



**Gloucester
City Council**

Cabinet

Meeting: Wednesday, 5th March 2014 at 6.00 pm in Civic Suite, North Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EP

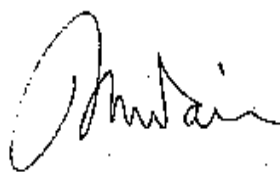
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|--------------------|---|
| Membership: | Cllrs. James (Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture) (Chair), Dallimore (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods), Organ (Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure), Wood (Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources) and Patel (Cabinet Member for Environment) |
| Contact: | Anthony Hughes Democratic Services Officer 01452 396127 anthony.hughes@gloucester.gov.uk |

AGENDA

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence. |
| 2. | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive from Members, declarations of the existence of any disclosable pecuniary, or non-pecuniary, interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any agenda item. Please see Agenda Notes. |
| 3. | MINUTES (Pages 9 - 14) To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 5 th February 2014. |
| 4. | PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES) The opportunity is given to members of the public to put questions to Cabinet Members or Committee Chairs provided that a question does not relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matters which are the subject of current or pending legal proceedings, or • Matters relating to employees or former employees of the Council or comments in respect of individual Council Officers |
| 5. | PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES) To receive any petitions or deputations provided that no such petition is in relation to: |

| | |
|------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matters relating to individual Council Officers, or • Matters relating to current or pending legal proceedings |
| 6. | <p>DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2014-2017 (Pages 15 - 22)</p> <p>To consider a joint report of the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources presenting the second updated draft of the Council Plan for 2014-2017 for comments and recommendation to Council.</p> |
| 7. | <p>TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2014-15 (Pages 23 - 56)</p> <p>To consider a Report of the Director of Resources seeking agreement of Cabinet to formally recommend Council to approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/2015.</p> |
| 8. | <p>PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2014/2015</p> <p>To recommend to Council approval of the annual pay policy statement 2014/15 in accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>(Report of the Corporate Director of Resources 'to follow')</p> |
| 9. | <p>FUTURE OF GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL EVENTS CO-ORDINATION (Pages 57 - 64)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure seeking approval for changes to the City's Events Programme and its delivery.</p> <p>(Note: whilst the subject matter falls within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture, the report is being presented by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure in view of the former Cabinet Member's interest in the subject matter and to avoid a conflict of interest by virtue of his role as chair of Marketing Gloucester Limited).</p> |
| 10. | <p>HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY (Pages 65 - 120)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure seeking endorsement of the proposals set out in the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy to be published for consultation.</p> |
| 11. | <p>OPEN SPACE STRATEGY (Pages 121 - 246)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Environment recommending that the Open Space Strategy for Gloucester 2014-2019 is approved and that Open Space Action Plans for each city ward be progressed and approval to the allocation of up to 15% of Section 106 monies to procure consultants' input for expediting Section 106 funded projects.</p> |
| 12. | <p>CULTURAL STRATEGY UPDATE - JUNE TO DECEMBER 2013 (Pages 247 - 260)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture updating members on the progress that has been made in achieving the Cultural Strategy's targets over the last</p> |

| | six months. | | | | |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|--|----|--|
| 13. | <p>CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL'S TREE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES (Pages 261 - 268)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Environment recommending changes to the Council's current tree management guidelines and to formally adopt these guidelines for City Council owned trees.</p> | | | | |
| 14. | <p>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (Pages 269 - 280)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture updating Cabinet on the performance of Gloucester City's economy and key action for the next 12 months.</p> | | | | |
| 15. | <p>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>To resolve -</p> <p>"That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public are present during consideration of this item there will be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Section 100(I) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended."</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>Agenda Item No.</th> <th>Description of Exempt Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>16</td> <td>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Agenda Item No. | Description of Exempt Information | 16 | Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information). |
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| 16 | Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information). | | | | |
| 16. | <p>TESCO REDEVELOPMENT AT ST OSWALDS (Pages 281 - 286)</p> <p>To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture seeking agreement to revised proposals for the Tesco redevelopment and the disposal by long leasehold of 0.95 acres of land.</p> | | | | |



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Julian Wain
Chief Executive

Date of Publication: Tuesday, 25 February 2014

NOTES

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 as follows –

| <u>Interest</u> | <u>Prescribed description</u> |
|---|---|
| Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation | Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. |
| Sponsorship | Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made or provided within the previous 12 months (up to and including the date of notification of the interest) in respect of any expenses incurred by you carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. |
| Contracts | Any contract which is made between you, your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner (or a body in which you or they have a beneficial interest) and the Council (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged |
| Land | Any beneficial interest in land which is within the Council's area. For this purpose "land" includes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for you, your spouse, civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income. |
| Licences | Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the Council's area for a month or longer. |
| Corporate tenancies | Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) – (a) the landlord is the Council; and (b) the tenant is a body in which you, your spouse or civil partner or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest |
| Securities | Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where – (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the Council's area and (b) either – |

- i. The total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
- ii. If the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

For this purpose, "securities" means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

NOTE: the requirements in respect of the registration and disclosure of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and withdrawing from participating in respect of any matter where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest apply to your interests and those of your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner where you are aware of their interest.

Access to Information

Agendas and reports can be viewed on the Gloucester City Council website: www.gloucester.gov.uk and are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

For further details and enquiries about this meeting please contact Penny Williams, 01452 396125, penny.williams@gloucester.gov.uk .

For general enquiries about Gloucester City Council's meetings please contact Democratic Services, 01452 396126, democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk.

If you, or someone you know cannot understand English and need help with this information, or if you would like a large print, Braille, or audio version of this information please call 01452 396396.

FIRE / EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest available exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by council staff. It is vital that you follow their instructions:

- You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts;
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
- Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building; gather at the assembly point in the car park and await further instructions;
- Do not re-enter the building until told by a member of staff or the fire brigade that it is safe to do so.

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CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 5th February 2014

PRESENT : Cllrs. James (Chair), Dallimore, Organ, Wood and Patel

Others in Attendance

Julian Wain, Chief Executive

Peter Gillett, Corporate Director of Resources

Martin Shields, Corporate Director of Services and Neighbourhoods

Sue Mullins, Head of Legal and Policy Development

John Topping, Finance Manager

Anthony Hughes, Democratic Services Officer

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

73. MINUTES

The minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 11th December 2013 and the special meetings held on the 15th and 23rd January 2014 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair subject to an amendment to Minute No 63 of the 11th December 2013 (City Council Energy Costs, Consumption and Projects Monitoring Report) by the addition of the Cabinet Member for Environment as a co-author to the report.

74. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no questions from the public.

75. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

76. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RECYCLING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Cabinet considered the final report and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recycling Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Sebastian Field (Chair of the Group), Councillor Gordon Taylor and Councillor Haigh had been invited to the meeting to present the report. An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Field.

Councillor Taylor introduced the report on behalf of the Task and Finish Group highlighting the process of review undertaken, the evidence gathered and conclusions that had been reached. Councillor Haigh in particular drew attention to the recommendation (as below) relating to a relaunch of the food and waste service using the slogan '*Love food, hate waste*' and more cleaner ways of disposing of food waste.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 2nd December 2013 had agreed to forward to Cabinet the following Task and Finish Group recommendations to improve the current service:-

"A report should be prepared to go to Cabinet within the next six months suggesting a number of changes to the existing service with a view to implementation in two years using computer modelling. The revised scheme should coincide with the replacement of the current fleet of vehicles. Any new scheme should include the following:-

- An analysis should be carried out of the current waste stream as the recycling profile has changed. This could be performed by examining the contents of a fleet vehicle at the Depot.
- Consideration of a change of vehicles to a split-back refuse truck or a 'May Gurney' type vehicle similar to that used in Bristol. This would achieve a key objective of increasing the number of items that can be recycled.
- Exploration of collecting garden waste and cardboard at the same time within a split-back truck.
- The current rounds should be re-examined to take account of local issues and changes which have taken place since they were originally drawn up. For example, access problems in Kingsway and anti-social behaviour in Barton and Tredworth and City Centre properties caused by bins being left out on the streets on busy nights.
- Rounds should be remodelled using a computerised model approach.
- Crews and shift patterns will need to be examined and the necessary changes made.
- There should be a trial using a split-back vehicle on one round such as Tuffley for a period of three months.

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- When the new service is introduced the opportunity of changing existing bin sizes can be explored bearing in mind the constraints posed to residents living in terraced properties.
- There should be a relaunch of the food waste service using '*Love Food – Hate Waste*' as a slogan so that residents are aware they can use compostable bags or newspaper to line food caddies. Local supermarkets should be encouraged to join in with the campaign and sponsor free caddy bags to residents.
- Amey should have a containerised area at the Depot for holding furniture collected via the Council's Bulky Waste Service so that local charities such as Emmaus and the Furniture Recycling Project can be invited to view it to see if it is suitable for recycling".
- The City Council's website should be updated to provide better information for residents. The message should emphasise what can be recycled, rather than what can be thrown away."

Cabinet Members welcomed the report acknowledging that some of the recommendations were already being actioned, that receipt of the report was timely in view of the need to seek reduction in costs, the opportunity to look at new ways of working, the encouragement of recycling, and that the report was a good example of scrutiny in action.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be addressed and matters that can be actioned without the need of a further report be implemented at the earliest opportunity and matters requiring more detailed consideration be the subject of a further report to Cabinet as necessary.

77. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - EVENING ECONOMY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Cabinet considered the final report and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Evening Economy Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Chris Chatterton (Chair of the Group), Councillor Andrew Gravells and Councillor Sebastian Field had been invited to the meeting to present the report. An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Field.

Councillor Chatterton (Chair of the Task and Finish Group) presented the report on behalf of the Task and Finish Group, supported by Councillor Gravells, highlighting the process of review undertaken, the evidence gathered and conclusions that had been reached.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 11th November 2013 had agreed to forward to Cabinet the following Task and Finish Group recommendations:-

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Key Points

- The new Chief Executive for Marketing Gloucester should come from a professional marketing background and should be tasked with developing a long-term strategic marketing plan as a matter of urgency.
- The current Evening Economy Group should raise its profile and liaise more widely with local stakeholder groups. This will strengthen the Group's influence and foster a strong co-ordinated approach to promoting the City Centre.
- Marketing Gloucester should be actively approaching other organisations to publicise the City's attractions and not expect businesses to come to them. A regularly maintained, simple to use and comprehensive listings website would enhance the organisation's profile in this respect.
- Marketing Gloucester and the Evening Economy Group should devise a strategy to draw the potential extra visitors from the new Gloucester Quays leisure complex into the City Centre.

Pub/Club/Restaurant/Theatre/Shopping Facilities

- The development of a recognised restaurant quarter in the City Centre should be explored in common with other cities.
- Pubs and restaurants should be encouraged to offer promotions to coincide with events and ensure opening times are aligned to meet customer demand.
- Those clubs and pubs that cater for a wide range of musical tastes and live music should be encouraged to advertise more widely.
- The existing comedy clubs in the City need to build on their reputation and publicise their events.
- In respect of theatres, a niche should be found for established venues such as the King's Theatre and the Picturedrome.
- Retailers should be encouraged to co-ordinate late night shopping evenings to link with night-time markets and other key events in the City Centre.

Transport Considerations

- There should be liaison with local bus companies to ensure that there are services available to meet demand for key events in the City Centre such as Three Choirs, Christmas Lights Switch on, etc.
- Discussions should be held with local bus companies and First Great Western to explore incorporating tickets for local attractions with journeys.
- Parking schemes and tariffs should be harmonised to give greater clarity for visitors to the City Centre.

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Environmental Considerations

- Businesses should be encouraged to modify their trade refuse collection regime to ensure that bags and cardboard are not left in doorways, so that the appearance of the streetscene is improved.
- Street lighting and flood-lighting should be improved to give a feeling of security and also to illuminate and enhance the features of prominent buildings.

Gloucester Train Station

- The Leader of the Council should write to Network Rail to request them to refurbish the building
- The City Council should explore entering into a contract with the Severnside Rail Partnership to allow sponsorship of the station.
- The City Council should investigate marketing opportunities at the station, at nearby stations and on trains.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture thanked the Task and Finish Group for their report and commented that a number of the recommendations had already been actioned. The Chief Executive of Marketing Gloucester had been appointed; a letter had been sent to Network Rail seeking improvement to Gloucester Rail Station; improvement to street lighting was proposed through inclusion of £75,000 in the City Centre Investment Fund; the possibility of a new bus station was being pursued in advance of the Kings Quarter development.

The development of the Leisure Quarter in the Quays was not at the expense of the City Centre and part of the strategy was to improve the links between the City and the Quays.

The Cabinet Member for Environment commented that the placing of trade waste bags at incorrect times, thereby having a detrimental impact on the street scene, was a problem that was being addressed through the allocation of a dedicated officer.

Councillor Gravells emphasised the need for coordination between bodies and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods concurred with this and reminded members that a City Centre Co-coordinator had been appointed to start in March 2014.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure commented on the need to develop a new marketing model to encourage inward investment and the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources suggested the need to capture the potential market from the 'silver £' sector of the community who potentially have disposable income to spend in the evening.

The need for improved street lighting was recognised as one way of improving the environment so as to encourage people into the City Centre areas in the evening

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and reference was made to improvements already implemented or planned in this respect including Eastgate Street.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be addressed and matters that can be actioned without the need of a further report be implemented at the earliest opportunity and matters requiring more detailed consideration be the subject of a further report to Cabinet as necessary.

78. MONEY PLAN 2014-19 AND BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2014/15

Cabinet considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources reviewing the Council's Money Plan for recommendation to the Council and to approve budget proposals for the Council's 2014/15 budget.

Cabinet Members were pleased at the number of consultation responses received and it was noted that the budget proposals involved no increase in Council Tax, car park charges and garden waste charges.

RESOLVED

- (1) That Council be RECOMMENDED to consider the outcome of the budget consultation process and based upon that consultation approve the assumptions contained for the Council's Money Plan from 2014/15 to 2018/19 and approve proposals for the 2014/15 budget included in the report.**
- (2) That Council be RECOMMENDED to agree the implementation of the target budget reductions set in the Money Plan 2014-19; also to note that consultation has been undertaken on budget savings proposals to achieve the exceptional level of further savings required specifically in 2014/15 and 2015/16.**

Time of commencement: 18:00 hours

Time of conclusion: 19:08 hours

Chair



| | | |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Meeting: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 3rd March 2014 |
| | Cabinet | 5th March 2014 |
| | Council | 27th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Draft Council Plan 2014 – 2017 | |
| Report Of: | Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources | |
| Wards Affected: | All | |
| Key Decision: | No | Budget/Policy Framework: Yes |
| Contact Officer: | Sadie Neal | |
| | Email: sadieneal@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: 396326 |
| Appendices: | 1. Draft Council Plan 2014 – 2017 2. Performance Measures | |

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report presents the second updated draft of the Council Plan for 2014 – 2017 for comments and recommendations. The Council Plan details the priorities and plans for delivery, for the Council over the next three years (Appendix 1) and the performance measures set against the proposed plan (Appendix 2)

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is asked to consider the information contained in the report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate to the Cabinet.

2.2 **Cabinet** is asked to **RESOLVE:-**

- (1) to endorse the draft Council Plan for 2014-17; and
- (2) to **RECOMMEND** that Council approves and adopts the draft Council Plan for 2014-17.

2.3 **Council** is asked to **RESOLVE** that the draft Council Plan for 2014-17 be adopted.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 The Council Plan sets out how Gloucester City Council intends to deliver its role in improving, developing and promoting the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of communities in the City over the next three years. It will replace the previous Council Plan, which covers the period 2011 – 2014.

- 3.2 The administration working with officers have driven the process to confirm the priorities for the Council going forward. The review of the existing Corporate Plan 2011 – 2014 started back in May 2013 with facilitated discussion and relevant officer input.
- 3.3 Reference was made to other key strategic documents adopted by the Council in the revision of existing priorities. The Council Plan complements the City Vision (sustainable community strategy) and fully supports the vision and strategic priorities of the Gloucester Partnership.
- 3.4 A task and finish group was set up to progress and monitor the process associated with the review of the existing Council Plan. This group consists of Cabinet members and Council officers and has met four times between May 2013 and December 2013. Wider opportunities have been made available for input from members of the administration.
- 3.5 During September 2013 all City Council staff had the opportunity to attend sessions to look at the draft objectives as formulated by members and GLT. Workshops were undertaken to help identify how we will progress and achieve against the new objectives. This helped to inform the Key Actions & Projects section of the Council Plan as well as helping staff understand what we are working towards over the next few years.

3.6 The key priorities identified for the next three years are:

- **Prosperity** Growing Gloucester's economy
- **People** Working with our communities
- **Place** Pride in our City & Improving our environment
- **Performance** Maintaining the Council's viability

These priorities complement and align themselves with the City Vision and support the strategic priorities of the Gloucester Partnership.

- 3.7 The plan retains a strong emphasis on economic development and regeneration as this is an ongoing task and there are key projects to continue. Resources will be allocated to development in these areas. There is a strong focus on performance and financial viability where this will underpin progress of key projects and development of services. We have also focused on how we work with our communities actively supporting and assisting communities to help themselves. We are also keen to link the physical and social regeneration objectives to maximise the opportunities presented in addressing social inequality in the City.
- 3.8 The Council will therefore be directing its resources towards achieving these priorities, which include allocation of money, staff, assets and work done with our partners. Some of the priorities are shared with partners and will not be dependent upon financial contribution from the Council.
- 3.9 Initial feedback from the peer challenge team stresses the importance of this; ensuring that our priorities are adequately resourced in financial and staff terms and that the Council formally and practically disinvests from that which is not a priority.

3.10 The key activities and projects in the Council Plan inform the Council's business plans and individual staff appraisals.

3.11 Mindful of Members' wishes in past years, the presentation of this report to Overview and Scrutiny has been carefully timed in order that the draft plan is at sufficient stage of development to enable the committee to make meaningful comment, whilst there is both time and scope for members to make comments and for the Cabinet to reflect on them.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 The prioritisation has involved the consideration of many different alternatives, however these are the main priorities for the City and the Council.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 To agree the corporate objectives for the City for the period 2014 – 2017.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

6.1 Communicating the plan internally and externally will be essential to inform Councillors, staff, partners and the wider community of the future direction of the Council.

6.2 During February 2014 all services will have the opportunity to attend workshops to develop their service Business Plans and ensure that they are aligned with corporate priorities.

6.3 Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments will be considered before Cabinet makes final proposals on the document. This will then go to Council in March and this Committee may consider it again if it wishes.

6.4 Development of monitoring against the Council Plan is currently underway with officers and Members. The plan will be reviewed annually aligned with the budget setting process.

6.5 There are gaps in the numerical targets and these are currently being developed and Members' comments are welcomed.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 Although there are no specific financial implications in this report, the Council's Money Plan will reflect the resources required to deliver the key priorities in the Council Plan.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 Under the Constitution, the Council Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

9.1 Risks presented by the new Council Plan will be considered as part of the Council's risk registers, both at a corporate and service level enabling the capture of all associated risks and their management and mitigation.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

10.1 Impact will be assessed at time of finalisation of each area of the Council Plan to ensure compliance with the Public sector equality duty and general duties of the Equality Act 2010.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

11.1 The building of a safe, strong and healthy community is one of the key aims of our proposed plan. Community safety implications will be taken into account in all our activities.

Sustainability

11.2 Sustainability principles underpin our activities and will be key components of the actions in the Council Plan.

Staffing & Trade Union

11.3 There are no direct staffing implications arising from the report.

Background Documents:

Documents used in the review of existing Corporate Plan:

- City Vision
- Joint Core Strategy
- City Plan
- Health and Wellbeing strategy
- Budget Information

Gloucester City Council

Transforming Your City

Welcome to the Gloucester City Council plan for 2014-2017.

Looking back at the tasks we set in 2011 we have made much progress. Particular highlights include the positive economic growth of the City that is helping Gloucester become one of the best small cities in the country, to which the Council has contributed through its range of grants and support. Secondly, the continued progress of regeneration in the Railway Triangle, Great Friars, Kings Quarter, and the City Centre generally. We have also had a magnificent programme of events laid on by ourselves and our partners which bring people into the City and shows how Gloucester flourishes and thrives. We are currently awaiting government's response to the proposals for transfer of the housing stock to Gloucester City Homes and we have continued to deliver good services despite the need to make over £7million worth of savings which we have successfully done.

But of course much remains to be done and we are determined to continue this work and help Gloucester to go from strength to strength. Many of the themes of this corporate plan were evident last time and we believe it is right this should be so because these are the right things to do. Our plan sets out key objectives, the key actions and our measures of success how we are measuring these. We have included an enhanced focus on day to day performance so that our activities can be better understood and measured.

As always, we welcome comments and suggestions on the Council plan, which will be reviewed year by year throughout its life.

We do believe that it sets out a clear picture of the Council's priorities in the next three years and that it is an effective document pointing the way to Gloucester's future.

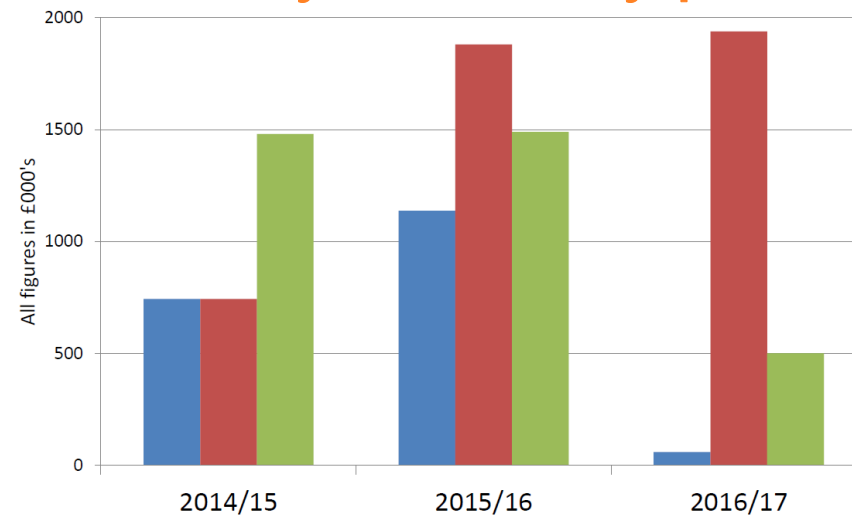


Paul James, Leader



Julian Wain, Chief Executive

Three year money plan



| (All figures in £000's) | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Savings required in year | 743 | 1,137 | 59 |
| Cumulative efficiency savings | 743 | 1,880 | 1,939 |
| Targeted savings | 1,480 | 1,490 | 500 |

| Council Priorities | |
|--|--|
| Prosperity Growing Gloucester's Economy | Growing Gloucester's Economy continues to be a priority for the Council. Much of our efforts over the next three years will be to continue the progress made in regenerating the heart of the city and ensuring local people benefit from the investment brought into Gloucester |
| People Working with our communities | To ensure everyone has the opportunity to make a positive contribution. Building resilience in communities, equipping them to help themselves to become safer and healthier. |
| Place Creating pride in our city and improving our environment | Developing the cultural offer and maximising the use of assets in the city to grow the tourism economy and generate pride in the city. |
| Performance Maintaining the council's financial viability | In recognition of the financial pressures currently faced by all Councils, departmental performance and delivery against our Five Year Money Plan will be a key priority for us. |

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Gloucester City Council

Transforming Your City



Council Plan 2014-2017



| | Priority | Objectives | Key Actions and Projects | Key Measures and Targets |
|-------------|--|---|--|---|
| Prosperity | Growing Gloucester's Economy | Attracting investment, nurturing & encouraging enterprise | Develop the local economy and attract inward investment through Economic Development activities and promotion of investment opportunities Continue to support businesses and issue grants to grow local business base | Build on the success of the business grants scheme by maintaining the high start-up rate of new businesses Formally adopt the City Plan Provide at least 25 grants to support local businesses |
| | | A city with skills and job opportunities | Work with private sector and partners to create employment opportunities Work with local college and universities to grow local entrepreneurial talent Ensure Gloucester is a key stakeholder and partner in the County Strategic Economic Plan | Contribute to the reduction of those not in education and training by reducing NEET rate Work with partners to increase the number of apprenticeships in the city Further develop projects such as the 'Interview Guarantee Scheme', securing at least 120 job opportunities for local people |
| | | A thriving centre and regeneration of the city | Invest £2,000,000 in City Centre Investment Fund Improvement to Southgate Street public realm Continue delivery of key regeneration sites – including the Completion of Kings Quarter Create a new indoor market Ensure regeneration aligns to the strategy detailed in the City Plan Deliver plan to regenerate bus station | Delivery of the City Centre Investment Fund Delivery of the Townscape Heritage Initiative Maintain a satisfaction rating of the public realm in the city centre of >75% |
| People | Working with our communities | Listening to our residents | Measure satisfaction with Council Services through the Gov-Metric system to inform & shape services through improved customer feedback & consultation Consult with residents on key areas of decision making | Increase our use of social media communications, increasing Twitter followers to at least 5,000 Undertake 4 key consultations per year Track satisfaction with services through GovMetric |
| | | An active, healthy & safe city for all to enjoy | Increase the % of residents living an active healthy lifestyle Work with partners to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti social behaviour Work with partners to develop a sports hub for South of the city at Blackbridge | Delivery of the Heart City project Review and adopt the 'Safer Gloucester Plan' Work with partners to increase the % of residents who feel the Council and Police are effectively tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and local crime issues Work with partners to provide a sports hub for the South of the city by 2017 Work with businesses in the City to ensure 90% of restaurants and takeaways achieve a food hygiene rating of 4* or above |
| | | Opportunity for all to achieve their potential | Tackle social inequality with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) | 120 households successfully helped through the Families First Program Improve Gloucester's overall ranking in the indices of deprivation to >118 |
| | | A City where people make a positive contribution | Improve the opportunities for people to volunteer in their communities Work towards reducing social inequality through the use of Asset Based Community Development in our pilot areas | Support 30 public events organised by "Friends of..." and other community groups each year Deliver xx volunteer hours through the Employee Community Involvement programme Introduce Community Builders in targeted areas of the city Enable 175,000 volunteer hours through our community grant projects |
| Place | Creating pride in our city and improving our environment | A greener Gloucester | Continue to decrease Co2 emissions from Council activities Improve household waste recycling rates Maintain satisfaction levels with waste & recycling services | Reduce our CO2 emissions by 10% by 2017 Reduce household waste sent to landfill by xx% Use Govmetric to continually monitor customer satisfaction with Council services Delivery of the waste and recycling action plan |
| | | A distinctive cultural offer for the city | Work with Partners to deliver a distinctive portfolio of events Invest in the City Museum Invest in a new Tourist Information Centre Rugby World Cup host city Tall Ships Festival Summer Festival Food Festival Seasonal Markets | The value of positive media coverage for the city as a result of our cultural offer A customer satisfaction rating of at least 90% for events run and supported by the Council xx visitors each year to the Tourist Information Centre |
| | | Affordable and decent housing for all | Transfer housing stock under CoCo Plus model Work with developers to ensure the provision of social rented properties on new build sites meets demand in the city Promote and encourage landlords to join the Landlord Accreditation Scheme to ensure good standards of private rented accommodation | Promotion and take up of 'Fit to Rent' scheme for 200 rental properties Ensure new housing developments of 15 units or consist of 40% affordable homes Bring back into use 24 empty homes each year through the Empty Homes Scheme Complete transfer of housing stock by 31/3/15 |
| Performance | Maintaining the council's financial viability | Delivery of the 5 yr money plan | Ensure Council assets are utilised, maximising potential income Continue to achieve efficiency savings through delivery of the Channel Strategy Ensure the Council has the organisational capacity and capability to meet future demand Annually Update & Deliver the Strategic Money Plan | Delivery against the Council's 5 Year Money Plan Promoting and increasing the use of self-service and cost-effective interactions with our customers, promoting use of our website and achieving 165,000 visits / month Adopt the Asset Management Plan Adopt the Organisational Development Strategy by xxxx Ensuring annual spending is within approved budgets Adopt and annually update the Strategic Money Plan |
| | | Tracking and Improving Performance | Continue to monitor and improve performance of daily council business | Monthly 'Business as Usual' tracking & improving performance reports will allow us to monitor performance, set targets and seek improvements Inclusion of all service standards in business plans by 2015 |

| Appendix 2 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|--|
| | Measure | Target (per year unless otherwise stated) | Evidence for target | Target Approved by owner? | Owner | Frequency of reporting | Previously Recorded? | Baseline | Baseline Source |
| Attracting investment, nurturing and encouraging enterprise | Encouraging new business startups | Maintain startup rate from 2012/13 | maintain previous performance | Yes | Economic Development | Annual | Yes | 797 | Duport 2012 |
| | Adopt the City Plan | Adopt by 01/01/15 | Discussed with owner | N/A | Development Control | Annual | N/A | N/A | |
| | Provide grants to support local business | Provide 25 grants to local businesses | Discussed with owners | Yes | Economic Development | 6 Monthly | tbc | 22 | Conservation issued 6 in 2012/13. Remainder issued by ED |
| A city with skills and job opportunities | Reduce NEET rate (16-18yrs) | Report only - no internal target | N/A | Yes | Economic Development | Quarterly (ONS publish data quarterly) | Yes | 4.1% (December 2013) | Corporate Plan 2011/14 |
| | Increase number of apprenticeships | Report only - no internal target | N/A | Yes | Economic Development | Annual | tbc | Awaiting data | Economic Development |
| | Secure local job opportunities through projects such as the 'Interview Guarantee Scheme' | Engage with new / expanding businesses and promote 120 jobs to unemployed residents | Discussed with owners | Yes | Economic Development | 6 Monthly | Yes | - | Economic Development |
| A thriving centre and regeneration of the city | Delivery of the City Centre Investment fund | Deliver to schedule (£2m to spend) | Cabinet Papers | N/A | Regeneration & Economic Development | 6 Monthly | N/A | General City Centre regenerations | |
| | Delivery of the Townscape Heritage Initiative | Deliver to schedule (£1.2m to spend) | Cabinet Papers | N/A | Regeneration & Economic Development | 6 Monthly | N/A | Southgate linkage | |
| | Resident satisfaction with cleanliness in the City Centre | 75% acceptable or better | Discussed with owner | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | Annual | Partially | Resident satisfaction with cleanliness in the City (not completed) | Corporate Plan 2011/14 |
| Listening to our residents | Increase our use of Social Media communications | Increase to 5,000 followers by 2017 | Twitter account details | Yes | Customer Services | Quarterly | Yes | 3,373 (Jan 14) - Brighton and Hove have 17,233 | GCC Twitter Account |
| | Election turnout | Commentary Update only | Overwhelming factors influencing voter turnout are outside of our control. | Yes | Electoral Services | Annual | Yes | 96,349 registered. Last local election 28.6%, last national (PCC) 15.7%, last parliamentary 64% | Electoral Register |
| | Undertake Key Consultations | 4 | None | Yes | Customer Services | 6 Monthly | N/A | Min 500 consulted, Min 5 themed questions | |
| | Track satisfaction with services through GovMetric | Commentary Update only | N/A | Yes | Customer Services | 6 Monthly | No | N/A | |
| An active, healthy and safe city for all to enjoy | Delivery of the Heart City Project | Deliver against the Heart City Pledge | See Pledge Details | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | 6 Monthly | N/A | Awaiting data | |
| | Adopt and deliver the 'Safer Gloucester' Plan | Adopt by 1/05/2014, then commentary update only | Discussed timetable with owner | Yes | Public Protection | 6 Monthly | N/A | N/A | |
| | Food hygiene ratings | 90% of businesses achieve a rating 4 or above | maintain previous performance | Yes | EH Licensing | 6 Monthly / Annual (awaiting confirmation) | Yes | 89.39% | Jan 14 Actual - Good or above |
| | Action to resolve ASB and crime | 80% Agree or Strongly agree by 2017 | Discussion with owner | Yes | Public Protection | Annual | Yes | 74% | % of local residents who feel that the Police and Local Council are dealing with the anti social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area. (Sept 2013) |
| Opportunity for all to achieve their potential | Households helped through the Families First Program | 120 Successful Outcomes | Increase to 8FTE, assume same rate of success per FTE. | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | 6 Monthly | Yes | 61 Successful Outcomes | with 7FTE in 7 Months |
| | Improve Gloucesters ranking in the indices of deprivation | 118th (or greater) | 118th was our position in 2007 (higher position = less deprived) | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | 3 Yearly | Yes | 96th (2010) | Corporate Plan 2011/14 |
| A city where people make a positive contribution | Public events organised by "Friends of..." and other community groups utilising public open spaces | 30 | Discuss with NMS | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | 6 Monthly | Yes | 26 in 2012/13 | Data provided by NMS |
| | Employee Community Involvement Program | 250 Volunteer Hours delivered | Discuss target with owner | Awaiting Response | Human Resources | 6 Monthly | Requested | | |
| | Community Grants projects | 175,000 Volunteer Hours | Marginal improvement from previous performance | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | 6 Monthly | Yes | 169050 Volunteer Hours | Delivered in 2012/13 |
| | Delivering ABCD through community builders | Update only | N/A | N/A | Neighbourhood Management | Quarterly | N/A | | |
| A greener Gloucester | Reduction in City Council CO2 emissions | 10% reduction by 2017 | Benchmarked against previous 5 years | Yes | Environmental Planning | Annual | Yes | 6934 tonnes | 2012 Actual |
| | Reduce household waste sent to landfill | Reduce by 10% by 2017 (21,815.2 tonnes) | Improvement upon previous performance | Awaiting Response | Neighbourhood Management | Monthly | Yes | 24,239.10 | Corporate Plan 2011/14 (forecast) |
| | Delivery of the Waste & Recycling action plan | Delivering to schedule and adopt by 1/12/14 | N/A | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | 6 Monthly | N/A | N/A | |
| A distinctive cultural offer for the city | The value of positive media coverage for the City | 480,000 | Marginal improvement on modal average | Yes | Comms & Marketing | Monthly | Yes | 722,578 | Corporate Plan 2011/14 (forecast) |
| | Customer satisfaction with events run and supported by GCC | 90% | Maintain previous good performance | Yes | Guildhall Events Team | Annual | Partially | 95% | Corporate Plan 2011/14 (2013 Year End) |
| | Visitor Numbers to the Tourist Information Centre | XX visitors | Marginal improvement from previous performance | To discuss | TIC | 6 Monthly | Yes | Awaiting data | |
| Affordable and decent housing for all | Take up of "fit to rent" scheme | 200 rental properties signed up to scheme by 2017 | Agreed with owner | Yes | EH Private Sector Housing | Quarterly | Yes | 140 | Count as of Feb 2014 |
| | Delivery of the Empty Homes Scheme | 24 empty homes brought back into use | Agreed with owner | Yes | EH Private Sector Housing | 6 Monthly | tbc | 30, 20 | Annual count 2012,2013 |
| | Complete transfer of housing stock | By 31/05/2015 | Discuss timetable with owner | Yes | Business Improvement | 6 Monthly | N/A | N/A | |

| | Measure | Target (per year unless otherwise stated) | Evidence for target | Target Approved by owner? | Owner | Frequency of reporting | | Previously Recorded? | Baseline | Baseline Source |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----|-------------------------|--|--|
| Delivery of the five year money plan | Delivery against the Council's five year money plan | Deliver to plan | N/A | Yes | Financial Services | Annual | | Yes | N/A | |
| | Increasing the use of cost-effective and self service interactions with customers | 165,000 page hits / month | Marginal improvement upon previous performance | Yes | Customer Services | Monthly | | Yes | 157947 | Jan13-Jan14 average |
| | Work to the Asset Management Strategy | Commentary Update only | N/A | Yes | Asset Management | 6 Monthly | | N/A | N/A | |
| | Adopt the Organisational Development Strategy | By xx/xx/xxxx | Discuss target with owner | Awaiting Response | Human Resources | 6 Monthly | | N/A | N/A | Information requested from HR |
| | Ensuring Annual Spending is controlled | Spending is within allocated budgets | Financial Services | N/A | Financial Services | Annual | | Yes | Annual Budgets | Financial Services |
| Tracking and Improving Performance | Include all Service Standards in Business Plans | By 01/04/2015 | Discussed with owner | Yes | Business Improvement | Annual | | No | N/A | |
| Business as Usual | Sickness Rate | 8.3 | Public sector Average (2009) - L.A.Lawyer | Awaiting Response | Human Resources | Monthly | | Yes | 10.24 | Forecast for 2013/14 (Dec) |
| | Missed Bin Collections | no more than 0.01% of dwelling stock (56). (Each item counted individually) | Recent Actuals | Awaiting Response | Neighbourhood Management | Monthly | | Yes | 20-60 month average | Recent months actuals |
| | Customer Complaints Received | Resolve 90% within 10 days No more than 80 complaints/month | Benchmarked to existing performance | Yes | Customer Services | Monthly | | Yes | 80.1 / month | Average total complaints including partner organisations Jun2013-Dec2013 |
| | Average wait time for telephone customers | Ave wait 1min or less, Abandon rate 10% < 5% | Discussed with owner | Yes | Customer Services | Monthly | | Yes | 55sec / 11.06% abandon | Jan 2014 average |
| | Subscriptions to GovDelivery | Increase by 1000 | Agreed with owner | Yes | Customer Services | 6 Monthly | | No | 5512 | Subscribers as of Jan 2014 |
| | Homelessness Prevention | Successful resolution to 70% of cases | Actual YTD performance 2012/13 | Yes | Housing & Homelessness | Quarterly | | Yes | 69.60% | Average YTD Performance from existing Corp Plan |
| | Development Control Statistical Return (021-02) (planning decisions) | Minor 65%, Major 60%, Other 80% | National target | Yes | Development Control | Monthly | | Yes | Minor 75.47%, Major 61.11%, Other 84.89% | YTD average - Dec 13 |
| | Fly tipping Incidents (079-01) | 1734 | 10% reduction on current annual forecast (public reported and officer reported to be separated) | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | Monthly | | Yes | 1927 | 2013/14 Forecast |
| | Visitor Numbers to the City and Folk Museums | 12,776 (City), 8,827(Folk) | Profile based on 2013/14 actuals and revised opening hours (see email to Angela Smith for details) | Yes | Museums Services | Monthly | | Yes | 16559 (city) / 15842 (folk) | 2012/13 Actual |
| | Council Tax Collections | 97.30% | Meet current standard | Yes | CIVICA | Monthly | | Yes | 97.30% | 2012/13 Actual |
| | NNDR Collections | 97.47% | Meet current standard | Yes | CIVICA | Monthly | | Yes | 97.47% | 2012/13 Actual |
| | Council Tax Arrears | 30.00% | Contract target | Yes | CIVICA | Monthly | | Yes | 32.09% | 2012/13 Actual |
| | Littering Incidents | 482 | 10% reduction on current annual forecast (public reported and officer reported to be separated) | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | Monthly | | Yes | 535 | 2013/14 Forecast |
| Dog Fouling Incidents | 230 | 10% reduction on current annual forecast (public reported and officer reported to be separated) | Yes | Neighbourhood Management | Monthly | | Yes | 256 | 2013/14 Forecast | |

Gloucester City Council

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Meeting: | Cabinet Audit and Governance Committee Council | Date: 5th March 2014 17th March 2014 27th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15 | |
| Report Of: | Corporate Director of Resources | |
| Wards Affected: | All | |
| Key Decision: | No | Budget/Policy Framework: Yes |
| Contact Officer: | Peter Gillett | |
| | Email: peter.gillett@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: 396400 |
| Appendices: | 1. Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15 | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To formally recommend that Full Council approves the attached Treasury Management Strategy, the Prudential Indicators and note the treasury activities.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that the recommendations to Council be noted and endorsed.

- 2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) The treasury management strategy which sets out how the Council's treasury service will manage external borrowing and investments in support of the capital programme be approved;
- (2) The borrowing authorised borrowing limit be approved at:-
 - a. 2014/15 £86m
 - b. 2015/16 £86m
 - c. 2016/17 £86m
- (3) The Housing Revenue Account capital financing requirement be limited to £62.750m in accordance with the debt cap imposed through the HRA self financing regime.
- (4) The prudential indicators set on in section two of the strategy which set out the capital plans, financing, minimum revenue provision policy statement and affordability on the Council tax and rents be approved.

- 2.3 Audit and Governance Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that the Treasury Management Strategy and the treasury implications of the potential CoCo be noted.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The treasury management strategy for 2013/14 proposed a continuation of the existing successful strategy to move to an under-borrowing position. In previous years the Council's level of external debt exceeded the capital financing requirement. The Council during 2013/14 has continued this strategy as at 31st March 2013 this over-borrowing had reduced to £0.2m and the forecast position at 31st March 2014 is 4.596m under borrowing.
- 3.2 This under-borrowing reflects that the Council resources such as reserves and provisions will have reduced debt rather than be externally invested. This strategy is sensible, at this point in time, for two reasons. Firstly, there is no differential between the marginal borrowing rate and investment rate so there is nothing to be gained by investing Council resources externally. Secondly, by using the resources to reduce debt the Council will reduce exposure to investment counterparty risk.
- 3.3 There will be short term cashflow balances that will be invested for short periods within the year. Section 4 of the strategy outlines the Annual Investment Strategy, in particular in outlines the creditworthiness policy through the use of credit ratings.
- 3.4 The borrowing strategy is straight-forward, use investments to reduce short term borrowing and long term debt as it becomes repayable. Once investments have been applied it is anticipated that any new debt will be short term as the current market rates are attractive and this also maximises future flexibility. This flexibility is important because the potential creation of the CoCo will have treasury implications as the Housing Revenue Account accounts for almost 80% of external debt. The treasury implications of the CoCo will be actively considered during the negotiation and approval process.
- 3.5 The strategy allows for either debt rescheduling or new long term fixed rate borrowing in place of short term borrowing if circumstances were to change during 2014/15 although the decision will take account of potential CoCo position.
- 3.6 The strategy also includes the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy statement. This policy continues with the practice approved last year. MRP is the revenue charge to reduce debt and is only required by the General Fund. This option provides for a reduction in the borrowing need over the approximate asset life. For clarity the options for reduction are explained and can either be through an annuity calculation (providing a consistent overall annual borrowing charge) or straight line (where the principal repayment is the same each year).

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The Strategy considered the following options.
- The potential to borrow long term rather than sort term. This remains an option should interest rates change but at the moment short terms rates are only 0.35% whereas long term rates are over 3% (10 years plus).

- Another option which has been discounted is that internal resources such as reserves could be externally invested rather than invested internally. The income from the external investment is the same as the cost of temporary borrowing so there is nothing to be gained by externally investing reserves at this point in time. In other circumstances, usually when long term rates are lower than short term investment rates there is sometimes merit in external investment of reserves and this will be considered if circumstances change.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 As outlined in the legal implications the recommendations require Council approval.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

6.1 The treasury management strategy provides a logical basis to fund the capital financing requirement and successful move to a fully under-borrowed position. The main issue that will impact of the strategy is the CoCo and this will require future work as part of the negotiation and approval process.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The expenditure and income arising from treasury management activities are included within the Council General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 The Treasury Management Strategy is required to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, CLG MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and CLG Investment Guidance.

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

9.1 There is a risk that short term and long term interest rates increase and this will be monitored both in-house and by the Council Treasury Management Advisor, Capita Asset Services. In this event the risk will be managed through the opportunities either to reschedule debt or new long term fixed rate borrowing in place of short term borrowing.

9.2 The risk of deposits not being returned by the counterparty is minimised by moving to a fully under borrowed position and then only investing short term cash flow monies with counterparties on the approved lending list. All counterparties on this list meet minimum credit rating criteria, ensuring the risk is kept extremely low although not eliminated.

9.3 The treasury management risks associated with the potential creation of the CoCo will be actively managed through the negotiation and approval processes.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

10.1 A PIA screening assessment has been undertaken and the impact is neutral. A full PIA is not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

11.1 None

Sustainability

11.2 None

Staffing & Trade Union

11.3 None

Background Documents:

Local Government Act 2003

CIPFA Treasury Management Code

CIPFA Prudential Code

CLG MRP Guidance

Treasury Management Strategy Statement

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy

Gloucester City Council
2014/15

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.

The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses. On occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

CIPFA defines treasury management as:

“The management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

1.2 Reporting requirements

The Council is required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals.

Prudential and treasury indicators and treasury strategy (this report) - The first, and most important report covers:

- the capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- a minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- the treasury management strategy (how the investments and borrowings are to be organised) including treasury indicators; and
- an investment strategy (the parameters on how investments are to be managed).

Quarterly Treasury update reports - This will update members on a quarterly basis with the progress of the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary, and whether the treasury strategy is meeting the strategy or whether any policies require revision.

An annual treasury report – This provides details of a selection of actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

Scrutiny

The above reports are required to be adequately scrutinised before being recommended to the Council. This role is undertaken by the Audit and Governance Committee.

1.3 Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/15

The strategy for 2014/15 covers two main areas:

Capital issues

- the capital plans and the prudential indicators;
- the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy.

Treasury management issues

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- prospects for interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy;
- policy on borrowing in advance of need;
- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy;
- creditworthiness policy; and
- policy on use of external service providers.

These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, CLG MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and CLG Investment Guidance.

1.4 Training

The CIPFA Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This especially applies to members responsible for scrutiny. Training for Members has been provided in the past and further training will be arranged as required during 2014/15. The training needs of treasury management officers are periodically reviewed.

1.5 Treasury management consultants

The Council uses Capita Asset Services, Treasury solutions as its external treasury management advisors.

The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subjected to regular review.

2 THE CAPITAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2014/15 – 2016/17

The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

2.1 Capital expenditure

This prudential indicator is a summary of the Council's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously, and those forming part of this budget cycle. Members are asked to approve the capital expenditure forecasts:

| Capital expenditure £m | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Regeneration | 2.164 | 1.287 | 4.703 | 2.050 | 2.050 |
| Services & Neighbourhood Resources | 2.317 | 0.317 | 0.975 | 0 | 0 |
| Housing General Fund | 0.794 | 0 | 0.415 | 0.200 | 0.200 |
| Total Non-HRA | 5.275 | 1.850 | 6.882 | 2.934 | 2.934 |
| HRA | 7.772 | 5.101 | 7.100 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 13.047 | 6.951 | 13.982 | 2.934 | 2.934 |

The Council has other long term liabilities which relate to the difference between the Local Government Pension Liabilities and assets. These do not have any treasury impact on Gloucester City Council as the Pension Fund is managed by Gloucestershire County Council. Therefore, other long term liabilities have been excluded from this strategy.

The table below summarises the above capital expenditure plans and how these plans are being financed by capital or revenue resources. Any shortfall of resources results in a funding borrowing need.

| Capital expenditure £m | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Non-HRA | 5.275 | 1.850 | 6.882 | 2.934 | 2.934 |
| HRA | 7.772 | 5.101 | 7.100 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 13.047 | 6.951 | 13.982 | 2.934 | 2.934 |
| Financed by: | | | | | |
| Capital receipts | 3.328 | 1.437 | 3.439 | 0 | 0 |
| Capital grants | 1.619 | 0.413 | 1.887 | 0.084 | 0.084 |
| HRA Major repairs | 3.129 | 2.000 | 1.487 | 0 | 0 |
| HRA Revenue | 0 | 2.900 | 2.900 | 0 | 0 |
| Net financing need for the year | 4.971 | 0.201 | 4.268 | 2.850 | 2.850 |

2.2 The Council's borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement)

The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is

essentially a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above, which has not immediately been paid for, will increase the CFR.

The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the borrowing need in line with each assets life.

The Council is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

| £000 | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Capital Financing Requirement | | | | | |
| Closing CFR | 76,700 | 76,438 | 80,218 | 82,502 | 84,745 |
| Movement in CFR | 4,547 | (262) | 3,779 | 2,284 | 2,243 |

| Movement in CFR represented by | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Net financing need for the year (above) | 4,971 | 201 | 4,268 | 2,850 | 2,850 |
| Less MRP/VRP and other financing movements | (424) | (463) | (488) | (566) | (607) |
| Movement in CFR | 4,547 | (262) | 3,779 | 2,284 | 2,243 |

2.3 Minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy statement

The Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year (the CFR) through a revenue charge (the minimum revenue provision - MRP), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required (voluntary revenue provision - VRP).

CLG regulations have been issued which require the full Council to approve **an MRP Statement** in advance of each year. A variety of options are provided to councils, so long as there is a prudent provision. The Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement:

For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 or which in the future will be Supported Capital Expenditure, the MRP policy will be:

- **Existing practice** - MRP will follow the existing practice outlined in former CLG regulations (option 1); This option provides for an approximate 4% reduction in the borrowing need (CFR) each year.
;

From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing (including PFI and finance leases) the MRP policy will be:

- **Asset life method** – MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the regulations (this option must be applied for any expenditure capitalised under a Capitalisation Direction) (option 3); This options provide for a reduction in the borrowing need over approximately the asset's life.

There is no requirement on the HRA to make a minimum revenue provision, instead depreciation forms a real charge to the HRA balance.

2.4 Affordability prudential indicators

The previous sections cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators, but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances. The Council is asked to approve the following indicators:

2.5 Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream and shows how much of the Council's net revenue stream is committed to the costs of capital financing represented by interest payable on borrowings and the Minimum Revenue Provision.

| | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Non-HRA | 4.27% | 3.71% | 5.09% | 5.71% | 6.32% |
| HRA | 13.25% | 13.64% | 14.05% | 14.48% | 14.91% |

The estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals in this budget report.

2.6 Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on council tax and Housing Rents

This indicator identifies the revenue costs associated with proposed changes to the three year capital programme recommended in this budget report compared to the Council's existing approved commitments and current plans. The assumptions are based on the budget, but will invariably include some estimates, such as the level of Government support, which are not published over a three year period.

Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the band D council tax

| £ | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Council tax - band D | 10.16 | -3.24 | 5.38 | 3.32 | 2.26 |

Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on average housing rent

| £ | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Average weekly rent | 0.04 | 0.81 | 0.63 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

3 BORROWING

The capital expenditure plans set out in Section 2 provide details of the service activity of the Council. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities. The strategy covers the relevant treasury / prudential indicators, the current and projected debt positions and the annual investment strategy.

3.1 Current portfolio position

The Council's treasury portfolio position at 31 March 2013, with forward projections are summarised below. The table shows the actual external debt (the treasury management operations), against the underlying capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement - CFR), highlighting any over or under borrowing.

| £000 | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| External Debt | | | | | |
| Debt at 1 April | 89,105 | 76,932 | 71,842 | 71,842 | 74,042 |
| Expected change in Debt | (12,173) | (5,090) | 0 | 2,200 | 2,200 |
| Other long-term liabilities (OLTL) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Expected change in OLTL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Actual gross debt at 31 March | 76,932 | 71,842 | 71,842 | 74,042 | 76,242 |
| The Capital Financing Requirement | 76,700 | 76,438 | 80,218 | 82,502 | 84,745 |
| Under / (over) borrowing | (£232) | 4,596 | 8,376 | 8,460 | 8,503 |

| £000 | 2012/13 Actual | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Investments at 31st March | | | | | |
| Investments | 5,993 | 4,600 | 800 | 800 | 800 |
| Investment Change | (10,126) | (5,193) | - | - | - |

At the 31st March 2013 there was an over borrowing of £232,000 compared with the capital financing requirement. It is estimated that by 31st March 2013 the position will have changed to £4.596 million under-borrowing with debt lower than the capital financing requirement. This change is consistent with the approved Treasury Management Strategy and has been achieved by using external investments to fund the in year capital financing requirement.

Within the prudential indicators there are a number of key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within well defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2014/15 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years, but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue purposes.

The Director of Finance reports that the Council complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in this budget report.

3.2 Treasury Indicators: limits to borrowing activity

The operational boundary. This is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases, this would be a similar figure to the CFR, but may be lower or higher depending on the levels of actual debt.

| Operational boundary £000 | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Debt | 85,000 | 85,000 | 85,000 | 85,000 |
| Other long term liabilities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 85,000 | 85,000 | 85,000 | 85,000 |

The authorised limit for external debt. A further key prudential indicator represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by the full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.

1. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised.
2. The Council is asked to approve the following authorised limit:

| Authorised limit £000 | 2013/14 Estimate | 2014/15 Estimate | 2015/16 Estimate | 2016/17 Estimate |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Debt | 86,000 | 86,000 | 86,000 | 86,000 |
| Other long term liabilities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 86,000 | 86,000 | 86,000 | 86,000 |

3.3 Prospects for interest rates

The Council has appointed Capita Asset Services as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The following table gives our central view.

| Annual Average % | Bank Rate % | PWLB Borrowing Rates % (including certainty rate adjustment) | | |
|------------------|-------------|---|---------|---------|
| | | 5 year | 25 year | 50 year |
| Mar 2014 | 0.50 | 2.60 | 4.40 | 4.40 |
| Jun 2014 | 0.50 | 2.60 | 4.40 | 4.50 |
| Sep 2014 | 0.50 | 2.70 | 4.50 | 4.50 |
| Dec 2014 | 0.50 | 2.80 | 4.60 | 4.60 |
| Mar 2015 | 0.50 | 2.90 | 4.70 | 4.70 |
| Jun 2015 | 0.50 | 2.90 | 4.70 | 4.80 |
| Sep 2015 | 0.50 | 3.00 | 4.80 | 4.90 |
| Dec 2015 | 0.75 | 3.10 | 4.90 | 5.00 |
| Mar 2016 | 0.75 | 3.20 | 5.00 | 5.10 |
| Jun 2016 | 1.00 | 3.20 | 5.00 | 5.10 |
| Sep 2016 | 1.25 | 3.30 | 5.10 | 5.10 |
| Dec 2016 | 1.50 | 3.40 | 5.10 | 5.20 |
| Mar 2017 | 1.75 | 3.50 | 5.10 | 5.20 |

Until 2013, the economic recovery in the UK since 2008 had been the worst and slowest recovery in recent history. However, growth has rebounded during 2013 to surpass all expectations, propelled by recovery in consumer spending and the housing market. Forward surveys are also currently very positive in indicating that growth prospects are strong for 2014, not only in the UK economy as a whole, but in all three main sectors, services, manufacturing and construction. This is very encouraging as there does need to be a significant rebalancing of the economy away from consumer spending to construction, manufacturing, business investment and exporting in order for this start to recovery to become more firmly established. One drag on the economy is that wage inflation continues to remain significantly below CPI inflation so disposable income and living standards are under pressure, although income tax cuts have ameliorated this to some extent. This therefore means that labour productivity must improve significantly for this situation to be corrected by the warranting of increases in pay rates. The US, the main world economy, faces similar debt problems to the UK, but thanks to reasonable growth, cuts in government expenditure and tax rises, the annual government deficit has been halved from its peak without appearing to do too much damage to growth.

The current economic outlook and structure of market interest rates and government debt yields have several key treasury management implications:

- As for the Eurozone, concerns have subsided considerably in 2013. However, sovereign debt difficulties have not gone away and major concerns could return in respect of any countries that do not dynamically address fundamental issues of low growth, international uncompetitiveness and the need for overdue reforms of the economy (as Ireland has done). It is, therefore, possible over the next few years that levels of government debt to GDP ratios could continue to rise to levels that could result in a loss of investor confidence in the financial viability of such countries. This could mean that sovereign debt concerns have not disappeared but, rather, have only been postponed. Counterparty risks therefore remain elevated. This continues to suggest the use of higher quality counterparties for shorter time periods;

- Investment returns are likely to remain relatively low during 2014/15 and beyond;
- Borrowing interest rates have risen significantly during 2013 and are on a rising trend. The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances has served well over the last few years. However, this needs to be carefully reviewed to avoid incurring even higher borrowing costs, which are now looming ever closer, where authorities will not be able to avoid new borrowing to finance new capital expenditure and/or to refinance maturing debt, in the near future;
- There will remain a cost of carry to any new borrowing which causes an increase in investments as this will incur a revenue loss between borrowing costs and investment returns.

3.4 Borrowing strategy

The Council is moving from an over to an under borrowed position. This means that investments are being used as they mature to fund the in year capital financing requirement or reduce external debt. This has resulted in external debt being lower than the capital financing requirement with Council reserves and balances being utilised to reduce debt rather than being externally invested. This strategy is prudent as there is no differential between temporary borrowing and investment rates and this will also reduce counterparty risk.

The Housing Revenue Account accounts for almost 80% of the capital financing requirement and external debt. The potential creation of a Co-Co will have a significant impact and the Council will actively consider the treasury implications during the negotiation and approval processes.

Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2014/15 treasury operations. The Director of Finance will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:

- *if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short term rates (e.g. due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation), then long term borrowings will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing will be considered.*
- *if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from a greater than expected increase in the anticipated rate to US tapering of asset purchases, or in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates are still lower than they will be in the next few years.*

Any decisions will be reported to the appropriate decision making body at the next available opportunity.

Treasury management limits on activity

There are three debt related treasury activity limits. The purpose of these are to restrain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of any adverse movement in interest rates.

However, if these are set to be too restrictive they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs / improve performance. The indicators are:

- Upper limits on variable interest rate exposure. This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position net of investments
- Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure. This is similar to the previous indicator and covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates;
- Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits

The Council is asked to approve the following treasury indicators and limits:

| £m | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Interest rate exposures | | | |
| | Upper | Upper | Upper |
| Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt | £85m | £85m | £85m |
| Limits on variable interest rates based on net debt | £30m | £30m | £30m |
| Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2014/15 | | | |
| | Lower | Upper | |
| Under 12 months | 0% | 50% | |
| 12 months to 2 years | 0% | 50% | |
| 2 years to 5 years | 0% | 50% | |
| 5 years to 10 years | 0% | 50% | |
| 10 years and above | 0% | 80% | |
| Maturity structure of variable interest rate borrowing 2014/15 | | | |
| | Lower | Upper | |
| Under 12 months | 0% | 100% | |
| 12 months to 2 years | 0% | 100% | |
| 2 years to 5 years | 0% | 100% | |
| 5 years to 10 years | 0% | 80% | |
| 10 years and above | 0% | 50% | |

3.5 Policy on borrowing in advance of need

The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.

Risks associated with any borrowing in advance activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

3.6 Debt rescheduling

As short term borrowing rates will be considerably cheaper than longer term fixed interest rates, there may be potential opportunities to generate savings by switching from long

term debt to short term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of the current treasury position and the size of the cost of debt repayment (premiums incurred).

The reasons for any rescheduling to take place will include:

- the generation of cash savings and / or discounted cash flow savings;
- helping to fulfil the treasury strategy;
- enhance the balance of the portfolio (amend the maturity profile and/or the balance of volatility).

Consideration will also be given to identify if there is any residual potential for making savings by running down investment balances to repay debt prematurely as short term rates on investments are likely to be lower than rates paid on current debt.

All rescheduling will be reported to the Cabinet, at the earliest meeting following its action.

4 ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

4.1 Investment policy

The Council's investment policy has regard to the CLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") and the 2011 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). The Council's investment priorities will be security first, liquidity second and then return.

In accordance with guidance from the CLG and CIPFA, and in order to minimise the risk to investments, the Council has below clearly stipulated the minimum acceptable credit quality of counterparties for inclusion on the lending list. The creditworthiness methodology used to create the counterparty list fully accounts for the ratings, watches and outlooks published by all three ratings agencies with a full understanding of what these reflect in the eyes of each agency. Using our ratings service potential counterparty ratings are monitored on a real time basis with knowledge of any changes notified electronically as the agencies notify modifications.

Furthermore, the Council's officers recognise that ratings should not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution and that it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To this end the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as "credit default swaps" and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings. This is fully integrated into the credit methodology provided by the advisors, Capita Asset Services in producing its colour codings which show the varying degrees of suggested creditworthiness.

Other information sources used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.

The aim of the strategy is to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which will also enable diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk.

The intention of the strategy is to provide security of investment and minimisation of risk.

Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in appendix 5.3 under the 'specified' and 'non-specified' investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council's treasury management practices – schedules.

4.2 Creditworthiness policy

This Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by Capita Asset Services. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
- CDS spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;

- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

This modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will therefore use counterparties within the following durational bands:

- Yellow 5 years *
- Dark pink 5 years for Enhanced money market funds (EMMFs) with a credit score of 1.25
- Light pink 5 years for Enhanced money market funds (EMMFs) with a credit score of 1.5
- Purple 2 years
- Blue 1 year (only applies to nationalised or semi nationalised UK Banks)
- Orange 1 year
- Red 6 months
- Green 100 days
- No colour not to be used

| Y | Pi1 | Pi2 | P | B | O | R | G | N/C |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1 | 1.25 | 1.5 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Up to 5yrs | Up to 5yrs | Up to 5yrs | Up to 2yrs | Up to 1yr | Up to 1yr | Up to 6mths | Up to 100days | No Colour |

| | Colour (and long term rating where applicable) | Money and/or % Limit | Time Limit |
|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Banks * | yellow | £5m | 5yrs |
| Banks | purple | £5m | 2 yrs |
| Banks | orange | £5m | 1 yr |
| Banks – part nationalised | blue | £5m | 1 yr |
| Banks | red | £5m | 6 mths |
| Banks | green | £0m | 100 days |
| Banks | No colour | Not to be used | |
| Limit 3 category – Council’s banker (not meeting Banks 1) | XXX | £5m | 1 day |
| DMADF | AAA | unlimited | 6 months |
| Local authorities | n/a | £100 % | 1 yr |
| Money market funds | AAA | £100 % | liquid |
| Enhanced money market funds with a credit score of 1.25 | Dark pink / AAA | £100 % | liquid |

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Enhanced money market funds with a credit score of 1.5 | Light pink / AAA | £100 % | liquid |
|---|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|

Our creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information than just primary ratings and by using a risk weighted scoring system, does not give undue preponderance to just one agency's ratings.

Typically the minimum credit ratings criteria the Council use will be a short term rating (Fitch or equivalents) of short term rating F1, long term rating A-, viability rating of A-, and a support rating of 1 There may be occasions when the counterparty ratings from one rating agency are marginally lower than these ratings but may still be used. In these instances consideration will be given to the whole range of ratings available, or other topical market information, to support their use.

All credit ratings will be monitored daily. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of our creditworthiness service.

- if a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
- in addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in credit default swap spreads against the iTraxx benchmark and other market data on a weekly basis. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of this external service. In addition this Council will also use market data and market information, information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of that supporting government.

4.3 Country limits

The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from other countries (where the approved counterparties from outside of the UK are from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AAA from Fitch). The list of countries that qualify using this credit criteria as at the date of this report are shown in Appendix 5.5. This list will be added to, or deducted from, by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy.

4.4 Investment strategy

In-house funds. Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months).

Investment returns expectations. Bank Rate is forecast to remain unchanged at 0.5% before starting to rise from quarter 4 of 2015. Bank Rate forecasts for financial year ends (March) are:

- 2013/14 0.50%
- 2014/15 0.50%
- 2015/16 0.75%
- 2016/17 1.75%

There are upside risks to these forecasts (i.e. start of increases in Bank Rate occurs sooner) if economic growth remains strong and unemployment falls faster than expected. However, should the pace of growth fall back, there could be downside risk.

The suggested budgeted investment earnings rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to 100 days during each financial year for the next four years are as follows:

| | |
|---------|-------|
| 2014/15 | 0.50% |
| 2015/16 | 0.60% |
| 2016/17 | 1.50% |
| 2017/18 | 2.25% |

Investment treasury indicator and limit - total principal funds invested for greater than 364 days. These limits are set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment, and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end.

The Council is asked to approve the treasury indicator and limit: -

| Maximum principal sums invested > 364 days | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| £m | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Principal sums invested > 364 days | £m Nil | £m Nil | £m Nil |

4.5 Icelandic bank investments

Heritable Bank

Heritable bank is a UK registered bank under Scottish law. The company was placed in administration on 7 October 2008. The current position on actual payments received and estimated future payouts is as shown in the table below and this council has used these estimates to calculate the impairment based on recovering 88.61p in the £.

| Date | Repayment |
|------------------|------------------|
| Received to date | 77.30% |
| July 2013 | 5.50% |
| January 2014 | 5.81% |

Recoveries are expressed as a percentage of the authority's claim in the administration, which includes interest accrued up to 6 October 2008.

4.6 End of year investment report

At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

5 APPENDICES

(These can be appended to the report or omitted as required)

1. Interest rate forecasts
2. Economic background
3. Treasury management practice 1 – credit and counterparty risk management (option 1)
4. Approved countries for investments
5. Treasury management scheme of delegation
6. The treasury management role of the section 151 officer

5.1 APPENDIX: Interest Rate Forecasts 2014 – 2017

Please note – The current PWLB rates and forecast shown below have taken into account the 20 basis point certainty rate reduction effective as of the 1st November 2012.

| Capita Asset Services Interest Rate View | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Now | Mar-14 | Jun-14 | Sep-14 | Dec-14 | Mar-15 | Jun-15 | Sep-15 | Dec-15 | Mar-16 | Jun-16 | Sep-16 | Dec-16 | Mar-17 |
| Bank Rate View | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.75% | 0.75% | 1.00% | 1.25% | 1.50% | 1.75% |
| 3 Month LIBID | 0.40% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.60% | 0.70% | 0.80% | 0.90% | 1.00% | 1.20% | 1.50% | 1.70% |
| 6 Month LIBID | 0.49% | 0.60% | 0.60% | 0.60% | 0.60% | 0.60% | 0.70% | 0.80% | 1.00% | 1.20% | 1.30% | 1.50% | 1.70% | 2.00% |
| 12 Month LIBID | 0.78% | 0.80% | 0.80% | 0.80% | 0.80% | 0.90% | 1.10% | 1.20% | 1.40% | 1.60% | 1.70% | 1.90% | 2.10% | 2.30% |
| 5yr PWLB Rate | 2.63% | 2.60% | 2.60% | 2.70% | 2.80% | 2.90% | 2.90% | 3.00% | 3.10% | 3.20% | 3.20% | 3.30% | 3.40% | 3.50% |
| 10yr PWLB Rate | 3.66% | 3.70% | 3.70% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 3.90% | 3.90% | 4.00% | 4.10% | 4.20% | 4.30% | 4.40% | 4.50% | 4.50% |
| 25yr PWLB Rate | 4.32% | 4.40% | 4.40% | 4.50% | 4.60% | 4.70% | 4.70% | 4.80% | 4.90% | 5.00% | 5.00% | 5.10% | 5.10% | 5.10% |
| 50yr PWLB Rate | 4.29% | 4.40% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.60% | 4.70% | 4.80% | 4.90% | 5.00% | 5.10% | 5.10% | 5.10% | 5.20% | 5.20% |
| Bank Rate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capita Asset Services | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.75% | 0.75% | 1.00% | 1.50% | 1.75% |
| UBS | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.75% | 1.00% | 1.25% | 1.50% | - | - | - | - | - |
| Capital Economics | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.75% | - | - | - | - | - |
| 5yr PWLB Rate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capita Asset Services | 2.63% | 2.60% | 2.60% | 2.70% | 2.80% | 2.90% | 2.90% | 3.00% | 3.10% | 3.20% | 3.20% | 3.30% | 3.40% | 3.50% |
| UBS | 2.63% | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Capital Economics | 2.63% | 2.60% | 2.60% | 2.60% | 2.60% | 2.70% | 2.80% | 3.00% | 3.20% | - | - | - | - | - |
| 10yr PWLB Rate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capita Asset Services | 3.66% | 3.70% | 3.70% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 3.90% | 3.90% | 4.00% | 4.10% | 4.20% | 4.30% | 4.40% | 4.50% | 4.50% |
| UBS | 3.66% | 3.70% | 3.80% | 3.90% | 4.05% | 4.05% | 4.30% | 4.55% | 4.55% | - | - | - | - | - |
| Capital Economics | 3.66% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 3.80% | 4.05% | - | - | - | - | - |
| 25yr PWLB Rate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capita Asset Services | 4.32% | 4.40% | 4.40% | 4.50% | 4.60% | 4.70% | 4.70% | 4.80% | 4.90% | 5.00% | 5.00% | 5.10% | 5.10% | 5.10% |
| UBS | 4.32% | 4.55% | 4.55% | 4.80% | 4.80% | 5.05% | 5.05% | 5.30% | 5.30% | - | - | - | - | - |
| Capital Economics | 4.32% | 4.35% | 4.35% | 4.35% | 4.35% | 4.35% | 4.35% | 4.35% | 4.45% | - | - | - | - | - |
| 50yr PWLB Rate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capita Asset Services | 4.29% | 4.40% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.60% | 4.70% | 4.80% | 4.90% | 5.00% | 5.10% | 5.10% | 5.10% | 5.20% | 5.20% |
| UBS | 4.29% | 4.45% | 4.45% | 4.70% | 4.70% | 4.90% | 4.90% | 5.05% | 5.05% | - | - | - | - | - |
| Capital Economics | 4.29% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.50% | 4.60% | - | - | - | - | - |

5.2. APPENDIX: Economic Background

THE UK ECONOMY

Economic growth. Until 2013, the economic recovery in the UK since 2008 had been the worst and slowest recovery in recent history. However, growth strongly rebounded in 2013 - quarter 1 (+0.3%), 2 (+0.7%) and 3 (+0.7%), to surpass all expectations as all three main sectors, services, manufacturing and construction contributed to this strong upturn. The Bank of England has, therefore, upgraded growth forecasts in the February quarterly Inflation Report for 2014 to 3.4%, 2015 to 2.7% and 2016 to 2.8%. The February Report stated that: -

The UK recovery has gained momentum and inflation has returned to the 2% target. Reduced uncertainty, easier credit conditions and the stimulative stance of monetary policy should support continued solid economic growth, with the expansion in demand becoming more entrenched and more broadly based.

Robust growth has not so far been accompanied by a material pickup in productivity. Instead, employment gains have been exceptionally strong and unemployment has fallen much more rapidly than expected. The LFS headline unemployment rate is likely to reach the MPC's 7% threshold by the spring of this year. Even so, the Committee judges that there remains spare capacity, concentrated in the labour market.

Inflation is likely to remain close to the target over the forecast period. Given this, and with spare capacity remaining, the MPC judges that there remains scope to absorb slack further before raising Bank Rate. Moreover, the continuation of significant headwinds — both at home and from abroad — mean that Bank Rate may need to remain at low levels for some time to come.

Forward guidance. The Bank of England issued forward guidance in August which stated that the Bank will not start to consider raising interest rates until the jobless rate (Labour Force Survey / ILO i.e. not the claimant count measure), had fallen to 7% or below. However, unemployment has fallen much quicker than the Bank expected and currently (17.2.14), stands at 7.1%. Accordingly, in the February Report, the Bank has now broadened its approach as follows: -

1. The MPC reckons there is spare capacity in the economy of 1-1.5% of GDP, mainly in the labour market
2. They will refrain from raising Bank Rate until a significant inroad has been made into reducing this spare capacity
3. They will provide additional forecasts based on eighteen economic indicators which they will take into account in considering the path of Bank Rate and QE
4. First increase in Bank Rate likely to be around Q2 2015
5. Rate rises will be slow and gradual (translation - probably 25bp per quarter)
6. Governor Carney expected that Bank Rate would be around 2% in three years time i.e. Q1 2017
7. Bank Rate is unlikely to get back up to pre crisis levels of 5% even when the economy has returned to normal
8. The Bank will not sell any of their portfolio of asset purchases before the first rise in the Bank Rate (but that does not mean they WILL start then!) and will also reinvest maturing gilts until then
9. They were more pessimistic on growth of productivity which has failed to keep pace with rises in output

10. They will make it a priority to protect growth in the economy provided inflation remains subdued (inflation forecast to be well behaved over the next two years: 1.9% in two year's time)

Forward surveys are currently very positive in indicating that growth prospects are strong for 2014, not only in the UK economy as a whole, but in all three main sectors, services, manufacturing and construction. This is very encouraging as there does need to be a significant rebalancing of the economy away from consumer spending to construction, manufacturing, business investment and exporting in order for this start to recovery to become more firmly established. One drag on the economy is that wage inflation continues to remain significantly below CPI inflation so disposable income and living standards are under pressure, although income tax cuts have ameliorated this to some extent. This, therefore, means that labour productivity must improve significantly for this situation to be corrected by the warranting of increases in pay rates.

Credit conditions. While Bank Rate has remained unchanged at 0.5% and quantitative easing has remained unchanged at £375bn in 2013, the Funding for Lending Scheme (FLS) was extended to encourage banks to expand lending to small and medium size enterprises. The second phase of Help to Buy, aimed at supporting the purchase of second hand properties, started in earnest in January 2014. These measures have been so successful in boosting the supply of credit for mortgages, and so of increasing house purchases, (though levels are still far below the pre-crisis level), that the Bank of England announced at the end of November that the FLS for mortgages would end in February 2014. While there have been concerns that these schemes are creating a bubble in the housing market, house price increases outside of London and the south-east have been much weaker. The Bank does not feel that Bank Rate increases would be effective in reducing house price inflation in London as a large part of property purchase is being done as cash transactions and / or by foreign purchasers, and is aggravated by a major short fall in new housing supply compared to the level of demand. As for bank lending to small and medium enterprises, this continues to remain weak and inhibited by banks still repairing their balance sheets and anticipating tightening of regulatory requirements.

Inflation. Inflation has fallen from a peak of 3.1% in June 2013 to 2.0% in December. It is expected to remain near to the 2% target level over the MPC's two year time horizon.

AAA rating. The UK has lost its AAA rating from Fitch and Moody's but that caused little market reaction.

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

The Eurozone (EZ). The sovereign debt crisis has eased considerably during 2013 which has been a year of comparative calm after the hiatus of the Cyprus bailout in the spring. In December, Ireland escaped from its three year EZ bailout programme as it had dynamically addressed the need to substantially cut the growth in government debt, reduce internal price and wage levels and promote economic growth. The EZ finally escaped from seven quarters of recession in quarter 2 of 2013 but growth is likely to remain weak and so will dampen UK growth. The ECB's pledge to buy unlimited amounts of bonds of countries which ask for a bail out has provided heavily indebted countries with a strong defence against market forces. This has bought them time to make progress with their economies to return to growth or to reduce the degree of recession. However, debt to GDP ratios (2012 figures) of Greece 176%, Italy 131%, Portugal 124%, Ireland 123% and Cyprus 110%, remain a cause of concern, especially as many of these countries are experiencing continuing rates of increase in debt in excess of their rate of economic growth i.e. these debt ratios are continuing to deteriorate. Any sharp downturn in economic growth would make these countries particularly

vulnerable to a new bout of sovereign debt crisis. It should also be noted that Italy has the third biggest debt mountain in the world behind Japan and the US. Greece remains particularly vulnerable and continues to struggle to meet EZ targets for fiscal correction. Whilst a Greek exit from the Euro is now improbable in the short term, as Greece has made considerable progress in reducing its annual government deficit and a return towards some economic growth, some commentators still view an eventual exit as being likely. There are also concerns that austerity measures in Cyprus could also end up in forcing an exit. The question remains as to how much damage an exit by one country would do and whether contagion would spread to other countries. However, the longer a Greek exit is delayed, the less are likely to be the repercussions beyond Greece on other countries and on EU banks.

Sentiment in financial markets has improved considerably during 2013 as a result of firm Eurozone commitment to support struggling countries and to keep the Eurozone intact. However, the foundations to this current “solution” to the Eurozone debt crisis are still weak and events could easily conspire to put this into reverse. There are particular concerns as to whether democratically elected governments will lose the support of electorates suffering under EZ imposed austerity programmes, especially in countries like Greece and Spain which have unemployment rates of over 26% and unemployment among younger people of over 50 – 60%. The Italian political situation is also fraught with difficulties in maintaining a viable coalition which will implement an EZ imposed austerity programme and undertake overdue reforms to government and the economy. There are also concerns over the lack of political will in France to address issues of poor international competitiveness,

USA. The economy has managed to return to robust growth in Q2 2013 of 2.5% y/y and 3.6% y/y in Q3, in spite of the fiscal cliff induced sharp cuts in federal expenditure that kicked in on 1 March, and increases in taxation. The Federal Reserve therefore decided in December to reduce its \$85bn per month asset purchases programme of quantitative easing by \$10bn and by another \$10bn in January. It also amended its forward guidance on its pledge not to increase the central rate until unemployment falls to 6.5% by adding that there would be no increases in the central rate until ‘well past the time that the unemployment rate declines below 6.5%, especially if projected inflation continues to run below the 2% longer run goal’. Consumer, investor and business confidence levels have all improved markedly in 2013. The housing market has turned a corner and house sales and increases in house prices have returned to healthy levels. Many house owners have, therefore, been helped to escape from negative equity and banks have also largely repaired their damaged balance sheets so that they can resume healthy levels of lending. All this portends well for a reasonable growth rate looking forward.

China. There are concerns that Chinese growth could be on an overall marginal downward annual trend. There are also concerns that the new Chinese leadership have only started to address an unbalanced economy which is heavily dependent on new investment expenditure, and for a potential bubble in the property sector to burst, as it did in Japan in the 1990s, with its consequent impact on the financial health of the banking sector. There are also concerns around the potential size, and dubious creditworthiness, of some bank lending to local government organisations and major corporates. This primarily occurred during the government promoted expansion of credit, which was aimed at protecting the overall rate of growth in the economy after the Lehmans crisis.

Japan. The initial euphoria generated by “Abenomics”, the huge QE operation instituted by the Japanese government to buy Japanese debt, has tempered as the follow through of measures to reform the financial system and the introduction of other economic

reforms, appears to have stalled. However, at long last, Japan has seen a return to reasonable growth and positive inflation during 2013 which augurs well for the hopes that Japan can escape from the bog of stagnation and deflation and so help to support world growth. The fiscal challenges though are huge; the gross debt to GDP ratio is about 245% in 2013 while the government is currently running an annual fiscal deficit of around 50% of total government expenditure. Within two years, the central bank will end up purchasing about Y190 trillion (£1,200 billion) of government debt. In addition, the population is ageing due to a low birth rate and, on current trends, will fall from 128m to 100m by 2050.

CAPITA ASSET SERVICES FORWARD VIEW

Economic forecasting remains difficult with so many external influences weighing on the UK. Major volatility in bond yields is likely to endure as investor fears and confidence ebb and flow between favouring more risky assets i.e. equities, and safer bonds.

There could well be volatility in gilt yields over the next year as financial markets anticipate further tapering of asset purchases by the Fed. The timing and degree of tapering could have a significant effect on both Treasury and gilt yields. However, the political deadlock and infighting between Democrats and Republicans over the US budget and raising of the debt limit, has finally been resolved. This removes two destabilising issues for bond yields but investor concerns over the impact of tapering on emerging market countries created a surge of volatility during January, and especially in reaction to adverse political and economic developments in Argentina and Turkey.

The longer run trend is for gilt yields and PwLB rates to rise, due to the high volume of gilt issuance in the UK, and of bond issuance in other major western countries. Increasing investor confidence in economic recovery is also likely to compound this effect as a continuation of recovery will further encourage investors to switch back from bonds to equities.

The overall balance of risks to economic recovery in the UK is currently evenly weighted. However, only time will tell just how long this period of strong economic growth will last; it also remains exposed to vulnerabilities in a number of key areas.

The interest rate forecasts in this report are based on an initial assumption that there will not be a major resurgence of the EZ debt crisis, or a break-up of the EZ, but rather that there will be a managed, albeit painful and tortuous, resolution of the debt crisis where EZ institutions and governments eventually do what is necessary - but only when all else has been tried and failed. Under this assumed scenario, growth within the EZ will be tepid for the next couple of years and some EZ countries experiencing low or negative growth, will, over that time period, see a significant increase in total government debt to GDP ratios. There is a significant danger that these ratios could rise to the point where markets lose confidence in the financial viability of one, or more, countries. However, it is impossible to forecast whether any individual country will lose such confidence, or when, and so precipitate a resurgence of the EZ debt crisis. While the ECB has adequate resources to manage a debt crisis in a small EZ country, if one, or more, of the large countries were to experience a major crisis of market confidence, this would present a serious challenge to the ECB and to EZ politicians.

Downside risks currently include:

- UK strong economic growth is currently very dependent on consumer spending and recovery in the housing market. This is unlikely to endure much beyond 2014 as most consumers are maxed out on borrowing and wage inflation is less than CPI inflation, so disposable income is being eroded.
- A weak rebalancing of UK growth to exporting and business investment causing a major weakening of overall economic growth beyond 2014
- Weak growth or recession in the UK's main trading partners - the EU and US, depressing economic recovery in the UK.
- Prolonged political disagreement over the raising of the US debt ceiling.
- A return to weak economic growth in the US, UK and China causing major disappointment in investor and market expectations.
- A resurgence of the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis caused by ongoing deterioration in government debt to GDP ratios to the point where financial markets lose confidence in the financial viability of one or more countries and in the ability of the ECB and Eurozone governments to deal with the potential size of the crisis.
- Recapitalising of European banks requiring more government financial support
- Lack of support by populaces in Eurozone countries against austerity programmes, especially in countries with very high unemployment rates e.g. Greece and Spain, which face huge challenges in engineering economic growth to correct their budget deficits on a sustainable basis.
- The Italian political situation is frail and unstable; this will cause major difficulties in implementing austerity measures and a programme of overdue reforms. Italy has the third highest government debt mountain in the world.
- A lack of political will in France, (the second largest economy in the EZ), to dynamically address fundamental issues of low growth, poor international uncompetitiveness and the need for overdue reforms of the economy.
- Monetary policy action failing to stimulate sustainable growth in western economies, especially the Eurozone and Japan.
- Heightened political risks in the Middle East and East Asia which could trigger safe haven flows back into bonds.

The potential for upside risks to UK gilt yields and PWLB rates, especially for longer term PWLB rates include: -

- A further upturn in investor confidence that robust world economic growth is firmly expected, causing a flow of funds out of bonds into equities.
- UK inflation being significantly higher than in the wider EU and US, causing an increase in the inflation premium inherent to gilt yields.

5.3 APPENDIX: Treasury Management Practice (TMP1) – Credit and Counterparty Risk Management

SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS: All such investments will be sterling denominated, with maturities up to maximum of 1 year, meeting the minimum 'high' quality criteria where applicable.

NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS: These are any investments which do not meet the specified investment criteria. A maximum of 50% ** will be held in aggregate in non-specified investment

A variety of investment instruments will be used, subject to the credit quality of the institution, and depending on the type of investment made it will fall into one of the above categories.

The criteria, time limits and monetary limits applying to institutions or investment vehicles are:

| | * Minimum credit criteria / colour band | ** Max % of total investments/ £ limit per institution | Max. maturity period |
|---|---|--|---|
| DMADF – UK Government | N/A | 100% | 6 months |
| UK Government gilts | UK sovereign rating | 50% | 5 years |
| UK Government Treasury bills | UK sovereign rating | 50% | 6 months |
| Bonds issued by multilateral development banks | UK sovereign rating | 50% | 6 months |
| Money market funds | AAA | 100% | Liquid |
| Local authorities | N/A | 100% | 1 year |
| Term deposits with banks and building societies | Yellow Purple Blue Orange Red Green No Colour | £5m £5m £5m £5m £5m 0 | Up to 5 years Up to 2 years Up to 1 year Up to 1 year Up to 6 Months Up to 100 days Not for use |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----|----------------|
| CDs or corporate bonds with banks and building societies | Yellow | 0 | Up to 5 years |
| | Purple | 0 | Up to 2 years |
| | Blue | 0 | Up to 1 year |
| | Orange | 0 | Up to 1 year |
| | Red | 0 | Up to 6 Months |
| | Green | 0 | Up to 100 days |
| | No Colour | 0 | Not for use |
| Corporate bond funds | | Nil | |
| Gilt funds | UK sovereign rating | Nil | |
| Property funds | | Nil | |

Accounting treatment of investments. The accounting treatment may differ from the underlying cash transactions arising from investment decisions made by this Council. To ensure that the Council is protected from any adverse revenue impact, which may arise from these differences, we will review the accounting implications of new transactions before they are undertaken.

5.4 APPENDIX: Approved countries for investments

Based on lowest available rating

AAA

- Australia
- Canada
- Denmark
- Finland
- Germany
- Luxembourg
- Norway
- Singapore
- Sweden
- Switzerland

AA+

- Hong Kong
- Netherlands
- U.K.
- U.S.A.

AA

- Abu Dhabi (UAE)
- France
- Qatar

AA-

- Belgium
- Saudi Arabia

5.5 APPENDIX: Treasury management scheme of delegation

(i) Full board/council

- receiving and reviewing reports on treasury management policies, practices and activities;
- approval of annual strategy.

(ii) Boards/committees/council/responsible body

- approval of/amendments to the organisation's adopted clauses, treasury management policy statement and treasury management practices;
- budget consideration and approval;
- approval of the division of responsibilities;
- receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports and acting on recommendations;
- approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment.

(iii) Body/person(s) with responsibility for scrutiny

- reviewing the treasury management policy and procedures and making recommendations to the responsible body.

5.6 APPENDIX: The treasury management role of the section 151 officer

The S151 (responsible) officer

- recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance;
- submitting regular treasury management policy reports;
- submitting budgets and budget variations;
- receiving and reviewing management information reports;
- reviewing the performance of the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of treasury management resources and skills, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of internal audit, and liaising with external audit;
- recommending the appointment of external service providers.

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Gloucester City Council

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Meeting: | Cabinet Briefing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Cabinet | Date: 12 th February 2014 3 rd March 2014 5 th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Future of GCC Events Co-ordination | |
| Report Of: | Cllr Colin Organ, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure | |
| Wards Affected: | All | |
| Key Decision: | No | Budget/Policy Framework: No |
| Contact Officer: | Martin Shields, Director of Services & Neighbourhoods Jason Smith, CEO Marketing Gloucester Ltd. Email: martin.shields@gloucester.gov.uk Tel: 396 745 Jason@marketinggloucester.co.uk Tel: 207020 | |
| Appendices: | 1. list of city events for 2014/15 & 2015/16 | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek approval for changes to the City's Events Programme and its delivery.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that;

- (1) A Central Events Team be created to co-ordinate all City events and provide a single point of contact for all event queries and advisory requests.
- (2) The newly created Central Events Team be based at Marketing Gloucester Ltd (MGL) and managed by Jason Smith, MGL CEO. The TIC Manager will work in partnership with the Central Events Team to ensure a consistent approach to destination marketing and a vibrant visitor/customer experience.
- (3) The new team work with event organisers from other organisations across the City to integrate the City Council's events into one comprehensive events programme.
- (4) The Schedule of Events shown at appendix 1 for 2014/15 and 2015/16, be approved.

- (5) The new Central Events Team co-ordinates the logistical and operational side of all the Council's Civic events including the administration of invitations for the six key Civic events listed in paragraph 4.3.5. All other support for the Mayor and Sheriff will be provided by the Corporate Support Team.
- (6) The event bookings process and income management be managed by the Central Events Team.
- (7) The events budget and a proportion of the Civic hospitality budget be managed by MGL on behalf of the City Council.
- (8) The Central Events Team consists of the existing MGL's Event Manager (seconded from the City Council) and two Event Co-ordinator posts (also to be seconded from the City Council) who will work collaboratively in the planning, programming and delivery of events. The City Council's Rugby World Cup Co-ordinator will work with the team for the relevant parts of his work programme.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The establishment of MGL has provided a central facility for destination marketing, sponsorship and brand building events, the most noticeable of which is the Tall Ships Festival which attracts tens of thousands of visitors into the City.
- 3.2 The City Council's events programme is currently delivered by staff working at the Guildhall. The staff also support local community events as they have the skills, equipment and flexible staffing structure to accommodate them. However, with a wide range of events running throughout the year this does mean that staff are often taken away from their 'day jobs' and as a consequence the delivery and success of all events, including those at the Guildhall have not been optimised.
- 3.3 The Guildhall also assists in the booking of open spaces and this service has recently been centralised to remove the confusion that often occurred when an event organiser wanted to book an open space for an event. Centralising all events and booking arrangements will make the whole system easier for all concerned.
- 3.4 The Council has continued to deliver a wide programme of events over recent years that have provided a number of positive outcomes for the City. However, producing and supporting a great number of events, from a variety of sources has resulted in a fragmented and uncoordinated structure that lacks clear processes.
- 3.5 A clear example of this has been the work involved in the delivery of a number of civic related events throughout the year that put a large time resource requirement on the Corporate Support and Democratic Services teams. Events include; Gloucester Day, Children's Civic Christmas Party and the Annual Civic Service.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 provides the current list of events and who is responsible for delivering them. It also lists the events scheduled for 2014/15 as part of an annual rolling events programme and includes one off or other cyclical events. The programme of events for 2015/16 also includes a section related to the Rugby World Cup and a

list of ideas of events that could take place in or around the tournament period. Further work is needed to establish which of these events will be taken forward.

3.7 Key Issue 1 – Duplication of Structure and Activity

- 3.7.1 Currently, both the City Council and MGL organise events within the City. In addition to this there are large scale events being organised by independent external organisers such as Gloucester Quays, The Round Table and Sportbeat.
- 3.7.2 The annual event calendar could be better co-ordinated, spreading the events more evenly over the events season. For example, the City Council organised music event – *Summer Sound* – has taken place in Gloucester Park on the same day as the Gloucester Quays Food Festival at Gloucester Docks. While you could argue that it caters for different markets and provides residents and visitors with a choice, holding these events on separate weekends would probably be more sensible both from the Council's and events-goers perspectives.
- 3.7.3 By co-ordinating the events organised by the City Council and MGL and co-locating into a single team, a more joined up and strategic approach can be taken to both the events and the resources required to facilitate them. The new Chief Executive of MGL has been consulted on, and agrees with, this proposal.

3.8 Key Issue 2 – Advice, Support and Booking Public Spaces

- 3.8.1 Many events are organised in the City by different organisations and individuals. These often require some kind of event support from the City Council; ranging from having their health and safety documents checked and permission granted to go ahead on City Council land, through to full event support from the initial planning stages, through to the end of the event.
- 3.8.2 There is currently no 'one-stop shop' for internal or external event organisers and it can be very difficult to trace the support given and allocate resources efficiently. For event organisers it can be a confusing process with multiple points of contact. Demand for events, and event support, is only set to increase due to the Rugby World Cup 2015, so the procedures and lines of responsibility need addressing in anticipation of this important opportunity for the City.
- 3.8.3 A recent Event Report produced by officers in Environmental Health made recommendations on the process for booking the public spaces and ensuring there are clear lines of responsibility. This will resolve this issue in principle, but it is important to make reference to it, as it will affect how the resources required are allocated and managed when addressing how the Events Team is shaped, where it will sit within the organisation and how it links with the Safety Advisory Group.

3.9 Key Issue 3 – The Annual Programme of Events

- 3.9.1 At present, the citywide events programme follows a fairly standard pattern. There is the City Council's *Summer in Gloucester* fortnight which takes place annually and the Marketing Gloucester organised Tall Ships festival at the end of May every other year, a Lantern Procession annually in November and a range of Civic events including; the Three Choirs festival, Remembrance Sunday, Gloucester Day, Armed

Forces Day (including Flag Flying ceremony), Annual Civic Service and the children's Civic Christmas Party.

3.9.2 In order to maximise the effect of the programme, there is a desire by the City Council and MGL to co-ordinate the dates events occur to provide a full programme of events for the summer months.

3.9.3 By including the independent externally organised events into the planning of GCC's co-ordinated programme, it will offer a more cohesive yet varied range of activities for the residents and visitors to the City. This will result in a reduction in the strain on staffing and resources during the peak season as it will have been strategically planned in advance.

3.9.4 Members are currently considering, as part of the budget consultation a set programme of events for the year.

3.10 Key Issue 4 – The Rugby World Cup 2015 (RWC2015)

3.10.1 Appendix 1 shows the events that are due to occur in 2015/16. Many of these events can be used to promote the RWC and are in accordance with the Host City Agreement.

3.10.2 A comprehensive programme of events needs to be formulated both in the run up to the event itself and for the 6 weeks that the tournament takes place. The Rugby World Cup Events Coordinator and the newly formed events team will work closely to ensure events catch the imagination of the visiting fans and are appealing to a wide range of audiences. Initial ideas for events associated with the RWC are being worked up and a separate report will be presented on this matter in due course.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 Option One – Leave as Existing – Not Recommended

4.1.1 The City Council would continue to organise the City events programme via the Guildhall and administer the Event Bookings procedure for open spaces. MGL continue to run the large scale city events. This option would not address the wish to see better co-ordinated arrangements.

4.2 Option 2 – Fully Assimilate Events into the Guildhall – Not Recommended

4.2.1 The MGL Events Manager is seconded to MGL from the City Council. This has been the case since MGL was formed. This arrangement could end thereby returning the role to the Council and all events could be co-ordinated from the Guildhall. MGL would no longer organise events, but would remain responsible for brand building and destination marketing. This option would not address the wish to see better co-ordinated arrangements.

4.3 Option 3 – Create a new GCC Events Team co-located with MGL - The recommended option

- 4.3.1 The purpose of this review is to ensure that the City has a wide range of successful events that take Gloucester successfully into the RWC2015 and beyond.
- 4.3.2 Joining all event co-ordination, including Events Booking and the Civic Events listed at 4.3.5 will allow for better use of limited resources and a more effective and synchronised programme throughout the year. The Corporate Support Team will continue to provide support to the Mayor and Sheriff on all other activities.
- 4.3.3 By co-locating with MGL (including events management), consistent communication and the potential for destination marketing to increase will result in it becoming a central hub for events and marketing activity. When MGL co-locates with the TIC, synergy and co-ordination will improve further.
- 4.3.4 In the meantime, a programme of events can be developed some years in advance, allowing for clarity of budgets, outcomes and incorporation of any national events that may impact on a local level.
- 4.3.5 It is recommended that six key Civic Events are delivered by the new events team. These are; Armed Forces Day (including flag flying ceremony), Three Choirs Festival, Gloucester Day, Annual Civic Service, Remembrance Sunday and the Children’s Civic Christmas Party.
- 4.3.6 The importance of civic events for the City and Members and in particular the profile and role of the Mayor in these events is recognised. Members can be reassured that Civic Events will continue to be delivered to the current high standard as process notes for each event have been developed and there will undoubtedly be shared and accumulated knowledge and experience of delivering these events during the transitional period.
- 4.3.7 It is envisaged that support will still be required from Guildhall staff but this will be in a more structured and coordinated way as the events programme will be set well in advance.

5.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 5.1 The timescale for joining both the TIC and MGL into one property is dependant on the procurement and refitting of a suitable location which is currently being dealt with by the City’s Asset Management Team. It is suggested that the Event Team could be developed while the property changes take place – it is not integral to the changes proposed.
- 5.2 Detailed work into the programming and delivery of future events and how budgets are allocated and managed will need to be carried out.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 It is not anticipated that there will be any additional staffing costs arising from these proposals. It is likely that resources will pass within services rather than additional resources being required.

- 6.2 The co-location of MGL and TIC in due course is likely to create a revenue budget saving through the sharing of building running costs. This saving will be used as a funding source to help cover the capital cost of works required to make the alternative venue suitable for the new working arrangements.
- 6.3 Any agreed amendments to the programme of events (particularly in relation to 2015/16 and the run up to the RWC) will take into account the impact of any lost income from events that are already planned where the hire of Council land produces revenue for the Council.
- 6.4 The events budget for 2014/15 is scheduled to be £160,000 (subject to changes as part of the budget consultation outcomes). When cross referenced with the events programme at appendix 1 it can be seen that the budget is fully allocated for 2014/15.
- 6.5 If new events are to be incorporated into the 2015/16 programme of events in the run up to, and during, the RWC then consideration will need to be given to rescheduling some events, cancelling some for that year or ensuring external sponsorship covers the cost of any additional events to those already agreed.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council is empowered by Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to provide such recreational facilities as it thinks fit and this includes the provision of outdoor facilities and staff. The Council can make such facilities available for use by other persons and has the power to make such charges as it thinks fit for use of the facilities.
- 7.2 Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to encourage persons to visit their area for recreation, health purposes or to hold conferences, trade fairs and exhibitions in their area and the Council can provide facilities for these purposes.
- 7.3 Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the Council to arrange the provision of entertainments of any nature, to advertise such entertainments and make admission charges. Parks, pleasure grounds, or other buildings such as theatres or concert halls, owned by the Council may be used for such purposes.
- 7.4 If co-location of the TIC and MGL comes to fruition then some form of agreement with MGL for occupation of the space in a shared building, covering rent, utilities etc. will be required.
- 7.5 MGL was set up as a limited company in 2008 with the aim of marketing and promoting the economic wellbeing of Gloucester, its businesses and residents. The Council is the only shareholder of MGL and has appointed Cllr James to be its representative on MGL. The Council nominee is appointed as a Director of MGL.
- 7.6 Opportunities for joint procurement (in connection with events) would have to ensure that our procurement rules were followed (unless MGL have procurement processes which are akin to our procurement rules and comply with the relevant legislation).

7.7 There are some events which have to be held on specified dates (e.g. Remembrance Sunday) and others where there can be more flexibility. Consideration should be given to having a protocol to cover this which clarifies who has the final decision-making power on whether or not events are held and when to avoid both organizations working on events when there is no requirement to.

8.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

8.1 There is a potential loss of revenue from events that attract an income if the event programme and priorities are changed, especially in relation to the RWC2015.

8.2 There is an opportunity to be proactive to the needs of the City and to maximise the potential for the events schedule with limited resources by having a single team and taking into account all third party events.

8.3 Gloucester City Council and MGL have a unique opportunity to raise the profile of the City and generate sponsorship for events as a result of being a Host City for the RWC2015. This could help ensure the sustainability of the events programme in difficult financial times.

8.4 Having a single point of contact and appropriate systems and resources in place offers the opportunity for supporting the community organisations in their events and adding to the Citywide event programme by helping to facilitate more 3rd party independent events on a variety of scales.

9.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

9.1 An impact assessment does not need to be completed at this stage. However, assessments will be completed for the approved events as they are being planned.

10.0 Other Corporate Implications

10.1 Community Safety

10.1.1 A central team offering a single point of contact ensures strong relationships with police and relevant community safety bodies.

10.1.2 By encouraging and supporting community events by third party organisations, the activity in communal areas encourages a safer community environment.

10.2 Sustainability

10.2.1 A joined up approach allows sustainability of the events programme to become a priority.

10.2.2 Through opening up channels for sponsorship, the events can rely less on core funding.

10.2.3 By having a clear programme of events (including the Event Bookings process), third party independent organisers and other partner agencies can better plan their events programmes.

10.3 Staffing & Trade Union

10.3.1 The restructure of the events co-ordination across the City Council is unlikely to result in redundancies. It is anticipated that existing Council staff will be assimilated or appointed to the Central Events Team posts. No changes are being proposed by MGL to it's staffing structure.

Background Documents: None



| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Meeting: | Cabinet | Date: | 5th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Housing and Homelessness Strategy | | |
| Report Of: | Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | Yes | Budget/Policy Framework: | No |
| Contact Officer: | Helen Chard, Housing Strategy & Enabling Service Manager | | |
| | Email: helen.chard@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: | 396534 |
| Appendices: | 1. Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to accompany the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy and to seek endorsement of the draft proposals to be published for consultation. A summary document of no more than four sides will also be made available.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) To approve for consultation the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy.
- (2) A consultation period is undertaken for a period of three months, and thereafter the strategy be updated to take account of feedback and presented back to Cabinet and Council for approval.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 The Council is required to put in place this strategy in order to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002, the Local Government Act 2003 and the Housing Act 2004. The Strategy should set out its objectives and be based on an assessment of need within the district and outline an approach to homelessness within the area.

3.2 A Draft Deregulation Bill was produced for consultation in July 2013 with the intention of removing prescriptive requirements on local authorities to consult and produce various strategies, including the Housing and Community Strategy; so far there has been no legislation to change the statutory requirement. Even with such legislation being passed, it is recommended that some coherent plan setting out detailed housing specific ambitions is available to inform discussions with funding organisations and set out the basis for the improved social value of good quality housing.

3.3 Since the last strategy expired, the Council had initially begun work with other districts to produce a joint housing strategy; however given the nature of the Localism Act a strategy with a clearer focus on objectives relating to Gloucester was considered preferable. In order to more accurately determine strategic priorities in Gloucester, the housing strategy needed to commence with the understanding of the 'objectively assessed need' figures for Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cheltenham as determined in partnership through the 'Joint core Strategy'; and when and in what locations they would broadly be met.

3.4 The strategy is concerned with the whole housing market i.e. all housing tenures including social and market provision, although the strategy does have a focus on the affordable housing stock and levels of homelessness, where additional government support may be required.

3.5 The main strategic objectives it is suggested that we pursue are: -

- To increase the availability and quality of homes
- To have the right types of homes available for city residents
- To reduce homelessness
- To support healthy communities

3.6 The strategy is intended to underpin, support and provide the delivery arrangements to fulfil the outcomes within the city vision. In addition, it sets out the approach in relation to our partnership working, including our work with the County Council with the commissioning of housing related support via 'Supporting People' funding. We recognise that for many vulnerable people, that early intervention to sustain a safe home environment, and receive support is critical to avoid damaging crisis situations that have both a personal, social and financial cost. In addition, it provides a context for work with the Homes and Communities Agency, our Registered Provider partners, voluntary sector organisations and communities.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 Beyond the collaborative approach outlined in 3.2, the production of a strategy is a legislative requirement.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The draft strategic objectives were shaped by the three housing services within the council, in order to bring together the collective knowledge about all forms of housing and provide a comprehensive understanding of Gloucester's housing market. It was felt initial proposals would provide a useful platform from which to engage with Service Users, Gloucester residents and other stakeholders to begin discussions with them and develop the strategy further based on their involvement.

5.2 The strategic objectives pursued have also been informed by a collection of housing related data, including the demographic situation within the City, now and in the future. Data has also been reviewed relating to numbers of applicants presenting as homeless or wishing to secure affordable housing and some analysis income levels and house prices in the City. This data has been used to inform the approach to deliver the appropriate size and type of housing required and, and also

the threshold to afford market housing. In addition data has been reviewed in relation to the condition and location of all existing housing stock in the City.

- 5.3 Given the interest in housing, both by residents and other stakeholders with an interest in financing, developing or managing homes in our communities, it is important that our proposals take account of their views and priorities to ensure they have the best effect.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 It is the intention to commence consultation once approval is obtained from Cabinet. A three month period of consultation is proposed between March and June. Consultation is intended to be undertaken throughout all wards in the City. In addition, specific stakeholder events are planned, with Registered Providers, and special interest groups who may have specific requirements in relation to housing for e.g. older people.
- 6.2 So far the action plan has not been prioritised, given the draft nature of the document. We will in the course of the consultation seek to understand Residents views on what is important to them, which we will then use to prioritise our activities.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The draft strategy is being prepared for consultation. To manage expectations during the consultation it will be made clear that any future projects or initiatives are subject to the identification and approval of the necessary resources. The finalised strategy will need to be approved by Council and any proposed projects and initiatives will need to be considered alongside budget bids from across the Council.
- 7.2 The Council receives New Homes Bonus, and consideration is being given to the use of further funds through the forthcoming budget setting process and in connection with the potential transfer of the housing stock. In addition, the Council has also secured Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) approval to retain a greater proportion of right to buy capital receipts with the condition that the money must be spent on new build accommodation. As of 31st December 2013 the Council holds receipts capable of generating £2,281,128.20 worth of housing development. The receipts held can only contribute 30% toward the total value of new development and must be spent within three years. These funds are currently subject to the consideration of CLG, as to whether they form part of stock transfer appraisal and new development potential. A decision concerning these funds is expected shortly, however alternative arrangements may be explored as a contingency in the event they aren't included as part of the transfer.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 S8 of the Housing Act 1985 placed a duty upon the Local Authority to consider housing conditions and the needs of the district with regard to the provision of further housing accommodation and S3 of the Housing Act 2004 provides that it must keep housing conditions under review.

S 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 provides that the Local Authority may carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based upon the results of that review. The strategy may be published as part of an authority's wider housing strategy but only the homelessness strategy is required to be published and available for inspection by members of the public.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 There is a risk of challenge as a consequence of not meeting our statutory responsibilities and putting in place a strategy.
- 9.2 Our failure to adequately set our plans and priorities, risks those developing or offering services related to housing doing so in areas that aren't a priority for us and therefore not making best use of limited resources.
- 9.3 In relation to organisations that fund housing development including the Homes and Communities Agency, we may fail to demonstrate credible evidence or consideration regarding investment and risk not securing funding.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 A provisional scoping assessment has been undertaken, however this will be built on throughout and following consultation once firm proposals are identified.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 11.1 The proposals within the Strategy are concerned with improving the approach to community safety and envisaged to have a positive impact.

Sustainability

- 11.2 The proposals within the strategy are concerned with ensuring the quality of homes are maintained and enhanced. In relation to new-build we are seeking that homes are built to high environmentally efficient standards to minimise fuel poverty and minimise carbon emissions. The strategy also concerns itself with 'lifetime neighbourhoods' and aspiring to deliver homes where residents want to live now and in the future.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 There are no staffing implications, other than Officer time involved with consultation and drafting documentation.

Background Documents: Please see bibliography at the end of the Draft Strategy.

Draft Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2014-19

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Foreword

Welcome to Gloucester's new Draft Housing Strategy which sets out our plans for delivering new homes and improving existing homes and services within neighbourhoods in the city.

I know how important it is to make available a range of homes that are affordable for all pockets, and to ensure there are a range of properties available that meet the needs and aspirations within the City. We all recognise the need for choices concerning our homes; we know that one size doesn't fit all.

It is also important that we make sound plans for housing in the future, by anticipating the growth of the City, including providing for the increasing numbers of older people who will be present in our communities. Ensuring the right housing support services are available for those who may need them, either in the short or longer term; and encouraging communities to be involved in developing informal support arrangements, within their own neighbourhoods should they wish.

We mustn't underestimate the role housing can play for the City in underpinning economic growth and supporting the local economy; we recognise the importance of keeping the construction sector moving, building attractive homes and neighbourhoods for those wishing to come and live and work in the city; whilst creating opportunities for trades people & professionals; and in the provision of new jobs and apprenticeships for young people.

In difficult economic times making good use of our resources is more important than ever, so building good quality homes that make efficient use of fuel and keep bills low and that existing homes are as well insulated as they can be is vital.

Tenants and other residents have come to expect the highest quality services and for a range of housing options to be available, including to those at risk of homelessness. We value our staff and partners providing housing services here in the City and I share in the ambitions of Gloucester City Homes, our other Housing Associations, and Registered Providers partners to continue to drive up standards by listening to, and involving their customers.

We want to share our plans with residents and those people with an interest in housing, to hear your views, and to check we are focusing on the right options.

We all wish to see good quality homes and neighbourhoods we can enjoy and take pride in and for Gloucester to thrive. I welcome working with communities and our partners to make that happen.

Councillor Colin Organ

Cabinet Member for Housing & Health & Leisure



The City Vision

A shared vision for the city is that “**Gloucester will be a flourishing, modern and ambitious City, which residents can enjoy**”.

This draft housing strategy is designed to share our plans for housing activities to support the delivery of our “City Vision”.

Our City - Currently the population of Gloucester is around 121,688 comprised of around 50,363 households and this is expected to grow by approximately 1% per year over the next twenty years.

Our Vision for this Housing Strategy

We want Gloucester to be a flourishing place where people can find homes that are affordable to them, that meet the needs and aspirations of their families; and for those homes to be within supportive neighbourhoods that promote success, and where respect and community value are common-place.

Summary of Our Key Objectives

1. To increase the availability and quality of homes
2. To have the right types of homes available for city residents.
3. To reduce homelessness
4. To Foster Community Health & Wellbeing.

The key objectives above serve to create a greater focus on the housing issues we are experiencing here in Gloucester and add to those from the Housing Strategy for England. The national strategic objectives are about: -

- Providing help for home buyers
- Help for House-builders
- Improving Fairness in Social Housing
- Action of Empty Homes
- Supporting Older People to live independently

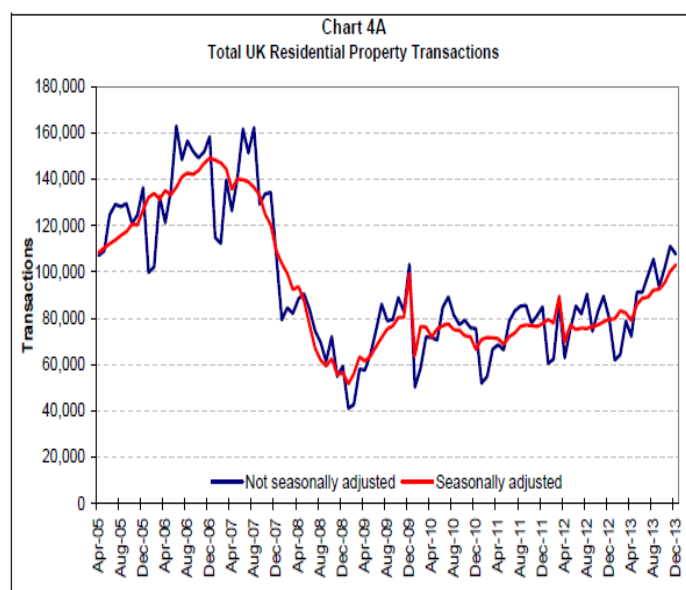
Introduction

Housing should provide a secure foundation for individuals to live the lives they want to live. Finding the right home, in the right place, can be

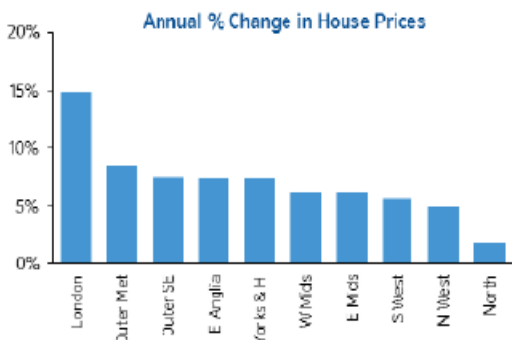
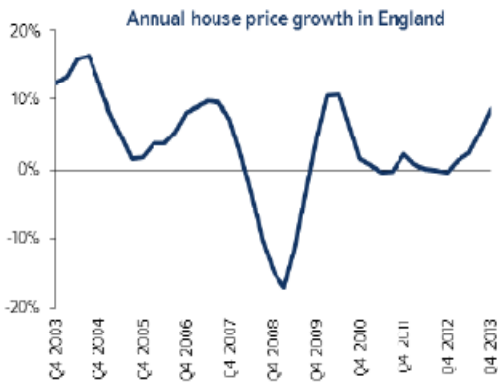
an essential platform for people seeking to support their families and sustain work. Laying the Foundations - A Housing Strategy for England 2011 (CLG, 2011)

We acknowledge that we are drafting this strategy during what are still fairly uncertain economic times, although there are some promising signs beginning to emerge in the housing market. More than ever our proposals need to direct our resources to best effect.

- National house-building levels have been at some of the lowest levels in peacetime history.
- Mortgage availability has been poor, in particular for first time buyers without deposits.
- Improved buoyancy coming about in the housing market via ‘Help to Buy’ supporting many first-time buyers, although some concerns this might yet create a housing bubble which may not just be limited to London and the South East.
- Nationwide Building Society report that all UK regions saw annual price rises in 2013. Reports indicate a 5% increase in house prices for Gloucestershire in the last year, although nationally prices are around 4% below 2007 peak.
- Property transactions have improved although still not above levels pre market downturn levels in 2007.
- Concerns remain relating to employment and inflationary pressures, which could see increases in interest rates and the potential for further mortgage repossessions.



HMRC 2014



Nationwide Building Society 2014

In these circumstances, we recognise the importance of linking our plans to those of our partners, which are set out in other strategic documents; such documents include the City Vision and Plan, the emerging Economic Development Strategy, the Health & Wellbeing Strategy, the Supporting People and Interim Regeneration Strategy.



Our population profile is fairly consistent with the national situation, with 89% of the population being white, which is slightly higher than the national average of 85%; but in the South West

region Gloucester has one of the highest proportions from the black and minority ethnic (BME) community, standing at 11%, a slightly lower level than Bristol with 16% (Census 2011). Recognising and embracing the diversity within our neighbourhoods will help us understand how best we can support communities, including the way we respond to community led initiatives, to ensure our neighbourhoods are the best they can be.

70% of households own their own homes, 15% rent privately and 14% rent from Registered Providers (RPs) and the Council.

The population projections for the city are shown below.

| | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 0-17 | 27,419 | 29,444 | 31,684 |
| | 22% | 23% | 23% |
| 18-65 | 77,415 | 80,196 | 82,258 |
| | 63% | 62% | 61% |
| 66+ | 17,087 | 19,358 | 21,329 |
| | 14% | 15% | 16% |
| Total | 121,921 | 128,997 | 135,271 |

Source: ONS Interim Sub National Population Projections 2011

Housing Tenure in the City

| Tenure | Gloucester Number | Gloucester % | England % |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| Owned with Mortgage | 19,129 | 38 | 31 |
| Owned Outright | 14,729 | 29 | 33 |
| Private Rented | 8,755 | 17 | 17 |
| Local Authority | 3,921 | 8 | 9 |
| Registered Provider | 2,793 | 6 | 8 |
| Shared Ownership | 557 | 1 | 1 |
| Living Rent Free | 479 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 50,363 | 100 | 100 |

Census Table KS402EW 2011

Achievements from our last strategy

- Since 2005 **1521** affordable and below-market cost homes have been built in the City.

- The development of 166 homes at the Extra Care Village offering an independent, yet companionable environment for older people.
- Over the last three years, prevented 2035 households from becoming homeless
- Facilitated mortgage rescue resulting in over 30 households being able to remain in their homes.
- Assisted more than 300 people through the Gloucester Homeowners Assistance Scheme to prevent them losing their home.
- 100% Decency in City Council housing stock
- Developed a cost effective Sanctuary Scheme to offer additional security measures for those victims of domestic violence.
- To move from over-night shelter provision for rough sleepers, to 'assessment and support' provision.

Why do we need a Strategy?

- To communicate our draft proposals so that residents of the city and our partners, who are involved in housing activity, can help shape and enhance our plans.
- To identify the priorities for focus and investment to our partners and stakeholders, in order that we can direct resources to deliver the best possible results for Gloucester.
- To link our local priorities with national plans and ensure the availability of good quality housing that supports growth and prosperity here in the City.
- To meet the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002, the Local Government Act 2003 and the Housing Act 2004.

Where do we need to focus our efforts?

- We use as a tool, a collection of statistics related to income, employment, health, education, housing, quality of living environment, access to open space and crime to help us understand some of the areas that need our support most of all.
- Whilst the statistical information is useful to us, we mustn't overlook the strengths that exist within all communities (sometimes referred to as assets) so that we avoid focusing only on what a community's needs appear to be, and take advantage of the strengths that exist

also. We believe that there are benefits by working together with communities; that it can lead to more effective community activity and leadership, and a better way of delivering other external support or investment.

- Our City Vision document developed with partners and residents, sets out shared priorities for the city. At the core of our vision for the City is the desire to reduce deprivation, and this cuts across our plans for improved prosperity and better outcomes for our communities.
- Based on findings from a City Council project that reviewed the housing stock and community outcomes, the following areas: - Podsmead, Matson & Robinswood, Westgate, and Kingsholm & Wotton, were considered to be those that should be prioritised for investment. It is our intention for this strategy to focus attention within these areas, whilst sustaining high standards within all of the City Council's housing stock.
- We wish to work with communities to shape investment and improvements into our homes and neighbourhoods, and increase numbers of affordable homes. We want to ensure we have a good mix of property types to suit all needs and incomes, and support initiatives that improve employment, safety, and well-being which is hoped, will bring about wider improvements.



More than just housing

We wish to ensure that there are suitable housing choices for those wishing to live in the City, whilst also recognising that housing is so much more than that.

Housing provides that place of safety; that place to nurture educational development and employment and aspiration; that place to enjoy as families or communities; the place to foster a sense of well-being, and at other times to recover and receive support.

Therefore this Strategy is designed to set out our key priorities for housing, as well as supporting a range of broader activities to make Gloucester a great place to live and work.

DRAFT

Key Objective 1

To increase the availability and quality of homes to underpin economic prosperity

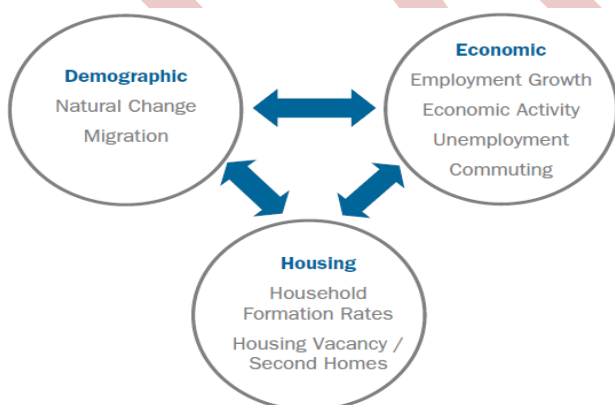
Where are we now?

In comparison with other districts in the County, over the next twenty years, the projections indicate that Gloucester's population will continue to grow significantly.

For the City Council to meet the requirements of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (CLG, 2012) a Local Plan must consider how it will meet housing need and show how it will meet that objectively assessed needs (OAN), both for market and affordable housing.

As well as demonstrating the overall number of homes to be delivered, it is important that we also encourage the right size, type and mix of homes in order that the right homes are built.

ONS Interim Sub National Population Projections 2011 have confirmed expectations of an ageing population in the county and city and this is expected to continue over the next twenty five years. Whilst Gloucester will see a significant growth of the numbers of older people, by contrast to other Districts in the County, Gloucester will still have the highest population of younger adults and will be the only district to see an increase in the population of children and young people.



(Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners, 2012, p. 20)

We have assessed a number of pieces of research and data in order to consider the right levels of homes to develop, which take into

account of matters such as natural demographic change including births, deaths, relationship breakdown. We have also wanted to understand the level of development necessary to sustain and create economic growth and prosperity in the future. Using natural population growth projections as a guide on their own would mean we would be unlikely to build sufficient homes to sustain the levels of economic growth that we require to support a growing economy. We therefore need to plan the delivery of homes carefully and ensure they are in the right locations, to enable the local economy to thrive in the future.

A range of evidence supports the development of our '**Joint Core Strategy**', which is a plan for Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cheltenham that sets out our intentions for development and identifies suitable locations throughout the districts.

The Core Policies within the JCS are linked to three primary ambitions: -

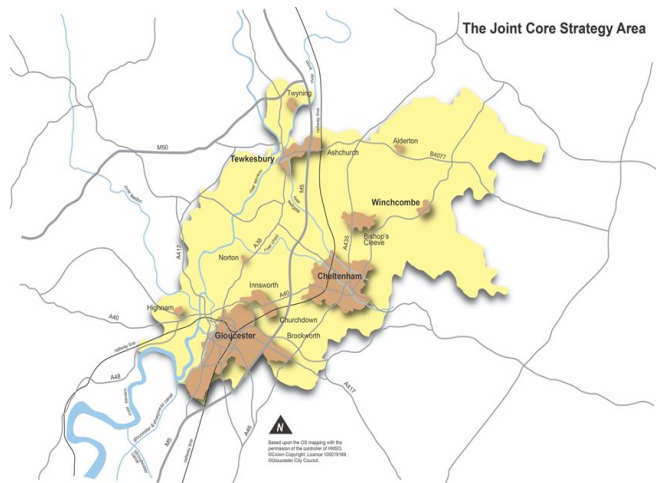
- A thriving economy
- A sustainable natural and built environment
- A healthy, safe and inclusive community

The numbers proposed to meet the 'objectively assessed need' are based on an agreed 'range' between 33,200 and 37,400 homes between the three areas.

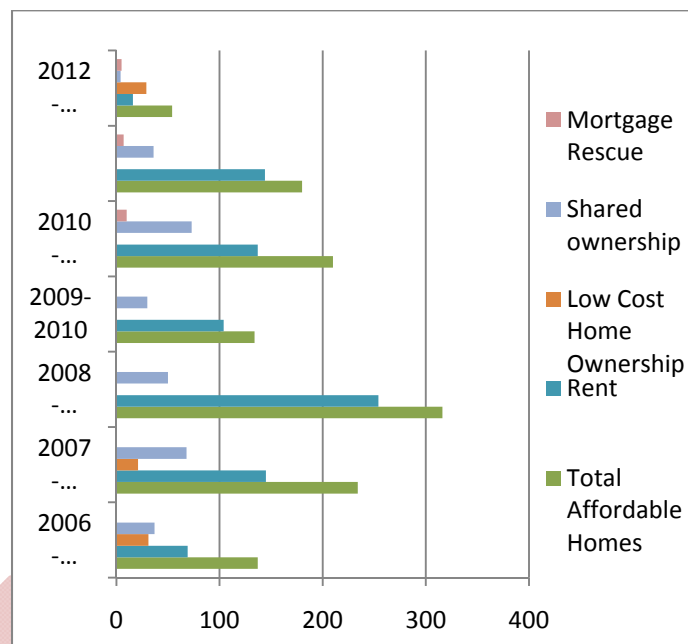
The higher end of this range of 37,400 new homes would assume a full economic recovery and return to past trends of household formation during the plan period until 2031, whereas the lower end of the objectively assessed need is 33,200 new homes which assume a partial return to trend.

The breakdown by District has been identified below.

| Gloucester | Cheltenham | Tewkesbury |
|------------|------------|------------|
| 13,100 | 10,000 | 10,100 |



(Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners, 2012, p. 7)



Delivery of Affordable Homes in Gloucester 2006-13

City Plan

This draft housing strategy is being developed alongside the [City Plan](#) (Gloucester City Council, 2012) with draft proposals part way through consultation. Following consultation the City Plan will be used to define the approach to delivering the city vision; and will include agreed locations for development, development targets and thresholds for delivering affordable homes. This draft housing strategy is intended to provide further detail regarding the approach to housing within the city.

Development of New Affordable Housing

Development of affordable housing has fluctuated, partly reflecting changes in the economy and availability of funding.

The table below shows delivery of affordable housing in the City between 2006-2013.

Between 2005-2010, the majority of affordable homes were provided through planning obligations for large residential development. The Kingsway development at Quedgeley in particular, has contributed a significant amount of our newer supply of housing.

Whilst housing secured via planning agreements will still contribute to the supply of affordable homes, many sites in the city do have constraints. We therefore need to continue to maximise affordable housing through this route, but also work with Registered Providers (RPs) to identify land or other opportunities for bringing forward sites independently, in order to ensure that we have the best chance of maintaining a good supply of new affordable homes.

We encourage Developers to have engaged with Registered Providers and be in contract before undertaking viability appraisals incorporating all resources that the RP and other stakeholders will bring to the development.

Brownfield Sites and Contaminated Land

Along with many other parts of the UK, Gloucester has a long industrial history, which has resulted in a legacy of Brownfield (previously developed) sites, many of which are also affected by potential ground contamination.

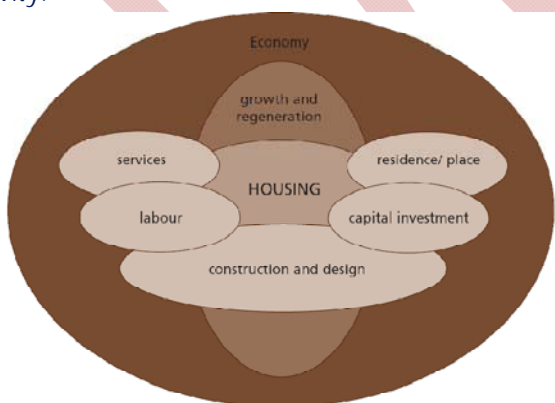
The safe, effective and affordable assessment and remediation of contamination is increasingly understood and information is readily available, and as long as good quality and timely advice is obtained, the potential presence of contamination will rarely present a significant barrier to the development of Brownfield and potentially contaminated sites.

Contamination is often a factor that Developers bring to our attention when assessing the level of planning obligations required for development in the City. We intend through the Joint Core Strategy, City Plan, Infrastructure Development plan, to review and set out our target for the provision of affordable homes that we believe is at a deliverable level.

The Council is committed to delivering to an appropriate affordable homes target requirement through our Plan, and with good evidence available regarding land conditions, this should minimise uncertainties with the identification of abnormal costs associated with contaminated land. Where abnormal costs are identified, we will explore options to attract grant subsidy to try to ensure the delivery of affordable homes is still possible.

Housing, the Economy and Employment

Research suggests housing plays a fundamental role place shaping, contributing to attractive localities and neighbourhoods, which draw in investment by businesses and supports business activity.



The draft JCS proposes a minimum of 33,200 new homes across the JCS area together with land to support 21,800 new jobs. This level of development will be delivered primarily through maximising the capacity of the urban areas with

the development of a number of strategic urban extensions on the edges of Cheltenham and Gloucester.

Where there is under-supply of housing, it has been suggested that home owners receive disproportionate advantage, by means of increased house prices, compared with those who don't own their homes, who may be faced with increasing rents due to less supply. Therefore ensuring a good supply of land through the planning process, both for business and residential growth are important in delivering economic stability and growth in the City.

Private rented sector housing can also offer flexibility for people to move, to access employment, on an initial or temporary basis.

We recognise Registered Providers (RPs) as important partners in bringing substantial investment to the city and contributing to regeneration and the creation of new high quality neighbourhoods for people to live in. In addition many RPs recycle surpluses back into neighbourhoods and provide financial advice and support; promote safe lending organisations to their residents; and often develop initiatives to challenge low aspirations. These activities see RPs step beyond their boundaries and engage communities in ways that directly and indirectly support economic activity.

In addition, RPs also contribute in wider schemes to support education, training and the employment of residents within neighbourhoods.

The City Council wishes to consider proposals to develop 'Live Work' hubs or similar schemes, where business and accommodation units can be combined; in particular to aid the start up of new businesses. We will wish to explore suitable locations and appropriate accommodation options with the business community.

Condition of Our Housing Stock

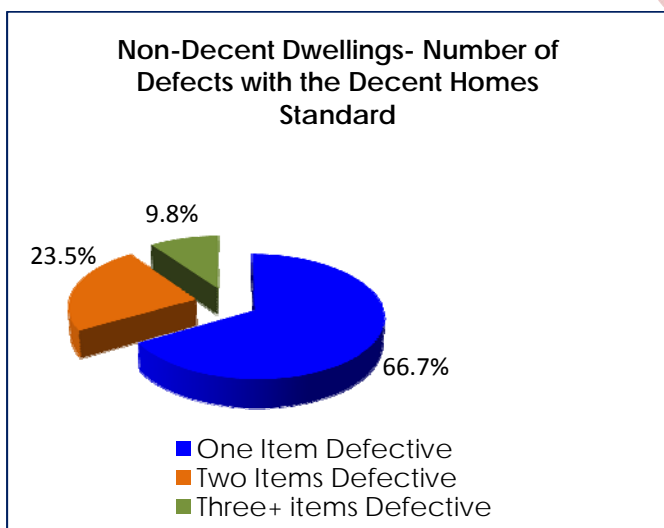
Decency in Registered Provider Stock

In recent years Housing Association stock has had higher standards of 'decency' due in most cases to more recent period of construction, and raised construction standards. According to the HCA's

Statistical Data Return for 2011-12 only one property in the City was recorded as not meeting the Decent Homes Standard. We encourage RPs to continue through their 30 year business plans, ensure these homes remain 'decent' at least.

Decency in Private Sector

It was reported in the Private Sector House Condition (David Adamson & Partners, 2011) Survey in 2011 that 8,250 dwellings (17.7%) of homes were rented from a private landlord (These statistics vary slightly from those provided by the census shown above due to self declaration). Of those dwellings, 76% met the requirements of the Decent Homes Standard and can be regarded as satisfactory. The remaining 11,154 dwellings (24.0%) are non-Decent.



(David Adamson & Partners, 2011, p. 39)

The cost of addressing non-Decent homes was estimated at £55.804M averaging £5,003 per non-Decent dwelling. With the exception of disrepair, housing conditions are generally better than the national average for all dwellings. The level of non-decency in Gloucester (whilst better than the national picture) is attributed to an increase in general levels of disrepair in the stock, particularly in the older housing, the private rented sector and in the Moreland and Westgate wards.

A continuing deterioration in the repair of homes presents some risks for the health and wellbeing of households who live in them.

The Council's Housing Stock – Decency & Regeneration

The Council's housing stock of approximately 4500 properties is at present managed through our Arms Length Management Organisation 'Gloucester City Homes' (GCH).

Investment of £38.6million has taken place within the Council's housing stock since October 2007 with 100% of our homes meeting the decency standard.

Whilst there is a Property Investment Programme which is phased over five yearly stages covering the life of the 30 year business plan, the existing [plan](#) (GCH, 2012) runs between 2012-17. The plan reflects the new self-financing arrangements for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from 1st April 2012, however it has identified that the funds available will be insufficient to maintain the current levels of 'Decency', or to be able to develop any new affordable homes. Part of the reason for this, are high costs associated with refurbishing non-traditional stock, and also that a self-financing debt cap of £62.75 million will be reached in 2014, whereby the Council will be unable to borrow further funds for stock improvements.

As a result of concerns about maintaining decent homes, the Council and ALMO commenced discussions with Government regarding alternative options and in May 2013 the Government expressed an interest in considering a 'Stock Transfer' for Gloucester.

In September 2013 tenant representatives selected Gloucester City Homes as their preferred future social landlord, and in October 2013 Gloucester City Council Members unanimously resolved to ask the Government to allow it to sell its homes to Gloucester City Homes. If successful, the Board of Gloucester City Homes would remain as now, one third tenants, one third council nominees and one third independents. The stock transfer application will be considered in some detail in early 2014, and if accepted, it is anticipated the transfer to Gloucester City Homes will take place by March 2015.

Within the proposals for stock transfer, are conservative plans that have been included for the initial development of affordable homes, on land currently owned by the Council. This would likely yield 100 new homes in the first four years,

however, this target will remain under review should the transfer progress. Initial Council project work has identified options for further stock improvements in Matson and Podsmead and subject to a successful transfer application, more detailed options will be considered to regenerate some of the current Council estates.

The Resources section of the Strategy provides further information regarding the options to maintain the decency of the Council stock and consider the regeneration of parts of the stock.

City Wide Regeneration

In order to make best use of our resources, we need to use those assets we already have and check whether they are fulfilling their potential; or whether there are opportunities to redevelop existing buildings or homes to create new housing solutions.

The [interim regeneration strategy](#) (Gloucester City Council, 2013) says that 'the City will establish its historic core as a place for inward investment' and key urban sites such as Kings Square, Greater Blackfriars, Greater Greyfriars and the Railway Corridor are identified as key regeneration sites.

The strategy also outlines the role that housing can bring to the regeneration of the city centre which has not yet been fully exploited.

With the changing profile of the High Street, there are opportunities we will explore concerning the potential range of uses of vacant or less successful locations, including conversions to residential accommodation to support the success and vibrancy of the city centre.

Our key priority sites above are identified within the Local Investment Plan (LIP), which is a prioritised plan agreed between local authorities within the County and the Homes and communities Agency (HCA). The Council will work to stimulate regeneration, independently and in partnership with the HCA, or Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to make available residential opportunities.

Dwellings with Hazards

The Housing, Health and Safety Rating System is the current method by which risks to a resident(s)

health and safety are evaluated. This is conducted by means of a formula, based on probability and the outcome of possible harm, a score is then provided.

Using hazard bands, risks are categorised into either Category 1 or 2 and under the Housing Act 2004, a Local Authority is placed under a general duty to take appropriate action in relation to Category 1 hazards, those in category 2 give rise to discretionary powers to Local Authorities.

Research by Adamson & partners has identified that the most frequent Category 1 hazards encountered, were risks and falls from excess cold. Category 1 hazards were most likely to be found in the private rented sector, the older housing stock, Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) and in the Moreland and Westgate Ward.

There are established relationships between housing conditions and ill health, resulting in implications for local NHS expenditure. One off costs to address the Category 1 hazards in Gloucester is estimated at £7,099M but would attract NHS savings locally of £0.484M per annum (a payback of 14.7 years).

Empty Homes

In the years 2009 to 2012 the number of empty homes has averaged at around 1830 and is showing a gradual reduction as a proportion of the total number of homes in the city having seen recent decreases from 3.2%, to 3.0% in December 2013. 3% is suggested to be an indicative level allowing a good degree of movement in the housing market.

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Number of empty properties | 1911 | 1945 | 1820 | 1734 | 1733 |
| Number of properties empty for more than six months | 864 | 966 | 863 | 779 | 794 |
| Total number of dwellings | | | | | 54536 |
| Number of | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.2 |

empty
properties as
a % of total
properties

Source: Council Tax Register

In that time, the number of those homes that have been empty for more than six months has reduced from 1.7% to 1.4% as a proportion of the total number of homes.

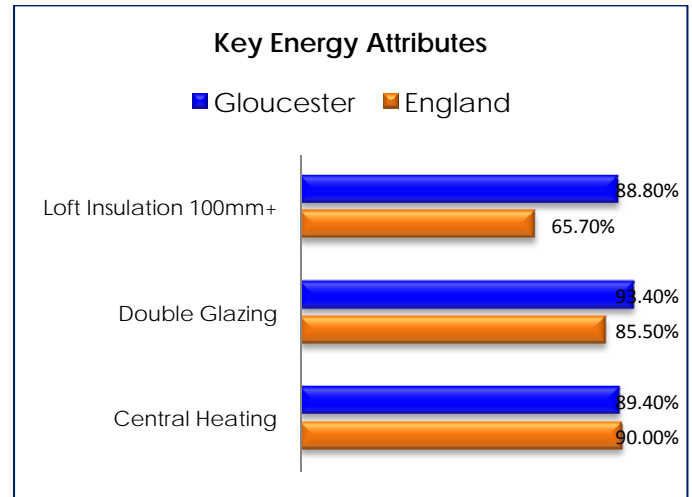
The wards with the highest percentage of empty homes are Westgate (8.5%), Kingsholm & Wotton (5.6%) and Barton & Tredworth (4.8%). The wards with the lowest percentage of empty homes are Longlevens (1.8 %,) Abbey (1.6%), Elmbridge and Matson & Robinswood at (2.1%).

The councils approach to dealing with empty properties is targeted to those that have been empty for more than four years or where the properties are in such a poor condition that they are causing nuisance to neighbours. Initially, an informal approach is taken and owners are signposted to schemes that can help them renovate and return the property back into use. Enforcement action includes the service of statutory notices to improve the condition or, in the worst instances, the compulsory purchase or enforced sale of the empty property.

Having worked in partnership with a RP to secure funds to refurbish empty homes, we aim to return 28 homes through the use of those funds. We also wish to ensure that we have levels of empty homes no greater than the 3% level.

Energy Efficient Homes

The energy efficiency of homes is assessed by means of a Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) energy rating score between 0 and 120. In Gloucester an average rating of 65 was recorded, which was an improvement, up from 61 in 2006 and above the national average of 51.



(GH, p. 72)

Energy efficiency levels in Gloucester are significantly better than the national average.

Of those dwellings without solid wall construction, 22,530 dwellings exhibit evidence of cavity wall insulation. This includes cavity insulation as built in more modern dwellings and insulation added since built. This represents 62.5% of dwellings with cavities and was above the national average for private housing of 32.3%.

Nevertheless, 5,786 dwellings or 12.9% fail to meet the thermal comfort requirements of the Decent Homes Standard. The sectors most greatly affected include:

- Private-rented Sector.
- Purpose-built Flats.
- Converted/Mixed-use Flats

Target areas for improvements are largely concentrated on areas of the city for e.g. Westgate where the properties are hard to insulate and perhaps require external insulation or have poor levels of thermal comfort caused by a combination of poor insulation and inefficient heating systems.

Improvements have been made with carbon dioxide emissions, with the average CO² emission per dwelling in Gloucester reduced to 4.42 tonnes per annum, from 5.25 tonnes per annum in 2005 which is better than the national average of 6 tonnes per annum.

In 2011, the Energy Act made provisions for the development of a Green Deal to replace the existing Carbon Emissions Reduction Target.

Green Deal (CLG Green Deal, 2011) is a market led framework that will allow individuals and businesses to make energy efficiency improvements to their buildings at no upfront cost. A 'golden rule' is fundamental to 'Green Deal' where the charge collected through the electricity bill should be no greater than the expected energy bill savings, estimated during the assessment process.

For Gloucester, the Green Deal can: -

Make available finance to allow for energy-efficiency improvements in both homes and businesses.

It can be used by local authorities to help drive economic growth, unlocking investment and supporting local jobs through the supply chain with the supply of materials for improved efficiency measures.

It may be used to support the work of Registered Providers in managing energy efficiency improvements in the stock.

Most importantly it can help minimise levels of fuel poverty.

As outlined within our Development Plan policy, "before considering the use of renewable energy technologies, the design of a development should first identify measures to reduce overall energy demand. This can include optimising solar gain, natural lighting and ventilation to reduce the need for space heating, cooling and lighting. Secondly the design should include measures to use energy more efficiently such as increasing levels of insulation in walls, floors and roofs and improved air tightness. Once the optimum benefit from these two stages has been achieved, the design should include measures to reach the required proportion of energy demand to be met from renewable or low carbon sources."

All new residential development will be required to meet the following minimum standards of construction.

From 2013 Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4

From 2016 Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5

Fuel Poverty

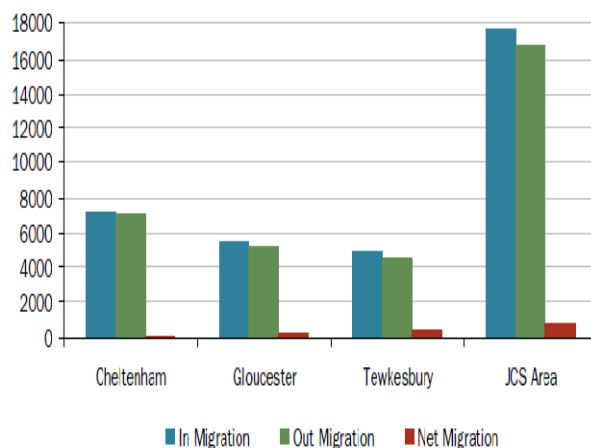
Research in 2011 found that 4,759 (10.8%) of households spend over 10% of their household income on fuel and were therefore defined as being in fuel poverty.

For the Council's housing stock we will pursue continued investment to support the affordable warmth / fuel poverty agenda with specific consideration to:

- Replacement of Night Storage Heaters
- Review of Solar Panels
- Loft and Cavity Wall Insulation

Migration

Figure 3.3 Average Domestic Migration Rates, 1999-2010



(Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners, 2012)

In the last five years, the Department of Work and Pensions has issued 4,520 National Insurance Numbers to migrants living in Gloucester, however as the graph above illustrates, in-migration is very closely matched to out-migration from the City. In addition, economic migration is an important element in supporting the growth requirements for Gloucester, whether that is national or international.

For a small proportion of people who come to Gloucester having sought asylum, Gloucester City Council works with UK Border Agency, as is the case with many other authorities, to have an overview of levels of such migration. However asylum seekers are accommodated outside of the social housing sector through a contract currently with Ready Homes. Asylum seekers are

people who have come to this Country, fleeing persecution at home, and have formally applied for the right to be recognised as a refugee. We also will continue to work with voluntary organisations such as Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS) who support migrants to settle in the UK or provide a safe return to their country of origin.

We will continue to monitor the changing patterns of migration, and any implications related to housing and communities within the City and review our approach accordingly.

What do we want to achieve?

- **An increased supply of homes, including those for, owner-occupation; rent both in the private and social sector**
- **Less neglected and empty homes**
- **Improve the quality of homes**
- **Improved energy efficiency in homes, by targeting our resources to those properties in greatest need.**
- **Reduced fuel costs, fuel poverty and reduced carbon emissions**
- **Good take up of the Green Deal**
- **Disrepair being tackled through focus on homes in the most serious disrepair or with vulnerable household.**
- **A clear plan to ensure the council's housing stock can be adequately maintained and to identify options for redevelopment**
- **Raised awareness with tenants about acceptable housing standards.**
- **An increase in the number of Landlords accredited to the 'Fit to Rent' scheme to ensure good standards.**
- **More redevelopment of Brownfield land and bringing derelict, under-utilised, and contaminated land back into use.**
- **Monitor migration patterns to inform the need for provision or understand any local neighbourhood effects.**

Key Objective 2

To have the right type of homes available for City residents

Where are we now?

Market Housing

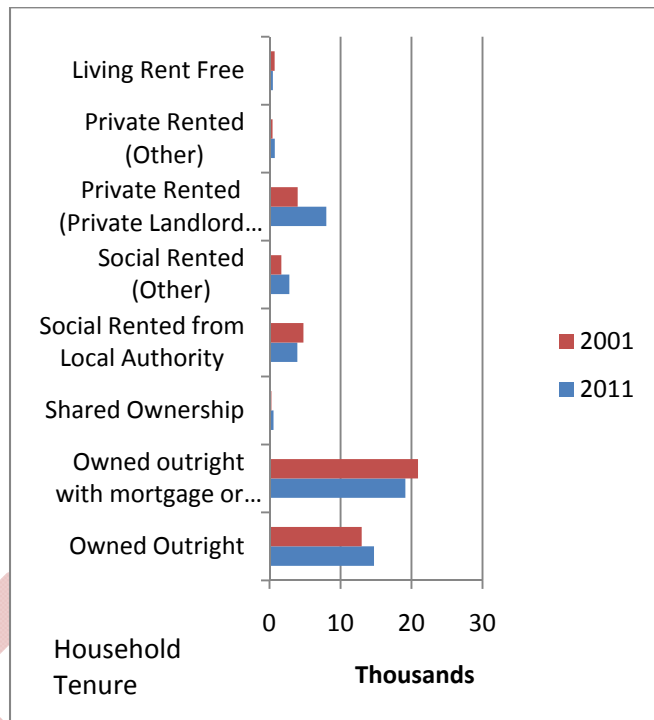
Market housing is housing that can be purchased without any financial support, which meets a households' needs or aspirations. A household is considered able to afford market housing in cases where the costs payable would constitute no more than 25% of their gross income.

Private rented sector accommodation remains an important and flexible resource that allows for temporary accommodation for those wishing to be resident in the city for short periods; options for those not wishing or unable to purchase accommodation; and also accommodates households unable or not wishing to access social housing.

| | 2011 | | 2001 | | Difference | |
|--|----------|------|----------|-------|------------|------|
| | LA Count | % | LA Count | | | % |
| Owned Outright | 14729 | 29.2 | 12985 | 1744 | | 28.4 |
| Owned outright with mortgage or loan | 19129 | 38.0 | 20918 | -1789 | | 45.7 |
| Shared Ownership | 557 | 1.1 | 274 | 283 | | 0.6 |
| Social Rented from Local Authority | 3921 | 7.8 | 4784 | -863 | | 10.5 |
| Social Rented (Other) | 2793 | 5.5 | 1679 | 1114 | | 3.7 |
| Private Rented (Private Landlord or Letting Agent) | 8012 | 15.9 | 3971 | 4041 | | 8.7 |
| Private Rented (Other) | 743 | 1.5 | 420 | 323 | | 0.9 |
| Living Rent Free | 479 | 1.0 | 734 | -255 | | 1.6 |
| | 50363 | 100 | 45765 | | | |

1

¹ The Census asked respondents to identify who their landlord is and the results reflect the responses they gave. In the past decade half of the local authorities in Wales have transferred the management of all their local authority housing stock to other social landlords. Individuals responding to the Census will report their understanding of their landlord and this may not reflect the actual management arrangements in all cases.



House Prices

The median (average) house price in Gloucester in 2012 was £142,500 compared to £66,300 in 2000. House prices have increased on an average of 9% per year during this period. The cost of the average house price in Gloucester is below the national average of £190,000. In approximate terms, households wishing to buy a home in Gloucester would require a deposit and an income of between £41,000 and £47,000 depending on lender requirements.

Average House Prices 2012

| District Name | Total Averages | Total Sales |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Cheltenham | £252,669 | 1728 |
| Cotswold | £337,093 | 1257 |
| Forest of Dean | £190,836 | 994 |
| GLOUCESTER | £153,890 | 1692 |
| Stroud | £235,311 | 1602 |
| Tewkesbury | £226,705 | 1125 |

(Land Registry)

In relation to affordability, in 2000 the bottom 25% of house prices were 3.61 times the average of the bottom 25% of the annual salaries in Gloucester. By 2012 based on provisional figures, the ratio had changed to 5.99 times lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings. (Qtr 3 2012, indicate a lower quartile house price in the region

of £119,500). The Gloucester ratio is still below the national average lower quartile figures for house prices and salaries where the ratio is 6.59.

This has created a broader group of people who currently cannot access accommodation in the private sector without some financial support, either through shared equity type schemes supported by the Government and/or Developers, or through Benefits.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should be at a cost which is below the costs of housing typically available in the open market and be available at a sub-market price indefinitely.

The census suggests there were 2793 housing association homes recorded in the City and 3921 local authority owned homes and a further 557 held via shared ownership leases from social landlords. (These figures may vary slightly from official sources, as census stats are based on resident returns).

Intermediate Affordable Housing

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels, this can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

Registered Providers include details of such homes through a regional Homebuy Agent [‘South West Homes’](#) who act as a one stop shop for home ownership opportunities in South West England.

In addition to the product types above, currently to support the Government’s housing strategy a ‘Help to Buy’ equity loan scheme has been created. This scheme offers a 10%-20% equity loan funded by the Government through the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) on new build properties. The equity loan is interest free for the first 5 years. In addition, a ‘Help to Buy’ mortgage guarantee scheme has been introduced to provide Lenders with the option to obtain a

guarantee, where the borrower only contributes a deposit between 5 & 20%.

We will promote the use of these and any newly identified products and the support available through South West Homes and Registered Providers to enable applicants who are eligible to take advantage of such schemes.

Housing Need

Local authorities have a duty to periodically assess housing need. An assessment of need tends to follow a tested method, where evidence of backlog need, (typically those already known to be in unsatisfactory housing circumstances or homeless); and then to go on and consider the future population profile projections, deducting levels of homes to be built, incomes and housing costs to identify how many people would be unable to resolve their own housing requirement for their household. As needs assessments consider projections for long time spans, annual variations are usually minor. Our housing needs assessment based on primary research conducted by Fordham Research in 2009, published in 2010 (Fordham Research, 2010) is still valid, although we hope to update shortly, and this outlines a total annual need for affordable housing of 797 dwellings per year. A summary of the assessment is shown below.

| Summary of housing needs situation in Gloucester | |
|--|--------|
| Element | Number |
| Backlog need (annual) | 300 |
| Backlog supply (annual) | 173 |
| Net backlog need (annual) | 127 |
| Future Need (annual) | 1,500 |
| Future Supply (annual) | 830 |
| Net future need (annual) | 670 |
| Total net annual need | 797 |
| Total gross annual need | 1,800 |
| Total gross annual supply | 1,003 |
| Total net annual need | 797 |
| Source: Fordham Research Gloucestershire household survey (2009); Various secondary data sources | |

Gloucestershire Homeseeker

In addition to the formula based approach described above, we also consider the needs as we know them today, from applicants for social housing. Applicants in housing need may apply through a 'Choice Based Lettings' IT system to bid for affordable homes.

Information regarding current levels of applications is provided below.

| | April 2012 | April 2013 | Change |
|-----------|------------|------------|--------|
| Emergency | 97 | 172 | 77% |
| Gold | 297 | 403 | 36% |
| Silver | 1433 | 1539 | 7% |
| Bronze | 3354 | 2637 | -21% |
| Total | 5181 | 4751 | -8% |

Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker

Recent government flexibilities have made it necessary for our Homeseeker Policy to be reviewed and amended in order to reflect policy and welfare reform changes. Preliminary changes have been considered, including those supporting military personnel; however we wish to review the effectiveness of our service and consider whether further changes should be made. Please refer to our separate [Homeseeker Policy](#) (Gloucestershire Homeseeker Partnership, 2012) for more detailed information.

Overcrowding and Under-occupation

In the 2011 a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey undertaken by (David Adamson & Partners, 2011) 34,186 (77.3%) dwellings were found to be under-occupied and 1,795 (4.1%) overcrowded.

In December 2012, Homeseeker identified 985 households wishing to move because they consider their home to be too small, and far fewer looking to move to smaller accommodation. This need will partly be accounted for within the housing need projections above, and developing sufficient affordable housing is critical.

More recently, the welfare benefit reform and the 'size criteria' will likely prompt some movement, as some households may be unable to afford the rent for a home that is larger than their needs. This may provide opportunities for some over-

crowded families to move to larger accommodation.

Ageing Population & Older People

The chart below shows projections for Gloucester and the expected growth in the numbers of older people. By 2030, it is expected the population over 65 will be around 28,100, an increase of 9300 people (49%) over those in 2012. Importantly the increases and implications are significant, with the more frail elderly over 80 and 90 years, creating challenges in relation to provision of health and care services and more generally for support for older people.

| Population aged 65 and over, projected to 2030 | | | | | |
|--|---------------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| | 2012 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 |
| People aged 65-69 | 5,600 | 6,100 | 5,700 | 6,600 | 7,800 |
| People aged 70-74 | 4,200 | 4,700 | 5,600 | 5,300 | 6,200 |
| People aged 75-79 | 3,500 | 3,600 | 4,200 | 5,100 | 4,900 |
| People aged 80-84 | 2,800 | 2,800 | 3,000 | 3,600 | 4,400 |
| People aged 85-89 | 1,700 | 1,800 | 2,000 | 2,200 | 2,700 |
| People aged 90 and over | 1,000 | 1,100 | 1,300 | 1,600 | 2,100 |
| Total population 65 and over | 18,800 | 20,100 | 21,800 | 24,400 | 28,100 Difference 9300 |

Poppi 2013

Over 65 population projection: % of numbers above

| Population aged 65 and over, projected to 2030 | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------------|
| | 2012 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 |
| People aged 65-69 | 0 | 9% | 2% | 18% | 39% |
| People aged 70-74 | 0 | 12% | 33% | 26% | 48% |
| People aged 75-79 | 0 | 3% | 20% | 46% | 40% |
| People aged 80-84 | 0 | 0 | 7% | 29% | 57% |
| People aged 85-89 | 0 | 6% | 18% | 29% | 59% |
| People aged 90 and over | 0 | 10% | 30% | 60% | 110% |
| Total population 65 and over | 0 | 7% | 16% | 30% | 49% |

Poppi 2013

Our early acknowledgement of meeting the needs of the ageing population was with the development of a 166 unit Extra Care Village at St Oswalds, this provision is well designed, secure, accessible and creates an environment that is companionable, to minimise social isolation. This

however provides only one option for older people, and other options that are suited to Older People now also need to be made available.

In order to make the best use of resources, we propose re-evaluating our existing accommodation in conjunction with GCH. We will be conducting more detailed analysis relating to the present and the next generation of older people, and the types of homes those people currently occupy, to understand their future needs, and where appropriate, develop further options to suit.

GCH are currently adapting their Older Person services to meet with the requirements of the Supporting People Strategy by the inclusion of 'hubs' or 'centres' in different localities, which support residents living locally who require support. In addition, the hubs will provide a range of activities to promote well-being and minimise social isolation by inviting local residents to join in.

We wish to stimulate the development of further suitable accommodation which could achieve the double benefit of helping the younger generation as well. Building one or more retirement apartments can stimulate the supply chain, partly by making available family homes with gardens, to the next generation, and so recycling the home to serve the needs of the growing numbers of younger households. This recycling can make improvements to the quality of homes in the City due to the modernisation and investment by the next generation.

People with Disabilities

In the UK there are more than 11 million people who may fall within the definitions of the Equality Act under the definition of disability. This group is not a static group, as some people may experience disability temporarily, others throughout their lifetime. Only 3% of disabled people have had their impairment since birth, it is usually acquired, affecting our body or mind as we age.

In Gloucester, [records](#) show that 5880 people, just fewer than 5% of the population are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, with 3120 receiving the Mobility Award at a Higher Rate and with 3480

receiving care at middle or high rates. The latest available [data](#) concerning Limiting Long Term Illness² experienced by people in the city showed as many as 18,531, almost 18% of the population. More recent [census data](#) from 2011 suggested 4.9% of the population of Gloucester described themselves as in bad or very bad health.

The City Council's housing register has recently shown 69 households citing medical, disability or caring as reasons for requiring accommodation in the social sector.

We wish to see any barriers to housing removed from disabled people, so they may achieve their aspirations and potential and are able to live independently.

We want to see disabled people have the ability to live within mainstream accommodation, with adaptations or with additional support provided when needed. We also wish to encourage and support disabled people to gain increased control and choice within their lives. We will encourage support an early intervention, or other preventative approaches to avoid any deterioration in circumstances.

We urge our partners, to support initiatives that encourage people with disabilities, should they wish to do so, to become involved, so that we create safe and inclusive neighbourhoods. We want to see facilities that offer easy access to a range of community services, and provide affordable housing designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Adaptations

The Disabled Facilities Grant enables disabled people to have adaptations carried out to their home to enable them to live independently.

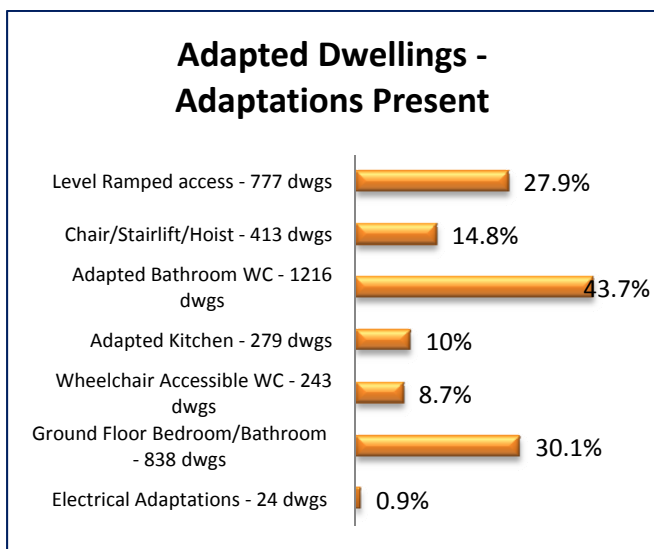
Currently we spend around £700,000 per annum carrying out adaptations to around 100 homes in the city.

2

The limiting long-term illness question in the 2001 Census was a self assessment of whether or not a person has a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the work they can do, including problems that are due to old age.

The 2011 survey reports that over 50% of households affected by disability have had a mobility problem within their dwelling but of these households, only 27.3% live in an adapted dwelling. The remaining 72.7% of households represent a future demand for DFG support from the Council.

The most common mobility problems relate to climbing stairs, use of bathroom amenities and access to and around the dwelling.



(David Adamson & Partners, 2011, p. 67)

In order to meet demand within the available budget, the councils across the county are working closely with their Housing Improvement Agency, 'Safe at Home' to identify proactive measures to either remove the need for DFG's (e.g. through falls prevention) or find alternatives to DFG's through the recycling of commonly used equipment.

Options are being promoted as part of the budgetary process, that from 2013/14 a budget of £300,000 per annum is made available to supplement the existing budget for provision of disabled facilities grants and from 2014/15 this will increase to a further £100,000 per annum to a total of £400,000 per annum.

Gypsy, Traveller & Showpeople

Through the Housing Act 2004 and national planning guidance we are required to undertake an assessment of need for communities residing within the City and where need is identified to put in place a strategy to meet those needs. In

addition we are required through 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites', March 2012 to provide for local targets, working with neighbouring authorities where there are cross-boundary issues.

A recent (Services, 2013) Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Assessment has identified a need for 14 additional spaces for the Travelling and Show People community. In addition, the need for 2 pitches was identified for the gypsy and traveller community within the City.

Various options in the City have been explored to contribute to meeting some of that need; however, due to the tight City boundaries and flood constraints, all land options identified so far have been unsuitable.

What do we want to achieve?

- Encourage development to meet aspiration and housing need providing market and affordable homes.
- Full range of housing options for the City to meet all housing need, demand across the income profile of the city.
- Develop our plans for Older People based on lessons learnt and updating our understanding of Older People requirements to enhance our policy approach.
- Ensure the creation of homes for people with physical and other disabilities within our communities and encourage corresponding community and personalised care and support budgets.
- Ensure that people with disabilities are provided with the necessary adaptations as quickly and as efficiently as possible.
- Support initiatives that encourage older people or those with disabilities to engage with us concerning housing proposals and other community initiatives
- Increased economic opportunities

- Ensure a range of house type options are available throughout all wards in the city.
- Promote our urban and neighbourhood regeneration priorities with key funding organisations, including HCA and LEP.
- We will conclude a new Gypsy and Traveller Assessment to understand the future requirements for the community and seek to make available pitches if required.
- Increased residential accommodation in the City Centre.
- Introduce a regular mechanism for consultation with the Travelling Showpeople Community and any other Traveller communities.

DRAFT

Key Objective 3

To Prevent Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

Homelessness is a complex problem; it creates uncertainty and takes many forms, its most visible being where people sleep rough, although more hidden forms such as sofa-surfing can also be problematic. In almost all cases, homelessness creates enormous uncertainty and the impact on any individual or their family cannot be underestimated.

Individuals who are homeless experience some, often multiple, complex health issues, often worsened by their homelessness. Local authority funded services, need to ensure the early identification of any problems or concerns and the prompt referral to partner organisations to ensure early interventions and or accommodation are made available to avoid crises.

The frequently identified causes of homelessness set out below are those the Government have indicated a commitment towards: -

- tackling troubled childhoods and adolescence
- improving health
- reducing involvement in crime
- improving skills, employment and the availability of financial advice

Where are we now?

Assessment of Homelessness in Gloucester

The Local Housing Authority has a statutory duty to provide advice and support to anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Council's Homelessness, Housing Options and Advice teams undertake enquiries relating to those who present as homeless, and consider a range of housing options, based on whether an applicant is eligible for assistance, in priority need, or if their homelessness was intentional.

Whilst enquiries are undertaken, and where an individual or household member is considered to be in 'priority need', the authority may provide temporary accommodation until such time as the

intentionality of their homelessness is established. An applicant or a household member who is considered to be in 'priority need', are usually those where a vulnerability exists; this includes families with children, pregnancy, old age, or physical or mental disability or some other exceptional reason.

Applicants who are unintentionally homeless and in priority need will be supported into suitable accommodation, and recent changes mean this can be either in the social housing or private rented sector. Even for households 'intentionally homeless', who will not owe the same level of homeless duty, will continue to be offered support with finding alternative accommodation.

The government has set out a vision for social justice that is based on two fundamental principles. First, prevention and early intervention throughout a person's life, encouraging carefully designed interventions to stop people falling off track and into difficult circumstances. Secondly, a 'second chance society' ensuring that no one is 'written off' and that anybody who needs another chance gets access to the support and tools they need to transform their lives.

So whilst some individuals are not considered to be in 'priority need', their support needs are still recognised and we work with other organisations such as the 'Supporting People' within the County Council, Support Providers and other voluntary sector organisations to ensure they are offered help to stabilise their situation or health, and regain the ability to secure accommodation and live independently.

In addition, we will work with local advice agencies and explore options to utilise grants to ensure independent advice and assistance, including support with legal proceedings is offered to those at risk of homelessness.

This draft strategy supports the desire from the Government for all local authorities to make a corporate commitment to the reduction of homelessness

Homeless Decisions

Below is a summary of decisions concerning homelessness in Gloucester.

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Homelessness Decisions | 334 | 362 | 521 |

Homelessness & Priority Need

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need | 109 | 108 | 191 |
| Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so | 29 | 39 | 30 |
| Eligible, homeless but not in priority need | 26 | 17 | 30 |
| Eligible but not homeless | 165 | 180 | 248 |
| Ineligible homeless | 5 | 18 | 22 |
| Total | 334 | 362 | 521 |

Source: PIE Returns

| 2012-13 | Q3 | Q2 | Q1 | Q4 | Average for 11/12 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| Eligible, Unintentionally Homeless and in Priority Need | 53 | 51 | 46 | 41 | 27 |
| Eligible, Homeless and in Priority Need but Intentionally so | 4 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 10 |
| Eligible, Homeless but not in Priority Need | 10 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 4 |
| Eligible but not Homeless | 73 | 47 | 66 | 62 | 45 |
| Ineligible | 2 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 5 |
| Total | 142 | 122 | 132 | 125 | 91 |

Source: P1E Report

Homelessness Prevention

We have witnessed an increase in individuals presenting as homeless, and we recognise that fundamentally, increasing housing supply is vital to lessen the pressure on demand for existing accommodation.

At the centre of our approach to homelessness is the desire to prevent homelessness occurring in the first place. In the previous 3 year period we prevented 2035 households from homelessness, alongside reaching decisions on 1217 homeless applications. Our success in preventing homelessness has been achieved using a range of options including: -

- Procuring private sector homes.
- Providing rent in advance and repayable rent deposits/loans.
- Mortgage Rescue and Assistance for Home Owners
- Sanctuary Scheme for Victims of Domestic Violence

Whilst we have many positive outcomes, we are not complacent and will strive to improve our services further, and are committed to delivering against the ten challenges set out in [‘Making Every Contact Count’](#) (CLG, 2012) We are already beginning work to adapt our frontline housing Service and enable our Housing Options Officers to focus their expertise on more complex cases and offer personalised advice.

We have started and will continue to make service improvements to meet the requirements of the CLG Gold Standard. As part of our self assessment, and benchmarking services with other local authorities, we will review our approach to explore further opportunities for improvements.

Discharge of Homelessness Duty in Private Rented Sector Accommodation

Following the changes introduced by The Homelessness (suitability of Accommodation) England Order 2012 and the Localism Act 2011 local authorities now have the power to end the main homelessness duty with a private rented sector offer with or without the applicant’s consent?

Formerly, Homeless households accommodated within the private sector retained a main homeless duty until they either left the accommodation provided or were offered a permanent tenancy. This has created unforeseen consequences with homeless households who are receiving assistance in the private sector

receiving priority over other households in housing need. We have recently begun using the new power to end the main homeless duty in the private rented sector which also includes an additional safeguard for the homeless applicant through a 're-application duty'. We will keep the matter of 'discharge to the private rented sector' under review, to understand any unanticipated consequences.

Homeless Pathway

Linked to changes identified with the [Supporting People Strategy](#) (Gloucestershire County Council, 2011) and revised budget; work has begun to remodel the 'pathway' of 'accommodation based support'. Contracts have recently been awarded with Providers to offer the first stage accommodation and assessment centres, where individuals can begin to engage with support staff and start the process of identifying and addressing any needs, and planning their route back to independence, with support options available to fulfil their plans.

In partnership with Supporting People a review will be undertaken of all the second stage 'accommodation based support' in the city and county in order to shape an effective county network, able to meet need closest to where it originates, whilst also offering the flexibility for individuals to move temporarily to receive support and reconnect back with their home area afterwards.

We will continue to review the implementation of the recently adopted ['Reconnection Policy'](#) in order to ensure it continues to meet our objectives.

For some homeless or vulnerable individuals it may be more appropriate to offer support within an independent environment, whether a new or existing home. In those circumstances 'housing related support' will be shaped to meet their needs.

To ensure we make best use of our 'accommodation based support' and that people ready for independent living aren't remaining due to financial barriers to moving on, we will review with Supporting People our approach to rent deposits.

Whilst budgets are constrained for 'housing related support' for vulnerable people, we are keen to work with Providers to explore other sustainable models of accommodation with lower levels of support that aren't reliant on support funding, particularly for the benefit of younger people, often affected by restricted benefit levels.

No Second Night Out & Transitional Funding to Prevent Homelessness

In October 2013 there were 11 people sleeping rough, compared with the 'rough sleeper count' in 2010 where 14 individuals had been found rough sleeping, beyond those occupying the Night Shelter. We cannot afford to be complacent about levels of rough sleeping, which would see individuals at their most vulnerable and at high risk living out, which may also expose others to risk. We recognise there may be fluctuations in rough sleeping levels, so we will review the way the service performs and associated services to ensure we have an effective response.

Of those formerly identified as sleeping rough, some were former workers from within the Economic Union and had **'No Recourse to Public Funds'** (NRPF) and in some cases were thought not to be fulfilling their 'treaty' responsibilities to remain in the UK. We are continuing to engage with statutory and voluntary sector partners so that they may verify eligibility to public funds, or ensure their needs are assessed, and in some cases support their return to their home country.

Transitional Homeless Funding Further to the allocation of £330k for the sub-region of Gloucestershire & South Gloucestershire, an action plan has been prepared at the request of CLG to identify the approach to reducing homelessness.

The main objectives proposed were to: -

- Review of needs and current services across the county and South Gloucs, to confirm our area of focus for the homelessness prevention project.
- To then develop an Outreach project that puts in place a 'No Second Night Out' response and avoids any rough sleeper

returning to the street for a second night out. The offer includes a dedicated personalised service, to work with newly homeless and potentially homeless people, as well as entrenched rough sleepers and those returning to the streets after a period of being housed.

- Provide a Personalisation or “self-directed support” service, offering clients greater choice over what services to access and the opportunity to take responsibility for their choices.
- Explore the feasibility of a Local Lettings Agency alongside a single Rent Deposit/Bond scheme
- Make use of NHAS staff development and training to continue and develop good practice across Gloucestershire.

This action plan is still in progress and will be pursued through the early part of the duration of the strategy.

Severe Weather Protocol In order to provide a humanitarian response in times of severe weather Gloucester participates in a protocol with all other districts within the County. The protocol ensures that in periods of severe cold or other extreme weather conditions, that no rough sleeper has to remain on the streets. Dependent on weather conditions, the protocol is implemented, and where necessary we will secure emergency placements.

We will continue to review the protocol and consider the involvement of voluntary sector organisations in responding in such circumstances.

Drug and Alcohol Support

We recognise people in difficult circumstances may turn to drugs or alcohol, or gradually increase their alcohol consumption beyond safe levels, and that this frequently leads to homelessness. We have therefore worked with the County Council to commission a specialist service delivered by ‘Turning Point’ to support individuals and their families to reduce their consumption of substances to safer levels or to abstain. Successful reductions in substance is expected to lead to improved health

improvements, and in some cases reduced levels of crime or antisocial behaviour.

The service specification was designed with the involvement of former and current service users, understanding the most important features of receiving support to fulfil a person’s recovery plans. Recovery Workers offer sessions at a series of Hubs or supported housing locations to provide support in a way that works for the individual, linked to support from GPs and specialist nurses.

The service will be monitored to ensure the best possible outcomes and minimise those losing their accommodation as a result.

Community Based Support

For those individuals assessed as needing additional support but without a need for accommodation, this will most often be provided by means of ‘community based support’, assisting individuals or families to maintain their tenancies wherever they may live. This support is critical in engaging with individuals or families when things start to go wrong and looking for solutions to prevent decline and any loss of their home.

As well as supporting people to prevent crisis, the community based support can help people who have been receiving higher levels of support in the past, and checking that they are able to manage independently in the early stages of resettling into new accommodation. There may be occasional periods where support can be offered for a short term to overcome a temporary crisis before withdrawing once the situation has stabilised.

Young People

Research by Shelter suggests that the causes of homelessness in young people are associated with adverse housing, economic and family trends and that young people are disproportionately affected and often don’t know where to go for help.

Local Authorities have duties towards young people and care leavers, under Homelessness legislation and the Childrens Act 1989 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2002. This means

young people may be eligible for assistance from the local housing authority or social services.

Any duty owed to homeless 16 and 17 year olds under the Childrens Act 1989 takes precedence over the duties under homelessness legislation, however as the local housing authority, we are still under a duty to assess, whether an applicant is in priority need, in addition to any referral we might make to social services. We do have a 'Southwark' protocol in place that sets out our shared arrangements.

In addition to our responsibilities above, young people often find obtaining accommodation difficult, with landlords often reluctant to let to young people, even those in receipt of benefits. Recent Housing Benefit changes have seen the 'shared accommodation rate' rise from the age of 25 to 35 (with some exceptions) meaning many single people up to the age of 35 only have sufficient benefits to live in shared accommodation, presenting some further challenges in terms of compatibility, and the availability of shared accommodation of a reasonable standard.

We are also working in partnership with Supporting People and support providers, to ensure we have a service dedicated to offering advice to young people to assess and offer appropriate support, to ensure they are housed safely. Ensuring young people receive adequate support and encouragement to pursue education or training is critical in terms of their future independence and wellbeing; and avoids a deterioration of circumstances or behaviours.

We wish to encourage Registered Providers or voluntary sector partners to focus on supply of suitable accommodation, including good quality shared provision. We will review existing supported accommodation to ensure there is sufficient capacity for those young people needing to gain the necessary skills before being able to live independently. Increases in the supply one bedroom accommodation are also necessary to respond to the high demand for Registered Provider stock, having increased partly due to the welfare reform changes and changing household formation.

We are also exploring 'crash pad' facilities for those young people who present at short notice as roofless and need accommodation until enquires can be completed and safe placements made.

We intend to continue to use mediation services and 'Night Stop' arrangements to try and offer other options, sometimes on a short term basis until the full circumstances can be established.

Supporting Individuals through Welfare Benefit Reform.

We are continuing to develop our understanding of the impact on individuals and households affected by Welfare Benefit changes, as policy changes are still being implemented, including those people on benefits under the age of 35; size criteria; and the Benefit Cap applied under current Housing Benefit arrangements and in future via Universal Credit.

Through the Welfare Reform Act the Government has introduced a new 'size criteria' from 1st April 13, for housing benefit claims in the social rented sector. The criteria apply to working-age households who are considered to be under-occupying their council or housing association homes and as a result lose part of their housing benefit. This decrease in benefit has been set initially at 14% for one extra bedroom and 25% for two or more extra bedrooms (based on rent and service charges).

In Gloucester, records indicate that from April 2013 there would be 873 housing benefit claims in the social housing sector, affected by changes associated with the house & household size criteria, approximately 423 of which are in Gloucester City Council's stock.

Much joint work has already been undertaken to identify and offer advice to those affected by the benefit changes to ensure they are aware of all options available to try and manage their rental payments. We will continue to work with our Registered Provider partners, and organisations offering welfare benefit advice to help households affected by benefit changes.

As benefit arrangements stand at present, we are beginning to see the early implications of the

introduction of the **Benefit Cap**. The benefit cap has been introduced for out of work households, which restricts the amount of benefit a household can receive to £500 per week for couple and lone parent households and £350 a week for single person households.

The elements which make up the Universal Credit are:

- The standard allowance
- An amount for responsibility for children and young persons
- An amount for **housing**
- An amount for 'other particular needs and circumstances'

A partnership has been created called the Gloucester Advice Partnership and this group includes representatives from CAB, GL Communities, The Law Centre and GARAS. The group considers issues arising from the reforms and how these are best resolved. Otherwise, any exceptional cases affected by welfare reform have the opportunity to apply through a through a new framework to deal with Discretionary Housing Payments.

Discretionary Housing Payment objectives include:

- alleviating poverty;
- encouraging and sustaining people in employment;
- tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention;
- safeguarding residents in their own homes;
- helping people who have had a room specifically adapted for their needs to remain in the property
- ensuring that people who are able to afford their rent without additional subsidy can do so;
- helping those who are trying to find alternative accommodation to do so;
- keeping families together;
- supporting domestic violence victims who are trying to move to a place of safety;
- supporting the vulnerable or the elderly in the local community;
- helping customers through personal and difficult events ;
- supporting young people in the transition to adult life, or

- Promoting good educational outcomes for children and young people.

Payments of DHP will normally only be awarded for a period of up to 13 weeks as the intention is for the recipient to seek a more affordable way of remaining in the property or seeks alternative accommodation. Repeat awards will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Exempt Accommodation

In 2011, changes were made through Circular HB/CBB A14/2011 to the eligibility of housing benefit for shared accommodation. The changes included the age threshold increasing from the age of 25 to 35; however certain exemptions were put in place. The exemptions included certain categories of ex-offenders (where there may be risks to others in shared accommodation), and also some provision for individuals who have formerly resided in specialist accommodation. We would urge all our partners, when working with clients to find 'move-on' accommodation outside of the social sector, to check whether the client might be exempted from the age restricted benefit, and so opening up further accommodation options.

Mortgage Rescue

Gloucester has benefited from the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme which was put in place to help eligible homeowners who fall within one of three priority need categories shown below. The scheme seeks to convert mortgaged properties to rent, where the household is in financial difficulty through no fault of their own, and assuming no other options are available to them.

The three priority need categories are that the homeowner must be: -

- a person with whom **dependent children** reside or might reasonably be expected to reside;
- a **pregnant woman** or a person with whom she resides or might reasonably be expected to reside; or
- a person who is **vulnerable** as a result of old age, mental illness or handicap or physical disability or other special **reason**, or with whom such a person resides.

The number of home owners facing a crisis situation with their finances is growing currently. For some within the priority need categories the MRS has been the only option. So far we have assisted around 30 households since the scheme was introduced.

The successful Government’s Mortgage Rescue Scheme ends on 31st March '14, however we will continue to offer Homeowners facing repossession, specialist housing advice and assistance in partnership with the Citizen’s Advice Bureau.

Homelessness Resources

| Source of Funding | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
|--|----------|----------|
| Homelessness Prevention Grant (City Funding) | £377,329 | £371,683 |
| CLG Transitional Funding (Sub Regional Allocation) | £330,000 | |
| Homelessness Transition Fund (County Funding) | £163,000 | |

What do we want to achieve?

- Reduced levels of rough sleeping
- Continue to improve the proactive homelessness prevention programme.
- Alternatives for delivering mortgage rescue following the phasing out of the existing Government scheme.
- Increased levels of accommodation in social or through the private sector for those single people under 35 with restricted benefit entitlement.
- Sufficient supported accommodation for young people and teenage parents.
- An evaluation of housing accommodation based support throughout the county, with accommodation located and matched to areas of need.
- An effective ‘Reconnection Policy’ successfully facilitating moves to receive support and suitable connection to home areas where appropriate.

- For Support Providers working with vulnerable or disconnected individuals, to actively encouraging take up of educational, employment or other activities to support independence and create a sense of worth.
- Minimise levels of substance misuse, dependency or reduced intake to improve health outcomes.
- Joint working with specialist organisations to provide support for clients with complex needs, including mental health issues.
- Monitor the position of homeless applicants who are owed a homeless duty, being discharged into the Private Rented Sector and consider any unintended consequences.
- Evaluate implications of Welfare Reform changes and establish options to minimise the risk of homelessness.
- Review our response when the severe weather protocol is implemented to consider service improvements.

Key Objective 4

To Foster Community Health & Wellbeing

Where are we now?

The Council has recently developed 'Ward Profiles' which provide an assessment of each ward's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. In turn, these profiles will help provide a platform for neighbourhood planning that seeks to support the Council's broader planning proposals. We wish to transfer power to local communities for them to shape the areas they live in.

The profiles examine the different types and sizes of homes available in our neighbourhoods to enable plans to provide the homes that people want and need. We recognise that our communities will want different types of homes including affordable, privately owned or privately rented to provide options that give choice and are affordable to all.

Localism

The Localism Act has provided flexibilities to local authorities concerning the way affordable housing tenancies are accessed or managed.

The City Council's [Tenancy Strategy](#) (Gloucester City Council, 2012) sets out our approach to these flexibilities, and how they support the objectives of this over-arching housing strategy; that is to create an environment where there are a range of tenancies available, that offer sufficient security to tenants; allows flexibility to respond to tenant aspirations, including moves to market housing; are responsive to different neighbourhood environments to ensure well-balanced neighbourhoods; make the best use of existing housing; and increase the number of affordable homes in the City.

In order to ensure healthy lifetime neighbourhoods our strategy requires that where there is any large scale new development or regeneration schemes to be undertaken, we will expect a Registered Provider to work closely with the Council so that we ensure that any new proposals complement the profile of a given area.

An important element of the Tenancy Strategy concerns the introduction of 'flexible tenancies' on larger properties, to ensure that this valuable resource is made best use of, and should a large house no longer be needed by a household due to their family size or changed financial circumstances, opportunities will exist to explore other options, including shared ownership or market purchase, or to bring the tenancy to an end.

Safeguarding

We will work in partnership with Adult and Childrens Services, local Safeguarding Boards, health, the police and other agencies to ensure the effectiveness of our safeguarding arrangements. We will do this through services we deliver or promote with Registered Provider partners as we recognise our part in protecting vulnerable people in the City, as well as meeting the Government's requirements below.

'preventing and reducing the risk of significant harm to vulnerable adults, from abuse or other types of exploitation, whilst supporting individuals in maintaining control over their lives, and in making informed choices without coercion' (Dept of Health, 2011).

In our partnership working we will promote and embed the Government Safeguarding principles:

Empowerment - Presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.

Protection - Support and representation for those in greatest need.

Prevention - It is better to take action before harm occurs.

Proportionality - Proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

Partnership - Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

Accountability - Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

We will also look at commissioning private emergency accommodation that provides

exclusive use to the authority. This is so we can undertake the necessary risk assessments to accommodate and safeguard vulnerable people.

Domestic Abuse Services

Through the partnership with Supporting People, a new Domestic Violence service commenced in 2012 and is intended to provide support in a variety of settings to meet the specific needs of victim's and their families. To avoid disruption and instability to families, support arrangements can occur in a victim's existing home, a refuge or by supporting the victim to move permanently, these services are available to any victim regardless of gender. The Service aim is to intervene as early as possible to prevent situations escalating.

Through the Support Provider, we will provide places of safety in a crisis and then support for families to return to their communities, where safe and they wish to do so. Through our successful relationship with Safe Partnership, we will continue to make available additional security measures tailored to meet the needs of the victim and their family, including a 'sanctuary room' in appropriate cases, to protect against any repeat violent incidents.

We will keep our arrangements for the victims of domestic violence under review to ensure we offer a high quality service.

Community Based Support

Part of our approach to supporting vulnerable people has been to work with Supporting People, to commission a new generic community based support. This is a more comprehensive service with a greater range of skills can be made available to service users; e.g. individuals do not always neatly match a specific 'label' e.g. homeless, substance misuse, young people, mental health, offenders etc.

Support will be offered where there are levels of risk and safeguarding concerns to individuals, and communities experiencing difficulties e.g. domestic abuse, chaotic drug and alcohol misuse

This service plays a crucial role across many client groups, in fulfilling our 'early intervention'

intentions, in order to offer support, before situations, deteriorate and breakdown, sometimes to crisis and 'roofless' situations. We encourage our partners to refer or signpost to those who may need additional support. We believe it will not only be advantageous to individuals and their families, but also be far more cost effective. We will keep under review and evaluate outcomes and if necessary seek modifications throughout the period of the strategy.

Well-Being

The recently created Gloucestershire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (GSHWB) has in partnership with social care colleagues set out its [strategy](#) (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012) and vision for health and well-being: **Working Together to Live Well and Stay Well'**

The aim of the vision is 'To improve the health of all Gloucestershire residents and protect the most vulnerable' by 'working with our communities to co-produce health, wellbeing and resilience.'

The strategy is based on four life stages, those are

- Starting well
- Developing well
- Living & working well
- Ageing well

The strategy acknowledges that improved health brings wider social and economic benefits for everyone such as increased productivity and tax revenue and reductions in welfare payments. Below you will see the role housing can play in supporting the life-stages above.



(CLG, 2008)

The Strategy reports that health inequalities arise from differences in the social and economic conditions in which people are born and live and as a result the burden of ill health is

disproportionately experienced by individuals, families and communities where there are lower incomes and lower educational levels. Evidence identifies high levels in neighbourhoods mainly located in central Gloucester.

The Strategy also reports hospital admissions due to a hip fracture are higher than the English average within Gloucester City. It also says that the proportion of excess winter deaths in Gloucestershire is 18.5% which is comparable to the England figure of 18.7%. However, within Gloucester City, numbers are recorded as (23.3%).

The Adamson stock condition report also reported an increase in the city with the percentage of households with at least one member with long term illness or disability (from 15.5% to 20.6%) and goes on to say demonstrate that that there is significant cost to the NHS from people suffering accident and illness due to falls and excess cold in the home.

We will look for opportunities for partnership working with public health through the Health and Well Being Board to develop projects and harness resource to tackle these hazards.

Where extensive adaptations are required to a property, we will consider whether this is the best way of meeting the housing needs of the household, and investigate alternative housing options.

When working with Registered Providers on new, revised service arrangements or developments, we will check that proposals adequately address the Health & Wellbeing and meet with our Lifetime Neighbourhood requirements set out below.

Older People and their Well-Being

According to research (Housing Learning & Improvement Network HLIN, 2012) , on average each older person living in specialist housing reduces costs to other services by £550 (Capgemini 2009)

By contrast, poor housing is very often a contributory factor to 'winter deaths', a range of health problems in older people, such as heart and respiratory conditions, as well as serious injuries and deaths from falls. To help take the

strain off Health & Adult Social Care, we will support the creation of specialist housing; support for people in their own homes, or other environments that are suitable.

Experience shows us that older people thrive where they live in safe environments, that avoid trips and falls, that are warm and well maintained. We wish to explore and encourage other preventative housing measures to support those less mobile, offering older people a better quality of life, and also prevent unnecessary care costs.

We know the projections regarding our ageing population and predicted needs, and we wish to work with Older People to enhance our understanding of their aspirations for accommodation, from independent accommodation to 'care ready' or 'extra care' type arrangements and put in place plans to deliver suitable schemes in line with demographic changes.

Health Issues in Gloucester

| Age 75+ Predicted to | 2011 | 2015 | 2020 |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Have a long term limiting illness | 4,907 | 5,135 | 5,799 |
| have dementia | 1,146 | 1,245 | 1,415 |
| be admitted to hospital due to a fall | 328 | 342 | 386 |

Challenges to Independence: Daily Tasks

| Aged 75+ unable to manage: | 2009 | 2015 | 2020 |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| at least one domestic task alone | 5,082 | 5,420 | 6,093 |
| at least one self-care activity alone | 4,127 | 4,393 | 4,931 |
| at last one mobile activity alone | 2,415 | 2,591 | 2,913 |

Source Projecting Older People Population Information System (POPPI)

A recent report 'Housing for our Ageing Population' (Network, 2012) identified ten key design elements that we will encourage partners or developers to incorporate into their proposals. Design features such as the inclusion of generous space standards, plenty of natural light, avoidance of an institutional environment etc. and also making the accommodation as 'care ready' for older people, to ensure they contribute to the best possible outcomes for older people.

There are different types of accommodation available for older people that typically fall within the following categories.

Mainstream Housing

Adapted Housing
General Needs Housing
Lifetime Homes

Specialised Housing

Sheltered/Retirement Housing
Very sheltered/Assisted Living
Extra Care/Close Care housing
Retirement Village

Residential Care or Care Homes

Residential Care
Nursing Home
Specialised Care Homes

Proposed New Health & Wellbeing Hubs

The approach to offering support within Sheltered Housing Schemes is beginning to change. It is recognised that often many people living within such schemes are active and well and require little support, whilst in the wider locality, there may be more frail individuals who are quite isolated and vulnerable. We are beginning to explore Hubs in different localities in the City, that can offer services to both residents within Sheltered housing schemes and also the wider community. Staff in the hubs will play an important role in the early identification of vulnerable people and offer or secure alternative support, as well as stimulate activities within which local people can become involved.

Specialist Provision

It is inevitable, that with the growing ageing population, as outlined above, we will need to cater for people who develop dementia, and encourage options that support their partners. Due to the ageing population in the county we have a higher than average rate of dementia within our population. The number of people aged 65 and over with a form of dementia is currently around 8,500 and is projected to grow by over 70% by 2030.

We therefore will explore the provision of specialist provision for dementia sufferers and where appropriate consider the needs of family members, within the City.

Home Improvement Scheme – Safe at Home

Home improvement schemes are available to help homeowners and private sector tenants who are older or disabled to remain in their own home, living independently, in safety and comfort. Home improvement schemes also advise on home improvements and adaptations that their clients may need, and help them to apply for local authority grants or loans to fund the required work.

The City Council and district Partners have worked in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council's Supporting People Team to put in place a contract for three years, commencing June 2011. This service not only provides adaptations to allow people to remain at home, but also enables those leaving hospital, who would otherwise not be able to return home.

Lifetime Neighbourhoods

We wish to create Lifetime neighbourhoods, which offer everyone the best possible chance of health, wellbeing, and social, economic and civic engagement regardless of age. "Lifetime neighbourhoods provide the built environment, infrastructure, housing, services and shared social space that allows us to pursue our own ambitions for a high quality of life. They do not exclude people through age, frailty or disability" (CLG, 2007). Lifetime neighbourhoods will however reap an 'age dividend' of improved health, inclusion and participation. As part of this approach and building on our Development Plan proposals, we will seek 10% of Lifetime Homes on all new residential developments, and a proportion of 'wheelchair user standard' homes in proportion with the evidence available at the time of development.

The Government has recently been consulting on its intended 'Housing Standards', the findings of which we will review and may well adapt our approach further depending on the guidelines published.

We will begin to use an 'asset based' approach to community health and wellbeing, building on the strengths and assets within communities. This type of approach will enable citizens and

charities to complement the work of service providers. GCH have been piloting such proposals and will be extending during 2014-15.

Community Safety

Through our Safer Gloucester Partnership it is recognised that every agency has a vital role to play in tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) and the aim is for all organisations and communities to work together to ensure that our communities are safe and tolerant and well maintained.

Secure By Design

We encourage developers to follow (APCO, 2010) principles when building new or regenerating areas of housing. Secure by Design is a Police lead initiative that seeks to minimise crime by designing it out of housing layouts or incorporating features including good surveillance that would make it difficult for crimes to be undertaken undetected.

Research has shown that 'secure by design' developments suffer at least 50% less burglary, 25% less vehicle crime and 25% less criminal damage that those not designed accordingly.

We are currently awaiting the results of the Government's Housing Standards consultation, which did take into account crime prevention measures. Whilst in the consultation period of this strategy, it is hoped the new guidelines will be available and we may relate our requirements to any enhanced guidance.

Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) & Hate Crime

A multi-agency team called Project SOLACE was created to bring agencies together to deal with ASB. Project SOLACE is a partnership of GCH, Gloucester City Council and Gloucestershire Constabulary. Gloucester City Homes manage the team.

Whilst Project SOLACE tackles ASB where it exists in private tenancies, owner-occupiers and public places, Registered Providers play an important role in tackling ASB within their own housing stock. The city council welcomes and urges all RPs operating in the city to take advantage of new tools or legislation to tackle any ASB that arises.

Hate Crime involves any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic. The definition covers disability, gender-identity, race, religion or faith and sexual orientation. We will encourage the 'Challenge It, Report It, Stop It' approach to minimise occurrences of hate crime.

We will promote the government requirements concerning hate crime with our RP partners and encourage an approach where there is ease of reporting. We will promote the requirements to: -

- prevent hate crime happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that foster hatred, and encouraging early intervention to reduce the risk of incidents escalating
- by encouraging the reporting of hate crime that occurs, by building victims' confidence to come forward and seek justice, and working with partners at national and local level to ensure the right support is available when they do
- Work with the agencies that make up the Criminal Justice System to improve the operational response to hate crime. We want RPs to support the criminal justice system and be a more effective part of the end-to-end process, identifying hate crimes early, managing cases jointly and dealing with offenders robustly.

What do we want to achieve?

A clear statement projecting housing requirements in relation to Older People, meeting a broad range of aspirations from independent accommodation through to Extra Care or Care Ready accommodation.

Well designed and high quality services that support older people, not just in our sheltered housing schemes, but in our wider communities.

Safeguard vulnerable individuals

Reduced deprivation

Explore provision of specialist accommodation for sufferers of dementia.

Increased resident engagement by all sections of the community.

Registered Providers utilising all options, including any new legislation at their disposal to tackle ASB.

Reductions in anti-social behaviour and hate crime.

Wider dispersal area for accommodation for refugees or asylum seekers in the city and county.

Improved health and well-being.

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Resources

Below are some of the resources that we will seek to secure to invest in improved housing outcomes, and draw on some funds through other sources as opportunities arise. The feedback from the consultation will be used to guide the way the investment should be targeted.

HCA Funding

Since 2011 grant support from the HCA has been made available with £4.5 billion nationally over the next four years for new affordable homes.

The arrangements for drawing down grant have significantly changed following the associated introduction of 'affordable rents'. In addition RPs have more flexibilities to dispose of housing stock, or undertake conversions on relet to affordable rent, both with the intention of recycling funds back into new housing provision.

In order to make use of grant funding from the HCA, the City Council has and must continue to identify, prioritise and promote suitable sites for the delivery of affordable housing and work with Registered Provider partners to stimulate investment of grant allocations here in the City.

The City Council's priorities for investment have been set out in the Council's interim regeneration strategy, and formerly within a Local Investment Plan formulated with other District authorities within the county. **The key strategic sites within the City are:** - The Kings Quarter, Blackfriars, Greyfriars, The Fleece, Gloucester Quays, and more localised neighbourhood regeneration in Matson and Podsmead.

The HCA also make other funding opportunities available periodically, such as the Local Infrastructure Fund, Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund, Build to Rent. Similarly we will work in partnership with organisations meeting the criteria to bid for such funding to secure investment in the City.

New Homes Bonus

Is a recently implemented funding stream that match funds the council tax raised on each new home for a period of six years. There is also a

premium of £350 paid for each affordable home developed or empty home returned to use.

Our objectives to increase the supply of all homes and affordable homes will see increased funding being made available to the local authority if successful.

For the year 2012-13, an allocation of £612,177 was made, of which £66,360 related to the affordable homes premium and a further allocation for 2013-14 of £2,531,000. Allocations are of course dependent on future delivery.

Given the current pressures on local authorities and allocations from central government, we will keep under review the future use of New Homes Bonus in delivering affordable housing.

S106 & Capital Funding

From time to time, commuted sums are taken in lieu of affordable housing on site for newly consented schemes. Taking a commuted sum is typically considered where a site would seem unsuitable for affordable housing e.g. where there is already sufficient in the locality. Such funds represent the value of land that would have been made available for affordable housing.

£661,258 is currently held, although £510,000 is committed to schemes that are in progress.

The priorities we propose for the continued use of these funds are: -

- To support new build delivery on suitable sites.
- To support sites where scheme viability is borderline.
- To provide specialist accommodation not provided as standard on new build developments.

Right to Buy Receipts

in March 2012 the government changed the [rules](#) (CLG, 2012) concerning RTB receipts used for replacement homes must form no more than 30% of the expenditure on replacement stock. It is intended that the balance comes from other resources including loans financed from 'affordable' rents (up to 80% of market rents), the council's own resources or funding from partners including housing associations or developers,

The City Council has signed an agreement with CLG to keep the receipts to provide affordable housing in the area. So far receipts from held will generate £2,281,128.20 of development. Consultation feedback and internal approvals will influence the way these funds are utilised for new homes.

Other Capital Funding

Gloucester Housing Market Partnership

The development of the urban extension at Kingsway of around 3300 homes has in the last decade provided a sizeable proportion of affordable homes within the City. Capital funding was formerly designated to deliver homes at Kingsway and £210,150 remains to support future phases. As a consequence of the planning condition in place relating to Kingsway, units delivered are required to be 'social rented' tenure or shared ownership, therefore the inability to attract HCA subsidy, available to support 'affordable rent' means supporting delivery with City Council funds remains critical.

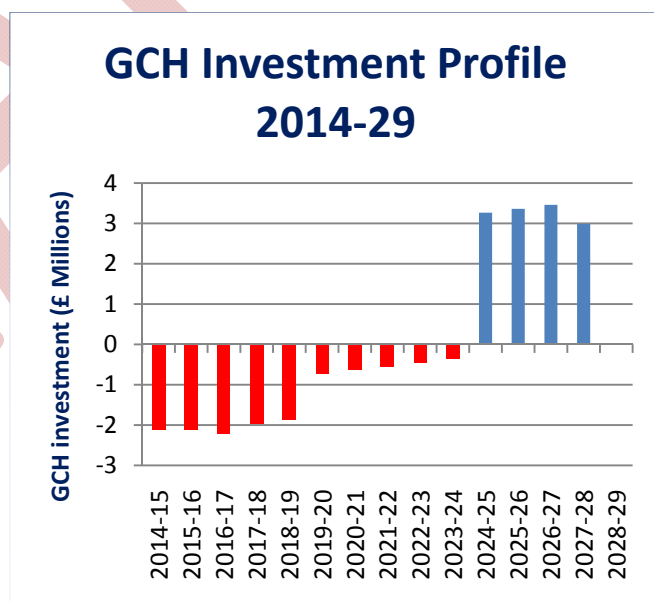
Housing Revenue Account

Formerly the method for financing and subsidising housing was through a national redistributive mechanism that is the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The subsidy system was abolished from April 2012 and replaced by a self-financing HRA. At Gloucester, the HRA is better off under reform than under the old system. The advantages of the reform are that most authorities will have sufficient resources over a 30-year period to maintain their stock to their current levels of repair. This is true in the long term for Gloucester, however there is an initial shortfall of budget in the first 11 years of the 30-year investment plan and will result in £13.07 million shortfall in investment requirements.

From 2014/15 the Housing Revenue Account resources for capital investment will be restrained because the Council will have reached the HRA borrowing cap set at £62.75m by the Government. As illustrated in the graph below this will result in ten years where there will not be sufficient resources to meet the Council's social housing capital investment need. In total £13.1m

of capital works that need to be completed will have to be deferred until after 2024/25 and it will take five years to clear this backlog before having any headroom for other housing projects. These deferrals of capital works will undoubtedly result in increased day to day repair spend to extend the life of components that really need to be replaced.

As indicated earlier the Government has agreed that Gloucester can apply for a stock transfer, with the intended transfer organisation being Gloucester City Homes. Based on the Council's resolution in October 2013, the alternative options we would pursue would be the continuation of existing arrangements, if a CoCo cannot be made to work. In parallel to the work on a CoCo, the following options of enhancing the existing arrangements will need to be agreed for further development; they are: - extending GCH's management agreement; changing GCH's ownership so as to allow it to borrow outside the public sector borrowing requirement.



| Funding Source | 2013-14 | 2013-14 |
|--|---|----------------|
| Capital funding | £210,150 | 0 |
| Disabled Facilities Grant | £364,000 | Not determined |
| GCC Top Up for Disabled Facilities Grant | £300,000 | Not determined |
| Right to buy receipts | £334,000 Formula permits £1.1M investment in new homes | Not yet known |
| Commuted Sums from s106 contributions | £661,258 | Not yet known |

Consultation

It is our intention to submit this draft strategy to a period of consultation commencing in March 2014 to June 2014. We welcome all responses to our Draft Strategy, in order that we can refine it and make it fit for purpose.

You will see a table of proposed actions, once we have received feedback, we will begin to give these actions timescales within the final strategy.

Your views can be provided by visiting

www.gloucester.gov.uk/housing (web page to be completed)

Or by sending your comments to enabling@gloucester.gov.uk

Or submitting a response (attach questionnaire) to Housing Strategy & Enabling, Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EP

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Key Objectives – Delivery Plan

| Key Objective 1 | Action | Measure or Target | Target Date | Risk | Responsible Officer or Resources |
|--------------------|---|--|-------------|------|--|
| Action 1.1 | Identified five year land supply | SHLAA | | | Planning Policy |
| Action 1.2 | Providing the stimulus for investment in housing in the City | Investment in affordable housing in the City Grant Total Investment | | | Planning Policy & Enabling |
| Action 1.3 | Improved planning policy for housing | Production of Supplementary Planning Document | | | Planning Policy & Enabling |
| Action 1.4 | Maximising Affordable Housing provision through s106 agreements | Monitoring % negotiated & actual levels of affordable housing delivered, against economic circumstances, Greenfield/Brownfield land. | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 1.5 | Consider partnerships with larger investment organisations | Evidence of options | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 1.6 | Release under occupied homes | Social Sector Private Sector | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 1.7 | Promote a high quality private rented sector | Improvements in stock condition results and increased numbers of accredited properties. | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service – Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 1.8 | Explore opportunities to develop homes above shops or in former retail areas | Units delivered above shops or in retail areas. | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 1.9 | Explore opportunities for conversions from commercial to residential | Assessment of options and any conversions made. | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service – Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 1.10 | Engage with Private Landlords to secure properties to provide options for those threatened with homelessness | Evidence of properties nominated to or leased. | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 1.11 | Use existing Empty Homes funding Allocation to return 28 empty homes back to use by 2015 and bid for any future funding opportunities | Evidence of specific properties returned to use. | | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service – Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 1.12 | We will aim to ensure that no more than 3% of homes are empty in the City | Measure total number of empty properties brought back into use | | | Environmental Health & Enabling |
| Action 1.13 | Provide private tenants with the | Evidence of material used to support | | | Private Sector Housing |

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| | information to enable them to assess the condition of their accommodation | action. | | Service |
| Action 1.14 | Carry out enforcement action to improve the condition of privately rented properties and target enforcement action in the areas identified as having the worst conditions. | Reduced the number of Category 1 hazards | | Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 1.15 | Use Green Deal to target properties requiring updated heating boilers and appliances for both owner occupiers and landlords. | Evidence of publicity material and records of Green Deal take up in the City. | | Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 1.16 | Continue to improve the incentives for landlords to join the Fit to Rent accreditation scheme to increase numbers of accredited properties. | Numbers joining the scheme. | | Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 1.17 | Promote electrical safety awareness to encourage owners to replace old electrical wiring. | Evidence of publicity material or re-wiring undertaken via Building Control (?) | | Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 1.18 | Monitor migration patterns to understand the need for provision or understand any local neighbourhood effects. | Evidence concerning migration. | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Key Objective 2 | Action | Measure | Target Date | Responsible Officer or Resources |
| Action 2.1 | Complete Strategic Housing Market Assessment to inform the requirement for different size, types and mix of homes | Completed SHMA | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 2.2 | To set out requirements in City Plan documents for those people with specific needs or disabilities including the provision of life time homes and wheelchair user accommodation. | Reduction of waiting time for specialist accommodation | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 2.3 | Ensure all HMO's subject to mandatory licensing are properly licenced. | Increasing numbers of new licenses. | | Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 2.4 | Conduct a more detailed evaluation of housing requirements and options for | Detailed approach on Older Person accommodation requirements within | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |

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| | older people. | City Plan to aide discussions with existing and new providers. | |
| Action 2.5 | Develop homes for older people; or disabled people within communities to take advantage of community support or to be able to use personalised budgets locally on care or support. | Increased options provided through Neighbourhood Hubs. Asset Based Community Activities being undertaken within communities. | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 2.6 | Respond to requests for adaptations as quickly as possible, and develop options for additional advice and support, where a move might be more appropriate than an adaptation. | Numbers of individual s who moved to more suitable accommodation increasing. | Private Sector Housing Service |
| Action 2.7 | Ensure sufficient levels of temporary accommodation to avoid the use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation other than on an exceptional basis. | More suitable temporary accommodation for homeless clients. Less expenditure on B&B | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 2.8 | Explore shared accommodation and other HMO type arrangements to support increasing numbers under 35 ineligible for more than a single room rent. | Choice based lettings (Homeseeker) will be analysed to determine the trend in the number of applications for housing. | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 2.9 | Develop specialist accommodation for people with complex needs | Increased bed spaces available to those complex needs within the city. | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 2.10 | Work with RPs to identify tenants under-occupying and those overcrowded to encourage moves to more suitable accommodation | Easy access system to match eligible people to the correct properties | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service |
| Action 2.11 | Encourage the involvement of Older People, disabled or minority groups, in shaping plans for their area or homes. | Better outcomes for individuals in their own homes and neighbourhoods. | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 2.12 | Promote our urban and neighbourhood | Number of key regeneration starts on | Housing Strategy & |

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| | regeneration priorities with key funding organisations, including HCA and LEP. | site Amount of subsidy attracted to regeneration sites. | | Enabling Service |
| Action 2.13 | Introduce a regular mechanism for consultation with the Travelling Showpeople Community and any other Traveller communities. | Continued engagement with Travelling Show People community or other communities if need identified Identify opportunities for pitches if need identified | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service & Planning Policy |
| Action 2.14 | We will agree short, medium and longer term priorities for investment into the city Council's housing stock to support regeneration and more effective use of our land assets and agree the most effective way of resourcing those improvements. | Phased plans for neighbourhood regeneration. Funding arrangements identified for neighbourhood regeneration. | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Objective 3 | Action | Measure | Target Date | Responsible Officer or Resources |
| Action 3.1 | We will explore new arrangements with organisations able to offer independent legal or financial advice to prevent homelessness. | Numbers being offered advice to minimise repossessions for those unintentionally homeless. | | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service |
| Action 3.2 | Identify individuals or households affected by Welfare Benefit changes and offer advice and assistance to secure affordable accommodation. | Data identifying clients affected by changes and evidence of advice or support offered. | | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service & Civica |
| Action 3.3 | Implement a framework concerning the use of discretionary housing funds. | Numbers of households prevented from becoming homeless through the use of Discretionary Housing funds. | | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service & Civica |
| Action 3.4 | We will develop more interim or hostel type accommodation in the medium term to respond to certain household presenting as homeless. | Numbers of interim accommodation. | | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service |
| Action 3.5 | Support the transition of a new service to meet the needs of rough sleepers. | Improved service outcomes for rough sleepers with complex needs. | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service & Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 3.6 | Ensure there is effective outreach to | Less rough sleeping | | Housing Strategy & |

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| | engage with rough sleepers and those with chaotic needs or complex behaviours to ensure support is available. | | | Enabling Service |
| Action 3.7 | We will work in partnership with local agencies to support vulnerable former EU Workers or other migrants to return to their country of origin and receive appropriate support, or other enforcement action if necessary. | The development of an agreement between partner agencies concerning migrants with no recourse to public funds. | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 3.8 | In conjunction with Supporting People we will review all accommodation made available to homeless or vulnerable individuals that provide support. | A revised network of homeless accommodation identified, with clear guidelines around support available. | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 3.9 | Build on the quality of frontline services to meet the 10 Challenges of the Gold Standard set via CLG | Assessment against Gold Standard criteria. Evidence of improvement plan. | | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service & Customer Services |
| Action 3.10 | Keep under review homeless applicants who are owed a homeless duty, being discharged into the Private Rented Sector and consider any unintended consequences associated with new legislation. | Cases being re-opened under 're-application duty'. | | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service |
| Action 3.11 | Evaluate implications of Welfare Reform changes and establish options to minimise the risk of homelessness. | Routinely review data associated with Benefits and the affordability of accommodation and risk to homelessness. | | Homelessness & Housing Advice Service & Housing Strategy & Enabling Service and Civica Client Officer |
| Action 3.12 | Review our response when the severe weather protocol is implemented to consider service improvements. | Any revised arrangements to support the severe weather protocol. | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Key Objective 4 | Action | Measure | Target Date | Responsible Officer or Resources |
| Action 4.1 | Better working relationship with Gloucester residents | Resident survey will show increased % of involvement | | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service Private Sector Housing Service |

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| Action 4.2 | Close links with UKBA | Evidence of accommodation in the City and a move toward more balanced arrangements in the county | Housing Options & Advice Service Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 4.3 | Increased number of homes/support for people with special needs | Evidence from SP contracts & KPI's Evidence of specialist dwellings | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 4.4 | Working in partnership with other agencies (SP, districts, health, County Council etc) | Indices of deprivation will go down including crime & ASB | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 4.5 | Review Tenancy Strategy Objectives Tenancy Strategy – less no. of tenants under occupying | Reduction in churn within communities. | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 4.6 | Encourage Registered Providers utilising all options, including any new legislation at their disposal to tackle ASB. | Annual RP interviews – assessment of measures to tackle ASB in the city. | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 4.7 | Encourage Registered Providers to promote initiatives that seek to prevent hate crime. | Annual & periodic RP interviews/meetings – assessment of measures to tackle hate crime in the city. | Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |
| Action 4.8 | We will look for opportunities for partnership working with public health through the Health and Well Being Board to develop projects and harness resource to tackle these hazards. | Funding secured or joint projects and outcomes. | Environmental Health & Housing Strategy & Enabling Service |

Action 4.9

Look for alternative cost-effective solutions to properties requiring extensive adaptations.

Recorded diversions from DFG to move to suitable alternative accommodation.

Environmental Health & Housing Strategy & Enabling Service

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Glossary

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| Affordable Housing | There are a number of different types of products which come under the Government's definition of 'affordable housing': Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing (both for rent and sale e.g. shared ownership, where a part share of the property is bought and rent payable on the un-owned share, enabling full occupation by purchaser/household), provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. |
| Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) | Gloucester City Homes (ALMO) is a not-for-profit company that is contracted to provide housing services on behalf of Gloucester City Council. |
| Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) | Recognising and identifying the strengths that exist in communities (the assets). Working together with communities, practice has shown that it improves a community's effectiveness. |
| Capital Funding | This is funding incurred for acquiring new or second hand homes or to make improvements in dwellings and in housing terms can be thought of as anything that increases the quantity or quality of the stock. It can include payments to lawyers, surveyors etc in connection with the purchase of land or buildings. |
| City Vision | A shared document detailing shared priorities for the city developed with partners and residents. |
| COCO | refers to a Community and Council-owned Organisation that is jointly-owned by the Council, tenants and independents and is set up to receive a transfer of housing stock from the Council. |
| Commissioning | Commissioning is essentially a structured way of deciding how and on whom public money should be spent. Commissioning is a cycle that involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment (or reassessment) of need Identifying resources • Planning how to use the resources • Arranging service delivery through a procurement process • Monitoring and reviewing service delivery |
| Communities and Local Government (CLG) | Is the UK Government Department for Communities and Local Government |
| Commuted Sums | A capital payment made by a developer to the council usually in lieu of the provision of an item that would otherwise have been provided through a planning obligation, in the case of housing, a cash sum provided rather than the provision of provision. |

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| Council Plan | The Council Plan sets out the council's approach to meeting its corporate objectives that is the desired outcomes we wish to achieve relating to the council's services or activities. |
| Decent Homes | All social housing must meet the Decent Homes standard, be warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities. |
| Deprivation Index | A collection of statistical indicators for income, employment, health, education, housing, quality of living environment, access to open space and crime comprise the deprivation index. This tool helps us understand how areas within the city are performing in comparison with other geographical areas in the City and beyond. |
| Demography | Characteristics and statistics of human population: the characteristics of a human population or part of it, especially its size, growth, density, distribution, and statistics regarding birth, marriage, disease, and death |
| Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) | It is a way of helping you if the housing benefit you get is not enough to pay your rent. There are criteria against which claims for DHP are assessed that vary between local authorities. DHPs are not the same as Housing Benefit. They are special payments which come from a separate cash limited fund. Once the fund has been spent in any financial year no more Discretionary Housing Payments can be made. |
| Draft Economic Development Strategy | A strategy that is designed to improve the local economy and infrastructure. |
| Equalities | Equalities are about 'creating a fairer society', where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential' |
| Extra Care | The term 'extra care' housing is used to describe developments that comprise self-contained homes with design features and support services available to enable self-care and independent living. Extra care housing is popular with people whose disabilities, frailty or health needs make ordinary housing unsuitable but who do not need or want to move to long term care (residential or nursing homes). |
| Gloucestershire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (GSHWB) | The Health and Social Care Act (2012) introduced wide ranging reforms across health and social care services. As part of these reforms every upper tier local authority has to set up a Health and Wellbeing Board. |

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| Homelessness (suitability of Accommodation) England Order 2012 (SI 2012/2588) | Local Housing Authorities have the power to meet their main homelessness duty with offers of accommodation in the Private Rented Sector, without requiring the Applicant's agreement. |
| Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) | The national housing and regeneration delivery agency for England, enabling local authorities and communities to meet the ambitions they have for their areas; and administers government funding to support housing and infrastructure provision. |
| Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) | A house is in Multiple Occupation (HMO) if: at least 3 tenants live there, forming more than 1 household, you share toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities with other tenants. |
| HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population Panel) | Ten key design elements that are concerned with meeting the needs and aspirations of our ageing population. |
| Housing Related Support | Housing Related Support is a service which assists previously homeless and /or vulnerable people to live independently in their own accommodation. The aim of this service is to support people in managing their own home to retain independence and enhance their quality of life. |
| Housing Strategy | A document that sets out the type of housing outcomes that people which to see in the area. A strategy will normally set out the priorities and means by which improvements will be made to secure the best outcomes. |
| Housing, Health and Safety Rating System | The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. |
| Interim Accommodation | Temporary accommodation (usually on an emergency basis typically whilst an application for housing is being assessed) |
| Intermediate Housing | Is affordable housing with rent set at between social housing and market housing levels |
| Joint Core Strategy | The plan that identifies locations and levels of residential development throughout Gloucester/Cheltenham/Tewkesbury. See http://www.gct-jcs.org/ |
| Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) | Gloucestershire is one of just 39 local enterprise partnerships in England, created by Government to promote a healthy economy. Driven by GFirst, LEP key themes are promotion, skills, connection and investment with the overarching aim of realising Gloucestershire's economic and commercial potential. See LEP website - www.gloslep.co.uk |

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| Local Investment plan | Local Investment Plans reflect local priorities for action and investment and are shared by local authorities and the Homes and Communities Agency. Plans will reflect local circumstances and priorities and so vary significantly in content, focus and length, with an emphasis on priority projects and the support needed over the short and long term to deliver them. |
| Local Plan | A Local Plan considers how it will meet housing need and show how it will meet that objectively assessed needs, both for market and affordable housing. See http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planningsystem/localplans for this & other planning terms. |
| Localism Act 2011 | The Act devolves greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and gives local communities more control over housing and planning decisions. |
| Mortgage Rescue Scheme | The mortgage rescue scheme is a Government initiative that aims to help homeowners in danger of losing their homes. See mortgagehelp.direct.gov.uk |
| National Planning Policy Framework | The National Planning Policy Framework sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. |
| Neighbourhood Plans | Neighbourhood planning empowers communities to shape the development and growth of a local area through the production of a neighbourhood development plan, a neighbourhood development order or a Community Right to Build Order. |
| No Recourse to Public Funds | A non UK resident who is ineligible for the following benefits in the UK: - 'Public funds' include a range of income related benefits, together with housing and homelessness support. The full list is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income-based jobseeker's allowance; • income support; • child tax credit; • working tax credit; • a social fund; • child benefit; • housing benefit; • council tax benefit; • state pension credit; • attendance allowance; • severe disablement allowance; • carer's allowance; • disability living allowance; • an allocation of local authority housing • local authority homelessness assistance |
| Objectively assessed need. | A phrase derived from the National Planning Policy Framework to describe the basis by which the total demand for housing, from all types of household and for both affordable and market housing; as indicated the evaluation of need should be robust and withstand scrutiny as to the way in which it was formulated . |
| Personalisation | Is the process of enabling people to be more in control of the services they receive. Every person who receives support, whether funded by Social Services or by themselves, will have choice and control over the shape of that support. |
| Project SOLACE | A multi-agency team introduced to bring agencies together to deal with Anti Social Behaviour. |
| Reconnection | For individuals accessing housing on a temporary basis to receive support or in an emergency to prevent rough sleeping, a reconnection policy exists that seeks to ensure individuals are supported to ensure the best possible chance of connecting back to support networks in areas they have previously lived, unless there are exceptional reasons that |

| | |
|---|--|
| | they are unable to do so. |
| Registered Providers | Registered Providers (formerly known as Housing Associations), are private non profit making, organisations that provide low-cost social housing for people in need of a home. Any trading surplus is used to maintain existing housing and to help finance new homes. Although independent they are regulated by the state and commonly receive public funding. |
| Revenue Funding | Expenditure on day-to-day items to run services. |
| Right to Buy | A right secured through the Part V of the Housing Act 1985 where a tenant holds a secure tenancy has the right to buy the property if they have lived there for more than 5 years and it is not an Elderly Person or Disabled accommodation,. |
| S106 Agreements | Councils may require developers to make some reasonable financial or practical contribution to the community to address housing or social issues. |
| Safer Gloucester Partnership | The Safer Gloucester Partnership is the re-branded name of the former Gloucester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, which was formed in 1999 following the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Partnership is a multi agency group, comprising representatives from organisations across Gloucester |
| Stock Transfer | Where the local authority transfers its housing stock to a new, not-for-profit social housing organisation. |
| Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) | An assessment of the housing market area, and the drivers for population change and housing need that informs the requirement of objectively assessed need, and sets out the basis for an appropriate mix of properties including the size, types and mix. |
| Supporting People | The supporting people programme commissions housing related support services through a working partnership of local government, health, probation, support providers and customers that use support services. The support available can help vulnerable people to live more independently. Examples of the kind of services commissioned and funded through the supporting people programme include domestic violence refuges, homeless hostels, sheltered housing and floating support services. |
| Sustained Attachments | Longer term attachments to an area or community such as; friends, family, work where positive support networks exist. |
| Tenancy Strategy | Sets out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing in the local authority are to have regard in developing their tenancy policies and content of tenancies. |
| The Health & Wellbeing Strategy (Gloucs CCI) | This strategy focuses on strengthening health and wellbeing and preventing ill health in Gloucestershire. |

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| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Meeting: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee | Date: | 3rd March 2014 |
| | Cabinet | | 5th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Open Space Strategy 2014-2019 | | |
| Report Of: | Cabinet Member for the Environment | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | Yes | Budget/Policy Framework: | Yes (policy) |
| Contact Officer: | Kay Lillington, Landscape Architect | | |
| | kay.lillington@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: | 396827 |
| Appendices: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation summary report January 2014 2. Open Space Strategy Executive Summary Jan 2014 3. Open Space Strategy 2014-2019 4. Example of draft Open Space Action Plan | | |

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet for formal approval a new Open Space Strategy, which sets out a robust, strategic framework for managing open space resources in Gloucester.
- 1.2 To present a consultation summary report detailing the public consultation carried out in May-July 2013.
- 1.3 To seek Cabinet approval to progress the draft Open Space Action Plans (one for each ward) to completion with additional community and member consultation.
- 1.4 To seek Cabinet agreement to use the allocated fees within S.106 funding to procure consultants' input to progress open space capital improvement projects.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is asked to consider the information contained in the report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate to Cabinet.
- 2.2 **Cabinet** is asked to **RESOLVE** that
 - (1) The Open Space Strategy for Gloucester 2014-2019 is approved.
 - (2) Officers should progress the completion of Open Space Action Plans for each city ward, in consultation with local residents, ward members and community groups.

- (3) Up to 15% of the available S.106 monies (allocated for fees in the legal agreements) may be used to procure consultants' input for expediting the implementation of S.106 funded open space projects.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 A Public Open Space Strategy for Gloucester was adopted in 2001. The strategy assessed the council's open space portfolio against new government guidance (PPG17), set out a list of recommendations and provided guidance for developers.
- 3.2 The 2001 Strategy and accompanying Supplementary Planning Guidance (New Housing and Open Space, adopted 2001) was a very successful tool for determining levels of open space provision required in new housing developments. To date it has helped the council secure over 40 hectares of new open spaces and over £4million of developer contributions to invest in existing open spaces across the city.
- 3.3 After a decade of successful use, the 2001 document has become outdated. Recent changes in government policy (National Planning Policy Framework replaced PPG17 in 2012) have also required a fresh look at the council's open space framework. A strategy for open spaces is also an important element of the council's overarching Asset Management Strategy.
- 3.4 In developing the strategy, national best practice guidance and exemplar strategies from other authorities have been drawn upon, to help create a strong and effective document.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Option to not update the open space strategy would impact on the council's ability to provide an evidence base for the City Plan and future housing development. There would be a lack of focus for open space development and maintenance across the city, no agreed framework for prioritising funding and improvements. With no up to date strategy it would also become increasingly difficult to negotiate new open space provision with developers.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 To enable the council to deliver its open space vision of 'a diverse network of quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester'.
- 5.2 To set out a detailed open space evidence base to inform the creation of associated planning policies in the new City Plan.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 The Open Space Strategy includes an Open Space Delivery Plan for 2014-2019.
- 6.2 The Delivery Plan identifies a series of main aims and actions that will help the council to deliver its open space vision.

- 6.3 An Open Space Strategy Delivery Group of relevant officers has been formed, meeting quarterly, to work up a detailed timetable for implementation of the actions and regularly review the targets and aims set out in the strategy.
- 6.4 The Group will prepare an annual report for members.
- 6.5 A key part of the delivery of the strategy is to identify the specific needs of local communities across the city, by drawing up Open Space Action Plans for each ward. Further consultation with residents, members and community groups will take place as the Action Plans are developed.
- 6.6 Officers will continue to work closely with the Planning Policy team, to develop robust and appropriate policies to protect both public and private open space across the city in the new City Plan for Gloucester.
- 6.7 Updating and implementing the Open Space Strategy and associated documents will enable the council to set out and achieve its strategic and local open space priorities, make best use of resources and continue to provide clear guidance for developers.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Further consultation work will involve officer time and will be funded through existing budgets.
- 7.2 Delivery of the strategy's aims will require capital investment. The extent and timing of delivery will depend on the availability of resources. Existing capital budgets will fund some areas of work, as will Section 106 developer contributions and external funding from grant-giving bodies.
- 7.3 The council currently has £648k of S.106 funding available to spend, specifically on open space, play and sports improvement projects across the city (details as specified within individual S.106 agreements). A further £865k of open space funding has been secured by way of completed S.106 agreements, but is not yet due for payment (triggers for payment are reached as each development progresses).
- 7.4 Each agreement allows for up to 15% of the sums received to be used towards fees for consultation, design and implementation of the projects.
- 7.5 Opportunities for additional external funding may also arise through collaboration with community organisations or Friends groups, who may be able to make funding bids for open space improvements identified in the strategy.
- 7.6 The maintenance costs of any new facilities will be funded through re-allocation of existing schedules in the Grounds Maintenance contract. Commuted sums for maintenance will also be secured from developers on adoption of new open spaces.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Disposal of any land designated as public open space will require formal disposal using statutory legal procedures.
- 8.2 Potential impact of any community 'right to buy' or Community Asset Transfer of open spaces or facilities through The Localism Act will need consideration. The council adopted a Community Right to Bid procedure in July 2013, which may apply to open spaces and their associated facilities.
- 8.3 Potential for communities to apply to designate 'Local Green Space' through the National Planning Policy Framework would give such areas formal protection similar to Green Belt land.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 The strategy effectively mitigates the risk of not using open space assets to their full potential and helps ensure value for money.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 Active and well used open spaces, with positive involvement of local residents will help build strong communities.
- 10.2 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 11.1 Improved community involvement and better management of open spaces will help to improve community safety.

Sustainability

- 11.2 Strategy identifies many positive environmental benefits of protecting and enhancing the city's open spaces.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 None

Background Documents: None

Open Space Strategy, consultation summary, January 2014

The consultation events



- **18 events held across all 15 city wards, between May-July 2013, in conjunction with City Plan consultation.**
- **650 attendees to the 18 consultation events.**

- Attendees were invited to contribute their views and ideas by participating in a number of activity stations relating to potential development, open spaces, ward information, meeting places and community action
- A specific open space questionnaire was available for each ward, asking residents for views on parks in their local area.
- The main open space strategy document also available to anyone who wanted further information.
- 124 open space questionnaires were returned, plus several written responses.

Response summary

60%

- **60% of questionnaire respondents said they thought their local parks were 'great' or 'good'.**
- **Gloucester Park & Robinswood Hill are seen as a city-wide resource.**

| <i>How do you feel about the parks and open spaces in your ward? (summary for all wards)</i> | | |
|--|------------|--------------|
| They're great | 27% | 33 responses |
| They're good | 33% | 41 |
| They're ok | 26% | 32 |
| Not so good | 9% | 11 |
| Really bad | 1% | 2 |
| No opinion | 4% | 5 |

"We have some beautiful open spaces and I enjoy the variety of more formal parks to wilder spaces."
Resident, Barnwood

Key issues



The top five key open space issues and themes identified by residents were (in order of highest number of responses):

- 1. Providing new or improved play spaces.**
- 2. Dealing with dog issues – fouling, dog control, signage and enforcement.**
- 3. Improving cleanliness, maintenance and litter control.**
- 4. Better promotion, marketing, information and awareness of parks for residents.**
- 5. Providing lots of free activities and events in local parks.**

Other issues consistently raised were:

- **More seating & picnic areas wanted in parks**
- **Loss of open space/green areas, concern about over-development**
- **Better grass cutting & vegetation management**
- **Improving community/personal/child safety**
- **Improving sports and fitness facilities, providing supervised sports activities**
- **Increasing patrols/wardens/police/reducing anti-social behaviour**

| Age of respondents (summary for all wards) | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Under 18 | 7% | 9 responses |
| 18-64 | 66% | 82 |
| 65+ | 24% | 30 |
| Not given | 3% | 3 |
| 98% of respondents live in Gloucester City | | |

"I use Armscroft Park regularly. It is a real lifeline."

Resident, Kingsholm & Wotton

Potential future development



The City Plan consultation events also gave residents the opportunity to respond to future development opportunities across the city, with potential development sites identified. There were some key sites that residents felt would result in loss of existing open space facilities or opportunities, these are:

- **Land at The Wheatridge (county council land, currently used as informal open space)**
- **Land at Hempsted (owned by Lysons Trust charity and currently used as farmland)**
- **Land at Leven Close (county council land, sports ground, currently closed)**
- **Land at Bishops College (county council land, currently closed, but some sports facilities in use and managed by Aspire)**
- **Ex. Civil Service sports ground, Estcourt Road (owned by Redrow Homes, currently closed)**
- **Land at Grange Road (privately owned, currently used as farmland)**
- **Land at Clearwater Drive (county council land, currently used as informal open space)**

The next steps



- **Build on this initial conversation with residents by developing Open Space Action Plans for each ward, with community input, to help identify priority sites and address key issues.**
- **Ensure children and young people are fully involved in the development of the Action Plans.**
- **Work closely with policy planners to ensure that the developing City Plan policies protect or mitigate against the loss of existing private playing fields or other undeveloped land within the city.**

Gloucester City Open Space Strategy 2014-2019

Executive Summary

Introduction

The open space strategy sets out how Gloucester City Council plans to protect, manage and enhance its open spaces over the next five years and beyond.

There have been significant changes since the previous strategy was adopted in 2001. Local authorities have had to re-assess levels of funding for all of their essential services and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) has set out new requirements for open space provision.

The strategy has been developed with these changes in mind and acknowledges that in many areas the council will increasingly need to work with partners and volunteers to deliver the safe, active and well managed spaces that we aspire to.



Purpose of the Open Space Strategy

The strategy has a threefold purpose;

- it provides a sound body of evidence for developing robust, sustainable open space policies within the proposed City Plan;
- it provides a series of objectives with a co-ordinated action plan for council officers and partner organisations to work towards and;
- it provides city residents with a clear understanding of the city council's open space aspirations and proposed programme of improvements, including opportunities for getting involved in shaping their local parks.

The strategy is very much a working document and in particular the Open Space Action Plans identifying the green space needs, aspirations and priorities for each city ward will be developed in conjunction with local communities.

The Open Space Vision: *'To create and manage a diverse network of good quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester.'*

The importance of green space

The contribution that good quality, safe and accessible open spaces can make to the overall quality of life within a community is well documented. There are numerous health, social, cultural, environmental and educational benefits.

The city has a wide range of open spaces including natural wildspace, formal sports grounds and play areas. It's important that there is a clear and sustainable plan for looking after all of these spaces, to ensure their long term protection, care and enhancement.

Consultation across Gloucester in 2013 found that 60% of those who responded thought their local parks were either 'Great' or 'Good', but residents also wanted the council to improve on cleanliness, safety, maintenance and dog issues. Providing new or improved play spaces, seating, lots of free activities and better marketing of parks were also most important to residents.



Key facts about Gloucester's open spaces

- There are over 150 individual areas of public open space in the city covering 300 hectares, together with allotments, cemeteries, Robinswood Hill Country Park (101 hectares) and Alney Island Nature Reserve (90 hectares), a total open space area of 519 hectares.
- There are six designated Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the city.
- Just over 12% of the city's total land area is publicly accessible green space.
- The council has an adopted policy to provide a minimum of 2.8 hectares of open space per 1000 population. City-wide the open space provision is 4.3 hectares per 1000, which exceeds this standard (largely due to the two very large natural open spaces at Robinswood Hill and Alney Island).
- Open space is not equally distributed across the city and in some areas access to good quality, local open spaces is particularly limited.
- There are 45 formal children's play areas in the city. Over £1million was invested in upgrading play areas between 2009-2013.
- There are several sports grounds and facilities that serve the city as a whole, such as the Oxstalls Sports Centre/Plock Court outdoor pitches and Blackbridge Jubilee Athletics track. Access to formal sports and play provision is not equally distributed across the city.
- Between 2001 (when the previous strategy was adopted) and 2013, the council secured 40 hectares of new open space and over £4million worth of investment for improvements to parks and open spaces across the city.

Key themes of the Open Space Strategy

The document assesses the existing quality and quantity of open space provision within the city. In terms of overall open space provision, it identifies that the distribution of open space across the city is adequate, but uneven.

The strategy identifies and sets a quantity standard for open space provision across the city of 2.8ha per 1000 population. However, because open space is not distributed evenly, there are six city wards where there is a significant shortfall in terms of the adopted standard:

- Barton & Tredworth (0.24ha/1000)
- Moreland (1.04ha/1000)
- Quedgeley Severn Vale (1.08ha/1000)
- Tuffley (1.19ha/1000)
- Hucclecote (1.42ha/1000)
- Kingsholm & Wotton (1.74ha/1000)

Due to the densely built-up nature of these wards, it is unlikely that creating additional new open spaces will be possible. Instead the strategy will seek to improve the quality of facilities in existing parks in these wards, as well as ensuring that residents are made aware of other parks and recreational opportunities in adjacent areas.

Ensuring the city's green spaces are managed and maintained cost effectively and using sustainable practices, is also vital. Involving the community in looking after the open spaces is very important and can help residents develop a sense of ownership and pride in local parks.

Although not directly under the city council's control, protection of private playing fields and sports facilities is also a key priority. Ensuring the council has robust planning policies to protect or mitigate against the loss of private open spaces to potential development sites and ensuring there is sufficient new open space provision falls within the remit of this strategy.

The document also identifies the need to produce supplementary guidance specifically for allotments and outdoor playing pitch provision.



Objectives of the Open Space Strategy

- To increase user satisfaction in our parks and open spaces over the next 5 years, as measured by an annual residents open space survey.
- To invest at least £200k capital spending per year for 5 years on open spaces, through developer contributions, grants, capital works and disposals.
- To achieve at least 3 Green Flag parks and open spaces in the next 5 years.
- To create or refurbish at least 2 children's play areas per year for the next 5 years.
- To increase the amount of open space under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares before the end of 2017.
- To review our open space portfolio and identify 10 sites for investment, disposal or alternative uses by the end of 2014.
- To consult with the public, local groups and organisations to develop Open Space Action Plans and priorities for all 15 city wards by the end of 2015.
- To increase community involvement in open space management by providing support to new or existing Friends and community groups.
- To publish a playing pitch strategy and identify a programme of works and priority sites for investment in sports provision by the end of 2014.
- To increase tree cover across the city's open spaces by planting at least 5,000 trees over the next 5 years.
- To ensure policies are put in place in the council's City Plan to protect existing open space and private playing fields and to help negotiate new open space in housing development.



A full copy of the Strategy can be viewed on the council's website at www.gloucester.gov.uk or by contacting Environmental Planning, Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EQ, heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk or by telephone 01452 396396.

The Delivery Plan and Open Space Action Plans

The Delivery Plan breaks down the Objectives into specific, more detailed actions, including target dates for completion. Regular monitoring will be carried out to ensure these targets are being met.

Developing **Open Space Actions Plans** for each ward, with further consultation with local communities and members is the next step, to help identify priority sites and address key issues. These Action Plans will be used to help decide which projects should be carried out (or additional funding sought) and in which order.

Funding the improvements

The council does not have unlimited budgets for open space management and improvement. Careful consideration must be given to ensure that any works carried out to open spaces are affordable and sustainable in the long term.

The strategy acknowledges that even though funding is limited, there are still opportunities for the council to work with partners and volunteers to deliver safe, active and well managed spaces. Sources of additional external funding will also be secured where possible.

Conclusion

Gloucester City Council is committed to providing an integrated network of good quality, safe and accessible open spaces with modern and appropriate facilities.

The Open Space Strategy sets out a framework for protecting and enhancing the city's open spaces, planning for future sustainable development and involving the community in managing and shaping our green environment.

Open Space Strategy

2014-2019



Open Space Strategy for Gloucester 2014-2019

Contents:

Foreword

Executive summary

1. Introduction

2. Vision and Objectives

3. Policy background

4. Open Space Principles

5. Setting the Standard

6. Working with partners & the community

7. Funding

8. Ward profiles

9. Delivery plan

10. Conclusion



Foreword

Gloucester has a wealth of parks, open spaces and natural environment. Our green spaces are popular and well used by residents as well as visitors to the city. The open spaces play an important role in community life. Gloucester is proud to be a green city.

The city council is committed to a programme of investment in our parks, to help create lively spaces and outdoor facilities for everyone to enjoy. We are proud to be a Bee Guardian City, planting flower meadows to provide food for wildlife and we also fly the Green Flag Award for quality in one of our parks. As we face more and more challenges, we need to ensure that the management and maintenance of our parks is efficient and providing good value for money.

However, we don't do this alone. We welcome input and assistance from many partners, groups, residents and volunteers who, like us, are committed to enhancing and protecting our green spaces.

We want our green spaces to continue to provide a positive environment for healthy activities and quiet relaxation. We will seek to ensure that they change and adapt to suit the needs and aspirations of the city of Gloucester and the communities within it.

Councillor Sajid Patel, Cabinet Member for Environment



Executive Summary

Introduction

The open space strategy sets out how Gloucester City Council plans to protect, manage and enhance its open spaces over the next five years and beyond.

There have been significant changes since the previous strategy was adopted in 2001. Local authorities have had to re-assess levels of funding for all of their essential services and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) has set out new requirements for open space provision.

The strategy has been developed with these changes in mind and acknowledges that in many areas the council will increasingly need to work with partners and volunteers to deliver the safe, active and well managed spaces that we aspire to.



Purpose of the Open Space Strategy

The strategy has a threefold purpose;

- it provides a sound body of evidence for developing robust, sustainable open space policies within the proposed City Plan;
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- it provides city residents with a clear understanding of the city council's open space aspirations and proposed programme of improvements, including opportunities for getting involved in shaping their local parks.

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The strategy identifies and sets a quantity standard for open space provision across the city of 2.8ha per 1000 population. However, because open space is not distributed evenly, there are six city wards where there is a significant shortfall in terms of the adopted standard:

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Due to the densely built-up nature of these wards, it is unlikely that creating additional new open spaces will be possible. Instead the strategy will seek to improve the quality of facilities in existing parks in these wards, as well as ensuring that residents are made aware of other parks and recreational opportunities in adjacent areas.

Ensuring the city's green spaces are managed and maintained cost effectively and using sustainable practices, is also vital. Involving the community in looking after the open spaces is very important and can help residents develop a sense of ownership and pride in local parks.

Although not directly under the city council's control, protection of private playing fields and sports facilities is also a key priority. Ensuring the council has robust planning policies to protect or mitigate against the loss of private open spaces to potential development sites and ensuring there is sufficient new open space provision falls within the remit of this strategy.

The document also identifies the need to produce supplementary guidance specifically for allotments and outdoor playing pitch provision.



Objectives of the Open Space Strategy

- To increase user satisfaction in our parks and open spaces over the next 5 years, as measured by an annual residents open space survey.
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- To achieve at least 3 Green Flag parks and open spaces in the next 5 years.
- To create or refurbish at least 2 children's play areas per year for the next 5 years.
- To increase the amount of open space under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares by December 2017.
- To review our open space portfolio and identify 10 sites for investment, disposal or alternative uses by December 2014.
- To consult with the public, local groups and organisations to develop Open Space Action Plans and priorities for all 15 city wards by December 2015.
- To increase community involvement in open space management by providing support to new or existing Friends and community groups.
- To publish a playing pitch strategy and identify a programme of works and priority sites for investment in sports provision by December 2014.
- To increase tree cover across the city's open spaces by planting at least 5,000 trees over the next 5 years.
- To ensure policies are put in place in the council's City Plan to protect existing open space and private playing fields and to help negotiate new open space in housing development.



The Delivery Plan and Open Space Action Plans

The Delivery Plan breaks down the Objectives into specific, more detailed actions, including target dates for completion. Regular monitoring will be carried out to ensure these targets are being met.

Developing **Open Space Actions Plans** for each ward, with further consultation with local communities and members is the next step, to help identify priority sites and address key issues. These Action Plans will be used to help decide which projects should be carried out (or additional funding sought) and in which order.

Funding the improvements

The council does not have unlimited budgets for open space management and improvement. Careful consideration must be given to ensure that any works carried out to open spaces are affordable and sustainable in the long term.

The strategy acknowledges that even though funding is limited, there are still opportunities for the council to work with partners and volunteers to deliver safe, active and well managed spaces. Sources of additional external funding will also be secured where possible.

Conclusion

Gloucester City Council is committed to providing an integrated network of good quality, safe and accessible open spaces with modern and appropriate facilities.

The Open Space Strategy sets out a framework for protecting and enhancing the city's open spaces, planning for future sustainable development and involving the community in managing and shaping our green environment.

Gloucester City Council Open Space Strategy 2014-2019 Executive Summary



“We have some beautiful open spaces and I enjoy the variety of more formal parks to wilder spaces.”

Resident, Barnwood

Section 1: Introduction

Parks and open spaces are increasingly recognised as a vital component of successful towns and cities. Research shows that parks and open spaces are some of the most widely used facilities provided by local authorities.

Urban environments offer a diverse range of open space opportunities. They can help contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents, provide visual and aesthetic quality, opportunities for formal and informal recreation, contact with wild-space, multiple environmental benefits and a safe refuge for wildlife and natural habitats.

Gloucester's parks and open spaces also contribute to our sense of civic pride and provide areas for communities to meet, play and hold a wide range of events.



This strategy sets out how Gloucester City Council plans to protect, manage and enhance its open spaces over the next five years and beyond. It provides a rationale to help secure external funding for the improvement and additional provision of open space and facilities, particularly via developer contributions.

The strategy also sets out the basis for further consultation and collaboration with local residents, community groups and neighbourhood partnerships to help create more detailed open space action plans for each ward in the city.



Gloucester is a predominantly urban area, with a population of 122,000 (2011 census data). The city is tightly contained by the A40 Northern Bypass, the M5 to the east and the River Sever and its floodplain to the west. Although there is access to the wider countryside surrounding the city, within the city boundary only Robinswood Hill Country Park and the Alney Island riverside meadows are freely accessible 'countryside' spaces, available to residents to use for informal recreation.

Residents of Gloucester have access to over 150 individual areas of public open space, covering 300 hectares, together with allotments, cemeteries, Robinswood Hill Country Park (101 hectares) and Alney Island Nature Reserve (90 hectares), a total open space area of 519ha. Residents also have permitted use of a range of privately owned spaces, such as school playing fields and private sports grounds. Open spaces can vary from a doorstep green, to a city park, allotments, nature reserve or large playing field. However, open space provision is not equally distributed across the city and in some areas access to good quality, local open spaces is limited.

The city council's previous Public Open Space Strategy, adopted in 2001, used standards and guidance set out in the national planning document PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' to quantify the city's open space provision and set minimum standards for new provision and recommendations for improvements to existing spaces. The document and its associated supplementary guidance quantified and analysed the city's existing open space stock successfully contributed to securing over 40 hectares of new open space and over £4 million of investment in parks and open spaces across the city in the decade following its adoption.

Open Space Challenges

Improving the quality of the open space infrastructure has been, and remains, one of the council's top priorities. However, stretched financial resources have led to increasing pressure to reduce council spending generally and this has brought about a need to re-assess the costs of maintaining these spaces and the way they are managed.

Previous residents' surveys have identified a strong desire for better quality open spaces with a good range of facilities. In order to provide improvements, funding needs to be found and the cost of future maintenance taken into account.



Also, demands on urban land and an on-going need to provide new homes to accommodate an increasing population in Gloucester means that there is added pressure on open space, both public and privately owned, which can often be seen as an easy target for development. The council will ensure that it continues to have robust policies in place to protect the majority of public and private open spaces, such as playing fields. However, it also recognises that in some cases allowing the development of poor quality, inaccessible or marginal open space in return for funds to improve quality and facilities on others may be appropriate. Balanced against this is the need to ensure that future population growth is reflected in the level of open space provision.



There are no easy answers to these challenges, but this strategy sets down solid principles to ensure that the right decisions are made.

Planning for sustainable development is vital and the City Council's Planning Policy team has been working in partnership with Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils on a Joint Core Strategy, to help

identify potential sites where new housing allocations and development can be

accommodated in the greater Gloucester area. This will inevitably have an impact on the demand for and distribution of open spaces. Similarly, the City Plan (Local Plan) for Gloucester will identify planning and development issues in local neighbourhoods, including open space.

Due to the complexities and importance of providing sufficient open space and facilities, a strategy is required to set out the rationale for ensuring that the correct quantity of open space is created and secured through the planning process and that existing public and private open spaces are protected from inappropriate development. In conjunction with the wider policy documents, the strategy will ensure that the needs of current and future residents are taken into account, that the quality of the spaces is regularly assessed and improved and that the open spaces are well distributed and accessible to as many people as possible.

This strategy sets out a vision and framework for the city's open spaces. It has also taken into consideration policies, aims and aspirations contained in other council documents and plans, including The Council Plan 2011-2014, Asset Management Strategy 2010-2015, Playing Pitch Strategy 2005 (under review), Green Infrastructure Plan 2013 and City Vision 2012-2022.

Public involvement

Equally as important as planning and managing our parks is ensuring the involvement of city residents, local groups and organisations in making choices and decisions about the future development and priorities for our open spaces.



We plan to help residents take a detailed look at their existing local open space provision. We will then work with communities to develop Open Space Action Plans for each city ward, identifying the key issues and priorities they would like to address during the life of this strategy. We also want to work with current and new Friends groups to get residents involved with the day to day management of their local spaces.

There may well be some tough decisions to be made in order to achieve the high quality, safe, clean and sustainable open spaces that we aspire to. However, we will ensure that we keep residents fully informed and involved in the process, so that everyone understands the council's intentions and objectives.

Section 2: Vision and objectives

City Vision 2012-2022

In 2011 the council held a wide-ranging consultation with residents and partner organisations to help identify the city's future priorities. Supported by previous consultation results and statistical information about the city and its population, the City Vision was created. The Vision identifies key aims of what we want to achieve for the city over the next 10 years, based on these residents' comments.

The two key strands of the Vision are 'Prosperity' and 'Community'. Parks and open spaces featured high in the community priorities, the two key community priorities being:

- **A city where people feel safe and happy in their community**
- **A healthy city with opportunities for all**

The aspirations for local parks and green spaces are further detailed with the key objectives:

- **Encouraging better use of the City's numerous parks and open spaces and work with communities to continuously improve and develop them**
- **Empowering communities to work alongside public bodies and make decisions about their areas for themselves**
- **Working with communities and voluntary and community sector organisations to provide activities for children, young people and vulnerable groups**

The Council Plan 2011-2014

The Council Plan 2011-2014 further detailed the short term objectives for the city under the headings People, Places, Prosperity.

The Plan includes providing support for communities to help create pride in their city and neighbourhoods, including parks and open spaces, and to offer help and advice to the voluntary and community sector and to forward the aims of the Big Society.

There is a corporate commitment to improve standards of cleanliness, including tackling dog-fouling, a major issue across the city, especially in open spaces.

Open spaces provide wide-ranging community benefits. The council acknowledges this and has shown a commitment to invest in open space facilities, such as the transformation of Gloucester Park, the rolling programme of play area refurbishments, renewing the athletics track at Blackbridge, creating sustainable planting displays and supporting projects to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The council will also seek to promote the city's venues, including parks and open spaces, as locations and facilities for communities to celebrate cultural diversity, including events and festivals.

Open Space Vision

To create and manage a diverse network of good quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester.



Open Space Objectives 2014-2019

- To increase user satisfaction in our parks and open spaces over the next 5 years, as measured by an annual residents open space survey.
- To invest at least £200k capital spending per year for 5 years on open spaces, through developer contributions, grants, capital works and disposals.
- To achieve at least 3 Green Flag parks and open spaces in the next 5 years.
- To create or refurbish at least 2 children's play areas per year for the next 5 years.
- To increase the amount of open space under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares by December 2017
- To review our open space portfolio and identify 10 sites for investment, disposal or alternative uses by December 2014
- To consult with the public, local groups and organisations to develop Open Space Action Plans and priorities for all 15 city wards by December 2015.
- To increase community involvement in open space management by providing support to new or existing Friends and community groups.
- To publish a playing pitch strategy and identify a programme of works and priority sites for investment in sports provision by December 2014.
- To increase tree cover across the city's open spaces by planting at least 5,000 trees over the next 5 years.
- To ensure policies are put in place in the council's City Plan to protect existing open space and private playing fields and to help negotiate new open space in housing development.

Section 3: Policy background

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and replaces the previous national planning guidance - PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation'. However, the associated companion guide, 'Addressing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17' is still valid and provides additional guidance to that provided in the NPPF.

Paragraphs 73 and 74 of the NPPF, provided below, set out guidance with regard to open spaces, sport and recreation.

'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to health and wellbeing of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.'

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ***An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or***
- ***The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity or quality in a suitable location; or***
- ***The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss'***

The NPPF also introduces the concept of 'Local Green Space', whereby local communities, through local and neighbourhood plans, can identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection (equivalent to Green Belt status). Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed and where it can be demonstrated that the space is related and of particular local significance to the community.

The NPPF stresses the important of open spaces in terms of providing for biodiversity, promoting healthy lifestyles and in mitigating flood risk and future vulnerability to climate change.

Local Planning Policy

The council's current adopted standards for open space are detailed in the 2002 Local Plan, which was approved for development control purposes. Chapter 10 of the local plan 'Open Space, Sport and recreation' contains a number of policies specific to the provision and protection of open space and sports pitches, with other chapters detailing policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity assets and allotments, promoting community safety and high quality design.

The emerging development plan for Gloucester constitutes the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Gloucester City Plan (GCP) and will replace the adopted 1983 Gloucester Local Plan and the 2002 Second Stage Deposit Draft Local Plan, which form the existing development policy framework for Gloucester.

The JCS is a partnership between the local authorities of Gloucester City, Cheltenham Borough and Tewkesbury Borough, and will provide the strategic planning framework for the three areas. It will, amongst other things, set housing and employment targets, define broad locations for peripheral development and set strategic development management policies, including landscape protection and green infrastructure. The draft JCS was published in August 2013, consultation was held in Oct/Nov 2013, with a final submission anticipated by the end of 2014. More information on the JCS is available at www.gct-jcs.org

The Gloucester City Plan will sit underneath the JCS and provide more detailed development management policies and smaller scale allocations. The City Plan will include policies for open space, sport and recreation, including a standard for the provision of public open space in new development and policies to protect existing open space from other development pressures. In addition, where new sites come forward, opportunities to maximise delivery and improvements to open space provision will be sought through the development plan process. The City Plan is in the early stages of preparation and will be adopted soon after the JCS. More information on the City Plan is available at www.gloucester.gov.uk/cityplan

Gloucester's City Vision was adopted in February 2012 and sets out an overarching vision for the city over the next ten years to 2022. One of the key aims identified in the Vision is to ensure Gloucester is a healthy city, with opportunities for all. Open space, sports and recreation form an integral part of achieving this aim. Consequently, one of the priorities set out in the Vision is to encourage better use of the Councils parks and open spaces and to work with communities to continuously improve and develop them.

Relevant planning documents

- Gloucester City Local Plan 2002
www.gloucester.gov.uk/localplan2002
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>

- Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17, September 2001
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/assessingneeds>
- Draft Joint Core Strategy, August 2013 <http://www.gct-jcs.org>
- Gloucester City Plan consultation documents, May 2013
<http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/cityplan>
- Interim Climate Change Strategy, 2012

The Six Acre Standard

In 1925 The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) made recommendations on planning for and providing outdoor recreational facilities. Since the 1930s these have been known as 'The Six Acre Standard' and they have formed an important part of the planning process contributing to assessments of local provision, the determination of local standards, the adoption of appropriate planning policies and the development of Supplementary Planning Guidance throughout the UK.



The recommendations in the Six Acre Standard were revised in 2001 and again in 2008 when the guidance became known as 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play' and the NPFA became Fields in Trust (FiT).



Much has changed in government policy since the FiT guidance was published, however the recent publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) does not conflict with the existing FiT guidance and it is still a valuable tool for local authorities to use to determine the quantity and quality of open space they are providing.

The FiT guidance provides detailed advice to help planners ensure a sufficient level of 'playing space' to enable residents of all ages to participate in sport and games, with an emphasis on access for children to playgrounds and other play space. The guidance has been used as part of this open space strategy, mostly in respect of quantifying and evaluating playing pitch and children's formal play provision.

Section 4: Open space principles

Introduction:

Good practice guidance suggests five key attributes of all open space facilities – accessibility, quality, multi-functionality, primary purpose, and quantity.

Accessibility – if a space is not accessible, it will not be well used. It is important to make sure spaces are welcoming and accessible to residents. However, quieter spaces can contribute to the visual amenity and biodiversity value of an area.

Quality – this depends on two things: the needs and expectations of users (people and wildlife) and good design, management and maintenance – i.e. ‘fitness for purpose’. The ‘purpose’ of a space can be hard to define, as many sites are **multi-functional**. Therefore a ‘**primary purpose**’ is identified in order to help clarify the main functions of the space.

Quantity – this is usually measured in terms of the amount of provision. However, for sports pitches this can be over simplistic, because artificial surfaces for example can accommodate many more hours of play (30+ hours per week) than grass pitches (2-3 hours per week). Therefore it is possible to address a deficiency in provision by improving the specification or quality of existing facilities.

Defining open space types and their primary purpose allows local authorities to prepare assessments of needs and audits of existing open space and recreational facilities.

Not all ‘open space’ is green. Areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity” can also be included in the definition of open space, as can civic space, which is often hard paved.

The multi-functionality of open spaces means that they provide many benefits to the urban environment, some examples of which are set out below:

- Strategic functions: defining and separating urban areas, better linking town and country and providing for recreational need over a wide area
- Urban quality – helping to support regeneration and improving quality of life for communities by providing visually attractive green spaces close to where people live
- Promoting health and well-being – providing opportunities for people of all ages for informal recreation, or to walk, cycle or ride within parks and open spaces or along paths, bridleways and canal banks. Allotments may provide physical exercise or other health benefits
- Havens and habitats for flora and fauna – sites may have potential to be corridors or stepping stones from one habitat to another and may contribute towards achieving objectives set out in local biodiversity action plans
- As a community resource – as a place for congregating and for holding community events, religious festivals, fetes and fairs

- As a visual amenity, even without public access, people can enjoy having space near to them to provide an outlook, variety in the urban scene or as a positive element in the landscape

Some open spaces have a special character, habitat or features and are given additional levels of protection through national designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

The open space types for Gloucester are set out below (although many sites are multi-functional.)

Type A: Parks and Gardens

Sites formally laid out that have been designed primarily to provide aesthetic enjoyment.

Primary purpose: To offer attractive and well maintained areas that are accessible to all, designed for informal recreational use, tree and planting for environmental benefit and space for community activities and events.



Type B: Informal green space

Open spaces with mainly unstructured planting, large grass area, some paths and seating.

Primary purpose: Flexible space for informal play and recreation, space for events and planting for environmental benefit

Can include publicly accessible woodlands, scrub, grassland (commons, meadows) wetlands, open and running water & wasteland.



Type C: Allotments

Areas of land for growing fruit, vegetables and other plants, either in individual allotments or as a community activity (not private gardens).

Primary purpose: To provide opportunities for those people who wish to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.



Type D: Countryside & natural spaces

Areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with residual natural habitats or which have been planted or colonised by vegetation and wildlife, including woodland and wetland areas.

Primary purpose: Wildlife conservation, biodiversity, environmental education and awareness, informal recreation & enjoyment.



Type E: Green infrastructure

A planned network of multifunctional green-spaces and interconnecting links, which is designed, developed and managed to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of the community.

Primary purpose: Main function could be a green river corridor, balancing pond or drainage feature. Many open spaces also have this as a secondary function.



Type F: Civic Spaces

Formal spaces including civic and market squares, other hard surfaced community areas designated for pedestrians.

Primary purpose: To provide a setting for civic buildings, opportunities for open air markets, demonstrations and civic events.



Type G: Cemeteries

Cemeteries and churchyards including disused churchyards and other burial grounds.

Primary purpose: Burial of the dead, memorial gardens, quiet contemplation



Type H: Spaces for Children & Young People

Areas designated primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, usually associated with housing areas.

Primary purpose: To provide exciting and safe areas for children and young people to meet, explore and socialise. Includes equipped play areas, ball courts, outdoor basketball hoop areas, skateboard areas, teenage shelters/hangouts, BMX tracks.



Type I: Amenity green space

Most commonly (but not exclusively) in housing areas, includes informal recreation green spaces and village greens.

Primary purpose: Informal activities close to home or work, enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas. May contain easements for underground services.



Type J: Sports provision

Natural or artificial surfaces either publicly or privately owned used for sport and recreation includes school playing fields.

Primary Purpose: To enable participation in organised outdoor physical activity



Private open spaces

Private open spaces are identified in the strategy, but the council does not have direct control over these.

However, many provide formal and informal recreational opportunities for residents, or even if they are not directly accessible, they are highly valued for their visual amenity and create a green break in the urban fabric of the city. Current planning policy SR.2 protects (in most cases) against loss of private playing fields and policy SR.5 promotes design for shared (community) use for new sports facilities in schools and colleges.

There are a number of shared use facilities available to residents in local secondary schools across the city. Access to these facilities, particularly sports pitches, is an important part of the city's open space network, and the council will continue to liaise with the schools and education authority to ensure this provision is sustained.

There are also other private playing fields and associated facilities, owned by companies or organisations that share use with the public. Loss of such private playing fields can have a significant impact on residents' options for accessing formal sports facilities. Planning policies are in place to ensure that these spaces are protected from development wherever possible, but should development be given the go ahead, as part of the planning process, the policies enable the council to negotiate with the developer to provide alternative facilities nearby, to replace those being lost.

There are a number of other sites across the city where areas of undeveloped private land are used informally as open space, although there is no legal right of access. Many residents see these undeveloped sites as integral part of the open space network. However, sometimes these sites are proposed for residential or other development. The council will seek to secure formal open space provision within new residential developments on these sites wherever possible.

Helping the Environment

Many of the city's open spaces perform a more strategic or functional role. There are three major factors that we need to consider when developing or enhancing existing and new open spaces:

1. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are a method of managing surface water in built development to replicate natural drainage. SUDS help to prevent pollution, control flooding, recharge groundwater and enhance the environment.



The main types of SUDS designs are filter strips, swales, filter drains, permeable surfaces, basins and ponds. SUDS are a requirement in all major new developments. Many SUDS features will have a dual function as open space assets managed for public benefit and may be integrated into both new and existing open spaces.

The council published SUDS guidance in July 2013, setting out what is required from developers and what they will be expected to contribute to future maintenance.

2. Green Infrastructure (GI)

Green Infrastructure (GI) is a strategically planned network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. Managed as a multifunctional resource, it is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green Infrastructure can include parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens. In Gloucester it is particularly relevant to the routes of watercourses through the city.



A Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan for Gloucester has been developed as part of the Joint Core Strategy. The philosophy behind the strategy is that anyone living or working in the urban areas of Gloucester, Tewkesbury or Cheltenham will within a short walk be able to access a GI space such as a swale, which connects into other areas of open space, creating access to a green network of spaces. These open spaces will in turn be connected by brooks or streams to the strategic GI asset of either the River Severn to the west or the Cotswold AONB in the east.

Developer contributions will be sought to maintain these GI assets and help overcome historical problems such as lack of bridges or access. On the strategic

scale it is hoped that the River Severn and its washlands will be managed in a positive manner as is currently the case with the Cotswold AONB.

3. Climate Change

Studies have shown that a significant reduction in the urban heat island effect can be achieved through increased open space provision. This is not only a result of shade from trees but from the evapo-transpiration from areas of grassland.

Climate change means the need for open space has heightened importance as we increasingly have to deal with hotter summer temperatures as green spaces help to cool the city environment.



Open spaces and green infrastructure also have an impact on mitigating against surface and storm water runoff and are a vital component of flood mitigation. The council has an adopted Climate Change Strategy and is committed to working with residents and businesses to help address climate change issues.

4. Helping our wildlife

We are increasingly aware of how our actions can impact on the environment around us. The city council acknowledges its responsibility to the native flora and fauna that resides in our parks and open spaces.

We are committed to protecting the natural environment, both in our designated nature reserves and across the city's open space network as a whole. In 2011 the Bee Guardians identified Gloucester as a bee friendly city. Since that time we have developed a palette of bee friendly tree species and pictorial flower meadow mixes, which have been planted right across the city to help increase the feeding opportunities available to endangered bee species. This programme will continue, along with our management and improvement of natural habitat across the city.

We are investing in our natural spaces to benefit wildlife. We have a herd of rare breed Gloucester cattle, which are used to graze our sensitive and protected nature reserves and flood meadows. We have goats grazing the geologically important quarry site at Robinswood Hill. We take hay cuts from our wildflower meadows to enable the rare flowers to set seed.

Section 5: Setting the Standard

Current & Future Needs – a city-wide analysis

Gloucester is a growing city; it is also the only part of Gloucestershire with a growing younger population. The population of Gloucester based on 2011 census data is 122,000 and there is a projected population increase in excess of 10,000 in the next 10 years. The council needs to ensure that there is sufficient provision of open space and sports facilities to cater for this increase.

Coupled with indoor sports centre provision, the city houses a number of large outdoor sports facilities that cater for the whole city catchment area (including some settlements just beyond the city boundary). These include Oxstalls tennis centre and synthetic hockey/football pitch, Blackbridge athletics track, several bowling greens plus a number of cricket, rugby and football grounds.



A Playing Pitch Strategy was produced in 2005 and is currently being reviewed alongside this document. An analysis of existing sports clubs (football, cricket, and rugby) and existing pitch provision (quantity and quality) is being undertaken, and the projected increase in population will also be factored in to determine the level of provision required. The playing pitch strategy will set out in detail the council's aims and objectives for pitch provision, development & management over the next 5-10 years.

The council recognises that provision for sport and play is not just about providing large amounts of playing field space, providing high quality facilities is also vital to ensure success. **The playing pitch strategy will therefore consider opportunities to develop sporting 'hubs', providing enhanced provision around existing clusters of pitches and facilities. There is potential for one hub at Plock Court/Oxstalls Sports Park to serve the central and northern part of the city, and at Blackbridge/Winget to serve the southern area.**

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The FiT 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play' guidance, which is widely acknowledged as the national benchmark, identifies three main criteria for good sport and play provision - Quantity, Quality and Accessibility. Whilst policy OS.2 (provision of open space at 2.8ha/1000 population) set out in the 2002 Local Plan is still the current formally adopted standard, we have used the FiT standards as guidance to update the council's open space standards (see table below) and in this strategy we have used this proposed standard to quantitatively assess our existing formal sport and play area portfolio (see Section 8 for ward by ward breakdown). This information will in turn feed in to the City Plan process to inform updated open space policies, for adoption in 2014.

As the city grows, the council's planning policies will require new housing developments to provide sufficient new open space for the additional population, or to provide financial contributions to improve the quality of existing open spaces nearby. There will also be a requirement to build more sustainable settlements. Green infrastructure, sustainable urban drainage systems and climate change issues will be fundamental and will have an impact on open spaces in the city.

Quantity

The NPPF requires local authorities to provide robust, up to date quantitative and qualitative assessments of existing provision, in order to establish the current and future needs for open space, sports and recreational facilities in their area.

The city council has an existing adopted quantity standard (Policy OS.2 – see details in table below) of the provision of open space at 2.8 hectares per 1000 population.



This sets the benchmark specific to Gloucester for overall provision, including formal sport and play areas, as well as informal green space and nature areas.

To ensure that our open spaces are equipped with sufficient facilities to serve the recreational needs of the current and future

population, we have therefore measured open space provision in three main areas; using the council's adopted standard for general open space plus the FiT benchmark standards for playing pitches (outdoor) and designated equipped playing space (which can include play areas, skate parks, BMX tracks, informal ball games areas etc.). These are set out in the table overleaf.

Open Space Quantity Standard – comparison table

| Type | Council's adopted open space standard (2001) Hectares/1000 population | FiT (NPFA) benchmark standard for quantity, all outdoor sport (2008) Hectares/1000 population | Proposed open space standard for Gloucester (2014-2019) Hectares/1000 population |
|---|--|--|--|
| Formal sport/playing pitches (urban authority) | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.6* |
| Designated equipped playing space (urban authority) | 0.7 | 0.25 (formal/equipped) 0.55 (informal) <hr/> 0.8ha total | 0.25# (formal/equipped) 0.55 (informal) <hr/> 0.8 total |
| Informal recreation | 0.4 | n/a | 0.4 |
| Overall open space provision | 2.8 | n/a | 2.8 |

Notes

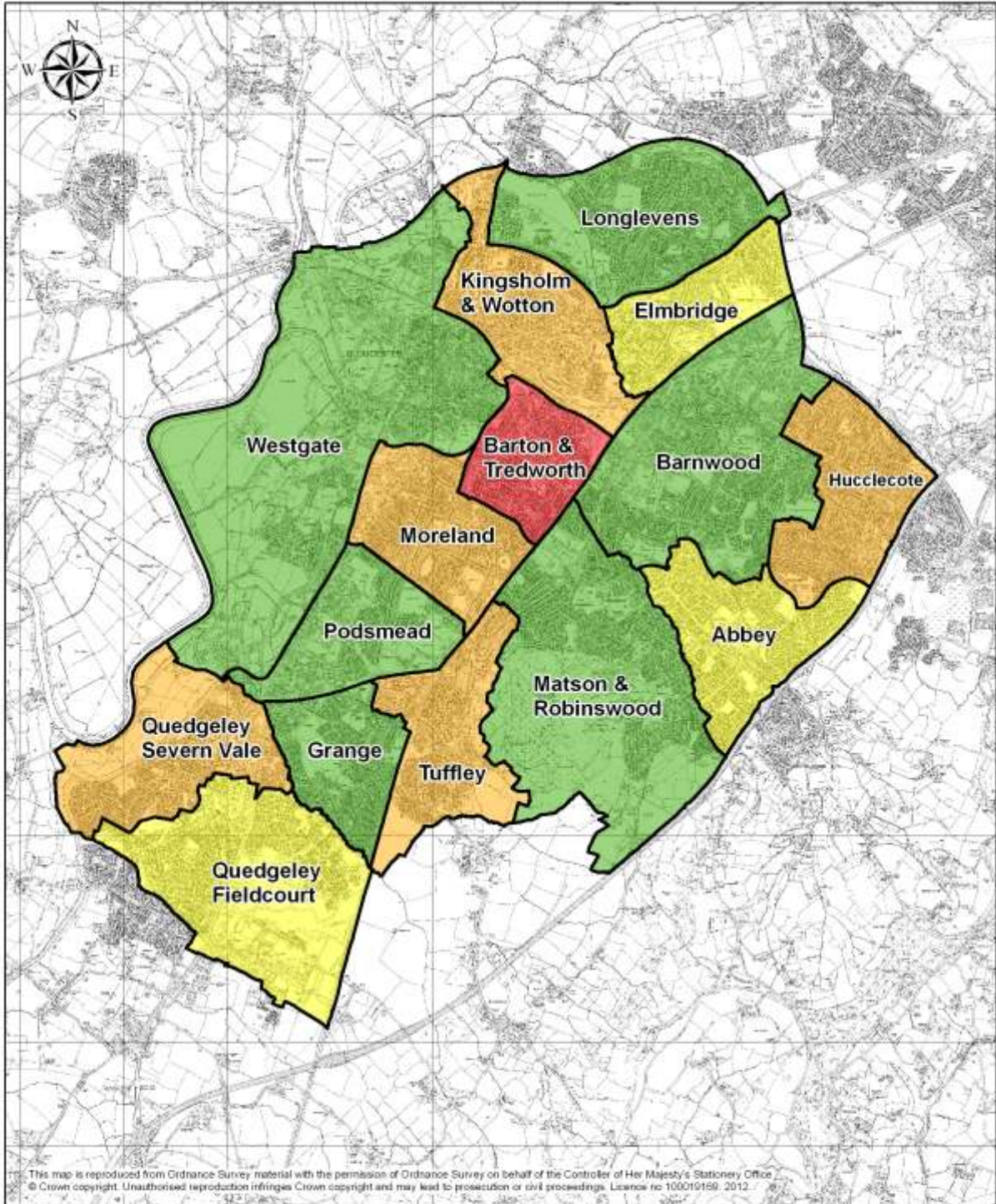
*Calculations for formal sport/playing pitches relate to outdoor sports (football, rugby, cricket, tennis, hockey, bowls, and athletics) and include public and shared use facilities available to the public, through clubs or organised teams.

#Calculations in the strategy for playing space relate to formal/equipped space, not informal play space (which could include all other types of open space).

In terms of the overall quantitative open space provision for Gloucester, the above standard is met, largely because of the large areas at Robinswood Hill Country Park and Alney Island Nature Reserve (together totalling 191 hectares). The open spaces, including country parks, allotments and cemeteries total 518.57 hectares, and with a population of 122,000, this provides open space at 4.25 hectares per 1000 population.

However, this does not tell the whole story. Although there is a generous amount of 'natural' green space such as Robinswood Hill and Alney Island, these habitat-rich countryside areas are generally not suitable for many types of formal recreation or sport. Also, open space across the city is not equally distributed, and this means that in some wards there is extremely poor provision and a severe shortage of formal sports and play facilities.

Access to good quality, local open spaces for many residents is limited. The following maps indicate where the deficiencies in provision lie (by ward), for overall provision (map 1) as well as formal sports pitch provision (map 2). It is these issues that this strategy aims to address wherever possible.

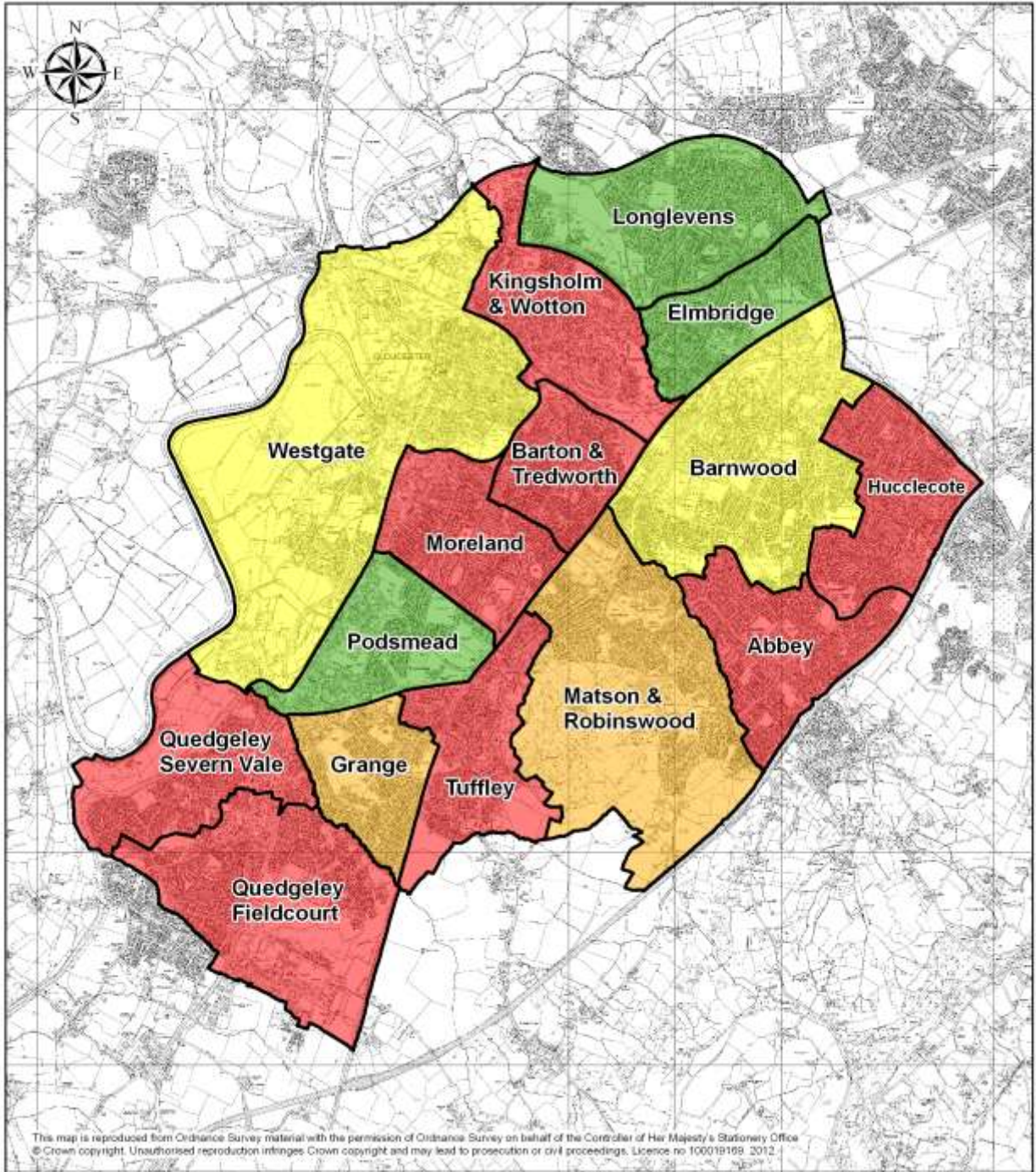


Wards in Gloucester - Open Space Provision (Quantity)
Proposed Standard: 2.8 hectares per 1000 population

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Meets or exceeds proposed standard | Falls just short of proposed standard (1-29% shortfall) | Falls well short of proposed standard (30-59% shortfall) | Falls seriously short of proposed standard (60-100% shortfall) |
|---|--|---|---|

Open Space Strategy 2014-2019

Map 1



Wards in Gloucester - Sports Pitch Provision (Quantity)

Includes private sportsgrounds and schools with shared use pitches

Proposed Standard: 1.6 hectares per 1000 population



Open Space Strategy 2014-2019

Map 2

Quality

Quality standards are very important, because they set a baseline for the levels of management and maintenance that the public can expect to find when visiting open spaces.



The quality of an open space is often valued by visitors above quantity or accessibility. There is much national good practice guidance available to support this.

The city's open spaces and associated facilities are regularly assessed for quality and safety. Ongoing customer feedback is also taken into account.

| Type | Quality standard |
|---------------------------|--|
| All parks and open spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house site assessments • Green Flag standards |
| Equipped play areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City council annual assessment based on FiT Play Value Assessment criteria • Annual RoSPA inspection • Visual/safety inspections every 10 days |
| Playing pitches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-technical visual survey or • Full Technical assessment |

Green Flag Award

The Green Flag award scheme represents the national standard for quality parks and open spaces.

Green Flag assessment measures sites against best practice principles for open space maintenance, management, sustainability and community involvement.

Sites are selected and submitted by the local authority for independent assessment. Gloucester currently has one Green Flag certified site, at Barnwood Park and Arboretum.



We aim to work towards achieving two additional Green Flag sites during the life of this strategy. Each site will need a detailed management plan to support the Green Flag application.

Accessibility

The FiT guidance also sets out benchmark standards for accessibility. This is to help ensure that all residents have good access to a range of open space facilities to meet their recreational needs.

Gloucester is a compact and relatively densely populated city, but it also has a generally good spread of open spaces and outdoor facilities. As a general guide, over 90% of residents live within 0.5km of a significant open space, and 100% of households can access an area of open space with 1km of their home.

Despite this seemingly good accessibility, there are some parts of the city which are very poorly served in terms of equipped open space facilities; provision in Gloucester currently does not fully meet the accessibility standards set out in the table below for every part of the city. Fewer than half of households can access a small play area (LEAP) within 400m (5 mins walk), although most households have a large play area (NEAP) within 1km (15 mins walk) and around half have a formal (public) playing pitch within 1.2km.

More specialised sports such as athletics are served by a single city-wide facility – e.g. the Blackbridge athletics track is within 30mins drive of all residents in the city.



| Type | Accessibility standard (FiT benchmark) | Current Gloucester provision |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| LEAP (small play area) | 400m walking distance | Does not currently meet this standard |
| NEAP (large play area) | 1km walking distance | Does not currently meet this standard |
| Playing pitches | Within 1.2km of all dwellings in major residential areas | Does not currently meet this standard |
| Community tennis courts | Within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas) | Does not currently meet this standard |
| Athletics track (6 lane) with floodlighting, per 250,000 people | Within 30 minutes drive time | Meets this standard |
| Bowls | One green within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas) | Does not currently meet this standard |

Wherever possible, the council will work towards providing additional facilities in areas that currently do not meet these accessibility standards. However, full compliance with the above standards is unlikely, due to the existing densely built areas of the city. However, many residents are also prepared to travel a little further to access good facilities, so we will ensure that all residents have access to regularly updated information on the council’s website about the location of all open space facilities across the city as a whole.

Grounds Maintenance

Gloucester's Open spaces are currently maintained by Amey (was Enterprise), the council's grounds maintenance partner, who have a 15 year contract for the city's grounds maintenance, running until February 2022. Maintenance operations are based on an output specification, with regular monitoring of performance.

Some operations are constant throughout the year and others performed on a seasonal or annual basis. Work is generally undertaken in accordance with BS7370: Grounds Maintenance Parts 1-5 1991-1998 and tree work to BS3998 Tree Work Recommendations 2010.

Amey also works closely with the council to develop, update and adapt open spaces and facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of users.



Examples of some of the main open space operations carried out by Amey are:

- Grass cutting and shrub bed maintenance
- Litter picking, emptying litter bins and dog waste bins
- Play area safety inspections and maintenance
- Tree work, including safety inspections
- Sports field preparation and maintenance

The council carries out regular contract monitoring and discussion with Enterprise, to determine best value for money and to implement improved working practices wherever possible.

Section 6: Working with partners and the community

There are many voluntary, public and private sector partners already involved in looking after the city's open spaces. Some act in an advisory role, others actively manage our spaces, provide key services, perform community liaison or help with funding for specific projects. These partnerships can bring significant benefits. Similarly, integrating open space improvements with wider programmes of neighbourhood working often gives better outcomes. We are committed to further developing a partnership, multi-agency approach to the improvement of our open spaces.

Some examples of our open space partners:

- Amey (grounds maintenance partner)
- Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust
- Gloucester City Homes
- Community Payback (Probation Service)
- The Conservation Volunteers, Gloucester Vale volunteers
- Private landowners/schools
- Quedgeley Parish Council
- Neighbourhood Partnerships
- Friends groups
- Local community groups
- Play Gloucestershire
- Amenity bodies (e.g. Civic Trust)

Across the city there are numerous community groups who are looking after the interests of their local environment. The council acknowledges their input, dedication and local involvement, which helps to improve, enliven and enhance our open spaces.



The council is very fortunate in having dedicated and committed volunteers and Friends groups, who hold regular volunteer work days, where they carry out tasks

such as weeding, scrub clearance, litter picking and planting, to supplement the council's maintenance regime. They also act as our eyes and ears on the ground and report larger maintenance issues to the council.

The council will continue to support and encourage the formation of local Friends Groups and community groups, and welcomes the input of local residents to help in our open space management and maintenance.

Section 7: Funding

The cost of capital works to improve and develop all of our open spaces and facilities would run into many millions of pounds. There is no single 'pot' of money to pay for open space improvements. However, there are a number of mechanisms by which we can secure capital funding for planned works.



We have already been successful in securing over £4 million of capital since 2001 for open space improvements from a number of sources, such as S.106 funding from housing developments, grants from central government and through the council's own capital works programme.

We have supported a number of community organisations in securing lottery funding to improve their local open spaces. We will continue to advise and assist local groups in making applications for external funding, if they are applying for funds to meet agreed local open space priorities.

We will also develop a framework for identifying and consulting on potential disposals of marginal areas of open space, which could be sold (subject to consultation) in order to invest the capital receipt in the improvement of other local spaces or facilities.

We will need to ensure that any capital works that we undertake are sustainable, giving careful consideration to future maintenance and repair costs.

Community Asset transfer

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) is a shift in management and/or ownership of land or buildings from public bodies (most commonly local authorities) to communities (community and voluntary sector groups, community enterprises, social enterprises, etc).

The Council recognises the value of enabling local community partners to take more responsibility for local assets, a process which can help to bring in external funding for its sites. With suitable safeguards in place, this can bring real benefits to both residents and the council.

Transfer options can range from freehold, a long lease, a shorter lease or a licence to occupy. However, for most transfers, where grants or loans are sought for capital development, the length of tenure will need to be long enough to secure external investment. Therefore, community asset transfer is usually taken to mean a long lease of at least 25 years or a freehold.

The Localism Act 2011 provides mechanisms for voluntary and community groups, parish councils and local social enterprises to express an interest in taking over the running of a local authority service or facility through community right to bid.

The city council adopted a Community Right to Bid procedure in July 2013, which establishes the formal procedures for identifying and listing assets of community value, which may apply to open spaces and their associated facilities. A Community Asset Register is also being prepared. Further information is available through the council's Asset Management team.

Section 8: Ward profiles

Introduction

Although Gloucester is an urban authority, it is generally seen as a green city. However, our open spaces are not evenly distributed. The city area is 4054ha, of which 519 ha is defined as public open space, country park/nature reserve, allotments or cemeteries. This means that just over 12% of the city's land area is publicly accessible green space.

It is anticipated that the city's population will grow from 122,000 (2011 census) to over 135,000 by 2022. Using the councils adopted minimum standard of 2.8ha/1000 residents, 349 hectares of open space is required to serve the city in 2012. Similarly, 378ha would be required by 2022. Therefore, on paper the city meets and exceeds the adopted standard for overall quantity of open space.

However, although it may appear that the city has an excess of open space, it is not just about quantity, the type and distribution of these open spaces is a key factor.

Almost 200ha of the open space land area is located in just two of our green spaces, at Robinswood Hill and Alney Island Nature Reserve and whilst these spaces are freely accessible to the public, their natural habitat precludes uses such as formal sport for example. Similarly, publicly accessible cemeteries (with secondary uses for informal recreation, dog walking etc.) and allotments have very specific open space uses and again, would not accommodate sport or formal play areas.

| Main open space type | Area (ha) | Primary uses |
|--|-----------------|---|
| Country park/nature reserve/countryside (type D) | 199.38 | Informal recreation, habitat management |
| Allotments (type C) | 16.93 | Food growing |
| Cemeteries (type G) | 27.03 | Burials, Informal recreation |
| Other open space (types A, B, E,F,H,I,J) | 275.23 | Parks, civic spaces, amenity land etc. Informal recreation Formal and informal sport and play |
| Total | 518.57ha | |

Within the remaining open space areas, there are significant deficiencies in the type of spaces and their distribution, most specifically in relation to formal sports and play facilities. It is these locally accessible green spaces and their facilities that are key to ensuring that all residents have sufficient open space options available to them.

Whilst we aspire to provide open spaces within walking distance of every household in Gloucester, in practical terms there simply isn't the land or resources available to create new parks in all areas of deficiency. However, improvements in the quality of facilities provided in the open spaces that serve areas with a shortfall can be achieved, so that more people can benefit from these facilities.

The following pages set out the open space provision for each city ward. Some un-adopted sites still owned by housing developers have been included in the calculations, but only those that are completed and fully open and in public use.

Abbey ward - open space profile



Abbey ward is a mainly residential ward of late 20th century housing estates. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 9,521.

There is a local shopping centre, community centre and primary school in the centre of the ward. The open spaces in the ward were largely created as part of the late 20th century housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, drainage or buffers to the M5 motorway. One exception is Hucclecote Hay Meadows, a remnant of traditional hay meadows with wildflowers, which is a protected Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The ward does adjoin Clock Tower Park in Barnwood ward, so Abbey residents are also able to make use of this large open space and its facilities.



Many of the open spaces in the ward were created as part of the 1980s housing development and were laid out with dense structural tree planting. This vegetation has never been managed, is rapidly maturing and in places is becoming rather overbearing. With the exception of the hay meadows, the ward's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows.

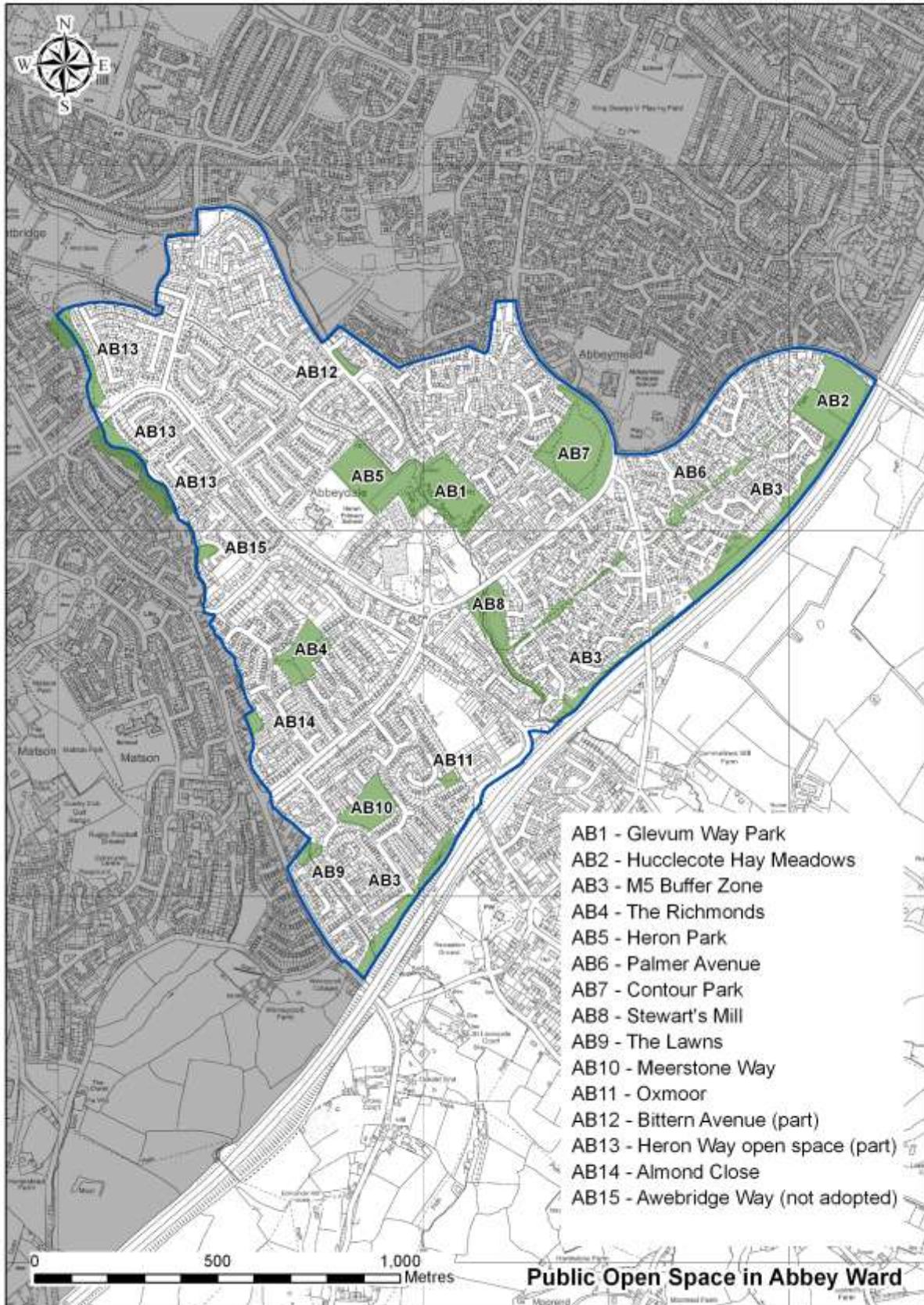


In total the ward has 20.87ha of open space, a provision of 2.2ha per 1000 population, which falls just short of the council's adopted standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are generally used by local teams. A bookable synthetic pitch is available at Abbeydale Community Centre and is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Outdoor sports provision equates 0.21ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There is one play area at Glevum Way which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which also falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public Space

| Ref. | Name | Size (ha) | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|-----------------------------|----------------|---|
| AB1 | Glevum Way Park | 3.01 | J + B + H (0.06ha LEAP) (1 adult, 1 junior football = 1ha) |
| AB2 | Hucclecote Hay Meadows LNR | 2.51 | D |
| AB3 | M5 Buffer Zone* | 3.23 | I |
| AB4 | The Richmonds | 1.33 | B |
| AB5 | Heron Park* | 2.35 | J (1 adult football = 0.91ha) |
| AB6 | Palmer Ave | 0.5 | I |
| AB7 | Contour Park | 3.67 | B |
| AB8 | Stewart's Mill | 2.12 | E (+ B) |
| AB9 | The Lawns* | 0.29 | B (+ E) |
| AB10 | Meerstone Way* | 1.28 | B (+ E) |
| AB11 | Oxmoor* | 0.15 | B |
| AB12 | Bittern Ave (part) | - | Included in Barnwood Ward calc |
| AB13 | Heron Way open space (part) | - | Included in Matson Ward calc |
| AB14 | Almond Close | 0.23 | B |
| AB15 | Awebridge Way* | 0.2 | B |
| | Total: | 20.87ha | |

*note: some open spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------|------|-------------|
| - | none | - | - |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|----------------------------|------|--|
| - | Heron School | - | No public use |
| - | Abbeydale community centre | 0.17 | Public use – bookable synthetic sports pitch |

Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---|------|--|
| - | Land off The Wheatridge (not included in open space calculations) | - | County council owned land, reserved for future development, but currently used as informal open space. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Abbey ward falls just short of the adopted standard for quantity. The creation of some new open space on the county council owned 'reserved' site at The Wheatridge could be explored, should residential development proposals for the site come forward.

Other improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality expanded play and sports facilities, particularly at Glevum Way, and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

An area of undeveloped land at The Wheatridge is currently well used by residents for informal recreation. This site is owned by the County Council and was originally reserved for a possible school site. However, there may be future plans to develop the site for housing. Any proposals will need to give consideration to the wildlife using the site and provision of open space may be required as part of the new development.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Abbey Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Barnwood ward - open space profile

Barnwood ward is a large ward containing a mix of uses, including residential estates, schools, cemetery and large industrial, retail & commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,356.

Some of the open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. Barnwood Park and Arboretum originally formed the grounds of a large private house and Clock Tower Park was part of the grounds of a hospital. Saintbridge balancing pond, allotments and Coney Hill cemetery all perform very specific functions.



Maintenance of the spaces varies depending on the use ranging from short mown grass to more natural sites managed for wildlife at Barnwood Arboretum and Saintbridge Pond.



In total the ward has 62.06ha of open space, a provision of 5.99 ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

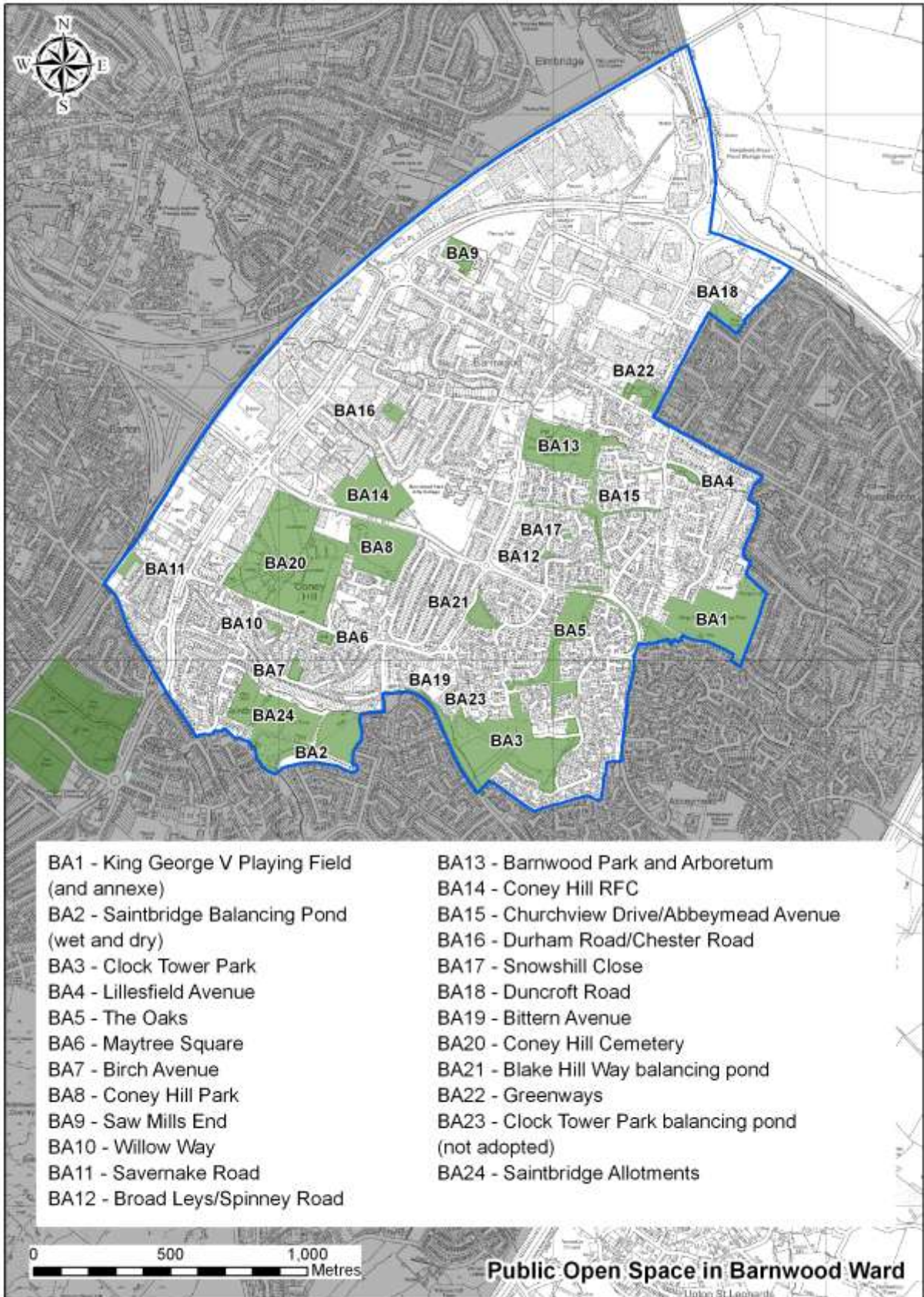
There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are used by local and other teams. There are several privately owned sites in the ward with accessible or shared use outdoor facilities

and these are included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Outdoor sports provision is 1.36ha per 1000, which falls just short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.



There are seven play areas in the ward, equating to 0.11ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public Space

| Ref. | Name | Size (hectares) | Description (see list of open space types) |
|-------------|--|------------------------|---|
| BA1 | King George V Playing field (and annexe) | 6.35+0.93= 7.28 | J + H + B 3ha sport 1 rugby, 1 cricket, 2 junior football, LEAP 0.06ha |
| BA2 | Saintbridge balancing pond (wet and dry) | 2.39+1.98= 4.37 | E + B Wet = 1.98ha, dry = 2.39ha |
| BA3 | Clock Tower Park (excl. Balancing pond?) | 7.66 | A + H + J 1 adult football, 2 tennis, 1 MUGA, 1 NEAP |
| BA4 | Lilliesfield Avenue | 0.35 | I |
| BA5 | The Oaks POS | 3.94 | J+ B + H 1 LEAP, 0.7ha 1 adult football |
| BA6 | Maytree Square | 0.26 | A |
| BA7 | Birch Avenue | 0.32 | B + H 0.04ha LEAP |
| BA8 | Coney Hill Park | 3.89 | J + A + H 068ha LEAP, MUGA, BMX 1 adult football |
| BA9 | Saw Mills End | 0.66 | J 1 adult football |
| BA10 | Willow Way | 0.17 | C |
| BA11 | Savernake Road | 0.31 | B |
| BA12 | Broad Leys/Spinney Road | 0.08 | I |
| BA13 | Barnwood Park and Arboretum | 4.68+1.51= 6.19 | A |
| BA14 | Coney Hill RFC | 3.73 | J + B 2.14ha - 2 rugby pitches |
| BA15 | Churchview Drive/Abbeymead Ave | 1.41 | I |
| BA16 | Durham Road/Chester Road | 0.36 | B + H 0.04ha LEAP |
| BA17 | Snowhill Close | 0.07 | I |
| BA18 | Duncroft Road | 0.72 | B + H 0.04ha LEAP |
| BA19 | Bittern Ave | 1.29 | E (includes site AB12 in this calc) |
| BA20 | Coney Hill Cemetery | 12.33 | G |
| BA21 | Blake Hill Way balancing pond* | 0.87 | E |
| BA22 | Greenways | 0.9 | B + H + J LEAP, MUGA, 1 tennis |
| BA23 | Clock Tower Park balancing pond * | - | E (0.74ha) |
| | Total (inc. allotments as below): | 62.06ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size (ha) | Description |
|------|------------------------|-----------|--|
| - | Saintbridge allotments | 4.9 | C, 37 starter plots, 147 full plots, 3 large community plots |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---------------------------------|------|--|
| - | Chequers Bridge MUGA | 0.06 | Currently no public access |
| - | Coney Hill School | - | No public use |
| - | MEB playing field | 3.64 | |
| - | British Energy site | 0.31 | Sports facilities used by employees – tennis/bowls |
| - | Clock Tower Park balancing pond | - | Not adopted yet |
| - | Coney Hill (Echoes?) MUGA | 0.1 | |
| - | Barnwood Park Arts College | 1.5 | Cricket pitch in shared use |
| - | Dinglewell School | - | No public use |
| - | Barnwood School | - | No public use |

Opportunities for improved provision

Barnwood ward meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but many sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Barnwood Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Barton and Tredworth ward - open space profile

Barton & Tredworth ward is a compact and densely built-up ward containing mainly residential properties plus schools and some retail & commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 11,000.



There are only four open spaces in the ward (including a new space at Diamond Jubilee Close), which places a lot of pressure on them. However, the ward does adjoin the main Gloucester Park in Westgate ward, so Barton and Tredworth residents are also able to make use of this large open space and its facilities.

St James' City Farm is located in part of St James Park. The land is leased from the council and the farm is run by GymNation, a local charity. As the farm is free to access and is generally open to the public every day, this area has been included in the open space calculation for the ward.

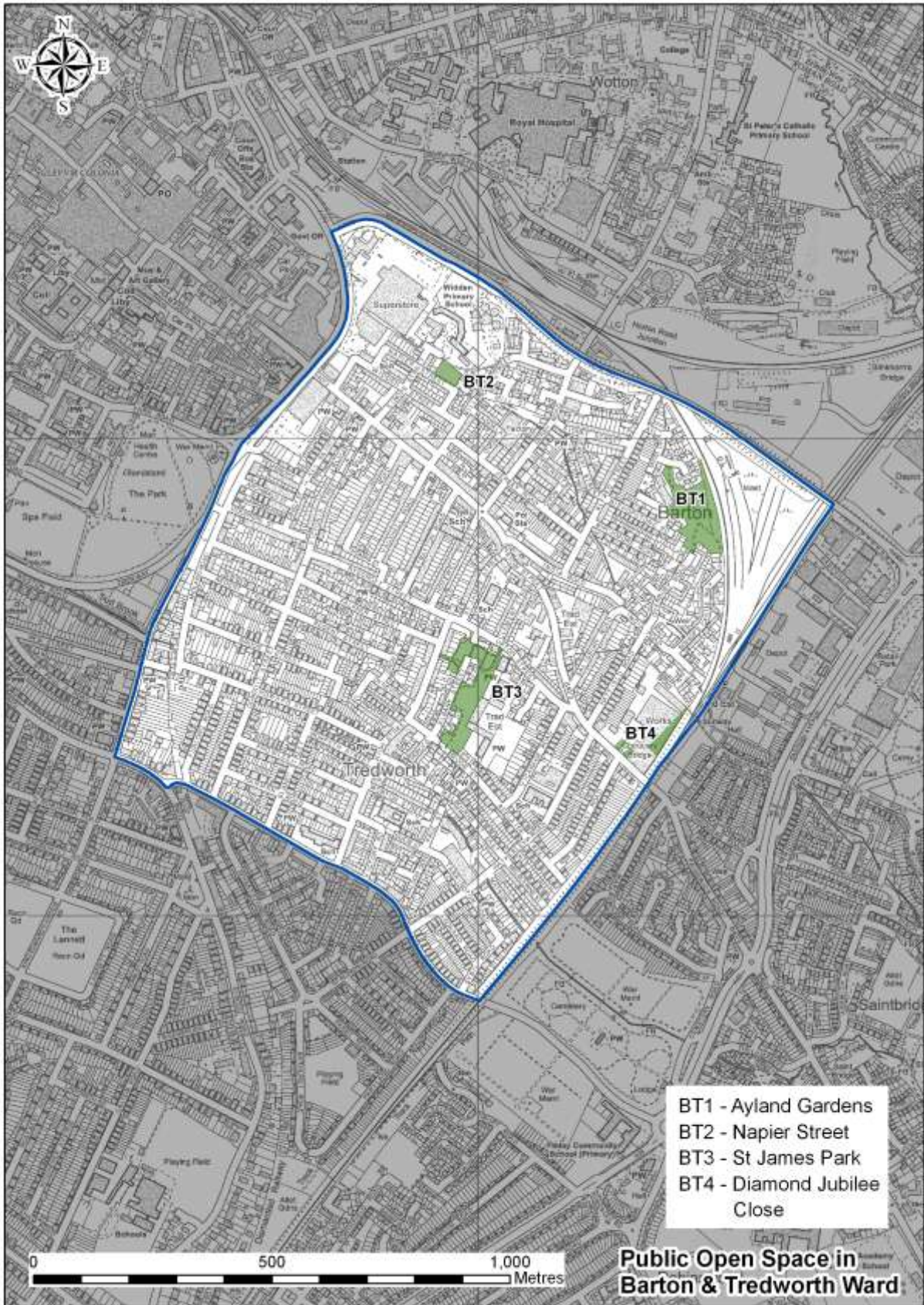
Maintenance of the spaces varies depending on the use ranging from mown grass to the hard-surfaced play area at Napier Street.

In total the ward has 2.61ha of open space, a provision of 0.24ha per 1000 population, which falls seriously short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There is an accessible, formal MUGA at Widden School with shared use (included in this calculation), but no other formal sports pitches provided in the ward. Outdoor sports provision therefore is 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.



There are three play areas in the ward, (including a new play area at Diamond Jubilee Close) equating to 0.04ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|-----------------------|---------------|---|
| BT1 | Ayland Gardens | 0.97 | B |
| BT2 | Napier Street | 0.18 | H - LEAP, MUGA |
| BT3 | St James Park | 1.26 | A + H - LEAP, MUGA |
| BT4 | Diamond Jubilee Close | 0.2 | H + I - LEAP |
| | Total: | 2.61ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------|------|-------------|
| - | None | - | |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--|------|--|
| - | MUGA Widden School | 0.09 | Hard surfaced sports court |
| - | Widden School (grass pitches) | - | No public use |
| - | Tredworth Infant School | - | No public use |
| - | Tredworth Junior School | - | No public use |
| - | St James' School | - | No public use |
| - | Hatherley Infant School | - | No public use |
| - | Tredworth Rugby Club (now Kingfisher church), Moor St. | - | Some use by groups - by agreement with owner (county council). |
| - | Conduit St Community Garden* | 0.03 | Currently not always open to the public. |
| - | St James City Farm* (generally accessible to the public during the day. This site has been included in the general open space calculation for St James Park.) | - | Urban farm, open to the public |

Opportunities for improved provision

Barton and Tredworth falls seriously short in terms of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity. Therefore opportunities to increase this provision should be sought wherever possible. A new area of open space with small play area has been created as part of the residential redevelopment on the old Gardner Denver factory on Barton Street (Diamond Jubilee Close).

Quality of facilities in the existing open spaces also falls short of expected standards, so improvements should concentrate on improved high quality play facilities at Napier Street and St James Park (potential for full MUGA), plus a potential new play area, MUGA or other sports pitch at Ayland Gardens.

Parks in adjacent wards, such as Gloucester Park and The Lannett also serve the residents of Barton and Tredworth, so ensuring good signage & safe access to these sites is also important.

Ensuring residents are made aware of nearby open space provision in adjacent wards and have well signposted access to sports and play areas is also a priority. Creating a space for allotment provision in the ward would also be desirable.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Barton & Tredworth Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Elmbridge ward - open space profile

Elmbridge ward is a mainly residential ward of 20th century housing estates plus schools, a community centre, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 5,791.



The open spaces in the ward were created as part of the housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. The ward adjoins Armscroft Park in Kingsholm and Wotton ward, so Elmbridge residents are also able to make use of this large open space and its facilities.

Elmbridge ward's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass and pitches with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. The Horsbere Brook and Wotton Brook run

through the two larger spaces at Sandyleaze and Armscroft Park.

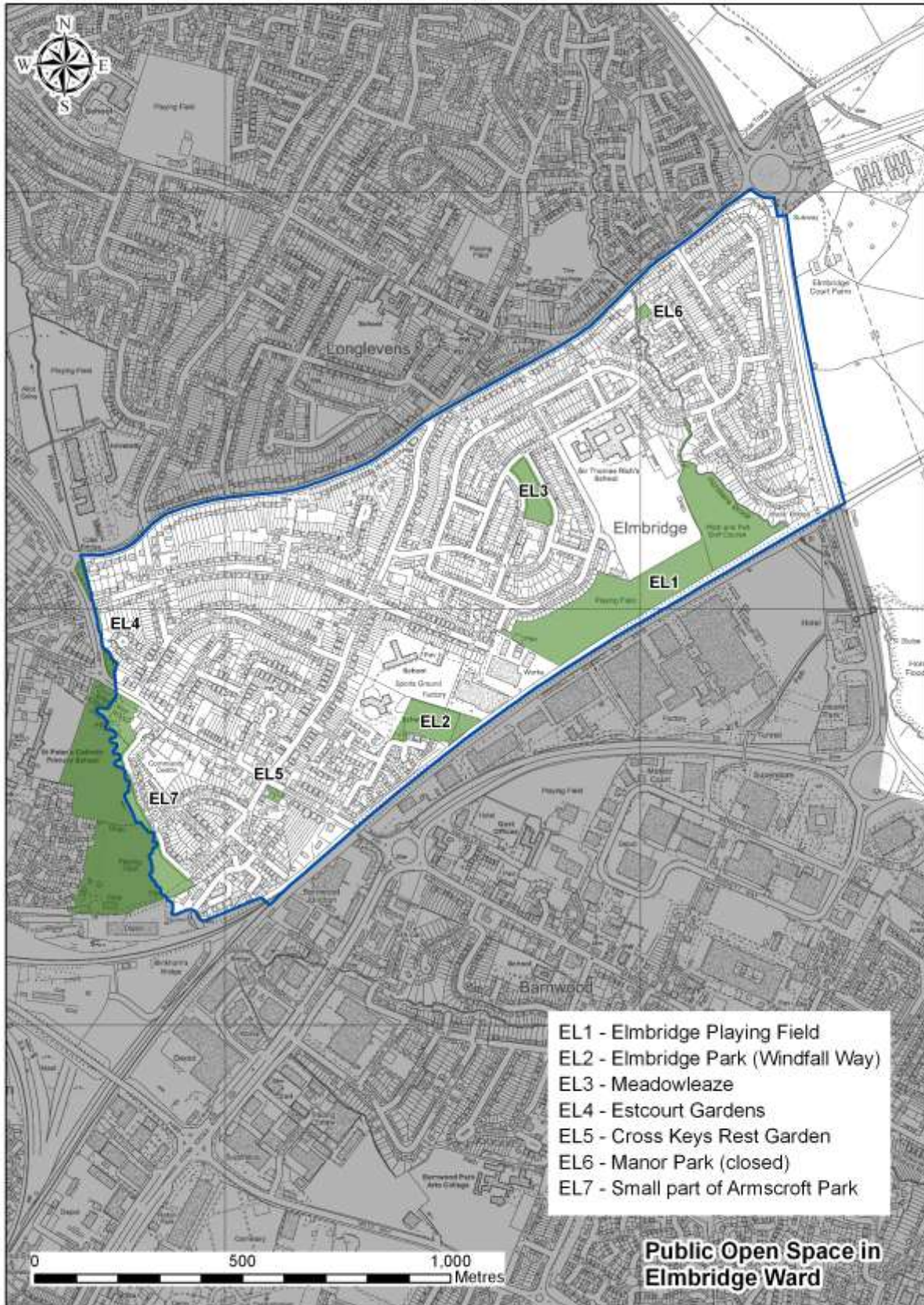
In total the ward has 10.86ha of open space, a provision of 1.88ha per 1000 population, which falls just short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are generally used by local teams. A number of shared use outdoor sports pitches are available at Sir Thomas Rich's School and there is a bowling green at Sisson Road. These facilities are included in the sports pitch calculation below.



Outdoor sports provision is 1.58ha per 1000, which just about meets the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are two small play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|--------------------------------------|----------------|---|
| EL1 | Elmbridge Playing Field (Sandyleaze) | 8.04 | J+ B 2 rugby |
| EL2 | Elmbridge Park (Windfall Way) | 1.32 | J + H + B 1 adult football, LEAP |
| EL3 | Meadowleaze | 0.86 | B + H LEAP |
| EL4 | Estcourt Gardens | 0.47 | A |
| EL5 | Cross Keys Rest Garden | 0.09 | A |
| EL6 | Manor Park open space | 0.08 | A (site no longer in use) |
| EL7 | Small part of Armscroft Park | - | Included in Kingsholm and Wotton Ward calculation |
| | Total: | 10.86ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------|------|-------------|
| - | None | - | |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|----------------------------------|------|--|
| - | Sir Thomas Rich's School | 4.0 | Shared use sports facilities Rugby/football/cricket |
| - | Sisson Rd bowling green | 0.22 | Bowling green |
| - | Elmbridge Infant School | - | No public use |
| - | Elmbridge Junior School | - | No public use |
| - | Elmscroft Community Centre | - | Community facility with outdoor garden space |
| - | Green Pippin Close central space | - | Informal private space |

Opportunities for improved provision

Provision in Elmbridge ward falls just short of the adopted standard for quantity, but as there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space, improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Armscroft Park also serve the residents of Elmbridge, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Elmbridge Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Grange ward - open space profile

Grange ward is a mainly residential ward of late 20th century housing development. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 5,846.

There is a local shopping centre, community centre, library, schools and some industrial, retail and commercial premises in the ward.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of the housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation.



The largest open space at Holmleigh Park, is in shared ownership with the county council (forming the grounds of Beaufort Secondary School), but is open to the public. The ward's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows.



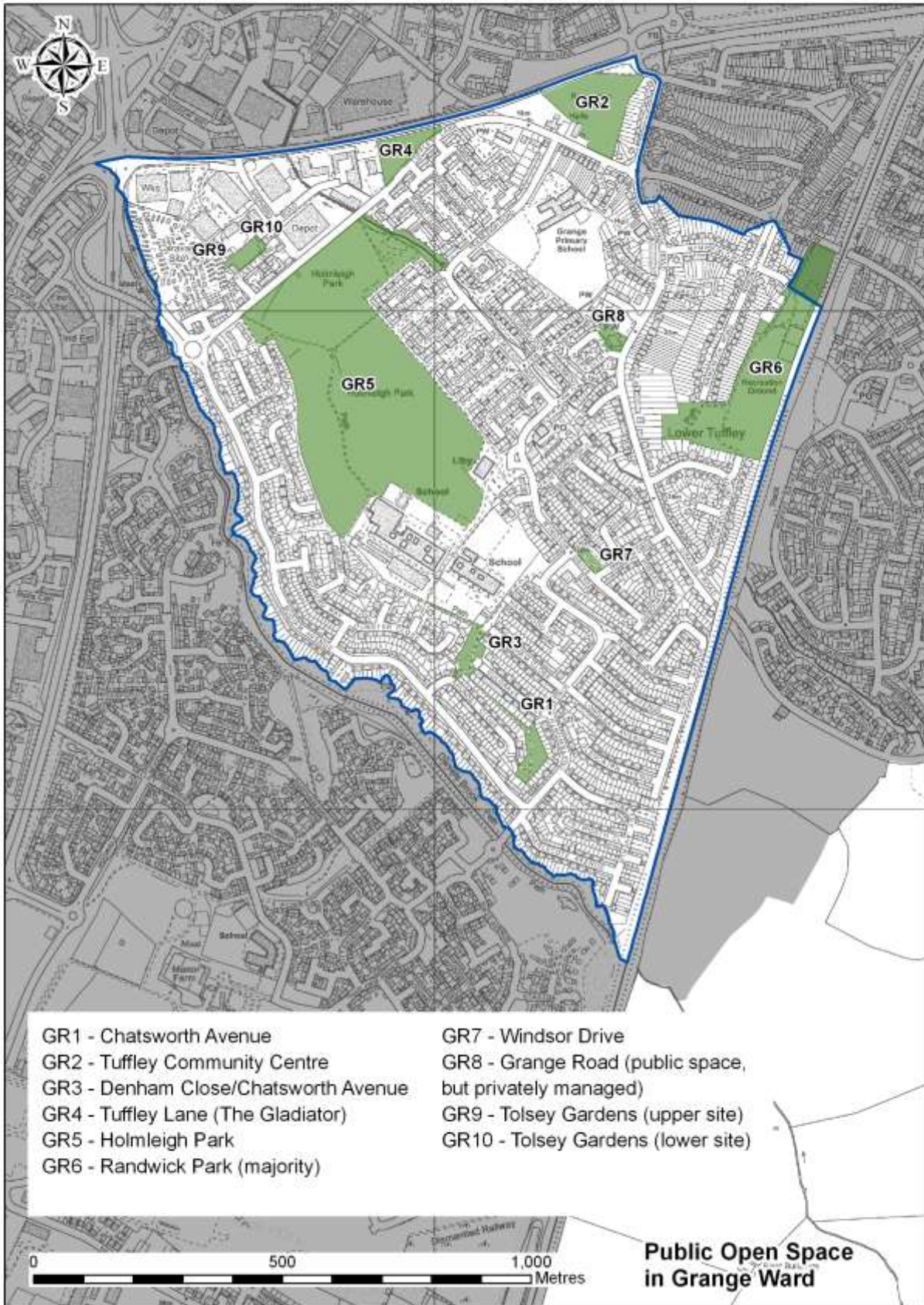
In total the ward has 24.54ha of open space, a provision of 4.20ha per 1000 population, which is in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are several formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are generally used by local teams. A bookable MUGA is also available through Beaufort School/Sports Centre and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.



Outdoor sports provision is 0.62ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are three play areas in the ward which equate to 0.10ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|--|----------------|--|
| GR1 | Chatsworth Avenue | 0.42 | B |
| GR2 | Tuffley Community Centre | 1.82 | J + B 1 adult football |
| GR3 | Denham Close/Chatsworth Ave | 0.38 | B |
| GR4 | Tuffley Lane (The Gladiator) | 0.63 | I |
| GR5 | Holmleigh Park* (part owned by county council, but not fenced) | 16.15 | J + B + H 2 adult football, LEAP |
| GR6 | Randwick Park (majority) | 4.61 | A + H NEAP, MUGA, skate Includes site TU3 in this calc |
| GR7 | Windsor Drive | 0.12 | B |
| GR8 | Grange Road (public space, but privately managed) | 0.21 | B + H LEAP |
| GR9 | Tolsey Gardens (upper site) | 0.2 | B |
| GR10 | Tolsey Gardens (lower site)* | new | B (0.06ha) |
| | Total: | 24.54ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------|------|-------------|
| - | none | - | |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| - | Beaufort School | 0.24 (MUGA) | Shared use MUGA |
| - | Harewood Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | Grange Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | Murray Hall Scout HQ | - | No public use |

Opportunities for improved provision

Grange ward meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but many sites fall short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities.

Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Grange Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Hucclecote ward - open space profile

Hucclecote ward is a mainly residential ward of 20th century housing development. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 8,829.

There is a local shopping centre, community centre and primary schools in the centre of the ward.

The open spaces in the ward were largely created as part of the housing estate development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, or they are functional for drainage or buffers to the M5 motorway. Hucclecote Green is an older, more traditional area of unfenced village green/common land.



The ward adjoins the King George V Playing Field and Greenways open space in Barnwood ward, so Hucclecote residents are also able to make use of these nearby open spaces and their facilities.

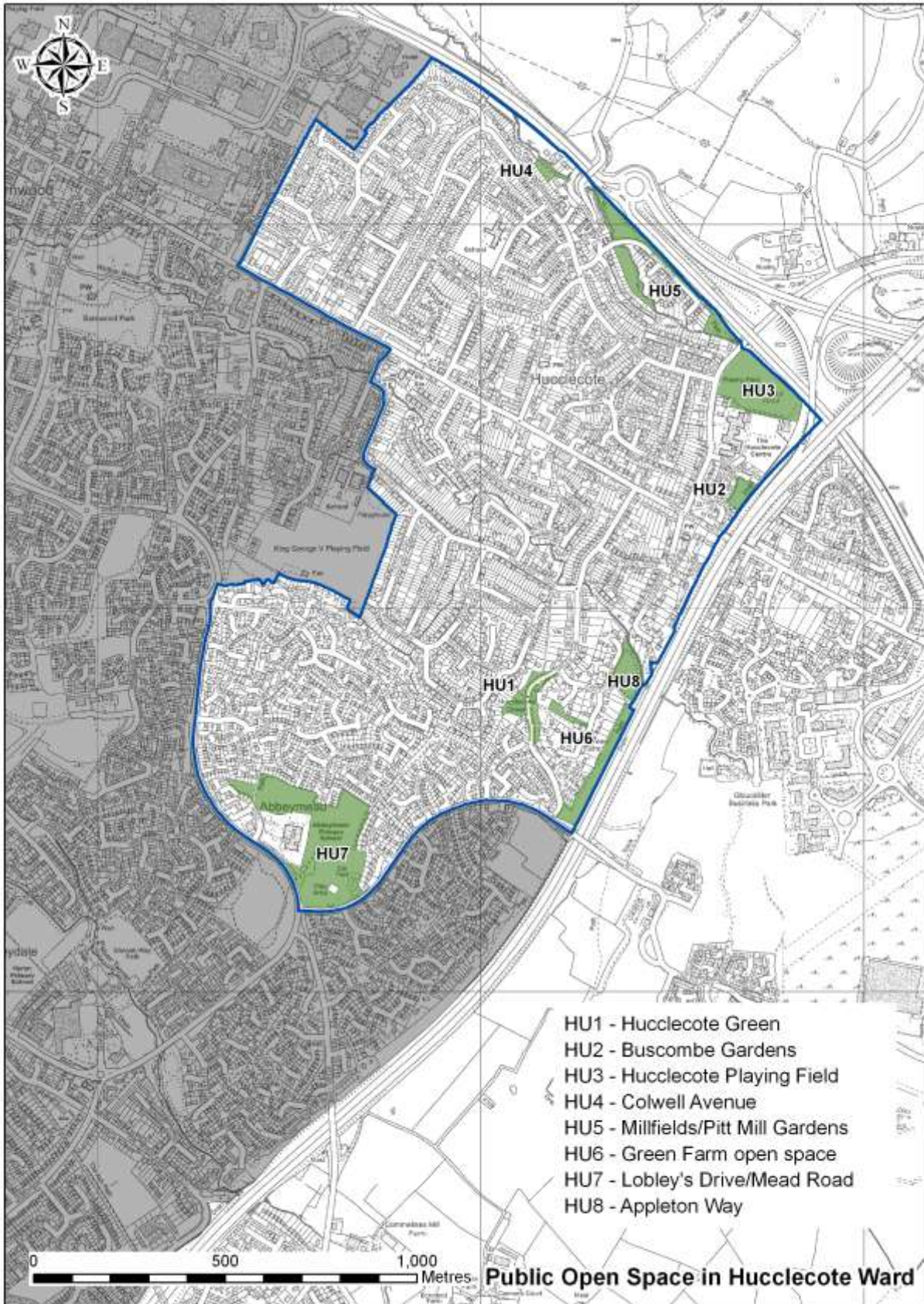
Hucclecote's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Hucclecote hay Meadows are managed by the city council's Countryside Unit and they have plans to improve the habitat value of Appleton Way balancing pond and the M5 buffer zone by managing the grassland for wildflowers.

In total the ward has 12.54ha of open space, a provision of 1.42ha per 1000 population, which falls short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.



Outdoor sports provision is 0.39ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There is one small play area at Mead Road which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|---|--------------------------|---|
| HU1 | Hucclecote Green | 0.83 | B |
| HU2 | Buscombe Gardens | 0.35 | E |
| HU3 | Hucclecote Playing Field | 2.52 | J + B 1 adult rugby, 1 cricket |
| HU4 | Colwell Ave (rear of scout hut on Deer Park Road) | 0.23 | B |
| HU5 | Millfields/Pit Mill Gardens | 1.91 | B |
| HU6 | Green Farm open space (off Appleton Way) | 0.2 | B |
| HU7 | Lobley's Drive/Mead Road plus Mead Rd | 5.44 + 0.23 = 5.67 | J + H + B LEAP, 1 adult football |
| HU8 | Appleton Way balancing pond | 0.83 | E |
| | Total: | 12.54ha | |

*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------|------|-------------|
| - | none | - | |

Private/other space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--------------------------|------|----------------------------|
| - | Hillview Primary school | - | No public use |
| - | Hucclecote Centre | - | No public use, site closed |
| - | Abbeymead Primary School | - | No public use |

Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---|------|---|
| - | Land at The Hucclecote Centre (not included in open space calculations – see above) | - | County council owned land, reserved for future development, but partly currently used as informal open space. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Hucclecote falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as King George V playing field, Hucclecote Hay Meadows and Greenways also serve the residents of Hucclecote, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

Residents in the south of the ward will soon be able to access the extensive new open space facilities being provided just outside the city at Cooper's Edge, across the Lobley's Drive M5 bridge.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

There is an outline planning consent for residential development of the Hucclecote Centre site. A planning agreement ensures that this development will include an area of new open space, as well as financial contributions to provide local sports and play facilities.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Hucclecote Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Kingsholm and Wotton ward - open space profile

Kingsholm and Wotton ward is a mixed ward with 19th and 20th century housing development, schools, community facilities, retail, industrial, commercial premises and a large hospital. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 7,408.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. Hillfield Gardens were once the grounds of a large, private house.

Kingsholm and Wotton's open spaces are a mixture of short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Hillfield Gardens has a more intimate garden-like character with flower borders and other features.



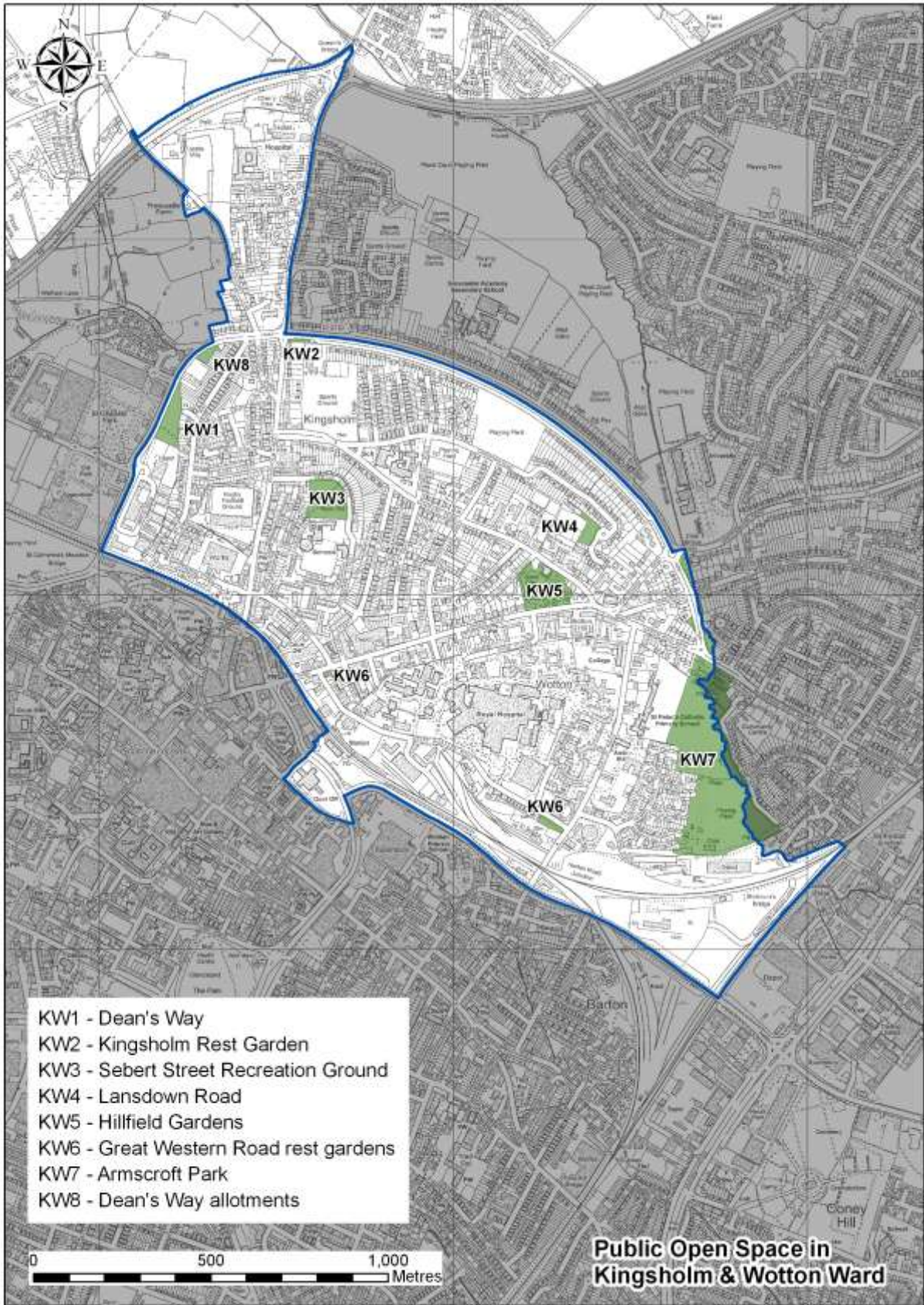
In total the ward has 12.88ha of open space, a provision of 1.74ha per 1000 population, which falls short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are some formal sports pitches provided in Armscroft Park which are used by a local rugby team. There are private tennis courts at Wotton Tennis Club and Kingsholm Square, which have member/resident access and these are included in the sports pitch calculation below. However, the large Civil Service club sports ground is not included, as this has been closed down and is no longer accessible for sport.



Sports provision is 0.33ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.04ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|---|---------------------|---|
| KW1 | Dean's Way | 0.69 | H + B LEAP |
| KW2 | Kingsholm Rest Garden | 0.05 | I |
| KW3 | Sebert Street Recreation Ground | 1.13 | H + B LEAP/community space |
| KW4 | Lansdown Road | 0.31 | B |
| KW5 | Hillfield Gardens | 1.39 | A |
| KW6 | Great Western Rd rest gardens x 2 (London Road and Horton Road) | 0.16+0.02 = 0.18 | A |
| KW7 | Armscroft Park | 9.01 | NEAP/MUGA |
| | Total: inc allotments below | 12.88ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|-----------------------|------|------------------|
| KW8 | Dean's Way allotments | 0.12 | C, 6 small plots |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------------------------------------|------|---|
| - | Horton Rd Cemetery | 0.16 | Public access |
| - | Civil Service Club | - | Site closed (April 2011) |
| - | Gloucester Rugby, Kingsholm Rd | - | No public use |
| - | High School For Girls, Lansdown Rd | - | Currently no shared use |
| - | Posy Lane | - | Currently being redeveloped |
| - | Wotton Tennis Club | 0.54 | Tennis courts (membership) |
| - | Kingsholm School | - | No public use |
| - | St Peters Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | Redcliffe College, Horton Rd | - | No public use |
| - | Kingsholm Square | 0.15 | Private garden for residents (2 x grass tennis court) |

Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--|------|---------------------------------|
| - | Civil Service Playing Field (not included in open space calculations, see above) | - | Land now owned by Redrow Homes. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Kingsholm and Wotton falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Plock court in the adjacent Longlevens ward is accessible to many residents in Kingsholm and Wotton, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to this site is also important.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

The closed Civil Service Sports Ground off Estcourt Road is currently owned by Redrow Homes. Some initial ideas have been put forward by the developer for the site. The city council's planning policies will look to protect these sites against the loss of private playing fields (or ensure that alternative provision is made elsewhere).

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Hucclecote Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Longlevens ward - open space profile

Longlevens ward is a mainly residential ward of predominantly 20th century housing development, plus schools, a university campus, community facilities and some retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 9,524.



The open spaces in the ward were mainly created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, or as routes for watercourses or buffers to the busy A40 ring road. Plock Court is a very large open space and is the city's largest sports ground. Open space is generally clustered to the north and west of the ward, with limited open space to the south and east.

Longlevens open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There are three large and popular allotments sites in the ward.

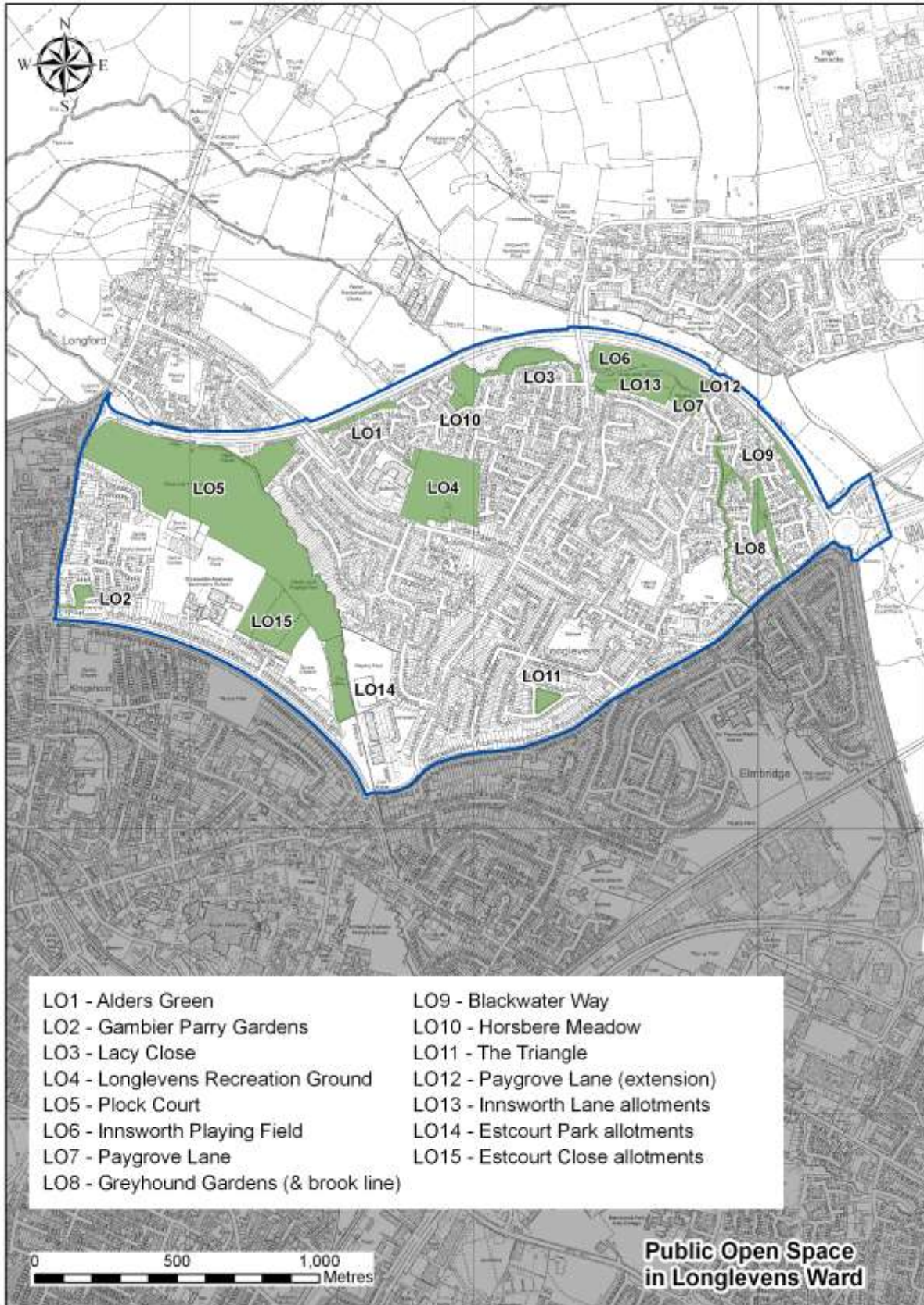
In total the ward has 50.28ha of open space, a provision of 5.28ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000. However, the Plock Court Playing Field is also a city-wide facility, which serves the greater Gloucester catchment area.



There are a range of formal sports pitches provided in the ward, which are used by both local clubs and teams from across the city. There are also a number of private playing fields and outdoor facilities in the ward. Some of these are accessible to residents and are included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports provision is 3.53ha per 1000, which is well in excess of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000, but as stated above, also serves the wider city population.

There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.02ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the FiT benchmark standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| LO1 | Alders Green | 0.2 | B |
| LO2 | Gambier Parry Gardens | 0.46 | B |
| LO3 | Lacy Close | 1.5 | B |
| LO4 | Longlevens Recreation Ground | 5.72 | J + H + B NEAP, MUGA 2 rugby, 2 adult football |
| LO5 | Plock Court | 26.37 | J + B Various grass pitches, Synthetic pitch |
| LO6 | Innsworth Playing Field | 2.1 | J + E + B 1 adult football, 2 junior |
| LO7 | Paygrove Lane | 0.74 | H + B LEAP |
| LO8 | Greyhound Gardens (& brook line) | 1.49+0.94 =2.43 | B + H LEAP |
| LO9 | Blackwater Way | 0.52 | I |
| LO10 | Horsbere Meadow | 1.22 | A + B |
| LO11 | The Triangle | 0.55 | B |
| LO12 | Paygrove Lane (extension) | 0.55 | E + B |
| | Total: (inc allotments below) | 50.36ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---------------------------|------|-------------------------|
| LO13 | Innsworth Lane allotments | 2.29 | C, 94 plots, mixed size |
| LO14 | Estcourt Park allotments | 1.72 | C, 62 plots mixed sizes |
| LO15 | Estcourt Close allotments | 3.99 | C, 132 full size plots |

Private space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|-------------------------------------|------|--|
| - | Leven Close playing field | - | Currently closed, no public use |
| - | Longlevens Infant School | 0.9 | Shared use for weekend junior football |
| - | Longlevens Junior School | - | No public use |
| - | University of Glos, Oxstalls Campus | 0.65 | MUGA for student/public use |
| - | Lacy Close, A40 side | - | Informal verge |
| - | Milestone School | - | No public use |
| - | Bishops College site | 1.32 | Currently closed, but synthetic/grass pitches still in use (managed by Aspire) |
| - | GALA club | 1.42 | Members use, football pitch |
| - | Debenhams Sports Ground | 3.01 | Cricket and football pitch (site currently being sold) |

**Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land
(but not public open space)**

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---|------|---|
| - | Land off Leven Close (not included in open space calculations) | - | County council owned land, potentially reserved for future development, but currently unavailable for recreation. |
| - | Land at Bishop's College (not included in open space calculations) | - | County council owned land, school is closed, but some sports facilities currently in use via Aspire Trust. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Longlevens meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but some sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Distribution of spaces in the ward is also a little uneven.

Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Increasing the sporting use of the large playing fields at Plock Court could be explored. There is potential to create enhanced new outdoor sports and changing facilities, including a 3G all weather pitch, in association with Oxstalls Sports Centre, currently run by The Aspire Trust, to create a local sports 'hub' for the north of the city.

The County Council currently own the closed playing field off Leven Close and Bishop's College site at Estcourt Close. No plans have yet been submitted for these sites, but the city council's planning policies will look to protect these sites against the loss of private playing fields (or ensure that alternative provision is made elsewhere).

Further improving the allotment sites in terms of secure fencing etc is also desirable.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Longlevens Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Matson and Robinswood ward - open space profile

Matson and Robinswood ward is a mainly residential ward of predominantly 20th century housing development, plus schools, community facilities and some retail and commercial premises. A large part of the ward



consists of Robinswood Hill Country Park, a golf course and ski centre, as well as some private farmland. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,282.

The majority of smaller open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation.

Matson Park was once part of the gardens of a large house and Sneedham's Green is an area of traditional village green/common land, which is grazed by a flock of free roaming sheep. Robinswood Hill is split between a private golf course and ski slope on the eastern side with the public country park on the west side. There is also a large, historic cemetery in the ward.

Matson and Robinswood open spaces are mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There are two allotments sites in the ward. The country park is managed by the city council's Countryside Unit.

Including the country park the ward has 141.64ha of open space, a provision of 13.78ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000. However, the country park is a city-wide facility also serving the wider Gloucester population.

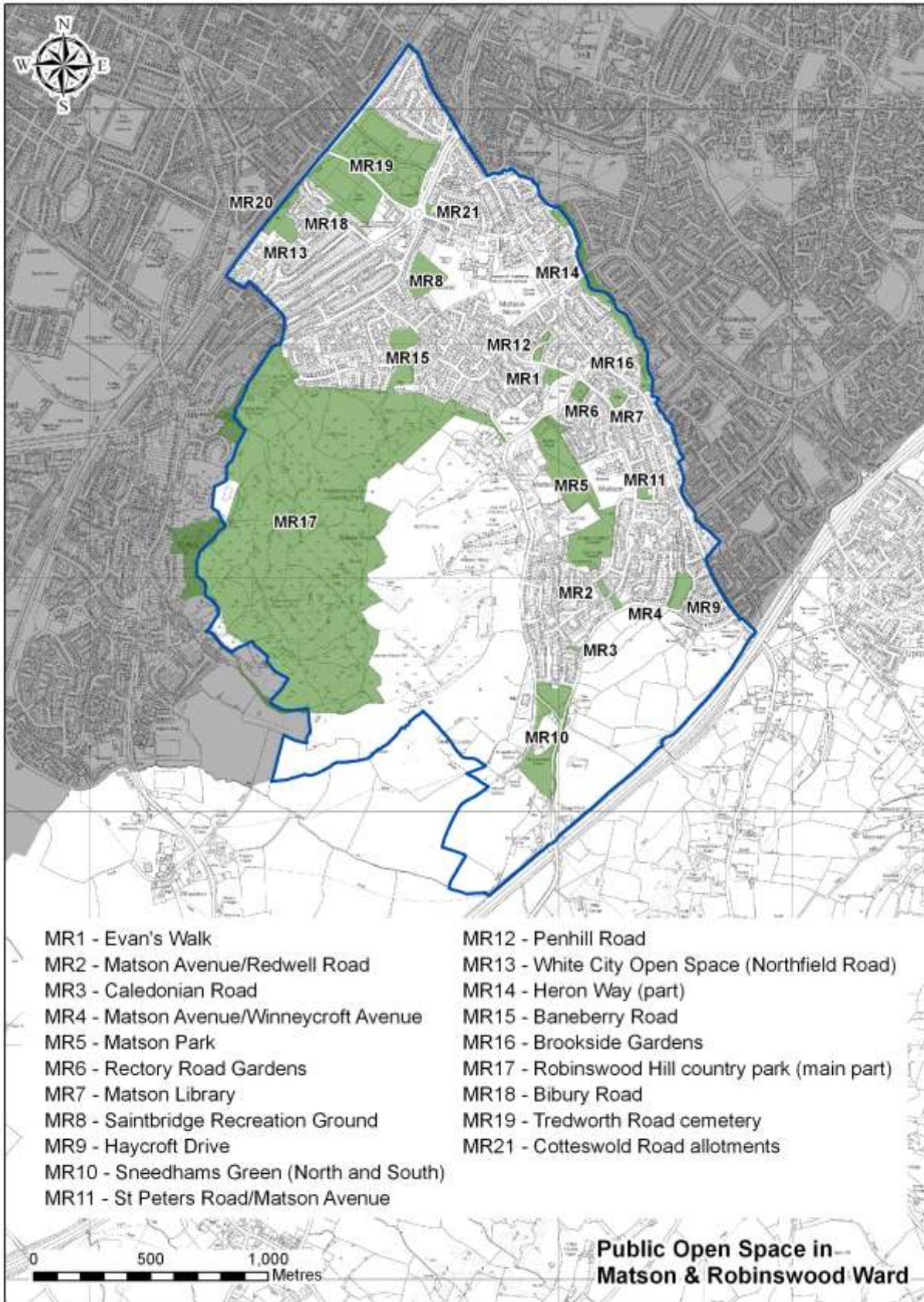
There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are used by local teams. A rugby pitch is provided on the Old Centralians ground and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports pitch provision is 0.68ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.



There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.03ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.

There are a number of other private outdoor facilities in the ward, such as the ski and snowboard centre and the gold course. Some of these are accessible to residents, but they are not included in the calculation sports provision, as they are not classed as pitch sports.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|--|-----------------------|---|
| MR1 | Evan's Walk | 0.41 | H + B LEAP |
| MR2 | Matson Ave/Redwell Road | 0.18 | I |
| MR3 | Caledonian Road | 0.09 | I |
| MR4 | Matson Ave/Winneycroft Ave | 0.2 | I |
| MR5 | Matson Park | 8.77 | J + H + E + A LEAP, 1 adult football, 1 rugby MUGA |
| MR6 | Rectory Road Gardens | 0.47 | A |
| MR7 | Matson Library | 0.4 | B |
| MR8 | Saintbridge Recreation Ground | 1.93 | J + B 1 rugby |
| MR9 | Haycroft Drive | 1.01 | B |
| MR10 | Sneedham's Green (North and South) | 1.44+2.99= 4.43 | B |
| MR11 | St Peters Rd/Matson Ave | 0.24 | B |
| MR12 | Penhill Road | 0.35 | B |
| MR13 | White City Open Space (Northfield Road) | 0.72 | B |
| MR14 | Heron Way (part) | 0.93 + 0.98 = 1.91 | E + B Calc includes part that is in Abbey Ward |
| MR15 | Baneberry Road | 2.27 | B + H LEAP |
| MR16 | Brookside Gardens | 1.42 | E + B |
| MR17 | Robinswood Hill country park (main part) | 101 | D |
| MR18 | Bibury Road | 0.28 | B |
| MR19 | Tredworth Rd cemetery | 14.7 | G |
| | Total (includes Robinswood Hill country park, Tredworth Cemetery and allotments below): | 141.64ha | |

*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|----------------------------|------|-------------------|
| MR20 | White City allotments | 0.76 | C, 26 large plots |
| MR21 | Cotteswold Road allotments | 0.1 | C, 6 small plots |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|-------------------------|------|----------------------|
| - | The Venture, White City | 0.23 | Adventure playground |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| - | Gloucester Academy site | - | Currently no shared use, may change when new school is opened. |
| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
| - | Finlay Community School | - | No public use |
| - | Old Centralians ground | 0.9 | Rugby (x 1?) |
| - | Moat Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | Robinswood Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | Matson Shops island? | - | Highway or housing land?, in public use |
| - | Hallmark Hotel Driving Range, Matson Lane | - | Golf not included in FiT sports pitch designation |
| - | Gloucester Golf Club, Matson Lane | - | Golf not included in FiT sports pitch designation |
| - | Gloucester Ski and Snowboard Centre, Matson Lane | - | Not included in FiT sports pitch designation |
| - | Robinswood Church? | - | No public use |
| - | Matson House (Selwyn School) | - | No public use |

Opportunities for improved provision

Matson and Robinswood meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but a number of sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality park infrastructure (paths, seats, bins etc), play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Robinswood Hill Country Park is a major city open space, attracting many thousands of visitors each year, both from local housing estates and beyond. There is a proposed and ongoing programme of improvements to the access, paths, signposting and other facilities at Robinswood Hill, which will benefit local residents and visitors from further afield.

Improving the allotment sites in terms of secure fencing etc is also desirable.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Matson and Robinswood Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Moreland ward - open space profile

Moreland ward is a densely built up residential ward of 19th and 20th century housing development, plus schools, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,284.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. The ward adjoins the main Gloucester Park in Westgate ward to the north and Tuffley Park to the south, so Moreland residents are also able to make use of these large open spaces and their facilities.



Moreland's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There is one allotments site in the ward.

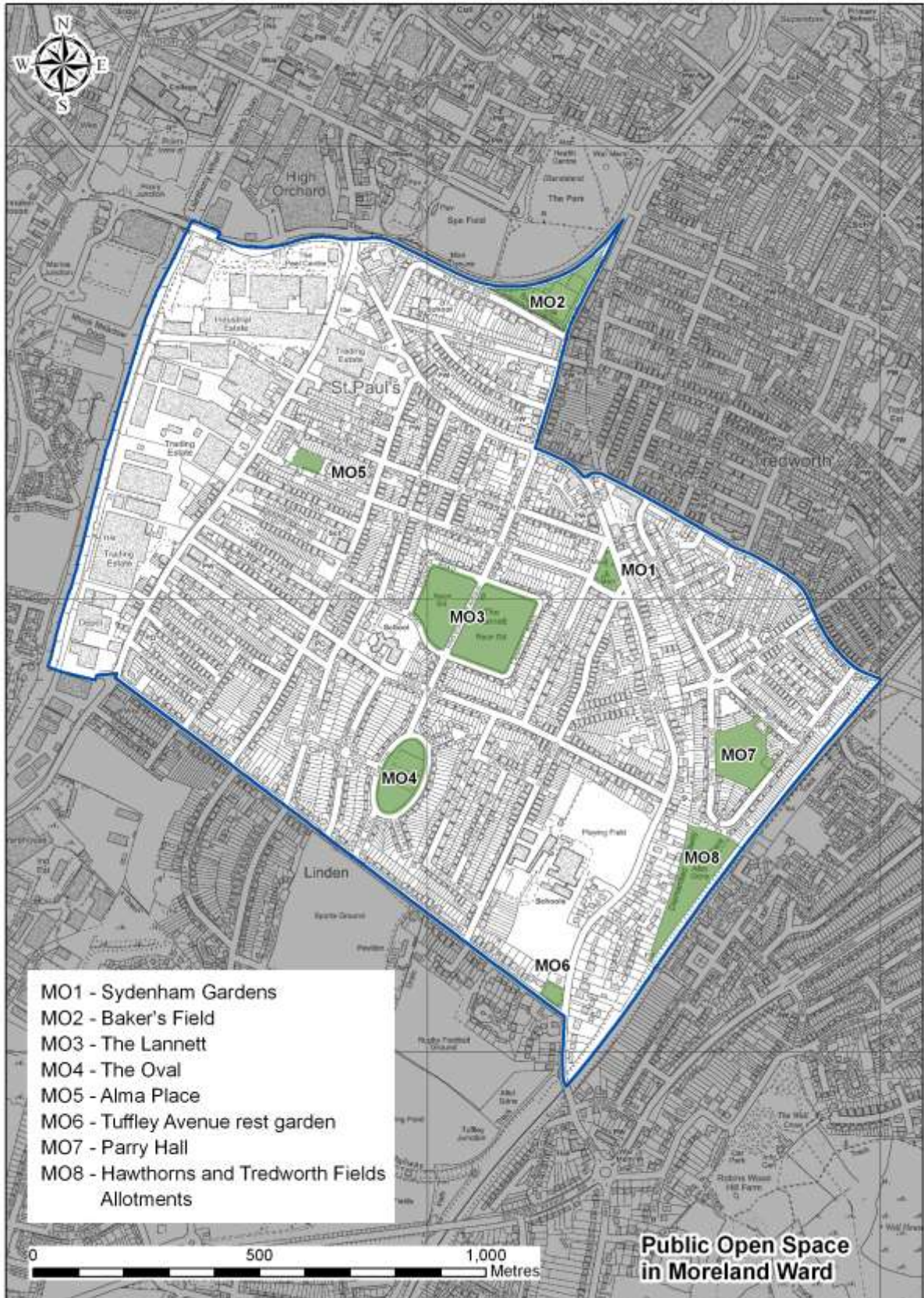
In total, the ward has 10.65ha of open space, a provision of 1.04ha per 1000 population, which falls well short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are used by local teams. Ribston Hall School allows some shared use of its grass pitches and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports pitch provision is 0.38ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.18ha per 1000, which falls just short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|---|----------------|---|
| MO1 | Sydenham Gardens | 0.29 | A |
| MO2 | Baker's Field (Gloucester Park) | 1.3 | H + J MUGA, basketball, fitness, skate, BMX, tennis x 2? |
| MO3 | The Lannett | 3.96 | J + H + B 2 rugby, LEAP, MUGA |
| MO4 | The Oval | 1.35 | H + B MUGA, tennis x 4 |
| MO5 | Alma Place | 0.26 | H LEAP, MUGA |
| MO6 | Tuffley Ave rest garden | 0.2 | A |
| MO7 | Parry Field | 1.46 | H + B LEAP, MUGA |
| | Total (includes allotments below): | 10.65ha | |

*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--------------------------------|------|--|
| MO8 | Hawthorns and Tredworth Fields | 1.83 | 75 mixed sizes, 1 large community plot |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---------------------|------|------------------------------------|
| - | Linden School | - | No public use |
| - | Ribston Hall School | 1.4 | Shared use, grass football pitches |
| - | St Pauls School | - | No public use |

Opportunities for improved provision

Moreland falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Tuffley Park and Gloucester Park also serve the residents of Moreland, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

Further improving the allotment sites in terms of secure fencing, etc is also desirable.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Moreland Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Podsmead Ward - open space profile

Podsmead ward is a mixed ward of predominantly 20th century housing development, plus schools, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 2,996.



The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation or as drainage infrastructure.

Podsmead's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows.

In total, the ward has 12.13ha of open space, a provision of 4.05ha per 1000 population, which meets and exceeds the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

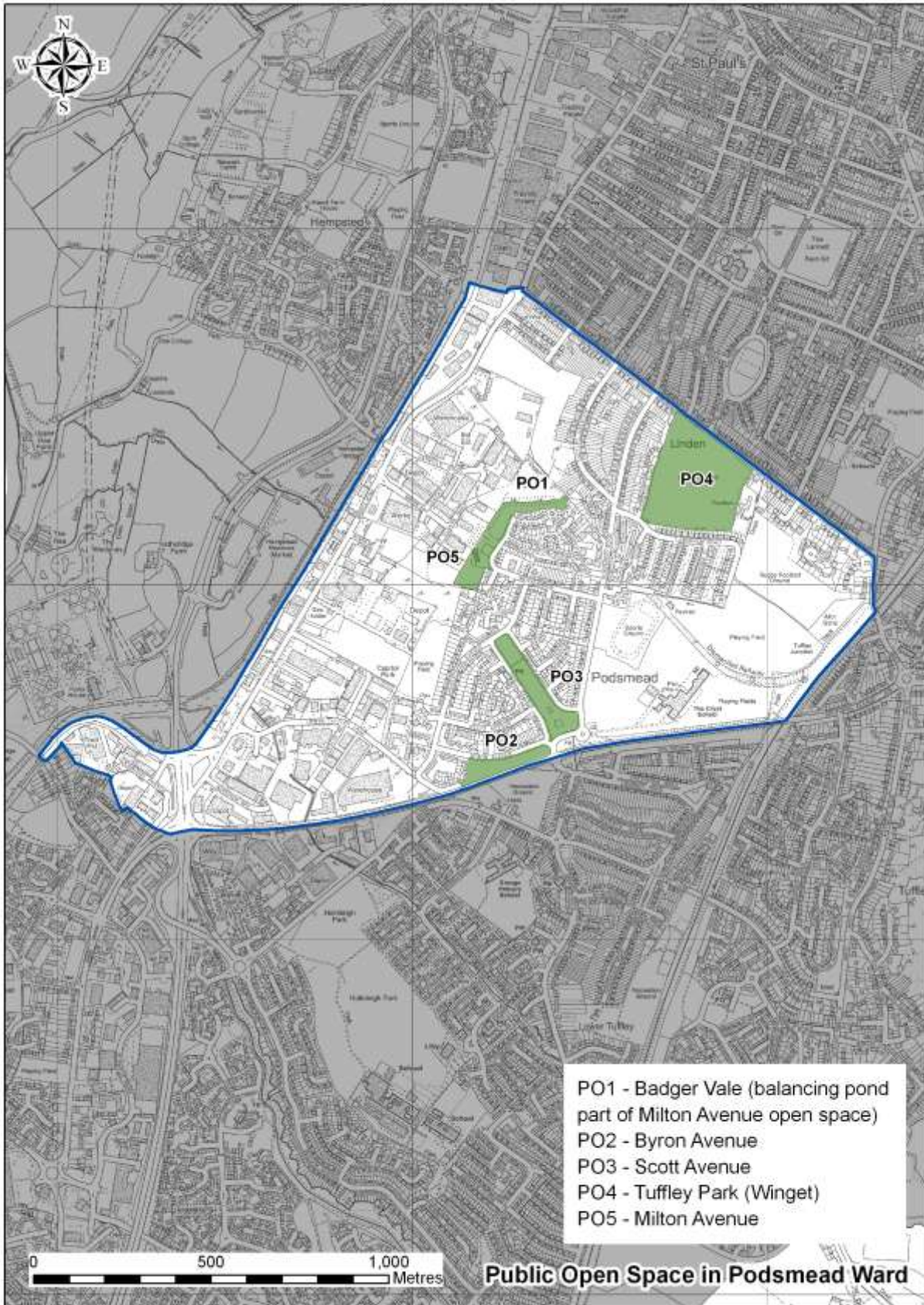
There are some formal sports pitches provided at Tuffley Park which are used by local teams. There are also a large number of private playing fields and outdoor facilities in the ward. Many of these are accessible to residents and are included in the sports pitch calculation below. The Blackbridge athletics track also serves as a city-wide facility.



Sports pitch provision is 7.99ha per 1000, which meets and exceeds the FiT benchmark standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Pitches in Podsmead also help serve the severely deficient Moreland ward.



There are two play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.13ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|--|----------------|---|
| PO1 | Badger Vale (balancing pond part of Milton Ave open space) | 0.98 | E + B |
| PO2 | Byron Ave | 1.08 | I |
| PO3 | Scott Ave | 2.07 | B + H LEAP, MUGA, shelter |
| PO4 | Tuffley Park (Winget) | 7.07 | J + B 2xCricket 2x adult football? |
| PO5 | Milton Ave | 0.93 | H + B LEAP |
| | Total: | 12.13ha | |

*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---|-------------|---|
| - | County council allotments (disused) off Stroud Rd | Future - | New plots proposed with residential development of site |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---|-------|------------------------------------|
| - | Crypt School | 1.6 | Some shared use - cricket (rugby?) |
| - | Blackbridge Athletics Track | 2.69 | Athletics club use |
| - | Old Cryptians & Tuffley Ave playing field (Blackbridge) | 11.35 | Rugby/football pitches |
| - | Winget bowls club | 0.18 | Bowling green |
| - | Tuffley Rovers FC | 2.07 | Football pitch |

Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---|------|---|
| - | Tuffley Ave playing field (Blackbridge) – see above (included in open space calculations) | - | County council owned land, currently used as formal sports pitches. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Podsmead meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, so there is no real necessity for creation of new open space in the ward, but a number of sites fall short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality park infrastructure (paths, seats, bins etc), play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Increasing the sporting usage of the large, relatively underused Tuffley Ave playing field (Blackbridge) is being explored. The site is currently owned by the County Council. There is potential to create enhanced new outdoor sports and changing facilities, including a 3G all weather pitch, possibly in association with Crypt School and Gloucester Athletics Club, to create a local sports 'hub' for the south of the city.

Planning consent for new allotments has been secured as part of the County Council Blackbridge development, but these are not yet constructed. This should happen in the next 3-5 years.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Podsmead Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Quedgeley Fieldcourt ward - open space profile

Quedgeley Fieldcourt ward is a mixed use ward. The majority of the housing stock is late 20th century, plus a large new estate built in the last 10 years as part of the ongoing Kingsway development of over 3,000 houses (ex. RAF Quedgeley). In addition to the housing there are schools, a local shopping centre, community facilities, a business park and numerous industrial, retail and commercial premises.

2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,449. However, the ongoing development of Kingsway means that the population of this ward is rising more rapidly than in other parts of the city. The open spaces in the ward have mainly been created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. A number of new open spaces are being created as part of the Kingsway development. It is intended that these will be adopted by the council, so those that are already completed and open for use have been included in the calculations for this ward. Proposed Kingsway spaces not yet constructed haven't been included.



Dimore Playing Field is also included in the overall calculation. Even though it is unadopted, it has been used by local residents for a number of years. However, it has not been included in the sports pitch calculation, because although it is designed to accommodate 2 football pitches (and a cricket pitch); it has never been laid out for formal sport.



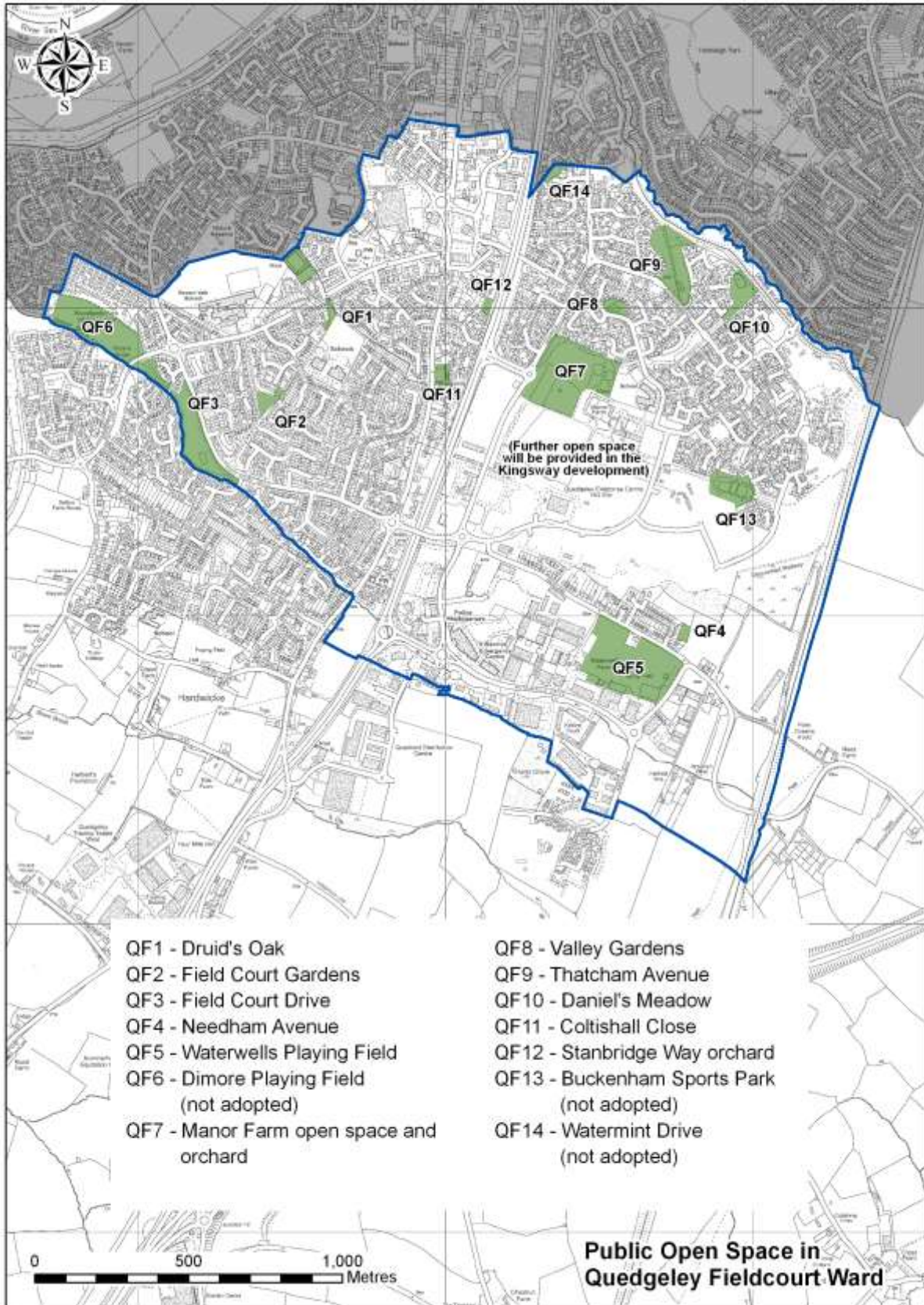
Quedgeley Fieldcourt's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. However, in the Kingsway development, there are two old orchards that are being managed less intensively, with nature conservation and preservation of the historic orchard character in mind.

In total, the ward has 22.28ha of open space, a provision of 2.13ha per 1000 population, which falls just short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are a number of formal sports pitches provided in the ward, which are generally used by local teams. Severnvale School allows some shared use of its synthetic pitch and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports pitch provision is 0.48ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Additional grass pitches will be created as the Kingsway development progresses. Pitches in Quedgeley Fieldcourt ward also help serve the severely deficient Quedgeley Severn Vale ward.

There are six play areas in the ward, plus some informal youth sports areas, which equate to 0.11ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|-------|--|-------------------------|---|
| QF1 | Druid's Oak | 0.2 | B+ H LEAP |
| QF2 | Field Court Gardens | 0.4 | B |
| QF3 | Field Court Drive | 2.86 | H + B MUGA, skate |
| QF4 | Needham Avenue | 0.17 | B |
| QF5 | Waterwells playing field | 5.41 | J + H + B MUGA, LEAP, synthetic pitch, 2 adult football, 2 junior. |
| QF6 | Dimore Playing Field* | 3.31 | B (+future J – sports pitches not yet laid out) |
| QF7 | Manor Farm open space and orchard | 4.81 | B + H + J MUGA, NEAP, 1 adult football, historic orchard |
| QF8 | Valley Gardens* | 0.33 | B + H LEAP |
| QF9 | Thatcham Avenue* open space & woodland | 2.03 | D + B |
| QF10 | Daniel's Meadow* | 0.85 | E + B |
| QF11 | Coltishall Close* | 0.31 | B + E + H LEAP |
| QF12 | Stanbridge Way orchard* | 0.14 | B |
| QF13 | Buckenham Sports Park* | 1.21 | J + H + B 2 x tennis courts, 1 x MUGA, NEAP |
| QF14 | Watermint Drive* | 0.25 | B |
| QF15+ | Kingsway development open spaces* | Additional future sites | To be confirmed |
| | Total: | 22.28ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--|------|---|
| - | Kingsway allotments and community garden (future proposed) | - | New allotments to be provided within next 5 years |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|---|------|-------------------------|
| - | Waterwells Drive, Dimore Brook corridor | - | Informal river corridor |
| - | Kingsway Primary School | - | No public use |

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|----------------------------|------|--|
| - | Woolstrop Moat | - | No public use (scheduled monument) |
| - | Severn Vale School | 0.1 | Some shared use for sports teams (synthetic pitch, tennis) |
| - | Field Court Primary School | - | No public use |

Opportunities for improved provision

Quedgeley Fieldcourt falls just short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity. However, a significant number of new open spaces are being created within the Kingsway development and these are being installed with surfaced footpath/cycleways, seats, bins and high quality sports and play facilities. Only those that are already completed and open to the public (up to April 2012) have been included in this calculation. The remaining sites will be created over the next few years, as the development nears completion.

The open space facilities in Quedgeley Fieldcourt, also help serve the adjacent Quedgeley Severn Vale ward, which is severely deficient in sports pitches. However, the busy A38 dual carriageway, which runs through the centre of the ward does act as a major barrier for residents in the west of the ward and may deter residents from accessing the new open space facilities at Kingsway and Waterwells to the east of the ward.

New allotment provision has also been secured in the Kingsway development, but this is not yet constructed. This should happen in the next 3-5 years.

Needham Avenue is a peripheral open space accessed from a private road off Naas Lane in Quedgeley. Open space provision along Naas Lane is now well served by Waterwells Playing Field, so Needham Avenue may be a site to consider for disposal.

There are several play areas in Quedgeley that are managed by Quedgeley Parish Council. Some of the play equipment is nearing the end of its useful life and the city council will work with the Parish to investigate opportunities for funding new play areas.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Quedgeley Fieldcourt Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Quedgeley Severn Vale ward - open space profile

Quedgeley Severn Vale ward is predominantly housing from the late 20th century, plus schools, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 7,128.

The open spaces in the ward have mainly been created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. Green Farm Orchard is designated as a local nature reserve, as is Quedgeley Arboretum.

A number of Quedgeley Severn Vale's open spaces are natural woodland areas with others maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. The LNRs are managed to an agreed management plan, beneficial to the natural habitat.



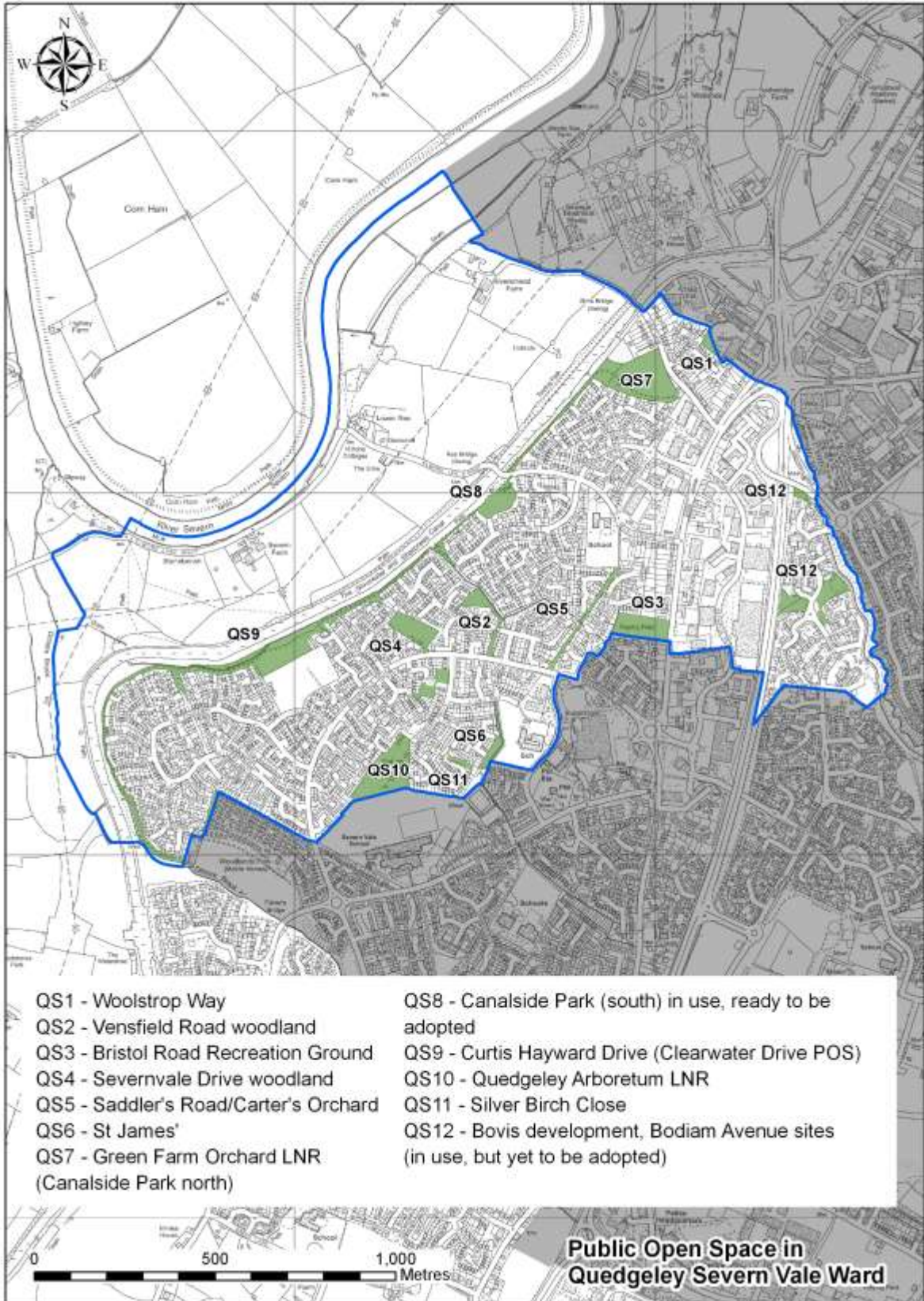
In total, the ward has 7.71ha of open space, a provision of 1.08ha per 1000 population, which falls well short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are no formal sports pitches provided in the ward to meet the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Pitches in the adjacent Quedgeley Fieldcourt and Grange wards help serve the severely deficient Quedgeley Severn Vale ward.



There are two small play areas in the ward (both managed by Quedgeley Parish Council), which equate to 0.05ha per 1000, which fall well short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.

The Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and towpath runs through the ward, providing good recreational opportunities. There are some private (school) playing fields and outdoor facilities in the ward, but these are not generally accessible to residents.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|--|---------------|---|
| QS1 | Woolstrop Way | 0.14 | H LEAP |
| QS2 | Vensfield Road woodland | 0.28 | D |
| QS3 | Bristol Road Rec. | 0.87 | B + H LEAP |
| QS4 | Severnvale Drive woodland | 0.71 | D |
| QS5 | Saddler's Road/Carter's Orchard | 0.29 | I |
| QS6 | St James' | 0.26 | I |
| QS7 | Green Farm Orchard LNR (Canalside Park north) | 2.33 | D |
| QS8 | Canalside Park (south) in use, ready to be adopted | 0.84 | I + B + E check size |
| QS9 | Curtis Hayward Drive (Clearwater Drive POS) | 0.31 | B |
| QS10 | Quedgeley Arboretum LNR | 1.55 | D |
| QS11 | Silver Birch Close | 0.13 | B |
| QS12 | Bovis development, Bodiam Ave sites (not yet adopted) | Future - | - |
| | Total: | 7.71ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------|------|-------------|
| - | none | - | |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--|------|---|
| - | Beech Green Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | Meadowside Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | Clearwater Drive reserved site | - | Informal, permitted public use, site likely to be developed in the future |
| - | Gloucester & Sharpness Canal and towpath | - | Linear footpath with permitted public access, fishing, cycling etc. |

Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--|------|--|
| - | Land off Clearwater Drive (not included in open space calculations) | - | County council owned land, reserved for future development, but currently used as informal open space. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Quedgeley Severn Vale falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality park infrastructure and facilities on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Holmleigh Park and Field Court Drive also serve the residents of Quedgeley Severn Vale, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

There are a number of woodlands and more natural open spaces in the ward. These will have different management requirements and it is anticipated that a survey/action plan for these will be carried out to ensure their long term viability.

The Canalside Park open space is a linear walkway/series of spaces running parallel to and linking with the canal and the main towpath, which is popular for informal recreation. Improvements to the signage, linkages, vegetation management and accessibility of this open space are proposed to encourage more people to use the space.

There are several play areas in Quedgeley that are managed by Quedgeley Parish Council. Some of the play equipment is nearing the end of its useful life and the city council will work with the Parish to investigate opportunities for funding new play areas.

An area of undeveloped land at Clearwater Drive is currently well used by residents for informal recreation, linking to the city council's Clearwater Drive open space (QS9) and canalside park. This site is owned by the County Council and was originally reserved for a possible school site. However, there may be future plans to develop the site for housing. Any proposals will need to give consideration to the wildlife using the site and provision of open space may be required as part of the new development.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Quedgeley Severn Vale Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Tuffley ward - open space profile

Tuffley ward is a residential ward of predominantly 20th century housing development, plus schools, some local shops and private farmland. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 5,888.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation or as a buffer to the mainline railway.

Tuffley's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There is one allotments site in the ward. The east of the ward also meets the boundary of Robinswood Hill Country Park.



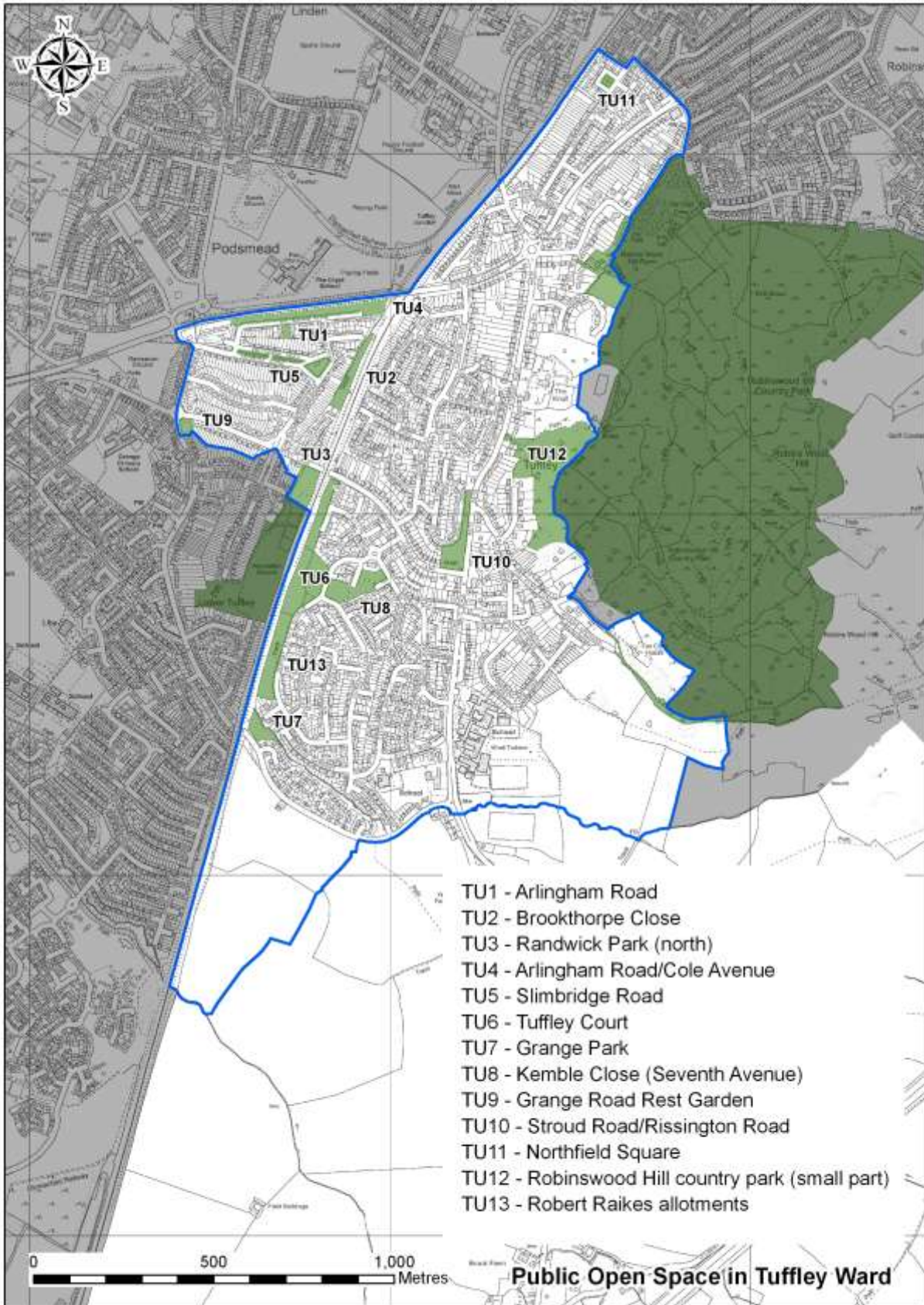
In total, the ward has 7.02ha of open space, a provision of 1.19ha per 1000 population, which falls well short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

St Peters High School allows some shared use of its pitches (and these form the sports pitch calculation below), but there are no other formal sports pitches provided on open space in the ward. Sports pitch provision therefore is 0.26ha per 1000,



which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Pitches in the adjacent Grange and Podsmead wards help serve the severely deficient Tuffley ward.

There is one play area in the ward, which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls severely short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|---|---------------|---|
| TU1 | Arlingham Road | 0.08 | B |
| TU2 | Brookthorpe Close | 0.55 | B |
| TU3 | Randwick Park (north) | - | Included in Grange ward calc |
| TU4 | Arlingham Rd/Cole Ave | 0.55 | I |
| TU5 | Slimbridge Road | 0.75 | B |
| TU6 | Tuffley Court | 1.87 | B + H MUGA, shelter |
| TU7 | Grange Park | 0.34 | B |
| TU8 | Kemble Close (Seventh Ave) | 0.8 | B + H LEAP |
| TU9 | Grange Rd Rest Garden | 0.17 | A |
| TU10 | Stroud Rd/Rissington Rd | 0.82 | B |
| TU11 | Northfield Square | 0.11 | B |
| TU12 | Robinswood Hill country park (small part) | - | Included in calculation for Matson ward |
| | Total (includes allotments below): | 7.02ha | |

*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--------------------------|------|---------------------|
| TU13 | Robert Raikes allotments | 0.98 | C 31 large plots |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|
| - | Tuffley Primary School | - | No public use |
| - | St Peters High School | 1.57 | Shared use synthetic and rugby pitch |

Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|--|------|--|
| - | Land off Grange Road (not included in open space calculations) | - | Currently open farmland on edge of city. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Tuffley falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for the creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality park infrastructure and facilities on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Robinswood Hill and Randwick Park also serve the residents of Tuffley, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

There is an opportunity to create a full, informal MUGA and improved children's and teenage play area at Tuffley Court open space.

Further improving the allotment site in terms of secure fencing etc is also desirable.

An area of undeveloped farm land off of Grange Road has been identified in the Joint Core Strategy as a potential infill housing site. This allocation is subject to further consultation in 2014. Any housing proposals would need to provide open space as part of the new development.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Tuffley Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Westgate ward - open space profile

Westgate ward is the largest ward by area in the city. A mixed ward encompassing Gloucester city centre, plus open farmland leading down to the River Severn, the ward contains housing development, schools, community facilities, retail, industrial, commercial premises, the city's landfill site and main sewage works. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 6,619.

Some of the open spaces in the ward are quite historic, including the grounds of Llanthony Secunda Priory (now held in Trust) and Gloucester Park. Others are civic spaces such as King's Square. There are also more natural spaces such as Alney Island Nature Reserve.



Westgate's open spaces are managed in a mixture of ways. The city centre spaces tend to be formal and mainly hard surfaced; there are areas of short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Some are more informal. Alney Island is managed by the city council's Countryside Unit.



Including the Alney Island nature reserve, the ward has 120.42ha of open space, a provision of 18.19ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

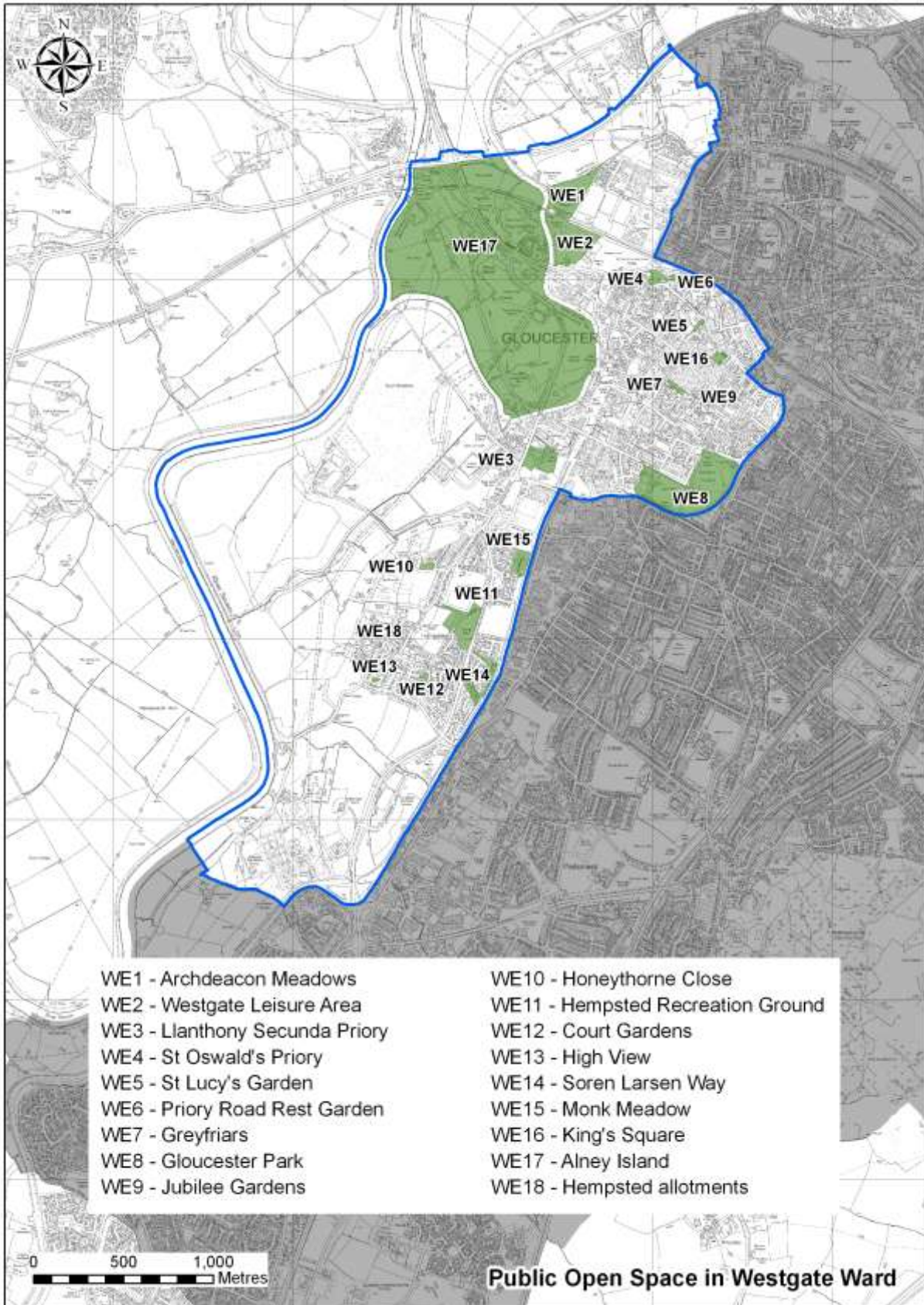
There are formal sports pitches provided in Gloucester Park and at Hempsted Recreation Ground, which are used by local teams. Private sports facilities are also available at Gordon League (rugby pitches) and Riverside Sports Centre (tennis courts) and these are included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports pitch provision is 1.15ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are four play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.06ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



There are a number of other private open spaces in the ward, including the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal & towpath, many of which have easy public access (see table below).



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Public space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description (see list of open space types) |
|------|---|-----------------|--|
| WE1 | Archdeacon Meadows | 3.81 | B |
| WE2 | Westgate Leisure Area | 5.1 | A |
| WE3 | Llanthony Secunda Priory* | 2.2 | A |
| WE4 | St Oswald's Priory | 0.64 | A |
| WE5 | St Lucy's Garden | 0.15 | A |
| WE6 | Priory Rd Rest Garden | 0.09 | A |
| WE7 | Greyfriars | 0.32 | A |
| WE8 | Gloucester Park | 11.39 | A + H + J LEAP, bowls, cricket, 1 adult football |
| WE9 | Jubilee Gardens | 0.06 | A |
| WE10 | Honeythorne Close | 0.31 | B |
| WE11 | Hempsted Recreation Ground* (inc. 0.6 extension off Horseshoe Way) | 2.94 | B + H LEAP, 1 adult football |
| WE12 | Court Gardens | 0.14 | I |
| WE13 | High View | 0.12 | I |
| WE14 | Soren Larsen Way | 1.52 | B + H LEAP |
| WE15 | Monk Meadow Open Space | 1.15 | B + H LEAP |
| WE16 | King's Square | 0.44 | F |
| WE17 | Alney Island Nature Reserve & Richard's Wood | 90 | D |
| | Total (inc. allotments below and Alney Island): | 120.42ha | |

*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

Allotments

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|----------|------|--------------------|
| WE18 | Hempsted | 0.04 | C 2 large plots |

Private/other open space

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|------|-------------------------------------|------|---|
| - | Cathedral grounds | - | Informal recreation/gardens |
| - | Severn Trent nature reserve | - | Wildlife reserve, no formal public access |
| - | Netheridge Farm | - | Informal access via public footpath network |
| - | Hempsted Meadows/Netheridge reserve | - | Informal access via public footpath network |
| - | Sudmeadow Landfill | - | Informal access via public footpath network |
| - | Gordon League RFC | 3.90 | Rugby pitches, club use |
| - | Sylvanus Lysons Trust Land, | - | No public use |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|---|
| | Hempsted Lane | | |
| - | Gloucester FC, Sudmeadow Road | - | No public use |
| - | Brunswick Square | - | Private garden, informal public access allowed |
| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
| - | | | |
| - | Town Ham field (ex. Allotments) | - | Owned by city council, but not currently in use |
| - | St Michael's Square garden | - | Informal public access |
| - | Gloucester Docks | - | Docks open spaces and quayside paths, public access permitted |
| - | Kings School playing fields | - | No public access |
| - | Port Ham/Castlemeads | - | Canal and River Trust land, informal public access |
| - | Llanthony Lock | - | Informal public access permitted on local footpath network |
| - | Riverside Leisure Centre | 0.23 | Tennis courts for members use |
| - | Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and towpath | - | Canal and River Trust land, informal public access permitted |
| - | Gloucester Quays/Peel Centre | - | Informal access to quayside |
| - | | | |
| - | | | |

Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

| Ref. | Name | Size | Description |
|-------------|--|-------------|---|
| - | Land off Hempsted Lane (not included in open space calculations) | - | Currently private farmland, owned by Sylvanus Lysons Trust. |

Opportunities for improved provision

Westgate ward meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but a number of sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality park infrastructure (paths, seats, bins etc), play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Alney Island is a large area of natural countryside, enveloped by the river Severn, but just a short walk from the city centre. An ongoing programme of improvements to the access, paths, signposting and other facilities at Alney Island will encourage more users to walk, cycle and explore the area.

Investment in the Westgate Leisure Area is also planned, so that this once thriving space is brought back into more active use, with footpath links to the Severn Way and the wider countryside made more prominent.

There is a very small allotment site in Hempsted consists of just two plots. The feasibility of creating a larger site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

Civic Spaces such as Kings Square are likely to see changes proposed as the landscape of the city centre adapts to current and future challenges. Providing high quality, functional and sustainable city centre open spaces is one of the council's key priorities.

The city council is currently developing a new area of open space at Hempsted Meadows/Netheridge Farm. This natural open space is incorporating improved habitat for wildlife, plus creating new walks and links to the wider footpath network along the canal and beyond. The city council also manages The Severnside Project, which has been working with local landowners, partners and volunteers on the western fringe of the city, between the canal and River Severn, to manage and improve the wildlife habitat and the footpath network.

An area of undeveloped farm land off of Hempsted Lane has been identified in the Joint Core Strategy as a potential infill housing site. The land is owned by a charity, The Sylvanus Lysons Trust, who have submitted initial proposals for residential development on the site. Any housing scheme would need to provide open space as part of the new development.

Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Westgate Ward Open Space Action Plan.

Section 9: Open space delivery plan

Introduction

In order to meet the objectives of this strategy there will need to be much further work done by council officers, to develop the mechanisms to implement and monitor the proposed action points and to consult with each local community and agree a set of detailed open space priorities.

Developing Open Space Action Plans for each city ward, in consultation with local residents and councillors, will identify specific proposals to improve quality and facilities in local parks and spaces. These will be put together with the corporate priorities to create an overall action plan, which will be ratified by councillors.

Some action points will require a financial investment, so progress will depend on capital funding streams. This may include disposal of some marginal areas of land, if the ambition to make multiple quality open space improvements during the life of this strategy is to be realised. All proceeds from the disposal of open spaces would be ring fenced for reinvestment back into parks and open space improvements, based on an approved list of priorities, so that all areas of the city can benefit. Priority will be to ensure, as far as possible, that each part of Gloucester has some good quality open space and a range of outdoor facilities as soon as reasonably possible.

Public consultation is essential in ensuring that decisions are influenced by the views of local people. Parks are about people. The parks groups that already exist across the city, who commit time and effort to improving their local spaces are also vital to helping us improve the quality of our parks. Our Neighbourhood Management officers will continue to monitor parks and open space, meet with residents and liaise with local groups and Neighbourhood Partnerships, to ensure residents' needs and concerns are heard and addressed.

Quality grounds maintenance is also key to improving user satisfaction in our open spaces and the council will continue to work closely with our grounds maintenance partner, Enterprise, to look at how we can make improvements whilst providing good value for money.

We will monitor the delivery plan and review progress annually, updating completed work and making approved changes as necessary.

Key sites and priorities

There are a number of key open spaces in Gloucester, which serve an enhanced role in the city's open space portfolio. These principal spaces can often provide a backdrop to festivals and events; some attract visitors from outside the city and all help to give the city its unique character.

| Name | Primary uses | Primary objectives to 2019 |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Gloucester Park | City's main historic park City centre location Sports ground <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major events and gathering space (e.g. Gloucester Festival) QEII Fields designation 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve and manage to a high standard – working towards achieving Green Flag standard. Promote for events |
| Robinswood Hill Country Park | Country Park Major area of natural habitat Winter sledging hill HQ of Glos Wildlife Trust SSSI (geological) in quarry area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beacon/highest point in the city QEII Fields designation 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved visitor facilities, upgraded ranger centre including mobile catering facility, improved signage, leaflets, trails and seating Promote for suitable events |
| Plock Court playing field | Main sports ground Synthetic pitch Oxstalls tennis centre /changing facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major events QEII Fields designation 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality and management of sports provision Creation of natural wetland habitat area Promote for events |
| Alney Island Nature Reserve | Riverside walks Designated Local Nature Reserve Flood Plain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severn Bore viewing Events on Oxlease field Close to city centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access, visitor experience, links to wider countryside Promote for suitable events |
| King's Square | Main city centre civic space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible space for events all year round | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to invest in improved civic space provision in the city centre |

To recognise their wider importance to the city three of these open spaces; Gloucester Park, Plock Court and Robinswood Hill Country Park were designated as protected Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) fields in 2012.

This is a campaign operated by Fields in Trust to protect outdoor recreational spaces in communities all across the country as a permanent living legacy of the Queen's 2012 Diamond Jubilee in 2012 and the 2012 London Olympics. The campaign aims to protect 2,012 outdoor recreational spaces as a permanent living legacy of these landmark occasions. Once designated, they cannot be used for other purposes, unless replaced with other suitable land of equal area.

Delivery Plan 2014-2019

Key - EP= Environmental Planning Team, **PP=** Planning Policy Team, **CP=** Corporate Property Team, **NMS=** Neighbourhood Management Service, **Crem=** Crematorium and Cemeteries Team, **CU=** Countryside Unit, **Aspire=** Aspire Sports and Leisure Trust

General

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|--|---|--|---|---------------------------|
| Consult residents, councillors and local groups on draft open space strategy | Via Friends Groups, Neighbourhood Partnerships, stakeholder groups, newsletters, direct consultation sessions | Formal adoption of strategy | Consultation summer 2013, Formal adoption February 2014, Publish adopted strategy by March 2014 | NMS EP |
| Develop Open Space Action Plans for each city ward | Via Friends groups, Neighbourhood Partnerships, stakeholder groups, newsletters, direct consultation sessions | Formal adoption of 15 Open Space Action Plans | Publish Draft Action Plans for consultation, with formal adoption by December 2015. Action plans to be reviewed annually. | NMS EP PP |
| Invest at least £200k capital spending per year into open space improvements | Developer contributions, existing capital budgets, grants and site disposals. | Increased quality of site facilities | £200k per annum (i.e. £1m over 5 years), reviewed annually | EP NMS CU |
| Identify 10 under-used open spaces and seek alternative uses or disposal | Assessment of existing open space portfolio. Formal disposal process if required | Increased public use of spaces or additional funds for open space from sales of land | By December 2014 | EP NMS CP |
| Carry out annual parks user satisfaction survey | Postal survey of sample households from each city ward and online via website | Increase user satisfaction each year | Annually – end of year 2014-2019 | NMS EP |
| Provide and develop policies to protect private playing fields from development | Formal planning procedure via City Plan | Adopted City Plan with formal policy protection for private playing fields | Consultation Spring 2014 Formal adoption after JCS, late 2014 | PP EP |
| Build on Bee City status to provide food plants for bees and other insects | Continue to plant bee-friendly meadow flowers and trees. | Increased number of trees and flower areas | On-going | NMS EP |

Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued

General

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| Update supplementary planning guidance to provide detailed open space guidance for planners and developers | Formal planning procedure via City Plan | Adopted planning guidance | Draft document by December 2015 | PP EP |
| Provide up to date information on all open spaces and facilities on council website | Input existing paper information, GIS mapping, photos etc to create open space resource on our website | Accessible on-line information and knowledge base for the public. | By December 2015 | NMS EP |
| Use our open space network to help combat the effects of climate change | Work with volunteer groups and contractors to plant trees 1,000 trees per year in our open spaces | Increased tree cover to help mitigate negative environmental impacts | 5,000 trees planted by December 2019 | EP NMS Enterprise Volunteers |
| Secure new open spaces, facilities and funding as part of new housing development | Negotiate with housing developers | Additional open spaces or upgraded facilities | On-going | EP |
| Promote our open spaces for events and community activities | Information on spaces, facilities and booking method as part of updated website information | Increased public events in our open spaces | On-going | NMS Marketing Gloucester Aspire |
| Monitor action plan progress annually, with a 5 year review of this strategy | Evolve Open Space Strategy Working Group into Open Space Strategy Monitoring group (officers) | Achieve actions identified in Delivery Plan | Quarterly meetings, annual review and report | Open Space Strategy Monitoring Group |
| Provide technical and practical support to community groups to secure external funding | Officer support and advice to community groups | Increased external funding applications and improved facilities on site | On-going | NMS EP |
| Support community involvement in managing the city's open spaces | Officer support and advice to existing or fledgling groups or individuals | Increased public involvement in managing open spaces | On-going | NMS |

Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued

Parks and Gardens

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|--|---|--|--|---------------------------|
| Improve parks quality and work towards achieving 2 additional Green Flag awards | Develop management plans for 2 additional sites & address quality issues on site. | Green Flag Award status for 3 parks in total | Annual Green Flag applications: Submit three by March 2019 | NMS Enterprise |

Informal green space

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Increase open spaces managed under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares | Change maintenance/mowing regimes, introduce additional flora if required | Increased biodiversity of previously gang-mown sites | 1 hectare per year to December 2019 | EP Enterprise CU |

Allotments

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|--|---|---|--|---------------------------|
| Improve existing allotment sites to ensure full use | Monitor sites and identify unused plots | Full occupation of available plots | On-going | NMS |
| Prepare and publish an Allotment Strategy | In house report | Clear statement on allotment policies and practices | Draft strategy by December 2014 Consultation Spring 2015. Formal adoption by July 2015 | NMS |
| Identify 5 sites where new allotments could be provided on existing open spaces across the city | Assessment of existing open space portfolio. | Increased use of marginal space, more allotment holders | By December 2014 | EP NMS |
| Negotiate allotment provision in new developments | Using planning policy to secure new allotment provision | Allotment provision in new developments | On-going | EP |

Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued

Countryside and natural green space

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|--|---|---|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Protect and enhance our natural green spaces and habitats. | Long term Stewardship agreements and grants | Improved habitat and management practices | On-going | CU |
| Increase open spaces managed under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares | Change maintenance/mowing regimes, introduce additional flora if required | Increased biodiversity of previously grass-mown sites | 1 hectare per year | EP Enterprise CU |

Green Infrastructure

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|---|-----------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| Publish draft Green Infrastructure plan | In house report | Increased awareness and understanding of GI needs and benefits | Draft document published Oct 2013, formal adoption by April 2014 | EP |
| Publish SUDS Design & Adoption Guide | In house/consultants report | Improved provision of quality SUDS schemes in new development | Adopted July 2013. To be adopted as SAB (SUDS Adoption Body) document by April 2014. | EP |

Civic Spaces

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|---|---|---|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Work with partners to develop and provide high quality city centre open spaces | Develop masterplan for land owned by the city in conjunction with commercial partners and investors | Improved city centre spaces, increased visitor satisfaction | 2014-2019 | City Centre Team |

Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued

Cemeteries

| What we will do | How we will do it | How we will measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|---|--|---|--|---------------------------|
| Manage the city's cemeteries to a high standard | Publish a set of standards for grounds maintenance in our cemeteries | Increased customer awareness and satisfaction | Draft standards by December | Crem |
| Encourage greater visitor numbers for informal recreation | Increased information and promotion of sites for informal recreation. Publish a leaflet and information on website | Increased footfall | As part of open space marketing/promotion by December 2015 | Crem EP |
| Enhance cemetery sites for nature conservation and habitat improvement | Change existing management regime to be more wildlife friendly | Increased biodiversity | Annual review by December 2015 and ongoing | Crem EP |

Spaces for children and young people

| What we want to do | How we will do it | How will we measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Assess and improve existing children and young people's play areas | Annual play area assessments to establish priority sites for refurbishment | At least two new or refurbished play areas per year | 2 sites completed per financial year | EP NMS |
| To provide further opportunities for recreation for teenagers and young people in existing open spaces | User surveys | Increased user satisfaction through user surveys | Consult with CYP on-going | NMS EP |
| To negotiate new provision and funding for new open space facilities for children and young people | Negotiation with developers | Increased sites for CYP, better facilities | On-going | EP |

Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued

Sports provision

| What we want to do | How we will do it | How will we measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|---|--|---|---|---------------------------|
| Review and publish an updated Playing Pitch Strategy | In house report | Adopted report with recommendations for improved sports pitches | Consult with sports clubs & bodies 2013. Publish Draft Strategy by Sept 2014. Final adopted version by December 2014. | PP EP |
| Improve and develop quality sports pitch provision across the city | Identify a programme of works as party of Playing Pitch Strategy | Implement programme of works to increase pitch quality | On-going | NMS EP |
| Encourage participation in sport and healthy outdoor activity | Increased access to our facilities and clubs | Improved health, better used facilities | On-going | Aspire |

Amenity green space

| What we want to do | How we will do it | How will we measure success | Timescale for action | Who will lead on delivery |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Identify potential new sites for tree planting and habitat improvements | Assess potential sites | Increased biodiversity of sites | On-going | EP NMS Enterprise |

Key

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Section 10: Conclusion

In the ten years since the previous Open Space Strategy was adopted, there has been extensive investment in the city's parks and open spaces. New sites have been created as developers build new housing estates and existing facilities have been upgraded using their financial contributions. However, there is still much for us to do.

Although the total provision of open space in Gloucester (including our country parks, nature reserves, cemeteries and allotments) meets and exceeds the proposed minimum standard of 2.8 hectares per 1000 residents, this general overall figure does not paint the whole picture. A detailed ward analysis shows considerable variations across the city, with Barton and Tredworth, Moreland, Kingsholm and Wotton, Hucclecote, Tuffley and Quedgeley Severn Vale wards falling significantly below the standard in terms of quantity.

The inconsistent distribution across the city is further illustrated in the ward by ward analysis of formal sports pitches and children's play provision, again showing some serious shortfalls in quantity. Only 3 wards met the proposed minimum standard for sports pitches and none of the 15 city wards meet the minimum standard for formal play. Access to sites is also key –good quality open spaces and facilities within easy walking distance are generally the most used.

Whilst opportunities to correct deficiencies in open space quantity is limited by lack of available land, the opportunity to increase and develop high quality facilities for sport and play are only limited by the availability of funding. The ability of the council to generate or source capital funding through partners is fundamental to implementing the actions proposed in the Delivery Plan. Ensuring this investment is well maintained and managed is also key to the strategy, as is addressing residents' open space management concerns such as anti-social behaviour, including dog fouling.

Private playing fields and sports facilities contribute greatly to the city's sports provision and are greatly valued and we will continue to support planning policies to protect them against development wherever possible. The 2005 Playing Pitch Strategy is being reviewed alongside this strategy and will provide an up to date and detailed analysis of current and future needs in conjunction with projected population growth.

Ensuring that residents and open space users have their say about how the council plans the future changes to our green spaces is vital to local community cohesion. Involving residents in looking after their local spaces through Friends Groups is even better, and the council is committed to supporting these groups into the future.

Regular monitoring of progress and completion of the numerous proposals set out in the Delivery Plan is vital, to ensure the full value of the strategy is realised.

As Gloucester continues to develop and grow, the council will ensure that our city's well loved and well used open spaces are protected, improved and able to adapt to accommodate future growth and the aspirations of its citizens.



Draft Open Space Action Plan for **Hucclecote** ward

Gloucester's Open Space Vision 2014-2019: To create and manage a diverse network of good quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester.

Introduction

This draft document is one of 15 ward action plans which support the open space strategy for Gloucester and should be read alongside with the main document (add web link to full strategy).

What is the Open Space Strategy? – It is a report that assesses the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces across Gloucester.

The Strategy sets out the proposed standards for different types of open space, identifies where there are shortfalls and proposes actions and improvements which could help address those needs. It identifies a number of strategic open spaces that serve the city as a whole, but also highlights the importance of having high quality, local open spaces, accessible to every community in the city.

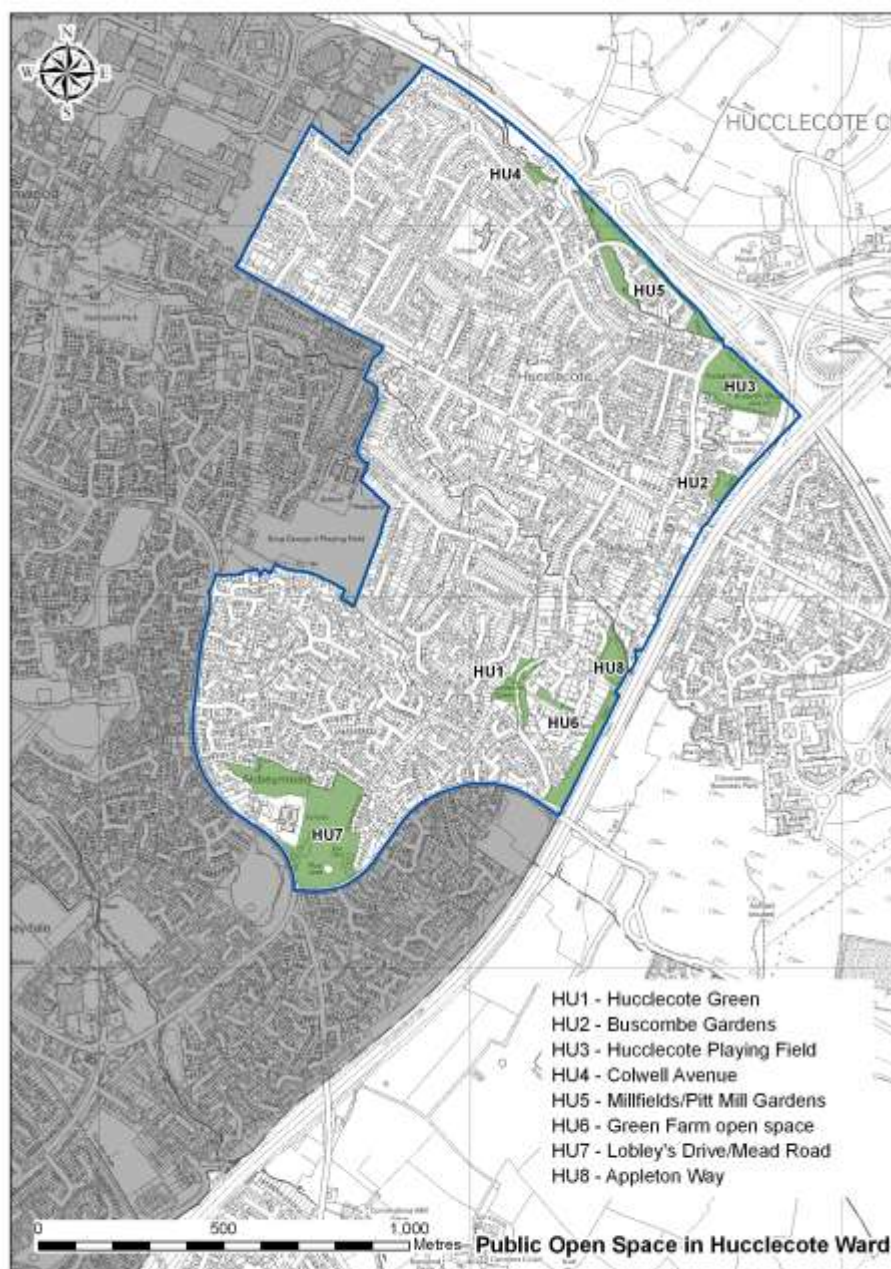
The strategy document sets out a series of Open Space Objectives and a Delivery Plan to help the council deliver the open space vision for Gloucester. One of the main Objectives is to produce an Open Space Action Plan for every city ward.

What is an Open Space Action Plan for?

This draft Action Plan identifies potential priorities and improvements to open spaces within the Hucclecote ward, which will help develop and improve a network of high quality, active and safe open spaces across the ward and the city as a whole.

What's not included?

The action plan does not include proposals for green spaces that are not freely accessible to the public, e.g. school grounds, private open spaces and private playing fields, open farmland etc.



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Open Space in Hucclecote ward

The open spaces in Hucclecote are all on the periphery of the generally residential ward. Only two fields are large enough for playing pitches (Lobley's Drive/Mead Road & Hucclecote Playing Field).

The open spaces were largely created as part of housing estate development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, or they are functional for drainage or buffers to the M5 motorway and A417 Gloucester Northern Bypass. Hucclecote Green is an older, more traditional area of unfenced village green/common land.

Although open space within the ward is relatively limited, the ward adjoins the King George V Playing Field, Duncroft Road and Greenways open spaces in Barnwood ward to the west and Contour Park and Hucclecote Hay Meadows Nature Reserve in Abbey Ward to the south, so Hucclecote residents are also able to make use of these nearby open spaces and their facilities.

Hucclecote's open spaces are generally managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Hucclecote Hay Meadows (Abbey Ward) are managed by the city council's Countryside Unit, who would also to improve the habitat value of Appleton Way balancing pond and the M5 buffer zone by managing the grassland for wildflowers.

Meeting the proposed standards:

Quantity - In total the ward has 12.54ha of open space, a provision of 1.42ha per 1000 population, which falls short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

Outdoor sports provision is 0.39ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There is one small play area at Mead Road which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.

Quality –

| Type | Existing quality |
|---------------------|------------------|
| General open spaces | To be confirmed |
| Play area | To be confirmed |
| Playing pitches | To be confirmed |

Accessibility –

The open spaces in the ward are located at the northern, eastern and southern edges of the ward, peripheral to housing, leaving many parts of ward limited access to POS. There are open spaces in adjoining wards, which serve Hucclecote residents living in the west of the ward.

The small play area at Duncroft Road serves almost exclusively Hucclecote residents, despite being located in Barnwood ward. This play area will be upgraded by spring 2014.

| Type | Accessibility standard (FiT benchmark) | Current Hucclecote ward provision |
|---|--|--|
| LEAP (small play area) | 400m walking distance (see plan) | Play area at Mead Road serves the south part of Hucclecote ward. Duncroft Road play area (Barnwood) serves the NW of the ward. King George V play area (Barnwood) serves the west of the ward. |
| NEAP (large play area) | 1km walking distance (see plan) | Does not currently meet this standard: Nearest NEAP is at Clock Tower Park, over 2km walking distance to furthest parts of Hucclecote. |
| Playing pitches | Within 1.2km of all dwellings in major residential areas | Meets this standard: Access to Hucclecote playing field, Lobley's/Mead Road or King George V is within 1.2km for all Hucclecote residents. |
| Community tennis courts | Within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas) | Meets this standard: Community tennis courts at Greenways (Barnwood) and Clock Tower Park (Barnwood) |
| Athletics track (6 lane) with floodlighting, per 250,000 people | Within 30 minutes drive time | Meets this standard: Blackbridge Athletics Track at Podsmead |
| Bowls | One green within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas) | Bowling greens (private clubs) located at British Energy (Barnwood) and Sisson Road (Elmbridge) |

Add map showing walking distances

Key city priority sites – there are no key open space sites in Hucclecote ward

Key open space sites in Hucclecote ward:

| Site | Size (hectares) | Map ref no: |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Hucclecote Playing Field | 2.52 | HU3 |
| Lobleys Drive/Mead Rd | 5.67 | HU7 |

Key proposed actions:

| Site | Action | Timescale |
|--|---|-----------|
| Hucclecote Playing Field | Investigate options to increase pitch provision on sloping part of site | |
| | Install new benches and litter bins | |
| | Improve measures to control dog mess | |
| | Install MUGA (multi-use games area) | |
| | Re-instate fence to A417 boundary | |
| | Increase parking areas (dependent on development of adjoining Hucclecote Centre) | |
| | Improve cricket pitch maintenance | |
| | Improve signage to open space | |
| Lobley's Drive/Mead Road open space | Draw up mini-management plan for this open space, including tree work and path clearance | |
| | Programme extensive tree management/thinning and improve ditch clearance | |
| | Improve measures to control dog mess | |
| | Install additional litter bins | |
| | Skate park – improve maintenance and explore future expansion, install seating | |
| | Lobley's car park – improve surfacing, investigate relocation of Amey wood chippings to a different site. | |
| | Install seating | |
| | Explore potential for additional junior football pitches at Lobley's (drainage issues) | |
| | Programme footpath/cycleway clearance, carry out surface repairs as required. | |
| | Expand play area at Mead Road, to include equipment for older children, explore potential for MUGA | |

Other sites/actions:

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Hucclecote Green Colwell Avenue Green Farm open space Pit Mill Gardens Millfields | <p>Management of these informal spaces will be relatively minimal, to include grass cutting & tree management.</p> <p>Extra dog/litter bins to be installed wherever necessary</p> | |
| Buscombe Gardens Appleton Way | <p>These spaces are primarily food storage/balancing ponds, and their management and maintenance will reflect this function.</p> <p>However, they also have potential to be developed to improve their wildlife and habitat value. Appleton Way could be linked with improved footpaths and signage to Hucclecote Hay Meadows.</p> | |

Potential disposal/alternative use sites:

Small area of underused land at Mead Road could be developed for alternative uses (subject to consultation)

Potential new/additional sites:

Residential development of land at the Hucclecote Centre will include additional open space

How will the proposed improvements be funded?

We can fund some of the works proposed through the council's capital and revenue programmes (Including the grounds maintenance contract).

We will seek external funding for capital works, as well as working with local groups and organisations to access additional external funding.

Some areas will benefit from Section 106 funds, which are paid by developers as part of a legal requirement of planning permission. These funds are usually targeted to specific sites and facilities (generally for formal sport and play improvements).

How can I have my say?

Details of consultation will go here.

This action plan will be reviewed annually

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| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Meeting: | Cabinet | Date: | 5th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Cultural Strategy Update – June 2013 – December 2013 | | |
| Report Of: | Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | Yes/No | Budget/Policy Framework: | Yes/No |
| Contact Officer: | Lucy Wright, TIC Service Manager | | |
| | Email: lucy.wright@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: | 396570 |
| Appendices: | None | | |

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update members on the progress that has been made in achieving the Cultural Strategy’s targets over the last six months.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- Note the achievements made in delivering the Cultural Strategy over the last six months (June 2013 – December 2013).

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 Members were last updated on progress about the Cultural Strategy action plan some six months ago in a bid to provide an effective feedback mechanism on how well the City was achieving its cultural targets.

3.2 The strategy proposed seven distinct action areas over a ten-year period. The seven areas are:

- Making sense of the city centre – creating an attractive and vibrant city centre.
- Rethinking heritage and cultural tourism – improving access, visibility and quality of heritage facilities with a particular emphasis on the water/maritime history.
- Raising the stakes for creativity – making provision for the growth in creative industries.
- Broadening Gloucester's excellence in sport.
- Enjoying and supporting diversity.
- Planning for a ‘transformational’ project.
- Marketing and promoting Gloucester.

A full version of the strategy can be viewed on the City Council's website at <http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/resident/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/Pages/Evidence-Base.aspx#culturalstrategy>

Progress – Cultural Update June 2013 – December 2013

- 3.3 Progress over the last six months has been significant and varied. This update is in no way comprehensive, but does indicate the extent of cultural activity taking place in our City. Around fifty people were contacted from the City Council and local cultural organisations to request information on what has been achieved in the last six months in relation to the seven strands of the Cultural Strategy.

1. MAKING SENSE OF THE CITY CENTRE

This strand of the Cultural Strategy is about physical improvements to the city centre and its buildings, as well as the interpretation and animation of the city and its public realm. This strand is about linking up various areas of the city including the Docks and city centre and providing public art of iconic status which leave strong impressions on visitors and residents.

- The Golden Egg was recently acquired by City Council from Aviva Investors with demolition now underway and on time and budget. Archaeological investigation under demolished building to be undertaken in late February and reinstatement with new paving to this area to be completed by 31st March.
- Up to £150,000 has been identified from the City Centre Investment Fund to help improve some of the more unattractive buildings in the City Centre. A number of facades have been identified including Eastgate Shopping Mall (South gate façade), Longsmith Street Multi Storey Car Park and the Kings Walk Car Park all of which would benefit the street scene if subject to some sort of improvement. A number of treatments have been investigated; including cladding with more attractive tiling, various forms of artwork, a green wall and even cladding with Photo-voltaic panels. Which projects to pursue will be subject to a further Cabinet report. The aim is to implement in time for the Rugby World Cup.
- Marketing Gloucester (MGL) worked with Gloucester Folk Museum to run a trial "busking programme" on Saturdays in the lead up to Christmas - concentrating on the days when there are no other events going on, to encourage a vibrant atmosphere in the walk from the Docks to the city centre. This was funded through the Christmas Entertainment budget and Economic Development's High Street funds. This was as a result of feedback from the two shopping centre managers in the city.
- MGL supported the "Mummers Festival" on 13th and 14th December - organised by Steve Rowley (a member of the Gloucestershire Morris Mummers and chair of the Mummers Unconvention) and have contributed financially to the production of posters and leaflets for the festival. This festival took place in Bath until this year and attracts over 100 mummers into the city from across the country and abroad who stay in the city for the weekend. MGL have now determined that this festival should take place next year and can include more

promotion through the Christmas in Gloucester programme and website.

- MGL have been supporting city centre initiatives including the provision of stalls and marketing assistance for a Flower Market - held on the weekend of Victorian Market to try and encourage visitors to the north side of the Docks.
- MGL provided help and advice for the Rotary Club 'Tree of Light' event and the City Centre Community Partnerships (CCCP) markets project. The Leader of the Council arranged for Gloucester and England rugby star Ben Morgan to perform the switch-on with the Mayor.
- MGL received £30,000 from the City Council's City Centre Investment Fund for a "Shop Gloucester" campaign - this funding will help to provide events in the city centre over the next two years including the Residents Weekend in March. It will also fund a "Shop in Gloucester" campaign on buses in other towns and cities nearby - with the strap line "Gloucester, a Great Day Out".
- Safer Gloucester has set up a multi agency Night-Safe Group to focus on making people safe and feel safe in the city centre on Friday and Saturday nights. The City Council has pledged to upgrade the CCTV system in the city centre and the County Council has improved the lighting in Eastgate Street. Following a successful trial in April, Eastgate Street will be fully pedestrianised between Clarence Street and GL1 from 11pm – 5am on Friday and Saturday nights, Bank Holidays and New Year's Eve. If all partners feel that this is a positive move, work will commence to resourcing this as a permanent arrangement.
- Tours of the Eastgate Chamber were provided by the City Museum and Art Gallery in partnership with the Civic Trust. The bi-weekly tours have continued to grow in popularity with more than 100 visitors in September.
- St Mary de Crypt Church, in partnership with the City Museum and the CCCP, opened an exhibition in the church of archaeological finds discovered on the site earlier in the year.
- A Stage 2 bid to Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) in the Southgate Street area was approved in September 2013. The overall THI Common Fund is £1.2 million, of which Gloucester City Council has committed £300,000. The 5 year project will improve the quality of the historic environment by offering grant assistance to property owners; other activities will include public realm improvements and training activities.
- A commemorative plaque was unveiled at Gloucester Folk Museum in August for the Cotton Motorcycle Club. The plaque marks the site of the factory which was in existence on Quay Street between 1923 and 1972.
- The City Archaeologist and the Property Services Team have been able to restore power to the King's Bastion chamber - below the King's Walk Shopping Centre. The chamber is no longer flooded and the lights are now working. The next stage of work is to install a de-humidifier and to undertake basic cleaning. Discussions are now underway regarding how best to make the chamber publicly accessible once more.

- A new City Centre Historic Grant Scheme was launched in April 2013, this scheme has £225,000 on offer to residents and tenants with regard to rejuvenating vacant properties and upper floors within the city centre area. The scheme is to run for 2 years. To date, two properties have received formal grant offers for improvements.
- City centre clean up days supported by businesses, community members and probation were run to get the city spick and span before the Gloucester History Festival.
- Empty retail units in the 'Primary Retail Area' continue to fall, from 44 to 34 over the 6 months April to November 2013, an average of 41 in year to date, compared to 46 last year.
- The number of city eateries continues to rise. Latest figures (Nov 13) show 110 restaurants, pubs, hotels and cafes within the Gloucester inner ring road area which offer food, compared to 95 last year.

2. RETHINKING HERITAGE AND CULTURAL TOURISM

The second strand of the Cultural Strategy looks to improving access, visibility and the quality of heritage facilities and attractions in the City. There is a real appetite for heritage and cultural tourism, not only from visitors but also our residents. To address this interest, a range of initiatives and projects have been developed that increase residents' pride in their City.

- The Discover DeCrypt project has recently been awarded a Stage 1 pass by the Heritage Lottery Fund for a £1million of funding to regenerate St Mary de Crypt Church and the Old Crypt Schoolroom on Southgate Street in Gloucester. The project team have received a grant of £79,100 towards the development phase which commenced in January 2014.
- To help teachers expand their historical subject knowledge particularly of Gloucester through different key periods in history, the Museums service has begun providing teachers evenings. As well as showcasing the Museum's resources and offer to schools it is also a chance for teachers to discover more about the city.
- In August the Museum service began to offer regular ticketed special evening events, such as 'Science Spectacular' which took place at the City Museum, and 'TudorFest' at the Folk Museum. Four of these evenings have been held so far, attracting good numbers, raising the profile of the Museums and helping boost the evening economy providing family friendly events in the city centre. Many more special events are planned for the New Year, such as 'Medieval Madness' in March and 'The Roaring Twenties' in June.
- The TIC is now selling tickets for the Museums Service. This provides the Museums with a point for visitors to purchase tickets when they are closed on Mondays.
- Working in partnership with the Tourist Information Centre (TIC), Civic Trust, Gloucester Cathedral, MGL and Asset Management, the Economic

Development (ED) Service has set up and progressed a new 'Gloucester Meet and Greet' scheme for coach operators visiting the city centre.

- Art Shape held an exhibition and artist talk by PJ Crook at St Nicholas Church, Westgate Street in the summer and is still working in partnership with the Churches Conservation Trust to look at a change of use for the building to a community arts centre.
- The museums' free Heritage Open Days offer included several guided gallery tours and opportunities to get up close to the collection. The museums offered three weeks of discounted membership as part of the History festival. The discount was subsequently extended to Christmas. This saw a total of 94 memberships purchased between September and December 2013, a large increase on the 41 memberships sold during the same period in 2012.
- The 'Museum Detective Club' – a Saturday club for children aged 5-11 years – was launched in August. Monthly meetings are held at the City Museum and Art Gallery.
- The City Mourning Sword, usually on display in the City Museum, was shown at talks in Blackfriars and the Docks as part of the Heritage Festival.
- The Conservation Team and MGL are working together to produce a new heritage walking tour. Quotations have been received to devise a mobile app to match the heritage trails currently available from the Civic Trust.
- Blackfriars run the 'Friends of Blackfriars' group, part of which will involve a group of volunteers who are keen historical researchers. A timeline is currently being developed to help bridge the gap between medieval priory and Tudor home to present day.
- The TIC continues to be an outlet for event organisers to sell their tickets. In partnership with Gloucester Guildhall and Marketing Gloucester, the service sold approximately £4500 worth of History Festival talks, a testament to the popularity of the annual event and the hard work of the Cultural Services teams.
- The City Museum participated in the 'Europeana Network of Ancient Greek and Latin Epigraphy' co-ordinated by the Sapienza University of Rome and funded by the European Union. This project will showcase some of Gloucester's Roman artefacts alongside the best of those from across Europe and bring them to a global academic audience via the project's website.
- Gloucester Quays continue to draw high profile celebrity names to the city drawing in thousands of visitors to the Food Festival, Victorian Christmas Market, Home and Garden Show and the Christmas Fayre.
- The Folk Museum is undergoing a facelift. All permanent exhibition galleries are being updated and re-displayed, to create a wider appeal and to give out of date displays a new lease of life. Public consultation has been carried out to make sure that the new displays appeal to a broad range of visitors. The Folk Museum is only open Saturdays until it fully reopens on Monday 17th February 2014 ready for half term.

- The Phase 2 HLF Project which will see the re-display of the City Museum first floor galleries is moving forward well. An application for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant will be submitted in mid-April 2014, which, if successful, will see the transformation of the touring galleries, and the 'Story of Gloucester' will continue upstairs from the ground floor galleries, creating a continuous 'flow' throughout the building.
- Gloucester Quays opened the new Cineworld Cinema in December.
- A number of national food chains chose Gloucester as a place to open new eateries; these include Ed's Diner, Zizzi's, Portivo Lounge and Chimichangas.

3. RAISING THE STAKES FOR CREATIVITY

Raising the stakes for creativity is about increasing opportunities for participating in arts including increasing activity in our schools and developing creative industry workspace in the City.

- July saw the Gloucester Youth Arts Festival taking place at Blackfriars, the Global Language Immersion Centre (GLIC) and City Works Alfred Street Gloucester. The theme was Environment, Ecology and Recycling and included events such as free science/engineering/environmental fair which was full of interactive, educational stalls. A number of creative workshops ran from Blackfriars and GLIC with a primary school art exhibition at City Works. It was a week long series of events which provided a free platform for schools, youth and community groups to 'showcase talents through the medium of the 'Arts'.
- Three local secondary schools used the community gallery space in the City Museum & Art Gallery to showcase their artistic talents. Many of the pieces displayed formed part of core or coursework for the pupils and so is work that is usually not seen by the wider public. The prospect of public display in the Museum really motivates pupils to strive even higher with their work as well as giving the people of Gloucester a chance to see and appreciate what Artistic talents the city's next generation has to offer.
- MGL organised the hugely successful Christmas Lights Switch-on Procession attracting record numbers of visitors into the city. It involved 250 local school children and provided 6 local artists with work. The Beatrix Potter Museum volunteers worked to create lanterns and masks for the event.
- Artists employed by member organisations of the Carnival Arts Partnership (Art Shape, Global Arts and GDance) were supported by GCC to deliver a 6-week community engagement programme of workshops. They worked with 3 groups (Increase the Peace, Glo-Active and the White City Youth Project) to prepare for participation in the Carnival parade.
- GDance and Art Shape ran a week-long Arts Inc Holiday Club at City Works in July for disabled and non-disabled children & young people who prepared puppets, costumes and dance moves in preparation for the parade. This was supported by partners Active Impact and Active Gloucestershire. GDance's VIA Dance Company for disabled and non-disabled adults, run at The National Star

- GDance continued to offer and deliver a range of subsidised dance courses and workshops to the city's schools and community groups (subsidised through BBC Children in Need).
- James Rowbotham, a Gloucestershire based 'motion-capture' specialist photographer, had an exhibition of work (including of GDance Associate Artists and performance photography) at Gloucester Guildhall during August.
- The Rain or Shine Theatre Company held their production of The Comedy of Errors in Barnwood Park on the 3rd August.
- Art Shape continue to offer arts training opportunities through 5 different arts courses each running for 3 terms of 8 weeks in different locations in the city and in different art forms from animation to craft and fine art and dance in partnership with GDance. Each class offers the opportunity for 12 people facing disabling barriers to engage with the arts who would not be able to access mainstream opportunities.
- Art Shape launched their pilot programme of higher learning opportunity for those facing disabling barriers that would prevent them from engaging in the arts through mainstream foundation training – Art Bridge. This programme of work will complete in December 2014 and be showcased through a touring exhibition.
- A graffiti wall is being set up with Linden Homes, GCCCP and Gloucester City Council to provide a space where people can create street art.
- MGL are working with Pat Dabbs and Karen Pearson on a new festival for the city - due to take place this year on 1st - 3rd August. The event will be a street art and dance festival taking place in Kings Square, Gloucester Guildhall, Eastgate Shopping and the gate streets. MGL are currently working on funding for the event and are about to submit a bid to the police commissioners fund. The response from the police has been very positive so far as the festival will encourage night time activity that is not based around alcohol and is seeking to reduce criminal activity. MGL already have secured £5K from the healthy living fund through County Council. The target total budget for this event will be £30,000.
- The Unite Peace Festival took place and was funded and supported by Gloucester City Council. This festival was created by young people for young people and took place in Gloucester Park.
- On July 12th and 13th 2013 Global Arts Inc hosted the 2nd Hat Festival which included a Hat Parade, V.I.P. reception at Blackfriars, Mad Hatter tea parties after the parade, hat making workshops, hat stands at Blackfriars, a free children's area and a groups of musical events, story telling and hat related workshops at Peppers.
- Blackfriars Priory has provided rehearsal and performance spaces for 'Gloucestershire Dance', 'Fairgame Theatre' and 'Create Gloucestershire', all of whom work with outreach groups.

- As part of Gloucester Festival, 'Tyger Productions' performed to a sell-out audience in the courtyard of Blackfriars Priory. The traditional setting help stage the original Romeo & Juliet to delighted audiences who pledged to return to Blackfriars having discovered a hidden gem in the city centre.
- A new music studio has been opened at Morelands Trading Estate by music lover, Dan Snowden (head chef of Peppers), which will offer practice space for bands and tuition rooms for tutors and pupils.

4. CONSOLIDATING GLOUCESTER'S REPUTATION FOR SPORTING EXCELLENCE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

This element of the Cultural Strategy requires the right balance between developing world class provision of sporting facilities and achievement with access for all. Gloucester has the lowest participation rates in sport in the County and therefore, increasing participation is important.

- With regard to the Multi Sports Hub, discussions are underway to set up a new hub on public open space on the southern side of the City adjacent to the successful Blackbridge Athletics track.
- Gloucester Rowing Club expects to start enabling work prior to the construction this year of a new Club House and training facility at Hempsted Meadows.
- GDance delivered a one-day training course in inclusive practice (for movement coaches / teachers) in partnership with Active Gloucestershire at Oxstalls Tennis Centre on 19th November.
- In October the 'Sporting Gloucester' exhibition opened at the Folk Museum. Showcasing the sporting achievements of Gloucester's professional and amateur sporting heroes. Amongst the loans for the exhibition were body building trophies won by Sharon Simmons, and hammer throwing shoes, gloves and Olympic vests worn by Commonwealth medallist Lorraine Shaw.
- Work is ongoing for the Rugby World Cup 2015 with the installation of 10 official RWC posts having been placed in parks across the city as part of the promotional lead up to 2015.
- Robinswood Hill FunFest 2013 – Working with the Gloucester Health Trainers, Aspire helped provide advice and practical sessions on outdoor activity to showcase the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- The Tennis Development team have worked very closely with the GL1 Sports Development team over the preceding six months to deliver a new membership for children from 2 through to 17. 'Active Life' provides people with the opportunity to do tennis, swimming or dry side courses, but also includes free swimming, soft-play entry, teen gym sessions and sports sessions (cardio tennis, zumbatonic) as well as numerous other benefits.
- Oxstalls piloted a new adult tennis coaching course called Tennis Express, for the LTA during the summer. Tennis Express will be rolled out to the country in

2014 to reduce barriers for adults participating in tennis and encouraging families to play.

- Oxstalls has been successful in gaining funding for 2013-2014 (£4,900) from the Tennis Foundation and have been selected as one of the LTA's Disability Network Clubs.
- Oxstalls have delivered an inclusion tennis teachers course for teachers and university students to enable them to set up after school inclusion sports clubs.
- Oxstalls Sports Park coaches have delivered coaching in 33 primary schools throughout Gloucester City over the past 6 months. The free coaching to the schools from funding secured allowed the schools to have 5 hours curriculum coaching at the school followed by 2 hours coaching at Oxstalls Sports Park.
- Oxstalls hosted and administered 4 district level 2 tennis festivals leading to a district final and then onto the level 3 County finals as part of the Gloucestershire School Games. This involved over 450 children competing in tennis competition within the county.
- Since June, Aspire has run a number of events including the County Cheerleading Event, National Floorball Youth Finals, National Badminton Bronze and Silver Competitions, National FA Futsal League (Midland Division) matches for home matches for Gloucester Futsal Revolution.
- Abbeymead Rovers Football Club annual youth football tournament was held on Glevum Way and Heron Park's open spaces in June. Several hundred people attended.

5. ENJOYING AND SUPPORTING DIVERSITY

Gloucester is home to a large number of community groups representing different faiths, cultures, genders and generations. Being one of the most diverse cities in England, it's important that all communities feel as though they are involved in the life of the city.

- The hires offers at both the City and Folk Museums have been in increasing demand, and have been able to support local community groups and charities, including Age Well Gloucestershire and ArtShape. The Chinese Women's Guild also continues to meet regularly at the City Museum.
- Gloucestershire Gay Pride was once again held at Gloucester Park on 22nd June. This year saw a record number of attendees as well as more performances from local and national acts and more stalls for information and purchases.
- The 8th August saw the Jamaican Cultural Evening take place at Gloucester Guildhall. This is now an annual event.
- The Tourist Information Centre is now developing a 'Welcome to Gloucester' document in Braille.

- GDance produced a large-scale professional site-specific dance piece called Stuck in the Mud at Blackfriars Priory – a partnership with Ballet Cymru and Hidcote Manor Garden, financed by Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales and The National Trust. It involved 13 disabled and non-disabled professional dancers + over 100 schools and community performers (local education partners were: Milestone School, Widden Primary, The National Star College). This achieved widespread print and broadcast coverage including BBC Radio Gloucestershire and BBC Points West.
- The Cultural Fair which was held in St James Park and the Samaritans 60th year anniversary in Gloucester Park were 2 community events held in open spaces.

6. PLANNING FOR A TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT

The Cultural Strategy suggests that the transformational project should be of international importance and be based on a strong public and private partnership. At the time of developing the Cultural Strategy in 2007, it was not clear what this project should be; only that it should put Gloucester on the map. A number of smaller projects could be described as transformational.

- The Tourism team is working with Asset Management in planning the relocation of the Tourist Information Centre, which will share premises with Marketing Gloucester. The premises under consideration are one of the city's most striking and important heritage buildings.
- Members will be well aware that in 2012 the City Council signed a lease with English Heritage to manage Blackfriars Priory as a venue for events, following substantial investment in the infrastructure at the Priory. Before the City Council took on this lease, Blackfriars had been closed to the public other than for a few days a year. Events that have taken place at Blackfriars since 2012 include weddings, vintage fairs, beer festivals, birthday parties, musical performances (including Rick Wakeman concerts) and dance events. There is much more potential to be developed as Blackfriars' reputation grows and its setting improves with the planned developments around it.
- The City Council has committed £50,000 towards Project Pilgrim (which is part of Gloucester Cathedral's Strategy) to improve the Cathedral's setting, its relationship with the city centre and its visitor facilities.
- The Llanthony Secunda Priory Trust has been successful in securing a Phase 1 pass for their £3 million HLF bid to reform and regenerate the historically significant site for the city. Over the next 4 years, the site will hold archaeological investigations and developments involving the community and educational organisations, culminating in re-instating the key buildings on the site so that they can be enjoyed by the public.
- Work is ongoing between Gloucester City Council and Stanhope towards the Kings Square development. This is a key component in fulfilling the strategy's objective of creating a distinctive identity for the city. The scheme will contribute towards repositioning Gloucester as 'the South West's most happening place to live, work and play' through the provision of a first rate transport hub, retail and employment opportunities that are a requirement of a dynamic cultural and

business facing City. The scheme will reinvigorate this part of the city, creating a sense of civic pride and confidence and provides the opportunity to include some cultural facilities within the area.

7. MARKETING AND PROMOTING GLOUCESTER

The consultees involved in helping to create the City's Cultural Strategy felt that Gloucester should make more of what already existed in the City and that the cultural message should be woven into Gloucester's marketing approach. The new cultural image that the consultees refer to is set out in strands 2 and 3 of the Cultural Strategy, however, they include making our heritage and culture more accessible and developing Gloucester's image as being a cool place to be.

In tandem with this, residents should feel involved in their City through regular communications and public events. They also advised that Gloucester's brand should be significantly improved. This was one of the purposes in the creation of Marketing Gloucester who have worked in consultation with partners to develop a brand for the City.

- St Michael's Tower have designed new leaflets for 2014 promoting activities available for adults and children including self guided trails/exploring our priories/churches - all of which are free. They also have new interactive heritage displays.
- The Tourist Information Centre won a gold award at the Cotswold Tourism Awards. MGL won a silver award for the Tall Ships Festival and Hatton Court won silver for Large Hotel. All of the winners are eligible to apply for the Visit England Excellence Awards.
- Gloucester Folk Museum and City Museum continue to attract interest from right across the globe. In September a Dutch cycle group came specifically to the Folk Museum to view the Pederson bike collection and archive. Later that month a group of international special needs students, hosted by the Shrubberies School spent a whole day with the Museums service, exploring the history and traditional cuisine of Gloucester. In December another group of international students from our twin city of Trier stayed at the Museum and enjoyed a visit to the Mayor's parlour.
- Since securing its place in the Rugby World Cup, Gloucester has received a vast amount of media coverage both in newspapers and via social media, well and truly putting Gloucester on the map as a key destination for tourists and sporting excellence. Gloucester Citizen, Gloucestershire Echo, This is Gloucestershire, The BBC and many more have all been keeping a close eye on Gloucester's Rugby World Cup developments which is sure to continue on the lead up to, during and after the event.
- Marketing Gloucester led a campaign in the run up week of the Munster / Gloucester Match. There is a full evaluation document available for more detail. The campaign fell into a number of key parts:

1. Social Media and PR before the match to promote attendance
 2. Collating and promoting offers within the city to encourage fans to enter the city centre and improve the visitor experience (social media and PR)
 3. Providing Street entertainment to enhance the City atmosphere
 4. Communicating with Munster fans encouraging them to return in 2015 and use Gloucester as a base for RWC (advertising/flyers)
- Jamie McDonald, a 'fundraising adventurer' and Gloucester Resident, is currently raising funds for various children's charities, including Great Ormond Street Hospital and Pied Piper Appeal by attempting a record breaking run in Canada from coast to coast. This has received international coverage.
 - MGL has appointed Jason Smith as their new Chief Executive. Jason, originally from Gloucester, has had a very successful career in business and now he wants to put something back into his home city.
 - MGL and the City Council partnered with Gloucestershire Media in creating, launching and sponsoring the Believe in Gloucester awards. The awards took place on Wednesday 17th November.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 Not applicable for this report.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The progress made during the last six months has been significant and has certainly contributed to making Gloucester a great place to visit and have contributed to the City's regeneration.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

6.1 It is clear that a significant amount of work has been done over the past 6 months contributing to the Cultural Strategy. More work is planned across each and every strand of the strategy which will continue to improve Gloucester's offer to residents, visitors and businesses.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications relating to this report at this stage.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications relating to this report.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

9.1 None at this stage. Appropriate risk management will be undertaken for each City Council project as they arise.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

10.1 This is not a new policy or action. It is purely a document to update on progress.

10.2 As part of the People Impact Assessments the Cultural Strategy will need to be reviewed in terms of best practice. A full review will take place over the coming months and an overarching PIA will be produced.

10.3 The Cultural Strategy celebrates all areas of our community. A key strand of the strategy is 'enjoying and supporting diversity'.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

11.1 There remains a perception by some that the City is not a safe place in the evening – work still needs to be achieved in promoting the city as a safe place to visit to enjoy cultural activities in the evening and the night-time.

Sustainability

11.2 Sustainability issues will be addressed within individual projects within the action plan.

Staffing & Trade Union

11.3 Not applicable.

Background Documents: None

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| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Meeting: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee | Date: | 3rd March 2014 |
| | Cabinet | | 5th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Changes to the Council's Tree Management Guidelines. | | |
| Report Of: | Cabinet Member for Environment | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | Yes/No | Budget/Policy Framework: | No |
| Contact Officer: | Justin Hobbs, Tree Officer | | |
| | Email: justin.hobbs@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: | 396897 |
| Appendices: | 1 - Tree management guidelines | | |

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider changes to the Council's current tree management guidelines and to formally adopt these guidelines as for City Council owned trees. The current tree management guidelines are in need of updating due to increased concern with regard to trees and their potential impact upon third party property interests.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is asked to examine the information contained in the report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate to the Cabinet.
- 2.2 **Cabinet** is asked to **RESOLVE** that the tree management guidelines at Appendix 1 be approved as the tree management guidelines for City Council owned trees.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The City Council owns, and is ultimately responsible for, thousands of trees located in open spaces, parks, nature reserves, Country Parks, playing fields and grass verges, across the City.
- 3.2 All tree owners, whether they are a local authority or a private householder, have a duty of care to ensure as far as is reasonably foreseeable that their actions (or inactions) do not result in trees causing damage to property and/or harm to persons. To fulfil this duty of care on behalf of the Council, Amey are contracted to survey City Council trees, and where required, undertake tree works, for example, removal of dead or dangerous trees and branches. This includes situations where City Council trees are located close to private property.

- 3.3 Where City Council trees are in close proximity to housing, businesses, etc the Council has established tree management guidelines. The guidelines were established over 5 years ago primarily to provide members of the public with clear and consistent guidelines with regard to what the Council will and will not do in regard to:
- Council trees overhanging property
 - Council trees restricting light or view
 - Council trees which are dead, dying, dangerous or contain any significant dead or broken limbs.
- 3.4 The guidelines also confirm what works members of the public can carry out on City Council owned trees, and the procedure for requesting permission to carry out works to City Council owned trees.
- 3.5 The guidelines are available to the public as a leaflet and are on the City Council's website.
- 3.6 Under the current guidelines the Council will "Prune branches where an actionable legal nuisance is being caused, e.g. damage to structure".
- 3.7 Furthermore the guidelines state that the Council has no obligation to "prune back or remove overhanging branches other than to abate an actionable legal nuisance".
- 3.8 The City Council receives a significant number of requests to prune and remove trees due to alleged tree root related subsidence to buildings. Damage from tree root related subsidence is a complex issue and dependent upon a significant number of variables. There are no proven "hard and fast" rules that enable a land owner to categorically state that X species of tree in Y location, will cause damage and that the tree should therefore be removed. Before removal can be entertained a number of tests, monitoring and analysis must be undertaken.
- 3.9 As of February 2014, according to the City Council's insurance database there have been 12 tree root related claims in the past two years. Payments have been made relating to 4 of these claims. The total paid out relating to tree root claims over the past 2 years is £5209.68
- 3.10 However, the Council position of undertaking works once damage has occurred, can be seen as a reactionary stance. A more proactive approach is therefore proposed which, while being more positive, should not lead to an excessive increase in unsubstantiated demands for tree removal. The following change is therefore put forward:
- "Where there is sufficient evidence, the Council will prune and/or remove trees to prevent damage to property".*
- 3.11 This will allow a tree to be removed where it is very likely (and backed up by evidence) that damage will occur without the damage actually having to occur first.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 A continuation of the status quo is an option. This has proven to be onerous to operate and can lead to unnecessary distress for owners of property where damage is very likely but has not actually occurred.
- 4.2 The Council could opt for a more pro-active approach where trees were removed 'just in case' they caused damage. This would undoubtedly result in many trees being removed unnecessarily and result in significant additional costs to the City Council.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 Due to a number of reasons, but primarily because of landscape schemes implemented on the back of development in the 1970s and 1980s, the number of complaints around Council trees and third party damage has been on the increase. Unusual weather patterns have also exacerbated the issue as most of the damage is caused by hydration and re-hydration of clay soils causing buildings above them to move. A re-active approach, where the damage has to occur before it is referred to insurers, while simple to implement, can cause distress to third parties. The proposal should allow a more practical approach where it is clear that damage will occur from inappropriately sited trees, while still ensuring that trees are not unnecessarily felled.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 If adopted, the guidelines will be incorporated into a new leaflet and website page. Monitoring will need to be put in place to ensure that trees are not unnecessarily felled and that costs to the authority are manageable.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 This is difficult to predict and will be monitored. However, if adopted, the guidelines could lead to further requests for works to City Council owned trees, leading in turn to increased officer time spent dealing with requests as well as costs of undertaking tree works.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Adoption of the guidelines does not alter the City Councils requirements in fulfilling legislation in relation to trees.
- 8.2 Under the Occupiers Liability Acts 1957 and 1984, the Council has a duty of care as landowner to ensure that the trees on its land are not a danger to others. The Council is also subject to the tort of nuisance and can be liable for damage caused by trees on its land where the damage caused is reasonably foreseeable.

- 8.3 Adopting guidelines of removing trees where evidence exists that damage is more likely than not to occur could help to reduce the volume and value of insurance claims against the Council for subsidence and other types of property damage.
- 8.4 Adoption of the guidelines does not alter the City Council's requirements in fulfilling its other legislative obligations in relation to trees (e.g. Tree Preservation Orders; High Hedges).

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 The risk posed by dead, dangerous and decaying trees has been acknowledged in the Appendix attached to this report.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 11.1 No implications.

Sustainability

- 11.2 No implications.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 None.

Background Documents: None

APPENDIX 1 – GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL TREE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The trees in Gloucester make a major contribution to its amenity. Amongst other things, they screen eyesores, frame views and form landmarks. Trees have significant environmental value, provide a habitat for many creatures and help to give us cleaner, filtered air, shade in the summer and warmth in the winter.

The Council is proud of its trees and favours the retention of trees where possible. The purpose of this guide is to provide the property owner/tenant with clear and concise information with regard to what they can reasonably expect from the Council in terms of:

- Council trees overhanging your property.
- Council trees restricting light or view.
- Council trees which are dead, dying, dangerous or contain any significant dead or broken limbs.
- Acknowledging requests and service delivery.

Work the Council WILL do

The Council will maintain their trees in a safe condition and will:

- Remove dead, dying and dangerous trees.
- Remove major dead wood (over 75mm diameter) which overhangs private/Council property.
- Remove dangerous or damaged limbs.
- Where there is sufficient evidence, the Council will prune and/or remove trees to prevent damage to property.

What should I do now?

If you would like the Council to carry out any of the work listed above, fill in the prepaid Tree Work Request Form providing as much accurate information as possible and return to Gloucester City Council.

What happens next?

You will receive a letter confirming that your request has been registered and is being assessed. We aim to assess the work and instruct a contractor, where appropriate, within a period of 8 weeks from the registration of your request. Occasionally, high volumes of applications will extend this period.

If we **agree to carry** out tree work, a contractor will be instructed to complete the work within 8 weeks of the date of the instruction.

If, after assessment, we decide that the work is not appropriate, you will be notified in writing before the 8 week period expires.

Work the Council will NOT do

The Council has NO obligation to:

- Prune or fell trees to improve light to a property.
- Prune or fell trees to improve the view from a property.
- Systematically crown reduce or 'top' trees.

Do not return the request form for this type of work.

If the Council will not do the work, can I get it done myself?

In common law, a property owner can cut back overhanging branches to the boundary of his property. The Council will usually have no objection to property owners carrying out tree work or engaging a contractor at their own expense, providing that:

- access is not gained onto the neighbouring land or into a tree within that land. If access to our land or into a tree on that land is required, our permission must be sought
- the tree is not situated in a Conservation Area or protected by a Tree Preservation Order for which separate consent is required from Planning Services
- any work that is done to a tree is not detrimental to its health or stability
- any tree work undertaken is carried out in accordance with current best practice (as defined in British Standard Recommendations for Tree Work 3998)
- we are notified of the proposed work and commencement date

Tree contractors

Most reputable contractors will give advice and provide a free quotation. Tree work is covered by British Standard Recommendations for Tree Work (BS3998) and the Council advises applicants to specify this standard for the proposed work.

The Council cannot recommend individual tree surgeons, but would strongly advise you to check the contractor's qualifications and public liability insurance before agreeing to any work.

The council has produced an information leaflet about selecting tree surgeons and arboricultural consultants. Please contact us if you would like a copy.

Council contacts

The City Council is responsible for trees in parks and open spaces.

Trees bordering the highway are the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council.

All City Council Tree enquiries: (01452) 396396

Email: enviro@gloucester.gov.uk

Tree Preservation Orders only: (01452) 396897

All County Council Trees: 08000 514514

Other useful contacts

Gloucester City Council:

www.gloucester.gov.uk

The Arboricultural Association:

www.trees.org.uk

Arboricultural Information Exchange:

www.aie.org.uk

Help with accessing this information:

www.gloucester.gov.uk

City Council Translation Unit: 01452 396909

For large print versions or help with other accessibility issues that you may have with this document:

01452 396396

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|-------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Meeting: | Cabinet | Date: | 5th March 2014 |
| Subject: | Economic Development Update Report | | |
| Report Of: | Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Culture | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | Yes | Budget/Policy Framework: | No |
| Contact Officer: | Anna Gwinnett, Economic Development Manager | | |
| | Email: | anna.gwinnett@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: 396973 |
| Appendices: | 1. Economic Development Activities to Date | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Cabinet on the performance of Gloucester City's economy and key actions for the next 12 months

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is recommended to **RESOLVE** that:

- (1) The actions outlined in the report are progressed.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 When the Economic Development Service was established in January 2010 an economic health check of the city was undertaken. The results helped inform economic priorities. The main findings showed that Gloucester must:

- Improve its business start-up performance
- Improve the support offered to its existing businesses
- Attract investment to grow the number of businesses
- Improve skill levels and employment opportunities

3.2 To facilitate growth and investment in Gloucester, the ED Service focussed on the above areas.

3.3 Various systems are now in place and performance against progress is regularly monitored. It is important that we maintain the positive progress made to date whilst ensuring we continue to deliver more for less and deliver on our targets.

3.4 In addition to our economic development activities, in December 2013, the ED Service, as part of the council's restructuring, was asked to take on responsibility for

city centre management and evening economy functions. This paper will outline our main priorities for these areas going forwards.

- 3.5 The ED Service has also undertaken work with Stanhope, through support on some major funding submissions as part of the bus station / Kings Quarter scheme.

4.0 Our Growth Agenda

- 4.1 Between 2001 and 2011, Gloucester's population grew by 10.7% with 36% of Gloucestershire's total population growth occurring in Gloucester. These figures are the highest of all the districts. Moving forward, it is estimated that Gloucester will experience the greatest population growth of all county districts, expected to increase by 20.1% or 23,800 people between 2010 and 2035.
- 4.2 Gloucester is a relatively young city with 25% of the population aged 19 and under (highest in the South West) and 39% under 30. Gloucester is expected to experience the greatest increase of Gloucestershire's districts in the number of children and young people between 2010 and 2035, with an increase of 16.4%.
- 4.3 Only Gloucester (8.1%), Tewkesbury (3.8%) and Cheltenham (1.7%) of all of Gloucestershire's districts are expected to see an increase in the working age population between 2010 and 2035. Subsequently, Gloucester is anticipated to be the focal point for young and working age population growth within the county.
- 4.4 All Gloucestershire's districts will experience an increase in people aged 65 years and over. The increase in the over 65 population in Gloucester is anticipated to be 73.7% by 2035, which is above the county average of 70.2%.
- 4.5 Given the city's population growth it is imperative that Gloucester secures investment and jobs
- 4.6 A competitive and sustainable economy can be achieved in Gloucester through a thriving small business community. The UK Competitiveness Index 2013 supports this concept – an economy that encourages new business to set up and expand will create new employment opportunities and stimulate economic growth within an area.

5.0 Enabling and Supporting Business Start-Up and survival

Activities to Date

- 5.1 See Appendix 1 – for an update on our activities for enabling and supporting business start-up and survival.

Indicators of Success

- 5.2 Gloucester is bucking the national trend in terms of business start-up and enterprise support. This is supported by various national economic reports.

Duport Business Confidence Report

Based on new company formations (limited companies with a registered trading address in Gloucester) and analysed by Duport using public record data from sources including Companies House, Office for National Statistics and Ordnance Survey, the data shows:

- 448 new companies set up between January and June 2013 - more than any other half year on record and a 10% rise on the same period in 2012.
- 2011 and 2012 were record years for company registrations in Gloucester when compared to any year in history.
- Gloucester also became more important to the national economy by increasing its UK company share by 0.012% (2010 – 2011).

Peter Valaitis, Managing Director, Duport Associates Ltd stated that “the increase in UK company share suggests Gloucester is becoming more important to the national economy, and ... that entrepreneurial spirit is flourishing. The record number of company formations we saw in 2012 is a testament to the redevelopment of the city centre, proving Gloucester is becoming more and more attractive to business start-ups.”

UK Competitiveness Index 2013

Gloucester has broken into the top 20 most competitive cities in the UK. Ranked 19th it comes in ahead of locations such as Nottingham, Birmingham, Cardiff and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. In addition, Gloucester is ranked 154th out of 379 local authorities in 2013 (an increase of 24 places compared to 2010). Only Gloucester (24 places) and Stroud (17) of the Gloucestershire districts saw an increase in their ranking between 2010 and 2013.

Experian (2012)

This growth report shows that Gloucester is ranked 11th out of 324 local authorities for growing its business base between 2010 and 2012, the biggest growth in the South West region.

Santander Town and City Index 2012

This report states that Gloucester is a leading destination for business by ranking the city 18th out of 74 UK cities for business.

Centre for Cities 2014

This report highlights that Gloucester is one of the cities that is making large improvements during the economic downturn. Gloucester is ranked:

- 6th (out of 64 cities) for having the highest number of patents approved (up from 10th in Centre for Cities report 2013)
- 2nd (out of 64 cities) for having the highest employment rate with 77.8% between Jul 2012 and Jun 2013 (up from 12th in Centre for Cities report 2013)
- 2nd (out of 63 cities) for the highest housing stock growth. Among the top-placed cities, only five (Swindon, Milton Keynes, Gloucester, London, Peterborough) have experienced housing supply growth in accordance to their population growth rate. Good supply means better affordability” so helpful for homebuyers and attracting new investors/businesses to the area.

Key Actions

- 5.3 We are keen to build on the progress made with start-up performance and ensure continued support for existing business within the city.

In 2014/2015 we will:

- Deliver business grants to 30 businesses in 2014/15 to assist new start-ups, expanding businesses and those businesses looking to relocate to the city.
- Extend business start up / business support provision for small-medium sized businesses (SMEs) through Gloucestershire Enterprise Ltd, Gloucestershire Adult Education, The Prince's Trust and other partners.
- Develop a programme of export courses to encourage 25 SMEs to trade internationally.
- Work with 30 local SMEs during 2014 to ensure that they have an Internet presence, which is accessible to customers via multiple platforms e.g. Smartphone, Tablet or Desktop. In the UK, online purchases by customers grew by more than six times between 2003-2012, whilst only a third of SMEs sell products or services online.
- Increase distribution of Your Business Matters e-newsletter from 600 businesses to 700 in 2014/15.
- Secure four large business events / business forums in 2014/15 and ensure a high profile for Gloucester businesses e.g. Enterprising Women Conference, Gloucester Rugby Business Club
- Target 700 businesses with sources of finance and funding e.g. The Technology Strategy Board and South West Investment Group in 2014/15
- Encourage "inter-trading / support local" amongst city businesses by producing a new Business Directory for 2,000 businesses and online web search facility by the end of 2014.
- Work with Marketing Gloucester to produce an independents' booklet which will aim to showcase many of Gloucester's 125 independent city centre retailers by March 2014.

6.0 Attracting and Retaining Investment within the City

Activities to Date

- 6.1 The ED Service has a remit to promote Gloucester and secure new business for the city. This helps expand the city's business base, fill vacant units, create jobs and stimulate economic growth.
- 6.2 See Appendix 1 – for an update on our activities for attracting and retaining investment within the city.

Indicators of Success

- 6.3 In relation to business rates properties in Gloucester, between March 2009 and October 2013 there has been a rise of 8.6% in the number of properties registered for rates and a fall of 2.2% in the proportion of those which are empty. The empty property rate is 14.73% in October 2013, which is the lowest since the ED Service was established.

- 6.4 £700 million private sector investment secured to date with over 1,000 new jobs and 700 new homes created.

Key Actions

- 6.5 In 2014/15 we will:

- Continue to support Stanhope and their commercial agents to deliver the bus station / Kings Quarter scheme by 2017.
- Engage with developers and commercial agents to promote Gloucester including the opportunities at the Blackfriars development and remaining sites at the Docks / Quays and the Railway Triangle.
- Work with GFirst LEP and other partners to progress the development of a strategic business park at Elmbridge. Currently, this has not been identified within GFirst LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.
- Work with Housing Enabling Service to establish a project group and work with developers, commercial agents and owners to bring forward extant planning permissions for 541 dwellings in the city centre. The group would also work towards securing a further 400+ residential dwellings in the city centre.
- Target high growth companies through targeted inward investment campaigns to reach over 5,000 potential investors, including developing appropriate marketing materials and channels.
- Investigate / secure a new customer relationship management system and commercial property database in order to capture property and enquiry details.
- Ensure we work closely with planning colleagues to ensure we have economic lead planning policies e.g. secure/identify more A3 uses to attract more restaurants.
- Work closely with the City Safe Manager to achieve a safe and vibrant city centre both during the day and into the evening economy, building on the City and County Councils' commitments to upgrade the CCTV system and improve street lighting, as well as numerous other initiatives.

7.0 Improving Skill Levels and Employment Opportunities

- 7.1 With the city's young demographic and population set to expand by more than 20% over the next 20 years it is imperative that Gloucester supplies jobs and develops a skilled population to meet the labour market needs.

Activities to Date

- 7.2 See Appendix 1 – Economic Development Activities to Date for an update on our activities for improving skill levels and employment opportunities.

Indicators of Success

- 7.3 Gloucester currently has the highest claimant count in the county although this is steadily decreasing. Gloucester's claimant count was 2,506 in November 2013, a decrease of 6.1% on the previous month. The County decreased by 4.6%, the South West decreased by 1.4% and the UK decreased by 3.6%. The last eight months have seen the claimant rate in Gloucester fall from 4.1% to 3.1%, whilst Gloucester's claimant count has fallen from 3,243 to 2,506 over the same period.

- 7.4 At the end of November 2013 there were 707 young people aged 16-18 not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Gloucestershire and this figure translates into an adjusted 16-18 NEET population of 4.4%. The total number of NEET decreased by 77 young people in November 2013 compared to October 2013.
- 7.5 Gloucester's NEET rate in November 2013 was 4.3%, which was lower than both Cheltenham (4.4%) and Tewkesbury (5.6%). This is a decrease of 1% for the same time last year (November 2012)
- 7.6 Gloucester continues to perform well in apprenticeship starts and achievements with the highest levels in the county in 2011/2012 and the figures to date in 2012/2013. The figures to date in 2012/2013 shows Gloucester has 1,390 apprenticeship starts (30.6%) of the county and 420 achievements (27.8%) of the county provision.
- 7.7 Gloucester has made significant progress in increasing the proportion of its working age population attaining NVQ Level 4, Level 3 and Level 2 qualifications between 2009 and 2012. These increases has seen Gloucester close the gap on the respective national averages although the city is still below the national average for NVQ Level 4 attainment.
- 7.8 Gloucester has the highest level of engagement in overall FE and skills participation in the county. Gloucester accounted for 23.8% (2,460) of the county participation levels in 2010/2011 and 23.6% (2,450) in 2011/2012.

Key Actions

- 7.9 In 2014/15 we will:
- Provide all business grant applicants with a 'Recruit Local' factsheet outlining current incentives and local support available to grow their company.
 - Work with three new major businesses locating in the city to support them with their recruitment needs and promote employment opportunities to unemployed Gloucester residents in deprived wards. This will based upon the model adopted for Morrisons' recruitment, which engaged with those furthest removed from the labour market and living in deprived wards.
 - Organise an employability event to showcase local employment and 'start a business' opportunities to unemployed residents in Gloucester.
 - Feature two articles a year in Your Business Matters and City Centre News on the benefits of apprenticeships to businesses.
 - Support hard to reach groups in starting up in business by using appropriate data (e.g. business start-up ward data) and work with intermediaries to support business development.
 - Work with Gloucestershire Adult Education to provide start-up courses for 30 people who are furthest from the labour market.
 - Ensure ongoing support / mentoring to assist with conversions. With increased capacity in the ED Service, we would like to support more people within hard to reach groups in accessing skills development training and self employment courses

8.0 Supporting a Thriving City Centre

8.1 The ED Service will work closely with the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development who is leading on the production of the city centre management and regeneration strategy.

Key Actions

8.2 In 2014/15 we will:

- Appoint a City Centre Manager by February 2014 for city centre management and evening economy.
- Secure relevant permissions and install new footfall cameras into the four gate streets by end of May 2014.
- Perform a comprehensive audit of the city centre using the ATCM toolkit to assess what is required to improve the look, feel and structure of the city centre in the short, medium and long term to make it more attractive / user friendly. Feed the findings into the City Centre Strategy, City Centre Action Plan / Evening Economy Action Plan.
- Establish a comprehensive database of all city centre businesses – approximately 450 businesses within the city centre – by September 2014.
- Deliver three Evening Vitality Grants for new businesses adding to the evening economy offer in 2014/15.
- Identify owners of empty units by March 2014 and encourage owners to spruce up premises - window dressing, pop-up art galleries / community facilities.
- Work with Marketing Gloucester to enhance the City of Gloucester website with particular focus on improving promotion of, and information about, the Gloucester offer. For example, the promotion of eateries within the city.
- Work with businesses in the city centre to improve their customer service skills and ensure all city hotels are supported in gaining official accreditation.

8.3 The ED Service has worked to establish a meet and greet scheme which was launched in partnership with the Civic Trust, with support from the Tourist Information Centre and Asset Management Service. The aim of the scheme is to increase footfall and tourist spend in the city.

- ED Service to work with the Asset Management Service to put overflow coach parking in place to increase capacity from the current 7 coach spaces by April 2014.
- ED Service to work with the Asset Management Service to make improvements to Westgate St Car Park to ensure it provides a positive and welcoming first impression – including the removal of the attendance box by April 2014.
- ED Service to promote the meet and greet scheme at a minimum of two events and through the trade press by April 2014.
- ED Service to promote the scheme and Gloucester as a destination to 200 coach operators and 30 tour guides by April 2014.
- ED Service to work in partnership with the Tourist Information Centre to recruit 3 volunteers for the meet and greet scheme to increase capacity to deliver a quality service to visiting coaches by May 2014.

9.0 Funding and Income Generation

Indicators of Success

9.1 High Street Renewal Fund

In 2012 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced the launch of the “Our Town First: Future High Street X-fund”, later renamed the High Street Renewal Fund. The ED Service submitted a bid, demonstrating innovation in the high street. The Gloucester bid was one of seven bids approved nationally. Gloucester was awarded £133,057 funding.

ERDF Funding

£1million of ERDF funding secured as part of the University of Gloucestershire partnership project including HCA funding secured for Blackfriars Inn refurbishment.

Kings Quarter submissions £2.5m and £3.3m

The ED Service has supported Stanhope in developing its submissions for funding from the GIFF and the LTB. These bids, if successful, will assist the viability and delivery of the Kings Quarter scheme.

Key Actions

- 9.2 In 2014/15 we will investigate business rates retention opportunities, the Regional Growth Fund, Exceptional Regional Growth Fund and other funding / income generating opportunities subject to capacity within the team.

Business Rates Retention

The business rate retention scheme under DCLG has meant councils now have a financial incentive to create and support local jobs and businesses. Councils will now be able to keep half of any increases in business rates to invest locally. Gloucestershire councils pool business rates amongst the six districts.

The ED Service has been advised that the council will know more details about its allocation in April 2014 and we are working with other departments to better understand what monies are being secured for Gloucester and what processes are in place to support job growth, particularly given Gloucester’s expanding business base and thereby its contribution to the county pool.

Regional Growth Fund (RGF)

The RGF is a flexible and competitive £3.2 billion fund operating across England from 2011 to 2017 and creating jobs into the mid-2020s. Round 6 will open in summer 2014. The projects selected by the RGF must attract private funding to match the public funding provided. RGF provide grants, loans and loan guarantees. The team will await information on round 6 funds and explore how this can be of benefit to Gloucester’s economic growth. We are also investigating the **Exceptional Regional Growth Fund (ERGF)**.

- 9.3 We will undertake a scope of opportunities for generating income through use of space in Kings Square and advertising opportunities with ED marketing / promotion materials.

10.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 10.1 The report sets out a range of options for supporting Gloucester's growth and is considered to represent a well balanced approach to achieving the best outcomes for the city.

11.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 11.1 The above progress report looks to address some of the city's key economic priorities.

12.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 12.1 A considerable amount of further specific work will be required following the approval of this report in order to progress the various projects and initiatives discussed above. Importantly, the report will act as a useful tool for the development of future economic development strategies and city centre plans.

13.0 Financial Implications

- 13.1 The proposals as set out above will be funded entirely through the monies received by the City Council from the DCLG Innovation Fund and the DCLG High Street Renewal Fund monies from Central Government, and the allocation to the ED Service from the City Centre Investment Fund.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

14.0 Legal Implications

- 14.1 The criteria for grants must be clearly drafted and identify the terms and conditions, if any, to be attached to them. The consideration and award of the grants must be fair and open, and the same criteria and approach applied to all applicants. Any constraints on grants must be identified at an early stage.
- 14.2 There are no other specific legal implications arising out of this report although there will be specific issues where it will be necessary to involve colleagues from Legal Services.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

15.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 15.1 A risk register has been undertaken. Risks include budget overspend through over subscription for the business grant schemes and failure to spend the DCLG High Street Renewal Fund. Current controls to mitigate these risks include monitoring grant funding, allocating funding to different budget codes and requesting regular spending updates from services that have been allocated funding.

16.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 16.1 We considered who would benefit from the proposals and projects, and could a particular group be affected differently by the proposals? Business grants will be

administered and operated fully in accordance with the City Council's equality policies, and will be open to anyone who meets the grant criteria and wishes to apply regardless of ethnicity, disability, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation of the business owner/applicant (subject only to minimum age for legal status requirements). We will continue to monitor take up of the grants so we can target publicity to specific groups if necessary. The business support programme is marketed widely and in particular proactively marketed to hard to reach groups who are less likely to take up the provision. In addition the programme is open to anyone regardless of ethnicity, disability, age, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

- 16.2 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

17.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 17.1 Improving the physical environment of the city centre, particularly through the Kings Quarter scheme including a new bus station, will help to reduce crime through better design and will improve the perception of the city centre as a safe place. The Council has made a major financial commitment to upgrade the city centre CCTV system and is working with the County Council to improve street lighting. The work of the Nightsafe group, which is chaired by Councillor Dallimore, in tackling night-time safety issues in the Eastgate Street area has been widely praised.

Sustainability

- 17.2 The actions within this report support sustainable economic development.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 17.3 No specific implications.

Background Documents: None

| Priorities | Objectives |
|---|---|
| Driving Business Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing quality business support and incentives to enable businesses, social enterprises and voluntary sector organisations to start-up, grow and flourish • Developing opportunities for entrepreneurship, innovation, continuous improvement and investment in skills • Stimulate business-to-business trading within Gloucester by improving local procurement opportunities and by strengthening the city's export market • Source and promote access to finance and funding in order to increase business growth |
| Stimulating Our Growth Sectors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide quality workspace / infrastructure for growth businesses at every lifecycle stage including start-up incubation, innovation centres and space for growing businesses to expand into and cluster • Enable high growth companies to access appropriate finance and funding streams to facilitate businesses in accessing design, research and product innovation • Encourage graduate and skills programmes to offer appropriate qualifications to meet the needs of our growth sectors • Provide support mechanisms for businesses within key growth sectors to improve their productivity and competitiveness • Encourage business diversification into growth sectors |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 10</p> Maximise Investment, Regeneration and International Trade Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise Gloucester's profile by proactively promoting the city and its regeneration opportunities on a local, regional, national and international scale as a first choice destination for business • Ensure Gloucester is an attractive destination for existing and potential business investors • Actively target specific sectors and organisations that would compliment and expand the current business and employment base within Gloucester, while also following up all other investment enquiries from start to finish • Retain business by establishing an effective listening to business / aftercare programme for local companies and new investors to understand their future requirements and how the Council might assist • Monitor supply / demand of employment land / premises and wherever possible ensure there is a readily available supply of suitable land / premises for those businesses looking to expand within or relocate into the city • Improve and expand trade opportunities by boosting the support available to businesses who want to export, particularly innovative and high growth small-medium sized businesses |
| Invest in Our Infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage investment in local infrastructure including improvements to digital / broadband access, utilities and transport • Promote and improve access to key development sites and existing employment areas • Expand and develop low carbon initiatives to reduce CO2 emissions, increase investment in green technology, promote green transport, improve education and business sustainability • Create the necessary infrastructure needed to support the development of Gloucester as a thriving tourist destination and as a place to live and work |

Strategic Themes and priorities

- Enterprising Gloucester
 - Providing quality business support and incentives to enable business start-up, survival and growth
 - Stimulating business growth within our priority sectors
 - Growing our enterprise and innovative culture
- Growing Gloucester
 - Ensuring key development sites and existing employment areas meet business needs
 - Creating a business friendly planning approach
 - Delivering exceptional, low carbon developments
 - Delivering sustainable transport infrastructure
 - Enabling world-class ICT infrastructure
- Working Gloucester
 - Tackling youth unemployment and worklessness
 - Ensuring that the skill needs of businesses, especially growth businesses, are met
 - Enabling businesses to access training and skills development to improve their competitiveness
- Thriving Central Gloucester
 - Developing and delivering “Gloucester Central” identity across the city centre
 - Creating a thriving and diverse commercial, retail, leisure and cultural centre in the city that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors throughout the day and night
 - Improving the quality and highlight the unique characteristics of the city centre environment
- Promoting Gloucester
 - Attracting and retaining investment in the city
 - Raising the city’s profile as a first choice destination for business and promoting regeneration opportunities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
 - Continuing to expand the visitor and business tourism markets

Agenda Item 16

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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