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Rural South Area Strategy Map

Appendix 1 – Delivering the Vision, Strategic Choices

1. Introduction

1.1 To deliver the vision of the open space strategy and parks development plan it is necessary to break down the vision into its four key themes; analyse the strategic choices that relate to each theme; and decide on the Council's proposed approach to each strategic choice.

2 Modernising our parks and open spaces

Which parks and open spaces should we be seeking to improve?

2.1 The Council's parks and open space investment programme over the last five years has focussed on:

- setting up Falkirk Community Trust to manage our high profile parks;
- creating and establishing the Falkirk Helix;
- improving the quality of the 7 Core Parks previously identified in the 2003 Culture and Leisure Strategy;
- improving the quality of the poorest quality play areas; and
- Installing Multi Use Games Areas at several locations around the Council area

2.2 The Falkirk Helix is of extremely high quality and, together with the creation of the Kelpies and the associated extension of the Forth and Clyde canal, has helped to raise the tourism profile of the Council area and is proving to be very popular with residents and visitors alike. There are, however, other open spaces of national or regional importance across the Council area which have not attracted comparable levels of investment e.g. Callendar Park, Muiravonside Country Park & Kinneil Estate.

2.3 The quality of the 7 Core Parks identified in the 2003 Culture and Leisure Strategy has improved as a result of the investment made (from an average score of 2.87 in the first open space audit to 3.44 in the second open space audit). There are however some communities who would not feel that they have felt any benefit from this programme of investment. For example, there are no Core Parks located in Banknock, Carron, Carronshore, the Upper Braes villages or villages in the rural area. Additionally, there are some communities where the identified Core Park is not necessarily the most valued open space within that community.

2.4 The second open space audit has identified that the gap in quality between those open spaces which sit higher on the hierarchy of importance and those which sit lower in the hierarchy has widened over the last 5 years.

2.5 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) continue focussing capital investment solely on the Helix, the 7 Core Parks identified in the 2003 Culture and Leisure Strategy and poorly performing play areas identified in the previous Parks Development Plan; or
- 2) re-focus all investment on the poorer quality parks and open spaces which are particularly valued by the local community and where there is no better quality alternative provision; or

- 3) re-focus some investment on the poorer quality parks and open spaces where there is no better quality alternative provision and some on the parks and open spaces which are particularly valued by the local community whilst maintaining investment and revenue budgets in the higher level open spaces which serve a more strategic function and raise the tourism profile of the Council area.

2.6 The consultative draft open space strategy has chosen to refocus investment as described in option 3 above. The indicative spatial strategy for each settlement area (as detailed in section 7 of the strategy) will identify the range of parks and open spaces which the Council believes are of most value to each community and where priority should be given to delivering improvements. If the Council has not correctly identified the most valued open spaces within each community then this should become clear during the consultation process and can be addressed when finalising the strategy. The strategy should also raise its aspirations for the quality of national and regional level open spaces.

What sports and play facilities should we be providing within our parks and open spaces?

2.7 The parks and open spaces within the Council area have a strong traditional offering of grass sports pitches and equipped play spaces which are highly valued by the community. There are some new open space facilities which people have expressed a desire for and which are not currently widely available in our parks and open spaces. These include: all weather synthetic sports pitches; bmx tracks, pump tracks and skate parks; outdoor gyms and areas of natural play.

2.8 The 2010 open space strategy set a number of standards in relation to accessibility to open space including:

- All households should be within 400m walking distance of an open space containing a playspace; and
- All households should be within 800m walking distance of an open space containing a sports area.

2.9 In order to achieve these standards, it is not only necessary to protect and maintain the majority of existing playspaces and sports areas, but also to seek to create new playspaces and sports areas in areas of identified deficiency. In a climate of reduced capital and revenue funding, achieving this will become increasingly difficult.

2.10 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Continue to maintain and upgrade our existing sports pitches and equipped play spaces, accepting that with reducing capital and revenue budgets, over time the overall play and sports development value will decline; or
- 2) Reduce the overall number of separate sports pitches and play areas we maintain, allowing capital and revenue budgets to be released to enable investment in a more modern portfolio of play and sports facilities which have a higher overall play and sports development value.

2.11 The consultative draft open space strategy has chosen option 2 as described above. To enable the implementation of this option the Strategy will review its standards in relation to walking distance to play spaces. The indicative spatial

strategy for each settlement area (as detailed in section 6 of the strategy) will identify the play spaces which are surplus to requirements in line with the new walking distance threshold and the open spaces where new or improved play facilities should be developed to enhance overall play value.

How can we encourage more people to use our parks and open spaces?

2.12 Amongst those who completed the citizens' panel questionnaire, roughly one third rarely or never used parks or open spaces. The most commonly stated reason was that there is too much dog mess, with a significant number of respondents indicating that there were too many bikes on the paths. The results of the questionnaire also indicated that just over half of respondents walked or cycled to the last park or open space they visited.

2.13 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Do nothing about these problems; or
- 2) Aim to deliver wider health benefits by decreasing the amount of people who rarely or never use parks and open spaces; and increasing the amount of people who choose to walk or cycle to parks and open spaces.

2.14 The consultative draft open space strategy has chosen option 2 as described above. In order to decrease the amount of people who rarely or never use parks and open spaces the Council should:

- Renew its focus on tackling dog fouling within and around parks and open spaces; and
- Develop a strategy for encouraging more considerate use of bicycles within parks and open spaces;
- Encourage people to access parks and open space by advertising what facilities there are within the Falkirk area and promote the benefits of using them

2.15 In order to increase the amount of people who walk or cycle to parks and open spaces the Council should:

- Seek to ensure the provision of good quality open space offering a range of activities within a reasonable distance of every household;
- Improve the active travel network connecting our parks and open spaces;
- Increase the number of parks and open spaces connected to the active travel network; and
- Improve the quality of paths within our parks and open spaces.

Can we improve the range of benefits our parks and open spaces provide?

2.16 Parks and open spaces are vital to the quality of the urban environment and the physical and mental health of its residents, they can also provide valuable wildlife habitat. They help to define a sense of place within settlements, contribute to their landscape structure, provide areas for recreation and physical exercise and provide an attractive setting for businesses to flourish. Where linked into networks, parks and open spaces can be extremely valuable for active travel and can form corridors through which wildlife can migrate through the urban area. Parks and open spaces also have a role to play in sustainable flood management, providing areas for flood water to go without adversely impacting houses or businesses.

2.17 One of the findings of the programme of consultation carried out in advance of the preparation of the consultative draft strategy was that there was widespread support for enhancing the biodiversity and nature conservation value of our parks and open spaces. The Council also has a duty under The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 to further the conservation of biodiversity.

2.18 A number of communities within the Falkirk Council area are at high risk of flooding, most notably in Grangemouth, Airth, Bo'ness, Carron, Carronshore, Bonnybridge and Dunipace. The Council has a duty under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 to exercise flood risk related functions with a view to reduce overall flood risk. As outlined above, parks and open spaces can play an important roll in providing areas for flood water to go without adversely impacting on houses or businesses.

2.19 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Develop a strategy for the long term improvement of its parks and open spaces without having specific regard to its biodiversity and flood risk management duties or the aims of Falkirk Greenspace; or
- 2) Change the management of the parks and open space resource to exploit opportunities to further the conservation of biodiversity, reduce overall flood risk and promote improvement projects which help to develop a high quality, multi-functional green network which will provide a range of benefits for people, businesses and wildlife and to the ecological status of water bodies across our area.

2.20 The consultative draft open space strategy has chosen option 2 as described above. In order to further the conservation of biodiversity the Council should:

- Identify opportunities to change the maintenance regime of its parks and open spaces to further the conservation of biodiversity;
- Identify opportunities to join up existing habitat networks through promoting targeted landscape change within existing parks and open spaces; and
- Encourage the provision of appropriately designed parks and open spaces within new developments which further the conservation of biodiversity and join up existing habitat networks.

2.21 In order to reduce overall flood risk the Council should:

- Support the development of flood risk management measures within existing parks and open spaces which have been identified within the Local Flood Risk Management Plan or Surface Water Management Plan.

2.22 In order to develop a high quality, multi-functional green network which will provide a range of benefits for people, businesses and wildlife and to the ecological status of water bodies across our area the Council should:

- Support a range of projects which improve the green network in and around the Council area by improving open space sites and corridors and their connectivity;
- Identify opportunities to change the maintenance regime of its parks and open spaces to enhance the ecological status of water bodies;

- Support a range of projects which deliver improvements to riparian habitats within open spaces and to restore water courses to their natural status where they are physically impacted.

3. Addressing inequality and fostering community through open space investment

How should we address the inequality of park and open space provision across our communities?

3.1 The quality of open space provision is not consistent across the Council area. The open space audit has found that there appear to be two tiers of quality of open space provision across the Council area with a greater number of larger, higher quality open spaces in Bo'ness, Falkirk, Polmont and the Rural Area and significantly less of these in Bonnybridge and Banknock, Denny, Grangemouth and Larbert and Stenhousemuir.

3.2 The open space audit has identified that the percentage of households with access to open space which is fit for purpose within 400m is lowest in the rural area concentrated in the villages of Allandale; Avonbridge; California; Dunmore; Greenhill; Shieldhill; Torwood; and Whitecross, and in the main settlements of Bonnybridge and Banknock; Grangemouth and Larbert and Stenhousemuir

3.3 Access to different types of open space is also not consistent across the Council area with access to park or amenity space over 2000m² lowest in Grangemouth and the Polmont Area; access to playspace the lowest in Bo'ness and access to a sports area lowest in Bonnybridge and Banknock.

3.4 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Give investment priority to those areas and open spaces which need improving the most; or
- 2) Spread investment equally across all communities.

3.5 As indicated previously at paragraph 4.2.6 the consultative draft strategy will re-focus investment on the poorer quality parks and open spaces which are particularly valued by the local community and where there is no better quality alternative provision as detailed within the indicative spatial strategy for each settlement.

3.6 The programme of investment outlined in the Parks Development Plan (see section 8) is designed to promote the early delivery of projects which do the most to address the inequalities in open space provision revealed in the open space audit.

How can we foster community cohesion through open space investment?

3.7 Parks and open spaces can act as community hubs, providing a focus for community action, a source of civic pride and improving the physical and mental health of the community. Organised community groups can prove tremendously valuable, raising funds and providing expertise to help with the improvement of parks and open spaces and accessing sources of funding unavailable to the Council. The best parks and open spaces are those which sit at the community's heart, performing functions which directly meet their needs and desires.

3.8 There are currently a number of community organisations actively involved in the management and improvement of parks and open spaces across the Council area including: Friends of Kinneil; Friends of Zetland Park; Friends of Dollar Park; Friends of Muiravonside; the Falkirk Allotment Society

3.9 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill looks to introduce a right for community organisations to take over control of land in public ownership if their plan is better for local people. This right is likely to extend to parks and open spaces.

3.10 A community organisation's enthusiasm for the improvement of a park or open space does not always sustain itself in the long term and there is a danger that the Council could be left with an expensive maintenance liability.

3.11 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Actively encourage the increased involvement of community groups in the management and improvement of parks and open spaces; or
- 2) Continue to act as the primary guardian of parks and open spaces, providing support to community organisations with an interest in parks and open spaces only where they actively seek it.

3.12 The consultative draft open space strategy has chosen option 1 as outlined above. In order to actively encourage increased involvement of community groups the Council should:

- Clearly set out the qualifying criteria which community groups will have to meet before they are offered Council support for their plans;
- Clearly set out the level of support that community groups can expect to receive from the Council;
- Set up and actively promote a fund which community organisations can bid into to help with project establishment costs;
- Give priority to investment in open space improvement projects where an active community group is prepared to fund raise or put in their time into project development;
- Working with volunteers and the Council's Education Training Unit to improve parks and open spaces;
- Research and investigate different models for increasing provision for community growing space; and
- Work in partnership to develop initiatives which will help us exploit the educational potential of our existing network of greenspaces.

4. Working and investing more efficiently

Can we maintain our parks and open spaces more efficiently?

4.1 The Council currently spends a great deal of money maintaining its parks and open spaces. In 2014-15 grounds maintenance and environmental initiatives accounted for over £5.5 million of Corporate and Neighbourhood Service's revenue budget. The financial pressures facing the Council mean that there is an ever increasing need to find less expensive ways of delivering services.

4.2 Limited trials have been carried out in parks and open spaces where maintenance regimes were switched to less resource intensive methods. These

include allowing grassland to grow long and mowing paths through it rather than intensively cutting the whole area. Feedback has been mixed, with some seeing the benefit of this approach in terms of saving money and improving value for wildlife whilst others see the change as an unwelcome lowering of standards which is inappropriate for higher profile parks and open spaces.

4.3 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Continue to maintain the majority of our parks and open spaces uniformly, accepting that as revenue budgets become tighter there will have to be an overall lowering of standards; or
- 2) Identify those parks and open spaces where: high intensity maintenance regimes are necessary to maintain an appropriate image; and lower intensity maintenance regimes would be more appropriate to save money and enhance value for wildlife.

4.4 The consultative draft strategy has chosen option 2 as outlined above. In order to take this option forward the Council should:

- Commission a study to identify those parks and open spaces where a lower intensity maintenance regime would be more appropriate either to save money, or to enhance value for wildlife;
- Identify a number of pilot parks and open spaces where the benefits of the new maintenance schedule can be showcased;

What is the best way to improve overall performance against the Council's various open space accessibility standards?

4.5 The open space audit has identified the locations across the Council area where accessibility to different functions of open space is above the walking distance thresholds set out in the various open space standards.

4.6 Addressing these deficiencies can be achieved in a number of ways:

- Creation of new open spaces;
- Addition of new facilities to existing open spaces;
- Creation of new entrances to existing open spaces;
- Revising the walking distance thresholds set out in the open space standard.

4.7 In order to improve overall performance in the most efficient manner the options available to the Council are to:

- 1) Revise open space standards to minimise the amount of investment needed to meet the new standards; or
- 2) Promote the creation of open spaces within new development sites to meet existing deficiencies; or
- 3) Introduce new facilities into existing open spaces to meet existing deficiencies; where possible this could be funded through planning gain; or
- 4) Identify where new entrances to existing open spaces; or where missing links in the active travel network can be created to address deficiencies.

4.8 The consultative draft strategy has chosen to pursue a mixture of all options above. The Council will review its accessibility standard in relation to access to an open space containing a play space with a view to reducing the number of separate play space sites whilst increasing the overall play value of the remainder. The following details will be outlined within the indicative spatial strategy for each settlement are in section 6 of this report:

- The areas of each settlement where there is a deficiency in access to different functions of open space.

4.9 The Council should then investigate the best way to address these deficiencies, considering the options outlined at paragraph 4.7 above.

How can we maximise the improvements achieved through Council investment?

4.10 Direct investment from Council funds is not the only way of improving parks and open spaces. Funding is available from a wide range of external sources to which the Council or individual community groups can apply. These include:

- Central Scotland Green Network Development Fund
- Scottish Rural Development Programme – via LEADER
- Sportscotland
- Forestry Commission
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Sustrans
- Landfill Communities Fund – via Falkirk Environment Trust

4.11 If Council funding can be matched with external partnership funding then more park and open space improvements will be able to be delivered for a smaller cost to the Council.

4.12 The open space strategy and parks development plan are not the Council's only strategic documents which deal with the improvement of greenspace. The following strategic documents also deal with this subject:

- Falkirk Greenspace – A Strategy for our Green Network;
- Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy; and
- Falkirk Core Paths Plan;

4.13 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Develop a set of projects and priorities which seek to exclusively deliver the vision of the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan and aim to deliver these projects the use of Council funds alone: or
- 2) Develop a set of projects and priorities which not only help to deliver the vision of the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan but also help to deliver the aims of other related Council strategies; and align with the priorities of external funding partners.

4.14 The consultative draft strategy has chosen option 2 as outlined above. To ensure that the projects and priorities of the strategy also help to deliver the aims of

other related Council strategies, the Parks Development Plan (see section 7) outlines where projects also deliver the aims of those strategies.

4.15 To ensure that a greater number of open space improvements can be delivered for a smaller amount of Council investment, the Parks Development Plan (see section 7) outlines where projects also meet the priorities of funding partners and will allow the Council to target appropriate sources of match funding.

5. Generating money for investment in parks and open space.

How should we raise money for investment in parks and open spaces?

5.1 In a climate of reducing Council resources there is a need to think of new ways of generating money to invest in open space maintenance and improvement.

5.2 The Council's parks and open spaces are an attractive environment to do business and deliver services within. Feedback received during the consultation programme which preceded the drafting of this strategy appeared to give support to the introduction of a scheme of charging for the commercial use of some parks and open spaces. However concerns were also raised that any scheme of charging could end up discouraging businesses and their customers from using parks and open space. Falkirk Community Trust has recently introduced a scheme of charges for the commercial use of the parks they operate.

5.3 The open space audit has indicated that in the majority of our communities there is an abundance of open space with only a few rural villages falling below the 5ha/1000 people standard set out in the 2010 open space strategy. There may well be scope to sell off surplus areas of open spaces with a view to investing the proceeds in the improvement of parks and open space elsewhere. Feedback received during the consultation programme appeared to accept the benefit of selling off surplus open space to generate money for re-investment but also revealed concern that proceeds from the sale of open space could be diverted out of the local area.

5.4 The choice facing the Council is whether to:

- 1) Protect all Council operated parks and open spaces in their current forms and source money for improvement and maintenance of them from existing limited revenue streams; or
- 2) Explore opportunities to generate money for investment in park and open space improvement and maintenance through: selling off parks and open spaces which are surplus to requirements; and expanding the scheme of charging for the commercial use of parks and open space currently operated by Falkirk Community Trust to parks and open spaces which are directly operated by the Council.

5.5 The consultative draft strategy has chosen option 2 as outlined above. To generate money for re-investment in parks and open spaces the Council should:

- Carry out an exercise which identifies the parks and open spaces which are surplus to requirements having regard to the standards contained within this Strategy;

- Develop a protocol which establishes: the percentage of proceeds from the sale of parkland and open space which should be re-invested in open space improvement; and how far away from the site sale proceeds can be re-invested;
- Explore opportunities to expand the scheme of charging for the commercial use of parks and open spaces currently operated by Falkirk Community Trust to parks and open spaces which are directly operated by the Council;
- Carry out a study to identify what opportunities there are to commercialise the park and open space resource and develop a business case for this;
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a Council owned factoring company which can take on the management and maintenance of privately owned open space;
- Investigate the potential to set up a crowd-funding mechanism to encourage public donations towards specific park and open space improvement projects; and
- Continue to explore opportunities to raise revenue for re-investment in the open space resource

Appendix 2 - Contexts

1 Policy Context

1.1 The provision of good quality open space is relevant to 4 of the **Scottish Government's 15 national outcomes**:

- We live longer, healthier lives;
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed;
- We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need;
- We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.

1.2 **Scottish Planning Policy** indicates that green infrastructure, including open space and green networks should be protected, enhanced and promoted as an integral component of successful placemaking. It also requires the preparation of up to date audits, strategies and action plans which cover the multiple functions of open space.

1.3 Scotland's third **National Planning Framework (NPF3)** identifies the Central Scotland Green Network as a national development with wide ranging environmental objectives including:

- Creating an environment for sustainable economic growth;
- Creating an environment more in balance, one that will support Central Scotland to thrive in a changing climate;
- Creating an environment which supports healthy lifestyles and good physical and mental wellbeing;
- Creating an environment that people can enjoy and where they choose to live and bring up their families; and
- Creating an environment where nature can flourish

1.4 Parks and open spaces within the Falkirk Council area form part of the Central Scotland Green Network. NPF3 indicates that, during its lifetime, remediation of derelict land, prioritised action in disadvantaged communities and active travel to maximise community and health benefits should be the priorities for funding.

1.5 Falkirk Community Planning Partnership has created a **Single Outcome Agreement** to measure the progress we are making locally to our shared vision for the Falkirk Council area. It contains a series of outcomes which our parks and open spaces can help to achieve:

- We will be healthier and live longer;
- Children will be supported in early years so that they become young people who are confident and successful;
- Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live; and
- Prosperous businesses will underpin the success of our local economy, providing sustainable and quality employment

1.6 The vision of the **Falkirk Local Development Plan** is for the Falkirk area to be a dynamic and distinctive area at the heart of Central Scotland, characterised by a network of thriving communities and greenspaces and a vibrant and growing economy which is of strategic significance in the national context, providing an attractive and sustainable place in which to live work and invest. The open space

strategy will have a role in creating and maintaining the network of thriving greenspaces and helping to deliver an attractive and sustainable place to live work and invest.

1.7 The Council's **Culture and Sport Strategy "Inspiring Lives"** recognises that parks and open spaces are one of the places where people make culture and sport happen; they are a focal point for participation and community cohesion, they attract visitors and enhance the image of the area and therefore they need to be fit for purpose. The Strategy also recognises that participation is key to improving a sense of well-being and enriching the lives of people of all ages and therefore structures need to be in place to encourage and enable grass roots participation in parks and open spaces. The Strategy is also clear that any forward plans for parks and open space need to be aligned to partner expectations to ensure opportunities for investment are maximised.

1.8 **Falkirk Greenspace – A Strategy for our Green Network** aims to connect areas of natural, semi-natural and man-made open spaces within our towns and villages, and create links into the wider countryside. The strategy recognises that the development of a high quality, multi-functional green network will provide a range of benefits for people, businesses and wildlife across our area. Priority actions are proposed conserving 9 themes:

- Economic Development and Placemaking
- Tackling Vacant and Derelict Land
- Outdoor Access
- Community Growing
- Education Services
- Woodland
- Water Environment
- Biodiversity; and
- Landscape

1.9 The Falkirk Council **Core Paths Plan** identifies a network of paths that gives people reasonable (non-motorised) access throughout the Falkirk Council area. It also identifies various opportunities to expand the core path network across the entire district. The open space strategy can play a role in helping to deliver these opportunities for expansion.

1.10 The consultative draft **Falkirk Forestry and Woodland Strategy** envisages that by 2055 an expanded and better connected network of high quality woodland will make a significantly enhanced contribution to Falkirk's economy, the health and well-being of our communities and the quality and resilience of our environments. The open space strategy can play a role in helping to deliver an expanded and better connected network of high quality woodland.

1.11 The **Falkirk Area Biodiversity Action Plan's** primary objective is to safeguard the local variety of life. In working towards this objective it aims to: protect and enhance our rare and threatened plants, animals and habitats; encourage, inspire and enable the community to take action to conserve their local biodiversity; and promote awareness and understanding of biodiversity. The open space strategy can play a role in helping to deliver all of these aims.

1.12 The strategic vision of the **Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy** is for a Falkirk Council area where the sustainable use of resources and

partnership working had resulted in economically and socially vibrant communities living in a flourishing environment. The open space strategy will have a role in helping to enable socially vibrant communities and creating a flourishing environment.

1.13 The ***Flood Risk Management Strategy*** for the Forth Estuary Local Plan District is expected to be published by SEPA in late 2015. It will confirm the immediate priorities for flood risk management in the area as well as setting out the future direction to be taken by all flood risk authorities. The open space strategy will have a role in helping to deliver some of the flood risk management priorities for the Falkirk area which could involve delivering natural flood management measures such as: the creation or restoration of intertidal areas; river or floodplain restoration; and runoff control actions.

1.14 The ***Scotland River Basin Management Plan*** aims to progressively improve the ecological status of all water bodies in the Scotland river basin district. The term ecological status includes water quality, water quantity, ecology and physical impacts (including culverting and engineering of watercourses) and the water environment includes all surface waters (including wetlands and transitional waters) and groundwater (including drinking water supplies). The open space strategy could have a role to play in helping to deliver improvements to the ecological status of water bodies within the Council area, particularly through helping to deliver improvements to riparian habitats within open spaces and to restore water courses to their natural status where they are physically impacted.

1.15 There is a range of other legislation which dictates the way the Council uses and maintains its parks and open space:

The Burial Grounds Act 1885

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967

Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009

The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011

High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013

Protected species legislation

Community Empowerment Bill

Health and Safety legislation

2 How much open space do we have?

2.1 The Council undertook an audit of 632 parks and open spaces between 2013 and 2015. Table 1 below shows the amount of open space within the different settlement areas across the district. Table 2 shows the amount of open space within the different Council wards.

Settlement Area	Area of Open Space (Hectares)	Population (2013 mid year estimate)	Hectares of open space/1000 people 2013
Bo'ness	243.7	14,531	16.8
Bonnybridge and Banknock	127.8	12,424	10.3
Denny	154.5	13,184	11.7
Falkirk	795.0	38,886	20.4
Grangemouth	100.1	17,269	5.8
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	223.6	25,498	8.8
Polmont Area	274.0	22,308	12.3
Rural North	70.9	2,691	26.3
Rural South	458.6	7,178	63.9
Rural Villages	529.5	9,869	53.7
Urban Settlements	1919.4	144,100	13.3
Falkirk Council	2448.9	153,969	15.9

Table 1: Amount of open space within settlement areas

Ward	Area of Open Space (Hectares)	Population (2013 mid year estimate)	Hectares of open space/1000 people
Bo'ness and Blackness	296.3	15,295	19.4
Bonnybridge & Larbert	356.3	16,614	21.4
Carse, Kinnaird & Tryst	150.4	19,820	7.6
Denny & Banknock	188.3	18,539	10.2
Falkirk North	334.2	20,122	16.6
Falkirk South	364.6	18,786	19.4
Grangemouth	84.4	17,482	4.8
Lower Braes	202.0	14,519	13.9
Upper Braes	472.5	15,963	29.6

Table 2: Amount of open space within Council wards.

2.2 Table 1 shows that on average there is 15.9 hectares of open space per 1000 people across the Council area. This amounts to an average of 159m² per person. It shows that the amount of open space within each settlement area varies from a high of 537m² per person in the rural villages to a low of 58m² per person in Grangemouth. Table 2 shows the variation between Council wards from 296m² per person in the Upper Braes to 48m² per person in Grangemouth.

3 What quality is our open space?

3.1 As part of the open space audit an assessment of fitness for purpose was carried out for 612 of the 632 open spaces. A detailed description of how the fitness for purpose assessment was carried out is contained within appendix 1. Table 3 below shows that the quality of open space varies across the Council area.

Settlement Area	Number of open spaces	Average score of an open space in the fitness for purpose assessment	Percentage of total number of open spaces which are fit for purpose	Percentage of total area of open space which is fit for purpose
Bo'ness	48	2.49	33.3%	69.3%
Bonnybridge and Banknock	82	2.29	15.0%	44.0%
Denny	51	2.48	19.6%	47.9%
Falkirk	124	2.62	36.4%	69.8%
Grangemouth	33	2.55	28.1%	50.3%
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	109	2.38	18.6%	40.5%
Polmont Area	97	2.53	31.3%	66.0%
Rural North	21	2.83	35.0%	5.1%
Rural South	61	2.52	34.4%	84.4%
Rural Villages	82	2.60	34.6%	73.8%
Urban Settlements	550	2.48	26.6%	61.3%
Falkirk Council	632	2.50	27.6%	64.0%

Table 3: Quality of open space within settlement areas

Ward	Number of open spaces	Average score of an open space in the fitness for purpose assessment	Percentage of total number of open spaces which are fit for purpose	Percentage of total area of open space which is fit for purpose
Bo'ness and Blackness	60	2.58	40.0%	59.9%
Bonnybridge & Larbert	79	2.44	21.1%	45.3%
Carse, Kinnaird & Tryst	94	2.38	20.7%	30.8%
Denny & Banknock	92	2.41	18.5%	45.5%
Falkirk North	55	2.73	36.4%	77.0%
Falkirk South	74	2.55	35.2%	68.4%
Grangemouth	33	2.49	25.0%	39.1%
Lower Braes	60	2.62	35.6%	70.5%
Upper Braes	85	2.40	25.0%	87.6%

Table 4: Quality of open space within Council wards

3.2 Overall, Falkirk has the best quality of open space with: the second highest average score in the fitness for purpose assessment (2.62); the second highest percentage (36.4%) of the total number of open spaces scoring good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment and the second highest percentage (69.8%) of the total area of open space scoring good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment.

3.3 Bonnybridge and Banknock have the worst overall quality of open space with the lowest average score (2.29) in the fitness for purpose assessment; the lowest percentage (15.0%) of the total number of open spaces scoring good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment and the third lowest percentage (44.0%) of the total area of open space scoring good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment.

3.4 Table 3 shows that there appears to be two tiers of quality of open space provision across the Council area with a greater number of larger, higher quality open spaces in Bo'ness, Falkirk, Polmont and the Rural Area and significantly less of these in Bonnybridge and Banknock, Denny, Grangemouth and Larbert and Stenhousemuir.

3.5 Each audited park and open space has been assigned a place in a hierarchy of importance. To decide where to place each open space on the hierarchy of importance we considered whether people would be likely to travel to that open space from across Scotland, from across the Council area, from across the settlement or only from within their neighbourhood to visit. Table 5 below shows how the quality of an open space can vary depending on where it sits in the hierarchy of importance.

Hierarchy Level	Number of sites surveyed	Average Score	Area covered by sites in hectares	Percentage of total sites scored "good" or better fitness for purpose	Percentage of total area which scored "good" or better fitness for purpose.
National	23	3.61	356.8	90.0%	98.9%
Regional	26	3.28	957.6	73.1%	84.4%
Settlement	162	2.77	764.3	41.6%	45.9%
Neighbourhood	421	2.27	370.3	15.7%	14.5%

Table 5: Quality of open spaces at different levels of the hierarchy of importance

3.6 Although only 27.6% of the sites surveyed scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment, they represent 64.0% of the total area of open space surveyed. Generally the higher an open space is in the hierarchy of importance, the more likely it is to score good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment. These results may reflect the Council's long running strategy of focussing investment on its more important open spaces and that this strategy might have been to the detriment parks and open spaces of lesser importance.

3.7 Open space across the Council area is multi functional. The open space audit assigned each surveyed open space a function or a number of functions depending

on the way it was used. Table 6 below shows how the quality of an open space can vary according to its function.

Function	Number of sites surveyed	Average Score	Area covered by sites in hectares	Percentage of total number of sites scored "good" or better fitness for purpose	Percentage of total area which scored "good" or better fitness for purpose.
Parks and Amenity Open Space	434	2.35	1129.1	19.1%	54.7%
Playspace	174	2.78	597.8	39.6%	79.3%
Sports Area	79	2.81	452.5	40.5%	38.6%
Natural/ Semi Natural	153	2.78	1701.2	44.4%	77.2%

Table 6: Quality of different functions of open space

3.8 Overall, sports areas have the highest average score in the fitness for purpose assessment and the second highest percentage of the total number of sites scoring good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment, however, the smallest percentage by area of sports pitches scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment. What this appears to suggest is that for all other functions of open space, the larger the park or amenity open space, playspace or natural/semi natural open space the more likely it is to score good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment, whereas the quality of a sports area is less likely to be dictated by its overall size.

3.9 It should be borne in mind that the fitness for purpose assessment of sites containing a sports area does not attempt to make a detailed assessment of whether the quality of that site is sufficient to meet the sports development needs of the Council area. This, more detailed assessment, has been carried out by the Council for the purposes of producing a Sports Pitches Strategy. So, although sports areas appear to have the highest average score in the fitness for purpose assessment, this does not necessarily mean that they are adequately fulfilling their sports development role.

4 How easy is it to get to different functions of open space across the Council area?

4.1 Table 7 below shows the percentage of households within each settlement with access to different functions of open space within defined walking distances and the percentage of households within each settlement with access to fit for purpose open space within 400m.

Settlement Area	Fit for purpose open space within 400m (5 minutes walk)	Park or amenity open space bigger than 0.2ha within 400m (5 minutes walk)	Open space containing a playspace within 400m (5 minutes walk)	Open space containing a sports area within 800m (10 minutes walk)	Natural/ Semi Natural Open Space within 1200m (15 minutes walk)
Bo'ness	75.0%	98.8%	57.7%	80.0%	98.5%
Bonnybridge and Banknock	55.8%	92.9%	75.1%	44.5%	99.5%
Denny	78.8%	90.7%	73.3%	92.5%	99.0%
Falkirk	74.5%	87.5%	68.2%	71.8%	99.4%
Grangemouth	60.5%	78.3%	76.1%	89.8%	86.2%
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	58.1%	90.8%	86.9%	89.3%	99.6%
Polmont Area	66.0%	81.9%	71.9%	72.1%	99.1%
Rural North	59.9%	51.9%	73.8%	79.1%	93.0%
Rural South	24.8%	82.5%	68.5%	86.9%	74.8%
Rural Villages	34.1%	74.3%	69.9%	84.8%	79.6%
Urban Settlements	67.7%	87.9%	72.8%	77.7%	97.7%
Falkirk Council	65.7%	85.7%	72.6%	78.1%	96.6%

Table 7: Percentage of households within the minimum walking distance of different types of open space by settlement area

Ward	Fit for purpose open space within 400m (5 minutes walk)	Park or amenity open space bigger than 0.2ha within 400m (5 minutes walk)	Open space containing a playspace within 400m (5 minutes walk)	Open space containing a sports area within 800m (10 minutes walk)	Natural/ Semi Natural Open Space within 1200m (15 minutes walk)
Bo'ness & Blackness	73.8%	96.4%	62.3%	80.2%	98.0%
Bonnybridge & Larbert	53.7%	88.0%	77.7%	72.5%	98.8%
Carse, Kinnaird & Tryst	61.8%	83.9%	84.9%	87.3%	97.4%
Denny & Banknock	68.5%	88.4%	71.8%	70.5%	96.5%
Falkirk North	83.7%	84.1%	71.1%	74.9%	99.0%
Falkirk South	65.4%	90.2%	66.5%	63.0%	99.5%
Grangemouth	59.5%	84.5%	76.3%	89.9%	86.2%
Lower Braes	66.0%	77.7%	64.8%	70.7%	99.0%

Upper Braes	44.1%	81.9%	72.5%	77.2%	83.4%
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Table 8: Percentage of households within the minimum walking distance of different types of open space by Council ward.

4.2 Access to fit for purpose open space within 400m is particularly low in the Rural area although the problem is concentrated in the villages of Allandale; Avonbridge; California; Dunmore; Greenhill; Shieldhill; Skinfats; Torwood and Whitecross. Amongst the main settlements Bonnybridge and Banknock; Grangemouth and Larbert and Stenhousemuir score below the Council average.

4.3 The Council's Open Space and New Development Supplementary Guidance indicates that the minimum functional size of parkland is 2000m². Access to parkland of 2000m² or greater is lowest in Falkirk, Grangemouth and Polmont, where historic settlement patterns have meant that there are significant parts of the older areas of these towns where there is no accessible parkland. The Rural North also scores badly with the villages of Airth and Torwood a particular problem.

4.4 Amongst the urban settlement areas access to an open space containing a playspace is only significantly below the Council average in Bo'ness. The villages of Torwood, The Loan, Shieldhill, South Alloa and Avonbridge also score significantly below the Council average.

4.5 Access to a sports area is only significantly below the Council average in Bonnybridge and Banknock. This is mainly because of the linear nature of the settlement which runs between Bonnybridge and Banknock along the A803 corridor and the lack of a functional sports area to serve the majority of Banknock. Of the rural villages, Allandale, Torwood, The Loan and South Alloa do not have access to a sports area within 800m.

4.6 The percentage of households with access to Natural/ Semi Natural open space within 1200m is particularly high. This is largely due the nature of the Falkirk Council area which has extensive accessible natural/ semi natural open space on the urban fringe which is rarely more than 15 minutes walk from any household. High performance is a mark of the success of the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative. It is notable that the Rural South, perhaps counter intuitively, has the lowest percentage of households within 1200m of natural/semi natural greenspace. This is perhaps a reflection that the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative did not cover settlements in the Rural area.

5 How have things progressed since the last open space audit?

Has the amount of open space changed?

5.1 The amount of open space across the Council area does not change very fast. Table 10 below summarises the main changes which have taken place between the Council's first audit of open space and the second audit. In all this amounts to a net loss of 6.35 hectares of open space which represents a reduction in open space of 0.03%.

Creation of open space	Change of function	Loss of open space
1.8 hectares of new parkland at Kinnaird Village	33.6 hectares of semi natural open space between Falkirk and Grangemouth transformed into Helix Park	2 hectares of park/ sports area at Antonshill to accommodate a new primary school
0.2 hectares of new playspace at Drover Round in Kinnaird Village		7.3 hectares at the former BP amenity grounds in Grangemouth to accommodate a new freight distribution centre.
4ha of new semi natural open space at Lionthorn		0.5 hectares of parkland at Glenfuir Road to accommodate new Council housing
0.05 hectares of new playspace at Ewing Place in Kinnaird Village		0.6 hectares at the former Maddiston Primary School to accommodate new Council housing
0.08 hectares of new playspace at Cambus Avenue in Kinnaird Village		0.3 hectares of parkland at Coo Park in Dawson to accommodate new Council housing
		1.67 hectares of semi natural open space at Rodel Drive to accommodate new housing.
		0.11 hectares of open space across the district changed to private garden ground.

Table 10: Change in open space provision

Has the quality of open space changed?

5.2 Of the 612 open spaces surveyed as part of the second open space audit, 169 of them had previously been surveyed as part of the first open space audit in 2007. Table 11, 12 and 13 below show how things have changed since the first audit across the different settlement areas, across the different hierarchies of importance and across the different open space functions.

Settlement Area	Change in average score of all open space	Percentage point change of the total number of open spaces which scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment	Percentage point change of the total area of open space which scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment
Bo'ness	+0.27	+40	+39.7
Bonnybridge and Banknock	-0.04	0	- 2.0
Denny	+0.16	+8.3	+0.5
Falkirk	+0.18	+5.2	+0.8
Grangemouth	+0.29	0	+30.1
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	+0.21	+4.7	+31.2
Polmont	+0.24	+11.1	+27
Rural North	+0.46	+10.0	-0.1
Rural South	+0.16	+12.5	-1.6
Rural Area	+0.25	+11.8	-1.1
Urban Area	+0.18	+8.9	+13.9
Falkirk Council	+0.19	+9.5	+12.1

Table 11: Change in quality of open space across settlement areas

5.3 There appears to have been a general improvement in the quality of open spaces across the Council area with the most stark improvement in Bo'ness and strong improvement in Grangemouth and Larbert and Stenhousemuir. Of the main settlement areas the quality of open space has deteriorated in only Bonnybridge and Banknock and the percentage of the total area of open space which scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment has reduced marginally in Bonnybridge and Banknock, the Rural North and the Rural South.

Hierarchy	Change in average score	Percentage point change of the total number of open spaces which scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment	Percentage point change of the total area of open space which scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment
National	+0.33	0	0
Regional	+0.46	+21.8	+15.9
Settlement	+0.12	+9.0	+12.0
Neighbourhood	+0.20	+5.1	+1.6

Table 12: Change in quality of open space across the hierarchies of importance

5.4 Most improvement has been made to the national and regional levels of open space reflecting the Council's long running strategy of focussing investment on its more important open spaces. Settlement and neighbourhood level open spaces also appear to have improved although not by as much as national and regional level open spaces.

Function	Change in average score	Change in percentage of the total number of open spaces which scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment	Change in percentage of the total area of open space which scored good or better in the fitness for purpose assessment
Park and Amenity Open Space	+0.33	+9.2	+14.1
Playspace	+0.23	+8.0	+9.2
Sports Area	+0.06	+3.6	+12.7
Natural/ Semi Natural Open Space.	+0.26	+14.9	+13.1

Table 13: Change in quality of different functions of open space

5.5 There appears to have been an across the board improvement in all functions of open space. Of all functions of open space, sports areas appear to have improved by the smallest amount since 2007.

How much investment has been made in open space?

5.6 Since the Open Space Strategy was approved in 2010 there has been significant capital investment in open space. Table 10 below shows the amount of money which has been invested in each financial year and the different funding streams it came from.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
CSFT/CSGN	£302,559	£706,325	£314,400	£368,321	£920,819
Outdoor Access	£80,000	£848,781	£1,410,738	£1,898,180	£2,781,785
Parks and Recreation	£122,725	£392,888	£949,708	£1,275,458	£1,150,623
Helix	£2,300,000	£3,000,000	£16,400,000	£16,500,000	£3,800,000
Falkirk Community Trust	N/A	£119,182	£ 74,906	£1,680	£132,000
Total	£2,805,284	£5,067,176	£19,149,752	£20,051,959	£8,639,727
Total excluding the Helix	£505,284	£2,067,176	£2,749,752	£3,541,959	£4,839,727

Table 14: Capital investment in open space since 2010

5.7 Of the figures quoted above, not all capital investment has come from Council coffers. Significant sums of money have been levered from partner organisations such as the Forestry Commission, Central Scotland Forest Trust, the Central Scotland Green Network Trust, Falkirk Environment Trust, LEADER, SportsScotland, Scottish Canals, NHS Forth Valley, Callender Estates and SUSTAN.

Appendix 3 – Parks Development Plan

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
Modernising our parks and open spaces - Investing in poorer quality parks and open spaces where there is no better quality alternative provision. Prioritisation - Percentage of households with access to a fit for purpose open space within a 400m walk: Priority 1 settlements = 0%-40%; Priority 2 settlements = 40-60%; Priority 3 settlements = 60-70%; Priority 4 settlements = 70-80%				
MQUAL.1	Maiden Park, Bo'ness (48)	Improve path network and provide clear and safe entrances to the site, improve connections to nearby sites. Improve maintenance around the stream and wooded areas. Protect and enhance mature woodland for local biodiversity.		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 1.8 Households brought within standard 799
MQUAL.2	Victoria Park, Bo'ness (46)	Improve path network and drainage problems. Add sitting areas along the paths, taking advantage of diverse topography (with involvement of the local community to avoid unnecessary spending). Improve planted features to increase the use and amenity of the site. Restructure park using landscape planting. Improve interface with surrounding residential areas.		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.83 Households brought within standard 331
MQUAL.3	Borrowstoun 1, Bo'ness (25)	The site could work as a park or an amenity green space for the neighbourhood with		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 1.25 Households brought within

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		the introduction of parkland features such as mown grass, paths, benches, bins, play areas, trees and other ornamental planting. Improve fencing & improve maintenance of mature tree, allowing it to continue growth in a healthy manner.		standard 492
MQUAL.4	Hollandbush Park, Banknock (404)	More could be done to define different spaces within the park through planting or development of the footpath network. Motorway could be screened with woodland planting.	£22,500 already secured through a S75 agreement	Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard – 313
MQUAL.5	Anderson Park, Bonnybridge (401)	Additional planting, include benches. Car park surface needs attention before it becomes unusable. Possible upgrade of play equipment.		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.4 Households brought within standard – 347
MQUAL.6	Bonny Water Corridor, Bonnybridge (400)	Introduce signage at the park entrances, repair and maintain walling especially at formal park area. The footpath network could be extended further up the corridor and improvements to muddy path sections should be made. River and woodland habitats managed where possible to maximise biodiversity. Seating/picnic facilities would be		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.86 Households brought within standard – 466

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		appropriate.		
MQUAL.7	Reilly Road, High Bonnybridge (393)	Play area would benefit from updating with additional equipment. If possible provide additional entrance point(s). Potentially improve access through the space with a path to encourage usage.		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.4 Households brought within standard – 260
MQUAL.8	Anderson Terrace, Hags (747)	Maintain and upgrade amenity planting. Potential to support resident gardening project if sufficient interest. Ensure litter is managed as the space is likely to be important for neighbouring residents.		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.6 Households brought within standard – 129
MQUAL.9	Ure Crescent 4, Bonnybridge (765)	Introduction of additional planting, especially tree planting to improve amenity. Ensure space is litter picked and fence is kept in good repair.		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 1.25 Households brought within standard – 608
MQUAL.10	Archibald Russell Centre, Head of Muir (114)	Given its location next to a community facility there may be opportunities for community gardening projects, community tree planting. Potentially install benches.		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.6 Households brought within standard – 436
MQUAL.11	Little Denny Burn 2, Denny (83)	Ongoing management of woodland adjacent to the burn. Litter picking, stream management for biodiversity		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.83 Households brought within standard – 528

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		and potentially promote links between adjacent spaces 88, 110, 90 with signage or interpretation.		
MQUAL.12	Blinkbonny Park, Falkirk (379)	The site would benefit from the introduction and extension of the path network towards the west. Also from the creation of sitting areas, to take advantage of the views over Falkirk and the north, and the wooded area. The site could also benefit from the introduction of other features to provide interest and increase user numbers. There should be community engagement to create a space that responds to the residents need and wishes.		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 1.8 Households brought within standard – 95
MQUAL.13	Summerford, Falkirk (185)	The site would benefit from the clearance of some areas and planting of others, in order to reorganise and rethink the function and use of the site, and provide the facilities accordingly. The community should be engaged in the development of the site to provide a better recreational resource.	£53,000 of funding already in place. Possible inclusion within WIAT scheme.	Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.75 Households brought within standard – 228
MQUAL.14	Princes Park, Falkirk (380)	The site would benefit from the extension of the path network, as well as the		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.4 Households brought within

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		division of the space in different areas by extending ornamental planting, to provide structure and interest to the site. The increase in maintenance and cleanliness would also enhance the number of visitors.		standard – 108
MQUAL.15	Merchiston Road Park, Falkirk (546)	Trees would enhance the visual amenity of the site, and fences should be repaired. A footpath running between Merchiston Road and Dollar Avenue would facilitate access. The site could potentially accommodate play equipment.		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 1.6 Households brought within standard – 316
MQUAL.16	Easter Carmuir, Camelon (188)	Amenity planting could be extended. More of an identity could be created for the space. Create areas of different character through planting, vegetation management. Consider how to improve access for older people / less able people.	Falkirk Council, Our Place 2	Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.2 Households brought within standard – 969
MQUAL.17	MacAdam Place, Camelon (121)	Extend tree planting along the roadside potentially replace the poor quality trees. A formal ramped path could be provided from the road to the south to ease access into the site.	Falkirk Council, Our Place 2	Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.4 Households brought within standard – 149

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
MQUAL.18	Roman Drive, Camelon (161)	Should be decided what the space is for. The site may be suitable for a low key play area for young children to encourage people into the space.	Falkirk Council, Our Place 2	Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 1.5 Households brought within standard – 570
MQUAL.19	Portal Road 1, Grangemouth (242)	The site would benefit from community engagement to provide possible solutions and desirable features to help define the space and increase the number of users to a desired level.		Priority 3 settlement. FFP score 1.8 Households brought within standard – 831
MQUAL.20	Grange Burn, Grangemouth (251)	The site would benefit from improved maintenance and the introduction of more bins and dog litter bins to avoid litter from gathering on the mown grass. Some of the accesses could be improved and more amenity planting could be introduced to provide all year round visual interest. On the wider areas, benches could be introduced to provide interest and enhance use of the space, taking advantage of the potential of the burn as a recreational resource. Any further development should be carried out with consultation of the residents to provide a safe and		Priority 3 settlement. FFP score 2.2 Households brought within standard – 713

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		communal space.		
MQUAL.21	Inchyra Park, Grangemouth (241)	The site would benefit from the creation of structure and meaning, by dividing the space into smaller areas with planting, paths and other parkland features. The site could also be managed to enhance biodiversity, with woodland areas and also to further mitigate the impact of the Industrial Works on the residential areas to the west.		Priority 3 settlement. FFP score 1.8 Households brought within standard – 615
MQUAL.22	Chapelburn Park East, Stenhousemuir (208)	An good link in the local cycling network which could be better promoted with signage. Potential to improve biodiversity associated with the burn. Potentially introduce variety in the grass, e.g. long grass, mown grass, meadow, and add interest with bulbs. Upgrades to some of the muddier footpaths recommended.		Priority 2 settlement. FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard - 960
MQUAL.23	Chapelburn Park West, Stenhousemuir (209)	Addition of benches, bins, some planting especially at the higher end of the site near the housing. Footpaths may promote access through the site. Manage grass for greater diversity (long grass, short grass, meadow) and to		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.6 Households brought within standard – 900

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		define spaces. Addition of more woodland would help spatial definition. Burn corridor could be better managed for biodiversity. Promote links to neighbouring site 208.		
MQUAL.24	Broomage Park, Larbert (386)	Entrances could be enhanced with improved signage, railings. Amenity planting should be maintained / enhanced with scope for additional amenity tree planting to ensure succession of mature trees. The site may support community involvement given it size, location and nature.		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard – 532
MQUAL.25	Hillview Road (353)	Provision of bins and benches. Addition of amenity planting, especially trees to ensure succession of existing mature trees.		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard – 474
MQUAL.26	Drumlanrig Place Wood, Antonshill (358)	Construction of second paved path across the site would improve circulation, potentially create some more grassy areas with benches within the more open woodland to encourage people into the space. Visibility through the site should be maintained		Priority 2 settlement FFP score 2.5 Households brought within standard – 630

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		through clearance of bramble and undergrowth. Maintenance of amenity planting at entrances.		
MQUAL.27	The Thrums, Laurieston (319)	The site would benefit from the extension of the path network, and the introduction of benches and bins to take advantage of the views. There should also be introduced more amenity planting to provide structure and interest to the park and also there should be more maintenance on the wooded areas to avoid gathering of litter.		Priority 3 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard – 609
MQUAL.28	Wallacestone Park (266)	The site would benefit from resurfacing on the paths and car park. Reduced car parking space, increased amenity planting and replacement of the benches, to allow site to be enjoyed in a healthy way.		Priority 3 settlement FFP score 2.6 Households brought within standard – 138
MQUAL.29	Abercairney Crescent, Rumford (138)	The site would benefit from improved maintenance and the introduction of amenity planting to provide visual interest to the site. The site would also benefit from the introduction of benches, paths and some more litter bins to promote use of the		Priority 3 settlement FFP score 1.6 Households brought within standard - 302

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		area and avoid litter from gathering.		
MQUAL.30	Valley Park, Maddiston (191)	Extensive programme of improvements funded through planning gain already implemented.		Priority 3 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard - 229
MQUAL.31	Main Road, Maddiston (143)	The site would benefit from the introduction of maintenance both in terms of cleaning and in terms of clearing and managing the woodland and scrub areas. The site would also benefit from the resurfacing of the paths and creation of sitting areas to allow the site to be visited and used. Also, the introduction of a play area, would improve the use of the site by the surrounding community.		Priority 3 settlement FFP score 1.6 Households brought within standard - 213
MQUAL.32	Moss Cottages Green, Dunmore (438)	The site would gain from the introduction of a path network, improved facilities in the play area, according to the community's needs and the involvement of the community in further development of the site and its functions.		Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard - 36
MQUAL.33	Torwood (431)	Develop access points, footpath network and signage, perhaps add small car park. Woodland	Contains vacant and derelict land	Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.5 Households brought within standard - 35

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		management to maximise biodiversity potential and amenity.		
MQUAL.34	Airth Castle Woodlands (434)	Create a path network to allow people to enjoy the site. Create conditions to manage the site to improve its environmental and ecological function.		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.3 Households brought within standard - 56
MQUAL.35	Airth Recreation Ground (437)	Would benefit from improved on site maintenance. A path network connecting the different facilities and more play equipment, adjusted to the community needs.		Priority 4 settlement. FFP score 2.4 Households brought within standard - 91
MQUAL.37	Recreation Ground ,Whitecross (427)	The site would benefit from the introduction of a path network and amenity planting, to bring structure and meaning to the site and to attract user to it. The community should be engaged in any further development of the site, to avoid unnecessary spending and facilities.		Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard - 187
MQUAL.38	California Recreation Ground (419)	Improve access and signage towards the site. Improve path material and poor drainage to avoid water logging and mud. Improve maintenance and cleanliness on the site to make it more welcoming and improve user		Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.5 Households brought within standard - 244

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		numbers to detract anti-social behaviour.		
MQUAL.39	Slamannan Road Recreation Ground, Avonbridge (418)	The site would benefit from the introduction of a path network, to allow equal access to all and to add structure to the area around the play facilities. The hedge on the roadside boundary should be replanted to add structure and amenity to the site. The site would also benefit from improved drainage.		Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.4 Households brought within standard - 160
MQUAL.40	Greenhill Park (440)	Litter management, repairs to the footpath are necessary. Woodland and other habitat to be appropriately managed. Play area is due upgrading. Signage would be useful, as would benches to promote views from the elevated position.		Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.4 Households brought within standard - 40
MQUAL.41	Thorndale Gardens, Allandale (702)	Ensure the maintenance and renewal of the amenity planting.		Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.3 Households brought within standard - 89
MQUAL.42	Shieldhill Playingfields (421)	The site would benefit from the introduction of parkland facilities like paths, benches and bins, to provide safe and easy access for all and to facilitate the pursuit of the main function of the site. Also		Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.0 Households brought within standard - 452

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		<p>maintenance should be improved to avoid litter from gathering around the wooded area. The car park should be extended and resurfaced to provide safe conditions for drivers and the entrance should be improved to become more welcoming and safe.</p>		
MQUAL.43	Main Street, Shieldhill (422)	<p>The site would benefit from the introduction of more benches and bins, to allow people to enjoy the views towards the north. Also, there should be more amenity planting around the fencing, on the edges of the site, to provide more friendly boundaries. The play equipment should be updated and repaired.</p>		<p>Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard - 474</p>
MQUAL.44	Ledi Place, Shieldhill (662)	<p>The site would benefit from clearance of some of the shrubs and extension of the path towards the east. Also, some amenity planting and maintenance could be introduced to provide visual interest all year-round. Further development should be discussed with the community to avoid unnecessary spending.</p>		<p>Priority 1 settlement FFP score 1.3 Households brought within standard - 335</p>

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
MQUAL.45	The Rumlie (414)	The site would benefit from increased maintenance, enhanced biodiversity and wildlife. There should be paths, accessible for all linking the streets and the play facilities and the play areas should be resurfaced with a more suiting material. The community should be engaged in the development and maintenance of the site to detract vandalism and anti-social behaviour and to better adjust the site to the needs of it's users.		Priority 4 settlement FFP score 2.7 Households brought within standard - 74
MQUAL.46	Newton Park, Bo'ness (46)	Improve path network and drainage problems. Add sitting areas along the paths, taking advantage of diverse topography (with involvement of the local community to avoid unnecessary spending). Improve planted features to increase the use and amenity of the site. Restructure park using landscape planting. Improve interface with surrounding residential areas.	Contains vacant and derelict land	Priority 4 settlement FFP score 2.0 Households brought within standard – 271 SIMD Health Domain: 46%
MQUAL.47	King George V Playingfields, Redding (337)	The path network should be improved and extended to provide safe access for all. The maintenance should be		Priority 3 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard - 316

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		<p>enhanced to avoid litter from gathering and more bins and dog bins should be added. The site would benefit from the introduction of amenity planting and sitting areas, to provide uses and functions to the site in a healthy and community aware way.</p>		
MQUAL.48	Skinflats Park (442)	<p>The site could accommodate some more parkland facilities such as bins, benches and picnic tables and an increase in the ornamental planting features, to provide the settlement with a fit for purpose park, play area and playing field.</p>		<p>Priority 1 settlement FFP score 2.8 Households brought within standard - 133</p>
MQUAL.49	Binniehill Playgorund (415)	<p>The site would benefit from improved accessibility, and enhanced play features and opportunities. The gateway to the railway trail should be improved and also the boundaries and access should be improved. There should be sitting areas and access paths, especially closer to the bus stop. Amenity planting should also be introduced to provide year</p>		<p>Priority 4 Settlement FFP score 2.0 Households brought within standard - 74</p>

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		round interest to the site.		
MQUAL.50	Symington Park (822)	The site would benefit from amenity planting and new benches.		Priority 2 settlement FFP Score 1.6 Households brought within standard - 179
Modernising our parks and open spaces - Investing in parks and open spaces which are particularly valued by the local community Prioritisation - FFP score of Key Open Space Asset: Priority 1 = 0 - 3.0; Priority 2 = 3.0 - 3.5; Priority 3 = 3.5 – 4.0; Priority 5 = 4.0 – 5.0				
MVAL.01	Kinneil Estate (51)	Masterplan already prepared and approved	Falkirk Community Trust	Priority 4 FFP score 4.3
MVAL.02	Kinneil Foreshore (52) and Bo'ness Foreshore (53)	<p>Prepare a parks masterplan.</p> <p>The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area.</p> <p>Appropriate Assessment of the expanded masterplan should be carried out which should demonstrate that proposals can be implemented without causing adverse effects on the integrity of the Firth of Forth SPA either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.</p>	Falkirk Council	Priority 2 FFP score 3.5; 3.3
MVAL.03	Duncan Stewart (397)/	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Council	Priority 1

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
	Bonnyfield (396)			FFP score 2.4; 3.6
MVAL.04	Hollandbush Park (Ash Park) (404)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Council	Priority 1 FFP score 2.8
MVAL.05	Herbertshire Castle Park (Gala Park) (104)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Council	Priority 2 FFP score 3.0
MVAL.06	Callendar Park (365) and Wood (232)	Masterplan prep is currently underway	Falkirk Community Trust, Forestry Commission Scotland	Priority 3 FFP score 4.0; 3.8
MVAL.07	Helix (Incorporating, Dalderse, Helix North/Kelpies, Helix Park and Falkirk Stadium) (376,869, 870 & 871)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Community Trust Contains some vacant and derelict land	Priority 2 FFP score 4.9; 4.7; 3.3; & 2.5
MVAL.08	Falkirk Wheel (187)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Scottish Canals	Priority 5 FFP score 4.6
MVAL.09	Zetland Park (218)	Masterplan prepared but not approved.	Falkirk Council	Priority 4 FFP score 4.0
MVAL.10	Crownest Park (The Lido) (211)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Council	Priority 2 FFP score 3.2
MVAL.11	Gairdoch Park (207)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Council	Priority 1 FFP score 2.4
MVAL.12	Grey Buchannan Park (211)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Council	Priority 4 FFP score 4.1
MVAL.13	Laurie Park (207)	Prepare a parks masterplan.	Falkirk Council	Priority 2 FFP score 3.4
MVAL.14	Muiravonside Country Park (211)	Masterplan preparation is currently underway	Falkirk Community Trust	Priority 5 FFP score 4.6
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Raising the quality standards in our national and regional level open spaces Prioritisation - FFP score of national level open space: Priority 1 = 0 – 3.0; FFP score of regional level open space: Priority 2 = 0 – 2.0; Priority 3 = 2.0-2.5; Priority 4 = 2.5 – 3.0				
MNATREG.01	Bonny Water Corridor (400)	Introduce signage at the park entrances, repair and	Falkirk Council	Priority 4 Regional – 2.9

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		maintain walling especially at formal park area. The footpath network could be extended further up the corridor and improvements to muddy path sections should be made. River and woodland habitats managed where possible to maximise biodiversity. Seating/picnic facilities would be appropriate.		
MNATREG.02	Seabegs Wood (395)	Necessary to strike a balance between developing for visitors and preserving the character of the site. Small lay by parking and upgraded access path may be appropriate. More interpretation about the wall would be appropriate. Access could be provided through the woods to neighbouring residential areas.	Falkirk Council	Priority 3 Regional – 2.3
MNATREG.03	Little Denny Reservoir (111)	May be the potential to improve the accessibility of the site with footpaths and signage.	Scottish Water	Priority 3 Regional – 2.5
MNATREG.04	Forth and Clyde Canal – Falkirk (159,884,886)	(159) Ensure the maintenance of the amenity planting near the roadside. Litter management needed at the northern end of the site.	Scottish Canals	Priority 1 National – 2.8, 2.6, 2.4

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		<p>(884) Review the path connections from the canal, through the adjacent industrial areas to the residential streets to ensure that easy and safe access can be had. Review the path links from the canal to the High School rear entrance, with regard to health and safety concerns around current access. Ensure that the environment along the tow path and adjacent to transitional zones/ open spaces remains tidy and litter free. Provide litter bins at appropriate points along the route. Provide seating at a couple of locations along the route to encourage people to use the route for leisure. Continue to maintain the areas of amenity planting to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. Undertake regular litter picks at the set of steps at the eastern section of the path</p> <p>(886) Consider planting a row of trees along the canal side, to the north of the canal. Replace the fencing at the narrow section of the</p>		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		canal and make area safe, also install warning signs. Review the need for a waste bin at appropriate locations.		
MNATREG.05	Bo'ness Foreshore West (545)	<p>The site would benefit from improved accessibility with quality materials on the paths and some improvement on the maintenance aspects. There could be some information about the original of the open space and other features of interest to attract visitors and users to the site.</p> <p>The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area.</p>	Falkirk Council. Contains vacant and derelict land	Priority 2 Regional – 1.8
MNATREG.06	Falkirk Stadium (871)	<p>The site would benefit from improved facilities to provide some interest and enhance the use of the site. Also some more amenity planting could be introduced to provide all year round interest and also to create a stronger barrier between the busy road and the site. Improved planting would provide a shelterbelt between the busy road and the</p>	Falkirk Council	Priority 3 Regional - 2.5

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		<p>Stadium's facilities, as well as some visual interest. Planting measures could also decrease the visual impact of electric pylons and cables. A section of the landscape planting along the A9 and A904 is soon to be replanted to reflect the site's potential as a business location. The remainder of the site should be tidied up, with shrub beds and woodland areas cleaned up and maintained to ensure that the overall impression of the site is favourable.</p> <p>Address the dumping issue, with signage, CCTV surveillance and on the spot fines. Any proposals to develop the site should be undertaken through a masterplan process to ensure that all aspects of the site are addressed and brings the best overall results.</p>		
MNATREG.07	Bo'ness Foreshore East (56)	<p>Create a footpath network, with appropriate signage and welcoming entrances to site. Manage scrub and woodland to permit healthy evolution and enhance biodiversity on the site. Improve</p>	Falkirk Council. Contains vacant and derelict land	Priority 2 Regional – 1.5

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		<p>maintenance and litter/ debris removal and introduce park-like features such as benches, bins, according to the needs and views of the local community. Provide better links with other open spaces along the shore and also other spaces towards the south.</p> <p>The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area.</p>		
MNATREG.08	Torwood (431)	Develop access points, footpath network and signage, perhaps add small car park. Woodland management to maximise biodiversity potential and amenity.	Private landowner	Priority 3 Regional – 2.5
<p>Modernising our parks and open spaces – Developing new parkland facilities in areas of identified need</p> <p>Prioritisation – Percentage of households with access to park or amenity open space of over 0.2 hectares within a 400m walk: Priority 1 settlement = 0-50%; Priority 2 settlement = 50-70%; Priority 3 settlement = 70-80%; Priority 4 settlement = 80-85%; Priority 5 settlement = 85-90%; Priority 6 settlement = 90-100%</p>				
MPARK.01	Torwood			Priority 1
MPARK.02	Merchiston			Priority 5
MPARK.03	Grahamston			Priority 5
MPARK.04	East Dawson			Priority 5
MPARK.05	South Camelon			Priority 5

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
MPARK.06	South Bantaskin			Priority 5
MPARK.07	Woodlands			Priority 5
MPARK.08	North East Grangemouth			Priority 3
MPARK.09	South Broomage			Priority 6
MPARK.10	Ladeside			Priority 6
MPARK.11	Reddingmuirhead			Priority 4
MPARK.12	Rumford			Priority 4
MPARK.13	West Polmont			Priority 4
MPARK.14	South Polmont			Priority 4
MPARK.15	Old Polmont			Priority 4
MPARK.16	South Airth			Priority 1
MPARK.17	West Allandale			Priority 2
MPARK.18	Avonbridge			Priority 2
MPARK.19	East Shieldhill			Priority 3
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Developing new play facilities in areas of identified need Prioritisation – Percentage of households with access to an open space containing a playspace within a 600m walk: Priority 1 settlement = 0-75%; Priority 2 settlement = 75-90%; Priority 3 settlement = 90-95%; Priority 4 settlement = 95-100% or number of households further than 800m from an open space containing a playspace: Priority 1 settlement = over 400; Priority 2 settlement = 200 – 400; Priority 3 settlement = 100 – 200; Priority 4 settlement = under 100				
MPLAY.01	Borrowstoun			Priority 3 (1)
MPLAY.02	Carriden			Priority 3 (1)
MPLAY.03	North East Bonnybridge			Priority 4 (3)
MPLAY.04	North East Grangemouth			Priority 4 (2)
MPLAY.05	Merchiston			Priority 4 (1)
MPLAY.06	Grahamston			Priority 4 (1)
MPLAY.07	Woodlands			Priority 4 (1)
MPLAY.08	South Broomage			Priority 4 (3)
MPLAY.09	Torwood			Priority 1 (4)
MPLAY.10	East Shieldhill			Priority 4 (4)
MPLAY.11	West Allandale			Priority 2 (4)
MPLAY.12	South West Airth			Priority 3 (4)
MPLAY.13	East Antonshill			Priority 4 (3)

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Improving play provision within a rationalised portfolio of playspaces				
MPLAY.14	Identify which of our remaining portfolio of playspaces need investment to ensure that they provide play equipment to serve three different age groups.		Falkirk Council	
MPLAY.15	Within our remaining portfolio of playspaces, identify where incorporation of natural play features would be financially sustainable and improve overall play value.		Falkirk Council	
MPLAY.16	Carry out a review of the 69 potentially surplus open spaces identified within the Strategy to confirm which of these should be confirmed as surplus to operational requirements.		Falkirk Council	
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Developing new sports areas in areas of identified need				
Prioritisation – Percentage of households with access to an open space containing a sports area within an 1200m walk: Priority 1 settlement = 0-50%; Priority 2 settlement = 50-75%; Priority 3 settlement = 75-95%; Priority 4 settlement = 95-100% or number of households further than 1200m from an open space containing a playspace: Priority 1 settlement = over 1000; Priority 2 settlement = 500 – 1000; Priority 3 settlement 200 – 500; Priority 4 settlement = under 200				
MSPOR.01	Borrowstoun Mains			Priority 4 (3)
MSPOR.02	Banknock			Priority 2 (1)
MSPOR.03	Milnquarter/ Greenhill			Priority 2 (1)
MSPOR.04	Bantaskin			Priority 3 (1)
MSPOR.05	Longcroft			Priority 2 (1)
MSPOR.06	Woodlands			Priority 3 (1)
MSPOR.07	Wallacestone			Priority 3 (2)
MSPOR.08	Fankerton			Priority 4 (4)

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
MSPOR.09	Arnothill			Priority 3 (1)
MSPOR.10	Tamfourhill			Priority 3 (1)
MSPOR.11	East Polmont			Priority 3 (2)
MSPOR.12	Kinnaird Village			Priority 4 (3)
MSPOR.13	Beancross			Priority 4 (4)
MSPOR.14	South Alloa			Priority 1 (4)
MSPOR.15	The Loan			Priority 1 (4)
MSPOR.16	Allandale			Priority 1 (4)
MSPOR.17	Torwood			Priority 1 (4)
MSPOR.18	South Airth			Priority 3 (4)
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Enabling the development of a network of strategic pitch sites				
MSPOR.19	Enable the creation of a network of strategic pitch sites across the Council area	The Council will provide partnership funding	Falkirk Council, Falkirk Community Trust, Local Football Clubs, Sportscotland	
MSPOR.20	Review, update and formalise a Sports Pitches Strategy for the Council area		Falkirk Council, Falkirk Community Trust , Sportscotland	
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Creating new semi natural open spaces in areas of identified need				
Prioritisation – Percentage of households with access to a natural/ semi natural open space within a 1200m walk: Priority 1 settlement = 0-50%; Priority 2 settlement 50-100%				
MSEM.01	Zetland Park		Falkirk Council	Priority 2
MSEM.02	Whitecross			Priority 1
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Developing a high quality, multi-functional green network which will provide a range of benefits for people, businesses and wildlife across our area				
MGNT.01	The Drum Green Corridor	Develop link between Drum open space, Kinningars Park and the Crookies		
MGNT.02	Drum Farm South Green Corridor	Develop green corridor along Drum Farm South frontage		
MGNT.03	Kinglass Farm Woodland	Develop woodland corridor	Miller Homes	

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
	Corridor	along urban edge at Kinglass Farm		
MGNT.04	Bo'ness Green Corridors	Improve quality, function and diversity of open space corridors within Bo'ness incorporating contiguous open spaces such as Deanburn Glen and Maidenpark; Grahamsdyke Playingfields and Newton Park		
MGNT.05	John Muir Way	Carry out landscape and access improvements along the John Muir Way. The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area.	In the Bo'ness area this comprises some vacant and derelict land.	
MGNT.06	Dennyloanhead Green Corridor	Develop green corridor along the dismantled Kilsyth to Bonnybridge Railway in Dennyloanhead	Mactaggart & Mickel	
MGNT.07	Bonny Water Green Corridor	Develop link between the Bonny Water corridor and the Denny to Falkirk footpath		
MGNT.08	Rowan Tree Burn Green Corridor	Develop green corridor		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		along the Rowan Tree Burn		
MGNT.09	Banknock North Nature Park	Develop nature park specifically managed for use by Great Crested Newts in Banknock	I&H Brown. Contains some vacant and derelict land	
MGNT.10	Doups Burn Wetland Park	Develop a managed wetland park alongside the Doups Burn corridor in Banknock	Falkirk Council/ . Contains some vacant and derelict land	
MGNT.11	Loch Park Sports Area	Improve sports area provision at Loch Park (392)	Central Demolition	
MGNT.12	Bonnyfield Local Nature Reserve Expansion	Expand Bonnyfield Local Nature Reserve to incorporate wetland habitat at Parkfoot Moss to the west of the bonded warehouse complex, enhance riparian habitat along the Bonny Water and improve access to LNR via the Seabegs Pend.		
MGNT.13	River Carron Green Corridor	River Carron Corridor improvements		
MGNT.14	DEAR Woodland Corridor	Develop broadleaved woodland corridor on the southern edge of the Denny Eastern Access Road	Bett Homes, Falkirk Council	

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
MGNT.15	Rosebank Woodland Corridor	Robust structure planting along the northern edge of the Rosebank site and retaining woodland on eastern edge.	Mactaggart and Mickel	
MGNT.16	Denny Falkirk Path	Opportunity to link Denny and Camelon/Falkirk utilising the solum of the disused railway line		
MGNT.17	Lionthorn Policy Bing Sports Area	Develop a new sports area at the Policy Bing. Funded by planning gain money from Lionthorn	Falkirk Community Trust	
MGNT.18	Mungal Burn Green Corridor	Develop a new green corridor along the Mungal Burn path as part of the development of the Cauldhame Farm 2 housing development site.		
MGNT.19	Sunnyside Playingfields extension	Investigate the potential to incorporate part of the Cauldhame Farm 2 site into an extension of Sunnyside Playingfields North (190)		
MGNT.20	Forth and Clyde Canal Green Corridor	Improve the recreational function and setting of the Forth and Clyde Canal corridor		
MGNT.21	East Falkirk Green Corridor	Develop new green corridor linking the Helix to	Forth Valley College	

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		Victoria Park		
MGNT.22	Ladysmill Burn Restoration	Investigate the potential for channel restoration of the Ladysmill Burn		
MGNT.23	Bothkennar/ Skinflats	<p>Opportunity along the coastline to the north of the River Carron to create new supporting habitat for Firth of Forth Special Protection Area species and new visitor facilities for bird viewing and improve access to the area from the Helix. Could involve managed coastal realignment which would help to reduce overall flood risk.</p> <p>The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area.</p>		
MGNT.24	Kinnaird/Carron Policies	Introduce buffer planting as part of Bellsdyke/ Hill of Kinnaird urban expansion. Investigate opportunities to secure the management and reinforcement of remnant parkland		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		landscapes along the eastern edge of Stenhousemuir and Carronshore		
MGNT.25	Larbert Green Corridors	Investigate opportunities to improve the quality, function, connectivity and diversity of opens space corridors running alongside the Chapel Burn and the How Burn		
MGNT.26	Glenbervie to Denny Path	Investigate opportunities to provide a missing link in the core path network to enable a circular route between North Broomage and Denny via Glenbervie and Torwood		
MGNT.27	Manual Burn Green Corridor	Retain and enhance the Manual Burn corridor as an amenity and biodiversity asset.		
MGNT.28	Gilston Burn Green Corridor	Opportunity for green corridor through the Gilston development site along the line of the Gilston Burn incorporating riparian buffer strip	Hansteen	
MGNT.29	Polmont Area Green Corridor	Improve the quality, function and diversity of open space corridors	Falkirk Council. Scottish Canals	

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		running through Polmont. Enhance connectivity to the Polmont Burn & Westquarter Burn corridors and the Union Canal.		
MGNT.30	Maddiston Woodland Corridor	Create new woodland edge along the eastern edge of Maddiston		
MGNT.31	Helix South	Improve internal path networks and access to the Helix from Laurieston and Polmont		
MGNT.32	Kincardine to South Alloa path.	<p>Create missing link in the Round the Forth Foreshore Path between Airth Sewage Works and Dunmore and create a path along the A905 from Airth to South Alloa.</p> <p>The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area.</p>		
MGNT.33	Waterslap	Investigate opportunities to enhance the abandoned opencast site at Waterslap between Airth and Letham including potential river		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		restoration along the Pow Burn and access improvements from Airth and Letham.		
MGNT.34	River Avon Corridor	<p>Improve access network along the River Avon upstream from Avonbridge to Slamannan and downstream from Linlithgow Bridge to Grangemouth.</p> <p>The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Slamannan Plateau Special Protection Area.</p>		
MGNT.35	Hillcrest Woodland Corridor	New greenspace incorporating extensive tree planting to be created as part of the housing development site at Hillcrest near Shieldhill		
MGNT.36	Hillend Farm Wildlife Corridor	New greenspace specifically managed for use by Bean Geese (and not made available for public recreational use) to be created as part of the		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		Hillend Farm housing development site in Slamannan. The programming of any works on site should be timed to avoid disturbance of migratory birds associated with the Slamannan Plateau Special Protection Area.		
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Encouraging increased use of parks and open spaces				
MUSE.01	Tackling dog fouling			
MUSE.02	Promoting the responsible use of parks and open spaces.	Develop and promote a code of conduct promoting the responsible use of parks and open space so that they can be enjoyed equally by all.	Falkirk Council, Falkirk Community Trust	
MUSE.03	Promoting the facilities on offer within parks and open spaces			
MUSE.04	Encouraging people to walk or cycle to parks and open spaces			
Modernising our parks and open spaces – Improving the benefits to nature				
MNAT.01	Management and maintenance for biodiversity	Identify opportunities to change the maintenance regime of its parks and open spaces to further the conservation of biodiversity. See action EMAN.1 below		
MNAT.02	Enlarging existing habitat networks	Identify opportunities to join up existing habitat networks through promoting targeted		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		landscape change within existing parks and open spaces		
MNAT.03	Support the development of flood risk management measures	The Flood Risk Management Strategy for the Forth Estuary Local Plan District could contain a number of flood risk management measures which the Council's parks and open spaces could help to deliver. We will support the development of these measures.	Falkirk Council. Falkirk Community Trust. SEPA	
MNAT.04	Management and maintenance for water ecology.	Identify opportunities to change the maintenance regime of its parks and open spaces to enhance the ecological status of water bodies		
Addressing inequality and fostering community through open space investment – Addressing Inequality				
See references prefixes MQUAL; MVAL; MNATREG; MPARK; MPLAY; MSPOR & MSEM above	Addressing inequalities in different types of open space provision	Actions have been prioritised to deliver those in the areas of greatest need first		
Addressing inequality and fostering community through open space investment – Fostering Community Cohesion				
I&CCOM.01	Community Greenspace Fund	Set up and actively promote a fund which community organisations can bid into to help with project establishment costs.	Falkirk	
Working and investing more efficiently – Management and Maintenance				
EMAIN.01	Appropriate maintenance	Commission a study to		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
	study	identify those parks and open spaces where a lower intensity maintenance regime would be more appropriate either to save money, or to enhance value for wildlife. See action MNAT.1 above		
EMAIN.02	Changed maintenance regime – demonstration projects	Identify a number of pilot parks and open spaces where the benefits of the new maintenance schedule can be showcased.		
EMAIN.03	Digitise the Council's ownership records.	This will allow us to have a comprehensive understanding of which parks and open spaces we own and maintain.		
Working and investing more efficiently - Accessibility				
EACC.01	Falkirk Royal Infirmary	Investigate the potential to secure the provision of a new parkland, play area and sports area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals
EACC.02	Gowan Avenue	Investigate the potential to secure provision of a new parkland and play area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals
EACC.03	Firs Park	Investigate the potential to secure provision of a new parkland and play area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
EACC.04	Portdownie	Investigate the potential to secure the provision of a new sports area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals
EACC.05	Hill of Kinnaird	Investigate the potential to secure the provision of a new sports area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals
EACC.06	Gilston	Investigate the potential to secure the provision of a new sports area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals
EACC.07	Grangemouth Town Centre	Investigate the potential to secure the provision of a new open space and play area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals
EACC.08	Grahamston Opportunity Area	Investigate the potential to secure the provision of a new parkland and play area as part of new development proposals		In association with development proposals
EACC.09	Hillcrest	Investigate opportunities to create new playspace within this development site as part of new development proposals	Persimmon Homes	In association with development proposals
EACC.10	Falkirk High	Investigate opportunities to negotiate wider public access to privately managed sports facilities		
EACC.11	Woodlands Sports Hall	Investigate opportunities to negotiate wider public access to privately managed sports		

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		facilities		
EACC.12	New entrances study	Carry out a study to identify where the creation of new site entrances would increase the number of new households with access to different types of open space within the distances set out in the various open space standards.		
EACC.13	Missing links study	Carry out a study to identify where the creation of missing links in the active travel network would increase the number of new households with access to different types of open space within the distances set out in the various open space standards.		
Generating money for investment in parks and open space				
GINV.01	Surplus open space identification study	Carry out an exercise which identifies the parks and open spaces which are surplus to requirements having regard to the standards contained within this Strategy	Falkirk Council	
GINV.02	Scheme of charging for commercial use of parks and open space	Explore opportunities to expand the scheme of charging for the commercial use of parks and open spaces currently operated by Falkirk Community Trust to parks and open spaces	Falkirk Council, Falkirk Community Trust	

Reference	Actions	Context/ Detail	Partners (lead in bold)	Timescale/ Priority
		which are directly operated by the Council		
GINV.03	Commercial opportunity identification study	Carry out a study to identify what opportunities there are to commercialise the park and open space resource and develop a business case for this.	Falkirk Council	
GINV.04	Crowd-funding mechanism study	Investigate the potential to set up a “crowdfunding” mechanism to encourage public donations towards specific park and open space improvement projects.	Falkirk Council, Falkirk Community Trust, MyParkScotland	

Appendix 4 – Pre-Consultative Draft Strategy Consultation Report

1.0 Introduction

A programme of pre-consultative draft strategy consultation was undertaken as part of the Policy Development Panel process. The purpose of the consultation was to inform the preparation of the consultative draft Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan. The programme of consultation included:

- A seminar for elected members;
- A seminar for organisations with an interest in parks and open spaces
- A survey of officers involved in the management and maintenance of parks and open spaces
- A questionnaire about attitudes to and use of parks and open spaces which was distributed to the Citizens' Panel.

2.0 Members' Seminar

The members' seminar took place on 3rd November 2014 and, other than Council officers and members of the policy development panel, was attended by 7 elected members and 1 member of the public representing Friends of Dollar Park. The format of the seminar was as follows:

Item	Content
1. Convener's address	Welcome and introduction to the seminar.
2. Scene setting	An overview of the national picture surrounding parks and open space investment.
3. Falkirk Community Trust (FCT)	Update on the work being undertaken by FCT in relation to parks management plans and current investment programme.
4. Corporate and Neighbourhood Services (C&NS) update	Update on the work being undertaken by (C&NS) in relation to individual park masterplans and current investment programme.
5. 2013 Open Space Audit Summary	Summary of the process and findings of the 2013 open space audit and 2014 accessibility analysis.
6. Strategic Choices	An outline of the strategic choices facing the Council which the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan will have to address.
7. Visions of open space in Falkirk	Sticky dot exercise which asks members to prioritise which qualities they would like to see Falkirk's parks and open spaces having in the future. Members will be able to do this whilst having a coffee break. This will be followed by a summary of what the results of the exercise appear to be telling us about the

8. Feedback	members' priorities and open discussions about why the members made the choices they did. Open discussion allowing members the opportunity to voice any concerns they have about parks and open spaces in the Council area which they want the review of the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan to address.
9. Convener	Close of Seminar

Analysis of the results of the Strategic Choices workshop and recommendations for Strategy drafting can be seen in annex 1. Analysis of the results of the Visions of Open Space workshop can be seen in annex 2.

Following the seminar copies of the presentations given were circulated.

3.0 Stakeholders' Seminar

The stakeholders' seminar took place on 14th November 2014 and, other than Council officers and members of the policy development panel, was attended by 25 people representing the following organisations:

- 11 Community Councils;
- 4 "Friends of" groups;
- Friends of the Earth Falkirk;
- Falkirk Allotment Society;
- Scottish Natural Heritage;
- Fields in Trust;
- LEADER;
- Forestry Commission Scotland;
- NHS Forth Valley;
- Central Scotland Green Network Trust; and
- Sportscotland.

The format of the seminar was as follows:

Item	Content
1. Registration	A chance to meet fellow delegates before proceedings start and have a hot drink
2. Convener's address	Welcome and introduction to the seminar
3. Scene setting	An overview of the national picture surrounding parks and open space investment
4. Visions of open space in Falkirk	After a short introduction from David Crighton, delegates will be asked to discuss, in groups, the different features of open space which are in front of them and reach consensus as to which feature is the most important and which feature is the least important. Groups will then be asked to feed back

	justifying their choices.
5. 2013 Open Space Audit Summary	Summary of the process and findings of the 2013 open space audit and 2014 accessibility analysis
6. Strategic Choices & Refreshments	Delegates will be asked to look at a range of strategic choices facing the Council which the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan will have to address and consider the positive and negative consequences of each choice. Facilitators will feed back the results of this exercise and encourage further discussion around any of the points raised
7. Council and Community Trust Update	Update of work being undertaken by FCT in relation to parks management plans and current investment programme and by Falkirk Council in relation to park masterplans and the current investment programme
8. Questions and Answers	An opportunity for delegates to raise any questions they might have about the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan review process or anything else that has come up in discussions
9. Convener	Close of Seminar

Analysis of the results of the Strategic Choices workshop and recommendations for Strategy drafting can be seen in annex 1. Analysis of the results of the visions of open space workshop and recommendations for Strategy drafting can be seen in annex 3.

Following the seminar copies of the presentations given were circulated.

4.0 Officers' Survey

A survey was circulated on 6th January 2015 to officers representing various services of the Council and Falkirk Community Trust. The survey explored the following issues:

- How can the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan affect the day to day business of the Council and Falkirk Community Trust;
- How the Strategy can assist with service delivery;
- What challenges lie ahead; and
- How the Strategy can help to deliver services more efficiently.

The survey was completed by 12 officers representing the following services:

- Development Services:
 - Development Planning Team
 - Environmental Planning Team
 - Development Management Unit

- Asset Management Unit
 - Development Control and Flooding Team
- Corporate and Neighbourhood Services:
 - Operational Services
- Falkirk Community Trust:
 - Physical Activity – Active Schools
 - Physical Activity - Recreation

Analysis of feedback received can be seen in annex 4.

5.0 Citizens' Panel Questionnaire

The Citizens' panel questionnaire was circulated on 9th December 2014 to members of the Council's Citizens' Panel. The questionnaire was completed by 467 members of the Citizens' panel.

The questionnaire asked questions about peoples attitudes towards and use of:

- The Council area's 5 large parks (The Helix, Falkirk Wheel, Callendar Park, Muiravonside Park and Kinneil Estate)
- Other smaller, more local parks; and
- Other outdoor spaces such as nature reserves, the canal or woodland areas

It also asked respondents who rarely or never use parks or open spaces, what the main reasons for this were.

Finally the questionnaire asked which of the following five options should be the Council's top priority for spending on parks and open spaces:

- The five big parks which are used by tourists and people from the whole of Falkirk; or
- Local parks and open spaces that are used mainly by local people; or
- Parks and open spaces in areas of social disadvantage; or
- The towns or villages which have poorer quality parks and open spaces; or
- Creating new parks and open spaces in areas which do not have them.

Analysis of feedback can be seen in annex 5.

6.0 Summary of Issues to be addressed by the consultative draft Strategy

The following paragraphs draw together the issues raised during the pre-consultative draft engagement exercise which the consultative draft Strategy should aim to address:

Modernising our parks and open spaces to deliver multiple benefits

The quality of our large parks and open spaces should be retained as they are highly valued by residents and visitors alike. In the past, capital investment by the council has been focussed on improving the 7 Core Parks and the creation of the Helix. This has had the effect of improving the quality of the Core Parks from an average of 2.87 in 2007 to 3.44 in 2013. The strategy should now refocus spend on improving:

- poorer quality parks and open spaces in areas where there is no better quality alternative provision; and
- parks and open spaces which are particularly valued by the local community.

The Strategy should support the development of standardised corporate signage, information points and park furniture, and recognise the value of traditional sports and playspace offering within the Council area whilst also supporting exploring opportunities to extend the provision of less traditional sports facilities such as bmx, pump and skate parks and introduce areas of natural play.

The Strategy should aim to increase the amount of people who walk, run or cycle to open space as the results of the Citizens Panel survey appear to indicate poor performance in this area.

Dog fouling appears to be a significant barrier to people's use of parks and open spaces with approximately 1 in 10 people choosing to rarely or never visit parks and open spaces because of it. The Strategy should endorse a drive towards eradicating the problem.

The Strategy should support the enhancement of the biodiversity value of parks and open spaces.

The Strategy should establish the principle of using parks and open spaces to deal with flood risk issues where feasible.

Addressing inequality and fostering community through open space investment

The Strategy should give investment priority to areas and open spaces which need improved rather than trying to spread investment equally across all

communities. The Strategy will need to articulate a compelling rationale for this, as some communities may perceive that they are missing out.

The Strategy should promote the ring fencing of a proportion of open space investment resources to open space projects where local communities are prepared to get involved in the management of the open space and raise funds or volunteer their time productively.

Working and investing more efficiently

The Strategy should promote a change of maintenance regimes in open spaces of lower level importance to save money and enhance biodiversity. Examples of the benefits this can provide should be given to reassure the public.

The strategy should prioritise opportunities for shortening the walking distances to parks and open spaces through creation of new entrance points and improving permeability throughout the surrounding paths network above creating new open spaces or new functions within existing open spaces.

The Strategy should promote the prioritisation of investment priorities to address needs and demand. If some of these priorities are able to attract partnership funding, then these should be pursued in advance of those which are not able to attract partnership funding.

The Strategy should support a change of play area accessibility standards, to allow a rationalisation of the Council's current portfolio and a refocusing on a smaller number of better quality facilities.

The Strategy should aim to align its goals with those of other related Council Strategies, most notably Falkirk Greenspace, A Strategy for our Green Network.

Generating capital for investment in open space

In order to generate capital for investment in open space improvements and achieve revenue budget savings, the Strategy should: endorse the principle of disposing of open spaces which are surplus to requirements; set out the rules that will be used to determine which open spaces can be disposed of and how revenues should be re-invested; and illustrate how this would work through providing examples across a range of settlements.

The Strategy should promote the establishment of a scheme of charging for the commercial use of parks and open spaces. Care will be needed to ensure that the scheme of charging does not have any unwanted negative effects such as discouraging people to take outdoor exercise.

The Strategy should support the principle of commercialising parts of the parks and open space resource to generate revenues for future open space investment. It should recommend that a study is undertaken to identify what

opportunities there are to commercialise the resource and develop a business case for this.

Appendix 5 – The Open Space Audit and Fitness for Purpose Assessment

1. Assessment Criteria

The aim of the open space audit is to undertake an assessment of the nature, type, quality, spatial distribution and use of existing open spaces in the Falkirk Council area.

The seven key criteria used to assess the intrinsic qualities of the sites were, Accessibility, Health and Wellbeing, Cleanliness and Maintenance, Biodiversity and Nature Conservation, Cultural Heritage and Local History, Community Involvement and Design and Aesthetic Qualities. The assessment was carried out by attributing a value on a scale of 1 to 5 in each of the seven above mentioned key criteria, according to the methodology adopted from the previous audit, where 1 is poor, 2 is fair, 3 is good, 4 is very good and 5 is excellent.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent

Table 1 – Scoring line defined to assess the key criteria, adopted from the previous audit;

The following sub-criteria were considered when assessing the overall quality of each site:

In terms of **Accessibility** the site had to comply with the following sub criteria:

- Is the access to the surrounding community good?
- Are there good footpaths through the site?
- Does access generally appear safe?
- Is there equal access for all groups?
- Does the site seem welcoming?
- Is there appropriate signage?
- Is the site well-utilised or under used?

For **Health and Wellbeing**, the score depended on the sub criteria below:

- Does it promote good human health and feelings of wellbeing?
- Is it physically used by the local community for sport & exercise?
- Is there an appropriate level of facilities for this?
- Is the greenspace visually connected to the local community?
- Does it benefit the well-being of the local community?
- Does it feel safe & secure?

In terms of **Cleanliness and Maintenance** the site had to comply with the following sub criteria:

- Does it generally appear clean and well-maintained, or litter-strewn and unattended?
- How do you rate litter levels and waste management?
- Is dog fouling obtrusive?

- How well is it maintained (for the type of space that it is)?
- How well are any buildings and other infrastructure maintained?

For the scoring of **Biodiversity and Nature Conservation** the following sub criteria was considered:

- Is the site designated for its wildlife/ biodiversity value e.g. SINC, Local Wildlife Site, Nature Reserve, SSSI?
- Are natural heritage features (e.g. wild flora, woodland, streams etc) an important feature of the site, and if so are they being conserved/ protected or neglected?
- Is there any evidence of rare plant and animal species?
- Is the site managed appropriately to encourage biodiversity?

In terms of **Cultural Heritage and Local History** the site had to comply with the following sub criteria:

- Are there any buildings and structures within the site with cultural heritage value, e.g. monuments, statues, canals?
- Are any of these features designated, e.g. Listed Building, Scheduled Monument or World Heritage Sites?
- Are these features a key characteristic of the site, and if so are they being conserved/ protected or neglected?
- Does the adjacent townscape setting have cultural heritage value?

For the scoring of **Community Involvement** the following sub criteria was considered:

- Is there evidence of community involvement in the site, e.g. events, community woodland, urban farms etc?
- Does it look like the local community has had any involvement in the management and development of the site?
- Is there potential for community engagement and involvement?

In terms of **Design and Aesthetic Qualities** the following sub criteria was considered:

- Is it fit for purpose?
- Does it optimise the opportunity?
- Is it inspiring?
- Is it a creative response to its environment?
- What are the design constraints and opportunities at the site?

2. Hierarchy of Parks and Open Spaces

The audit aims to understand the open space resource and strategic roles and fit between local, regional and national tiers within the open space network, so, each site was assigned a number according to its position in the hierarchy of open spaces. The hierarchy of parks and open spaces, defined for the 2010 open space audit and strategy is based on the size of the sites, their role and function and how far people are willing to travel to visit the site. This designation is divided into National, Regional, Settlement and Neighbourhood levels.

At a **National** level we find the sites that attract people from further afield than just the Falkirk area. They may be a national or international tourist attraction such as the Falkirk Wheel, a Country Park like that at Muiravonside, a major town park promoted as a tourism attraction such as Callendar Park, or a series of green corridors providing connections across the Central Belt such as the canal network. They are generally large in scale, provide a unique experience, they are varied in character, and provide a high level of facilities appropriate to their typology. They usually have a number of designations (sometimes of national or international importance) relating to their landscape, ecological or cultural value.

At the **Regional** level we find sites that attract people from across the Falkirk area in the main, differentiated primarily from level 1 sites, by having fewer visitors from further afield. They tend to be medium to large in scale, have characteristics of specific interest, and variety appropriate to its typology, for example the western foreshore of Bo'ness, or the wooded policies of Bantaskine Estate. They may have less variety than Level 1 sites, and associated designations may be fewer or of a lower value.



National and Regional Level Sites – Falkirk Wheel in Falkirk and Grey Buchanan Park in Polmont;

At a **Settlement** level are the sites that generally serve the population of the town or village in which they are located, and which generally do not attract visitors from the rest of the Falkirk region. They tend to be medium in scale, with fewer characteristics of interest, designations or facilities than Level 2 sites. They will generally encompass local parks such as Douglas, Victoria and Zetland Parks, semi-natural spaces such as Airth Castle Woodlands or Limerigg Pond, disconnected green corridors such as the disused railway corridor in The Loan, town playing fields etc. There may be primarily local designations associated with it.

At a **Neighbourhood** level are the sites whose function relate purely to the neighbourhood immediately around them and are used only by the population living in the immediate vicinity. They are generally smaller pocket spaces such as kickabout areas, amenity open spaces or play areas within and around residential areas, with limited facilities and features of special interest, and are rarely designated in any way.



Settlement and Neighbourhood level Sites – Westquarter Glen in Polmont and Sunnyside Amenity Greenspace also in Polmont;

3. Typology of Sites

Each open space had been assigned a function, and in many cases multiple functions, according to the following typologies:

1. Public Park or Garden
2. Play Space
3. Amenity Open Space
4. Sports Area¹
5. Natural/Semi Natural/Green Corridor
6. Churchyard/Cemetery
7. School Grounds/Institutional Grounds
8. Allotment

4. Fitness for Purpose Assessment

Quality open space is defined as open space which is ‘fit for purpose’ meaning it is in the right place, readily accessible, safe, inclusive, welcoming, well maintained, well managed and performing an identified function. ‘Fitness for purpose’ (FFP), by definition, requires the assessment of open space in relation to the intended purpose or need.

The ultimate quality of a site relates to how it serves the needs and aspirations of the community and those needs vary according to the place of the site in the hierarchy and the typologies assigned to it, for example, the criteria that makes a neighbourhood sports area of an acceptable quality in relation to its purpose is not the same as a National level Country Park. Table 2 below illustrates how the primary factors affecting fitness for purpose differ in relation to different typologies and hierarchies of open space. For multi functional open space, the primary factors affecting fitness for purpose are cumulative as illustrated in table 3 below:

¹ Sports Area refers to all types of outdoor sport facilities. Access to open space containing a sports area means specifically sports areas which are free to use.

Open Space Hierarchy	Pan 65 Typology	Accessibility	Health & Wellbeing	Cleanliness & Maintenance	Biodiversity & Nature Conservation	Cultural Heritage & Local History	Community Involvement	Design & Aesthetic Qualities
National	Public Park or Garden	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Natural, Semi-Natural, Green Corridor	1	1	2	1	1	1	2
Regional	Public Park or Garden	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Amenity Open Space	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
	Sports Area	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
	Natural, Semi-Natural, Green Corridor	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
Settlement	Public Park or Garden	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
	Play Space	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
	Amenity Open Space	1	2	1	2	2	1	1
	Sports Area	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
	Natural, Semi-Natural, Green Corridor	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
	School Grounds, Institutional Grounds	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
	Churchyard, Cemetery	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
Neighbourhood	Public Park or Garden	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
	Play Space	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
	Amenity Open Space	1	2	1	2	2	1	1
	Sports Area	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
	Natural, Semi-Natural, Green Corridor	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
	School Grounds, Institutional Grounds	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
	Allotments	1	2	1	2	2	1	2

Table 2. Primary (1) and secondary (2) criteria, according to quality and "Fitness for Purpose"

PAN 65 Typology	Accessibility	Health & Wellbeing	Cleanliness & Maintenance	Biodiversity & Nature Conservation	Cultural Heritage & Local History	Community Involvement	Design & Aesthetic Qualities
Play Space	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
Natural/Semi Natural	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
Playspace and Natural/ Semi Natural	1	1	1	1	2	1	2

Table 3: Primary and Secondary criteria in multi functional open space.

Putting this into practice using the example of Herbertshire Castle Park in Denny (which is a settlement level open space) gives the results below:

Site Quality Scores	Primary Factor (Y/N)	Score (1 to 5)
Accessibility	Yes	4
Health and Wellbeing	Yes	3
Cleanliness and Maintenance	Yes	3
Biodiversity and Nature Conservation	Yes	3
Cultural Heritage and Local History	Yes	3
Community Involvement	Yes	2
Design and Aesthetic Qualities	Yes	3
Fitness for Purpose Score		3

1. Public Park and Garden	2. Playspaces	3. Amenity Open Space	4. Sports Area
Yes	Yes	No	Yes
5. Natural/Semi-Natural	6. School Grounds/Institutions	7. Allotment	8. Churchyard/Cemetery
Yes	No	No	No

The scores for each of the criteria which are primary factors affecting fitness for purpose are aggregated (A) and then divided by the number of criteria which were primary factors (B) to give the overall fitness for purpose score (C). So for the above example:

$$A = 18$$

$$B = 7$$

$$C = 3$$

Appendix 6 - Accessibility Standard Review

1. Introduction

1.1 The first open space strategy set the following accessibility standards:

- People should be no more than 400m (5 minutes walk) from a surveyed open space which is good quality.
- People should be no more than 400m (5 minutes walk) from a public park.
- People should be no more than 400m (5 minutes walk) from a play space.
- People should be no more than 800m (10 minutes walk) from a sports area.
- People should be no more than 1200m (15 minutes walk) from a natural/semi natural open space.

2. Access to “good quality” open space

2.1 The second open space audit has revealed that, Council wide 65.5% of households are within 400m of a surveyed open space which is of good quality (i.e. scores 3 or better in the fitness for purpose assessment) and that performance varies across different parts of the Council area with as low as 37.5% meeting this standard in the rural area and as high as 80.6% meeting this standard in the Denny area.

2.2 94.9% of households across the Council area have access to a surveyed open space within 400m walk so there are a wide range of opportunities to improve performance everywhere, by improving the quality of existing parks and open space. It seems reasonable therefore to retain this open space standard.

3. Access to a park within 400m

3.1 When defining the multiple functions of an open space in the open space audit two of the options available were “public park or garden” and “amenity open space”. It is not entirely clear what the difference between a public park and garden and an amenity open space is other than spaces which have been classified as a public park or garden generally have more formal parkland features, and are bigger.

3.2 The previous open space standard applied only to access to a public park or garden and excluded many large, good quality amenity open spaces from the analysis.

3.3 **SG13 Open Space and New Development** provides some useful guidance indicating that the minimum functional size of a new park should be 2000m². It seems reasonable therefore for the new open space standard to apply to access to a public park and garden or amenity open space of over 2000m².

3.4 The second open space audit reveals that Council wide, 85.7% of households are within 400m of a public park and garden or amenity open space of over 2000m². Performance varies across different parts of the Council area with as low as 60.7% meeting this standard in the rural area and as high as 98.8% meeting this standard in the Bo’ness area.

3.5 There are a limited number of ways to improve performance in this area:

- Where possible creating new parks within areas which don't meet this standard;
- Promoting the development of new parks in association with development opportunities in areas which do not meet this standard;
- Creating new park or amenity features within existing sports areas and natural/semi natural open spaces in areas which do not already meet this standard.
- Creating new entrances to open spaces to shorten the walking distances to them

3.6 Despite the limited opportunities to improve performance, current performance is sufficiently high to justify retaining the previous standard, albeit with slightly revised wording. Opportunities to improve performance will be highlighted within the various area strategies in section 6.

4. Access to play space within 400m

4.1 The second open space audit reveals that Council wide, Council wide 72.6% of households are within 400m of a an open space containing a playspace. Performance varies across different parts of the Council area with as low as 57.7% meeting this standard in Bo'ness and as high as 86.9% meeting this standard in the Larbert and Stenhousemuir area. Improving performance would require the creation of new play areas in areas of identified deficit. In the face of challenging budget constraints aiming to significantly improve performance is probably unachievable.

4.2 As noted in the "delivering the vision" section of this Strategy, the consultative draft strategy has chosen to seek to reduce the overall number of separate play areas we maintain, allowing capital and revenue budgets to be released to enable investment in a more modern portfolio of play facilities which have a higher overall play value. A review of the play space accessibility standard is a key action of the modernising our parks and open spaces theme.

4.3 The table below shows the performance of the different parts of the Council area against different walking distance thresholds:

Settlement Area	Households with access to an open space containing a playspace within 400m	Households with access to an open space containing a playspace within 600m	Households with access to an open space containing a playspace within 800m
Bo'ness	57.7%	82.7%	93.8%
Bonnybridge and Banknock	75.1%	90.8%	96.2%
Denny	73.3%	94.5%	98.9%
Falkirk	68.2%	88.0%	97.6%
Grangemouth	76.1%	90.2%	96.4%
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	86.9%	96.3%	98.7%
Polmont Area	71.9%	89.3%	94.1%
Rural North	73.8%	84.9%	88.3%
Rural South	68.5%	87.3%	96.5%
Council Wide	72.6%	89.9%	96.6%

4.4 There are significant parts of the Council area which do not have access to an open space containing a playspace within 400m. Maintaining a 400m standard would result in the need to create many new playspaces and very few opportunities to remove playspaces without adversely affecting the number of households with access to an open space containing a playspace. Maintaining the 400m standard would not therefore meet the Council's proposed aspiration to reduce the number of playspaces and enable the play value of the remainder to be improved.

4.5 Increasing the standard to a 600m threshold would mean a much larger percentage of households across the Council area would have access to an open space containing a playspace within an "acceptable" walking distance. There would still be a number of areas where creation of new playspaces would be needed. Analysis has indicated that approximately 20 new playspaces would be needed to address identified deficiencies but there would also be approximately 22 playspaces which could be removed without adversely affecting the number of households with access to an open space containing a playspace. Adopting this standard would allow the Council to make some savings, however, much of the money saved would be needed to go towards creating new playspaces so there is not likely to be a significant amount of money left to go towards increasing the play value of existing playspaces.

4.6 Increasing the standard to an 800m threshold would mean there were very few parts of the Council area which did not meet this standard. Although there would be a few places where new playspaces were needed it would be much fewer than if a 600m or 400m threshold were adopted. There would also be more opportunities to remove play areas without adversely affecting the number of households which had access to an open space containing a playspace within an "acceptable" walking distance. Consequently there would be likely to be a larger amount of money available to invest in improving the play value of existing playspaces, however, the amount of local opposition to loss of playspaces would be likely to increase.

4.7 Increasing the standard to an 800m threshold is likely to be the only option which would allow the Council to meet its proposed aspiration to reduce the number of playspaces and enable the play value of the remainder to be improved.

5. Access to a sports area within 800m

5.1 The second open space audit reveals that Council wide, 78.1% of households are within 800m of an open space containing a sports area. Performance varies across different parts of the Council area with as low as 45.4% meeting this standard in Bonnybridge and Banknock and as high as 92.5% meeting this standard in the Denny area.

5.2 There are a number of ways to improve overall performance including:

- creation of new sports areas in areas of identified deficit;
- negotiating public access to privately managed sports areas in areas of identified deficit; and
- promoting the creation of new sports areas within development sites in areas of identified deficit.
- Creating new entrances to open spaces to shorten the walking distances to them;
- Increasing the acceptable walking distance to sports areas above 800m

5.3 Although improving performance would be challenging there is likely to be significant scope to improve performance through a small number of minor interventions. It would be reasonable to retain this standard for the time being with a further review in a future open space strategy if it appears that attaining the standard in the majority of our communities is unachievable, however, as the Council is aiming to reduce the number of sports areas it manages and maintains so that it can concentrate resources on a smaller number of better quality facilities, the best way of achieving this would be to increase the acceptable walking distance to open spaces containing a sports area. The table below shows performance against a 1200m walking distance threshold.

Settlement Area	Households with access to an open space containing a sports area within 800m	Households with access to an open space containing a sports area within 1200m
Bo'ness	80.0%	95.7%
Bonnybridge and Banknock	44.5%	71.9%
Denny	92.5%	97.8%
Falkirk	71.8%	91.8%
Grangemouth	89.8%	99.0%
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	89.3%	97.0%
Polmont Area	72.1%	91.8%
Rural North	79.1%	86.3%
Rural South	86.9%	93.6%
Council Wide	78.1%	92.9%

5.4 Under an 800m walking distance threshold there are 6 sports areas which are potentially surplus to requirements across the Council area, this rises to 15 under a 1200m walking distance threshold.

6. Access to a natural/semi natural open space within 1200m

6.1 The second open space audit reveals that, Council wide, 93.2% of households are within 1200m walk of a natural/ semi natural open space. Performance varies across different parts of the Council area with as low as 74.8% meeting this standard in the Rural area and as high as 99.5% meeting this standard in Bo'ness and Denny.

6.2 Such a high level of performance reflects the nature of the Council area. There are relatively few places more than 15 minutes walk from a settlement edge and the Falkirk Greenspace Initiative has been hugely successful in developing a network of accessible countryside on the urban fringe. It seems appropriate to retain this standard. Opportunities to improve performance will be highlighted within the various area strategies in section 5 of the Strategy.

New Standards

Accessibility Standards:

People should live no more than 400m (5 minutes walk) from a surveyed open space which is good quality.

People should live no more than 400m (5 minutes walk) from a public park, garden or amenity space of greater than 2000m².

People should live no more than 800m (10 minutes walk) from an open space containing a playspace.

People should live no more than 1200m (15 minutes walk) from an open space containing sports area.

People should live no more than 1200m (15 minutes walk) from a natural/semi natural open space.

Accessibility Policy: The Council will make investment decisions which aim to increase the percentage of households which meet the various accessibility standards set out in the Open Space Strategy.

Appendix 3

Open Space Strategy and Parks
Development Plan Policy Development
Panel – Note of Meeting 26 August 2016

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND PARKS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 26 AUGUST 2016 AT 2.00 P.M. WITHIN MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK.

In attendance: Councillors Adrian Mahoney, Jim Blackwood and John McLuckie; Danny Thallon (Planning Officer); Mike Joyce (Estates Development Officer); and Antonia Sobieraj (Committee Services Officer) (all Falkirk Council); and Claire Mennim (Team Leader, Parks and Sustainability, Falkirk Community Trust).

Apologies: Frank McChord (Local Community Planning Officer).

Councillor Mahoney welcomed all those attending and confirmed the purpose of the meeting which was to allow members of the Panel to discuss and approve the final version of the Draft Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan following the consultation exercise. The final Strategy would be submitted to the Executive for approval.

Following the meeting of the Panel on 23 September 2015, and the approval of the draft Strategy by the Executive on 20 October 2015, the public consultation was undertaken between 7 December 2015 and 7 March 2016. The responses included 238 online survey responses and a number of written responses from national and local organisations. Following the completion of the public consultation exercise, Panel members were issued in June 2016 with details of the responses received, associated officer analysis and consequent optional changes to the draft Strategy for consideration at a future Panel meeting. A meeting of the Panel would be convened following the Council recess at which time the issues raised would be fully considered.

Panel members were now asked at this meeting to consider whether to include the suggested additions to the Strategy for final submission to the Executive. Panel members were reissued with the comprehensive documentation in the form of the latest version of the draft Strategy together with details of the responses received, associated officer analysis and consequent optional changes to the draft Strategy for consideration.

The Panel members highlighted a range of issues during discussion. Members went through the consultation responses report and the officer analysis of responses and made comment. The areas of discussion in summary included:-

- The comprehensive public consultation exercise and the responses received;
- The importance of the positive message;
- The importance of delivering the Strategy through engagement with the community;
- The emphasis on improved quality play and open space provision;
- The balancing of negative issues such as the reduction in open spaces with positive messages and contextual information;
- The provision of improved quality, sustainable provision and efficient maintenance and standards and meeting community aspirations;
- The proper analysis, justification and consistency within the Strategy and the promotion of fair and equal accessibility for all;

- The importance of easy access from all areas of the Council area to good quality open space;
- The recognition of the value of open spaces to local communities and for visitors to the area;
- The connectivity with the core path network and connectivity between sites;
- The importance of emphasising within the Strategy the ‘choices’ in relation to provision and their implications;
- The inclusion of information pertaining to the VisitScotland parks award in recognition of the quality of provision in the Council area;
- The recognition of the income generation opportunities such as visitors centres and car parking;
- The importance of providing quality, safe and inviting open spaces for local communities whilst undergoing significant budgetary pressures;
- The realistic assessment of community priorities and aspirations;
- The implications of Community Empowerment Act and the importance of joining up practice and initiatives with other Council services and the Community Trust;
- The importance of the effective appraisal of the use of surplus parks and open spaces on a case by case basis and dialogue with communities and elected members;
- The need for a further consultation exercise once the strategy has been approved to ratify the list of potentially surplus playspaces highlighted therein;
- The annual cost of holding surplus sites including the consequences of vandalism;
- The importance of good quality sports facilities and the connectivity with the outdoor sports strategy and the opportunities for sports hubs;
- The contribution of allotments to the enjoyment of open space;
- The inclusion of Gairdoch Park, Falkirk as a key open space and that Dollar Park not be included;
- The value of planting to enhance whilst recognising budgetary constraints;
- The lighting of sports facilities as appropriate;
- The provision of transport information and signage at bus stops and other facilities as appropriate;
- The relative value of no ball games signs; and
- The commitment to the accessibility of open space.

The Panel agreed that no meeting was required prior to the submission of the draft Strategy to the Executive on 18 October 2016. Prior to the submission to the Executive, Danny Thallon would update the draft Strategy in line with discussions during the meeting and provide copies to Panel members by email for approval prior to the Executive.

Future meetings were as undernoted:-

14.	Executive. Meeting to seek Executive approval of the final version of the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan.	Tuesday 18 October 2016.	Executive Members.	Public.
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