

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



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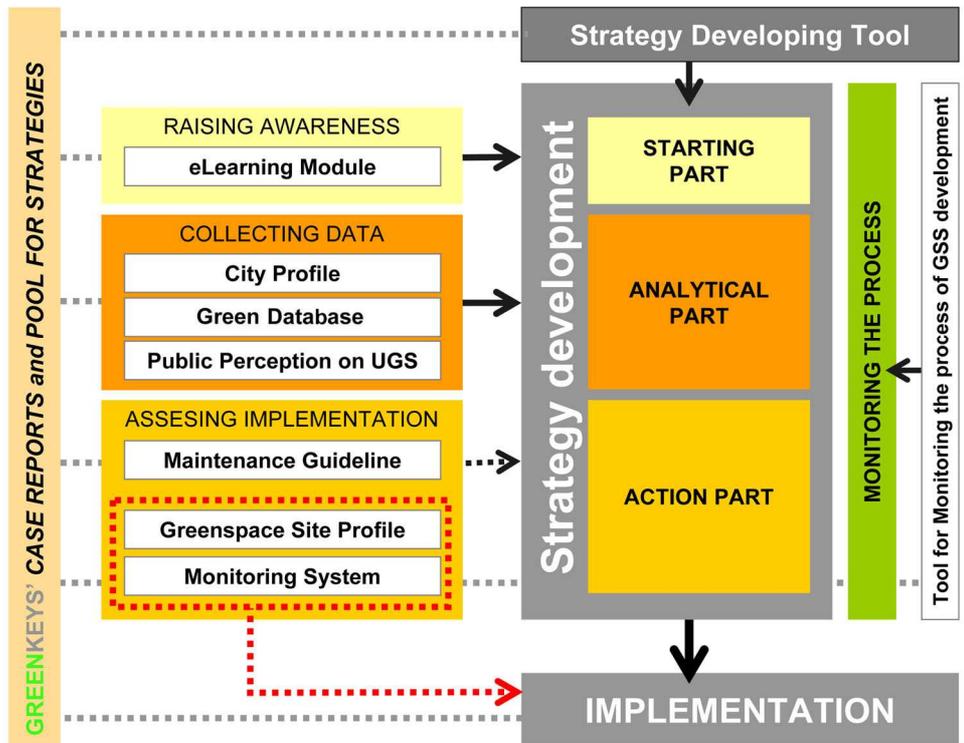




URBAN GREEN AS A KEY FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Project coordinated by LEIBNIZ INSTITUTE OF ECOLOGICAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, DRESDEN

Scheme: GreenKeys' Tools for Urban Green Strategy development process



STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

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Halandri, Greece
Alexandra Alexandropoulou, 2008

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

I Introduction

An integrated and strategic approach to green space planning and management is essential in order to effectively provide green spaces and safeguard the urban quality of life and wellbeing. This STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE is intended to give some more detailed information and hints about the strategy development process and so help European city administrations and local governments get involved, organise, develop, and implement Urban Green Space Strategies in a more effective way. It is part of the set of **STRATEGY DEVELOPING TOOL** that has been prepared to assist with the formulation of Urban Green Space Strategies. It can be used together with the **OVERVIEW TABLE**. For better and more effective results the **TOOL FOR MONITORING THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING GREEN SPACE STRATEGY** is strongly recommended to be used alongside this guide.

The strategy development guide supports the goal to create a vision for a sustainable future and the goals of sustainable urban development. It has been developed over the course of the project and is based on:

- a review of general strategic planning literature with a specific focus on green space management analysis; and
- the experiences gained from the examination of the progress of GreenKeys partner cities in their strategy development processes.

In general, strategy is a policy for achieving a set of specific objectives. It is the development of a major approach or method that is suitable for attaining goals and resolving specific issues.

The Urban Green Space Strategy confronts the present green spaces situation, with all their problems, conflicts, potentials and needs, together with the future collective vision and goals. It will link the work of different departments with the aspirations and needs of local communities and other stakeholders. It covers all the contemporary aspects and subjects dealing with green spaces planning, design, management and maintenance together with the issues surrounding both capital and revenue funding. As a result it provides guidance on the tangible development proposals, tasks and actions that are required for implementation to ensure the realisation of visions and goals.

In GreenKeys the following understanding about urban green space strategy has been adopted, which is based on CABE Space (2004): **Urban green space strategy sets out a collective vision for improved green spaces, which meet community needs and provides a reference point for allocating resources and plans of action.**

For further information and especially for examples of the different strategy formulation steps please consult the manual **GreenKeys @ Your City – A Guide for Urban Green Quality** – Chapter 2.

2 Formal and Practical Framework of the Guide

This guideline briefly outlines a structured procedure which is based on the GreenKeys experiences and recommendations which are documented in existing green space strategy guides (e.g. CABE Space (2004), Mayor of London (2004), Scottish Executive Central Research Unit (2001), see Box 1). Whilst these guidelines have been developed to conform with the United Kingdom Planning Regulations they do, however, provide useful and valid instructions for application in European cities outside the UK. Moreover, with an appropriate adaptation to the particular needs of the GreenKeys partner cities, they have served as an effective starting point for the development of green space strategies within the GreenKeys project. The project has analysed, summarised and employed the most important aspects from these and other documents and incorporated them into the GreenKeys approach to Green Space Strategy Development.

Box 1: Sources for published Green Space Strategy Guidelines

Green space strategies: a good practice guide

Green Space strategies, a good practice guide aims to help a local authority to undertake a robust assessment of its green space provision and to set out a vision for the whole of its green space and the goals it wants to achieve.

Source: CABE Space (2004). *Green space strategies: a good practice guide*. CABE Space, London.

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=485>

Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies.

The Mayor's London Plan recognises the valuable contribution that open spaces play in providing a good quality environment. Local authorities should produce an Open Space Strategy in order to understand fully the provision of open space and the demands and needs placed upon them. The Guide will assist this process and establish a common framework for benchmarking and strategic planning in London. The Guide sets out practical guidelines on the methodology and content of an Open Space Strategy within the London context. It provides advice on assessing the quantity and quality of open spaces and in identifying the needs of local communities and other users of open spaces.

Source: Mayor of London (2004). *Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies*. Best practice guidance of the London Plan, Greater London Authority, London, 70 p.

http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/sds/open_space.jsp

Rethinking open space.

The report addresses a variety of issues related to the interdependent roles of local authorities, local communities and the planning system in order to achieve effective open space management and maintenance. It concludes that most Scottish local authorities should rethink their approaches to open space planning and need a better methodology for the preparation and implementation of green space planning policies. To make towns and cities attractive and viable places in which to live, work and play open space strategies and policies should seek to satisfy community needs and promote sustainable green networks of accessible, high quality green spaces. Chapter 7 outlines a methodology for green space strategy preparation to support that task.

Source: Scottish Executive Central Research Unit (2001). *Rethinking open space. Open space provision and management: a way forward*, Edinburgh, 149 p. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2001/03/8576/File-1>

3 The GreenKeys approach to an Urban Green Space Strategy development

There is no fixed programme or structure that can be used to adequately formulate an urban green space strategy. The procedure to be applied depends upon many circumstances, including local conditions and requirements, as well as national planning legislation, processes and the cultural characteristics of the public organisations. In that sense, every city has to establish its own approach for proceeding with the work. Financial and personal resources, as well as available skills, also play an important role in determining the quality and comprehensiveness of the strategy. Some general tasks are, however, mandatory and necessary to work out in any strategy planning exercise. The structure discussed in the following paragraphs has been drafted to serve as a recommendation.

Preparing an Urban Green Space Strategy

In light of the experiences gained within the GreenKeys project it is recommended that the strategy development process is organised in three major parts:

- Starting part (preliminary activities)
- Analytical part (information gathering and evaluation)
- Action part (formulation of strategy)

The **Starting part** addresses the important tasks that are intended to create the foundation for a successful strategy development process. Within this phase:

- a responsible core strategy group has to be established;
- the required skills identified; and

- a working programme elaborated upon;
- political support has to be arranged; and
- the main stakeholders and actors should be identified and contacted; furthermore
- a preliminary mission and vision should be elaborated upon.

The investment in these tasks will pay off later, therefore, care should be taken to address and deal effectively with any issues and recommendations that arise during this phase.

The **Analytical part** includes the collection and analysis of the ‘objective data’ and ‘subjective information’ that are both necessary to put the strategy onto a satisfactory empirical basis. The data pool collected in this phase is indispensable in making reasoned judgements and deciding upon the major priorities that the strategy should deal with. The data pool makes it possible to identify important characteristics about the local situation, including green space type, location, accessibility, quantity and quality of public parks and green spaces. If available, GIS (Geographic Information System) could be a good tool to collect the spatial and tabular data digitally. This would enable the ready evaluation and presentation of the data in map form, together with the integration of existing strategies or plans into the urban green space strategy.

In the **Action part**, the results of the previous activities are compiled and a document containing the strategy decisions is drafted. The draft document is the basis for consultation with the stakeholders involved in the strategy process. Their responses can be integrated into the general conclusions in the final version of the strategy document. The final document is then subject to the approval of the local authority. Possession of such a green space strategy document means that it can be used as a reference point for local authority decisions related to the development, planning, design, and maintenance of green spaces. The document establishes the strategic thinking and management approach that is necessary to make a significant contribution to the sustainable development of an authority’s towns and cities.

Elements of the GreenKeys’ Green Space Strategy

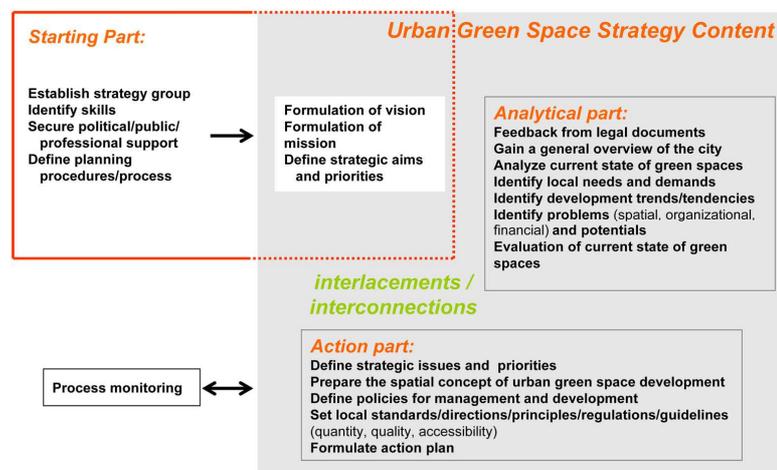


Fig. 1: shows the 3 main parts of the GreenKeys strategy building process and their elements. The concise description of the parts and elements can be found in the manual **GreenKeys @ Your City – A Guide for Urban Green Quality** – Chapter 2.

The following paragraphs describe the individual tasks and the working steps for each phase. These steps are **not** set out as a sequential process and consequently are **not** numbered. In the reality of the strategic development processes, overlapping of tasks in each phase cannot be avoided – as a general rule this is not a problem. It is the responsibility of the strategy group to decide which sequence will work best in a particular situation.

4 Starting Part – Preliminary Activities

General considerations

The preparation process of a comprehensive and integrated green space strategy involves a multitude of tasks and activities that require different approaches and skills. When initiating a strategic planning process a set of preparatory considerations, consultations and decisions have to be made before commencing the core work programme:

- Who will own the strategy?
- What are the purposes of the strategy and the strategic plan?
- Will external stakeholders and the public be involved?
- How is the development process managed and organised in phases and tasks? and
- What level of resources and time will be needed?

These important questions have to be addressed as one of the first tasks of a strategy group. For example, a comprehensive green space strategy development that addresses all the open spaces in a city has to identify the multiple links that the strategy will have to other policies and strategies, to other departments, organisations, units, groups or persons and to their particular interests, needs and demands.

Establishing the strategy group

The initiation and organisation of the complex task of strategy development, as well as the production of the required documents, is the responsibility of a core strategy group. The head of a green space department or another spatial planning department responsible for green spaces should take the lead to initiate the group. He or she can kick-off the group formation by issuing an invitation letter which outlines the purpose, scope and form of the green space strategy.

An appropriate size for a core group is about three to five members. In municipalities where the management of urban green spaces comes under the jurisdiction or custodianship of different departments, the core group should be of a size that reflects the specific department make up and responsibilities. It is advantageous to have a key decision maker of the city council in the core group, who is a strong supporter of green space issues.

The core group needs a clear leadership that can define the roles and responsibilities of the group members. It also requires a project management that coordinates the analytical work, together with the communication, consultation and reporting to the council and the public throughout the working process of the green space strategy. The consideration and identification of key stakeholders for possible inclusion as group members should be a permanent activity of the core team as well as the basic task of keeping in contact – this can help to stimulate the group members to stay active and interested during the whole process.

The strategy group might perform a stakeholder analysis to discover who such persons or groups could be. A balanced mix of stakeholders is ideal. The selection should consider the nature and relevance of the contribution that an invited stakeholder can make to the development of the strategy. Stakeholders should possess a strong interest in the topic, along with considerable influence and standing (positional or influential power) to be able to promote the implementation of the strategy; otherwise the whole activity will remain ineffectual. Another group of stakeholders will be people who have high levels of interest but low levels of influence in moving the organisational processes forward. These will include public interest groups and ordinary citizens. The latter, however, mostly represent the broad public who will benefit from the strategic green space development.

An external expert in strategic planning can support the core group and be a facilitator and mediator.

Box 2: Examples of strategy groups**Members of the Darlington Open Space Strategy group (Steering group)**

- Assistant Director – Environmental Services
- Principal Planning Officer
- Planning Officer
- Principal Countryside and Rights of Way Officer
- Assistant Director – Leisure and Arts
- Estates and Property Manager
- Representative from Children’s Services
- Representative from the Primary Care Trust
- Two community representatives

Source: Darlington Borough Council, 2007. Darlington Open Space Strategy 2007 – 2017.

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk>

The Walsall Council green space strategy group

- Authority Councillors (11) and Officers (50)
- enabling support from CABE Space and GreenSpace
- Friends Groups (12 groups / 30 people)
- Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (9 LNPs / 30 people)
- Stakeholders / Partners
- Household Survey: 1420 responses
- 100 people – direct contact

Source: Walsall Council (2006), Walsall Green Space Strategy, Draft for Consultation

http://www.walsall.gov.uk/walsall_gss_draft_for_consultation_web.pdf

Identification of skills and work programme

The core group shall be responsible for the identification of the skills needed to develop a green space strategy as well as for the elaboration of a suitable work programme.

Producing an integrated and comprehensive green space strategy involves approaches and methodologies that require diverse skills in:

- Landscape architecture and green space maintenance;
- Urban land use planning and design;
- Landscape ecology and nature protection;
- Stakeholder consultation;
- Public relations and public participation;
- Project management;
- Financial management and fund raising;
- Strategic planning, trend analysis and others.

It is most unlikely that all of these skills will be within the core competence of a single department. Many of these skills and competences should be distributed within the organisational structure of a municipality but several may well be absent.

The strategy group has to identify the kinds of skills that are needed to master the task of strategy development. It then has to identify which department can provide know-how, competence, data, and work force input and involve the departmental representatives with the work of the strategy group. The group should identify and invite those persons who are most influential and valuable for the required tasks and who are willing to contribute in a constructive way.

A joint team approach within the municipality is suitable to get the people working together. During the unfolding of the process, the strategy group will expand, as a suitable number of supporters is needed.

Any indispensable skills and competences that are not available in-house will have to be hired from external experts and consultants. External experts can serve as process designers. They could act in

particular, as facilitators and mediators for the strategic dialogue and group discussions in internal and public meetings, where issues tend to become controversial.

The strategy group should devise a working programme, which sets out the scope of the green space strategy, its main working steps and tasks and the required resources and timescales. This will depend upon the decisions concerning the purpose and scope that the green space strategy should cover.

The time frames for both the plan and the strategy development should be realistic and achievable: not too short and not too long.

- If too short a time frame is projected there is a risk that all the relevant steps may not be considered and all the relevant drivers may not be consulted. A strategic plan covering too short a time span is not strategic.
- If too long a time frame is projected the strategy development process can lose its power and motivation. A strategic plan that covers too long a time range can lose its relevance.

For a green space strategy a five-to-fifteen year plan horizon may be suitable. For the strategy development process an eighteen-to-twenty-four months planning process may be an appropriate period of time in many cases. This depends, however, on the information that is currently available and how reliable this is. More time will be required if much of the information has to be generated to a high quality or when many stakeholder consultations are involved. The working programme has to be communicated to the council or key decision makers in order to get approval: in particular for allocating resources and agreeing the timescale.

Securing political support:

The acceptance and the success of any strategic approach will depend heavily on the political support behind the strategic planning process. It should be present at the beginning and must be regularly approved during the whole range of activities.

The first responsibility of the core group is to negotiate the political agreement about the overall strategic planning effort and the key working programme. At the beginning, the key decision or policy makers have to obtain the support and commitment of the council for the strategy group in order to move on with the strategy development process. In similar vein it is important to consider and include the external key decision makers from outside the municipality within the negotiation process at an early stage.

In the circumstances whereby the strategy building is initiated by a political or governmental mandate, the process should run more smoothly than if it is initiated from within a green space department. If the latter is the case, it should be backed up by an approval letter from the mayor or city council. It is recommended, therefore, that the political decision makers in the municipality are informed at the outset about the activities in order to gain their support for any task or activity to be undertaken in the course of the project. The missions, visions and goals resulting from the strategic dialogue are only as valuable as their acceptance and confirmation by the necessary political representatives. Creating a supportive environment at the political level for a green space strategy (which is a strategic concern by itself) makes it much easier to get tasks and actions launched afterwards. In order to help create continuous support for the strategy process and content the strategy group can present the city council and the mayor with documents explaining the vision of the strategy and its benefits, the expected results and the potential for improvement to the quality of life in the city. It is important to:

- Contact influential politicians and public representatives and introduce them to the importance of urban green spaces for the community and about the need to think and act strategically to improve green space provision and quality.
- Inform them about the work programme and any on-going activities and invite them to vision workshops, presentations, public hearings and other related events so as to gain their support.



GreenKeys provides the eLearning Module, which supports these activities to improve the awareness of politicians in the subject of green space issues. The eLearning Module is available in the CD-ROM Tools

Securing public support

A comprehensive strategy needs cooperation between a variety of public actors and public interest groups. In particular, when green spaces are created and/or managed by other public organisations or are privately owned, the identification and involvement of these key stakeholders is important at the beginning of the process.

Citizens should be informed and encouraged to actively take part in the strategy development process. Public participation can improve the development of visions that meet the needs of the whole community. Citizens can introduce important elements of local knowledge and skills into the whole process and communicate their needs and expectations (GreenKeys provides a questionnaire to support the identification of user preferences and user values of economic criteria, **→TOOL FOR PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS URBAN GREEN SPACE, Chapter 4.6**). The consideration of public workshops on different focus themes (e.g. vision, problems, ideas or solutions) should be included within the strategic planning process, in addition to announcements about activities regarding green spaces in public newspaper articles and other media forums. Citizens can participate in different ways – they can collaborate both formally and informally. The strategy group must decide the appropriate level of comprehensiveness for the public participation activities, given the scope and aims of the strategy building process. The availability of skills and resources is a critical factor as it determines the extent of the public participation activities.

Support from external professionals is also important because these people can provide support during the strategy development and give affirmation and approval about its content from an independent perspective. During workshops, round table discussions and interviews the inclusion of external experts adds to the quality of the project from the collaboration and exchange of their experiences, opinions, and thoughts. The honest expression of problems and information collection from on-going activities and examples can contribute to a better strategy.

Defining planning procedures / process

It is important at the beginning of the process that thoughtful consideration is given and decisions reached about the legal form of the green space strategy and the resulting document. It should be clear what formal procedures need to be followed to so as to ensure conformity and coherence with the national and local legal planning processes and procedures. In this phase a review of planning legislation would be **advisable**. Consideration should be given to the issue of how the Urban Green Space Strategy document will be embedded officially in the formal development policies of the city. Make sure that you are aware of the current planning processes and other local council strategies which are important for your strategy.

The **→TOOL CITY PROFILE (Chapter 4.1)** supports the collection of data and information in an organised form. Possible questions from the **→TOOL CITY PROFILE** to this topic are highlighted in box 3.

Box 3: Consider for this step the questions **→TOOL CITY PROFILE**

- 3.5 Participation in and responsibilities for planning, design, implementation and maintenance of urban green and open spaces
- 3.5.3 How is the procedure for the planning of green spaces usually used in your city: integration of planning documents, guidelines, participation, etc.?
- 3.5.4 What instruments or documents are used? Please judge also the efficiency:
- 3.5.5 Please describe the general planning procedures in your city. Are there any national, regional or other implications that have to be observed? If so, what are they?

Formulating the mission and vision statements

The mission and vision statements are important elements in the green space strategy, and should be included in any strategy document. It is possible and acceptable to merge both statements together into one paragraph. It is often the case that the words 'mission' and 'vision' are used interchangeably in strategy documents. They have, however, distinct and important difference roles: 'mission' describes 'general purpose', whilst 'vision' describes 'future direction'.

It is of crucial importance to formulate both the preliminary mission and the vision statements at the beginning of the strategy development process: these will then serve for self-reference and guidance purposes for further discussion in the group. Both statements will be subjected to debate with the strategy group, the internal and external stakeholders and the public; they will be refined and adjusted during and through to the end of the process. A final agreed-on version is then documented and published in the strategy document. This should not be more than ½ of an A4 page.

The mission statement

The mission statement briefly sets out the purpose and the values of the organisation(s) which is/are responsible for the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of urban green spaces. In a readily understood manner, it explains to the audience:

- What the organisation is;
- What it is doing;
- Why it is doing it;
- With and for whom it is doing it; and
- Its distinctive competences.

The Statement can include distinctive competences in terms of values and philosophy in dealing with nature and with people. This will provide for the audience a better understanding of the intention of the department with respect to the public.

An unclear (or absent) mission statement holds the risk of causing problems for the organisation because:

- Members of the organisation could focus on the wrong things, due to lacking or misleading information
- The organisation's view could be too limited in its possibilities, especially if the statement is overly narrow.
- The organisation may not become aware of the need to rethink its purpose and make internal changes based on changes in its environment.

Finally, it is most important that the group achieves a consensus on the elements and format of the mission statement so that the audience will actively support it.

The vision statement

The vision statement outlines, at the beginning of the strategy process, what the organisation wants to achieve in the mid and long-term period of time. A vision statement should provide a bridge between what the organisation has at the moment and what it wishes to have in future. Based on this vision statement the strategy group can develop the green space strategy. In particular, the vision statement describes what the urban green space situation will ideally look like in the future and the results it aims to achieve. The strategic vision statement provides direction and inspiration for organisational goal setting. Examples of vision statements are presented by box 2.

A vision statement should go beyond what the green space department has already achieved in the municipality, otherwise it would not induce any progress. A vision statement usually has some inspirational components which may sometimes sound irrational, however, it must be achievable in the context of the resources that are, or will be available for the department in the near future. It is important that the members of the strategy group, the decision makers, the involved stakeholders, and, later on, anyone involved in the realisation of the strategy, share the vision.

Box 4 provides some examples of mission and vision statements.

Box 4: Examples of mission and vision statements

The Trust for Public Land Mission Statement, US

The Trust for Public Land conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring liveable communities for generations to come.

From: http://www.tpl.org/tier3_print.cfm?folder_id=1965&mod_type=2

Mission statement of Whangarei District Council, New Zealand

In its mission statement, the Whangarei District Council undertakes to “provide services and facilities for the community in the most efficient, effective and transparent manner, enabling the district to prosper as a safe, healthy and attractive place”.

Whangarei District Council 2001. *Open Space Strategy: Open Space – Special Places*

Mission statement of Forestry Commission Great Britain

"Our **mission** is to protect and expand Britain's forests and woodlands and increase their value to society and the environment. The objective of the Forestry Commission GB is to take the lead, on behalf of all three administrations, in the development and promotion of sustainable forest management and to support its achievement nationally. In England, Scotland and Wales the organisation has its own strategy and mission, and delivers the forestry policy of each country through specific objectives drawn from the country forestry strategies.

We aim to be an organisation that **values**:

- teamwork - working as teams with colleagues and others to ensure that trees, woods and forests meet the needs of people in each part of Britain
- professionalism - enjoying and taking pride in our work, achieving high standards of quality, efficiency and sustainability
- respect - treating one another with consideration and trust, recognising each person's contribution
- communication - being open, honest and straightforward with colleagues and others: as willing to listen as to tell
- learning - always learning, from outside the Forestry Commission as well as from within
- creativity - not being afraid to try new ways of doing things "

Source: Forestry Commission Great Britain, <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-6val65>

Halandri's Green Space Strategy Vision statement

Safeguard and preserve the existing green spaces in our city, introduce new ones and develop them so as to provide a worth-living-in environment for our citizens and a “playground” for our children.

Municipality of Halandri, 2008. *Urban Green Spaces Management – Draft Strategy*. Halandri, Greece, European Programs Office.

CD-ROM Tools > City Folder > Halandri

The Melbourne City Council's “Vision to 2050” states:

“The City of Melbourne in 2050 will have the highest quality parks, gardens, trees and recreational facilities, easily accessible to and enjoyed by all who live in or visit the City. These assets and the life that they support will be sustainably managed on behalf of the community and future users with a reduced ecological footprint.”

Source: Melbourne City Council, *Growing Green*, 2003

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/rsrc/PDFs/Parks/GrowingGreen1.pdf>

Vision for Moreland's open space system in 2023

"In 20 years' time, steady progress will have been made in park improvements and redevelopment, as well as the establishment of new open spaces. Moreland's open spaces will provide a wide range of open space experiences and settings to meet the needs of all sectors of the local community, including people of all ages, capabilities and cultural backgrounds. The parks, piazzas and waterway corridors will offer diverse and attractive opportunities close to home for healthy exercise, socialising, relaxing, learning, competitive sports, play, festivals and cultural events, outdoor meals, and connecting with nature. The natural and cultural heritage of the municipality will be celebrated, protected and restored in its open spaces. The extensive use of indigenous plant species in new parks, waterway corridors, and streetscapes will have brought back many native birds and other wildlife, and created bush land that is valued by young and old. The well-designed and maintained landscapes will enhance the image of the municipality and will be managed for social, environmental and economic sustainability."

Source: Moreland City Council, 2004. *Moreland Open Space Strategy*

<http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/pdfs/Moreland%20Open%20Space%20Strategy%202004.pdf>

Defining the aims and general priorities of the strategy

Once the preliminary mission and vision statements have been set out and the first analysis has been undertaken, the strategy group should formulate the preliminary goals and objectives it wishes to achieve. This will set out the scope and the programme for further work: important in establishing the steps and priorities that follow. The identification of key strategic issues (priority areas, priority topics, priority types of green space that are of strategic importance) is intended to decide on the focus of the strategy and what will have priority in the undertaking of any tangible measures. Goals and objectives are focused on outcomes and results that are qualitative in nature. The strategic goal statements should be consistent with the vision statement.

Strategic aims and priorities are usually related to:

- Improvement of green space provision in areas with deficiencies
- Promotion and development of new green spaces from unused land,
- Enhancement, where necessary, of the quality and accessibility of existing green spaces,
- Protection of existing natural green spaces from development with other land uses,
- Improvement and extension of public involvement in the planning, design and maintenance of green spaces, and
- Development and improvement of green space networks at the local, city and regional levels.

The activities in the working steps described above should be formulated and summarised in a written document. Such a framework report outlines the draft concept of the strategy development process and identifies its main elements. This framework report provides guidance and focus for the strategy group about the next steps of 'the Analytical part'.

Box 5: Examples of strategic priorities and aims

Halandri's strategic aims:

Protection and accession:

- Meet current needs and demands: safeguard existing green spaces.
- Meet future needs and demands: incorporate the green space strategy into the Strategic City Plan and the Urban City Plan.
- Acquire more spaces: funding for purchasing private land and turn it into public space.
- Create more spaces: 'invent' new perceptions for green spaces.

Quality Enhancement

- Retain the minimum current quality level.
- Improve natural and semi-natural green spaces including urban fringe.
- Augment the vegetation cover: amplify the 'optical' beautification parameter.
- Enrich the biodiversity index: try and use various species in the design of the green spaces.
- Sustainable design: design of the open green spaces using well adapted plants, features and material environmental friendly.
- Establish monitoring and alert procedures to guarantee the perpetuity of their quality level.
- Invest in equipment: make a green space friendlier and safer for the users.
- Development of maintenance schemes: introduce sustainable maintenance concepts by exploiting the open green spaces for various uses.
- **Accessibility**
- Equal opportunities: ensure that all citizens can be at a green space within a maximum (to be defined) time space.
- Invest in infrastructure: smaller or greater interventions so as to make it easier for people to get around (especially for people with disabilities).
- Promote sustainable mobility: allow better pedestrian and cycling links between different parts of an area in order to reduce the amount of vehicular travel.

Involvement

- Raise awareness: Create a series of campaigns and events either live or web-based.
- Promote environmental education: educate the next generation of active and productive citizens to

take the lead in similar actions in the years to come.

- Engage social groups: local “friends of” and volunteers groups in order to spread knowledge, interest and the feeling of shared responsibility.
- Living tool: local people are the main users of green spaces and have the most knowledge and experience on their characteristics, problems and needs.
- Engage local stakeholders: acquire help or funds for the maintenance.
- Consultation process: show that their opinion matters have to show that this strategy matters for them, too.

Municipality of Halandri (2008). Urban Green Spaces Management – Draft Strategy. Halandri, Greece, European Programs Office. [CD-ROM Tools > City Folder > Halandri](#)

Walsall Council’s strategic aims:

A Better Quality Environment

We want green spaces to play their part in making Walsall an attractive place in which to live, work and play.

Healthy, Safe and Secure

We want to create a network of safe, accessible green spaces which are full of positive activity and encourage our communities to become healthier

Raising the Standard

We want to change this. Positive community involvement in parks and green spaces has existed in Walsall for over 10 years, indeed the authority was the national pioneer in this approach.

Listening to and Engaging with People

We want to aspire to consulting and involving all sections of our diverse community

Achieving Excellence

We want to work across service areas and with key partners, organizations and services to create excellent green spaces and an excellent service.

Source: Walsall Council (2006). Walsall Green Space Strategy (Draft for Consultation)

http://www.walsall.gov.uk/index/leisure_and_culture/greenspacestrategy.htm

5 Analytical Part - Information gathering and evaluation

A more comprehensive analysis of the current situation is required to promote the strategy. Any missing data and information should be compiled in accordance with the goals and objectives set out in the previous activities, In particular, it is important to clarify any unanswered questions and to identify gaps in green space provision. The City Profile is a useful tool that supports this activity. The following sections help in considering important elements of this working phase:

The planning context and links with other legal documents

The green space strategy should consider complementary policies, strategies, programmes and plans that exist or are under development in other documents or planning activities at the national, regional and local levels. The strategy should review and report any links that are laid down in official planning policy documents or plans and identify their connections, relations and relevance to green space management. Such links can be found in community plans, cultural strategies, sport and recreation strategies, children’s play strategies and others. In particular, this requires the identification of standards for green space provision or quality that are set out at the national or regional levels. The City Profile provides a set of questions that address these issues and helps to identify important links to legislation, policies, and plans at the national and regional levels. It also identifies the relationships with international policies, programmes, and concepts.

This kind of analysis will uncover links that may exist between different urban municipality departments, plans and stakeholders as well as with the national, regional and local planning policies, strategies and objectives that have to be taken into account in decision making on local planning activities. These synergetic effects will support the strength of the green space strategy.

Box 6: Examples of national expectations of the planning system for urban green space in the United Kingdom

Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17): Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation – July 2002: sets out the policies needed to be taken into account by local planning authorities in the preparation of development plans (or their successors); they may also be material to decisions on individual planning

applications. PPG17 requires authorities to plan for open space by undertaking robust assessments of the needs of their communities and by auditing existing provision. Where authorities have not yet completed this work, open space may only be built upon where it has been demonstrated that it is surplus to requirements. National planning guidance sets out the expectations of the planning system for urban green space.

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2002): Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17): Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. London.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/ppg17>

Expected outcomes of Planning Policy Guidance 17 as stated in the PPG17 companion guide

This Guide reflects the Government's policy objectives for open space, sport and recreation, as set out in PPG17. The long term outcomes PPG17 aims to deliver are:

- Networks of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities, in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors, are fit for purpose and economically and environmentally sustainable
- An appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing provision
- Clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and land owners in relation to the requirements and expectations of local planning authorities in respect of open space and sport and recreation provision

PPG17 makes clear that the Government is firmly of the view that achieving these outcomes depends on planning authorities first undertaking local assessments of need and audits of provision. This Companion Guide, therefore, sets out one way in which they can do so. Other approaches are also possible, however, and may be equally acceptable. Accordingly, authorities should not feel constrained from developing an alternative approach of their own, provided it is compliant with the policy requirements of PPG17.

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2002). Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17. London.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/assessingneeds>

Example of consideration of national and international context in the Medway Open Space Strategy

“A National context for play: This strategy identifies a new standard for play facility provision in Medway as recommended by the government's Planning Policy Guidance 17 document. PPG 17 encourages Local Authorities to set their own Standards for provision of children's play, informing future provision and revisiting existing provision.”

“An International context for play: Article 31 of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child, ratified by the UK Government in 1991, states that: “every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in the play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.”

Source: Medway Council Cabinet (2007). Countryside and open space strategy

http://ww2.medway.gov.uk/FTP/Cabinet_Decisions/is1151/reports/report_1151_1758.pdf

Example how Melbourne considers international, national and local commitments in its green space strategy

“Growing Green builds on existing Council commitments and policies including the Melbourne Principles for Sustainable Cities, Council's commitment to achieving sustainability, Council's City Plan 2010 and other policies relating to greenhouse gas emissions, sport, recreation and leisure and the management of water, parks and trees.”

“City Plan 2010 is Melbourne City Council's primary policy and planning strategy. The intention of City Plan is to move towards a more thriving and sustainable city. Four inter-related themes set the broad strategic directions for City Plan. They are:

- Connected and Accessible City
- Environmentally Responsible City
- Inclusive and Engaging City
- Innovative and Vital Business City

The themes, objectives and actions in *Growing Green* link with the strategic directions of City Plan, and interpret them within the framework of open space, trees and recreational facilities.”

Source: Melbourne City Council (2003). Growing Green: An Environmental Sustainability Plan for the City of Melbourne's open space and recreational facilities.

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/rsrc/PDFs/Parks/GrowingGreen1.pdf>

The →**TOOL CITY PROFILE (Chapter 4.1)** supports the collection of data and information in an organised form. Possible questions from the →**TOOL CITY PROFILE** to this topic are in box 7)

Box 7: Consider for this step the questions →TOOL CITY PROFILE****

- 3.1 Goals and Strategies for urban development
 - 3.1.1 Does in your city possess: a development policy?, a strategy?
 - 3.1.2 How are these delivered? What are the related documents?
 - 3.1.3 Do specific goals and relevant strategies exist for the planning of urban green and open spaces?
 - 3.1.4 Is there any sustainability definition or convention used as a guideline (e.g. Agenda 21, Charta from Aalborg)? Please describe any programmes and projects used for sustainable development that are important for urban green and open space development in your city.
 - 3.1.5 Does your city participate in any regional green and open space policy or plan? If yes please name it and describe the relationship with the city green space policy and plan
 - 3.1.6 Which department(s) is (are) responsible for developing the goals and strategies for urban development?
 - 3.1.7 Which main planning instruments determine the general goals and strategies and how would you judge the efficiency of the instruments to aid the reaching of these goals? (e.g. landscape/city development plan, green management plan, green policy plan, concepts for nature conservation, special laws protecting and developing urban green)
- 3.2 Goals and Strategies for urban green space development
 - 3.2.1 Do specific goals and strategies exist for the planning of urban green and open spaces? If yes, what are the goals and strategies relevant to urban green spaces concerning urban development in your city?
 - 3.2.2 Which main planning instruments determine the achievement of the general goals and strategies (e.g. landscape/city development plan, green management plan, green policy plan, concepts for nature conservation, special laws protecting and developing urban green)?
 - 3.2.3 Are there any projects or programmes to support some or all of the important functions of urban green spaces? Please name, if not yet mentioned before.
 - 3.2.4 Please name any projects or programmes supporting urban green spaces
 - 3.2.5 Are there any specific projects or initiatives, which support the development of new urban green and open systems? If so, please describe them.
 - 3.2.6 How does your city try to improve the following aspects of urban green spaces? Please name any concepts, projects or programmes supporting them.
- 3.5 Participation in and responsibilities for planning, design, implementation and maintenance of urban green and open spaces.
 - 3.5.3 How is the procedure for the planning of green spaces usually used in your city integration of planning documents, guidelines, participation, etc.?
 - 3.5.4 What instruments or documents are used? Please judge also the efficiency.
 - 3.5.5 Please describe the general planning procedures in your city. Are there any national, regional or others implications that have to be observed? If so, what are they?

General overview of the city

The green space strategy must be based on an overall analysis and understanding of the main characteristics covering issues like demographic features (population size, age structure, social groups, etc.), geographical and other background data, the economic and other characteristics of the city. In this phase the current data of the city should be collected. Cities usually have statistical yearbooks that provide a wide range of such data: other information can be obtained from sources such as regional or national statistics.

Socio-demographic information, for example, provides an overview of the societal diversity, which is relevant for the analysis of the needs and demands of society. This kind of information should contain features like:

- Population size and age structure with groups such as children, students, workforce, retirees, and the disabled,
- Ethnic groups, social fringe groups, and the unemployed,
- Groups without house gardens and groups without motor vehicles, etc.

The →**TOOL CITY PROFILE (Chapter 4.1)** supports the collection of data and information in an organised form. Possible questions from the →**TOOL CITY PROFILE** to this topic are shown in box 8)

Box 8: Consider for this step the questions →TOOL CITY PROFILE

- 1.6 Population: Total city population
- 1.7 Which trends have occurred during the past 5-10 years? (Demographic changes, population growth or reduction, ageing, etc.)
- 1.8 Which trends are expected during the next 5-10 years? (Demographic changes, population growth or reduction, ageing, etc.)
- 2 Geographical background
- 2.1 Describe briefly the location of the city (natural characteristics regional situation, transport network, etc...)
- 2.2 Climate (please describe the climate in your city using the following terms: continental or maritime, humid or arid, hot summers or cool summers, mild winters or cold winters). What are the benefits and disadvantages of this climate?
- 2.3 Relief (please describe the topography of your city using the following terms: flat or hilly, on a slope, on the top of a hill, in a valley, surrounded by hills). What are the benefits and disadvantages that result from the topographical form?
- 2.4 Hydrology (please describe the hydrology of your city in brief terms.) What are the benefits, disadvantages and risks with the hydrology system?
- 2.5 What are the specifics of the soil types within your city? What are the benefits and disadvantages of these soil types?
- 2.6 Describe the vegetation characteristics of the city (types of habitats, naturally existing vegetation structures). What are the benefits and disadvantages of these the vegetation characteristics?
- 2.7 Are there specific natural protection areas in your city?
- 3.9 Economic situation and demands
- 3.9.1 Please provide the following data about your city: GDP per capita, Unemployment rate, Overall annual revenues of the city, Overall annual expenditures of the city, and so on.
- 3.9.2 Overall annual expenditures of the city for overall city, richest neighbourhood, poorest neighbourhood, and city centre.
- 3.9.3 How much funding is currently allocated for the planning, design and implementation of new urban green spaces or the improvement of existing spaces in the current city budget?
- 3.9.4 How much funding is currently allocated to the maintenance of urban green spaces in the current city budget?
- 3.9.5 Which kinds of financing exist for green spaces development and management in your city and how important are the different sources of funding?
- 3.9.6 Private initiatives – Please give a brief description of the types of private initiatives and their importance for the development of urban green?

Analysis of current state of green spaces in the city

The strategy group should have a comprehensive understanding of the current state of the green space situation in the city. The basis of this understanding is an analysis that covers and describes the different aspects and dimensions of the green space characteristics like the physical, structural and functional aspects (accessibility, economic, together with ecological aspects). This analysis should also address the historic and cultural qualities. The analysis of each aspect will vary and may be brief or detailed to a greater or lesser extent. The depth of the analysis will depend upon the definition of, scope and purpose of the green space strategy, as identified in 'the Starting part'.

Analysis of physical aspects of green spaces

The important **physical aspects** of urban green spaces that should be checked and analysed are generally the **quantity aspects** like: distribution and supply of public green spaces at a %age of the city area; m² of urban green space per inhabitant; distribution and supply of natural and landscape resources like woodlands, grasslands and water areas (especially those with high recreational and landscape values); **structural and morphological** characteristics of green spaces like relief features, green fingers and corridors etc.

The quality aspects of urban green spaces relate mostly to: the suitability and quality of site structure, design and provision of urban green spaces with regard to their importance and functions for the city; site condition quality (how well the site is maintained, natural state of vegetation, etc); natural and landscape, historic and cultural values and qualities that should be preserved or emphasised.

Analysis of functional aspects of green spaces

Functional aspects of green spaces are linked to accessibility and the use of green spaces, their programme and provision suitability, and also the connectivity between public green spaces and with the hinterland.

Ecological and environmental aspects deal with biodiversity and ecological values, natural corridors, urban climate and other environmental issues that are important for human wellbeing and health.

Analysis of economic aspects reviews the current expenses (costs) of the development, implementation and maintenance of green spaces in the city. It also provides the overview of resources for financing and the budgets available for different issues.

The results can be displayed on paper maps or in digital form using GIS. Areas with special importance or problems should be highlighted. The general goal of the green space analysis is to identify what exists to establish its quantity and quality. This information is the basis for any further consideration about the new qualities that these areas should aspire to in the future.

- Identify and describe the basic characteristics of your green spaces and list their historic, ecological and other qualities. Highlight areas which have a special importance for biodiversity. Find any new qualities that these areas should aspire to in the future.
- Establish the spatial planning context of parks and green spaces: mapping of your green spaces, if possible using GIS tools.
- Assess the supply, including site audits and assessments. Identify the current supply of green spaces according to your documents and databases. Carry out field audits, if possible, to evaluate the quality status of the areas.
- Assess the needs and demands, including the use of consultation. Find out what the attitudes of the citizens are to green space issues. Look for questionnaires or consultations that have been utilised in the past. (Use, for example, the economic questionnaire from GreenKeys). For this step it is very useful to include citizens within the planning process. Find cost- and time-effective methods to gain the required information.

Identification of green space typology

It is very important at this stage to have an appropriate typology and terminology that adequately covers and describes the characteristics of the variety of green spaces existing in the city. The identification of urban green space typology is a special and somewhat complex task that needs to be undertaken carefully in order to support concise and improved planning, design and management. The typology should also include a hierarchy of green spaces that supports the application of provision standards and high quality design guidelines.

There are many ways to define both the terminology of green spaces and the structure of typologies for green spaces. It would appear that every country has its particular definitions and approaches to classify their green spaces. It is often the case that typologies use the term 'open space' for all types of green space in non-built-up open areas. They distinguish between a green space that is land covered with vegetation like parks and gardens and public spaces like squares, plazas, market places or other civic spaces which are mainly covered with impervious or hard paved surfaces. In many cases it is not possible to apply the definitions and distinctions of a typology consistently to all circumstances because many spaces serve a range of functions or combine green and civic space elements. It is particularly difficult to apply the typology to different types of informal green space.

All green areas, including private green spaces and gardens, contribute to the benefits and image of the location. Thus, local authorities should, where possible, consider private green spaces in their analysis and strategy.

Box 9 shows an example of a general typology that can be used as a reference typology and as a starting point to prepare the green space analysis. It is open to the addition and modification of definitions, types and sub-types where necessary. The typology should be developed according to the urban green space situation, in order to maintain a coherent strategic context for the issues that the strategy will focus upon.

Box 9: An example of green space typology			
Main Types	Sub-types	Main functions	Characteristics
Public parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban parks and gardens Country parks Formal gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal recreation or relaxation Community events Horticultural or arboricultural displays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible, high quality design and facilities More or less maintained Include other types of green spaces e.g. children's play areas and sports facilities
Private green space and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> House gardens Forecourt gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enclosed and associated with a house or organisation
Natural and semi-natural green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodlands Urban forestry and shrubs Grasslands Wetlands Water bodies Derelict land or post-industrial land in succession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildlife conservation Biodiversity Environmental education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of undeveloped land with residual natural soil and vegetation Areas of previously developed land which is planted or colonised with spontaneous vegetation and wildlife
Green Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking and cycling routes Road verges Canals, rivers, streams Old railway lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking and cycling Horse riding Wildlife migration Link green spaces together Link to surrounding countryside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be used for leisure purposes or travel Part of a designated and managed green space system or network
Amenity green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenery at housing estates Greenery at commercial buildings Greenery at schools, universities, hospitals, public administrations, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal and social activities Improve aesthetics and provide visual amenity for residential and other areas Separate buildings or land for visual, safety or environmental reasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to home or work Sunbathing, picnics etc.
Allotments, community gardens and urban farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All allotments Urban agriculture Community gardens City farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gardening and growing fruits and vegetables Promotion of health and social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either in individual allotments or as a community activity
Provision for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipped play areas Ball courts Skateboard areas Teenage shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily for children's play Social interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and accessible play opportunities Usually linked to housing areas
Outdoor sports facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports pitches Tennis courts Athletics tracks Water sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor sporting activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large and generally flat areas of grassland or specially designed surfaces
Cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cemeteries Disused churchyards Other burial areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burial of the dead Quiet contemplation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often linked with wildlife conservation and biodiversity
Other functional green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storm water retention area Old landfills and dumps Sewage treatment land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental functions Wildlife habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often restricted accessibility Add more types to the list as required by local circumstances or priorities

Public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squares • Streets and residential roads • Car parks • Courtyards • Seafronts and promenades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting for public buildings • Location for public events • Connections for people and for wildlife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed for pedestrians
Adopted from: Urban Green Spaces Task Force (2002). Green Spaces, Better Places: Final report of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce, London, DTLR.. Scottish Executive Central Research Unit (2001). Rethinking open space. Open space provision and management: a way forward, Edinburgh. English Nature (2003). Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities: A Review and Toolkit for their Implementation. English Nature Research Report 526.			

It is advisable for all identified green spaces in the city to be mapped and categorised according to type, size, location, function, and importance. A combination of this information will support the development of a green space hierarchy that gives a better understanding of the functions they perform and the values they have for the community. As a result, it will be possible to distinguish between green spaces that are of strategic importance at the regional, city and neighbourhood levels. This procedure is most applicable to parks, green spaces and woodlands. It allows the assigning of benchmark values to these areas to evaluate their current provision in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

Box 10 provides a proposal for a green space hierarchy that was developed and proposed for the London Metropolitan Area Plan 1994 and is still being used, in modified form, in the UK. It defines major green space types and their main functions and gives standards for size and distance from home. Such green space types can have very different characteristics.

Box 10: A green space hierarchy		
Type and Main Function	Size and distance from home (or catchment area)	Characteristics
Regional Parks (Linked Metropolitan Open Land and Green Belt corridors) Weekend and occasional visits by car or public transport	400 hectares 3.2 – 8 km	Large areas and corridors of natural heathland, downland, commons, woodland and parkland, also including areas not publicly accessible but which contribute to the overall environmental amenity. Primarily providing for informal recreation with some non-intensive active recreation uses. Car parking at key locations.
Metropolitan Parks Weekend and occasional visits by car and public transport	60 hectares 3.2 or more km where the park is appreciably larger	Either i) natural heathland, downland, commons, woodland, etc. or ii) formal parks providing for both active and passive recreation. May contain playing fields, but at least 40 hectares for other pursuits. Adequate car parking.
District Parks Weekend and occasional visits by foot, cycle, car and short bus trips	20 hectares 1.2 km	Landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing for a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups, and informal recreation pursuits. Should provide some car parking.
Local Parks	2 hectares 0.4 km	Providing for court games, children's play spaces, sitting-out areas, nature conservation areas.
Small Local Parks and Open Spaces Pedestrian visits, especially by old people and children; particularly valuable in high density areas.	Under 2 hectares Less than 0.4 km	Gardens, sitting-out areas, children's play space or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.

<p>Linear Open Spaces Pedestrian visits</p>	<p>Variable Wherever feasible</p>	<p>Rivers, canals, other waterways and associated open spaces and towpaths; paths, disused railways, nature conservation areas; and other routes which provide opportunities for informal recreation. Often characterised by attractive features or areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.</p>
<p>Source: Advice on Strategic Planning Guidance for London, London Planning Advisory Committee (1994)</p>		

The →**TOOL CITY PROFILE (Chapter 4.1)** supports the collection of data and information in an organised form. Possible questions from the →**TOOL CITY PROFILE** to this topic are in box 11)

<p>Box 11: Consider for this step the questions →TOOL CITY PROFILE</p>	
<p>1.3</p>	<p>Land use (built up area, except urban green and open spaces)</p>
<p>1.5</p>	<p>Green and open spaces</p>
<p>3.3.2</p>	<p>What types of green space are likely to be supported in the future? Please rate their importance.</p>
<p>3.7.2</p>	<p>Which ecological functions of green spaces are the most influential regarding current green space planning in your city?</p>

Identification of local needs and demands

Community consultations are indispensable in the creating of a strategy, in order to correctly reflect and account for the needs of the citizens. The consultations are useful in identifying the attitudes of local people to the existing provision of green spaces or for identifying the expectations and future needs because, for example, there may be no current provision of a particular type of green space. Questionnaires, telephone interviews or group consultations are important ways to gain that information. In the preparation and planning of consultations and questionnaires a clear understanding of the demographic structure of the community and, furthermore, of the identified goals and objectives of the ‘strategy area’ should exist. Opinion polls that have already been carried out in the past can serve as a good data source, however, a potential problem could be that they do not address current problems. The other option is to carry out a new poll that is focused on the identified strategic problems, in order to get the required information.

For example, the →**TOOL FOR PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS URBAN GREEN SPACE** described in Chapter 4.6 of the manual is a good example of a topic specific questionnaire. Despite the general value of such polls, the results will represent, nevertheless, a relatively static view of the perception of the interviewees. It is recommended, therefore, that consideration should be given to the organisation of workshops, seminars, and expert interviews. Through these a more dynamic view will be obtained of the public’s needs and demands and of the professionals’ recommendations. Workshops and seminars are particularly valuable because the participants (both the interested public and professionals) can be provided with information and education about the current state of affairs and any problems: this is knowledge that they may not gain as uninformed interview partners. This exchange of information and transfer of knowledge provides them with a more comprehensive view of the benefits that can be expected from their green spaces. It may be assumed that such communication processes will likely result in a better identification of local needs and demands. Whatever the strategy group decides to do it should use cost- and time-effective methods to obtain the required information.

Box 12 provides a brief overview of different public consultation techniques and their advantages and disadvantages.

<p>Box 12: Different public consultation techniques</p>		
<p>Technique</p>	<p>Advantage</p>	<p>Disadvantage</p>
<p>User surveys</p>	<p>Suitable to survey travel time or travel methods; user opinions about adequacy and</p>	<p>Ignores non-users</p>

	quality of green space and recreation facilities.	
Household surveys	Suitable to identify the needs and opinions of the local community as a whole; should complement user surveys for decision support.	Requires careful preparation to select a representative sample
Street surveys Surveys at community events	Easy to conduct e.g. at community events and not too expensive	Less rigorous than household surveys and not representative
Focus groups Local workshops	Best ways to obtain qualitative information (e.g. attractiveness, perceived safety, needs, satisfaction with provision) Complement quantitative surveys and improve their interpretation	Sometimes promotion of unrealistic local expectations or aspirations
Citizens' Panels Community Forums	In some cases can be as effective as surveys	Effectiveness declines as time passes
Consultations with special interest groups, community or user groups	Gaining special information and opinions from informed and engaged people	In some cases focus is only on single aspects (e.g. nature conservation group that are only interest in birds, or amphibians, etc.)
Source: Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2002). Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17. London. (with modifications and amendments)		

Box 13 provides three good examples of community consultations that have been carried out during the preparation stages of a green space strategy.

Box 13: Examples of community consultations

Maidstone Green Space Strategy

- telephone survey with random sample of 400 local residents
- on-site surveys at 14 green spaces throughout the Borough in which 553 face-to-face interviews were conducted
- internet survey with pupils based at seven different schools throughout the Borough which yielded responses from 210 young people
- survey of local groups and organisations
- workshop with the Maidstone Youth Forum
- focus groups
- consultation meetings with Council Officers.

Source: Maidstone Borough Council, (2005). Green Spaces for Maidstone Strategy

The Use of Public Consultation for Doncaster's Green Space Strategy

"A substantial public consultation exercise over a 6 month period was undertaken to assess the citizens' needs, demands and opinions of Doncaster's Greenspace. This involved consultation with Groups and Organisations involved in the use and provision of Greenspace, individual citizens and primary school children.

The Community Consultation involved a groundbreaking method of gathering the public's opinions on Greenspace in Doncaster, which is unique within the region and is being used as a template by other local authorities. The results have been used to provide an objective assessment of land provided for recreational use and the final and comprehensive building block (alongside the quantity and quality assessments) in producing the Greenspace Strategy."

Source: Doncaster Council (2002). Quality Spaces, Quality Places – A Greenspace Strategy For Doncaster. Draft report for consultation prepared by Greenspace Strategy Team

The conclusion from Walsall Council's Community Consultations

"The authority has carried out community consultations for over a decade and has a good track record in partnership working with community based organisations but what it does not fully understand is "who are our users and non users?"

"The green space service needs to talk to its users and find out who they are, where they come from, why they use the spaces, why they go to the events etc and share this information across the service to begin to build an accurate picture that it tracks annually."

"The council will develop a robust framework to enable it to carry out regular market research to understand the needs and expectations of users and non-users of green spaces."

From Walsall Council (2006), Walsall Green Space Strategy, Draft for Consultation

http://www.walsall.gov.uk/walsall_gss_draft_for_consultation_web.pdf

The →**TOOL CITY PROFILE (Chapter 4.1)** supports the collection of data and information in an organised form. Possible questions from the →**TOOL CITY PROFILE** to this topic are in box 14)

Box 14: Consider for this step the questions →TOOL CITY PROFILE****

3.3 Planning and Design

3.3.1 How do you judge the importance of green space for the urban structure and image of your city?

3.3.3 What use possibilities should be offered in urban green spaces? Please rate their importance.

3.3.4 To number the statements in the order of their current importance.

3.5 Participation in and responsibilities for planning, design, implementation and maintenance of urban green and open spaces.

3.5.1 Are there any existing procedures to encourage the involvement of residents in the planning, design, implementation and maintenance of green spaces?

3.5.2 Rate the importance of involving the citizens of your city during: planning and design, Implementation, and maintenance. If there are any special concepts, please describe these. How citizens are involved in the planning and design process? Please comment on the efficiency of any involvement. How are citizens involved in the implementation process? Please comment on the efficiency of any involvement.

3.8 Socio-cultural demands

3.8.1 How do you judge the provision of public green space in your city?

3.8.2 Are there any districts with less than adequate green in your city? If yes – please briefly describe these districts summarising their structure (kind of buildings, density, function, location within the city?)

3.8.3 What degree of importance do user groups have in the planning of green spaces as seen from the viewpoint of the administration of the city?

Identification of development trends and tendencies

The identification of development trends and tendencies and the analysis of their influence on green spaces (e.g. land use changes, new industrial areas, de-industrialisation or major development projects) can be quite important for understanding the planning context of urban green space in the city. It can be summarised from existing documents, policies, other informal sources (spatial researches and studies) and gained from public enquiries and workshops with inhabitants and professionals.

The →**TOOL CITY PROFILE (Chapter 4.1)** supports the collection of data and information in an organised form. Possible questions from the →**TOOL CITY PROFILE** to this topic are in box 15)

Box 15: Consider for this step the questions →**TOOL CITY PROFILE**

- 1.5 Green and open spaces:
What land use trends / land use changes are expected within the next 5-10 years within your city with regard to the land use units being addressed (especially concerning the green and open spaces)?
- 1.7 Which trends have occurred during in the past 5-10 years? (Demographic changes, population growth or reduction, ageing, etc.)
- 1.8 Which trends are expected during the next 5-10 years? (Demographic changes, population growth or reduction, ageing, etc.)
- 3.3.2 What types of green space are likely to be supported in the future? Please rate their importance.

The identification of problems and obstacles can be obtained from the following three aspects regarding green spaces: Spatial problems, Organisational problems and Economic – Financial problems. These problems are reflected in the planning, managing and maintenance of green spaces. Some can be solved or better tackled within the framework of an Urban Green Space Strategy.

Spatial problems can, for example, arise from:

- the unequal distribution of green spaces within the urban fabric;
- rapid growth of changing land use (from green spaces to built-up land);
- changes of possible use (public spaces becoming private);
- tearing apart of the green network or corridors with expanding other land uses etc.

Spatial problems can be presented on a map which illustrates areas or points of conflict (fencing, cut connections) or other problems (not maintained areas, etc) and is directly useable in further evaluation. **Organisational problems** can be central to the maintenance of green spaces. These are usually connected with city administration and the distribution of tasks concerning green spaces issues, e.g. lack of cooperation or appropriate internal communication. **Financial problems** can arise from the lack of funding to adequately maintain and develop urban green spaces.

The identification of potentials and opportunities for urban green space development can be prepared from different aspects:

- **Spatial** (structural and morphological) for example, to establish a clear green space structure and network in the city;
- **Functional** (for different ways of uses, public accessibility); and
- **Ecological** (for improving the natural environment or climate condition), using and putting together different findings from various analyses.

These can be presented on special thematic maps and serve as starting points to develop the map of urban green space concepts or green systems. Other aspects can also be identified and summarised from the analyses such as potentials for different funding solutions and management organization improvement.

The →**TOOL CITY PROFILE (Chapter 4.1)** supports the collection of data and information in an organised form. Possible questions from the →**TOOL CITY PROFILE** to this topic are in box 16)

Box 16: Consider for this step the questions → **TOOL CITY PROFILE**

3.4 Deficits and problems

- 3.4.1. Are there any persistent problems or conflicts preventing the development of green spaces? (e.g. Insufficient finances, political instability, corruption, bureaucracy, maintenance problems, and so on.)
- 3.4.2 Do any of these or other common problems cause difficulties regarding the maintenance of green areas? If so, how does your city try to deal with these problems? Please name or describe concepts, projects or programmes and judge their efficiency for reducing problems of finance, vandalism, litter/rubbish, insufficient security, and so on.

Evaluation of the current state of green spaces in the city

The final step of the Analytical part is the **Evaluation of the current state of green spaces in the city**. Evaluation confronts the current state of the green spaces with the potentials, problems and the vision (needs, goals, ideas) about how to develop them in the future.

In this part the evaluation map can be drafted and a description provided of the condition of the green spaces - general (good/bad) or detailed (explanation of all the criteria). Evaluation is necessary in order to set clear criteria that help to develop a transparent process that can be explained easily to politicians and the public when the green space strategy is presented or submitted for official approval. An effective process is based on the preliminary evaluation of all aspects (as quantity, distribution and accessibility, quality of provision and design, security, usability etc) separately. The results are then overlaid to make a final map which explains which spaces are in good condition, which are in a bad condition (a more detailed evaluation scale can be used as well), which have potentials or need to be improved, which have been established new and so on. This kind of evaluation could provide a good basis for defining the final strategic issues and priorities and for preparing the spatial concept of urban green space development.

Standards for green spaces provision

There is no doubt that standards or criteria for green space size, quality and accessibility are useful and necessary instruments which allow local authorities to find out and assess how satisfactorily they provide green space for the community and to compare their performance with others.

A general problem is that in many European countries (possibly also globally) no generally accepted statutory standards or criteria for green spaces exist at the national level. A survey, published by the Central Research Unit Scottish Executive (2001), found that no statutory green space standards exist in 9 European countries, including Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. There are no such standards in the USA either. Each of these countries has, however, developed procedures to determine the standards for different green space types that are to be used at the local level. There seems to be a consensus that the setting of standards is best done at the local level. One important reason is that green space provision depends on so many factors that it is hard to find one standard that fits all situations. Authorities and interests at the local level are also better placed to involve the community in the procedures required for setting the locally-derived green space standards which best meet the local needs.

In the UK a number of standards exist that have been developed by organisations such as English Nature, the Woodland Trust and the National Playing Fields Association (now Fields in Trust). In Germany, the German Council for Land Stewardship (*Deutscher Rat für Landespflege*) recently published a summary of the important green space standards that have been available and applied in urban planning and green space planning for decades. The Council proposes to develop these standards further and add quality criteria. They will then be able to use them alongside the framework of the model for dual urban development, in order to meet the German goals for sustainable urban development.

Neither of these sets of standards mentioned above are, however, legally binding for local authorities in the respective countries but they provide a valuable benchmark that provides some orientation towards the subject. Some examples of procedures and standards are presented in the following boxes so as to provide the benchmarks that had been widely discussed nationally and applied locally in the respective countries. These can be used as a starting point for the audit process when no local standards exist.

Recommendation: Local authorities can contact national agencies and professional organisations to obtain more advice and access on the procedures and standards that are usually applied in their countries.

Box 17: Examples of proposed standards for different types of green spaces at the national level

Standards for natural green spaces.

Box and Harrison (1993) proposed a standard for the provision of natural green spaces in urban areas that should help local authorities to assess their provision of this type of green space and to compare it to others. With the help of such a standard local authorities can identify deficits and develop policies which acknowledge, protect and enhance the benefits that natural green space can provide for urban dwellers. As a contribution to urban sustainability and quality of life, urban dwellers should have access to natural green spaces where they have contact with wildlife and experience nature. According to the authors, natural green space is defined as: "Land, water, and geological features which have been naturally colonised by plants and animals and which are accessible on foot to large numbers of residents." (Source: Box, J. and Harrison, C. 1993. Natural Spaces in Urban Places. *Town & Country Planning* 62(9): 231-235.)

This definition includes a diversity of green space that can be found in many locations and in different sizes within urban environments. Examples are: abandoned land which has been colonised by spontaneous vegetation and forms a habitat for a rich wildlife or areas that are a mixture of planted and spontaneous vegetation. Also less intensively managed parts of parks, school grounds, cemeteries and others as well as allotments, orchards and gardens are considered as natural green spaces.

English Nature, a government agency that champions the conservation of wildlife and geology throughout England, slightly modified and adopted the proposed standards which are now known as the Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt) model. The ANGSt model's standard applies to natural and semi-natural spaces and is primarily an accessibility standard which uses a distance threshold. It also applies a quantitative hierarchy for the natural green space size.

The ANGSt model proposes to reduce the original minimum distance from 500 metres to 280 metres, which is equivalent to about five minutes walk. Therefore:

- a) an urban resident should be able to enter a **natural green space** of at least 2 hectares within 0.5 kilometres of their home, and
- b) a **Local Nature Reserve** should be provided in every urban area at the minimum level of 1 ha per 1,000 inhabitants.

Further, the following standards should be met:

- a) There should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 kilometres of all residents
- b) There should be one 100 ha site within 5 kilometres of all residents
- c) There should be one 500 ha site within 10 kilometres of all residents.

Recommended literature available on the English Nature website at www.naturalengland.org.uk:

English Nature 1995. Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities: A Review of Size and Distance Criteria. English Nature Research Report No 153.

English Nature 2003. Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities: A Review and Toolkit for their Implementation. English Nature Research Report 526.

English Nature 2003 Providing Accessible Natural Greenspaces in Towns and Cities –Evaluation Draft

Standards for playing fields

The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) (since 2007 renamed in Fields in Trust (FIT)) is the only independent UK wide organisation dedicated to protecting and improving outdoor sports and play spaces and facilities. It recommends quantitative standards with qualitative recommendations for play facilities. These seek to ensure that sufficient space is provided in appropriate locations to enable people of all ages, especially children and young people, to practice outdoor play, sports and other recreation pursuits. Outdoor playing space is a significant component of urban green space but differs from other green spaces as its purpose is focused on play, sport and active recreation. The playing fields should be of a suitable size and quality and safely accessible and available to the general public. NPFA also provides a hierarchy of children's play facilities: Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP); Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP), and Local Area for Play (LAP).

A minimum standard for outdoor play is 2.4 hectares for 1000 people. This standard should be broken down into 1.6 hectares of outdoor sport space and 0.8 hectares of children's playing space.

Source: National Playing Fields Association. The Six Acre Standard. (see also www.fieldsintrust.org)

Standards for Woodlands

The Woodland Trust, UK defines for natural and semi-natural woodland an accessibility standard using a distance threshold and a quantitative hierarchy.

Standard: No person should live more than 500 metres from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2 hectares size.

There should also be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20 hectares within 4 kilometres (8 kilometres roundtrip) of people's homes.

Source: Woodland Trust (2004). Space for People – Targeting action for woodland access. www.woodland-trust.org.uk/publications/publicationsmore/spaceforpeople.pdf

Civic Trust – Green Flag Award

In the UK the Green Flag Award defines a standard for parks and other green spaces including cemeteries, country parks, nature reserves and water gardens. The Green Flag Award applies to green spaces that must be freely accessible to the public and provide a welcoming and well managed space for their local community. The Civic Trust manages the Green Flag Award Scheme on behalf of Communities and Local Government. Since 1996 the best green spaces in the country are identified and rewarded. The goal is to encourage others to apply the same high environmental standards and management practices. Since that time, the award scheme has created a quality standard and benchmark of excellence in recreational green spaces.

Every year a network of over 600 green space professionals judge the applications. Each winning green space is entitled to fly the Green Flag as a certificate for the high standard. By 2008, there are 554 green spaces flying the Green Flag in England, Scotland and Wales.

The main quality criteria for the award are:

Key Criteria	Standards
A Welcoming Place	Overall positive and inviting impressions for any visitor approaching and entering the park or green space. Important features are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and safe access • Good signage to and within the park or green space • Equal access for all members of the community
Healthy, Safe, and Secure	The park or green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place. Particularly important issues are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment and facilities must be safe to use. • The park or green space must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse. • Dog fouling must be adequately addressed. • Health & Safety policies should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed. • Toilets, drinking water, first aid, public telephones and emergency equipment.
Clean and Well Maintained	For aesthetic as well as Health and Safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litter and other waste management issues must be adequately addressed. • Grounds, buildings, equipment and other features must be well maintained. • A policy on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.
Sustainability	Methods used in maintaining the park or green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practices available according to current knowledge. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environmental policy or charter and management strategy should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed. • Pesticide use should be minimised and justified. • Horticultural peat use should be eliminated. • Waste plant material in the park or green space should be recycled. • High horticultural and arboricultural standards should be demonstrated. • Energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling, and resource conservation measures should be used.

Conservation and Heritage	Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural features, wildlife and fauna. • Landscape features. • Buildings and structural features. • These features should serve their function well without placing undue pressure on the surrounding environment.
Marketing	Is there: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Marketing strategy in place, in practice and regularly reviewed. • Good provision of information to users, e.g. about management strategies, activities, features, ways to get involved. • Promotion of the park or green space as a community resource.
Community Involvement	Management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community who represent as many park or green space user groups as possible. Management should be able to demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of user community and levels and patterns of use. • Evidence of community involvement in management and/or developments and results achieved. • Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community.
Management	A Green Flag Award application must have a management plan or strategy in place which reflects the aspirations of Local Agenda 21 and clearly and adequately addresses all the above criteria and any other relevant aspects of the park or green space's management. The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed. Financially sound management of the park or green space must also be demonstrated.

Source: Greenhalgh, L. and Parsons A., (2006). Raising the Standard – The Green Flag Award Guidance Manual. (Updated 2004). www.greenflagaward.org.uk or www.civictrust.org.uk

Entente Florale Europe

Entente Florale Europe is an international competition for European cities and towns aimed at promoting a greener and more pleasant environment. It is organised by the European Association for Flowers and Landscape, an international non-profit association. The competition, which was initially founded between Great Britain and France more than 25 years ago, has at present twelve member countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, The Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Slovenia, and The United Kingdom.

Through a national annual competition in the member countries, public authorities, private bodies and individuals are encouraged to cooperate in improving the environmental and aesthetic quality their urban environments thereby raising the quality of life for both inhabitants and visitors. The competition fosters the greening of cities (population greater than 30,000), towns (population between 5,000 and 30,000) and villages (population lower than 5,000) through the planting of flowers and shrubs, the development and maintenance of green spaces and parks and by generally encouraging ecologically and environmentally sound development.

Furthermore, educational and communication initiatives which promote environmental awareness is supported. The national winners in the two categories city/town and village will be nominated for the next year's international competition. The winners can expect to enhance the reputation of the municipality and the country, to foster community spirit and enhance the quality of life. It will enable citizens to assume ownership of their local environment.

The criteria are arranged in three groups:

Criteria	Explanatory notes
Vegetation and Landscape (50%)	
I. Seasonal Planting (in containers and in flower beds) (15) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality 2. Quantity 3. Maintenance 4. Density 5. Size 6. Colour coordination 	In window boxes, hanging baskets, concrete, terracotta even plastic containers, quality of those containers and suitable position - right plant in the right place

7. Suitability 8. Diversity 9. Originality 10. Design	
2. Permanent planting (15) 1. Quality 2. Quantity 3. Maintenance 4. Density 5. Size 6. Colour coordination 7. Suitability 8. Diversity 9. Originality 10. Design	Perennials, shrubs, trees, tree policy - protection, register and suitable position - right plant in the right place
3. Open Space (10) 1. Awareness 2. Maintenance 3. Design 4. Policy	Quality and maintenance of green spaces, parks, public/botanic gardens, private front gardens, playgrounds and sports pitches, cemeteries, rivers, streams, ponds, lakes and their banks, plans and programmes/strategies, special projects. The policy is a statement of the decisions taken in order to implement aims and objectives; of most critical importance will be evidence of implementation.
4. Landscape (10) 1. Presence of green network 2. Management 3. Policy 4. Biodiversity of fauna and flora 5. Ecological pre- and conservation	Integration into the landscape, green corridors, long term objectives, programmes, plans/strategies. Quality and maintenance of natural and protected areas, and of rivers, streams, ponds, lakes and their banks
Environment (26%)	
5. Environment (10) Waste 1. Composition and green waste recovery 2. Selective waste collection Water 1. Waste water treatment 2. Rain water collection Chemical products Responsible use Sustainable energy	Private/public composting, green waste recovery Selective waste collection in private households, shops and businesses, in public establishments etc, recycling Sewage treatment plants, reduction of fresh water consumption Responsible use of fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides Thermal insulation, solar plants, bio-gas plants, use of wind power and petroleum gas for car drive etc
6. Environmental education (8) 1. Quality 2. Range 3. Policy	Network of voluntary groups, events aiming at transmitting knowledge, account taken in school curricula (or youth groups/clubs) of the green or environmental dimension, initiation into gardening, visits, etc, education to respect landscape, fauna and flora etc
7. Overall impression (8) 1. Quality of built environment 2. Respect for heritage 3. Cleanliness	Streetscape, street furniture Respect for local and traditional elements, like regional architecture, heritage site and monuments. Prevention of graffiti, litter, billposting etc
Tourism – Involvement (24%)	
8. Tourism and leisure (8) 1. Attractiveness 2. Infrastructure 3. Marketing and development policy 4. Sustainability	Tourism information, hotels, guest houses, holiday flats, holiday programmes for guests/tourists, value as an excursion destination. Playgrounds, sports pitches, hiking and biking trails, local community centre, cultural facilities and events, long term objectives, programmes and strategies
9. Effort and involvement (8) 1. Municipality 2. Business 3. Inhabitants 4. Cooperative groups 5. Local competitions	Effort by local and/or municipal authority, by local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, shops, factories Opening to the public of private heritage gardens, botanic gardens etc. Flower, balcony, garden competitions
10. Presentation (8)	

Information to the public 1. Quality 2. Documents 3. Policy Communication to the press 1. Quality 2. Range 3. Documents Explanation to the jury 1. Documents 2. Organisation	Policy and actions taken by the municipality/community to directly inform the public/inhabitants Arrangements taken to inform the press, radio, TV by press conferences, press releases etc Arrangements for the jury visit to present the entire town/city and urban life by brochures, pp-presentation, explanations and on-site guidance
Source: Homepage of the European Association for Flowers and Landscape, Assessment criteria and assessment explanation for towns (see www.entente-florale.eu)	

German model for dual urban development and green space standards

"Cities and residential areas are densified but mixed with a reasonable amount of open spaces which offer their inhabitants a lot of different uses and a high quality of life. Densification in residential areas serves the purpose of avoiding further use of land by residential, commercial and traffic development in the surrounding countryside (sprawl). High urban residential and living quality can be achieved if the buildings themselves are well designed with regard to architecture and to scale and if attractive open spaces suitable for diverse uses for human well-being are located in the immediate vicinity. In addition, diverse types of open spaces of various sizes should be located farther away and if possible linked with one another and with the surrounding countryside. Moreover, these should be within reasonable walking or cycling distance." (German Council for Land Stewardship, 2006).

Open and green space standards

The implementation of this model requires quality, quantity, and accessibility standards for three types of urban open spaces:

a) Open and green space in the immediate residential environment:

- Quality:** Area is more or less densely structured with building and green spaces; Buildings are architecturally pleasing with balconies, terraces, and planted facades and roofs; Undeveloped areas (e.g. unpaved inner courtyards or front gardens including private greenery) are planted aesthetically or are covered by spontaneous vegetation. They provide for ecological functions. Undeveloped areas are accessible for all user groups of diverse ages, gender and ethnic origins. They offer diverse types of recreation (e.g. playgrounds, seating areas, tenant gardens). Paved areas complement the green spaces (e.g. sports fields, seating areas, play streets, etc.). Parking spaces are in underground garages or in multi-story car parks

Quantity: 4 m² per resident.

Accessibility: in up to 150 to 250 metres from home

b) Open and green spaces within a residential area or urban district:

- Quality:** Complement green spaces in the immediate residential environment because they are far larger and have more functionality. Main purpose is to promote socio-cultural and health functions (active and passive recreation; events); The variety of green space types, designs, and uses: formal and historic green spaces, gardens, squares and plazas, larger parks with walking and cycling routes, lawns for sunbathing, sports and playgrounds, allotments, stagnant water bodies and streams, green spaces with low-intensity management as well as un-managed areas, woody green spaces to experience nature; Additional purpose of these green spaces is to fulfil ecological functions: typical plants for settlements and sometimes rare species (flora and fauna) can be found. At least 10 % is low-intensity land use or unmanaged land to allow 'spontaneous vegetation'. More than 50% of the green spaces are linked by walking and cycling routes with adjacent greenery (for protection).

Quantity: 6 to 7 m² per resident; size is 0.5 to 5 hectares

Accessibility: distance is 300 to 750 m which equates to 10 to 20 minutes of walking time.

c) Green spaces near to settlements:

- Quality:** Promotion of socio-cultural and health functions (active and passive recreation; experiencing cultivated and natural landscapes);
 Typical green space types are historical parks and gardens, large parks, agricultural and forest land, green corridors at near-natural streams and rivers and their surroundings;
 Walking and cycling routes link these green spaces with other green spaces
 A main purpose is to fulfil ecological functions and to allow people to experience nature, landscape and wildlife.
 At least 10% is low-intensity land use or unmanaged land to allow 'spontaneous vegetation' and to serve species and biotope protection.
- Quantity:** 7 m² per resident; size is at least 10 hectares
- Accessibility:** distance is 1000 m which equates to about 20 minutes of walking time.

In Germany the following planning instruments support the implementation of the above model: regional planning, state-level regional planning, and urban land use planning in conjunction with the federal and state nature conservation laws and environmental laws.

Source: Deutscher Rat für Landespflege (2006). Durch doppelte Innenentwicklung Freiraumqualitäten erhalten. In: Deutscher Rat für Landespflege. Freiraumqualitäten in der zukünftigen Stadtentwicklung. Schriftenreihe des Deutschen Rates für Landespflege, Heft 78, Seiten 5-39.

Analytical summary

A form of analytical summary can be prepared in order to identify the problems, obstacles, potentials, opportunities and challenges for green space development in the city. This would then provide a useful framework to guide the further development of strategy: especially the preparation of strategic issues and priorities and the action plan. Some of the specific issues might be presented on special maps so as to provide a clearly understood visual overview.

The **Analytical part** is usually incorporated into the Final Strategy Document. This provides an analysis of the results that form the background to the strategic decisions and actions. At the Evaluation stage, however, the analysis has to be presented in more detail.

It is difficult to specify the amount of work or the length of time that may be required to complete the Analytical phase of the Strategy. This will depend, to a large extent, on the data which is available, the needs for different studies and surveys and the extent of public involvement in the process. According to the experiences of this process which have been gained in the UK, 6-8 months might be a guide as to the average time required for the phase (source: CABE 2004). The actual time required will, however, be conditioned by the situation that exists regarding the level of development and reliability of the data bases and the extent of cooperation.

In order to ensure greater efficiency in the implementation of the Urban Green Space Strategy it would be useful to present the Analytical summary and Evaluation results to the public and politicians in order to secure approval for the next step.

6 Action part – Formulation of the strategy

The **Action part** is the core of the strategy building process. Earlier parts of the work have built up an analytical framework on which the tasks carried out in this part mainly rely upon. In particular, the results and conclusions of the analytical part have to be discussed and considered in terms of identifying those issues which are of strategic importance according to their relevance and priority.

The final strategy will need to include those issues which are of a high priority. In so doing it will elaborate upon and define a pattern of goals, policies, programmes, principles, guidelines, and actions. The process required to formulate the strategy will include:

- consultations;
- decisions for action; and
- the allocation of financial and personal resources to promote the implementation of the strategy.

At an early stage a draft version of the strategy document, including perhaps draft ideas of formal action plans, may be very helpful as a means of articulating the lines of thought. This should include different proposals for achieving the vision and aims of the green space strategy. It should also outline a clear concept about how to implement the most important actions that are deemed essential to bring the green space strategy and its goals to life.

The strategy document will usually need political, professional and public consultation prior to its adoption with any consultation exercise undertaken on the basis of the draft document. The responses from these consultations are then reported upon and taken into account as appropriate adjustments are made to arrive at a final version of the strategy. This can then go through the final acceptance process of the political body of the local authority, accompanied by a separate consultation responses document. Final approval is necessary before a strategy can be implemented. *[Note: The consultation responses document sets out the responses and comments received, alongside information about how or whether they have influenced change from the draft within the final strategy document.]*

Such an approved green space strategy document is a valuable reference point for the local authority to prepare and evaluate further decisions related to the development, planning, design and maintenance of green spaces. It sets down the strategic thinking and strategic management approach that is necessary to contribute significantly to the more sustainable development of towns and cities.

Defining strategic issues and priorities

It is fundamental, at this stage, to identify those issues which have a potential to be of strategic importance for green spaces. Some of these issues will already have been identified and discussed in the previous parts of the process, especially during the work on the analytical part. These will include:

- the preliminary formulation of the vision;
- the general aims of the strategy at the starting part;
- the identification of strategic problems and challenges, derived from
 - the evaluation of current provision
 - quality assessments and
 - community needs

From consideration of these issues a number of key points will emerge that are important to address as strategic issue. Some new issues will also emerge from the integrated analysis and discussions relating to the information that has been gathered and evaluated during the analytical part.

The strategic issues are usually related to:

- the provision and quality of green spaces;
- the need to create new green spaces;
- qualities of accessibility; and
- qualities of connectivity.

Issues may also be more specific, like the productivity of financial resources and new funding opportunities or the scheduling of investments. Other examples are issues of new partnerships, social inclusion and community involvement.

The assemblage of these points will produce a 'long list' of important green space issues. Not all the points on this list will, however, have the same level of importance or relevance. The strategy group will need to discuss each of the points, possibly placing a 'weighting' or priority level on each point. It will then need to determine the points to be included on the final agreed list of issues to address through the strategy. This selection process has to be undertaken carefully because it determines the path of the subsequent work.

Some simple procedures can help to ease the passage of the process and streamline discussions.

- a) As a first step, the group should separate the list into strategic and operational issues. Only the strategic issues should be considered further. Operational issues can be

handed over to operational staff to be handled within the routine operations. This step will usually reduce the list considerably.

- b) In the next step the list of strategic issues can be sorted into different kinds or varieties such as: priority, logical, or time limited sequence. Each strategic issue should then be formulated as a question, with a focus on what the local authority can do about the issue.

The benefit of the procedure is that the group's focus is drawn to the really important issues. This is a necessary pre-requisite for the further steps in building the strategy. Conflicts are commonplace at this stage and should be handled in a constructive way: otherwise they may fester and become harmful to the satisfactory continuation of the strategy building process.

The outcome of this step will be an 'agenda list' of strategic issues that have been agreed upon by the strategic planning team. They will then form the core topics on which the strategic plan will be elaborated. This outcome results from the most valuable part of the strategy building process.

The identification of key **strategic issues** has a fundamental impact on how ideas for strategic action will be developed later in the process and how the implementation will be carried out.

The description of the strategic issues should accord with the following rules:

1. The issue should be formulated as a question which is capable of having more than one answer. The local authority should be able to do something about the issue.
2. It should briefly discuss the cause of and factors involved that make the issue strategic.
3. It should describe the consequences if the issue is not addressed.

The description of each issue should not be longer than one to two A4 sized pages.

Defining Priorities

The setting of priorities for the issues is another important aspect at this stage. It is important to discover:

- What is necessary to do immediately and with high priority (short term priority);
- What is necessary to do with more of a long term perspective; and
- What is of low priority or requires no action for the present.

Several factors determine how the priorities for the future green space development are identified and defined in a strategy process.

The political requirements and expectations for green space development are of considerable importance, along with their relationship to other community strategies. Of equal importance is conformity to community needs and the availability and allocation of financial resources.

This part of the exercise can be supported through the identification of the specific relevance of the issues by separating them into the following types:

1. No action is required for the present but continuous monitoring is required
2. Any action can be handled as part of the regular planning activities
3. Immediate action is required that is outside of the regular routine operations

High priorities will tend to be categorised as type 3 and lower priorities as type 2.

Preparation of the Spatial Concept of Urban Green Space Development

The preparation of the spatial concept is a crucial element of the strategy in order to establish and improve the network of accessible and high value green spaces. It places the future development of the cities' urban green spaces into the spatial context of the entire urban land use, especially the built environment. With the help of a Spatial Concept Map the spatial distribution of existing green spaces and green spaces that will be newly developed can be illustrated as well as the framework of their interconnections. It also highlights their relationships to community needs and identifies their value or potential value for the public.

This clarifies how the individual green spaces form an integral part of a city-wide green network and how this is connected to the open spaces of the hinterland. It becomes more obvious which role and

function they play in this system and which improvements will be achieved through the implementation of the strategy. The acknowledgement of city-wide relevance within a green space strategy will improve the value and acceptance of the measures in the development of individual green spaces. As a result the image of the entire city will be enhanced and a consistent spatial concept for green space development will be to hand that helps in the management of environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The basis for such a spatial concept is the spatial analysis and mapping of the urban green spaces according to the typology developed in the analytical part. The Concept Map should point out the key green areas and their major functions as well as their development goals with respect to provision, quality, accessibility and multifunctional usability. Additionally, strategic principles and guidelines for the future development of the major green space types should be worked out.

It is important to consider areas which need effective protection from development into other urban land uses. The protective status can be defined for different reasons. This could be with respect to the value for:

- Biodiversity and wildlife;
- Recreational functions;
- Ecological (environmental) functions; or
- Aesthetic and cultural functions.

Depending upon the value or potential value of the green spaces different levels of protection status should be defined.

Another aspect is the presentation of areas that are identified as requiring improvement measures or those for redevelopment or areas where new green spaces will be established. It seems to be sensible to include the adjacent green spaces of neighbouring communities into the concept. This will guarantee that the development of green corridors and green networks will continue in the city's hinterland. In many cases the green spaces at the urban fringe and the neighbouring areas play an important role that contributes to the living environments of both communities. Many users cross community borders to visit green spaces in their neighbouring community when such areas provide multiple functions and are easily accessible.

It is therefore recommended that neighbouring local authorities are included within the consultation process and in discussions concerning development and management issues of cross boundary and regional importance. This is the basis for a cross-community concept to enlarge the green network into the neighbouring countryside. Important issues are, for example, how green spaces near to the boundaries will be used by the residents of both communities and how responsibilities for development and maintenance will be shared. How can the cross-community green corridors and green networks be better connected by walking and cycling routes and trails without disturbing barriers?

Information from surveys and studies can be exchanged for this cross-boundary planning process and shared in order to improve the strategy building process. It should be appreciated that boundaries or barriers are often solely administrative and have no tangible relationship to either the form of the landscape or the connectivity that exists within the community.

Implementation plan

The long term success of the Green Space Strategy depends upon an effective plan that directs the implementation process through the planning, design and construction systems of the municipality. Only with an effective implementation process and action plan can the full benefits of a Green Space Strategy be delivered. The strategy building process has to consider the implications for implementation from the outset and in so doing needs to involve, at an early date, those people who have a necessary and active role in its implementation. Together with the required resources the implementation plan helps to make the planned changes in the strategy occur and in so doing create the real enhanced value for the community.

The funding, or a proportion of the funding, that is required for the implementation of the strategy is unlikely to be available from the regular budget and external sources will tend to be required. A green space strategy forms a good basis, however, for attracting external funding because it can provide persuasive arguments about the purpose and effectiveness of the additional investments and how these will contribute to the achievement of the more general community goals.

In cases where external funding is not available it is sometimes possible to shift existing resources, where appropriate, so as to match the goals and priorities set out in the strategy. There are many ways which can lead towards the accomplishment of previously set priorities and goals and each local authority will need to establish the most appropriate concept related to its existing resources and opportunities.

Defining policies for management and development

This step requires the identification and definition of policies for management and development according to the identified strategic issues and priorities. They can be organised in relation to the issues to which they belong, such as the need to create new green spaces or the enhancement of green space quality and accessibility. Policies can also be related to the productivity of financial resources and new funding opportunities or community involvement.

There tend to be several ways to address the identified problems and a variety of policy options will emerge that can be relevant and suitable to meet the local needs. An assessment is then required in order to find out which policy option is the most effective and which best fits the overall goals and objectives of the strategy. Criteria for such an assessment are, for example:

- maximising the proportion of people within a distance threshold;
- maximising the accessibility for different types of green spaces; or
- making the most of space resources and money to reduce areas with provision deficiencies.

Another important aspect is to favour policies that contribute to the improvement of green corridors and the green network of the city.

Defining of local standards, regulations, principles, directions and guidelines

The evaluation of community needs and the current state of green space provision in the analytical part is the basis that allows for the definition and setting out of locally-determined quantity standards. In the case that the evaluation has revealed deficiencies in the provision of green space the strategy should define a set of appropriate provision standards to ensure that all people in the city have easy access to sufficient green spaces of high quality. These local standards should be a crucial element in the policies, regulations, and guidelines of the local planning systems of the city.

Local standards for green space provision usually have a quantitative, a qualitative and an accessibility component.

- The quantitative component defines the quantum of green spaces needed to overcome the deficiencies.
- The qualitative component describes the principles and guidelines against which to evaluate the need for improvement of green space with deficient or poor quality.
- The accessibility component defines the distance thresholds and travel prospects and costs to use the green spaces.

It is not sufficient to have only e.g. quantitative standards for green spaces because the respective criteria do not address the quality aspects of the spaces or how people have access to them. Only a suitable combination of all three components provides a comprehensive picture of the green space provision and its value for the community.

The local standards should be accompanied by regulations on how to measure them and by principles, regulations and guidelines about how to apply the measures to achieve the desired levels of the standards.

A good starting point for the setting of local standards is a reference to the existing national standards and quality criteria proposed by governmental agencies, professional associations or academic reports (see box 17 with examples from UK and Germany). It is acknowledged that in

many cases the national standards need to be modified to accord with local circumstances and opportunities. It is recommended, therefore, that examples should be studied where local authorities have defined and successfully applied individual local standards. National and local standards and quality criteria usually, nevertheless, tend to provide a reasonable and acceptable framework of values that are within a suitable and useful range that can be applied to many situations.

Quantity and accessibility standards for green spaces can usually be defined very precisely (see box 17 National standards) and be very specific for different types of green spaces according to size, location and function (see box 10 green space hierarchy). Quality standards, however, are formulated in a more generalised subjective style, usually in form of descriptive guidelines (see box 17 Quality criteria for green spaces in Green Flag award and Entente Florale). In any case, to secure a broad level of acceptance, the setting of local standards should follow on from an objective evaluation and benchmarking procedure.

Setting quantity standards

Quantity standards for green spaces provision can be set to satisfy the needs for recreational purposes but also for the provision of a desirable level of wild life habitat and species populations. The quantity standard is usually defined as a ratio between a spatial unit of a green space area and a population, e.g. 7 square metres of green space per person or 1 hectare of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 people.

The analysis of the existing quantity of green space and the population gives a reasonable background that should form the basis for the determination of appropriate local quantity standards. These should take into account the community's expectations and needs as well as information about the different levels and types of use for different green space types.

In some cases it is reasonable to define and apply separate quantity standards according to the specific conditions in individual neighbourhoods or districts of the city.

This should be done by reference to the standards discussed and those usually applied in other national and local contexts. They should be defined, together with local accessibility standards, after considering the path networks and public transport system.

Setting quality standards

Setting local quality standards for green spaces is an important step to guarantee that locations with poor quality can be improved. They define how a green space should look and the kind of green elements and other facilities should be used to make a green space valuable for the community. The defining of quality standards needs some additional considerations to those employed for setting the quantity or accessibility standards.

Quality standards are based on a good understanding of the main characteristics of the green spaces and require topography, ecology, and history to be addressed, together with the social, cultural and economic context. In setting the standards there is a need to integrate the information from the quality analysis, the investigation of community needs, and the agreed vision about what the future of the green spaces should be. The result is a mixture of:

- What is desirable for and expected by the community;
- What is possible to achieve in the light of spatial, personal and financial resources; and
- How it can be maintained in the long term.

There are several sets of criteria that are suitable to define the quality of green spaces: for example that from the Green Flag Award or the Entente Florale competition (see box above). These schemes address issues such as visual and emotional impression (high quality design, easy and safe access), safety and security conditions, maintenance and cleaning policies, structure and health conditions of trees and other vegetation, provision and conditions of park equipment and infrastructure, conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage, involvement of people, environmental sustainability, marketing and management.

It is very likely that there will be variations in the quality standards according to the different characteristics of the green spaces such as size, vegetative structure, environmental conditions, the main functions provided by the space, their use and management regimes. The standards should,

therefore, be defined for different types of green spaces according to their level in the green space hierarchy and their functional role in the city's green space network.

Many of the quality criteria can be assessed by applying a simple rating system to describe the current and the desired conditions, e.g. using a scale from 1 to 4 or 5 to rate unacceptable, poor, fair, good and excellent conditions.

Due to the complexities which arise from the many criteria that are involved in the setting of quality standards one should not and cannot consider them as absolute rules. They are, however, valuable as reasonable benchmarks that allow the quality of existing green spaces to be measured and assessed so as to establish if improvements are needed. Furthermore, they are an important and indispensable element for monitoring any improvement over time as part of the strategy's monitoring and review process.

In order to set quality standards that are as consistent as possible with the local conditions and the people's needs and expectations, public involvement is an important factor so as to achieve social justice.

Setting accessibility standards

Access to public urban green spaces is an important civil liberty which refers to a legal right to enter and use these areas. The extent to which groups of residents make use of these rights at particular times and in particular places defines the accessibility of green spaces. Physical constraints as well as social and cultural parameters are important considerations for the assessment and setting of accessibility standards. Physical constraints are, for example, the distance from home, the effects of barriers such as roads, railways, rivers and impassable buildings/curtilages as well as the degree of independent mobility of different social groups of adults and children. Social and cultural factors include a fear of crime which is related to the use of green spaces and the cultural effects this has on people's willingness and ability to utilise and enjoy risky and unsafe places.

The distance threshold is an effective and easy-to-apply method to define accessibility of green spaces, particularly when it is used in combination with GIS. It identifies the quantum of people or households within a particular distance value of a green space. The distance value refers to the time that people need to move from their homes to visit the place, by foot, bicycle or public transport. Some standards, for example, calculate 10 minutes walk equals 450 metres of walking distance.

The distance threshold is also useful as a means of identifying the best and most effective location for the placing of new green space provision.

There are various maximum distance values that apply to typical user groups and different green space types. They reflect the amounts of time users are expected to walk, cycle or travel by public transport to access green spaces of differing sizes, locations and functions. The standard distance threshold needs, for example, to be modified when physical barriers are involved in the assessment of accessibility. Local accessibility standards can be informed and supported by household questionnaires and user interviews in order to reveal how much people are willing to walk, cycle or travel to visit their green spaces.

Careful consideration is required when setting accessibility standards so as not to set distance thresholds that are either too high or too low. Higher thresholds are needed when there are limited possibilities to provide new green spaces that would overcome deficiencies and achieve the standard. Too high a threshold may cause the problem that the provision level is too low to meet some local needs and quantity standards. When the analysis of green space usages indicates that people don't use the existing green spaces because they are not willing to accept the given distance to move to them a lower threshold would reduce the catchment of the areas and increase the areas where new provision is needed. This may cause the problem that an unreasonable demand for new green spaces emerges which can lead to uneconomic consequences. In such cases it would be better to improve accessibility with more effective public transport systems or better cycling routes.

It is recommended that hierarchies of accessibility standards are defined in relation to the hierarchy of different green spaces in the city's green network, considering different modes of travel and functions of green spaces.

Formulating of the action plan

The role of the strategic plan is to lay out the overall policy framework with long term goals. The action plan is the instrument that drives the implementation in a shorter specific time frame. The action plan will lead to the desired changes of conditions envisaged and laid out in the strategy. A strategy will not be able to deliver the full benefits to the community without an action plan. Only the action plan and its implementation will promote the goal achievements which create the added value for the community and increase the stakeholder satisfaction. The implementation of the action plan links strategic planning to strategic management.

To achieve the strategy's goals and to implement its policies a set of programmes, initiatives and actions must be identified which has a reasonable setting of priorities and timescales for implementation. Consequentially, the elaboration of the action plan should follow according to the identified strategic aims. Typically, action plans for green space strategies cover periods of one or two years. Some actions may, however, take longer for implementation.

The action plan should be as precise as possible, thus it has clearly to articulate an answer to several questions for each action:

- What needs to be done? Specification of tasks for each issue (goal, priority, policy)
- Who shall do it? Definition of responsibilities and identification of partners, collaborators, agents, and contractors
- When shall it be done? Setting a reasonable time frame for short, middle or long-term tasks
- Where shall it happen? Identify and describe the locations and the types of green spaces in the city where the action will happen
- How and why shall it happen? Describe the measures that will be carried out and define why and how the expected result will contribute to achieve the goals and objectives
- How much it will cost? Estimate the costs in terms of capital and revenues
- Who provides the money? Specify the sources of funding and allocate them to the tasks; identify additional sources of funding.

Additionally, the action plan usually includes a formal evaluation process to determine whether the implementation process meets the substantive strategic goals. This can be done by setting down adequate performance indicators that can be monitored during the implementation process.

Consultation on the Draft Green Space Strategy

Before the local authority can adopt the Green Space Strategy and the implementation can start the strategy document needs a final consultation. This procedure will guarantee that the final strategy is in line with the goals, aspirations, needs, and opinions of the involved members, officers, stakeholders and the public.

Important stakeholders that should be considered for the consultation are:

- Statutory consultants and adjacent local authorities,
- Organisations that are involved in green space management,
- Major owners and managers of private green spaces,
- Non-governmental organisations, community groups, local groups, special interest groups, e.g. schools, sport clubs, nature conservation groups, etc., and
- The general public.

There are different forms of consultation that can be applied to the different groups. For governmental and non-governmental organisations a request for formal response or a questionnaire is suitable. Other stakeholders and the general public can get involved in the consultation process via focus group meetings, public displays and public meetings. If possible, it is recommended that a permanent consultative network is established.

Another option is to establish a Green Space Group in the City. This group can bring together different stakeholder groups so as to have a continuous debate about critical issues related to green spaces, to further improve the strategy building process and to oversee the ongoing implementation process. Information can be distributed at annual meetings and the progress of the implementation of the green space strategy reviewed. This can also be a place to debate and to set priorities for forthcoming action, according to the action plan.

Monitoring and review

During the implementation of a green space strategy it is recommended that a regular monitoring and review procedure is established. The purpose of this is to measure the progress of the action plan's activities and to document its final delivery. Furthermore, the strategy implementation needs to adapt to any socio-economic or environmental changes in the municipality or to changes linked to general strategies and development policies of the local authority.

Periodic reviews of the action plan should assess whether the course and focal points of the strategy are still in line with the objectives and target of the local authority and with the needs of stakeholders and the community. The review should also check whether actions are achieving the intended objectives. If this is not the case, say with some issues, both the strategy and/or the action plan will require modification and updating.

The action plan reviews should be undertaken annually but may also be over a longer time period. The entire strategy should be reviewed every three to five years. The need for review will depend upon the magnitude of the changes that might happen in the municipality, e.g. new investments in business and infrastructure, demographic change or new development plans necessitating an update of the green space strategy.

Several issues within the strategy and the action plan may be subject to monitoring e.g.

- the relevance of the strategic aims and priorities;
- quantitative and qualitative achievements of the actions;
- costs;
- target dates; and
- other measurable outcomes.

The action plan should, therefore, define performance indicators for the activities that can be used for the monitoring process. Examples are indicators measuring cost efficiency, visits by target groups, user satisfaction ratings, public involvement and others.

Indicators for local performance on a specific green space can include the number of visitors and their satisfaction with the location. Another performance indicator is the number of park management plans that are completed and implemented.



The GreenKeys Green Space Strategy Overview Table (Chapter 4.3)

The overview table summarises and highlights the key elements of the GreenKeys Green Space Strategy in a brief and concise format. This form of presentation allows the entire process and its contents to be seen at a glance. The table is recommended for use by those who are already familiar with the process and do not need detailed information. Thus, the STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE and the **overview table** complement one another and should be used together.

In the overview table, the first column represents the main elements or tasks that are included in each part of the main structure. The embedded sub columns provide a more specific description of the element for some rows. Additionally, the second main column of the table briefly describes the expected output of the task and the third column shows how the result is achieved. It includes recommendations and hints on methods and the tools that can be deployed for that purpose. In particular, it refers to other GreenKeys tools that may be useful in that respect and which are available on the CD-ROM Tools.

The GreenKeys tool **Strategy Developing Monitoring Table (Chapter 4.4)** provides a simple and easy way to assist the strategy development process. This tool supports a strategy group in checking the current status of tasks and in monitoring their progress during all phases of

the green space strategy development process. This monitoring tool is aligned to the framework and structure proposed in the Strategy Developing Tool. It has been tested and proved to be of assistance by the city partners. More information about this tool is available in the Chapter 4.4 and to download in the CD-ROM Tools.

The GreenKeys tool **Monitoring System for Project Evaluation** was developed to assess the changes in a green space site. It was specifically developed for application to a single green space. It can also, however, be used to monitor the success of the strategy implementation. It is available in Chapter 4.9 and to download in the CD-ROM Tools.

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