

Bromley

THE LONDON BOROUGH

Open

Spaces

Strategy for 2021 to 2031

In partnership with



www.bromley.gov.uk/parks

The complete strategy

An aerial photograph of a park area. In the foreground, there is a large green lawn and a paved path. In the middle ground, a tall, lattice-structured tower stands prominently. The background shows a city skyline under a clear sky. The entire image is framed by a large, semi-transparent blue circle.

“

An open space portfolio that promotes the environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the borough, allowing our residents, communities and wildlife to thrive

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Executive summary

The London Borough of Bromley is, at 150km², the largest London Borough by geographical area, with over 77km² designated as Green Belt land. As a result of this unique and diverse landscape composition, Bromley is generally considered to be London's 'greenest' borough.

We are proud to be London's greenest borough and we recognise the contribution that our large and varied open space portfolio makes towards Bromley being a great place to live, work and visit. In collaboration with our grounds maintenance provider (idverde UK), our stakeholders and our partners, we have developed the strategy to reflect our overarching vision for the portfolio:



An open space portfolio that promotes the environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the borough, allowing our residents, communities and wildlife to thrive

This strategy is built upon both a series of baseline conditions which we would look to maintain and build upon throughout its duration, and challenges that drive the strategy forward. Taken together they form five Strategy Objectives (SOs) which are purpose statements that set goals for us in achieving our vision:



SO1

Quality and accessibility



SO2

Natural, cultural and historical assets



SO3

Health, wellbeing and community



SO4

Local economy



SO5

Financially viable open space portfolio



Strategy Objective 01

Quality and accessibility

This SO is about ensuring our open spaces are welcoming and accessible, whilst ensuring that there is an enhanced and balanced provision of facilities across the portfolio through audits and individual site management plans. It is also about developing further our community focused and integrated approach to open space management by working closely with external stakeholder groups (such as Friends Groups) and empowering them to secure external funding, resources and equipment.



Strategy Objective 02

Natural, cultural and historical assets

This SO is about ensuring the continued protection of Bromley's diverse natural habitats, its biodiversity and its cultural and historical assets contained within the portfolio. It is also about ensuring that they are able to evolve so that they are proactive in reducing the impact of a changing climate, whether through their natural regeneration or the installation of green infrastructure such as electric vehicle charging points. Lastly it is about increasing public understanding of the value of the portfolio, by an expansion of the borough's award winning outdoor education programme.



Strategy Objective 03

Health, wellbeing and community

This SO is about supporting and encouraging the physical and mental health benefits that the open space portfolio offers, whether that is through the encouragement of active travel, individual exercise opportunities or the facilitation of social networking between different members of the community to combat loneliness and social isolation such as community food growing. It is also about ensuring that these healthy lifestyle benefits are adequately promoted via our website and other media.



Strategy Objective 04

Local economy

This SO is about ensuring that open spaces are able to adequately support the local economy, whether that is through sustainable community events or through enhanced leisure, play, recreation and sports provision. We wish for this modernisation to ensure facilities are both fully inclusive of a range of needs and diversify the type and number of activities that can take place in one space.



Strategy Objective 05

Financial sustainability and modernisation

This SO is about ensuring that the open space portfolio is financially sustainable and can attract the necessary funding to ensure that we meet our aspirations for it. It looks to adopt a multi-agency approach in securing funding, whilst also exploring other methods in which to secure income, such as through Environmental Stewardship Schemes, donations and sponsorship.



Delivering the Strategy

We will call upon the expertise and time of a number of partners and stakeholders during both the formation and implementation of policy throughout the strategy lifetime. It is in recognition of the dedication of these groups that the strategy contains a review of their governance structures so that they reflect best practice whilst empowering them to deliver improved outcomes.

We will continue to fund the ongoing maintenance and management of the portfolio, but as per SO5, will identify new income streams, grant funding and commercial opportunities to allow its sensitive modernisation and enhancement.

Throughout the life of the strategy each of the Action Points contained within the SOs will be subject to a monitoring framework to ensure that we and idverde UK are meeting its milestones. There will be annual reviews of the strategy to ensure that its focus remains relevant and responds to broader changes in strategic priorities. Within this monitoring system there would also be key SO action points and undertakings that it expects to be met as a minimum as they are either a baseline for other points of the strategy to proceed or are a key outcome.

We would also like for the strategy to be recognised externally for its quality including via Green Flag status, London in Bloom and through increases in user satisfaction in its Open Space Satisfaction Survey.



Foreword

The aim of this strategy is to set out our priorities for the deployment of resources in the blue and green spaces and parks that make up our open space portfolio over the coming years.

We strive to conserve and enhance them, maximise the benefit derived from them by their users and the communities within which they are located, optimise their carbon reduction, soil water retention, biodiversity, ecological and environmental benefits such as urban cooling, and to generate a return on any investment made towards the wellbeing of the portfolio. The strategy additionally aims through a holistic approach to support wider corporate objectives and the delivery of legal and statutory obligations.



In 2019, we took the decision to award an innovative 8-year (extendable to 16-years) contract to idverde UK for our open space portfolio. This new approach intends to deliver focused and targeted strategic investment, management, maintenance and enhancement of our open space portfolio and the individual assets within it throughout the life of the contract.

Whilst the contract included the transfer of the client-side management functions and responsibility for the development of the strategic approach to our open space portfolio to idverde UK, this Open Spaces Strategy is the result of our collaborative work with idverde UK and other stakeholders. This collaborative approach should ensure that it reflects our priorities and identifies, communicates and monitors a course of action intended to deliver these and to make best use of the portfolio for the benefit of our communities, economy and residents over the next decade.

We also take this opportunity to recognise the commitment, devotion and effort of our partners, external agencies and other local stakeholders, including:

- community groups, such as Friends Groups, allotment and leisure garden groups, archaeological and geological organisations, and educational interest groups
- cultural, sport and leisure providers, such as bowls clubs, sports clubs, delegated sports managers, and event and activity promoters
- local businesses, such as cafés, nurseries and school clubs
- volunteers and individuals across the borough, such as naturalists
- external funding bodies, both locally and nationally

We want to thank them for the significant contribution they make to the enhancement, management, maintenance and preservation of the portfolio and the various activities that are available within them for the benefit of our communities and residents as a result of their hard work and dedication.

In preparing the strategy we have recognised the significant contribution that the open space portfolio has made to the lives of our residents, users of the open spaces and those that work within the borough whilst subject to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our joint experiences throughout this ongoing and challenging period have contributed to our appreciation and understanding of the many benefits we derive from the open space portfolio. Be they, biodiversity, ecology and environmental, the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and residents, a place of escape, exploration, reflection or relaxation or the economic and social prosperity of our neighbourhoods, communities, towns and borough.



Councillor William Huntington-Thresher

Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Our open space portfolio

The London Borough of Bromley is, at 150km², the largest London Borough by geographical area, with over 77km² designated as Green Belt land. As a result of this unique and diverse landscape composition, Bromley is generally considered to be London's 'greenest' borough.



Within this landscape, we are custodian of over 28km² of open space, incorporating:

- formal parks, including three Country Parks
- leisure gardens
- allotments
- outdoor sports facilities
- playgrounds
- cemeteries
- closed churchyards
- a range of semi-natural habitats, including large areas of woodland (such as a third of London's Ancient Woodland)



Many of these sites also contain special conservation designations including five Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



The sites contained within the portfolio are diverse in character and range from the national attraction of Crystal Palace Park, through to smaller sites such as pocket parks, play areas and green space within residential estates, some of which may lack the significant features of the larger sites, but are nonetheless important areas of open space.

The portfolio also contains a significant amount of unique heritage, archaeological and historical environments, including:

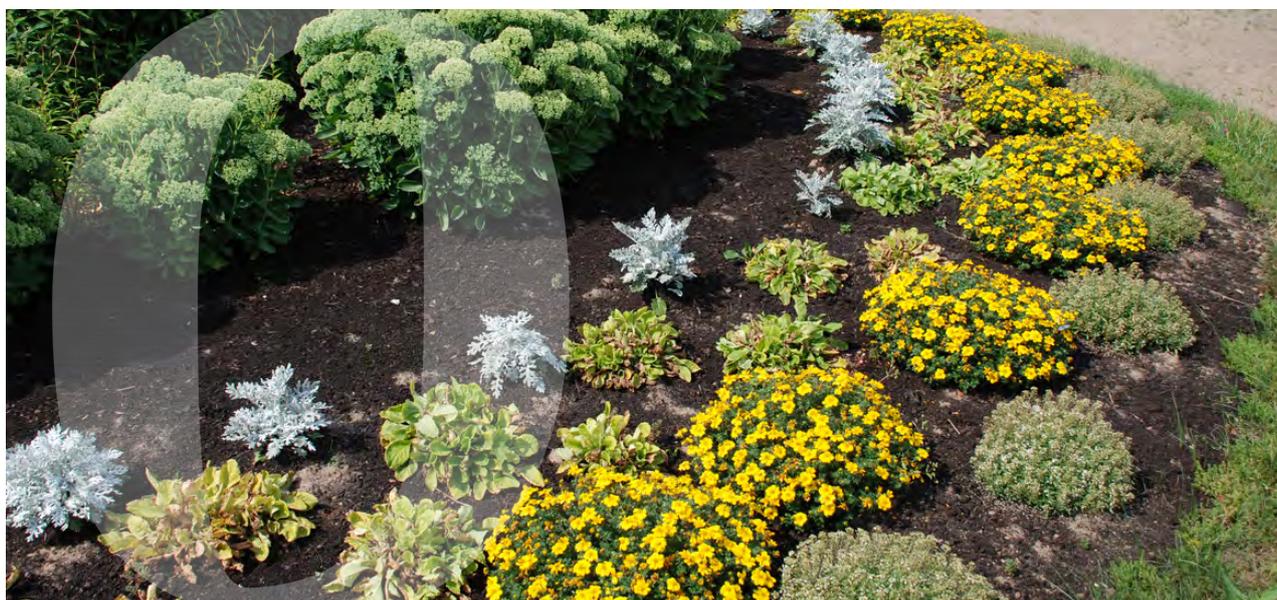
- the Grade II listed Crystal Palace Park and its Grade I listed Dinosaurs
- the architecture of Priory Gardens the remains of the moated manor
- estate circa AD1200 at Scadbury Park the unique cultural significance of the countryside in the High Elms estate, which helped to inspire the work of Charles Darwin by serving as part of the 'open-air laboratory' in which he developed his theory of evolution by natural selection



Sunrise at Edgebury Open Space, Chislehurst

Further open space within the borough over which we are not custodian, includes:

- National Trust woodland
- Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray Commons
- part of the North Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) further SSSIs and LNRs
- sites of Metropolitan, Borough or Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGs)
- extensive areas of farmland, private sports grounds, golf courses and woodland



Introduction

We are proud to be London’s greenest borough and recognise the contribution that our large and varied open space portfolio makes towards Bromley being a great place to live, work and visit.

We know that our open space is highly valued by both our residents– and the diverse communities of which we are composed– and incoming visitors and workers to the borough. Open spaces make a significant contribution to the local economy, both in terms of the monetary value that they can generate from visitors, but as importantly, through the elements of the natural environment that provide goods and services to people including the intrinsic value to people’s physical and mental health.

In collaboration with our grounds maintenance provider, idverde UK, stakeholders and partners, we have developed this Open Spaces Strategy to:

O Reaffirm our commitment to our open space portfolio by reinforcing its broader value unequivocally

O Maximise the biodiversity, climatic, ecological, environmental, health, social and wellbeing benefits derived from our open spaces for the benefit of our residents and communities

O Ensure our open spaces are safeguarded for the future financially in a manner that is sustainable and appropriate

O Make our open spaces feel like ‘destinations’ that people want to come to

Section 2.1

Why we need an Open Space Strategy

With our partners, we believe that this strategy is required to:

- ✓ Fully understand the role that the open space portfolio plays in the wider Bromley community, economy and environment
- ✓ Provide a clear and motivational picture of our aspirations for our open space portfolio
- ✓ Provide a clear framework for all stakeholders as to where their role sits within the overall strategy so they are motivated to maintain their high standards of work
- ✓ Enable us to support all stakeholders by focusing their resources so that through collaborative working, the benefits of our open space portfolio can be enjoyed by all
- ✓ Explore sustainable forms of revenue to support our open space portfolio's future including via appropriate commercial activity, capital investment schemes and community and grant funded projects
- ✓ Provide a clear framework of our expectation for future policy documents that are derived from or link to this strategy, such as Individual Open Space management plans
- ✓ Enhance the open space portfolio's value to nature and ensure they are resilient to the impacts of a changing climate



Section 2.2

Scope and limitation

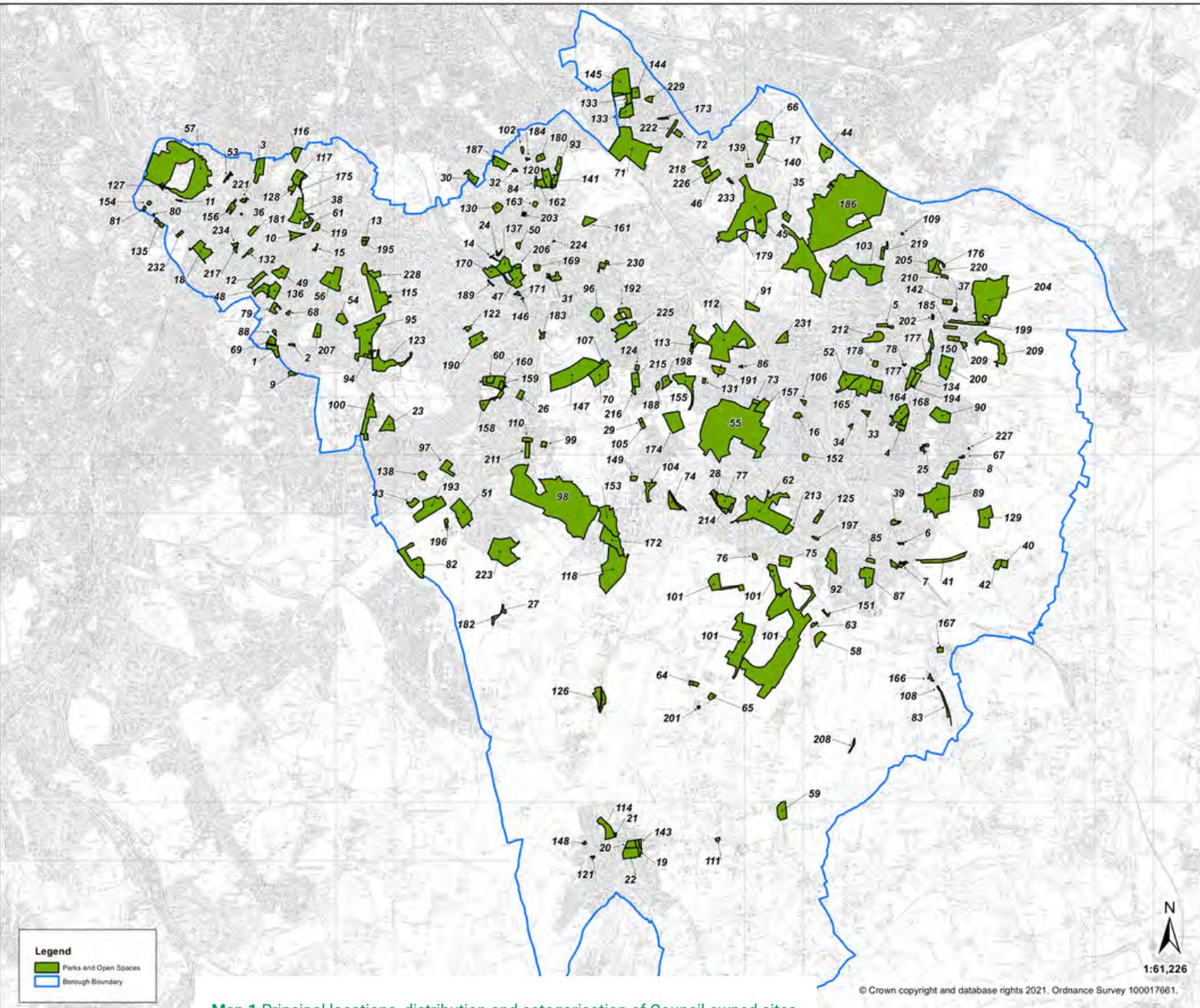
This Open Space Strategy applies to all sites that we have custodianship of. These are maintained by idverde UK, our ground maintenance service. It includes Council-owned parks, gardens, allotment sites, cemeteries and closed churchyards.

The principal locations, distribution and categorisation of these sites is given both on the following map (Map 1) and within Appendix 1 of this document. It also includes any green and blue infrastructure, such as woodland and water bodies, within the open spaces.

This strategy is not intended to apply to or deliver improved outcomes on any sites outside of this definition, including private residential land, sports grounds, agricultural land or areas of green space that are managed by another body, such as the National Trust or a Wildlife Trust. However, we may, via this strategy, implement policies that could influence decisions made at some of these sites, for example, via our educational programmes.



This strategy also concerns itself primarily with the elements of grounds maintenance that fall under the remit of idverde UK. However, where there is a crossover with other key strategic documents, such as our Tree Management Strategy, the Bromley Biodiversity Plan, our Regeneration Strategy and our Net Zero Action Plan, we have ensured that it has drawn on the relevant expertise to ensure that this strategy both links to and doesn't contradict them.



Map 1 Principal locations, distribution and categorisation of Council owned sites

Section 2.3

Baseline conditions

This strategy is based on the following baseline conditions which we are looking to maintain and build-upon throughout its duration. These have then been used to identify the challenges facing the open space portfolio (set out in Section 3) and to then develop the Strategic Objectives (set out in Section 4) to overcome these.

What our portfolio looks like

Our open space portfolio:



contains a total of 234 sites, including some with special conservation designation, such as three which are SSSI



has 7 Green Flag Awards (in 2021)



is supported by 53 formal Friends Groups

Investment in our portfolio

In conjunction with idverde we have raised £226,000 through a combination of grants and initiatives for reinvestment back into the portfolio in 2020/21. £103,000 of this was contributed to in some way by the Friends Groups.

Multiple community organisations and statutory bodies also contribute towards the evolution and management of our open space portfolio, including volunteer groups, Delegated Sports Managers and Government Public bodies.



Investment in our portfolio

Levels of satisfaction with our open spaces

In the 2020 we undertook a satisfaction survey with idverde to gauge levels of public satisfaction with the open space portfolio.

From the survey, we know that:

- 80% of respondents noted that they were satisfied with the overall condition of our open space portfolio
- 55% of respondents noted that they were satisfied with the condition of its facilities

Feedback on the draft strategy

In the 2020, we also undertook a survey to gauge levels of public satisfaction with the draft version of this strategy.

From the survey, we know that:

- 75% of respondents noted that the portfolio provided them with a significant social outlet as places to visit with friends and family
- 45% of respondents noted that they used the portfolio for a sporting interest

Other things we learnt

Whilst the larger and more prominent locations within the portfolio generate the largest footfall, a total of 135 sites were named at least once by respondents to the consultation on the draft strategy as being one that they frequently visited.

Whilst recreation and leisure pursuits tend to be the dominant activities taking place within the portfolio, there is also significant sporting interest and a wide range of specialist hobbies and interests, such as Ornithology and Photography.

Respondents to our surveys generally noted that they liked the variety of sites contained within the portfolio as they support a range of activities and purposes dependent upon an individual's preference.

Challenges driving this strategy

The following challenges, coupled together with the baselines outlined in section 2, are used to drive the strategy forward.

Sharing the benefits

-  We will make sure that we fully understand and communicate the benefits of our open space portfolio to all stakeholders and sections of the community. This includes environmental, social and economic benefits.
-  We will make sure that the portfolio is managed so that it's benefit to nature is enhanced, whilst also adapting to the impacts of a changing climate. The strategy acknowledges that some sites have special Conservation status. Therefore, we need to ensure that they continue to be managed in line with the requirements of these designations.
-  We will make sure that the benefits to the portfolio are equally distributed and felt across the borough through the enhancement of smaller, local open spaces as well as more prominent sites.

The people who live in the borough



The population of the borough is projected to increase from approximately 331,000 in 2021 to 341,000 in 2031.

We are expecting our population to age and become more ethnically diverse (Bromley Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2021). However, it is important to note that the borough contains a higher proportion of young people aged under 16 (20% of the population) when compared to London overall (14%). Therefore, we need to facilitate open spaces that support the wellbeing of both older and younger residents with amenities that ensure they are accessible to all.

We are committed to making sure that those sectors of the community whose views have been under-represented and those who are not traditional users of open spaces are included within the strategy. This can include those who are living with disabilities or health issues, those from ethnic minority groups and those living in areas that are deficient in open space. This helps to ensure social inclusion and equality of opportunity (Public Health England, 2020).

Managing demand

Through this strategy we need to manage the pressures caused by the promotion of our open spaces within the borough as 'destinations', which is likely to cause increased usage and 'wear & tear' of our open spaces.

We will balance the needs of the many user groups and their increasing numbers, whilst seeking to avoid the conflicts and damage caused by anti-social behaviour and overuse. At the same time, we will recognise that the needs and aspirations of stakeholders vary between place to place and change over time.

The long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the shift to home working, has hastened a change in the work and leisure practices of many of our residents. This places new demands upon our open space portfolio at times of the day different to those previously seen. This facilitates the need to incorporate mitigating actions in the strategy.

Managing our resources

We are ambitious for our borough and so we want to make sure that this strategy can remain ambitious and high achieving throughout its duration. At the same time, we acknowledge that not every desired amenity can be provided in every open space, therefore it is important that stakeholder expectation is managed appropriately.

We want to make sure that this strategy optimises the potential for our open spaces to source their own sustainable forms of income, whilst ensuring that this is controlled and that it does not exclude any users.

We will support the targeting of community grants towards projects that benefit both our open space portfolio and our wider community.

We want everyone to be able to understand each concept or project within this strategy. That's why we have written it using language that can be easily understood. What's more, this strategy creates a framework under which our stakeholders, such as allotment holders, Delegated Sports Managers, Friends and Volunteers, receive the appropriate support and empowerment to maintain their high standard of work, thus delivering good governance of the portfolio.

We want to make sure that this strategy supports and synchronises with national, regional, and local policy, framework, guidance, and objectives.

We want to make sure that the usage of our land or buildings are utilised so that the resulting activity better meets the strategic aims of enhancement of the portfolio for the benefit of the local community, whilst ensuring that all functions of a particular site are recognised, such as a site that serves as a haven for wildlife and biodiversity may also provide outdoor sporting facilities.



Hang Grove Fields in the High Elms estate after a hay cut

Our objectives

We have developed this strategy to reflect our overarching vision for our open space portfolio:



An open space portfolio that promotes the environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the borough, allowing our residents, communities and wildlife to thrive

To deliver our vision, we have identified five Strategy Objectives (SO):



SO1

Quality and accessibility



SO2

Natural, cultural and historical assets



SO3

Health, wellbeing and community



SO4

Local economy



SO5

Financially viable open space portfolio

The SO's are purpose statements that set goals for the Council in achieving our vision. Such objectives have been influenced by both the current identified baselines, the identified challenges facing us in maintaining these baselines (informed through public consultation) and the overall enhancement of the portfolio.

| STRATEGY OBJECTIVE (SO) | | PURPOSE STATEMENT |
|---|---|---|
|  S01 | Quality and accessibility | To improve the quality and accessibility of Bromley's open spaces |
|  S02 | Natural, cultural and historical assets | To enhance Bromley's diverse natural habitats, protect its cultural and historical assets and to increase public understanding of these sites |
|  S03 | Health, wellbeing and community | To manage Bromley's open spaces for improved health and wellbeing |
|  S04 | Local economy | To support the local economy through attractive open spaces in town centres and the provision for sustainable community events |
|  S05 | Financially viable open space portfolio | To ensure that Bromley's open spaces are financially sustainable by identifying new income and commercial opportunities that allow sensitive enhancement and modernisation of the portfolio |

Each SO is supported by the following:

- A series of outcomes that it wishes to achieve
- Accompanying action points and undertakings that demonstrate how it will achieve these
- Timeframes and milestones for when these action points should be achieved. Most timeframes are set to the December of a particular year, which indicates the latest date that we expect the particular action point to have been achieved; however, where possible we will look to deliver outcomes ahead of schedule to ensure maximum benefit to our open space users
- Further information that explains key concepts and terminology contained within the SO
- Case studies demonstrating the previous success of a particular policy

Action points within the SOs have been selected as part of three overarching themes:



A brief outline of proposed projects is given in Appendix 2.1, whilst further case studies that could not fit into the main body of text are given in Appendix 2.2. Both are signposted where relevant within the SO tables.



Strategy Objective 01

Quality and accessibility

What we aim to achieve

This SO is about:

- ➔ Ensuring that our open spaces are welcoming, accessible, maintained to a high standard and have positive effects on the security and wellbeing of local communities.
- ➔ Ensuring an enhanced, balanced provision of facilities across the open space portfolio that address any inequalities.
- ➔ Developing our community focused and integrated approach to open space management further by working closely with external stakeholders such as Friends Groups and local volunteering organisations.
- ➔ Affirming our continuing support for these stakeholder groups by increasing both the number of groups and the individual volunteers that comprise them and their capacity to secure external funding, resources, and equipment.

How we aim to achieve this

It will achieve this through the following action points:

- ➔ **Strategy endorsement:** The full adoption of this comprehensive Open Space Strategy.
- ➔ **Open space asset register:** Undertake an audit of our open space portfolio and from this identify sites that require investment, enhancement, conservation or individual management plans.
- ➔ **Open space needs assessment:** Once complete undertake a gap analysis of open space amenities and facilities.
- ➔ **Open spaces portfolio model:** Identify an optimal model for management of the open space portfolio which makes creative use of its assets.
- ➔ **Open space stakeholder model:** Undertake a review of the governance arrangements and structures for our open space Delegated Sports Managers, Friends Groups, partners and volunteers.



What we will do

| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Strategy endorsement | | | |
| 1.1 Member endorsement for the Open Space Strategy | Endorsement of the full strategy as a framework for decision making within the Portfolio for the period from 2021-2031. | November 2021 | Endorsement of the full strategy at the Council's November ECS PDS Committee |
| 2. Open space asset register | | | |
| 2.1 Audit of open space portfolio | Undertake and produce a draft audit of the Council's open space portfolio. This to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A natural capital accounting assessment • Evaluation of open space quality, assets, function, fitness for purpose, safety and security | December 2022 | Full audit of the entire open space portfolio completed |
| 2.2 Open space investment, conservation and enhancement | From the audit in Action Point 2.1 a series of open spaces suited to investment, conservation and enhancement will be identified and implemented over a rolling three year programme. | January 2023 to December 2026 Review of programme to be completed by December 2026 | Proposals to be fully implemented by the end of each respective year and to incorporate the lessons of the previous year so that the programme is regularly updated |
| 2.3 Open space management plans | From the audit in Action Point 2.1 undertake the first tranche of individual open space management plans. | December 2022 | Management plans fully developed and implemented (Tranche 1) |
| | Complete management plans for the remainder of the Portfolio incorporating information from the audit. | December 2023 | Management plans fully developed (remainder) |
| | Implement the remaining open space management plans. | December 2024 | Management plans fully implemented |
| | Review and update individual management plans incorporating any lessons learned. | December 2025 | Management plans updated accordingly |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|--|--|--|
| 2.4 Queens Gardens | Complete a recycling pilot in Queens Gardens (See Appendix 2.1). | December 2022 | Programme adopted and rolled out |
| 3. Open space needs assessment | | | |
| 3.1 'Gap analysis' of current open space amenities. | <p>After completion of Action Point 2.2 review and develop proposals to address any gaps in the balance of facility provision within the open space portfolio.</p> <p>A further 3 years investment, conservation and enhancement programmes undertaken (as identified by the gap analysis) and used to update individual site management plans as appropriate.</p> | <p>December 2027</p> <p>Between January 2028 and December 2031</p> | <p>Gaps or deficiencies identified, and proposals costed</p> <p>Each year's programme to identify priorities for the next year and incorporate lessons from the previous</p> |
| 4. Open spaces portfolio model | | | |
| 4.1 Creation and implementation of model | <p>Undertake a governance and organisational structure review for open spaces, allotments, cemeteries and closed churchyards. Present and develop proposals in open consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>Implementation of the new governance arrangements.</p> <p>Review outcomes from implementation of the governance model and make tweaks as necessary.</p> | <p>December 2022</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2024</p> | <p>Proposals developed and fully consulted upon</p> <p>Proposals finalised, approved and new model implemented</p> <p>A fully tweaked model in operation</p> |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|--|---------------|---|
| 5. Open spaces stakeholder model | | | |
| 5.1 Review the governance arrangements and structures for Open Space Stakeholders | Undertake a governance and organisational structure review for stakeholders including Delegated Sports Managers, Friends Groups, partners and volunteers and present proposals to them. This to include the effectiveness of the Delegated Sports Manager model for sports delivery. | December 2022 | Completion of consultation and development of proposals |
| | Implementation of the new governance arrangements. | December 2023 | Proposals finalised, approved and new model implemented |
| | Review outcomes from implementation of the governance model and make tweaks as necessary. | December 2024 | A fully tweaked model in operation |

Further information

Natural capital accounting assessment

‘Natural Capital’ refers to the elements of the natural environment that provide goods and ecosystem services to people (e.g., Bromley woodlands, hedgerows, scrub and meadows can be regarded as a ‘natural capital’ asset, as they provides benefits such as flood risk reduction, carbon capture, urban cooling and pollution reduction and an intrinsic value in and of itself).

The Natural Capital Accounting assessment will record both the physical state of the Council’s natural assets and the volume of ecosystem services they produce, thus forming a baseline of their current condition. This baseline will provide a framework for decision making within the portfolio in which the environment is brought together with socio-economic factors (thus ensuring that it is not forgotten) and act as barometer for improvements brought about to the Portfolio because of this strategy.



Open space safety and security

The safety of visitors to our open spaces is of paramount importance to us and requires continual review.

Operatives from our service provider Ward Security will continue to patrol the portfolio daily, to provide both a reassuring presence and to carry out public duties such as responding to individual incidents at certain locations. Site facilities will also be inspected regularly to ensure that they are safe for visitors to use. Byelaws will be updated to take into account new and emerging issues and enforced when required.

Information and interpretation signage can help to increase visitor security and we will seek to update the information on existing signs and to install them at strategic locations where they would be a welcome addition to the visitor experience.

We will also continue to work in partnership with third party organisations where appropriate including the Metropolitan Police Service's Safer Neighbourhood Teams and emergency response services to both respond to incidents and to collaborate on initiatives to reduce anti-social behaviour.



Investment, conservation and enhancement of open space

Where references are made to open space investment, conservation and enhancement within this SO this shall be about identifying land and buildings with untapped potential so that the resulting use provides an enhancement to the open space.

It does NOT refer to the disposal of space for private development.

Examples of this include:



Wild meadow creation

The transformation of amenity grassland into naturalised, species rich biodiversity areas through a change in cutting regimes.



Biodiverse Grassland Meadows
Parkfield Recreation Ground (left),
Chelsfield Green (centre) and
Elmfield Wood (right)

Glentrammon Recreation Ground

The Friends group secured a grant from the Big Lottery Fund Community Spaces to double the existing play area onto unused land.



The playground at Glentrammon Recreation Ground is an example of enhancement of land for community benefit



Betts Park and Farnborough Recreation Ground

The development of unused land for the installation of outdoor gyms that are free to use and contain equipment suitable for different ages, abilities, and fitness levels.



The installation of outdoor gyms at Betts Park (left) and Farnborough Recreation Ground (right) onto disused land which not only provide health benefits, but also encourage use of local open space



Open space management plans

Through open space management plans that are bespoke to a particular site, regularly reviewed and developed in conjunction with local stakeholders, we aim to accurately document the current condition of every site in the portfolio, evaluate critically how their management systems are performing and bring focus to areas within individual locations for future improvement.

These plans will be relevant both to the day-to-day management of a site, as well as fulfilling larger strategic roles.

Sites containing special conservation designations or managed through Environmental Stewardship schemes will reflect these specialised natures within their individual plans.

Havelock Recreation Ground

Bourne Road, BR2 9PB

Through collaboration between the Council, idverde and the local Friends Group a management strategy was prepared for the maintenance of the recreation ground and to resolve any related issues around site users and available resources.

The site, which was deficient in maintenance and access to nature, has been enhanced through initiatives such as the creation of a path that traverses the recreation ground, a naturalised grassland set aside for nature, and various events and activities organised by the Friends Group such as bulb, hedge and tree planting programmes.



A new path (left) and a naturalised meadow area (right) are examples of improvements made to Havelock Recreation Ground resulting from the creation of a management plan for the site

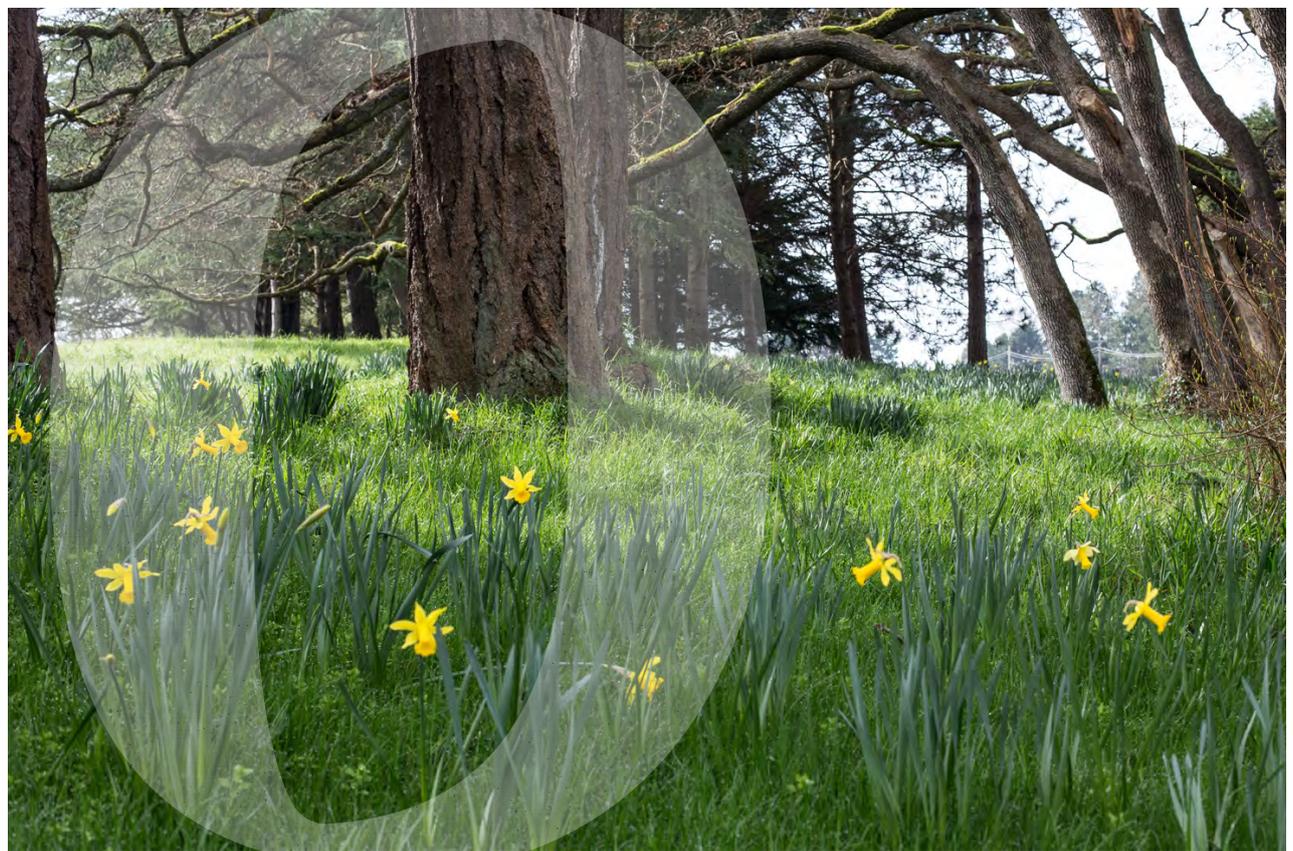


We are keen to ensure our provision of open space is diverse and of a high quality. A 'Gap Analysis' will allow us to identify future community needs and clarify appropriate infrastructure and maintenance requirements.

This work will also update the work of the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment and the Bromley Local Plan (see Appendix 4.3.) in identifying areas with deficiencies in the quantity or accessibility of open spaces and sporting and recreation facilities within them. Once complete, areas can be selected where improvements can be made to reduce any inequalities (for example, increasing the extent of natural habitat, updating pathways through sites that provide a significant experience of nature, the use of innovative solutions to offset deficiencies in open space, such as green walls and the creation of amenity space within residential areas).

Governance arrangements and models

The strategy aims to identify and implement innovative governance arrangements for different parts of the portfolio (e.g., allotments and cemeteries) that recognises any pressures on them, looks to diversify the uses of each site and clearly delineates the rights and responsibilities of each stakeholder.



Crystal Palace Park

Thicket Road, SE19 2GA



Crystal Palace Park is an 80-hectare Grade II listed Park, that contains several natural and heritage-built features that are of international importance. The Crystal Palace Park Regeneration Plan looks to develop a capital scheme for the regeneration of the park and create a sustainable business model to ensure that the benefits created by the regeneration is ongoing. The plan has also led to the development of the Crystal Palace Park Trust, comprised of a renowned group of experts and volunteers, which during the course of delivering the Regeneration Plan will look to assume the role of custodians of the park. The Trust which achieved charitable status in 2020 will provide expertise and resources in delivering on the regeneration objectives including the reinvigoration of the park as a contemporary and historic showcase, developing its identity, providing community benefits through the provision of facilities and events and deliver a sustainable plan for the long term future of the park. Improvements that we would like to see as a result of the regeneration plan include:

- An activity plan designed to specifically benefit local residents in Anerley, Penge and Crystal Palace.
- Conservation of the former Crystal Palace Terraces.
- Innovative new approaches to the conservation of the Grade I listed Dinosaurs and the surrounding Geological landscape.
- Works to the restoration of the Subway.



The Crystal Palace Park Trust once fully formed will take on custodianship of the park to assist the delivery of several improvements including to the Dinosaurs (left) and Subway (right)



Strategy Objective 02

Natural, cultural and historical assets

What we aim to achieve

This SO is about:

- ➔ Protecting and enhancing Bromley's diverse natural habitats, biodiversity, cultural and historical assets within the open space portfolio.
- ➔ The evolution of portfolio services so that they positively and proactively contribute towards reducing the impact of a changing climate and are fit for the future.
- ➔ Enhancing the sustainability of the natural resources of the portfolio.
- ➔ Increasing public understanding of the value of the portfolio.
- ➔ The promotion of the Council as a leader in service ambition for, and delivery to, the portfolio.

How we aim to achieve this

It will achieve this through the following action points:

- ➔ **Ecological resilience:** The adoption of management regimes and introduction of appropriate infrastructure that support biodiversity, ecology and sustainability across the portfolio.
- ➔ **Asset transformation:** Developing proven solutions to the use of assets for commercial, leisure and non-traditional activities.
- ➔ **Heritage conservation:** Developing programmes for the protection, conservation and enhancement of Bromley's unique archaeological and historic environments.
- ➔ **Environmental education:** Increasing biodiversity, ecological, and environmental awareness across the portfolio.



What we will do

| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1. Ecological resilience | | | |
| 1.1 Change in management regime | Identify open spaces suitable for a change in management regime, including nature friendly management to implement a rolling 3-year programme of work (see Appendix 2.1 for examples of proposed projects). | Proposals to be complete by December 2022 and implemented between January 2023 and December 2025 | Proposals to be fully implemented by the end of each respective year and to incorporate the lessons of the previous year |
| 1.2 Natural regeneration of open space | Identify sites and habitats within the portfolio with natural regenerative capacity such as forestry, wetlands and hay meadows. | December 2022 | Sites identified and projects proposed |
| | From this develop a 3-year programme for approval. | December 2026 | Projects fully implemented |
| 1.3 Woodlands establishment | Identify sites across the borough where tree planting may take place for benefits such as the capture of atmospheric carbon, biodiversity and an improved amenity environment. | September 2022 | Sites identified and planting regime fully costed |
| | From this develop a fully costed planting regime for member approval and public consultation. | Programme to run for the duration of the strategy | Carbon estimates calculated and projects approved and implemented |
| 1.4 Sustainable drainage | Identify and undertake a feasibility study for moving towards Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes. | December 2022 | Study undertaken |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1.5 Electric vehicles | Align with the Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy to identify appropriate locations for EV chargepoints across the open space portfolio including key visitor car parks. All chargepoints must be supplied by electricity from renewable sources. | December 2022 for site identification | Locations identified at open spaces for charge point installations |
| | From this develop proposals for a 2-year programme for EV charging locations across the open space portfolio. | Programme to run from January 2023 to December 2024 | Proposed locations connected to network |
| | After completion of the 2-year programme, ensure that key visitor site car parks and service vehicle parking are connected to the EV power network. | December 2027 | All key locations connected to the network |
| 1.6 Open space energy consumption | Audit energy consumption at all sites and update asset register. From this implement energy efficiency works (including lighting infrastructure to LED updates). | December 2022 | Audit undertaken and upgrade projects undertaken |
| 2. Asset transformation | | | |
| 2.1 Open space asset model | From SO1 audit, analyse the sustainability of the open space portfolio assets, built form and function and develop proposals to support the Council's longer-term financial planning (30-year Model). | December 2022 for analysis to be complete | Longer term needs identified to inform wider Council financial planning |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|---|---|---|--|
| 2.2 Rolling capital and grant funded programme | <p>From the audit undertaken in S01 document the condition of Open Space Assets, their current use and group/rank them in priority order.</p> <p>From this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop detailed proposals for the regeneration of open space assets Develop a rolling 3 year rolling capital and grant funded programme for the approval of these development proposals Annually identify, develop and implement project proposals, and update the 3-year rolling grant programme for the remainder of the strategy lifespan Update individual open space management plans to reflect any changes brought about by the capital and grant funded programme | <p>Proposals to be complete by December 2022 and implemented between January 2023 and December 2025</p> <p>December 2022 for completion</p> <p>Rolling capital programme to proceed from January 2023 to December 2026</p> <p>Rolling capital programme to run throughout strategy life</p> <p>Throughout strategy lifetime</p> | <p>Proposals to be fully implemented by the end of each respective year and to incorporate the lessons of the previous year</p> <p>Sites identified, proposals costed and approved</p> <p>Proposals to be fully implemented by the end of each respective year and incorporate the lessons of the previous year</p> <p>As above</p> <p>Updated Management Plans reflecting changes</p> |
| 2.3 Open space building stock | <p>Regularly review the open space portfolio building stock.</p> | <p>Proposals incorporated into rolling capital programme throughout strategy lifetime</p> | <p>Fully occupied stock reflecting current and future objectives</p> |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|--|---|---|
| 3. Heritage conservation | | | |
| 3.1 Scadbury Park | <p>Develop and deliver the grant funded repair works project to protect the vulnerable brickwork of Scadbury Moated Manor (See Appendix 2.1).</p> <p>Develop a 5-year master plan for Scadbury Moated Manor and the broader park that emphasises both its history and biodiversity and consult upon proposal.</p> <p>Present and obtain approval for Scadbury Moated Manor year master plan and secure funding for Year 1 of plan (Years 2-5 will be included in the 3-year rolling programme under Action Point 2.2).</p> | <p>December 2022</p> <p>December 2022</p> <p>Scadbury Park Master Plan to be in action between 2025 and 2030</p> | <p>Proposals fully costed, approved and implemented</p> <p>Consultation and proposal fully complete</p> <p>Proposal funded and approved</p> |
| 3.2 Other key borough locations | <p>Develop the open space portfolio built form opportunities in key borough locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement scheme for the Glassmill Lane Reservoir • Continuing to develop the grant funded restoration programme for the Bowie Bandstand at Croydon Road Recreation Ground along with the creation of proposals to create an enhanced community facility for the rest of the site • Proposals for Church House Gardens, Alexandra Recreation Ground and Kelsey Park that reflect their uniqueness, history and horticulture | <p>December 2024 for completion of proposals</p> <p>Each project will be dependent upon successfully securing grant funding opportunities</p> | <p>Proposals fully developed, costed and approved</p> <p>Completion of all proposals where feasible by the end of the strategy lifespan</p> |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|---|---|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals for the restoration and maximisation of heritage assets in other Open Spaces (e.g., Victorian Water Fountains) See Appendix 2.1 for more detail on these projects. | | |
| 4. Environmental education | | | |
| 4.1 Council and service provider environmental awareness programme | Develop and implement a biodiversity, ecological and sustainability programme to integrate with site management plans in the borough's Regional, Metropolitan and District Parks. | December 2022 (proposal developed) December 2023 (proposal implemented) | Programme fully proposed, approved and implemented |
| | Develop and implement a similar programme for the remainder of the open space portfolio (including Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards). | December 2024 | Programme fully, proposed, approved and implemented |
| 4.2. Bromley environmental education programme | Develop and implement an educational environmental awareness and opportunities programme, predominantly through Bromley Environmental Education Centre at High Elms (BEECHE) but to also expand to other sites, initially at Crystal Palace Park. This pilot programme to last 2 years. | January 2022 – December 2023 | Programme fully proposed, approved and implemented, incorporating any lessons learned in the duration |
| | Review and continuation of programme across strategy lifespan. | Across strategy lifespan | As above |



Further information

Nature friendly regime management

space portfolio is well placed to provide important benefits to biodiversity through either the creation of permanent habitat within one site or via a network of habitats that stretch across the Borough and the wider region. Such an approach would deliver benefits to biodiversity, the economy and community health and wellbeing.

By identifying open spaces with existing habitat features which can be improved and/or those which are geographically well placed to form part of a network of sites, management changes such as establishment of meadows, a reduction in leaf collection or appropriate tree planting to create hedgerows and woodlands can be implemented to improve the overall value of the portfolio for biodiversity

We have already implemented a series of management changes across our portfolio including:

- The conversion of approximately 88ha of amenity grassland into meadow via changes in grass cutting regime.
- The implementation of livestock grazing as an alternative to machinery for hay cuts in some of the portfolio's more sensitive habitats including parts of the High Elms Estate. The livestock are well loved by visitors and have led to a more varied sward height and accompanying gains to biodiversity.



Natural regeneration of open space

We will also look to identify sites where it can undertake the appropriate restoration of habitat (e.g., ponds, meadows and woodlands). Such restorations would have the potential to increase the capture of atmospheric carbon, whilst storing it more effectively and retain water, reducing the risk of flash flooding and producing net gains for biodiversity.

Darrick Common

Crofton Avenue, BR6 7UB

Darrick Common and Newstead Woods is a Local Nature Reserve(LNR) consisting of 25 hectares of woodland, meadow and marsh habitat. The installation of a spillway had led to much of its water draining away and the drying of the marsh, with a profound impact on plant and amphibian species.

Work to restore the marsh as a wetland habitat began in partnership between the Council, idverde, the RSPB, Natural England and the local Friends Group. Vegetation with high absorption rates was cleared, the marsh reprofiled to deepen its area and 'leaky dams' constructed using elm coppice and the installation of pre-existing sleepers. This created a permeable barrier which still allowed the water to trickle through to the spillway but also created a wetland habitat behind it.

The restored habitat is a perfect environment to capture and store atmospheric carbon, whilst also offering opportunities for key species to either return or newly colonise it.



The restoration of natural Wetland Habitat at Darrick Common (left and centre) has led to Willow Emerald Damselfly (right) colonising the site for the first time and it is hoped that the Great Crested Newt will also return



Woodland establishment

London is recognised to be one of the greenest cities in Europe with an extensive tree canopy in not only woodlands and open spaces, but also in streets and private residential gardens. This provides multiple benefits including the provision of habitat for wildlife and the creation of a greener and more pleasant environment. The open space portfolio is well placed to help increase this tree cover.

Via this strategy, we will build on previous work to identify suitable land for tree and/or woodland planting. This approach would aim to study sites in detail to maximise the full potential for tree planting, rather than simply infilling 'surplus' land. Sites can then be considered as part of a wider network of continually improved green infrastructure rather than isolated projects.

All plantings shall ensure that appropriate regard is given to the relationship between the right type of tree and location and consist of species that are both native and of local provenance where possible. All tree planting programmes shall seek to be sustainable and long lasting, to make a marked contribution to the capture of atmospheric carbon.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SuDS)

SuDS are drainage systems that look to mimic nature and manage rainfall close to the location in which it falls. This is particularly important in urbanised areas where there are an increased number of impermeable surfaces that increase rainfall runoff contributing to flooding, pollution and erosion. SuDS help to counteract these impacts, facilitate the capture of atmospheric carbon and enhance the surrounding landscape, such as by improving water quality and providing natural local habitats, contributing to biodiversity objectives.

The Council, in line with the Bromley Local Plan 2019 (see Appendix 4.3.) is working to implement a network of SuDS borough-wide to work towards the effective management of surface water flooding by integrating them into the design of all new planned developments. The Open Space Portfolio offers an opportunity to further intercept flows from surrounding developments and create water features which will not only protect the borough's major town centres and historic environment, but also positively influence the landscape value, by acting as a 'blue corridor' that link different green spaces together. Any proposals will consider the vulnerability and importance of local ecological resources when determining both the suitability of a site and the type of scheme enacted.



Electric Vehicle (EV) provision

We have introduced several EV chargepoints in our car parks and worked with Transport for London to install rapid chargepoints at key locations in the borough. As part of our continuing commitments to provide a bespoke charging network, we will work with suppliers to identify locations suitable for EV chargepoints across the open space portfolio. This appraisal will begin by looking at visitor data and conducting surveys to establish levels of demand and use. Subject to availability of ring-fenced funding and government grant schemes, we will work with our suppliers and operators to install charge points at strategically viable locations. To mitigate carbon emissions, all electricity supplied will be generated from renewable resources.

Open space energy consumption

Our Carbon Management team will work closely with idverde to identify energy efficiency and smart technology opportunities across the portfolio, including upgrades to lighting stock and utilising suitable funding streams whilst being sensitive to local wildlife and habitats.

30-year model

The strategy looks to develop a 30-year model to ensure that any project that is unable to be completed during the lifetime of this strategy, instead becomes part of a longer-term business plan with sustainable sources of income lasting beyond its duration.

Heritage proposals

The project proposals mentioned under Action Point 3 will aim primarily to restore the heritage features of the sites in question but will also consider all of their facets including where relevant development proposals for vacant buildings and the restoration/creation of water bodies.

Educational, biodiversity, ecological and sustainability programme

The Council and idverde has an established educational programme at Bromley Environmental Educational Centre at High Elms (BEECHE), that allows learners to pursue their interests in Science, Nature, Art, Philosophy and Play. This programme places emphasis upon outdoor learning and aims to both nurture a sense of enjoyment from being in nature and to engage participants in practical science.



The strategy aims to build on the already high standard of education provision through exploring opportunities to both diversify the learning opportunities (such as for those in university or academic study and for encouraging positive practices on private land) and expand its offering to other sites in the portfolio and across the borough, initially by expanding to Crystal Palace Park.

This strategy also looks to link this education programme with biodiversity, ecological and sustainability management practices as and when they are enacted across the portfolio including:

- A reduction in the use of herbicides via the implementation of Foamstream technology.
- The refinement of practices when managing Non-Native Invasive Species.
- The use of locally sourced materials to reduce emissions from transportation.

Foamstream technology kills weeds using hot water insulated in a biodegradable foam, which unlike traditional pesticides does not contain inorganic chemicals.

This integration will ensure that all stakeholders are both aware of latest good practice and changes to legislation and that they lead by example through their day-to-day operational activities. These initiatives will also integrate with and be included in individual site management plans.



The sustainable purpose-built BEECHE Building (left top and bottom) which specialises in outdoor education (right top) which the Council is looking to expand over the life of the strategy. This educational programme will look to link with measures that have already been enacted across the Portfolio including the introduction of Foamstream technology (right bottom)



Net zero carbon

We are committed to delivering Net Zero Carbon emissions both within our own organisational structure, and by working collaboratively with our supply chain to identify ways to reduce our environment impact across all our services.

Our collaboration with idverde has already resulted in tangible initiatives across the portfolio including the electrification of vehicle fleets and zero emission equipment. We will continue to support our service providers, partners and staff to transition to alternatively powered vehicles (before the 2030 ban on petrol and diesel vehicles is introduced) in order to achieve a reduction in fossil fuel consumption and emissions. At the same time idverde through its partnership with One Carbon World has offset its direct Carbon emissions within a UN backed scheme to achieve carbon neutrality for its services in 2020 and will continue to do so this in the coming years.

As such we aim to reach Net Zero Carbon maintenance of its Portfolio by the end of the strategy lifetime, with the off setting of direct emissions supporting this reduction plan.





Strategy Objective 3

Health, wellbeing and community

What we aim to achieve

This SO is about:

- ➔ Supporting and encouraging the physical and mental health benefits that our open space portfolio offers.
- ➔ The use of our open space portfolio to promote events, activities and community-based concepts to increase the health, wellbeing and enrichment of the borough's residents and visitors across all age groups and spectrums.
- ➔ Promoting the different facilities available in our open space portfolio that facilitate these lifestyles.

How we aim to achieve this

It will achieve this through the following action points:

- ➔ **Active transport:** Supporting and encouraging walking, cycling and other active modes of transport to open spaces, and enhancing the green networks that link them.
- ➔ **Physical and mental health:** The use of the portfolio for initiatives that improve both the physical and mental health of residents including tackling social isolation and loneliness.
- ➔ **Community food growing:** Increasing opportunities for community food growing across the portfolio, with an emphasis on increasing access to healthy food.
- ➔ **Web content review:** Ensuring that the healthy lifestyle benefits (and all other benefits) of the portfolio are effectively promoted via the Council website and other media.



What we will do

| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|---|--|--|
| 1. Active transport | | | |
| 1.1 Green travel networks | <p>Continue to promote the boroughs green travel networks for health benefits.</p> <p>Facilitate access to green transport networks through initiatives such as the creation of new networks and updates to wayfinding signage.</p> | Throughout the lifetime of the strategy | Integrated green travel networks that link to strategic town centres from all parts of the portfolio |
| 2. Physical and mental health | | | |
| 2.1 Physical health and wellbeing opportunities | <p>Review and redevelop health and wellbeing opportunities ensuring a balanced provision at both urban and rural sites. Ensure equal opportunities for physical activity for children, youth, and seniors.</p> | <p>December 2024 (proposals)</p> <p>Throughout life of strategy (implementation)</p> | Proposals developed for approval that lead to a balanced offering across the portfolio |
| 2.2 Mental health opportunities | <p>Review and redevelop mental health opportunities including community groups and places of relaxation. Ensure a balanced provision at both urban and rural sites, and for children, youth and seniors.</p> | <p>December 2024 (proposals)</p> <p>Throughout life of strategy (implementation)</p> | Proposals developed for approval that lead to a balanced offering across portfolio |
| 3. Community food growing | | | |
| 3.1 Community gardens | <p>Explore opportunities for the creation of community gardens and the growing of healthy food within the portfolio.</p> | <p>December 2022 (proposals)</p> <p>Throughout life of strategy (implementation)</p> | Proposals developed for approval that lead to a balanced offering across the portfolio |
| 3.2 Food sales | <p>Explore opportunities to link into the events and commercial activity strategy in SO4 to provide opportunities for local growers to sell food and network with other traders.</p> | <p>December 2022 (to link in with initial events strategy)</p> <p>Throughout life of strategy (implementation)</p> | Events policy fully developed and inclusive of local growers |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 4. Web content review | | | |
| 4.1 Review of web content | Undertake review of all online content to coincide with wider Council redesign of the site. | December 2022 for completion | Corrections for web content fully developed and implemented |
| | Implement any recommended changes to web content | December 2023 for completion | |
| 4.2 Website form | Continue to explore with the web team further interactive elements that fully promote the features and facilities available at individual sites in the portfolio. | January 2024 onwards throughout life of strategy | Web content continually refreshed across strategy lifetime |

Further information

Active transport

We recognise that encouraging the uptake of active travel to open spaces, such as walking, cycling and horse riding offers a cheap and accessible route to better health outcomes to those who may otherwise be excluded from exercise (Bird, 2004), whilst also helping to reduce carbon emissions.

A large network of walking routes has been already been developed across the borough that take in much of the portfolio including circular walks, nature trails and longer distance paths including the Green Chain Walk, Capital Ring and the London Outer Orbital Path. There are also over 100 miles of cycle routes within the borough that link strategic town centres and over 300 public rights of way (pathways, bridleways and byways), that cover more than 120 miles.

As part of the strategy we will continue to promote these routes not only for the health benefits for participants, but as an opportunity to encourage people to take active forms of transport when they visit sites within the open space portfolio. It will also take the opportunity to:



- Find opportunities to link into existing networks from town centres. Create new networks to town centres poorly served by existing ones.
- Help facilitate use of these green travel networks via the provision of appropriate infrastructure (e.g., ensuring sufficient provision of cycle racks, water fountains, benches, planting and greening etc at key locations) information (e.g., walking trail maps and improvements/updates to wayfinding signage) and ensuring that they are well maintained, pleasant and safe to use.
- Improve access to these networks for those with disabilities.
- Continue to support and look to expand community endeavours that support walking (e.g. Walk Talk Walk Bromley and Environment Bromley), Cycling (e.g. Bikeability) and Horse Riding within the portfolio



The intersection of several walking networks (Green Chain, Capital Ring and the Waterlink Way) with a Cycle Route in Cator Park, through which it is possible to reach strategic locations including town centres. Clear wayfinding signage and a shared pedestrian and cycle pathway help facilitate access to this network

Physical activity and healthy lifestyles

Physical inactivity is becoming increasingly common with major implications for obesity and the general health of the local population. The Open Space Portfolio offers accessible opportunities for physical activity that is inclusive of all ages and income statuses within a natural environment.

We are committed to improving health and combatting obesity via the Bromley Health and Wellbeing Strategy and will look to increase opportunities within the Open Space Portfolio for physical activity such as sports boot camps and Parkrun. However, it also recognises that sporting provision should be appropriate for all sections of the population as not all may wish to take part in organised sports or join a gym (Dobson et al, 2019). Therefore, the strategy will also look for opportunities within its rolling programmes of investment to make exercise and fitness accessible to all, such as the provision of new outdoor gym equipment, table tennis tables and trim trails.

Whitehall Recreation Ground

Southlands Road, BR2 9QY

Whitehall Recreation Ground is a community green space in Chatterton Village that combines sporting and play facilities with important local wildlife habitats. Extensive fundraising efforts by the local Friends Group led to the installation of a sensory fitness trail which included pull bars and a fitness ramp, designed without moving parts to help with long-term maintenance. The fitness trail has added to the suite of sporting provision already available at the site, including football and outdoor bowls.



Two pieces of equipment that form part of the fitness trail at Whitehall Recreation Ground, opened in March 2020



Mental health

of nature, can have a positive impact on people's mental health and emotional wellbeing, a key factor for many in reducing stress and anxiety during times of restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We will look for opportunities within this strategy to ensure that there are many opportunities for people to boost their mental wellbeing in its open spaces, whether that is through participation in sporting activity or contemplation in quieter areas.

The open space portfolio can also facilitate social networking between different members of the community helping to combat loneliness and social isolation (Dobson et al, 2019). We are committed to working with partners and community groups to reduce loneliness in the community throughout the lifecourse of its forthcoming Loneliness Strategy. We will also look to enhance opportunities for meeting and socialising with others whether this is through larger community events (as detailed in S04), or through smaller gatherings of individuals with a shared purpose or interest such as Friends Groups or at a meeting space such as a café.

Community food growing

The use of open space for communal growing areas can help to promote physical activity, become an educational resource, offer an opportunity for social interaction and make provision for people to grow their own fresh and affordable food, which in turn can encourage healthy eating and alleviate food poverty. It has also been used successfully to help marginalised groups and individuals combat mental health issues by building social connections (Dobson et al, 2019).

Whilst we already make provision for food growing via our extensive number of allotments we would like via the strategy to encourage the development of community gardens and orchards at appropriate locations within the Portfolio, including in areas of under-utilised land.



Green Gyms

Winsford Gardens

Croydon Road, SE20 7SS

College Green

West Street, BR1 1PE

Green Gyms, initially established by The Conservation Volunteers working in partnership with the Council, are a group of volunteers who run weekly practical conservation work in Winsford Gardens, Penge and College Green, Bromley.

Activities, which range from gentle weeding through to constructing new features, place emphasis on improving both the local environment and the health and wellbeing of volunteers. Collaboration with 'care in the community' organisations also aim to combat any social isolation of volunteers. These collaborations have had many positive impacts including the creation of new wildlife habitats, areas for growing edible plants, relaxation areas and educational spaces, and encouraging participants to sustain their participation in physical activity (Bird, 2004).



A community garden and growing area created by the Green Gym in College Green, Bromley

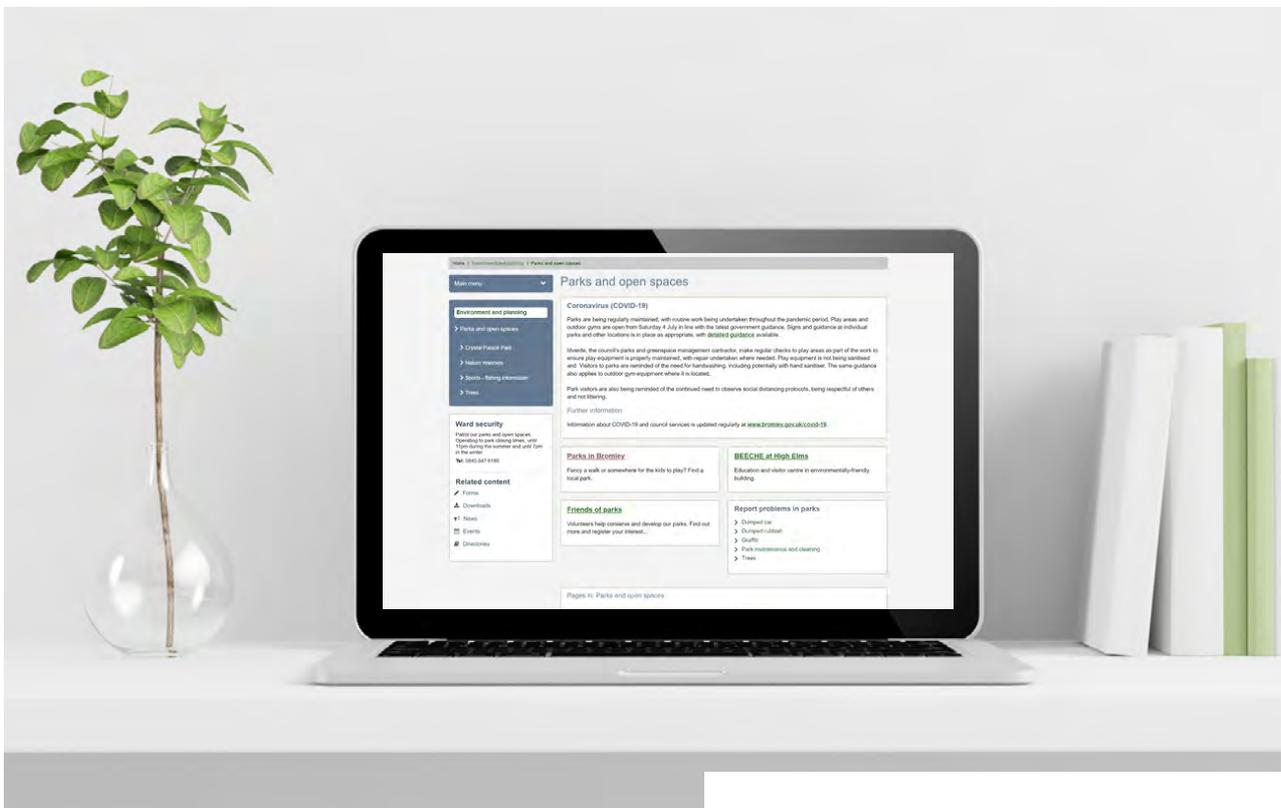


Web content review

We will undertake a review of all our online open space web content within the early years to ensure that it remains relevant, up to date and incorporates the latest updates to procedures, for example around the online reporting tool Fix My Street.

After this website review is fully complete, we will then look to incorporate new features to further improve upon content including:

- A refreshed layout to the homepage of parks content that is more accessible and user friendly.
- The creation of new pages where appropriate, such as individual webpages for prominent sites within the portfolio.
- Links to other stakeholder groups, such as the idverde Park's website and the Bromley Friends Forum websites, in an appropriate and consistent way.
- Innovative solutions that fully promote the different features and facilities available within sites within the portfolio to the public, such as horticultural features, access to nature for quiet study and relaxation, health and sporting facilities such as outdoor gyms etc.
- A review of accessibility to information beyond online resources.



Brook Lane Community Garden

—
Brook Lane,

Brook Lane Community Garden located in Plaistow is both a wildlife habitat and informal growing space with upcycled beds, raised beds, polytunnels, an orchard and a pond. The site hosts students from local schools on a variety of initiatives including pollution prevention, food growing and a forestry school. It is also a community space with a rustic shelter that can be booked for birthday parties, functions and volunteer events.



The dipping pond and platform in the gardens, developed in collaboration with Burnt Ash Primary School

Local economy



What we aim to achieve

This SO is about:

-  Supporting the local economy through attractive open spaces within town centres.
-  The provision of sustainable community events within the portfolio.
-  Enhancing the amenity, health, leisure, play, recreation and sports provision of the open space portfolio through the participation of the local community.
-  Investigating how the better use of urban open spaces could support the local economy.

How we aim to achieve this

It will achieve this through the following action points:

-  **Town centre economy:** Developing open spaces adjacent to or within town centres that can be used to sustainably support their growing economies.
-  **Commercial activity:** Delivering a sustainable events programme that supports the local economy.
-  **Play facilities:** Reviewing and modernising the playscape offer within the open space portfolio.
-  **Sporting and other facilities:** Identifying opportunities to enhance the open space portfolio facilities through alignment with the local economy.



What we will do

| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1. Town centre economy | | | |
| 1.1 Town centre feasibility study | Deliver a feasibility study into town centre open spaces and the ways in which they may contribute to the Bromley Economy. | December 2023 | Programme proposals developed and approved |
| | Implement town centre feasibility study recommendations over rolling 3-year programme (see Appendix 2.2 for a further case study). | Projects to run from January 2024 to December 2027, dependent on scale, duration and funding | Programmes rolled out and implement lessons learned from previous years |
| 2. Commercial activity | | | |
| 2.1 Events strategy | Review and re-scope the existing open space events policy and programme. | December 2022 for completion | Policy developed for approval |
| 2.2 Events programme | Deliver a sustainable annual events programme that represents the Council's profile and aspirations for its residents, communities and visitors and aligns to the objectives of this strategy. Ensure it incorporates any lessons learned as it proceeds (see Appendix 2.2 for a further case study). | For duration of strategy lifespan and beyond | Events programme continues to be fully implemented and incorporates lessons from previous years |
| 3. Play facilities | | | |
| 3.1. Playground facilities (Tranche 1) | Review and redevelop play area and open space physical activity provision within the portfolio including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced playground provision at Kings Meadow The improvement of playground areas at Betts Park, Old Hill Playground and Palace Square Open Space | December 2022 | Playground proposals fully developed, approved and implemented Playgrounds open to the public |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|
| 3.2 Playground facilities (Tranche 2) | Review and redevelop premier play proposals at identified urban flagship open spaces (from SO1 Audit). | December 2024 | Playground proposals fully developed |
| | Implement premier play proposals at identified rural flagship open spaces. | December 2025 | Proposals fully implemented. Playgrounds open to the public. |
| 3.3 Playground facilities (Tranche 3) | Continue to review and redevelop open space play areas throughout the duration of the strategy, aiming to address any under provision identified in SO1. | Throughout duration of strategy | Continual review and redevelopment of open space play areas. |
| 4. Sporting and other facilities | | | |
| 4.1 Grassroots sports facilities | Deliver improved cricket and pitch playing surfaces at Farnborough Recreation Ground. | December 2021 | Improved facilities in use by public |
| | Deliver improved grass root sports facilities at Norman Park and Biggin Hill Recreation Ground (see Appendix 2.1). | December 2023 | Improved facilities at both sites in public use |
| | Continue to deliver open space environments with improved grass roots sports activities. | Throughout life of strategy | A balanced provision of facilities across the portfolio |
| 4.2 Amenity, catering and public convenience facilities | Review the amenity, catering and public convenience offer within the portfolio and present recommendations for enhancing these. | December 2023 | Proposals developed for approval |
| | Continue to create a better amenity, catering and public convenience offer. | Throughout life of strategy | A balanced provision of facilities across portfolio |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| 4.3 Priory Gardens | Develop and consult upon a horticultural 'Arts and Crafts' model for the gardens (see Appendix 2.1). | December 2024 | Proposals fully developed for public consultation and approval |
| | Implement the horticultural 'Arts and Crafts' model for Priory Gardens. | December 2025 to run for duration of strategy and beyond | Programmed adopted and rolled out |

Further information

Town centres feasibility study

We will undertake a feasibility study to look at how the current composition, condition and facilities within portfolio sites located within or near to town centres can help facilitate sustainable growth in their economies, integrate into these economies by improving access and linkages, help diversify their use and support key corporate objectives in our Regeneration Plan, Local Plan and Net Zero Action Plan (see Appendix 4.3.).

Events and commercial activity

The borough's open spaces are already the setting for many varied activities that are both enjoyed by residents and support the local economy and temporary employment opportunities. We wish to explore the potential for greater complementary events and commercial activity within the open space portfolio that will demonstrably add to existing ones, bring traction to and awareness of a site, and provide a sustainable revenue stream to enable its conservation and enhancement. Any proposed activity will consider:

- Wider use of the space in question.
- The potential of the event to be inclusive of the local community. The suitability of the site to host the activity in question.
- That the activity in question is controlled to ensure that sites are returned to tidy and accessible public use as quickly as possible afterwards and that visitor health and safety is fully considered (e.g. the hirer has the necessary competence and qualifications to meet any terms and conditions of hire).
- That the event will not over-ride the other benefits people gain from the space and/or exclude other groups who do not wish to take part in the activity from accessing it.

Royston Field: Penge Festival

Franklin Road, SE20 7QG

The Penge Festival is a series of events that celebrates the diverse art, culture, history, music and dance of the town and includes stalls, fairground rides, artwork, food and music, with an emphasis on representing the local community. Further events outside of Royston Field also occur.

The Penge Festival is an example of an event from which there is a nominal income but makes use of a local Open Space for a community and social basis.



The Penge Festival in 2018



Any revised events strategy will also undertake a review of the current barriers to entry (e.g. serviced areas providing electricity and water access) to enable better quality regional activities to be hosted within open spaces.

Examples of events and commercial activity include increased provision for cafés, market venues, enhanced sports activity and infrastructure for leisure, health and wellbeing such as play groups. Commercial activity will look where possible to facilitate the promotion and sale of local produce (e.g. that of local allotment holders).

Over the lifetime of the strategy, we wish to increase the income generated through commercial activities by 10% from that obtained in 2019.

Playscape modernisation

As part of the strategy we recognise the need to review and improve upon the play provision within the open space portfolio. The improvements that we wish to see include:

- An equal distribution for play equipment for all age ranges across the borough, that addresses any deficiencies identified in the Local Plan and the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment (see Appendix 4.3.) and the audit in SO1.
- Play areas that are fully inclusive and cater for a wide range of needs including those with physical disabilities and learning difficulties.
- Inspiring and challenging equipment that is not constrained by conventional playground concepts.
- Play areas that support families spending time together.

We have identified that the play provision within Betts Park, Palace Square Open Space and Old Hill Playground has the potential to be enhanced to a standard commensurate with the rest of the portfolio, hence the focus on these sites in the earlier years of the strategy.

Kings Meadow

Burnt Ash Lane, BR1 5AF

The Kings Meadow Playground (designed by Proludic) which opened in 2021 retained some of its existing equipment but now includes a new zip wire, a pod swing, a 'multi-play' unit with a medieval theme, a rocking log and monkey bars. It also contains an enhanced seating area to encourage people to spend time at the site.

The playground is the result of long-standing efforts by the local Friends Group in collaboration with the Council and idverde and was funded with the help of the National Lottery Community Fund, a contribution from the Council and crowdfunding and grants secured from local stakeholders



The new playground at Kings Meadow which contains a set of innovative equipment which has improved the playscape offer of the site



Facilities and sports provision

We are also looking to review the potential of its open space portfolio to better support sporting activity (both organised and those of a more informal nature) and to deliver an accompanying fundraising plan to deliver these improvements. The improvements that it wishes to see include:

- A diverse set of facilities which in turn help diversify the type and number of active uses that one space can accommodate.
- Facilities that support activities that align with the needs of the local economy and communities.
- Facilities that ensure that all sectors of the community can actively participate in recreational and sporting activities.
- Environmentally friendly and sustainable designs to sporting facilities that are a positive addition to the existing landscape.



Farnborough Recreation Ground

Starts Hill Road, BR6 8HF

Farnborough Recreation Ground is an important site for sporting activity within the local community and includes sports pitches, tennis courts and an outdoor gym. Work was undertaken by Bourne Sports Limited (in conjunction with TGMS sports surface consultants) to improve the cricket facilities at the open space, including the reconstruction of the cricket square, the re-grading of the outfield and improvements to the net installations and pavilions. This produced a multi-use games area that could be used for cricket, soft ball games and mini tournaments for younger players.

The restoration was the result of collaborative work between the Council, idverde, Sports England and Locksbottom Cricket Club (the latter two of which provided significant funding to the project) and showcases where working in a multi-agency approach can secure funding to deliver improvement to facilities.



Improvements to the Cricket Facilities at Farnborough Recreation Ground (above, left) has allowed cricket matches to resume (above, right), whilst also diversifying the type of sports that can be played on site



Strategy Objective 5

Financial sustainability and modernisation

What we aim to achieve

This SO is about:

- ➔ Ensuring our open spaces are financially sustainable by working with stakeholders to identify new income and commercial opportunities that allow sensitive enhancement and modernisation of the portfolio.
- ➔ Ensuring that we can attract the funding needed for our aspirations for the open space portfolio.
- ➔ Helping to secure sustainable and innovative funding regimes for the portfolio.

How we aim to achieve this

It will achieve this through the following action points:

- ➔ **Long term funding:** Identifying programme and project funding requirements over the life of the strategy.
- ➔ **Capital and grant funded programme:** Developing and presenting 3-year project projections and obtaining approval for these.
- ➔ **Sourcing funding:** Attracting larger scale funds in a multi-agency approach to enhance support for strategic aspirations.
- ➔ **Open space contributions:** Investigating methods for attracting donations to the open space portfolio.
- ➔ **Regeneration through enterprise:** Increasing the commercial use of the open space portfolio in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to wider site use.



What we will do

| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1. Long term funding | | | |
| 1.1 30 year model | Analyse the requirements of the open space portfolio and develop proposals to support a viable 30 year model (as also outlined in SO2). | December 2022 for analysis to be complete. 30 year model to aim to capture until the end of 2052. | A fully implemented model in place until 2052 |
| 2. Capital and grant funded programme | | | |
| 2.1 Open space grant funded programmes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure and deliver a grant funded improvement programme for grass root sport facilities in the portfolio. Secure and deliver a new grant funded cycle track and community club at Hoblingwell Wood Recreation Ground (see Appendix 2.1). <p>Develop a 3-year rolling capital and grant funded programme for approval (as referenced in SO1, SO2, SO3 and SO4).</p> | December 2022 December for the completion of each year's work, to run throughout life of strategy | Proposals fully developed, approved and implemented. Facilities in use by public. A balanced provision of facilities across the open space portfolio |





| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 3. Sourcing funding | | | |
| 3.1 Large scale funding | <p>Assess external funder focus, priorities and delivery outcome aspirations and ensure that any rolling programmes are aligned to these. Use the outcomes of this to attract larger scale funds throughout the life of the strategy with a focus on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggin Hill Recreation Ground and Norman Park • Kelsey Park and Croydon Road Recreation Ground • Key open spaces identified in the Regeneration Strategy and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment • Other open spaces for which the Council has strategic aspirations | <p>Throughout life of strategy</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2027</p> <p>December 2031</p> | <p>A balanced provision of funding across the portfolio</p> <p>Grants secured on time for completion of projects by given date</p> <p>Grants secured on time for completion of projects by given date</p> <p>Grants secured on time for completion of projects by given date</p> <p>Grants secured on time for completion of projects by given date</p> |
| 3.2 Environmental stewardship | <p>Identify opportunities to fund biodiversity, ecology, and sustainability enhancements through Environmental Stewardship (see also Appendix 2.2).</p> | <p>Throughout life of strategy</p> | <p>Balanced selection of enhancements across the portfolio</p> |



| ACTION | DETAILS | TIMESCALE | MILESTONE |
|--|---|--|--|
| 4. Open space contributions | | | |
| 4.1 Donations to open spaces | Investigate and implement new innovations through which the Council may attract donations to the open space portfolio (e.g. contactless payments and legacy gifting schemes). | Continuous development throughout the life of the strategy | An innovative and varied range of donation methods |
| 4.2 Open spaces business foundation | Establish a foundation with business partners to fund and develop open spaces. | As 4.1 | A wide-reaching foundation |
| 5. Regeneration through enterprise | | | |
| 5.1 Commercial use of open space | Investigate ways in which to increase the commercial use of the open space portfolio sustainably and sensitively, co-aligning with the events strategy in SO4. | Continuous development throughout the life of the strategy | An open space portfolio with complementary commercial activity |
| 5.2. Commercial sponsorship of open space | Investigate and implement a sponsorship strategy for the open space portfolio. | Continuous development throughout the life of the strategy | A sensitive and appropriate sponsorship strategy |



Further information

30 year programme

Please see S02 for an explanation of this model.

3 year rolling capital programmes

3 year rolling programmes (where identified in the SOs within this strategy), aim through an annual cycle of reviewing the previous year's programme, implementation of the current and the obtaining of approval for the next, to deliver continuous improvement across the portfolio. They will operate on a 3-year basis to allow us sufficient scope to be adventurous in our proposals and will have the following three factors as 'bases' for approval:

- Our priorities for the open space portfolio and individual sites in any particular year.
- Our outcome aspirations in any particular year (e.g. improving sports provision or biodiversity)
- The alignment of external stakeholders' priorities with ours.

Environmental Stewardship Schemes

The Environmental Stewardship Scheme is a scheme run by Natural England (on behalf of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) in which we can be paid for effectively managing our land in a manner that protects and enhances the environment and biodiversity.

We have a proud record in achieving enhancements through such schemes and wish to continue to develop existing ones and identify new opportunities over the strategy lifetime.



Keston Common

Fishponds Road/Heathfield Road,
BR2 6HU

Keston Common is a 55-hectare landscape with both SSSI and Scheduled Ancient Monument Status that contains a variety of habitats including heathland, woodland, bog/valley mire and four ponds. For many years, the bog area was decreasing in size due to changes in hydrology on neighbouring land and encroachment of scrub and woodland, leading to the extinction of key species such as the round leaved sundew. Large scale restoration works, supported by a Countryside Stewardship scheme saw the implementation of drainage improvements and the removal of trees and lower lying scrub. This led to a recovery of key species, and a return of a 'favourable' condition rating for the site, which careful ongoing management is required to maintain. Long term management planning provided by the RSPB has also helped restore rare heathland habitat at the site.



Regeneration work supported by an Environmental Stewardship Scheme has seen the restoration of the bog area and heathland habitat (above left and centre) at Keston Common and a return of the overall site to 'Favourable' condition

Multi-agency approach

Through adopting a multi-agency approach to secure funding we are able to benefit from a synergy that is generated by combining resources and expertise from different authorities, as well as delivering outcomes that it would be difficult to achieve when working individually. It also allows policy to move from simply looking at generating income, to taking a more holistic view of the outcomes of a particular project to the local community.

This strategy has given multiple examples of this approach leading to improved outcomes within the portfolio. We will continue throughout the life of this strategy to seek partners with aligned priorities and delivery outcome aspirations whilst also continuing to commit targeted investment.

Donation and sponsorship

We are keen to explore opportunities for individual members of the public and larger businesses/organisations to assist in the management of an Open Space by donating and financing specific items for the benefit of the community. Such viable options may be:

- **Contactless donations:** The development of an easy to use contactless system as a donation mechanism to Open Spaces.
- **Legacy 'gifting' schemes:** Ways by which private individuals could either leave a significant monetary donation to open spaces or divert charitable gifts to them.
- **Sponsorship:** The use of different open space assets in order to create select sponsorship opportunities with selective parties such as -
 - Playgrounds (these may be attractive for a range of interested parties or retailers).
 - Sports facilities (pavilions and all-weather pitches may be attractive to health clubs, sports manufacturers or initiatives linked to national government sporting bodies).
 - Heritage assets (these may be attractive for arts, cultural and conservation charities, in particular after they have been restored).
 - Grass verges.

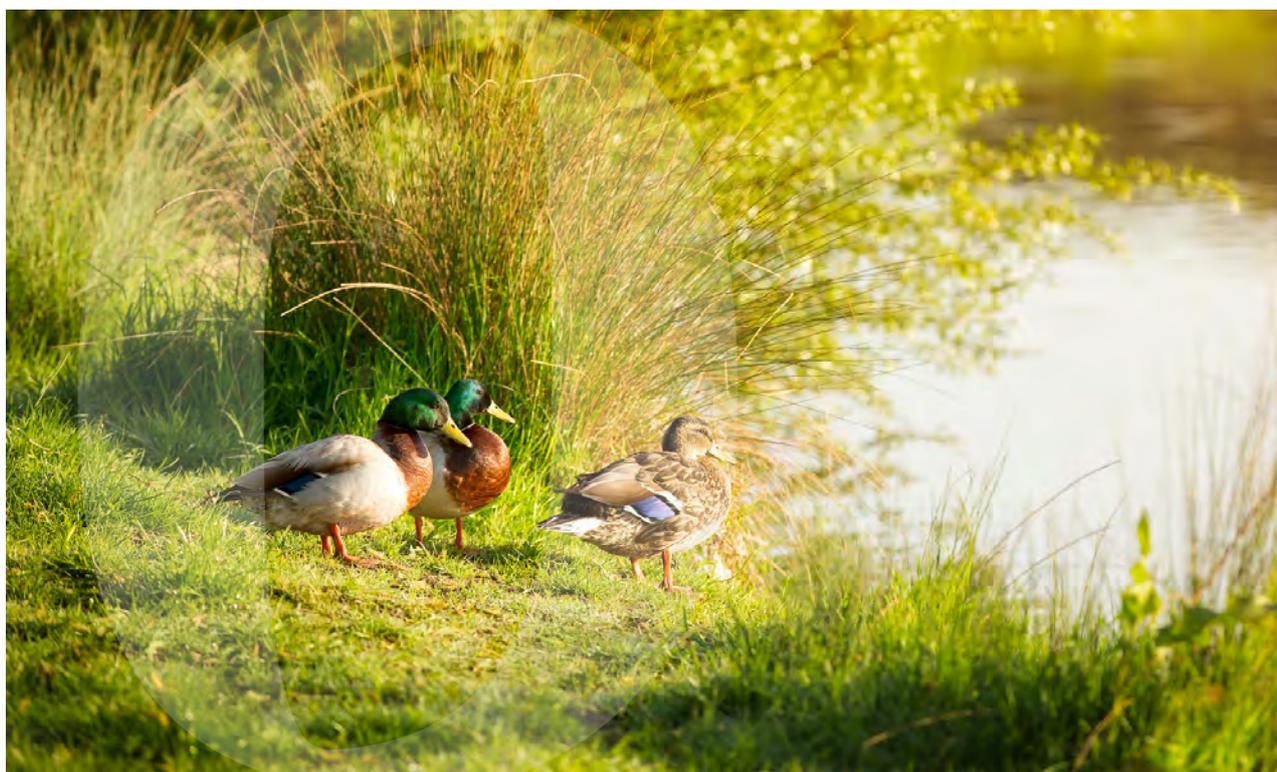


An example of advertising as part of the Council's existing floral bedding scheme

Such sponsorship opportunities would include pre-determined parameters including the types of organisations allowed (with a focus on those that are relevant to the asset in question) and the size and form of the displayed sponsorship. It would look to work in a similar way to our existing floral bedding sponsorship scheme and act not only as a mechanism to generate revenue to reinvest back into the portfolio, but to also support local good causes and community groups.

- **Carbon Offsetting:** Investigating the environmental feasibility and financial sustainability of establishing a carbon offsetting and accreditation service for stakeholders who wish to reduce their emissions locally by financing environmental projects within the portfolio. Such a programme would estimate the required carbon to offset in order to make it cost-effective for both us and stakeholders, whilst also acknowledging that any successful scheme will far exceed this strategy's 10 year timeline.
- **Open Spaces Business Foundation:** Investigating the benefit of a parks foundation with charitable status that would focus purely on generating income and raising the profile of the portfolio. Such a model would look to attract new funding and investment opportunities and attract volunteers and sponsorship.

We recognise that donation and sponsorship initiatives must be undertaken sensitively to ensure that there is not undue pressure to donate, that it is appropriate and clearly demonstrates a benefit to the open space portfolio and its users.



Delivering the strategy

Over the life of this strategy, we aim to deliver a Bromley wide and community focused open space portfolio.

Ensuring that the strategy delivers all of its strategic objectives will depend upon a multitude of factors:

- The support of our key partners and stakeholders delivering their best work.
- Ensuring the strategy is adequately and consistently funded across its lifetime. Ensuring that there is an adequate monitoring system in place with objectives, targets and performance indicators to measure progress in strategy implementation.
- Ensuring that the strategy is well promoted and disseminated in a wide variety of formats so that stakeholder engagement is maintained.

Section 5.1

Partners and stakeholders

We will call upon the expertise and time of a number of partners and stakeholders during both the formation and implementation of policy throughout the strategies lifetime.

A full list of our partners and stakeholders can be found in Appendix 3.

Communities, friends and volunteers

We are proud of and actively encourage community, 'Friend' and volunteer engagement in the evolution and management of its open space portfolio.

Our Parks Friends Groups are groups of volunteers that get involved with practical maintenance of a local open space. There are at time of writing 53 active groups and over 3,500 individual 'Friends' members across nearly half of the open space portfolio including parks, allotments, woodlands and heritage/archaeological sites.



These groups contribute a total of around 45,000 hours per annum with activities ranging from weeding and planting through to habitat surveys, biodiversity audits, the sharing of skills and advice, educational provision and the organisation of social events such as concerts and fetes. Their roles have become increasingly proactive and include developing stronger links with open space users and attracting significant levels of external funding for the enhancement and development of the portfolio. These activities not only complement the grounds maintenance activities undertaken by our service provider idverde but also make a significant difference to the quality, accessibility, interpretation and management of the portfolio.

The Friends Groups are supported by an umbrella organisation, the 'Friends Forum' which provides them with a common voice and representation within Council structures. The Council, for its part actively provides these groups with financial and practical support in their practical endeavours and community based projects.

Other community groups include the Bromley Countryside Volunteers who undertake practical conservation work to enhance the borough's natural environment and in 2019 celebrated 30 years of operation.

It is in recognition of the dedication and hard work of the various community groups that a review of their governance arrangements forms part of SO1 within the strategy so that future relationships reflect best practice within local government, community and charity sectors, whilst also empowering them to continue to deliver improved outcomes. The strategy has placed an emphasis on community based projects that can draw on these groups expertise in both their creation and implementation and looks to identify opportunities to increase both the number of groups and individual volunteers within them. Case studies in the strategy have aimed to champion the roles of various Friends Groups in achieving improved outcomes

Other partners and stakeholders

We have also partnered with a significant number of other stakeholders on the development and implementation of this strategy which fall within 2 categories:

Community Organisations, Specialist Interest Groups and Charities that provide knowledge, insight and expertise in the formation of policy targeted at a project for a community benefit. A key example is the partnership between the Council, idverde and the RSPB which has seen a member of the latter's team based within Bromley for the incorporation of their expertise and best practice in the management of Council sites, whilst also giving communities the opportunity to access the wildlife within their local area.

Statutory Bodies that provide assistance and statutory guidance in the formulation of policy. These include government departments and public bodies including the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Environment Agency.



Chislehurst Commons working together with the RSPB and idverde were able to put together a £25,000 bid for restoration works to Prickend Pond. RSPB knowledge formed a critical part of the evidence needed to make the case

Section 5.2

Funding the strategy

Aspirations for improvement along with the ongoing and routine maintenance of the open space portfolio will require a significant and consistent volume of investment. We are committed to funding the maintenance and management of the portfolio whilst supplementing this expenditure with funding from external bodies and grants.

Ongoing portfolio maintenance and management

The daily maintenance and management of the portfolio will be delivered via our teams and service providers:

- Horticultural maintenance and the general cleanliness of open spaces by our grounds maintenance partners idverde.
- Certain cleansing by our street cleansing provider Veolia.
- Incidents around anti-social behaviour delivered by our Enforcement Officers, our enforcement provider Ward Security and any related statutory partners.
- Arboricultural maintenance delivered by our Tree Officers and our provider Glendale. Reactive maintenance to hard standing and buildings along with statutory checks by the our property department and partners.



A restored section of pathway at Jubilee Country Park (above, left), a restored section of fencin providing handrail at Hollydale Recreation Ground (above, centre) and new tiling to the Ice House in Bromley Palace Park (above, right) are examples of routine maintenance success achieved through colloaboration with the Council's property department and partners

External funding

Whilst we continue to deliver on our priorities, (including the provision of high quality open spaces) we must also 'live within our means'. We are therefore unable to meet the aspirations contained within this strategy through Council Budgets alone, and therefore plan to supplement our expenditure on the portfolio with external funding:

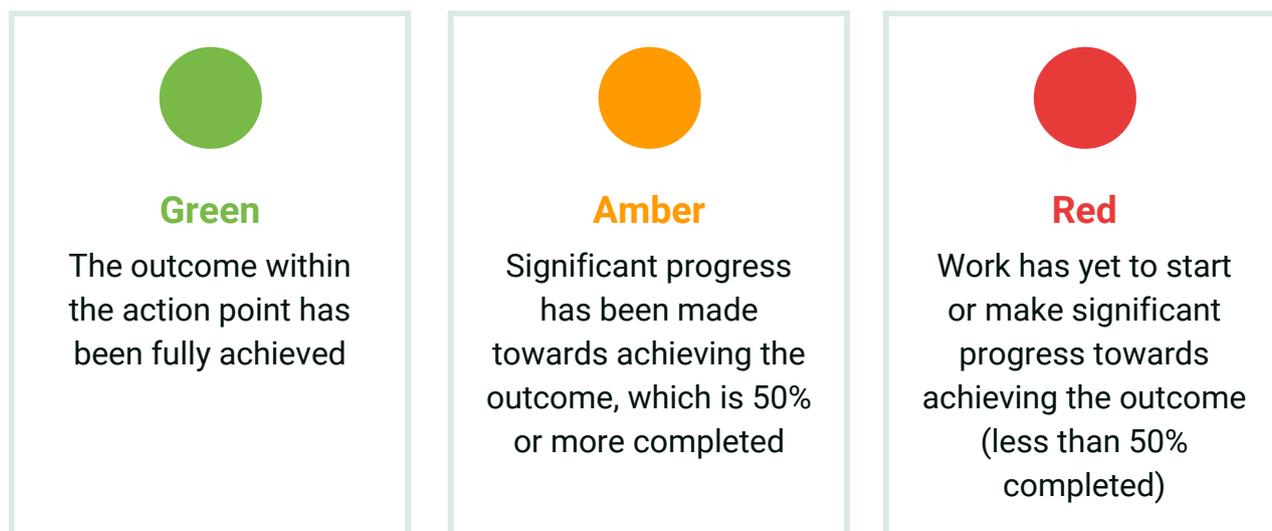
- **Income generating schemes:** As outlined in SO4 we will seek to identify income generating schemes in the open space portfolio through events and complementary commercial activity whilst being sensitive to the aspirations and desires of open space users. As referenced in SO5 we aims to increase the income generated through commercial activity by 10%.
- **Funding bodies:** Working as part of a multi-agency approach we will seek investment from external funding bodies and partners (e.g. the Heritage Lottery Fund) subject to the submission of detailed technical applications. We will seek to develop these proposals in conjunction with relevant local stakeholders such as Friends Groups and aim to secure £5 million of funding as a baseline,with additional targets to be reviewed annually.
- **Innovative fundraising schemes:** Schemes that can help us to sensitively attract funds to the portfolio,such as through sponsorship, donations and gifting schemes as outlined in SO5.



Section 5.3

Monitoring and review of the strategy

Throughout the life of the strategy each of the Action Points and their various undertakings will be subject to a monitoring framework that will ensure that milestones are being met by both us and our principal service provider idverde. Each undertaking will be rated on a Traffic Light System:



Each action point will note progress made thus far, the next milestones and the target date for these to be completed. These target dates will generally align with the date of the next update from the Portfolio Holder to the Environment and Community Services Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committee.

Outcomes from the monitoring system and accompanying reports will be presented:

- Through the annual contract review report presented to the PDS Committee early in the financial year.
- Additional operational management updates reports will be provided to senior management on performance and progress. These will identify the next outputs that must be achieved by which date, action owners, sources of funding and other resources necessary for delivery.

These reports will be supplemented by the outcomes from the Open Space Audit, Natural Capital Accounting assessment, general portfolio assessments and an overview of general market conditions.

Through these reports we will carry out annual reviews of the Strategy to ensure that its focus remains relevant and to consider changes in strategic priorities arising from broader Government or Council policy and economic, environmental, developmental, financial, regeneration and social changes, including any that may have been unforeseen at the start of the strategy. The performance of service providers both in meeting specific objectives and those of the strategy overall will be analysed through a series of rectifications and defaults.

Through annual public satisfaction surveys, we will seek to establish current levels of satisfaction with the open space portfolio and from these identify challenges, demand, opportunities, and trends to further inform the future evolution of the strategy. We would like over the lifetime of the strategy to achieve a 20% increase in the level of satisfaction in facilities recorded in the Open Space Satisfaction survey from the 55% baseline.

Section 5.4

Communicating the strategy

We value our communities and stakeholders and have been committed to engaging them in the shaping of this strategy.

The reports from the annual contract review meetings will be scrutinised by the PDS Committee and published on the Council's Decision Making website page (<https://cds.bromley.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>) for public scrutiny and oversight. Stakeholders will also be updated through regular meetings of key groups (e.g. the Bromley Friends Group Forum, the Parks, Green Space and Countryside Stakeholder Panel Meetings and the Countryside Consultative Panel etc.), whilst those who have active involvement with a particular project or facet of the strategy will have regular liaison with both Council officers and our partners on an ad-hoc basis as and when specific updates occur.

All communication shall aim to be inclusive of all sectors of the community and in a method that suits the target audience at hand.

The appropriate documentation will be available to all operatives working the Portfolio with idverde operatives having access to individual Open Space Management Plans from 2022 onwards.

What will success look like?

Over the life of this strategy we aim to deliver a Bromley wide and community focused open space portfolio. We would like for the strategy to be recognised for its quality both internally and by external bodies.

Section 6.1

Internal recognition of quality

The strategy has outlined its robust monitoring system in Section 5.3. Internal recognition of quality via this system will look to demonstrate:



That the action points and their undertakings are being met by us and our partners at or before the deadline stated by this strategy.



That the quality of the day to day operational grounds maintenance activities are maintained to a consistently high level throughout the duration of the strategy.



Within the monitoring system there are also key SO action points and undertakings that we expect to be met as a minimum as they are either a baseline for other parts of the strategy to proceed, or are a key outcome:

A successful Bromley Open Space Strategy



S01 Quality and accessibility

- Refreshed governance and support arrangements for key stakeholder groups within the portfolio, such as Friends Groups (allotment societies) by December 2023.
- An increased number of friends Groups and individual volunteers by the end of the strategy lifetime.
- A full evaluation of the open space portfolio and its environmental and economic benefit. This is continually reviewed over the strategy lifetime.
- Complete management plans for each open space by December 2023.
- Successful development and implementation of the new governance model and regeneration of Crystal Palace Park.



S02 Natural, cultural and historical assets

- Successful development of the master plan for the regeneration of Scadbury Park.
- Management regimes that lead to improved ecosystem services which in turn actively benefit biodiversity.
- A diversified educational programme that ensures stakeholders lead by example in their day-to-day activities.
- A net zero carbon maintenance of the portfolio by the end of the strategy lifetime.



S03 Health, wellbeing and community

- An open space portfolio with a suite of initiatives that positively contributes to community physical and mental wellbeing.
- An open space portfolio that is both fully integrated into green travel networks and links into key town centres.



S04 Local economy

- An increase in the income generated through complementary and sustainable commercial activities within the portfolio by a minimum of 10%.
- An open space portfolio that comprises diverse play, sporting and amenity facilities for the use and enjoyment of all, whilst addressing any under provision.
- A 20% increase in the satisfaction of open space portfolio facilities measured through the open space satisfaction survey.



S05 Financially viable open space portfolio

- An open space portfolio with a sustainable source of income lasting beyond the strategy lifetime.
- An open space portfolio that supplements Council expenditure with external funding.
- The securing of £5m of grant funding as a baseline, with additional targets to be reviewed annually.

Section 6.2

External recognition of quality

In addition to setting our own standards for success, we would also like the strategy to be recognised externally for our successful management of the open space portfolio.

The following are examples of marks of quality that would illustrate these achievements.

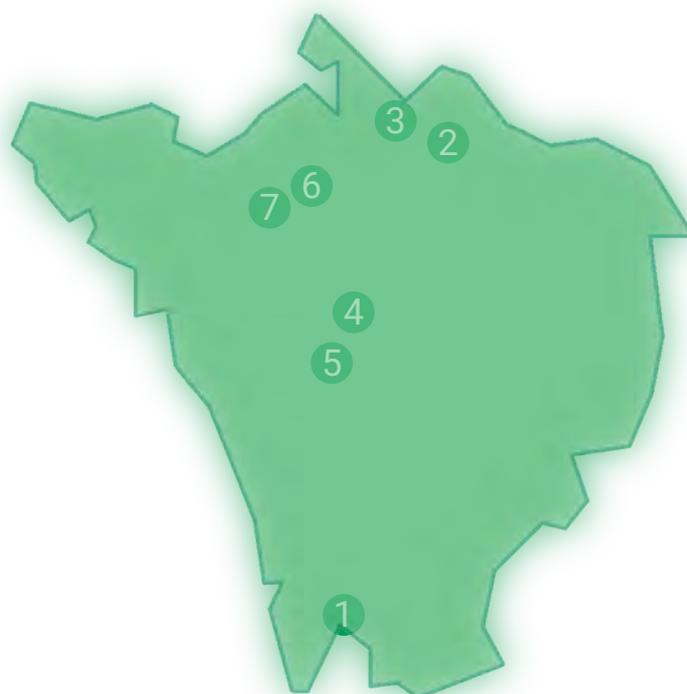
Green Flag Awards

The prestigious Green Flag award both rewards well managed open spaces and sets the benchmark for maintenance standards across the UK and internationally.

The receipt of such an award affords multiple benefits, including the status of being affiliated with the programme, and the opening of tourism and revenue opportunities.

Seven sites within the portfolio have been awarded Green Flag status and we would look to retain and increase the number throughout the duration of the strategy.

Whilst not every site within the portfolio will achieve this accolade, the strategy incorporates its benchmark standards into its SO's, including sites are clean, well maintained, secure and managed for the benefit of their natural and built environment.



-
- 1 - Biggin Hill Recreation Ground
 - 2 - Chislehurst and St Pauls Cray Commons
 - 3 - Chislehurst Recreation Ground
 - 4 - Hayes Common
 - 5 - Keston Common
 - 6 - Queens Gardens
 - 7 - South Hill Wood
-



idverde and the Friends of Chislehurst Recreation Ground receiving a Green Flag award in 2019 (top) awarded for multiple achievements including (but not limited to) the overhaul of the play facilities (bottom left), the creation of 'Chislehurst Rocks' (a family friendly music festival), the establishment of a shaded wildlife area in collaboration with a local Cubs group, an improved entrance and an extensive sport offering including Tennis and Football (bottom right).



Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) quality badge

LOtC is the only nationally recognised indicator of good quality educational provision for outside learning providers, combining both the quality of the learning and effective risk management. As such it is recommended that schools look for the LOtC badge when choosing providers of outdoor education.



The Educational, Biodiversity, Ecology and Sustainability programme at High Elms Country Park outlined in SO2 achieved this accreditation in 2020 which it will look to retain as it expands to other sites, demonstrating our commitment to maintain the high standard of education provision in an environment that is safe and welcoming.

London in Bloom

The London in Bloom campaign rewards those who make positive and lasting changes to their local environment for the benefit of the community. It accepts entries from all sectors of the community (including local authorities and Friends of Parks groups) and takes an integrated approach to its award system, incorporating everything from litter and graffiti through to conservation and horticultural standards.



We will encourage various open space stakeholder groups to enter both portfolio sites and the planted and green street environments in town centres into this competition. The benefits of such an award would align with the strategy aim of creating pleasant, welcoming environments through both the involvement of communities in the improvement of their open spaces and increased interaction between its members.



Community, resident and users

As outlined in Section 5.3, the regular Open Space Satisfaction Survey will form a key external validation of the strategy.



For more information, contact:

Environment and Public Protection
London Borough of Bromley
Civic Centre, Stockwell Close
Bromley BR1 3UH

