'. The City Corporation continues to assist the Barbican Wildlife Group to carry out enhancement projects in Fann Street Garden and supports corporate volunteering organisations, on an ad hoc basis, particularly in relation to biodiversity enhancement projects. The only restriction that now applies lies in the very nature of the sites themselves; not having the large scale parks projects enjoyed by neighbouring boroughs, volunteering opportunities are limited to small scale projects and garden maintenance.

4.4.12 Implementation with other policy areas

Figure 7 below illustrates how this Strategy relates to other policy and implementation mechanisms to help secure enhancements to existing open spaces and the creation of additional open space.

Figure 7: Implementation Diagram



4.5 Action Plan

4.5.1 A five year action plan has been prepared separately to develop the commitments set out in the 10 Strategic Objectives into identified Actions and Milestones over the medium term.

4.6 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

4.6.1 The Open Spaces Department will be responsible for driving forward the Strategy and its Action Plan, monitoring progress against identified milestones and targets and reporting to the Open Spaces Committee annually. Appropriate mechanisms and checks need to be put in place to ensure that the work of the group is reflected positively in delivery of projects on the ground.

4.6.2 The supply of open spaces is monitored by the Department of the Built Environment through the monitoring of planning permissions and subsequent losses and gains of open space. An update to this Strategy will be carried out in 2018/19 and the Open Space Audit will be updated annually.

City of London - Open Space Strategy

Appendix 1: Typology

1. Open Space Typologies

Open space typologies are set out in Table A1 below and are contained in the City of London Open Spaces Audit 2013.

Table A1: Open Space Typologies

	Typology	Primary Purpose
Greenspaces	Parks and Gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
	Natural and semi-natural greenspaces,	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and activities
	Local Green corridors	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel and opportunities for wildlife migration
	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside or water sports
	Amenity Greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
	Provision for children and young people	Areas designated primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.
	Cemeteries and churchyards	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity
Civic Spaces	Primary civic spaces	Provides open space amenity. Includes civic and market squares and other hard surfaces designed for pedestrians.
	Secondary civic spaces	Provides both open space amenity and facilitates pedestrian movement.
Under construction	Sites awaiting development.	

Source: City of London Open Spaces Audit (2013).

Appendix 2. Key Relevant Statistics and Population Figures

Table A2-1: Existing estimated week day day-time population

Source	Populations	2011
2011 Census Office for National Statistics	Workers	370,000
City of London Student Estimate	Students	29,000
City of London Visitor Estimate	Visitors	23,000
2011 Census	Residents not in employment	2,000
	Total	424,000

Notes: (1) Total figures rounded to nearest thousand (2) only residents 'not in employment' were used to avoid double counting.

2. Projected estimated week day day-time population

Table A2-2– Projected week day day-time population

	City
Existing Population	424,000
Predicted growth	52,000
Predicted Population	476,000

Note: Predicted Population figures rounded to nearest thousand

This is broken down as follows:

Table A2-3: Projected week day day-time population

Source	Populations	2011	2019
2011 Census Office for National Statistics	Workers	370,000	414,000
City of London Student Estimates	Students	29,000	29,000
City of London Visitor Estimates	Visitors	23,000	30,000
2011 Census Office for National Statistics	Residents not in employment	2,000	3,400
Total		424,000	476,000

Note: (1) Total figures rounded to nearest thousand (2) No new Higher Education facilities expected (3) 'Residents not in employment' increased by 70% from existing, in line with predicted growth of the overall resident population.

3. Employment and Residential Growth

The data below shows that both office and residential floor space will increase during medium term.

Table A2-4: Office Growth 2014-2019

	Office floor space
2014	8,600,000
Growth between 2014-2019	980,000
Projected Office floor space	9,580,000

Table A2-5: Housing Growth 2014-2019

	Residential units
2014	1,107
Additional units between 2014-19	781
Projected residential units	1,888

4. Summary of Results of Consultation

The following is a summary of the consultation that has helped inform this draft Strategy.

Local Plan Consultation 2013/14. The following comments were made as a result of the consultation.

- Respondents felt there is a need to encourage enhancement of space within the public realm and green spaces need to be actively managed to encourage biodiversity and promote the health and well-being of residents, workers and visitors. There was also large support for securing public access to private open spaces. There was support for green roofs and walls as well as balconies which enhanced green space.
- While green spaces and recreational facilities were encouraged there was also concern that care should be taken when siting these uses near residential areas to minimise disturbance to residents.
- There was support for the creation of green corridors throughout the City, making it more pleasant to travel on foot and creating more green areas in which to sit during the summer with more amenity and recreational uses and to increase biodiversity.
- There was concern about the lack of facilities for children and teenagers in the City. However there is a need to balance these uses with quiet areas.

- There was recognition of the high demand for use of open spaces throughout the City, therefore the potential for spaces to be multi-purpose should be fully explored. It was felt that there is an unfulfilled demand for sports areas in the City, also office developments should provide cycling parking with shower and changing facilities and also explore the opportunities for multi-use as sports facilities for inter-firm provision.

City Gardens Customer Survey (2012)

The City Gardens section also conducts its own site specific research. For example, over 1015 face-to-face interviews were carried out at most of the City Garden sites during 2012 in order to help inform the design and provision of green space.

Resident Events (twice annually)

Residents meetings are conducted twice a year. There is a central meeting held at Guildhall in January and June, as well as meetings on each of the four estates held in May and November. In addition there is also a resident meeting held in the West of the City to reflect the growing population in that part of the City. The Open Spaces Department always have a stand at each event so that residents can feed any concerns or raise any issues.

Although residents sometimes use these forums as an opportunity to enquire about ongoing works, they rarely raise maintenance or other garden issues. Of more importance to residents is the overall lack of open space in general and opportunities to provide more, as well as the climate change and sustainability issues associated with open space.

5. Types of Existing Open Space by Key City Place.

Table A2-6 sets out the amount of open space (by open space typology) for the City as a whole and its six Key City Locations.

Table A2-6: Types of Open Space by Key City Place (All figures are in hectares)

Type of Open Space	North of the City	Cheapside & St. Paul's	Eastern Cluster	Aldgate	Thames & the riverside	Rest of the City	Total
Primary Civic Space	4.29	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.9	7.5
Secondary Civic Space	4.57	0.76	0.08	0.23	2.22	1.28	9.14
Parks and Gardens	1.19	0.52	0.05	-	2.63	0.8	5.18
Cemeteries and Churchyards	2.19	0.83	0.17	0.09	0.26	0.8	4.35
Amenity Green Space	2.07	0.06	0.07	0.24	0.18	0.27	2.88
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspaces	1.24	-	-	-	-	-	1.24
Provision for children and Teenagers	0.22	0.07	-	0.29	0.19	-	0.78
Outdoor Sports Facilities	0.62	-	-	-	-	-	0.62
Green Corridors	0.14	-	-	0.08	0.18	-	0.4
Total Space	16.53	2.84	1.18	1.33	6.17	4.04	32.09

Appendix 3: Five Year Action Plan (2014-2019) (Will not be included in final SPD).

Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
1. Maintain and increase public access to existing open spaces and enhance the quality of these spaces, in terms of both design and management.	Adopt Local Plan Open Space Policies DM19.1, DM19.2, DM19.3, DM19.4	January 2015	DBE (Policy)		See Action + Milestone
	Adopt Public Realm Enhancement Strategies for 15 areas of the City.	April 2015	DBE (Environmental Enhancement)		See Action + Milestone
	Review the 10 approved Public Realm Enhancement Strategies.	April 2015	DBE (Environmental Enhancement)		See Action + Milestone
	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
2. Increase the amount of high quality publicly accessible open space in order to maintain the existing City-wide ratio of 0.06 ha per 1000 weekday	Adopt an Open Space 5 year Action Plan	December 2014	OS Department (City Gardens)		See Action + Milestone
	Continue to secure the creation of additional publicly accessible open space in development schemes.	As development opportunities allow	DBE (Development Management)	Developers + Agents	Hectares of publicly accessible open space to rise in proportion with population growth.

day-time population and focus efforts on creating additional publicly accessible open space in the east of the City, particularly in the Eastern Cluster and the Aldgate area.	Continue to implement Environmental Enhancement Projects	As development opportunities allow	DBE (Environmental Enhancement)	Developers + Agents TfL	Hectares of publicly accessible open space to rise in proportion with population growth.
Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
3. Ensure that all open spaces are designed and managed to be safe and accessible to all and, where appropriate, enabling opportunities for different activities at different times of the day and year.	As funding becomes available, complete improvement works to all City Corporation sites and ensure accessibility issues are taken into account.	April 2019	OS Department (City Gardens)		See Action + Milestone
	Agree formal maintenance agreements for churchyards maintained by the City Corporation when and where applicable.	April 2019	OS Department (City Gardens) City Solicitor		See Action + Milestone

	Ensure an appropriate work plan is implemented for hard landscape areas.	April 2019	CS Department (Landscape Infrastructure) ES Department (Highways + unenclosed spaces)		See Action + Milestone
	Implement local enhancement schemes to improve access to open spaces (signage, footway improvements, dropped kerbs, tactile paving, cycle lanes, traffic calming measures etc)	Ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens) DBE (Environmental Enhancement)	Neighbouring Boroughs City Fringe Partnership	See Action + Milestone
Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
4. Provide, where appropriate, additional play opportunities (including equipped play areas) that are accessible to all,	Ensure that new spaces have the potential to offer 'play experiences' for children, either by securing CIL agreements or the delivery of temporary informal sessions delivered	Ongoing	Community + Children's Services Department DBE (Environmental Enhancement)	Developers + Agents Play Partnership	See Action + Milestone

including disabled children, in existing and new spaces.	by stakeholders.		OS Department (City Gardens)		
Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
5. Ensure that existing and new spaces make a positive contribution to the biodiversity value of the City through appropriate plant choice and habitat creation.	Incorporate planting and tree species that provide biodiversity value.	As development opportunities allow	OS Department (City Gardens) DBE (Development Management)	Developers Volunteers	Hectares of publicly accessible open space to rise in proportion with population growth.
	Effectively manage trees maintained by the City Corporation and control the felling, lopping or pruning of private trees where possible.	Ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens) DBE (Development Management)	Developers + Landowners	To maintain and manage the current number of mature trees in the City in accordance with the CoL Tree Strategy
	Continue to manage the City's gardens identified as Sites of Local Importance	April 2017	OS Department (City Gardens)	GLA	See Action + Milestone

	for Nature Conservation (SLINC) and increasing the number as the opportunity arises.				
	Review and implement the second revision of the City of London's habitat and species Biodiversity Action Plans.	January 2020 then actions ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens) DBE (Development Management)	Developers + Landowners	Complete 100% of all identified projects in accordance with the outcomes and timescales set in the individual Action Plans.

Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
6. Ensure that enhanced and additional open spaces accord with high standards of sustainable and inclusive design, construction and management and take account of the	Ensure all new green spaces take account of the latest technology and expertise when specifying appropriate materials, planting and features into enhancement schemes and designs for new open spaces.	Ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens) DBE (Environmental Enhancement) DBE (Development Management)	Developers + Landowners	100% of all new and refurbished spaces to be tested against the Corporate sustainability framework to ensure that all features, including their long term maintenance, are as sustainable as

potential changes to City's climate, particularly the urban heat island effect.					possible whilst satisfying user needs.
Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
7. Increase the provision of private and communal residential amenity space (balconies and roof terraces) and communal amenity green space for office workers (including indoor and outdoor gardens) in appropriate locations.	Adopt Local Plan policies DM 10.2 and DM10.3	January 2015	DBE (Policy)		See Action + Milestone
	Secure the creation of amenity space, where appropriate, as part of development schemes.	As development opportunities allow	DBE (Development Management)	Developers	See Action + Milestone

Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
8. Effectively manage the temporary loss of any open space during the construction of projects and ensure that a high quality open space is established as soon as possible following the necessary works.	Finsbury Circus Garden: Maintain with the Crossrail Project the detailed specification for a replacement open space and ensure the garden is installed within the agreed timescale.	April 2018	OS Department (City Gardens) DBE (Transport)	Crossrail Project Team	See Action + Milestone
	Continue to identify any necessary mitigation measures for nearby open spaces.	October 2019	OS Department (City Gardens)	LB Islington City Fringe Partnership	See Action + Milestone
Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
9. Manage open spaces to recognise their potential contribution to the improved health and well-being of the City and wider communities.	Investigate possible funding and partnerships to deliver activities within City Gardens to assist with improved physical and mental health and well-being.	April 2019	OS Department (City Gardens)	Community and Children's Services Volunteers Third Sector	See Action + Milestone

Strategic Objective	Action	Milestone	Lead Department(s)	External Partners	Monitoring (Target + Indicator)
10. Increase public awareness and understanding of the different types of open spaces in and around the City and encourage the City's communities to make the most of open spaces to help improve them.	Maintain and improve information on the City of London website, and e news correspondence.	Ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens)		See Action + Milestone
	Maintain information signs at each City Corporation open spaces and continue to provide site and self-guided walks leaflets via the information centre and in key gardens.	Ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens) Public Relations		See Action + Milestone
	Carry out residents, workers and City executive surveys.	Every 4 years	OS Department (City Gardens)	Residents and workers	Achieve a minimum of 80% average satisfaction rating with open spaces in the City
	Carry out dedicated site surveys and annual satisfaction questionnaires.	Annual	OS Department (City Gardens)	Residents, workers + visitors	Achieve average 150 per year
	Work with the Blue Badge Guides to ensure the quality of their information is up to date.	Ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens)	Blue Badge Guides	See Action + Milestone

	Provide corporate groups with meaningful volunteering activities that add value to the City Open Spaces. Support the Friends of City Gardens to fulfil their aims and objectives.	Ongoing	OS Department (City Gardens)	City Businesses + Volunteers	See Action + Milestone
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