

PARKS & GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

2015-2020



“ Culture for a better Southend
through Parks & Open Spaces ”

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FOREWORD



Welcome to Southend-on-Sea's Parks and Green Space Strategy 2015 – 2020. We are extremely fortunate to have a wealth of parks and green open space across the borough of Southend. They are very popular with local people, and many local community and park groups play an important role in keeping them safe and friendly. Southend is a seaside town which is known for its beautiful parks and in particular its Cliffs Gardens facing the Thames Estuary. With a history of success at the Chelsea Flower show, Hampton Court Flower Show and Green Flag winning parks, providing high quality parks and open spaces is nothing new for Southend and is the result of hard work and good planning.

This document is an all-encompassing strategy which covers Parks, Open Spaces, Biodiversity, Green spaces and trees across the 'green realm'. The document sets key themes, standards and actions that will be undertaken to ensure parks and open space continue to play an important role for the health, wellbeing and the economy of the borough and its neighbourhoods.

“High quality parks and public spaces are an essential feature of successful neighbourhoods where people want to live, work, play and invest. They are vital to people’s health and the local economy.”

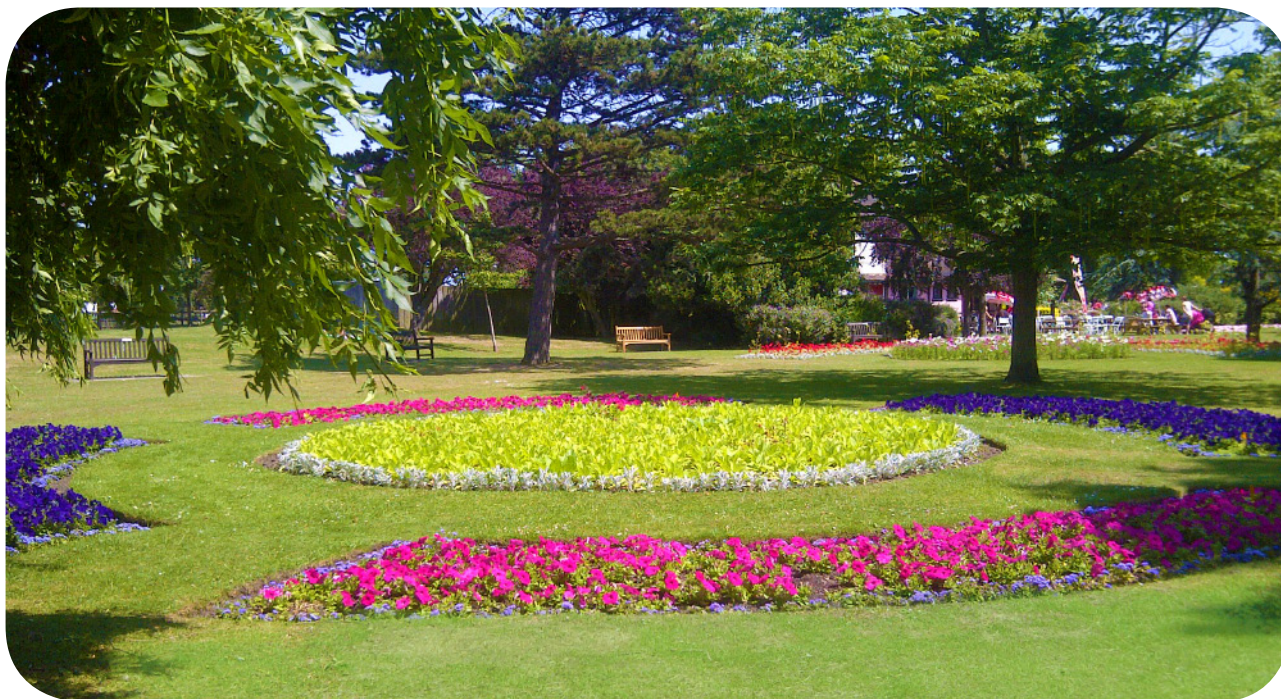
(Michael Bloomberg, Design Trust for Public Space & the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation 2010)

Although the Council will face many economic challenges over the period covered by this strategy, we recognise the importance of good, well maintained parks, and green spaces and the significant contribution they make to a balanced community. This strategy therefore looks to maintain our current high standards and work with other Council departments, partners and the community to develop activities, events in the parks, improve the street scene and protect our biodiversity for present and future generations to enjoy.

Cllr Graham Longley

Portfolio Holder for Enterprise, Tourism and Economic Development

1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Southchurch Park

Good quality green spaces are important to the quality of life enjoyed by the residents of Southend. The contribution of good quality green space has been widely recognised in national research and through local consultation work. The benefits of parks and open spaces are many and varied; improving physical and mental health, helping to mitigate the more dramatic effects of our climate such as flooding, promoting and sustaining wildlife, providing a focus for the community and a venue for social, sporting and recreational activities.

Southend is a dense urban area and as a result has limited green or open space. Such spaces are under increasing pressure as the need for development grows. These pressures along with a growing population mean existing facilities are less able to satisfy the increasing demands placed upon them. This underlines the need to safeguard current spaces and to incorporate new spaces and facilities in future development schemes.

The purpose of this strategy is to provide a measure of the quality and quantity of those facilities currently available, identify areas of deficiency and opportunity, and to set out a template for the future of green space within the borough. The

strategy will also consider the wider civic realm in relation to the development of the town as a whole.

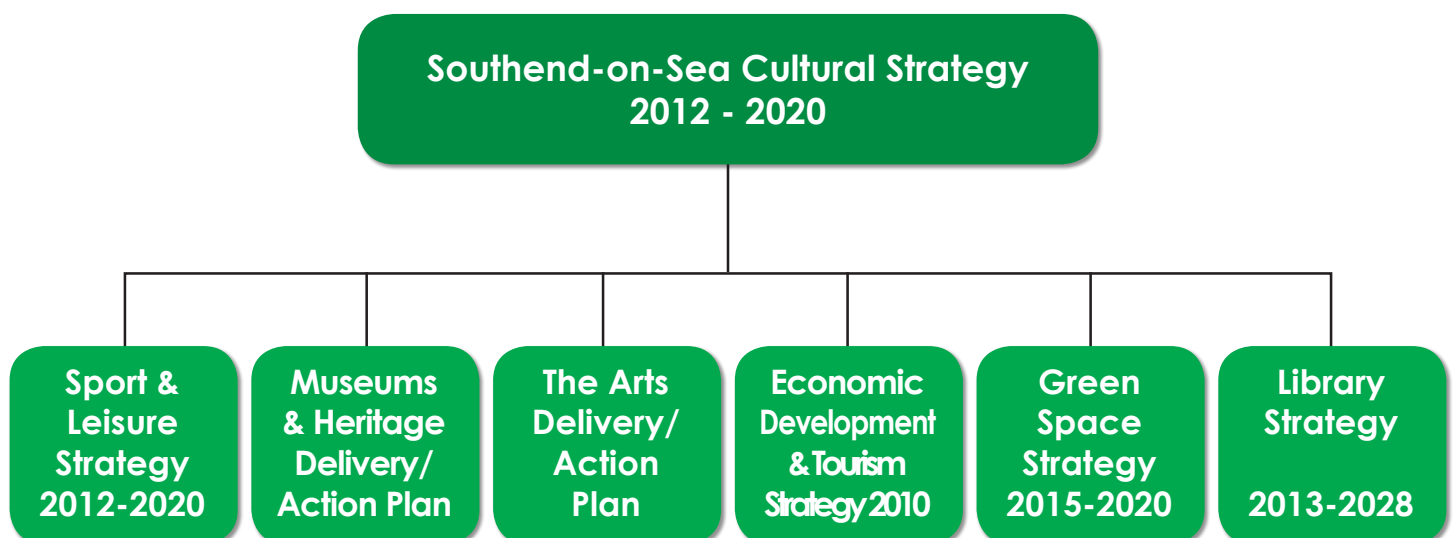
THE COUNCIL'S VISION OF 'CREATING A BETTER SOUTHEND' IS SUPPORTED BY FIVE AIMS:

- **Clean**
- **Safe**
- **Healthy**
- **Prosperous**
- **Led by an Excellent council**

To achieve our aims the Council identifies priorities, related actions and performance measures to assess how well it is doing.

The corporate priorities are informed by consultation with residents and discussions with our key partners including Essex Police, NHS bodies, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service plus the business and voluntary and community sectors.

As an overarching document for Green Space and Biodiversity within Southend it outlines practical actions that support the aims within "Culture on Sea" (the borough wide cultural strategy), the strategies which stem from it and the Council's overarching aims and ambitions set out within its corporate plan.



This strategy directly links to each of these key local ambitions. However, the strategy also recognises the national and regional context within which the council operates. It recognises the need to inform and influence both national and regional agencies and to develop new and innovative partnerships to deliver these ambitions for the benefit of residents, visitors and business.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The strategy is made up of ten main sections and an action plan.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PARKS

This section sets out how increasing urbanisation in the mid-nineteenth century created an urgent need for measures to improve public health.

At this time the great population move from the countryside into towns and cities resulted in cramped, unsanitary living conditions. The Public Health Acts of 1848 and its revision in 1875 enabled local councils to commit funds to create public parks and green spaces. The Victorians recognised that creating 'green lungs' within the developing cities provided great benefits to public health and wellbeing.

Philanthropy played an important role in the early development of parks in Southend. The name R.A Jones remains well known today for his generous gift of Priory Park in 1917. Further parks and green spaces were developed in the 1970's and 1980's as a result of new housing developments.

Many national reports have highlighted a general decline in parks since the 1980's although the last decade has generally been recognised as a period of renaissance. Many now feel that this period of growth is at risk due to the ongoing austerity measures.

WHAT IS A GREEN SPACE STRATEGY AND WHY DO WE NEED IT?

This section sets out the need to establish an overarching plan to meet the current and future needs of the growing population in Southend. It recognises the important contribution made by green spaces to the economic, social, physical well being of the town and its residents.

HOW DOES THE STRATEGY LINK TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES?

This chapter considers public space against key policy. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 recognises the importance of local decision making to meet local needs. This along with regional projects such as the Thames Gateway Green Grid Project emphasise the role of natural space to support healthy communities.

THE VALUE OF GREEN SPACES AND BIODIVERSITY.

This section sets out the many benefits of good quality public green spaces. Often their economic value has been overlooked. It is not easily measured but recent studies have quantified financial benefits to the retail sector, tourism and property values.

The benefits to people's physical and mental health were well established from the outset. Many of these appear to have been forgotten over time but of late are again being recognised more widely.

Parks also play a key role promoting social cohesion by providing attractive places to meet, take part in sport, walk the dog and attend events. Play is vital to children's physical, emotional and social development and open spaces provide many opportunities for children to explore and grow.

Green spaces are increasingly important as havens for plants and wildlife. These are the fundamental building blocks of life without which mankind would cease to exist. The effect of global warming causes increasing levels of concern within the scientific community. Here again green spaces play an important role in mitigating some of these effects. Equally they have positive impacts by reducing air temperatures, improving air quality and reducing the impacts of flooding.

SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

This section defines the types of open spaces within the town. It establishes a consistent typography for each of the spaces.

KEY AIMS

This section sets out the key aims of the strategy:

- To provide and maintain good quality parks and open spaces
- To connect these spaces with a well maintained, attractive street scene
- To provide recreation and sports facilities to encourage active, healthy lifestyles
- To protect and promote our natural green heritage and biodiversity preserving it for future generations
- To encourage community involvement in the development and management of green spaces

STANDARDS

Under this heading the strategy sets out the key standards for public open space and the green civic realm in terms of the quantity of space, its accessibility and the quality of these spaces.

The principle standards can be summarised as:

- Ensure that all residents have easy access to a public open space of at least 0.2 hectares
- To provide one hectare of public open space per 1,000 people
- To provide and maintain a high quality 'street scene'
- To adopt the Green Flag standards as the quality mark for destination parks and open spaces

Some areas of the town do not currently meet the accessibility standard and practically speaking, it will be difficult to achieve in Milton and Westborough wards. The strategy aims to improve on this by introducing new open spaces where this is made possible by new developments. It also aims to improve the connections between existing spaces by landscaping, tree planting and better signage and route funding.

THE COMMUNITY

In 'The Community' the strategy considers the town and its people. It looks at the current population, distribution, as well as current factors around deprivation, ethnicity and health.

The population is expected to rise by 6.6% by 2021 to 186,399 and over that time will be an ageing population. The town has become more ethnically diverse in the last ten years. The borough has a number of areas showing higher levels of deprivation as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010. The main areas are found within the wards of Kursaal, Milton and Victoria.

Life expectancy has generally been seen to be increasing over the past decade. The health of the most disadvantaged has not kept pace with these improvements. Within Southend the wards of Kursaal, Milton and Victoria demonstrate the lowest life expectancy.

MAIN PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

These final sections of the strategy reiterate the main priorities and an action plan to deliver these aims.

2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF PUBLIC PARKS



Prittlewell Square

Publicly funded parks first appeared in the United Kingdom in the mid-19th Century. The Industrial Revolution produced a rapid change in the country with more people moving from the countryside to live in towns and cities. Victorians saw great benefits for working people in the creation of parks. They were seen as providing 'green lungs' for the city and beneficial to health, reducing disease, crime and social unrest.

The first parks came into being as philanthropic gifts and were laid out by the great landscape designers of the age. Derby Arboretum was gifted to the city by Joseph Strutt. It was designed by the renowned John Claudius Loudon and opened to the public in September 1840. A few years later, in 1847 Joseph Paxton completed work on Birkenhead Park in Liverpool.

The big population move from the countryside to the cities resulted in cramped, unsanitary living conditions. A major cholera epidemic in 1831 and 1832 highlighted the problems caused by these conditions. In 1848 a new cholera epidemic broke out in Europe sweeping across the continent from Moscow to Paris. The British Parliament had been watching the new epidemic spread with alarm and took the first proactive action in the form of the Public Health Act 1848.

This Act created the General Health Board which was empowered to create local health boards with the authority to deal with sanitation, rubbish collection and the provision of public parks.

The Act was revised in the 1875 Public Health Act which further authorised local authorities to provide and maintain recreation land. The Act allowed authorities to raise the necessary funds and to create bye-laws to govern behaviour in the parks and pleasure grounds.

The 1890's saw the development of the Garden City Movement championed by Ebenezer Howard. The Movement promoted key principles in the development of towns, recognising the importance of public open space and spacious, tree-lined avenues for the working population. These principles had a significant influence on the development of the 1909 Town Planning Act.

Southend-on-Sea underwent a significant period of development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries following the arrival of the railway. The first public parks came into being at the end of the 19th century with Prittlewell Square being the oldest park in town.

Public parks continued to develop from this time through a combination of philanthropy and acquisition. The jeweller, R. A. Jones, was a great benefactor who gifted Priory Park to the town in 1917. Messers Baxter, Dowsett and Ingram were also instrumental in the development of the park network with the donation of Southchurch Park in 1895. The council acquired Chalkwell Hall in 1903. Belfairs Park and Nature Reserve were also acquired in stages in 1926, 1938 and 1947. Shoebury Park came along in 1935 and Eastwood Park in 1938.

During the 1970's and 1980's further open space was provided as a result of new housing developments.

Since the 1980's it has been seen that there has been a decline in public parks across the country. The introduction of Compulsive Competitive Tendering and reductions in parks maintenance budgets are generally held responsible for lower standards and the loss of many historic features in parks in the UK. In more recent times there has been a reaction to this trend. The Urban Taskforce report 'Towards an Urban Renaissance' of 1999 highlighted the importance of public parks and made numerous recommendations to stem the decline. Major funding has been made available through the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore significant, historic landscapes. Improving the local environment has been promoted in national schemes such as Britain in Bloom and public parks specifically through the Green Flag Award scheme.

3. WHAT IS A GREEN SPACE STRATEGY AND WHY DO WE NEED IT?

“The measure of any great civilisation is in its cities, and a measure of a city’s greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks, its squares”

- John Ruskin

A Parks and Green Spaces Strategy enables Southend-on-Sea Borough Council to formulate a holistic vision for all green spaces, their use and how future demands and pressures can be met. It sets out how to improve and develop green spaces in an action plan over a period of time against identified resources.

It provides an overarching vision pulling together the needs of the community and the Council's wider objectives and aims to make improvements to health, environment, quality of life, regeneration, economy, culture, planning, transport, biodiversity and the public realm.

Nationally, funding for parks and open spaces has been in decline for more than twenty years. In some areas parks are seen as ‘no go areas’ where the fear of crime discourages people from visiting. Facilities have been closed down where the lack of maintenance has left them in an unsafe condition. Park keepers are no longer employed. The numbers of gardeners and maintenance staff have been dramatically reduced. The provision of parks is not a statutory service and as such has made it an easy target for savings. The government has now recognised the growing problem and lent support to schemes such as the Green Flag Award where the intention is to improve the condition of these important spaces.

Parks and green spaces are at the heart of Southend-on-Sea and they will need to be constantly improved to meet the increasing demands on our green spaces. However, budgetary constraints have meant that maintaining these green spaces is becoming more and more difficult. This strategy provides an action plan which will re-address community needs and use these to attract additional funding from all sources available: external, internal, Government grants, private philanthropy etc. The strategy recognises the benefits of partnering with other organisations to share costs and reduce overheads.

4. HOW DOES THIS STRATEGY LINK TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES?

NATIONAL POLICY

The national planning context is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was published in March 2012. This framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It also provides a framework within which local people and their local council can produce their own distinctive local and neighborhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities. Known as the Local Improvement Development Plan, it highlights that our natural environment is essential to our wellbeing, and that its care is important. Habitats that have been degraded can be restored. Species that have been isolated can be reconnected. Green Belt land that has been depleted of diversity can be refilled by nature – and opened to people to experience it, to the benefit of body and soul.

This strategy will work towards delivering identified needs of our community, incorporate them within the Improvement Development Plan and secure income to fulfill them via the Community Infrastructure Levy applied to all planning developments within the borough.



Priory Park

REGIONAL POLICY

The Localism Act, November 2011, enables the Government to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). However, following a legal challenge by CALA Homes a 12-week consultation on each of the strategic environmental assessments into the impacts of revoking the RSS was completed.

These consultation responses are currently being considered by Government and at this time the RSS, relevant to the East of England and known as the East of England Plan, remains part of the development plan for Southend until the revocation process is formally completed.

SUB-REGIONAL POLICY

The Thames Gateway Project published its implementation plan 'Greening the Gateway' in 2005. The report described the aim of the project of establishing sustainable communities in which homes, jobs, schools and public services are provided together. It recognises that cleaner, safer and greener spaces are vitally important to quality of life and builds on the earlier report 'Sustainable Communities: building for the future' (ODPM February 2003) which aims to improve the quality of our parks and green spaces.

THAMES GATEWAY GREEN GRID

This project focuses on the regeneration and economic development of the Thames Corridor. The project recognises the need to ensure a functional green infrastructure to provide a sense of place, environmental protection and to enhance the quality of life for communities within the Gateway. This policy is detailed within the document "Creating sustainable communities: Greening the Gateway a green space strategy for Thames Gateway" published by The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Southend is part of the 'Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership', and is working with its neighbouring authorities towards an integrated strategic approach linking Parks and Green Spaces outside and inside the borough and promoting greenways.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES GROWTH

The Council's Core Strategy was adopted in 2007 and covers the period until 2021. The key strategic objectives include:

- Securing sustainable regeneration and growth focused in urban areas
- Providing not less than 13,000 net additional jobs and 6,500 net additional dwellings in the period 2001 to 2021

By 2012 a total of 3,779 dwellings had been completed, leaving a possible minimum of 2,721 dwelling to be completed over the period of the plan. An assumption of occupancy rates of 2.2 per dwelling will entail a population increase of 13,200 by 2021. Such an increase in population will inevitably result in greater demands on the town's parks and green spaces both in terms of their maintenance and the facilities they offer.

LOCAL POLICY

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council has a number of policies and strategies in place. These include the Cultural Strategy 'Making Culture Count'; Community Plan, Local Transport Plan, Crime and Disorder Strategy, The Southend-on-Sea Borough Local Plan and Local Development Framework, including a Core Strategy Development Planning Document. The following diagram sets out the relationship between each of these and positions the Parks and Green Space Strategy at the heart of this hierarchy.



5. THE VALUE OF GREEN SPACES AND BIODIVERSITY

The British Household Panel Survey asked respondents the reasons why their area is a good or bad place to live. 44 per cent of the reasons given related to quality of public space. The Survey of English Housing asked respondents to list the three main things that would improve their local area. Issues relating to aspects of public space are cited as many times as factors relating to employment, health and housing. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) Space (the government's former advisor on public open space) identified a range of benefits of parks and open spaces under the following headings.

ECONOMIC VALUE

Good quality parks and open spaces contribute a clear economic benefit to Southend. As we compete to attract investment, good quality green spaces play an important role. Businesses are drawn to places with good quality open spaces as they, in turn, attract customers, employees, and services. Within the retail sector, a high quality public realm can boost trade by encouraging greater footfall. Well planned improvements to public spaces in town centres can increase trade by up to 40 percent and encourage significant private investment. (reference: DoE and the Association of Town Centre Management (1997) Managing Urban Spaces in Town Centres – Good Practice Guide, London, HMSO).

Well-managed, high quality open spaces have a big positive impact on commercial property prices and domestic house prices. Evidence from the Netherlands has shown that houses with a view of a park can increase values by 8% and a nearby park can increase values by 6%. (Ref: The Value of Public Space, Cabe Space). People are willing to pay to live near a desirable green space. This positive impact on property prices benefits the local economy.

In addition, within towns the presence of trees has been also be shown to help create jobs, encourage inward investment. Some research has demonstrated they can also increase property values by as much as 18% (Anderson LM & Cordell HK (1988)). Parks also play a significant role within the tourist economy. In 2013, Visit Britain reported on three studies indicating that parks are a valuable asset to tourism (ref; Visit Britain, Overseas Visitors Love our parks and gardens). The research showed that of the 31 million tourists visiting the UK in 2012 approximately



11.1 million enjoy visiting parks or gardens. Visits to parks and gardens were seen to be more popular than visits to museums, castles, historic houses and art galleries.

IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL BEING

Improving health and well being was a key principle underlying the establishment of public parks in the 19th Century. Access to the fresh air of open spaces was recognized by the Victorians as fundamental and this principle remains as important today. Many studies in recent years have demonstrated the importance to physical, mental and social well being. They promote healthier lifestyles by encouraging walking and cycling as alternatives to cars and public transport. Provision of recreation opportunities encourages more active lifestyles. Parks and open spaces are integral to giving people opportunities to play sport and socialize. The benefits of open spaces to mental health and wellbeing are also important. The presence of green spaces in providing natural views and places to get away from the stresses of urban living can be an important factor in reducing stress related illnesses and the consequent social and economic impact of mental ill health.

BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children have the right to play, recreation and culture under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Play is vital for children's physical, emotional and social development. Open spaces and parks are crucial in providing opportunities for fun, exercise and learning, as well as encouraging children to understand how to manage risk and challenges.

REDUCING CRIME AND FEAR OF CRIME

Fear of crime (to a greater extent than actual crime itself) can deter people from using parks and open spaces. Better design and management of public spaces can allay these fears and encourage people to use open spaces. Places that are

well used throughout the day (from dog walkers in the morning and evening, to people enjoying lunchtime outdoors) make people feel safer, and encourage others to use the space.

SOCIAL DIMENSION OF PUBLIC SPACE

Parks and open spaces bring people together, and encourage people to interact when they may not otherwise meet. This can foster social ties that help define neighborhoods and make them better places to live. Spaces are used more when they are green and natural rather than man made. High quality public spaces have the potential to be venues for social events that re-enforce Southends civic society and give a sense of identity to the town, for example the Village Green festival held in Chalkwell Park.

MOVEMENT IN AND BETWEEN SPACES

A well maintained network of green spaces encourages walking and cycling; provides green buffers between buildings; improves access to areas of the town and improves biodiversity. The urban habitat programme in Southend provides links from green spaces within the town out to the urban fringe and surrounding countryside to encourage movement, exercise and enjoyment.

BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE

Recent research carried out by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and set out in the 2013 report *The State of Nature* highlighted significant decline of urban species. Parks and open spaces are becoming increasingly important havens for wildlife. The presence of these areas in cities provides the opportunity for people to be close to nature, which in turn brings pleasure and benefits to human physical and mental health.

CLIMATE CHANGE

There has been much debate about climate change however many now agree that, for the future, the UK can anticipate higher temperatures, wetter winters and more intense patterns of weather. Parks and open spaces play an important role in mitigating some of the effects of these changes.

Increasing areas of hard surfaces in towns contributes to higher temperatures compared with the surrounding countryside. This effect is reduced by green spaces and trees in particular, which reduce air temperature, improve air quality and make towns more comfortable places to live.

6. SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY



This strategy considers all green public spaces under the following typographies:-

PARKS & PUBLIC GARDENS

These are considered as sites which are formally laid out primarily for aesthetic enjoyment. This includes Southend's Victorian and Edwardian parks and landscapes, ornamental gardens and flower beds. These parks may also include a range of other facilities such as sports pitches, playgrounds and so on.

NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACES

Informal in layout and character they generally have few or no additional facilities. The sites provide people with access to, and experience of nature. It includes woodland, grassland, scrub, hedgerows and wetland.

GREEN CORRIDORS

This space includes cycle ways, walking routes, bridle ways, rights of way and transport routes in and across the borough providing opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding. Green corridors can be a continuous green area or linked spaces along a route providing opportunities for play, contemplation and recreation and protect and encourage biodiverse wildlife, flora and fauna.

AMENITY GREEN SPACES

This type of open space is most commonly found in residential areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work.

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS

These are designed to increase opportunities for children and young people to play or meet safely within equipped and unequipped environments.

ACTIVE SPACE

Those areas include those used for a variety of organised and competitive sports, events and activities and those used for Wheeled-sports activities and Multi Use Gym Areas (MUGA's).

SPACES OF SPECIAL BIODIVERSITY INTEREST

These are areas that show or potentially show a biologically diverse range of flora and fauna and include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Sites of Local Wildlife Interest.

PUBLIC REALM, PUBLIC SQUARES AND STREETS

These sites can include any publicly owned streets, pathways, right of ways, parks, publicly accessible open spaces and any public and civic building and facilities. This also includes formally laid out squares, trees, verges and other green spaces considered as the street scene of Southend.

ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY GARDENS

Areas of land, leased from the council for the purpose of growing fruit, vegetables ornamental plants etc.

CEMETERIES, CHURCHYARDS AND BURIAL GROUNDS

These areas, as well as including Council owned cemeteries and burial grounds, include churchyards which have closed for burials by an Order of the Council in accordance with the Burial Acts. This closure transfers the ownership and liability for maintenance to the Council under section 215 of the Local Government Act 1972.

ACCESSIBLE COUNTRYSIDE IN URBAN FRINGE AREAS

The countryside in and around urban areas is vital to the areas suitability, wellbeing and economy, inspiring urban living to be connected to nature it is vital to ensure that these spaces are well maintained, accessible and that way finding from urban centres is clear.



Chalkwell Park

CASE STUDY

BELFAIRS WOODLAND CENTRE AND THE BELFAIRS & DAWS HEATH LIVING LANDSCAPE



For many years the Council had an aspiration to create a woodland information centre at Belfairs Park. The council believed that by building a centre it would enable them to inform and educate residents and visitors about the management of the woodlands and, in particular, coppicing.

To help realise this aspiration the council looked for a 3rd sector organisation to work with them to deliver the project. Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) proved to be the best organisation to work with the council to deliver and manage the woodland centre.

Working together the council and EWT secured funding from a number of sources including The Heritage Lottery Fund, Europe, trusts, business and private donors. This allowed work on the centre to commence in the latter half of 2012. The funding allowed for a much wider project than the building of the Woodland Centre and has enabled EWT and the council to deliver elements of one of the Trust's Living Landscapes; a project which aims to restore, recreate and reconnect wildlife habitats in the Daws Heath area.

The Belfairs Woodland Centre opened to the public on 7th September 2013. The Woodland Centre is open daily to the public providing visitors with information on the Living Landscape and including woodland management.

A full programme of activities and events are run throughout the year with family events taking place during weekends and school holidays, guided walks, adult courses ranging from wildflower identification to basket weaving are also offered. Volunteers are essential to the delivery of a rich and diverse range of activities and engaging these volunteers is an important part of the on-going project.

The project and the partnership between the council and EWT are continuing to develop with both organisations learning from each other's experience.

7. KEY AIMS

THE PARKS AND GREEN SPACE STRATEGY IS CENTRED ON THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

- To provide and maintain good quality parks and open spaces
- To connect these spaces with a well maintained, attractive street scene
- To provide recreation and sports facilities to encourage active, healthy lifestyles
- To protect and promote our natural green heritage and biodiversity preserving it for future generations
- To encourage community involvement in the development and management of green spaces

THE THEMES SET OUT THE OVERRIDING AIMS OF THE STRATEGY, BUT ARE NOT EXCLUSIVE OR SELF-CONTAINED. THEY ALSO UNDERPIN THE COUNCILS AIMS OF:

- “Making Southend Active and Alive with Sport & Culture”
- “Ensuring a well maintained and attractive street scene, parks and open spaces”
- “Culture on Sea” the borough wide cultural strategy’s aim of: “Southend to be recognised as the Cultural Capital of the East of England”

The following sections and the resulting action plan set out how these key objectives will be achieved.



8. STANDARDS

QUALITY STANDARDS

In recent times various studies have considered how much green space is available within towns and cities and how much is needed. It is a challenging question and much depends on the established character of the location and how this has developed over time. There are no formal standards set by government.

“The Government believes that open space standards are best set locally. National standards cannot cater for local circumstances”

- Planning Policy Guidance 17

The following section considers some of the work carried out to determine appropriate levels of public open space provision.

NATURAL GREENSPACE

Natural England believes that everyone should have access to good quality natural greenspace close to where they live and have produced 'Nature Nearby' Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance" to help people make this a reality. The guidance is aimed at parks and greenspace practitioners and their partners, particularly decision makers, planners and managers of green space. It describes the amount, quality and level of visitor services that Natural England believe everyone is entitled to.

The guidance proposes the adoption of three key standards by greenspace professionals that will deliver high quality and inspiring visitor experiences in green spaces close to where people live, and connect people with the natural environment. The standards include the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGS).

ANGS was developed in the early 1990's and was based on research into the minimum distances people would travel to the natural environment. Natural England reviewed the standard in 2008 and concluded that it was still useful but that further guidance was required to explain how it should be applied.

The Nature Nearby report published in 2010 provides this additional clarity. ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have accessible natural greenspace:

- of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home.
- at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometre of home.
- one accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home.
- one accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home.
- a minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.

ANGS is a powerful tool in assessing current levels of accessible natural greenspace, and planning for better provision. The three underlying principles of ANGSt are:

1. Improving access to greenspaces
2. Improving naturalness of greenspaces
3. Improving connectivity with greenspaces

ALLOTMENTS

The benefits of allotments are well established:

- providing a sustainable food supply
- giving a healthy activity for people of all ages
- fostering community development and cohesiveness
- acting as an educational resource
- providing access to nature and wildlife, and acting as a resource for biodiversity
- giving open spaces for local communities
- reducing carbon emissions by avoiding the long-distance transport of food.

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) has produced a national allotment standard for a minimum provision of 20 standard plots of 250 square metres per 1,000 households or 0.5 hectares per 1,000 households.

PLAYING FIELDS

Fields in Trust (FIT) is the operating name of the National Playing Fields Association. In 2006 Fields in Trust commissioned independent research to undertake a survey of local planning authorities and consult with key stakeholders around the United Kingdom. The aim of the project was to establish Benchmark Standards for planning authorities and others. In 2008, FIT published the report, Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play. These benchmark standards are

and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play. These benchmark standards are recommended as a tool for assisting the development of local standards. FIT concluded that the total recommended standard for outdoor sport is 1.6ha per 1,000 head of population, which is consistent with the previous Six Acre Standard.

CHILDREN'S PLAYING SPACE

In addition, the document also recommends standards for children's playing space. The benchmark standard of 0.8 hectares of children's play space is commended per 1,000 head of population. This is split into 0.25 hectares of designated equipped playing space (including fenced areas with play equipment) and a further 0.55 hectares of informal playing space, typically consisting of amenity space.

STREET VERGES AND TREES

Urban living spaces and cleaner, safer, greener strategies are a national priority to improve outside living spaces. They are based on the government's commitment to enhance the quality of life in our neighborhoods, towns and cities, in turn, creating pride in the places where we live is essential to building community cohesion and successful, inclusive communities. This is clearly set out in the Government's White paper 'Our Towns and Cities', which describes the future of the Government's vision of urban living and people living in attractive, well-kept towns, villages and cities.



Chalkwell Park

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN SOUTHEND - ACCESSIBILITY

To ensure that all residents have easy access to a public open space of at least .02 hectares

The accessibility standard refers to how close people should be to their nearest publicly usable open space. Whether a space is 'publicly usable' depends on two factors: the type of space and the size of space – is it big enough to be usable?

International research into the impacts of greenspace on health and on a wider quality of life shows that having green space within easy reach of your home is a strong indicator for health and quality of life. Provision of 0.2 hectares of green space provides an area big enough for a 'kick about' pitch or other informal recreation.

Southend is a densely populated area with limited opportunities for new open space. Whilst it has 577 hectares of open space these are not evenly distributed and as such we recognize that there are areas of the town which are not within easy reach of a publicly usable open space. The wards of Westborough, Victoria and Kursaal have the most limited provision of open space in the town.

We will aim to improve on this by:

- Introducing new open spaces where possible and where planning policy allows.
- Improve the “green” street scene by making it attractive and well maintained
- Work to improve signage and routes to open spaces.

USING SOUTHENDS ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD

When applying the accessibility standard to the existing open space resource, it is possible to identify those areas which do not meet the standard. In these areas, creation of new spaces (and/or improved access to existing spaces) is a priority. Any new development in such an area would be required to provide accessible open space or to create better links to existing spaces if they are nearby. Any resources available for open space (whether from developer contributions or other sources) should be applied to addressing the accessibility shortfall.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN SOUTHEND – QUANTITY

To provide one hectare of public open space per 1000 people

It is estimated that approximately one third of the borough does not meet this standard due to the dense population, and in particular Kursaal, Milton and Westborough wards have less than 0.3 hectares. Whilst it is difficult to introduce new green spaces in all areas the councils knowledge of the most important



PrioryPark

of these areas should be renewed in order that they may be incorporated into the boroughs Infrastructure Delivery Plan and 106 agreements where possible. In addition priority should be given to these space deprived areas for route finding and signage to direct residents to local open spaces within reasonable reach.

THE QUALITY OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The quality of an open space is more difficult to measure than the quantity of space available. Quality measures combine both objective and subjective considerations, are influenced by personal taste, experience and knowledge.

The quality of a public park is influenced by its design, the facilities available on the site, and how well the park is maintained. In Southend, there is an effective hierarchy of public parks. Destination parks such as Belfairs Park and Nature Reserve offer a wide range of facilities such as playgrounds, golf course, tennis courts, restaurant, and a visitor centre. Local parks such as Bonchurch Park offer much less in terms of the physical facilities available.

The Green Flag Award has established a set of criteria to assess the quality of parks. They have become nationally recognised and accepted as a reasonable

measure of the various features and functions of parks. The standards have been adopted as the relevant quality mark for destination parks and open spaces in Southend. The Award sets out the criteria as follows:

A Welcoming park	easily accessed, with attractive entrances
Healthy, safe and secure	feeling safe with well maintained facilities and equipment
Well maintained and clean	litter free, well cared for parks
Sustainable	consideration of sustainable practises such as reducing pesticide use, peat, energy conservation and recycling of waste materials
Conservation and heritage	appropriate management of natural features, flora and fauna, conservation of the built environment and historical features
Community involvement	appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for the whole community, opportunities for greater community involvement
Marketing	providing information, promoting parks to encourage greater use
Management	delivering the above criteria and maintaining financially sound practices

STREET SCENE STANDARDS

The quality of the street scene and the public realm is also recognised within planning policy as making a significant contribution to the quality of life for residents. There are a number of strategic objectives within the Core Strategy relevant to this point.

Strategic Objective 8

Secure a thriving and attractive town centre and network of district and local centres.

Strategic Objective 14

Deliver high quality, well designed and attractive urban and natural environments which are safe, people friendly and distinctive and which respect and enhance existing character and local amenity

Strategic Objective 15

Secure effective and efficient sustainable development which prevents or minimises local contributions to, and the impact of, climate change, flood risk and the depletion of non-renewable resources.

Strategic Objective 18

Contribute to the creation of a 'Green Grid' of high quality, linked and publicly accessible open spaces and landscapes

Trees and soft landscaping play a central role in defining the character of a town, softening the environment, contribute to the economic value of the town, improve the sense of well-being and mental health as well as improving air quality, mitigating against climate change, flooding and provide an important habitat.

The key actions to maintain a high quality 'street scene' environment are:

- Regularly mown roadside verges with edges cutback each year with any ruts or damage repaired.
- Weed and litter free shrub beds which are regularly pruned to accepted horticultural standards while maintaining safe sightlines.
- Develop and maintain areas of varied horticultural interest with a mix of different planting schemes to enhance the visual amenity and address areas of deficiency.
- Develop and maintain green corridors providing good amenity value and actively promoting biodiversity
- Maintain street trees to the highest arboricultural standards, removing dead or diseased trees as required and continue to plant new trees each year

CHILDREN'S PLAY SPACES

Children's play equipment and areas will be maintained to the following British Standards:

- BS EN 1176: Playground Equipment (11 Parts)
- BS EN 1177: Impact Absorbing Playground Surfacing
- BS EN 15312: Free Access Multi-Sports Equipment
- BS EN 14974 Wheeled Sports Areas
- BS EN 15312 Multi use Games Areas

CASE STUDY

PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENTS



In 2008 the borough of Southend-on-sea had 39 publicly accessible play areas managed by the Culture section of the Council. The majority of these areas were traditional play areas catering for toddlers through to pre teens. The remainder of the areas were made up of ball play areas, wheeled sports facilities and youth areas.

In 2008 a high proportion of the equipment within the play areas was in excess of 15 years old and coming to the end of its life. In addition, the play areas did not always meet the needs of current users as they offered limited challenge and play value. The Council secured funding from the Big Lottery to improve two of its play areas, Southchurch Park and Eastwood Park. Subsequently the Council was awarded Play Builder funding to refurbish the majority of the play areas across the borough.

The Play Builder project set out to improve 29 publicly accessible play areas throughout the borough by combining the £1.1 million Play Builder capital funding with £400,000 investment from the Council's capital program. Improvements were guided by the Council's play strategy that play should be freely available at all times, free of charge at the point of participation and freely chosen by children and young people.

The project was further developed through community consultation, and influenced by the Design Guide (Play England), and the experience of those currently involved in play provision. The project looked to develop more challenging play opportunities, increase imaginative and inclusive play spaces, and include the use of natural elements as part of the play experience. In addition to the physical improvement of play spaces the project also aims to increase awareness of play areas and look at the routes to and from them.

When the project was completed in 2010 the Council evaluated the success of the scheme through consultation. Young people concluded that the improvements to the play areas had met the project aims and provided high quality play areas.

9. THE COMMUNITY

OVERALL VIEW OF SOUTHEND

Southend is 16.1 square miles in size and is the largest conurbation in the East of England. Located on the north side of the Thames Estuary approximately 40 miles east of central London, it is bordered to the north by Rochford and to the west by Castle Point.

The borough has 7 miles of award-winning beaches and coastal nature reserves; has over 577 hectares of green spaces including 80 parks and 14 conservation areas and is home to the longest leisure pier in the world. Southend is served by an international destination airport, two railway lines linking to London, with 10 railway stations and many local bus routes.

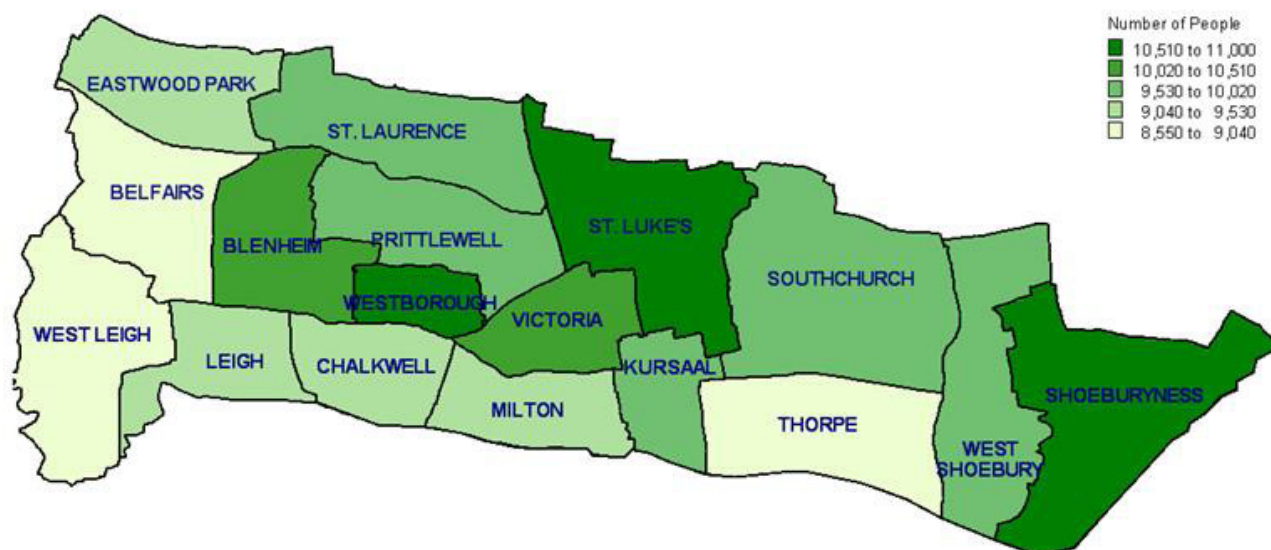
FIGURE 1: MAP OF SOUTHEND-ON-SEA



POPULATION AND DISTRIBUTION

Figure 2 shows the population distribution in Southend-on-Sea and generally reflects the density of housing in the more urban areas. The wards of Shoeburyness, St Luke's and Milton have the highest number of people.

FIGURE 2: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION FOR ALL PERSONS BASED ON MID-YEAR POPULATION ESTIMATE 2010 FOR SOUTHEND-ON-SEA



Source: ONS

The population of Southend-on-Sea is 174,838 (mid-2012 population estimates ONS). By 2021 the population is expected to rise by 6.6% to 186,399 and it's ageing population; population aged 65 and over is expected to rise by 14% by 2021. This will have an impact on the levels and type of services required in future years.

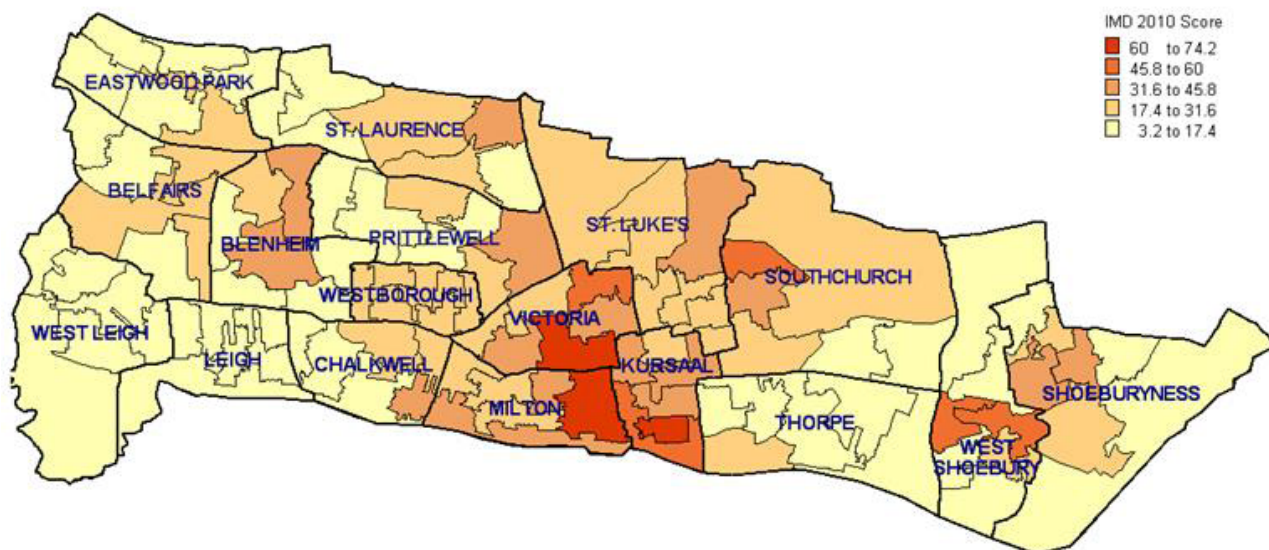
DISADVANTAGE (DEPRIVATION)

Levels of disadvantage are measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010 (IMD 2010). The indices combine a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area (lower super output area [LSOA]) in England.

The higher the IMD score, the more deprived the area. The benefits of green space provision in deprived areas is well documented and as such the level of green space provision, its uses and quality are vitally important in the health wellbeing and economic improvement of these areas.

Figure 3 (opposite) shows which areas in Southend-on-Sea have higher levels of disadvantage (darker areas on map) and so potentially higher levels of need. Main areas of disadvantage are within the wards of Kursaal, Milton and Victoria.

FIGURE 3: SOUTHEND-ON-SEA LSOA IMD 2010 SCORES

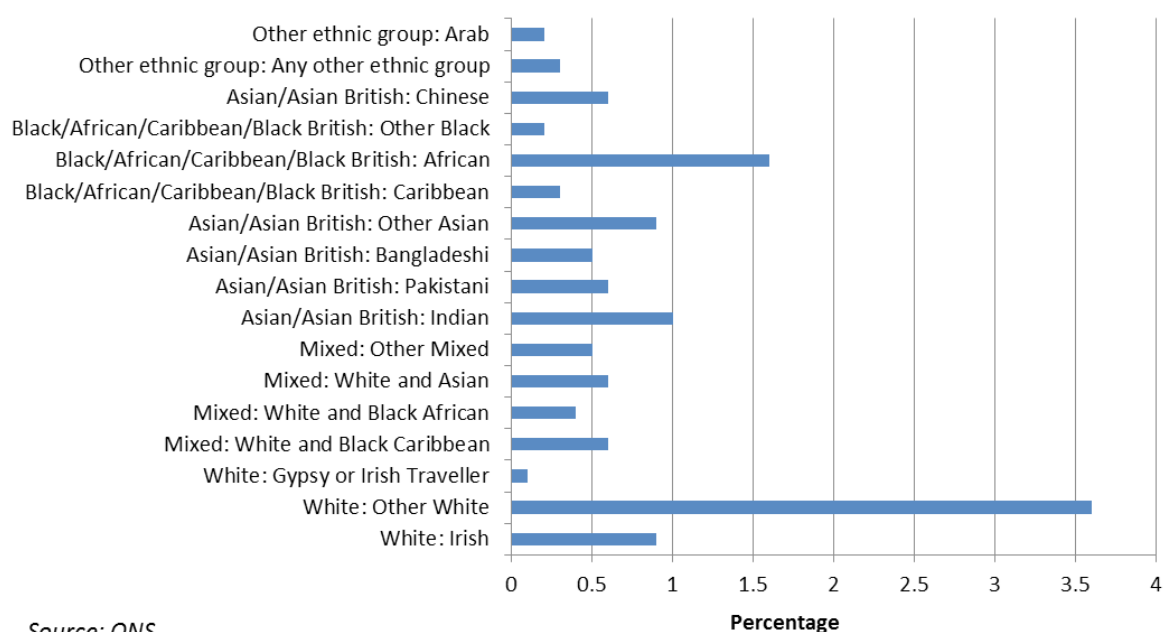


Source: Department of Communities and Local Government

ETHNICITY

Over the last ten years ethnic diversity in Southend-on-Sea has increased. In 2001 7.1% of the population was classified as being from an ethnic minority group (anything other than "White British"). The census of 2011 found the population of ethnic minority groups had increased to 12.9%. The largest increase was in the category "White Other" (1.8% increase) as demonstrated in figure 4. This most likely reflects the pattern of immigration from eastern Europe seen in other areas across the UK in recent years.

FIGURE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION IN ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS, 2011 ONS



Source: ONS

From a service provision perspective, it is important to understand the ethnic make-up of the local population.

WHAT CAN GREEN SPACES DO?

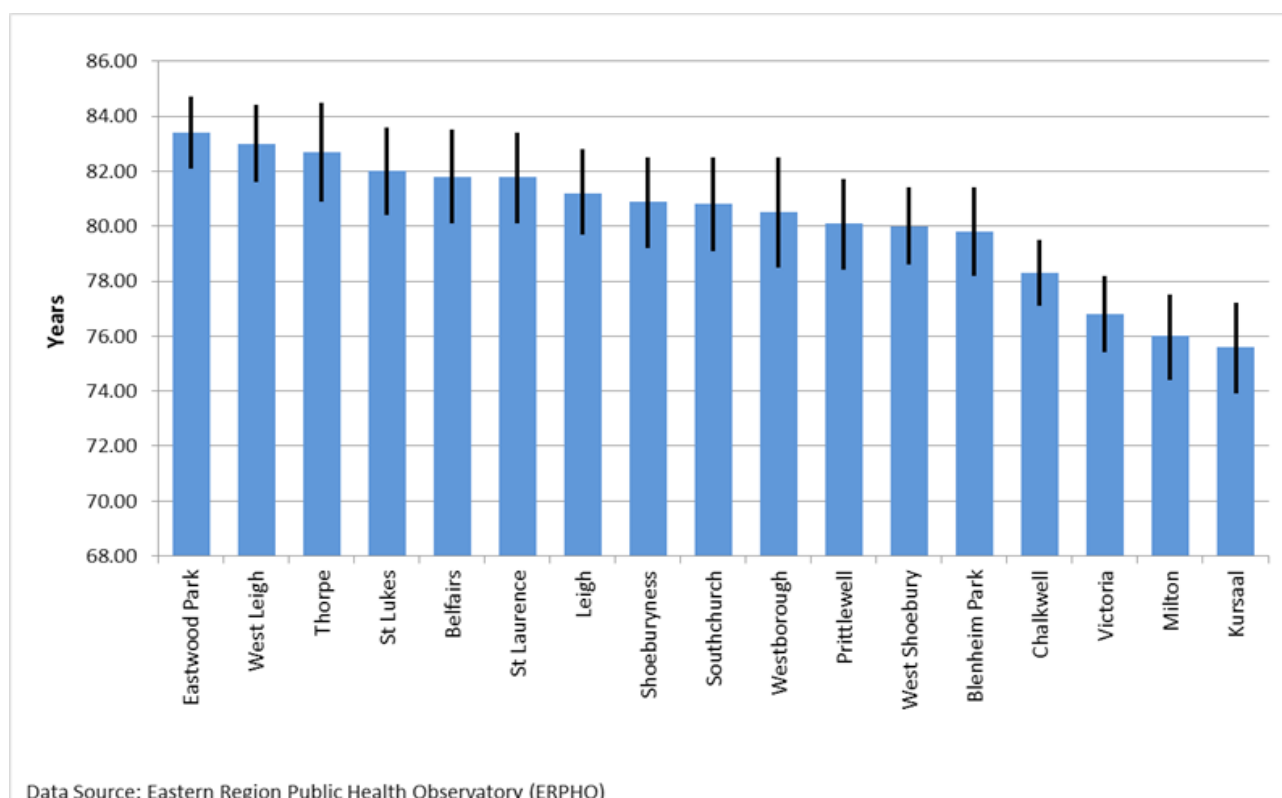
- Enhance the physical character of Southend making it a better place to live and increase civic pride
- Provide effective places for relaxation, contemplation and activities making Southend an attractive and better place to live
- Improve physical and social inclusion including accessibility, particularly for young, disabled and older people
- Providing a wide variety of cultural, social and community facilities, including seasonal activities which make people active and provides space for communication, contemplation, recreation and relaxation.
- Provides popular outdoor educational facilities the young, schools and academic institutions

LIFE EXPECTANCY AND HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Life expectancy is a measure indicating the number of years that a person can expect to live.

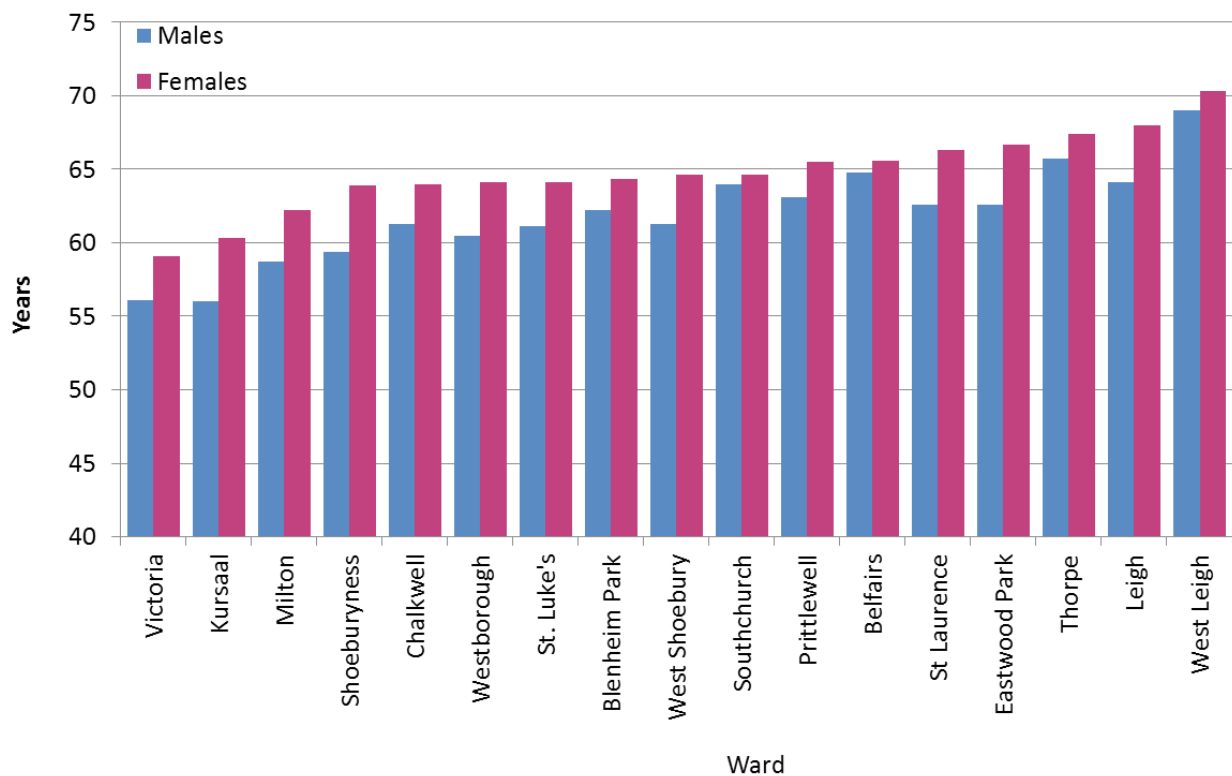
Nationally, life expectancy has been improving year on year over the past decade. However, the health of the most disadvantaged has not improved as quickly as that of the better off, and in some cases, the gap in life expectancy between these groups has widened. Figure 5 shows life expectancy for all wards in Southend.

FIGURE 5: SOUTHEND-ON-SEA LIFE EXPECTANCY, ALL PERSONS, 2008-10



As well as living longer, people need to have a good quality of life. The measure that is used to determine the quality of life a person has is 'disability free life expectancy'. Disability free life expectancy measures the years lived without a condition or illness that restricts a person's ability to perform activities of daily independent living.

FIGURE 6: DISABILITY FREE LIFE EXPECTANCY ESTIMATE AT BIRTH FOR MALES AND FEMALES BY WARD 1999-2003 (EXPERIMENTAL STATISTICS)



The populations of Kursaal, Victoria and Milton wards have considerably lower disability free life expectancy than those of West Leigh, Thorpe and Leigh (Figure 6). This reinforces the link between deprivation and ill health.

MORTALITY FROM CIRCULATORY (CARDIOVASCULAR) DISEASE

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the most common cause of death in the UK. The majority of CVD deaths are from coronary heart disease (46%) and stroke (23%). There is robust evidence that many of these deaths could be prevented through changes in lifestyle to reduce risk factors. Accessible, good quality green space is a major factor in promoting more active lifestyles.

The most important modifiable risk factor for stroke is high blood pressure or hypertension. It is a serious condition known as the "silent killer" as it is asymptomatic and is often undiagnosed. The only way for people to find out they have the

condition is to have regular blood pressure checks. Treatment of hypertension is effective in reducing risk of stroke. Other interventions to prevent heart disease and stroke could include actions to increase levels of physical activity.

WHAT CAN GREEN SPACES DO?

- Contribute to health agendas e.g. reducing stress levels, by providing formal and informal green space and recreational facilities
- Provide alternative routes for circulation, including networks for walking and cycling and safer routes to school therefore encouraging activity.
- Raise air quality and moderating extremes of temperature.



Priory Park

Parks and Open Spaces make a significant contribution to effective residential and commercial development, to economic and social regeneration and are recognised as a driver in inward investment decisions. Good quality and accessible green infrastructure helps to create a positive sense promote healthy living, protect and enhance biodiversity and increase quality of life. Southend's green spaces and other environmentally designated areas contribute towards environmental protection and water management through pollution filtration, flood protection and sustainable urban drainage solutions. Accessible and living landscapes are highly effective in delivering positive health, social inclusion, and community safety and educational outcomes.

WHAT CAN GREEN SPACES DO?

- Provide an attractive and safe environment
- Make towns more desirable to live and do business in and so increase house prices and urban regeneration.
- Parks and green spaces boost tourism
- Protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological habitats
- Improve water quality and flood control.



Southchurch Hall Gardens

10. WHAT ARE THE MAIN PRIORITIES?



TO PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN GOOD QUALITY PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

- Ensure that all green spaces are healthy, safe and secure
- Ensure that green spaces are clean and well maintained
- Ensure that parks and open spaces are attractive with varied horticultural interest
- Promote the use of parks and open spaces for public events and entertainments
- Maximise external funding through grants and development contributions
- Deliver an excellent service while achieving value for money

TO CONNECT THESE SPACES WITH A WELL MAINTAINED, ATTRACTIVE STREET SCENE

- Maintain and improve the quality of green spaces with principle parks achieving Green Flag standards
- Achieve quality standards for the street scene and public realm
- Improve accessibility to all parks and green spaces

TO PROVIDE RECREATION AND SPORTS FACILITIES TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

- Maximise and promote the health benefits of green space
- Maximise the educational benefits of green space
- Review the provision of sports pitches across the town
- Provide and maintain a safe and stimulating network of play spaces
- Identify and develop new play and recreation facilities to reflect changing behaviours

TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE OUR NATURAL GREEN HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY PRESERVING IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

- Emphasise and celebrate local heritage
- Employ sustainable working practises and materials
- Working in partnership with relevant organisations and agencies

TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF GREEN SPACES

- Encourage more community involvement and volunteering
- Develop Community Activator roles to look after and support volunteers both in green space and street scene maintenance
- Promote and extend self-management of allotment sites by societies
- Promote social inclusion through good design, maintenance and community involvement

12. ACTION PLAN

1) TO PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN GOOD QUALITY PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Every resident in Southend will live within easy reach of a publicly usable open space of at Least 0.2 hectares.	<p>Review and update interpretation and general parks information.</p> <p>Promote parks and open spaces to increase awareness and availability.</p> <p>Protect existing parks and open spaces from development or disposal.</p> <p>Update the previous review of green space coverage, signage and route finding within the borough re-confirming areas of poor coverage and build them into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and 106 agreements.</p> <p>Additional funding for signage and access should be sought from grants and philanthropy.</p>	Ongoing	Parks team, Planning team	Estimated annual budget of £50,000
Working towards meeting our quality standard	<p>Review and update maintenance specifications.</p> <p>Ongoing commitment to staff training.</p> <p>Inspection and monitoring</p>	Annual review fed into service plan	Parks team/ Contractors/Culture	<p>External funding bids</p> <p>Officer time</p>
All parks and major green spaces will have a plan to maintain and improve.	All major parks will have an up to date management plan and smaller green spaces will have a management statement identifying maintenance requirements and improvements required.	By 2017	Parks team	Officer time

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Achieve Green Flag standard in all principal parks	Work to maintain Green Flags standards in Belfairs, Priory, Chalkwell and South-church and achieve Green Flag standards in Shoebury park	ongoing	Parks team	Revenue budget for parks maintenance. Capital to be identified
Reduce antisocial behaviour	<p>Ensure high standards of maintenance</p> <p>Remove offensive graffiti and signs of vandalism quickly</p> <p>Close co-operation with the Police, Youth Offending Team and the Probation Service</p> <p>Establish Parks Watch groups to ensure good communication between council officers and the public</p> <p>Provide opportunities for positive recreation such as good play facilities for a wide age range</p> <p>Involve young people in the design and build of new green spaces/playgrounds</p> <p>To 'design out' potential problems in new schemes</p> <p>Promote parks as a good venue for community events.</p>	Ongoing	Parks team, Police, Youth Offending Team etc	Within existing budgets
Continue to undertake condition and replacement surveys of all the property sited on the boroughs green spaces to ensure it is maintained and replaced /developed where necessary.	Continue to assess and work with the Council's property services division to review and maintain these buildings. Developing replacement schemes and potential funding to undertake the replacement where possible. In particular Priory Park Café and Blenheim Park Pavilions.	Annual programme	Asset management, property team	To be identified

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Increase the number of events and activities taking place within the boroughs parks and green spaces	<p>Enhance the spaces and their facilities to attract independent organisation to hire to run events and activities.</p> <p>Continue to work with local organisations such as Metal Arts to develop both major and minor parks events and activities.</p> <p>Work with other Cultural and Council sections to utilise the parks and open spaces for events and activities.</p> <p>Promote use of parks and open spaces which currently host few events</p>	Ongoing	Events team, partners, etc	Within existing budgets
Continue to develop the parks and green spaces income streams	<p>Continue to review other areas initiatives to raise income from parks and open spaces determining if applicable to implement in Southend.</p> <p>Annually review the parks and green space charges and leases to ensure appropriate charge is being levied.</p>	Annual review	Culture/Parks team	Within establishment

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Develop and undertake major parks and green space schemes by securing external funding.	<p>Continue to develop major parks and green space developments by seeking and unlocking external funding. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The re-landscaping and restoration of Southchurch Hall and Southchurch Hall park • The development and implementation of Gunners Heritage centre. • The refurbishment of Priory Park and Leigh Library Gardens • Green space links from urban areas 			
Review parks and green space infrastructure developing a standard approach across the borough.	<p>Develop and implement a universal style for all signage. Removal of all 'dog waste' bins and encourage recycling. Reduce the amount of plaques and reflect donated trees in more suitable ways. Use porous materials for hard surfaces to improve drainage. Review fencing its requirement, maintenance and integration with the street scene. Standardise bin design and other furniture.</p>	Ongoing subject to annual review/service plan	Parks team	Capital investment to be identified \$106 funding, CIL,
Staff development	<p>Continue to work with staff to encourage horticulture and management training. Develop and implement apprentice schemes.</p>	Annual review	Parks team	

2) TO CONNECT THESE SPACES WITH A WELL MAINTAINED, ATTRACTIVE STREET SCENE

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Develop and introduce 'greener streets' programme	Promote tree donations Identify areas of need Encourage greater community involvement eg 'Southend In Bloom'	Ongoing annual programme targeting given areas	Parks, Street Scene In Bloom Residents/Tenants Associations Local businesses	£20,000 pa
Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the boroughs street scene	Develop an integrated delivery approach within the Place Department.	2015/16	Place department	Within existing resources

3) TO PROVIDE RECREATION AND SPORTS FACILITIES TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Refurbish and renew play areas across the borough where needed.	Update the previous review of play spaces required across the borough reconfirming priority areas. These areas should be incorporated into the Infrastructure delivery plan. Sidmouth play area and Manners Way, Leigh Library Gardens, Colne Drive Additional funding should be sought from grants and other services such as public health to maintain and improve play areas across the borough.	Review play strategy April 2016	Playground improvement costs Sidmouth £170k Manners Way £120k Colne Drive £50 Leigh Library £50k	Ongoing maintenance costs £20,000 per annum
Review sports pitch provision within the borough	Identify current and likely future use and consider geographical spread and accessibility	July 2015	Parks team, Planning	Within establishment costs

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Increase the provision of wheeled sports areas, Parkour, MUGAS and outdoor gyms	Review the need and opportunities across the borough to identify potential sites for these facilities. Work to identify and secure funding for their implementation and the incorporation of new sports facilities like Parqour.	2019	Parks team	£15k outdoor fitness £50k wheeled sports
Revitalise the quality and use of outdoor tennis courts within the borough	Undertake a review of tennis courts and their requirements, rationalising those which are in areas of low demand and secure external funding to develop revitalise those that are in demand.	2016	Lawn Tennis Association Parks team	External funding
Enhance the educational value of green spaces	Best use of website Working with third parties School visits and planting projects, Forest Education Initiative, install good quality interpretation boards in areas of particular interest Maximise use of new technology e.g. apps	Annual programme eg National Tree Week	Essex Wildlife Trust South Essex Natural History Society	Within existing budgets App development £50 – 60k

4) TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE OUR NATURAL GREEN HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY PRESERVING IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

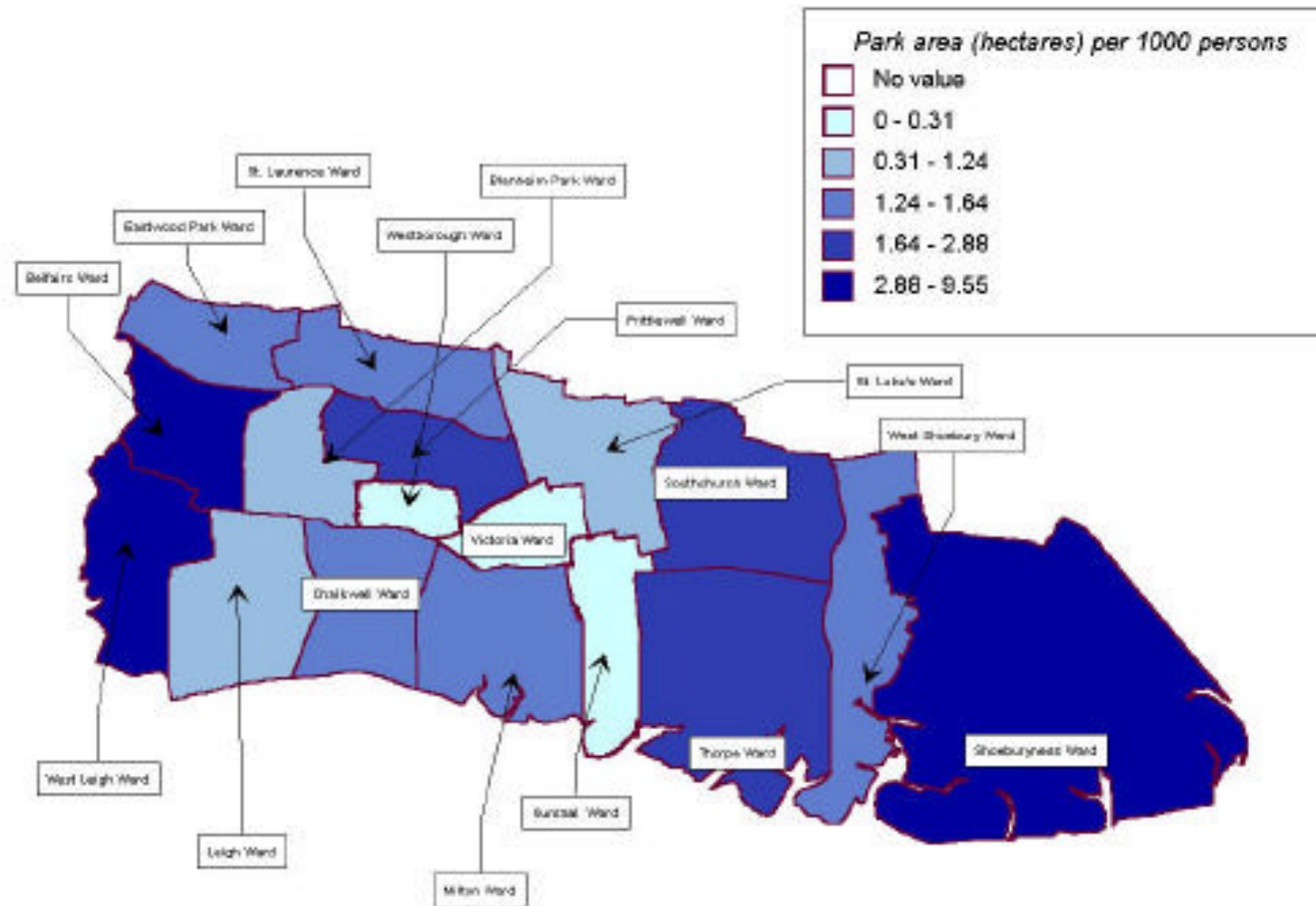
WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Improve Biodiversity by continuing to implement wildlife friendly schemes and management within the borough's parks and green spaces.	Review each green space within the borough and consider the effectiveness, effect on public health and impact on biodiversity implementing wildlife friendly schemes where appropriate. If heavy investment is required to develop the space the scheme should be built into the Council's improvement development plan.	Deliver 3 local schemes each year	Partner working Essex Wildlife Trust etc Parks team	£9,000 per annum

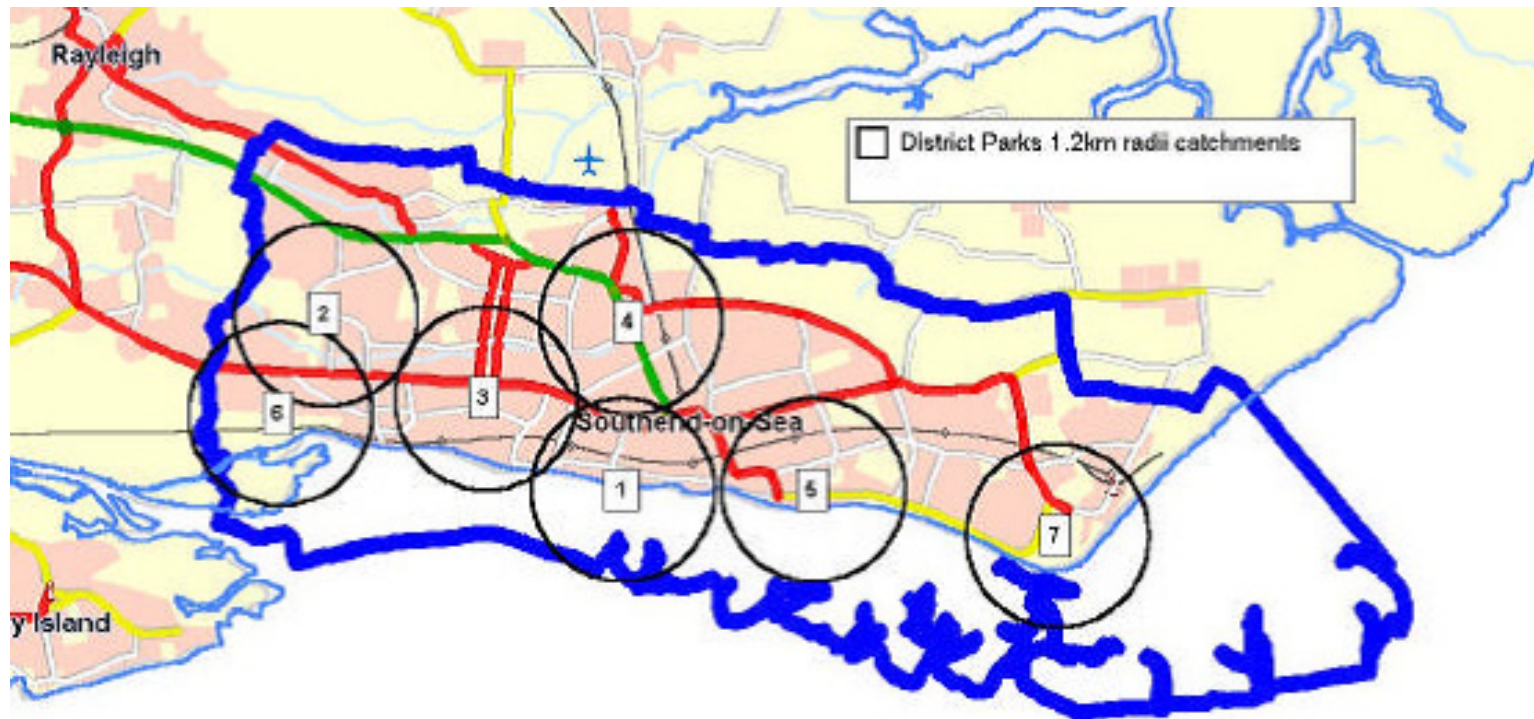
WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Increase the number of Green Corridors within the borough.	Identify potential green corridors, the benefits it can bring and its aspirations. Improve the biodiversity value of green corridors where possible and ensure they are incorporated boroughs improvement development plan and 106 agreements to attract funding.	April 2015	Parks team	External funding Revenue funding £5k p.a.
Increase the maintenance and number of local designated sites (e.g. SSSI's Local Wildlife Sites etc.)	Work with Essex Wildlife Trust and other third sector organisation together with volunteers to develop and maintain sites of biodiversity within the borough Revise management plans for Belton Hills, St Marys, Oakwood Park woodland	Management plans complete by one each year	Parks team South Essex Natural History Society Essex Wildlife Trust South Essex Conservation Volunteers	Within establishment
Promote the role and importance played by parks and open spaces in reducing impact of climate change	Identified benefits while retaining leisure and recreational use of sites	Ongoing	Parks team, planning,	Within existing budgets
Sustainable management	The parks division will ensure sustainable management by the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recycling of all green waste • reduction of herbicide • reduction of peat use • Use of recycled materials such as granite kerb edgings, road plantings, railway sleepers and wood mulch • Reduce energy use • Reduce water use 	ongoing	Parks team, property team	Within existing budgets
Review the Council's tree policy and annual tree planting	The Council's tree policy will be reviewed to take account of climate change and the effect of diseases such as Ash Dieback.	2016	Arb team Planners	Within existing budgets
Develop and introduce 'greener streets' programme	Promote tree donations Identify areas of need Encourage greater community involvement eg 'In Bloom'	Ongoing annual programme targeting given areas	Parks, Street Scene In Bloom Residents/Tenants Associations, Local businesses	£20,000 pa

5) TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF GREEN SPACES

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	TIMESCALE FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Work to increase capacity by leasing out society allotments sites into self management	Commence discussions with local allotment societies to encourage them to take lease on the land and self-manage sites	2015/16	Asset management, legal team, parks team	Within existing budgets
Continue to deliver subsidised donated tree scheme	Promote scheme through National awareness days, local press	ongoing	Parks team	£5,000 pa
Create network of community orchards	Identify sites	Annual programme	Parks team	External funding estimate £5,000 annually
Increase volunteering	Develop Community Activator roles to look after and support volunteers both in green space and street scene maintenance.	2015	Working with Southend Association Voluntary Services Essex Wildlife Trust	£20,000pa
Develop programme of cultural events and activities encouraging resident involvement promoting health benefits gained from culture, recreation, parks and nature	Identified programme of events/outreach incorporating library services, arts, leisure development and parks sites focusing initially on areas of deprivation within the borough	2015	Culture team	£15,000 pa
Develop community ownership of buildings	Review the current use and management of buildings within the parks and green spaces. Look to develop community ownership therefore reducing the management cost of opening, closing and inspecting.	2015	Parks team, asset management, planning	Capital budget to be identified

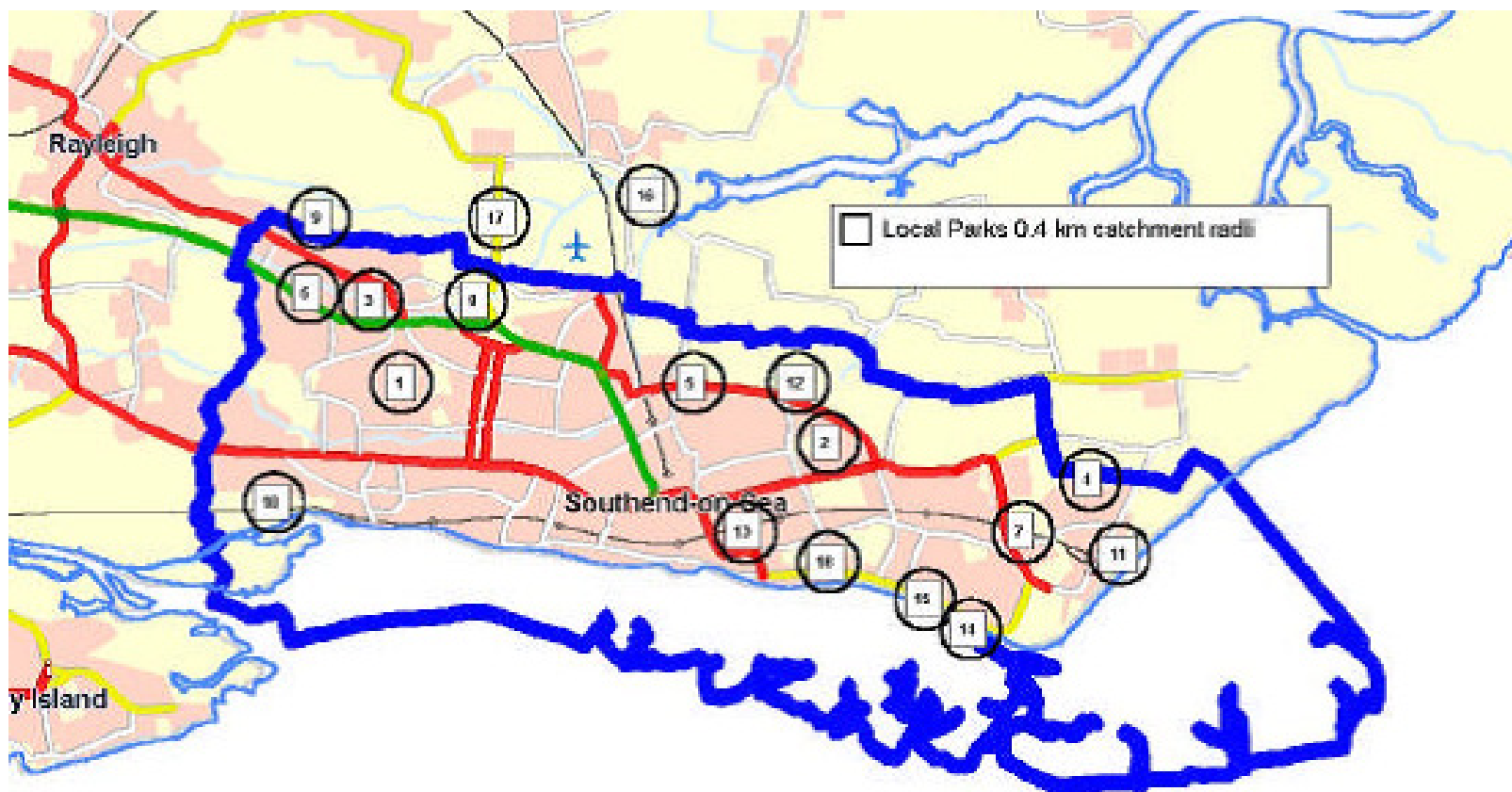
APPENDIX 1 GREEN SPACE PROVISION IN SOUTHEND





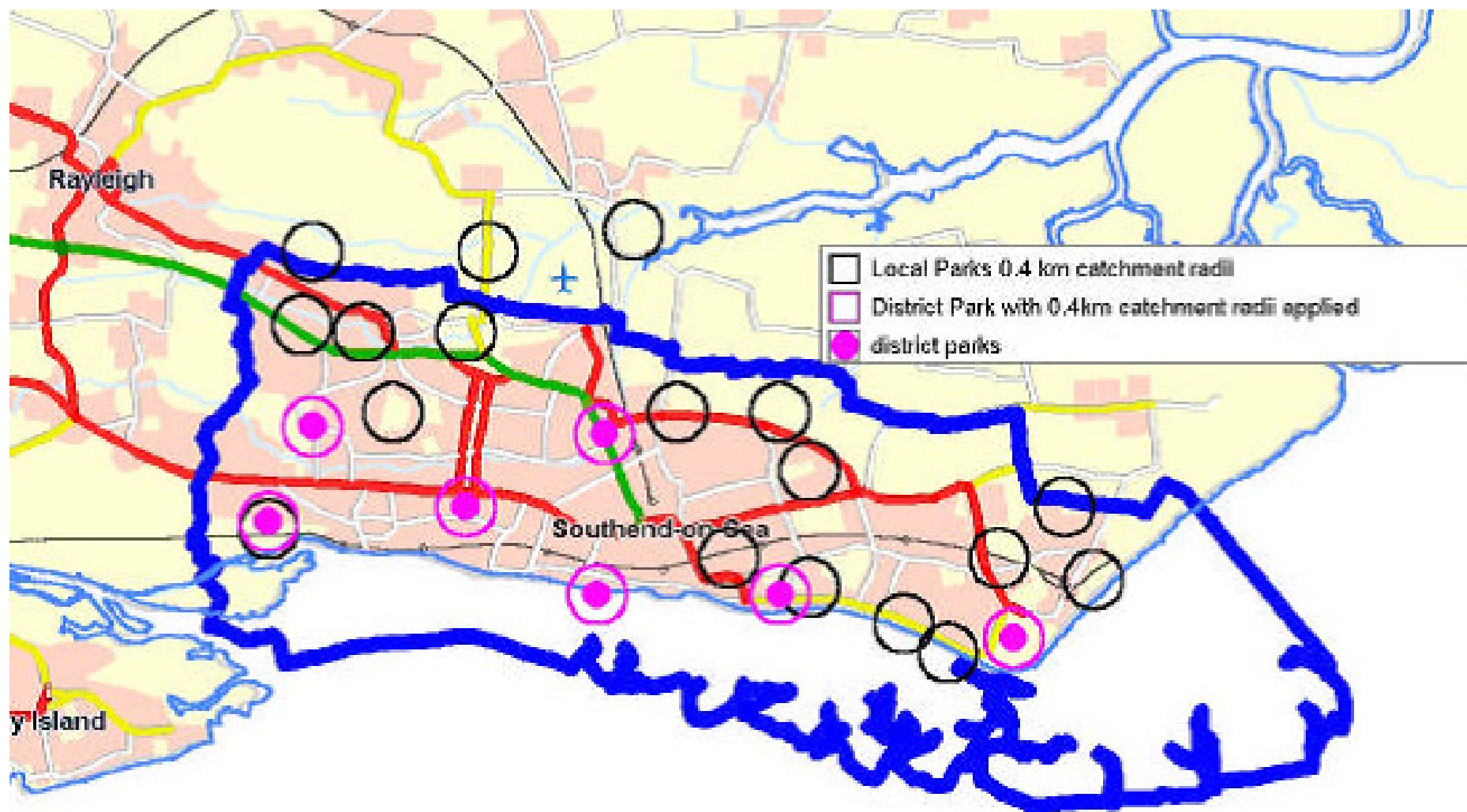
SITE REF NAME (PRIMARY FUNCTION / SECONDARY FUNCTION)

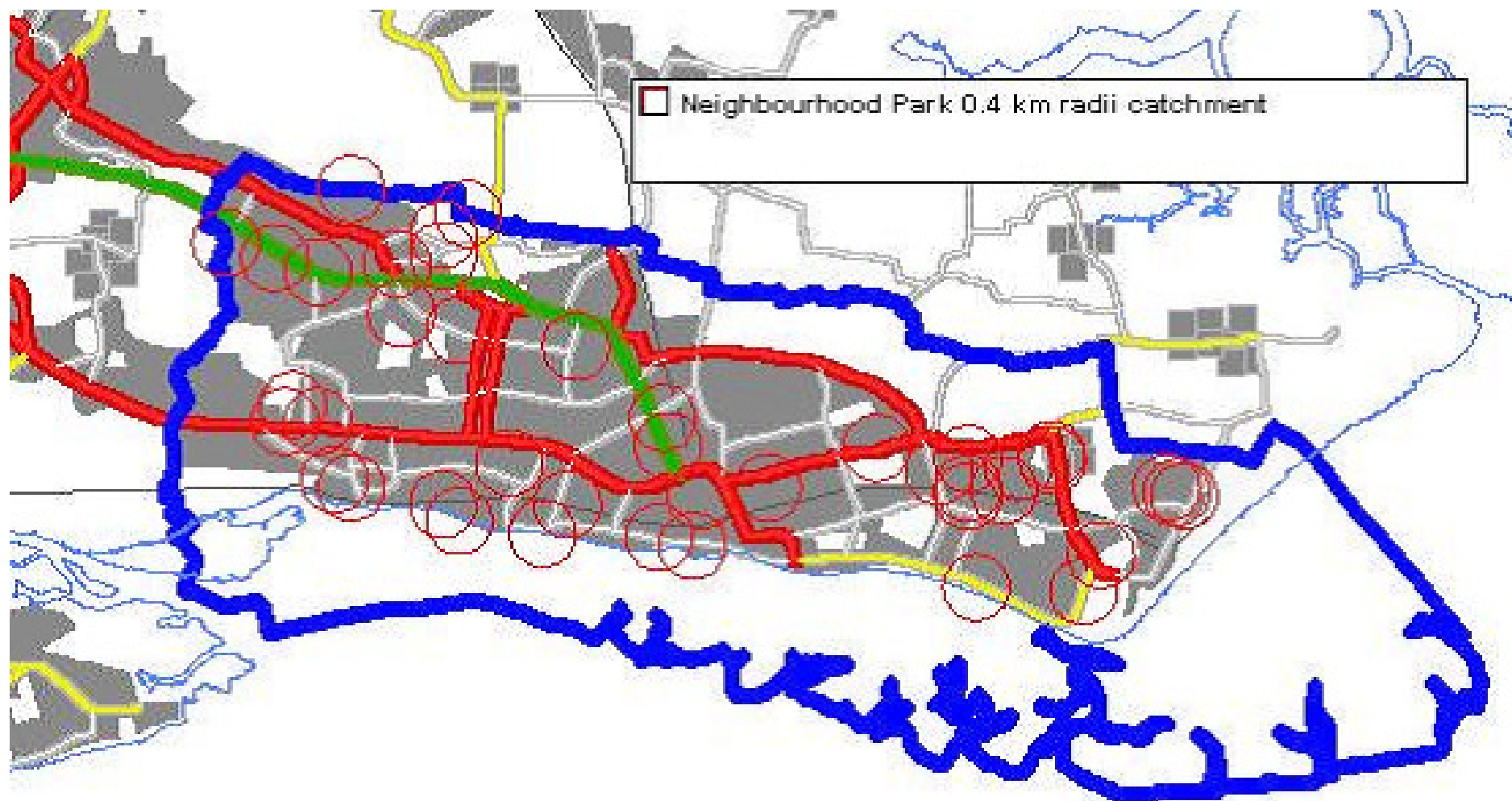
- 1 Southend Cliffs (Informal recreation / Ornamental)
- 2 Belfairs Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation)
- 3 Chalkwell Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation)
- 4 Priory Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation)
- 5 Southchurch Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation)
- 6 Belton Hills/Marine Parade Gardens (Informal recreation / Ornamental)
- 7 Gunners Park (Informal recreation)

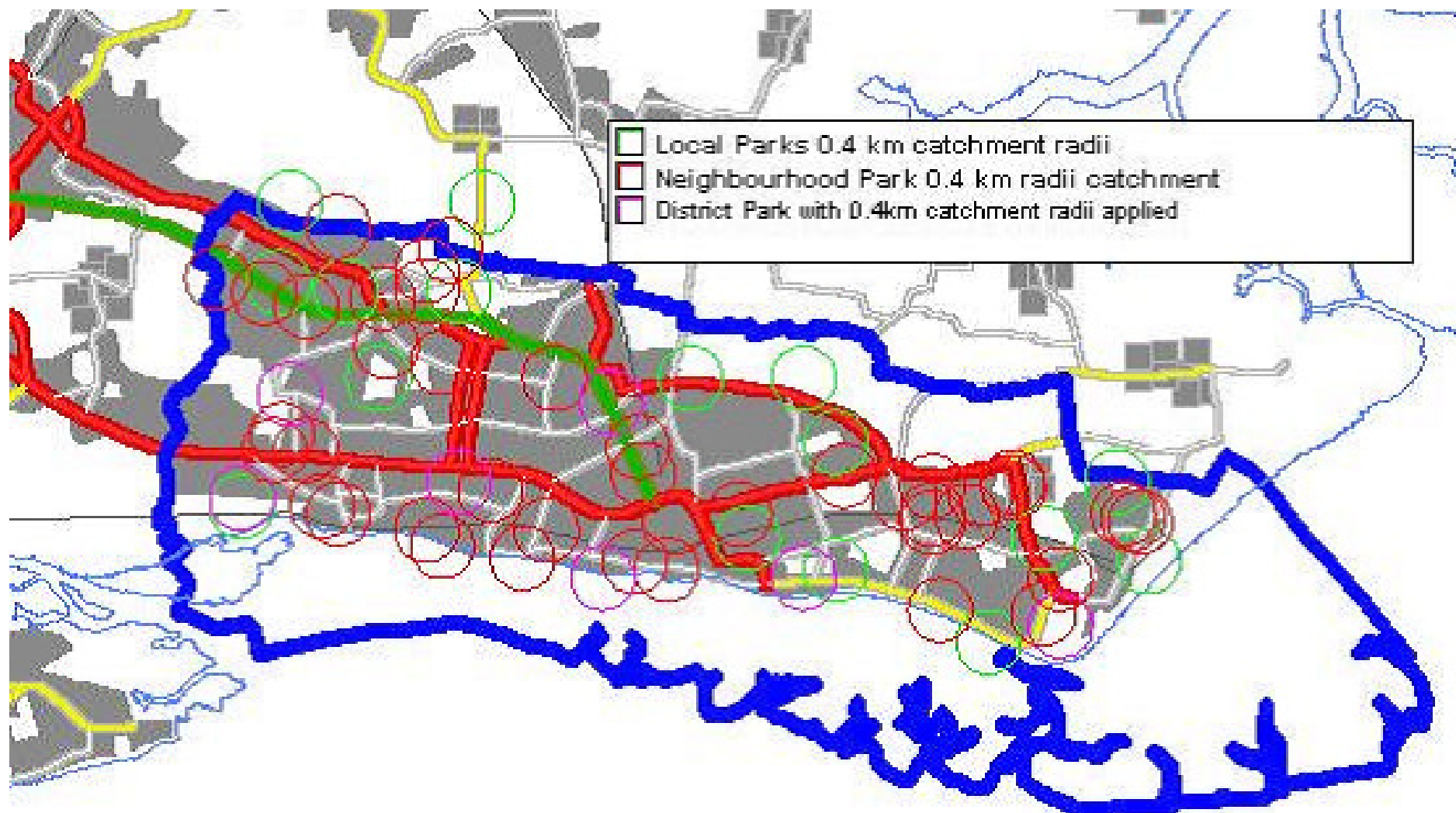


SITE REF NAME (PRIMARY FUNCTION / SECONDARY FUNCTION)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Blenheim Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation) | 10 Leigh Cliffs/Gardens (Informal recreation / Ornamental) |
| 2 Bournes Green (Informal recreation / Formal recreation) | 11 East Beach (Informal recreation) |
| 3 Eastwood Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation) | 12 Garon Park (Formal recreation / Informal recreation) |
| 4 Friars Park (Informal recreation) | 13 Southchurch Hall Gardens (Informal recreation / Ornamental) |
| 5 Jones Memorial (Informal recreation / Formal recreation) | 14 Shoebury Common (Informal recreation / Ornamental) |
| 6 Oakwood Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation) | 15 Thorpe Bay Gardens (Informal recreation) |
| 7 Shoebury Park (Informal recreation / Formal recreation) | 16 Warners Park (Formal recreation / Informal recreation) |
| 8 St Laurence Park (Informal recreation) | 17 West Barrow Hall Park (Formal recreation / Informal recreation) |
| 9 Edwards Hall (Informal recreation) | 18 Southchurch Park East (Informal recreation / Formal recreation) |







APPENDIX 2 LIST OF SOUTHEND'S GREEN SPACES

CLASSIFICATION	NAME	SQ METERS	HECTARES	
PARKS & OPEN SPACE	Belfairs	854000	85.4	
DISTRICT PARKS (MORE THAN 20 HECTARES)	Gunners Park	340000	34.0	
LOCAL PARKS (LESS THAN 2 HECTARES)	Blenheim Park	95000	9.5	
	Bournes Green park	48000	4.8	
	Chalkwell Park	108000	10.8	
	Eastwood Park	63000	6.3	
	Friars Park	79000	7.9	
	Garon Park	170117	17.1	
	Leigh Cliffs	31000	3.1	
	Marine Parade Gardens / Belton Hills	255000	25.5	
	North Shoebury Open Space	71000	7.10	
	Oakwood Park	76000	7.6	
	Priory Park	180000	18.0	
	Shoebury Common	46000	4.6	
	Shoebury Park	79000	7.9	
	Southchurch Park	125000	12.5	
	Southchurch Park East	72000	7.2	
	Southend Cliffs	91000	9.1	
	St Lawrence Park	100000	10.0	
	Thorpe Bay Gardens	25000	2.5	
	SUB TOTAL			
NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS (LESS THAN 2 HECTARES)	Bonchurch Recreation Ground	1200	1.2	
	Cavendish Sports Ground	11000	1.1	
	Churchill Gardens	10000	1.0	
	Cockethurst Park	14000	1.4	
	Leigh Library Gardens	9000	0.9	

CLASSIFICATION	NAME	SQ METERS	HECTARES	
NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS (LESS THAN 2 HECTARES)	Milton Road Gardens	3000	0.3	
	Prittlewell Square	4000	0.4	
	Scott Park	17000	1.7	
	Southchurch Hall Gardens	20000	2.0	
	Millennium Open Space-Prince Ave	20000	2.0	
	The Shrubbery	11000	1.10	
	Warrior Square	5000	0.5	
	Leigh Marshes	115460	11.55	
	SUB TOTAL	3039117	303.91	
AREA OPEN SPACE	Arterial/ Fairway open space	12000	1.2	Belfairs
	Aylesbeare Open Space	1712	0.17	Shoebury
	Belgrave Road Open Space	950	0.1	Belfairs
	Branscome Square	5000	0.50	Shoebury
	Brookfields Open Space	1605	0.16	Eastwood
	Burleigh Square	3000	0.3	Shoebury
	Shoebury War Memorial	4235	0.42	Shoebury
	Cheldon Barton Open Space	3495	0.35	Shoebury
	East Beach	46000	4.6	Shoebury
	Fairview Gardens	2456	0.25	Belfairs
	Wildlife Garden o/s Centre Museum	1673	0.17	Priory
	Collingwood Open Space	2120	0.21	Shoebury
	Four Sisters Way/ Close	1800	0.18	Eastwood
	Green Lane Open Space	675	0.07	Eastwood
	Hoblythick Lane Open Space	1090	0.11	Priory
	Hogarth Drive Courtyard	630	0.06	Shoebury
	Hurst Way	1930	0.19	Leigh
	Maplin Way North	15000	1.5	Shoebury
	Neil Armstrong Way Area	3683	0.37	Eastwood
	Oak Walk	874	0.09	Belfairs

CLASSIFICATION	NAME	SQ METERS	HECTARES	
AREA OPEN SPACE	Rembrandt Close	84	0.01	Shoebury
	Repton Green open space	1615	0.16	Eastwood
	Ridgeway Gardens	5000	0.50	Leigh
	Sedgemore Open Space	18997	1.9	Shoebury
	Thorpe Hall Avenue	17813	1.78	Thorp
	The Gardens - at lower end of Leigh Hill	575	0.06	Leigh
	The Leas Open Space	8586	0.86	Southend
	Thorpe Bay Station Gardens	1370	0.14	Shoebury
	Turner Close Courtyard	410	0.04	Shoebury
	Undercliff Gardens	6000	0.60	Leigh
	Underwood Square	1531	0.15	Belfairs
	Windermere Road Courtyards	694	0.07	Southchurch
	Whistler Rise Courtyard	435	0.04	Shoebury
	Vermeer Crescent	630	0.06	Shoebury
	Goya Rise	630	0.06	Shoebury
	Dandies Open Space	2500	0.25	Eastwood
	Danescroft	9120	0.91	Eastwood
	Gainsborough Open Space	10100	10.10	Southend
	Jena Open Space	2900	0.29	Shoebury
	Cluny Square	2196	0.21	Southend
	SUB TOTAL	221114	17.36	
SPORTS GROUNDS	Alexandra Bowls Centre	2995	0.3	
	Belfairs Golf Course	498150	49.82	
	Belfairs Sports Ground	51000	5.1	
	Chalkwell Esplanade	13000	1.3	
	Elm Road Sports Ground	40000	4.0	
	Victory Sports Ground	57000	5.70	
	Jones Memorial Ground	63000	6.3	
	Warners Park	130200	13.02	

CLASSIFICATION	NAME	SQ METERS	HECTARES	
SPORTS GROUNDS	West Barrow Hall Park	73000	7.30	
	New youth Ground	95527	9.55	
	Garrison Cricket Square	6220	0.62	
	Sub Total	1030092	103.01	
PLAYGROUNDS * PLAYGROUND CONTAINS ALL-INCLUSIVE ITEMS OF PLAY	Blenheim Park*	2000	0.2	Local equipped Area for Play
	Belfairs Park*	2000	0.2	Neighborhood Equipped Area for Play
	Bonchurch*	900	0.09	
	Bournes Green	800	0.08	Local equipped Area for Play
	Caulfield Road*	1585	0.16	
	Chalkwell Park (Toddlers)	1480	0.15	Local equipped Area for Play
	Chalkwell Park (Older)*	2055	0.21	Neighborhood Equipped Area for Play
	Christchurch Road	2335	0.23	Neighborhood Equipped Area for Play
	Cluny Square*	6010	0.60	Local equipped Area for Play
	Cockethurst	990	0.10	Local equipped Area for Play
	Colne Drive	300	0.03	Local unequipped Area for Play
	Danescroft	395	0.04	Local equipped Area for Play
	Dandies Farm	1610	0.16	Local equipped Area for Play
	Delaware	3000	0.30	Local equipped Area for Play
	Eastwood Park	430	0.04	Local equipped Area for Play
	Fairfax Drive	745	0.07	Local equipped Area for Play
	Friars Park	1140	0.11	
	Gainsborough	1900	0.19	Local equipped Area for Play
	Gunners Park	4320	0.43	Local equipped Area for Play
	Jena Close	100	0.01	Local equipped Area for Play
	Jones Memorial	1650	0.17	Local equipped Area for Play
	Nightingale Close	365	0.04	Local unequipped Area for Play
	Leigh Library Gardens*	300	0.03	Local equipped Area for Play
	Lifstan Way	1656	0.17	Local equipped Area for Play
	Milton Gardens*	100	0.01	Local equipped Area for Play

CLASSIFICATION	NAME	SQ METERS	HECTARES	
PLAYGROUNDS * PLAYGROUND CONTAINS ALL-INCLUSIVE ITEMS OF PLAY	Manners Way	1310	0.13	Local equipped Area for Play
	Oakwood Park*	1290	0.13	Local equipped Area for Play
	Priory Park*	5160	0.52	Local equipped Area for Play
	Scott Park	1995	0.20	Local equipped Area for Play
	Shoebury Park*	2000	0.20	Local equipped Area for Play
	Sidmouth	1560	0.16	Local equipped Area for Play
	St. Laurence Park*	1200	0.12	Neighborhood Equipped Area for Play
	St. Laurence Millenium Open Space	10000	1.0	Local unequipped Area for Play
	Southchurch Park*	340	0.03	Local equipped Area for Play
	Three Shells	80	0.01	
	Estuary Housing 36 Kursaal Estate	1000	0.10	Local equipped Area for Play
	Social Care 37 Saxon Gardens	1285	0.03	Local equipped Area for Play
	Social Care 38 Saxon Gardens	2285	0.03	Local equipped Area for Play
	Social Care 39 Saxon Gardens	3285	0.03	Local equipped Area for Play
	Social Care 40 Coleman Street Flats (Housing)	500	0.05	Local equipped Area for Play
	SUB TOTAL	65456	6.55	
CLOSED CHURCHYARDS	Holy Trinity Church	8195	0.82	
	St. Clements Churchyard	2533	0.25	
	St. John's Churchyard	3407	0.35	
	St. Mary's Church	3617	0.36	
	SUB TOTAL	17815	1.78	
NATURE CONSERVATION AREAS	Belfairs Nature Reserve	374000	37.40	
	Belton Hills	144552	14.46	
	Leigh Marshes	211000	21.10	
	Two Tree Island	221260	22.13	
	Edwards Hall Park	121000	12.10	
	Waitrose Natural Habitat	18340	1.83	
	SUB TOTAL	1090152	109.02	

CLASSIFICATION	NAME	SQ METERS	HECTARES	
ALLOTMENTS	Bridgewater Drive	4050	0.41	
	Delaware	2835	0.28	
	Eastern Avenue	48560	4.86	
	Edwards Hall	8090	0.81	
	Elm Road	3645	0.36	
	Hamstel Road	32370	3.24	
	Herbert Road	4860	0.49	
	Lifstans Way	4050	0.41	
	Manners Way	22275	2.23	
	Norwich Avenue	17415	1.74	
	Rochford Road	12960	1.30	
	Sandringham Road	2025	0.20	
	St. Andrews Road	7290	0.73	
	Vincent Crescent	5265	0.53	
	Westcliff	44550	4.46	
	Growing Together Trust - Fairfax Drive	12000	1.20	
	Leigh TC Marshall Close	2000	2.0	
	Leigh TC Leigh 14000	14000	1.4	
	Leigh TC Manchester Drive	30000	3.0	
	SUB TOTAL	278240	27.82	
WOODLAND	Owlshall wood	4000	0.40	
	Oakwood	24700	2.47	
	SUB TOTAL	28700	2.87	
Grand Total		5770686	577.07	

APPENDIX 3 LIST OF SITES OF IMPORTANCE TO WILDLIFE IN SOUTHEND

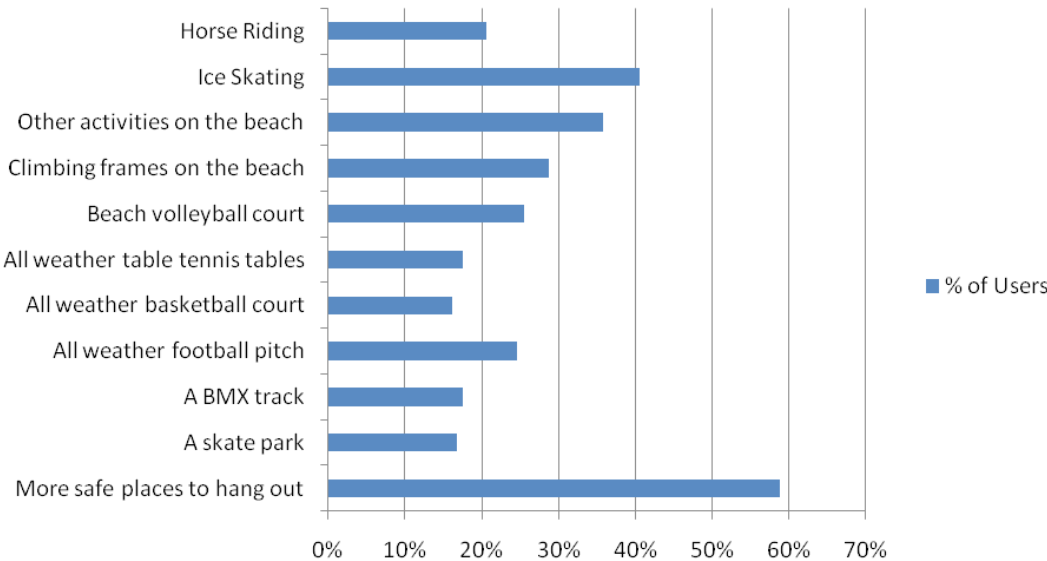
LOCATION	DETAILS
Two Tree Island, Eastern section (TQ 820850 - 840840)	Former rubbish tip now rough grassland. Most important areas are extensive saltmarsh and mudflats to the east and south. The mudflats are part of Leigh National Nature Reserve (NNR) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (S.S.S.I.) The island itself is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) only.
Benfleet and Southend Marshes (including Southend-on-Sea Foreshore) (TQ 820840 - 930840)	A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) [for birds] and a Ramsar (Internationally important wetland) site. Part of the SSSI is also designated as Southend-on-Sea Foreshore Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
Belton Hills (TQ 820850 - 830850)	Unimproved grassland managed for wildflowers and invertebrates. A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
Hadleigh Great Wood (Belfairs Nature Reserve) (TQ 810870/820870)	Ancient semi-natural Woodland. A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
Belfairs Woods and Golf Course (TQ 820870/830870)	Remnant ancient semi-natural woodland with some areas of grassland. A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
Oakwood (TQ 835885/832886)	Remnant ancient semi-natural woodland divided by A127. A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
Edward's Hall Park (TQ 836896)	Former farmland, now semi-natural grassland with possible example of remnant "ridge and furrow" in the area. Well established hedgerows and mature (formerly pollarded) trees. Potentially a good educational site. A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
Southchurch Park - East (TQ 890850/900850)	Southchurch Park East has a valuable lake, a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The lake has one of the most extensive reed beds in the borough with breeding Reed Warblers, Moorhens, Mallards and Dabchicks. The stream that feeds into it has an excellent aquatic flora and possibly rich fauna as well. Regular mowing of the slopes of the ditch could be detrimental to wildlife.

LOCATION	DETAILS
Thorpe Hall Golf Course (TQ 900850/910850)	A natural water catchment area, now providing a mosaic of semi-natural habitats. A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
St. Mary's Churchyard, Nrt. Shoebury (TQ 928862)	Pond and ditch important features. No formal designation but Great Crested Newts discovered during survey in 2005.
Foulness and Maplin Sands (TQ 900800 - 950870)	A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Most of it lies outside the borough boundary but abuts Benfleet and Southend Marshes SSSI boundary.
Shoebury Common , North and South (TQ 925841/926842)	A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and adjacent a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Remnant coastal grassland containing a rare grass species and other interesting flora. Shoebury Common North is herb rich grassland, especially on raised knolls with rare Clovers and Fiddle Dock. Shoebury Common South contains elements of relic flora of sandy common land including the nationally scarce Bulbous Meadow Grass, a mainly Mediterranean species which dies down completely by May. The South Western corner appears to be of most interest, however many interesting species could be found protected by the low fence near the road. A nationally scarce liverwort also occurs on this site.
Shoebury Coastguard Station (TQ 927841)	A remnant of ancient coastal grassland with a rich and varied flora. Could be considered as one of the most important botanical sites in the county. A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and adjacent a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

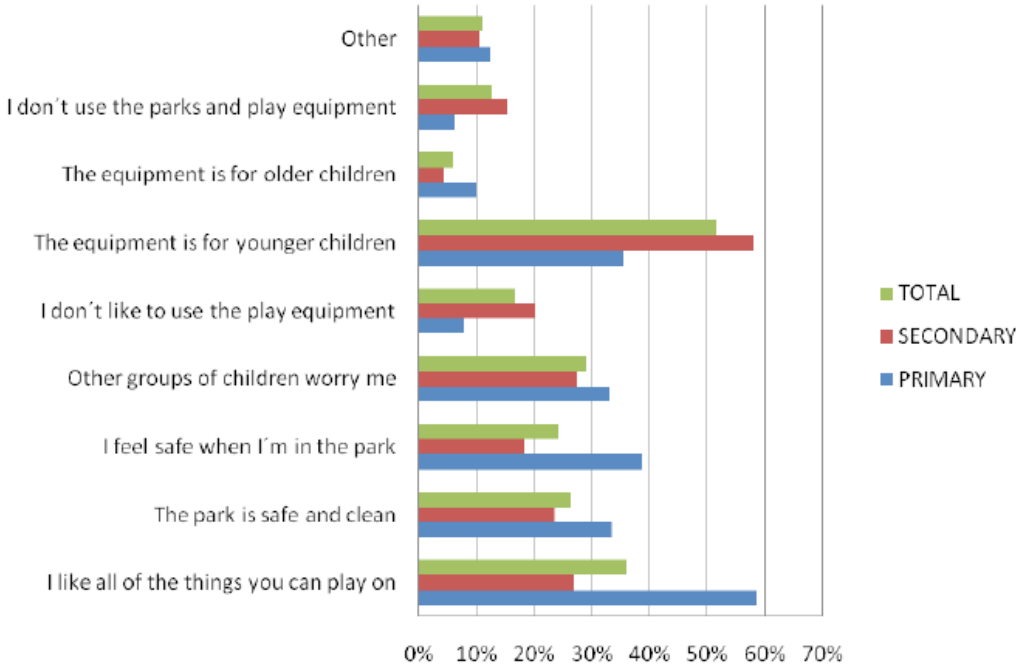
APPENDIX 4 CONSULTATION

The views of local people on open space and recreation opportunities can be inferred from the results local use and user satisfaction surveys of parks and open spaces under its management. The key findings and issues highlighted are:

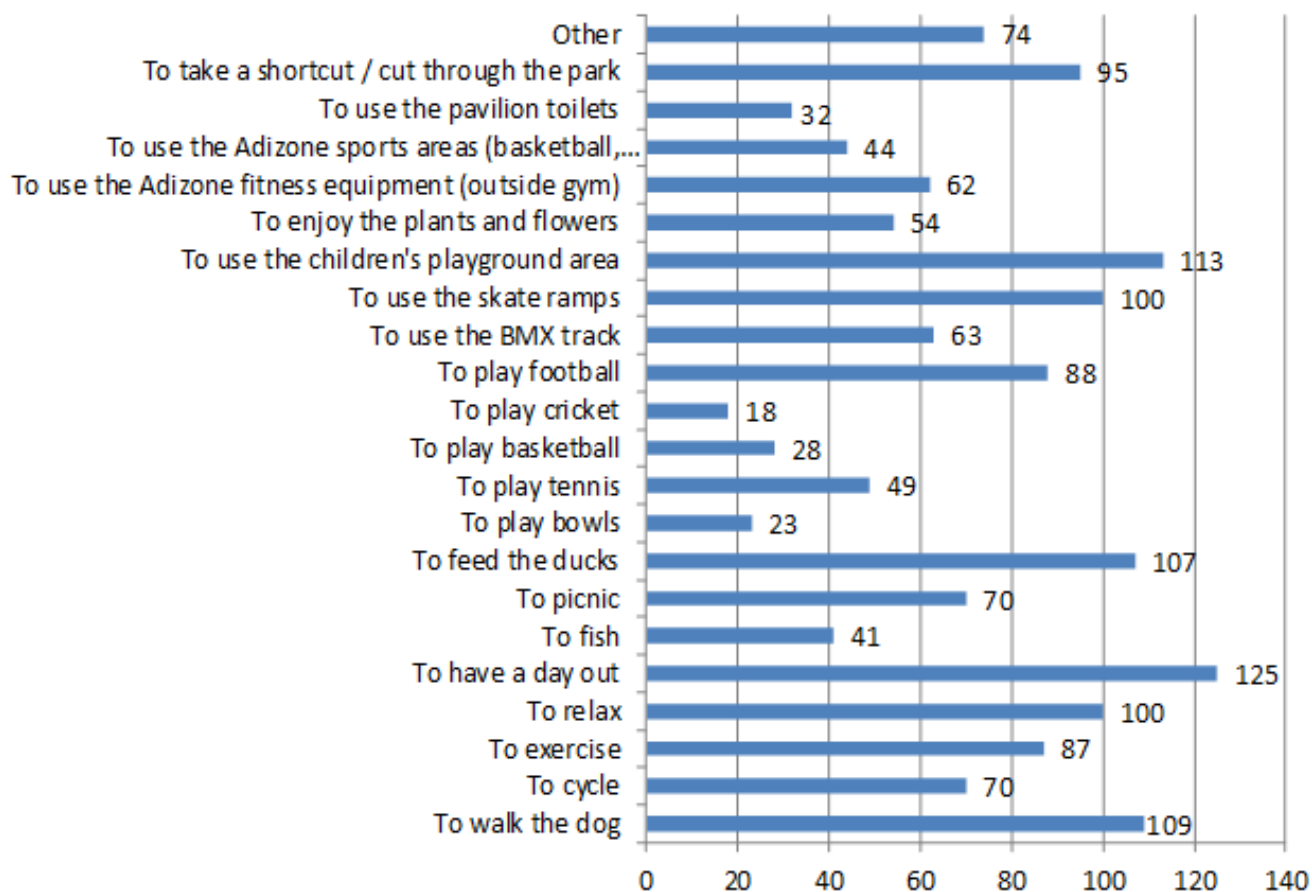
What facilities would you like to see in your local area? (multiple choice)



What do you think of the parks and play areas in your area? (multiple choice)



Reasons for using Parks



COMMUNITY WANT:

- Providing a wide variety of cultural, social and community facilities, including seasonal activities such as fairs, festivals and concerts.
- Protecting the historical, cultural and archaeological heritage
- Improve Toilet Facilities within parks
- Improve Café & refreshment facilities within parks
- Improve safety in green spaces with lighting and CCTV
- Reduce antisocial behaviour