



**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Cabinet

**Date:** 16 June 2008  
26 June 2008

**Subject:** Parks and Greenspaces Strategy

**Report of:** Director of Adult Services  
Director of Environmental Services  
Chief Executive - Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust

**Contact officer:** Stuart Murray 01942 488555

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**Purpose / summary:** To seek Cabinet approval to a strategy for the management and development of those parks and green spaces that are managed by the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust on behalf of the Council.

**Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended:** To continue to manage the relevant parks and green spaces outside of any strategic framework.  
A more draconian strategy based on land disposals to raise capital and reduce liabilities. The recommended strategy will help to focus resources and to achieve greater impact.

**Recommendation / decision:** That cabinet approves the strategy.

**Key Decision:** This report involves a key decision within ground(s) 3.  
  
The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before 8 July 2008  
  
This item is included in the Forward Plan.

**Risks / Implications:** Sources of funding will need to be identified and cannot be guaranteed. The strategy, and timing of improvements, will be impacted by this.

**Financial:** The strategy proposes an approach which

Staffing: targets investment to achieve proportionate impact.  
 Policy: None  
 Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted? This is a new policy  
 Wards affected: Yes, see attached  
 All

**Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?**

Yes

**If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?**

Yes

**Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?**

A full diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is available.

**Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?**

A diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached as an appendix to this report.

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes**

Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No**

\* delete which applicable

**For Cabinet reports only :**

Categorisation of the report:	<b>x</b>		<b>x</b>
Discussion leading to a decision	<b>x</b>	Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

**Tracking/Process:**

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
	All Townships		
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
	16 June 2008	26 June 2008	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection
Reports to WLCT Trust Board	16 May 2008		WLCT
Report to Cabinet	26 July 2007		

Proper Officer Bernard Walker  
Martin Kimber

Date 12 May 2008

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The parks and green spaces that are managed by the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust on behalf of the Council, are the last of the major service areas delivered by the Trust, to be “re-visioned”.
- 1.2 Cabinet considered a draft of this strategy at its meeting on 26th July 2007. That draft had being produced after a lengthy process of consultation and development. Since then, further consultation has taken place with all 10 Township Forums and other stakeholders.
- 1.3 The strategy covers the relationship between parks and a broad range of issues:-
- The “big picture” of open spaces in the Borough
  - The more deprived areas
  - The basket of outdoor leisure provision in each Township
  - The gap between the existing situation and an improved quality of service
  - How much it would cost to close that gap
  - A realistic timescale for improvement
- 1.4 The headline indicators for this area of service are different from some of the other leisure and cultural services, as the general level of participation is high. However, other key indicators are less positive, in particular general resident satisfaction which is both low and falling. The strategy is aimed at addressing these issues.

## 2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 The strategy advocates a new vision for parks and green spaces in the Borough – one which puts local communities in the driving seat:-
- “Parks and green spaces will aim to make a significant contribution to the quality of life in the borough. They will offer local communities the opportunity to shape and influence the features and facilities provided and, above all, the chance to get active – physically, mentally and creatively, and as citizens in the community.”*
- 2.2 All the park and green space sites are classified according to their size and function in a similar way to the report entitled Wigan Council: Open Space, Sport & Recreation: Strategy and Action Plan – 2007 (A key document in the evidence base supporting the Local Development Framework). This will enable the distribution and quality of sites to be viewed in a consistent and transparent way across the Borough.
- 2.3 Three principal parks are identified – Mesnes, Haigh and Pennington Flash country parks, together with a further fifteen Township Parks. These will form the core of the provision – the key sites. The aim will be to regenerate and improve these without any further deterioration of other green space sites on the portfolio.

- 2.4 Specific provision will be made for other groups of sites such as Local Nature Reserves, as well as particular facilities, such as play areas and grass sports pitches.
- 2.5 The relationship of the key sites to the areas of deprivation is mapped, recognising that the smaller green space sites have a vital role to play in improving the quality of life in these areas.
- 2.6 Each Township will have an “offer” of parks and green spaces that is aligned as far as practicable to its priorities.
- 2.7 Whilst the strategy will be influenced by available funding, alternative approaches to improvement will be continuously sought, including for example, through ongoing efficiency reviews and partnership working with the business and third sector.
- 2.8 A set of criteria for prioritising effort and resources is included that will help to shape the overall improvement plan. An initial improvement plan is included and it is proposed that this is reviewed annually.

### **3.0 Alternative options considered and reasons for the recommended option**

- 3.1 The Borough previously has not had a strategic approach to the operational management and development of its parks and green spaces. One alternative would be to carry on without one. However, this would mean that opportunities for targeted re-development and funding would be lost, and further deterioration of the portfolio more likely.
- 3.2 At the outset of the process of developing this strategy, significant concerns were expressed by a number of stakeholder groups that there would be a threat to some sites on the portfolio. Certainly, an alternative, more draconian strategy based on land disposal could be conceived, however, for a variety of reasons this alternative is considered both undesirable and undeliverable.

### **4.0 Conclusions**

- 4.1 It is most likely that the strategy will need to be delivered broadly within existing levels of resources (including external funding etc). Therefore, it is important to be clear and realistic about what can be achieved and how quickly. The indicative improvement plan reflects this.
- 4.2 Over the life of the strategy, some 12 years, total indicative capital investment in the order of £22m will be required. Of this approximately £5m has already been secured.
- 4.3 The estimates of capital investment and consequent revenue pressures are included to give an idea of the scale of the challenge if a step change in the service is to be aspired to.
- 4.4 Cabinet is requested to approve the strategy.

## Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section: Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust

Environmental Management and Sustainability Division

Policy/Service Area: Parks and Green spaces

Person Completing Form: Stuart Murray

Date: 12/05/08

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race		<b>x</b>	Disability	<b>x</b>	
Ethnicity		<b>x</b>	Gender		<b>x</b>
Age		<b>x</b>	Religion	<b>x</b>	
Class		<b>x</b>	Sexual Orientation		<b>x</b>

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

Yes

1. Evidence of disadvantage is largely associated with access by people with disability. This will be addressed within the operational and management plans being developed at each key site.
2. There are differences, between Townships, in the numbers of people who use parks – this needs to be better understood and will be addressed through ongoing parks surveys, including annually by the Citizen Panel.
3. Current byelaws prevent the use of some sites for religious gatherings and services. The appropriateness of these byelaws will be considered.

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

A variety of sources including:

- Focus group meetings.
- Township presentations.
- Friends of Group Meetings.
- Specific Stakeholder Meetings
- Ongoing parks users surveys

Action Plan – *What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?*

The development of management plans for key sites. The park management plans will address identified disadvantages. Assessment of existing historical byelaws.

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?
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Yes
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Timescale	2008-2020
Responsibility	Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust
Comments	

**Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?**

Departmental Service Plan	Yes
Section/Team Plan	Yes
Other (Specify)	WLCT Business Strategy, 2007/8-2011/12 Site Management Plans Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Access Audits
Date for further review:	Annually



**A Parks and Greenspaces Strategy for  
Wigan Borough**

**A VISION FOR 2020**

**Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust**

**26 June 2008**

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## FOREWORD

The overall strategy for all open spaces in the Borough is described in the Report entitled Wigan Council: Open Space, Sport & Recreation: Strategy and Action Plan (2007). That is the “big picture” prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance No 17 (PPG 17).

This document focuses on those parks and green spaces managed by the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust (WLCT) on behalf of Wigan Council, ie a sub-set of sites included in the above.

It is also part of the re-visioning of the portfolio of services offered by the WLCT, and therefore approaches the topic from a cultural perspective rather than a planning or pure environmental perspective.

The word “parks” used in this document is generally shorthand for a range of types of sites – the larger town and country parks, gardens, natural and semi-natural green spaces, amenity green spaces and sports facilities.

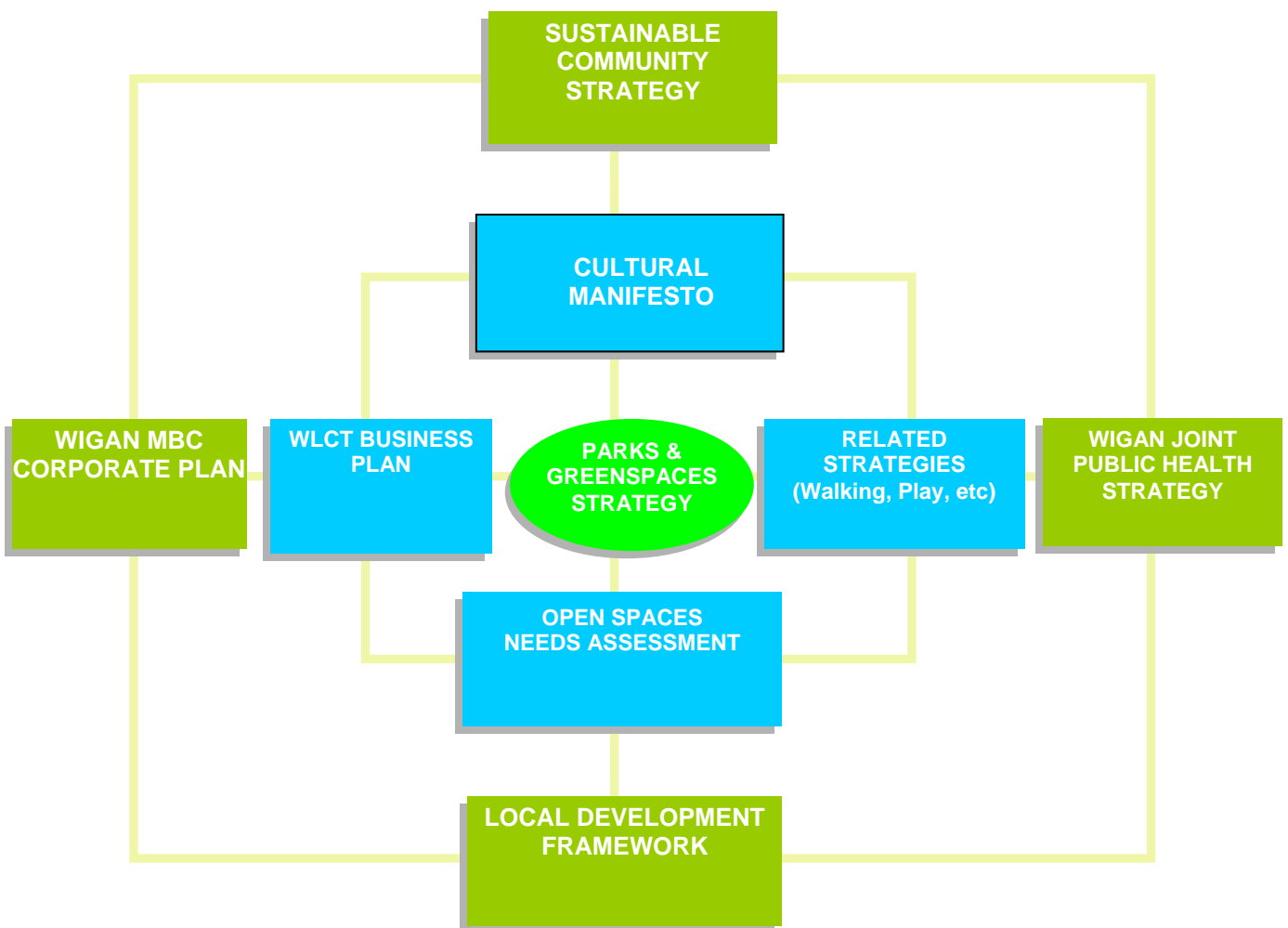
There are, or will be, separate strategies for other aspects of the PPG 17 classification– children’s play areas, allotments, and cemeteries. These are planned to be finalised within 2008/09

From a cultural perspective this strategy will help to deliver some of the aspirations and commitments of the *Cultural Partnership’s Manifesto 2012* – for the Borough of Wigan. The manifesto encompasses residents’ vision of the future:

- Arts, sports, libraries and leisure facilities of high quality and accessible to all
- Good quality facilities and projects for our children and young people
- Clean and well-maintained green spaces – parks, countryside and play areas

Figure 1 – The diagram below illustrates the relationship of this strategy to the other key documents and the policy context in which it is set. The key “external” drivers for the WLCT and for the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy are shown in green, ie, the outer boxes. These strategies are, in turn informed by central government policy but, in particular, by the government White Paper – Strong and Prosperous Communities and its related legislation and guidance.

The new Parks and Greenspaces Strategy supports the delivery of the aims of the Local Strategic Partnership and should become part of the Council Policy Framework.





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The headline issues facing the traditional parks and green spaces service provided by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust read as follows:-

- The level of use is high – the challenge is to capitalise on this in order to maximise the positive benefits to people's lives
- In many cases the quality of provision is poor and residents satisfaction is low – the challenge is to find a realistic way forward
- The current cost is low – the challenge is to secure significant investment that will have an impact

The responses to these challenges outlined in the strategy fall into three groups.

Firstly, there has not previously been an agreed systematic approach to the prioritisation of parks and green spaces, based on local need. This strategy addresses that and establishes a framework of parks and open spaces provision across the Borough. It aims to bring clarity to the purposes served by different parks and spaces and therefore what investment/facilities/management arrangements should follow in order for them to realise their appropriate potential.

Secondly the strategy advocates a set of practical measures, using existing resources to best effect – focusing on community engagement, improved maintenance, and the securing of investment funds.

Thirdly, the strategy advocates the use of the Green Flag Standard for parks as a central tool for driving and measuring improved performance.

Like any service strategy this one sets out a way forward from where we are now, to a time in the future when things will be improved. It basically asks 5 questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where would we like to get to?

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- How will we get there?
  - Can we afford it?
  - How will we know when we've got there?

It starts by setting the context of the service at the national, regional and local levels. For example, at a local level while Wigan Borough is one of the greenest metropolitan areas, and relatively rich in wildlife, overall residents satisfaction with this service is relatively low, and in some parts of the Borough particularly low. This a major challenge.

The strategy sets out an outline of the current service areas. There is considerable variation in the performance of individual elements of the service, ranging from national excellence to areas which have underperformed, when compared to regional and national standards. An understanding of the implications of this and the reasons why are essential if the service as a whole is to improve.

A new vision has been developed and has been subjected to consultation with a range of key stakeholders. This reads as follows:

*“Parks and green spaces will aim to make a significant contribution to the quality of life in the borough. They will offer local communities the opportunity to shape and influence the features and facilities provided and, above all, the chance to get active – physically, mentally and creatively, and as citizens in the community.”*

The vision is important because it is based on three critical “fixes”:

- i. not all sites contribute positively to people's lives;
- ii. in the past local communities have not always felt included in making decisions about their parks; and finally,
- iii. greater participation is essential if health and other benefits from parks are to be achieved.

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In terms of how this vision can be delivered, the critical measure is seen as re-focusing the work of the WLCT. This will produce more meaningful community engagement, including increased volunteering, and better partnership working. Particular improvement tools, such as the Green Flag Standard will be taken up and used to focus improvement efforts.

There is no “pot of gold”, no single future major source of funding, likely to become available and therefore we need to be forward thinking and imaginative in securing resources, yet at the same time realistic about what can be achieved and how quickly. The road to improvement will be a long one, and therefore the strategy spans the period up to the year 2020.

However, the knowledge base of who uses parks, how often, what they think of them and what they get from them is steadily improving as well, so in the future more informed decisions will be possible about the value and future direction of the service.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Parks have their origins in the Victorian period, when there was an obvious need to improve both the physical environment and quality of life in the rapidly expanding industrial towns. Many of the earliest parks were provided by local philanthropists, but the cause was later taken up by local authorities.
- 1.2. The Public Health Acts of 1875 – 1925, in particular, empowered local authorities to provide *“public walks or pleasure grounds – to purchase, take a lease, lay out, plant, improve and maintain land for this purpose”*.
- 1.3. The “policy” drivers *then* included:
  - employment creation
  - health benefits
  - educational links
- 1.4. So, in many ways, whilst the language has changed, the rationale for parks and green spaces and the service that supports them remains core to public life.
- 1.5. Parks in Wigan, in common with those across the country, experienced many years of structural decline from the early 1970’s through to the 1990’s. At the same time, there was sustained growth in the development and use of both country parks and areas of land previously despoiled by industrial uses, which were reclaimed for outdoor recreation.
- 1.6. The reasons for the period of decline of the urban park are often cited as a combination of budget reductions, the side-effects of Compulsory Competitive Tendering in the 1990’s, and competition from a whole new range of leisure activities, both “out of home” and “at home”. There may be other contributory factors as well, but the overall outcome has been to weaken the links between urban communities and the urban parks which were intended to serve them.

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1.7. Nationally, since 1995, there has been steady progress towards re-establishing the important community role for urban parks. This was triggered by the establishment of a source of capital investment for the most important parks in terms of their heritage value, i.e. a funding stream within the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Gradually, over a number of years, some momentum has built up, including the use of regeneration funds, the Green Flag Scheme, Central Government initiatives, etc – parks are reappearing on the agenda. However, it is fair to say that while the general physical environment of Wigan has greatly improved over the last 20-30 years, the recovery of its urban parks, in particular, has yet to gather momentum.

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## 2.0 CONTEXT

### National Context

- 2.1. The modern national debate about the future of parks has its origins in the late 1980's/early 1990's. "*Parks in Crisis*" was a frequent headline, first in the horticultural and technical press, but eventually picked up by a wider audience.
- 2.2. The first major milestone was the report **Park Life: Urban and Social Renewal** produced by the consultants Comedia/Demos in 1995 and promoted by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. The establishment of the Urban Parks Programme of the National Lottery followed shortly afterwards, albeit eligibility for funds being restricted to a narrow band of registered heritage parks.
- 2.3. Since then there has been a succession of reports and "good practice" initiatives which can only be described as a "search for policy". Other significant milestones have been the Government-led taskforce and the House of Commons Committee report **The Future of Town and Country Parks**, published in November 1999. However, apart from dismissing the notion of a National Body with responsibility for parks, the report failed to establish clear policy guidelines, let alone a practical way forward.
- 2.4. The Government position was eventually set out as part of the Urban Renaissance agenda at the Urban Summit of October 2002. The report **Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener**, published by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, has become the driver of the National Agenda that parks and green spaces fit into.
- 2.5. One of the outcomes of this was that the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) was given the lead role to promote the improvement of parks and green spaces. A new branch of that organisation has been created for the purpose – CABE Space. A selection of influential good practice guides and research material has

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already been produced, recent examples being **Paying for Parks – Eight Models for Funding Urban Green Spaces (October 2006)** and **Spaceshaper – A practical toolkit (2007)**. We will continue to draw on this national learning, closely following best practice in achieving the most appropriate funding models.

- 2.6. The other principal strand of activity that is driving improvement is the Green Flag scheme. Originally promoted by the Pesticide Trust in 1996 but now managed by the Civic Trust on behalf of the Department of Communities and Local Government, this is now an elaborate quality scheme against which all types of parks and green spaces can be measured. In 2007, 538 parks achieved the standard and, increasingly, this area of local authority service is being measured against the portfolio of Green Flag parks.
- 2.7. Finally, changes to the approach to land-use planning are critical. Since the creation of the modern planning system, open space has been a key issue, regulated through the application of formulas, such as the “Six Acre Standard”, whereby six acres of open space was the benchmark provision for every 1,000 residents.
- 2.8. Following a parallel timetable to the Local Government’s Improvement Agenda, new thinking around these issues has begun to emerge. The release of Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG 17) has moved away from one based on formulas, towards an assessment of supply and demand. However, while this is helpful in the wider context, as so many existing parks have other restrictions on them, such as covenants, bequest conditions and archaic bye-laws, the land allocated to parks is not easily altered. Nationally, surveys show that over 46% of people use or visit parks and green spaces more than once per week. As no charges for entry or general use are made, they should be a key part of community provision.

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- 2.9. In broad terms, parks and green spaces impact on local communities in a number of key ways:-
- 2.10. *Positive impacts on social cohesion* – they provide important social spaces, which are used by a broad spectrum of the local population. **However, at the local level, we need to know more about who uses parks, when, for what purposes, how satisfied they are and what the long-term impacts of such uses are.**
- 2.11. *Physical and environmental benefits* – They bring contrast to the urban environment, with positive psychological effects, removing pollutants from the environment, and they provide off-road play space and a wide range of natural and semi-natural habitats. **However, the motivations for and the benefits gained from the use of urban parks has not been fully understood.**
- 2.12. *Health and well-being* – In general terms, a wide variety of health-orientated benefits should arise from their use. **However, how often people use them, how long for and for what, needs to be better understood.**
- 2.13. *Educational* – They can be used as educational resources for a wide range of subjects in formal and informal settings, especially for those not performing well in traditional classroom settings, as well as for more spiritual refreshment. **However, evidence contrives to be anecdotal – i.e. no unique learning outcomes can be identified.**

### **Regional Context**

- 2.14. The North of England, and the north-west region in particular, is the home of urban parks. The social and economic history of the Victorian period is laid out in parks of that era. Philanthropic industrialists and other civic leaders, the Cotton Famine in Lancashire and the Public Health Acts, all played their part in creating a unique stock of heritage assets. Today, this

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is demonstrated by the number of parks in the north-west competing for Lottery funds and featured in the Green Flag Awards.

- 2.15. Equally, the north-west has a unique history of industries that have caused environmental degradation, the effects of which live on, not only in degraded land, but also in the health, living standards and aspirations of the population. There has been a long history now of land reclamation in the north-west, and this has, amongst other things, created a huge expansion of publicly accessible and managed green space. The North West Regional Economic Strategy 2006 still retains a strand linked to the restoration of land, with the north-west having over 8,000 hectares of previously developed, vacant and derelict land (24% of the total for England).
- 2.16. The Red Rose Community Forest is a well-established sub-regional initiative that is now well over 10 years into its anticipated life of 40. Working with local authority partners in Manchester, Salford, Bury, Bolton, Trafford and Wigan, it has continued the tradition of greening up formerly despoiled land. As well as expanding tree cover in the sub-region, the project has a central brief to promote recreation and community involvement, and therefore has a direct reliance on parks and green spaces.
- 2.17. The Regional Economic Strategy identifies six “regional parks” that may be developed, including one in Wigan. However, these are not yet defined in detail and only one, in East Lancashire, currently exists. They will, however, be expected to have regional impact in their scale. Essentially, these are about developing environmental and recreational assets under a new branding theme.
- 2.18. Wigan is promoting its own proposal for a regional park – Greenheart. In 2006 an award of £725,000 from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) enabled Greenheart to gather momentum. Phase 1 of the programme has supported a wide range of projects within the Greenheart

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boundary, that have a focus on Bickershaw, habitat creation and towpaths and multi-user routes. A report to Wigan Council entitled “Greenheart Action Plans” April 2008, sets out the vision and objectives, including a spatial strategy and strategies covering “site connectivity”, land management, branding, marketing, communications and governance arrangements.

### **Local Context**

- 2.19. Wigan is the largest borough within the Greater Manchester conurbation. The shape of the communities within it is very much influenced by the history of coal mining and related heavy industries overlaying the earlier agricultural settlements. Road communications within the borough are particularly restrictive.
- 2.20. One of the consequences of this spatial history within the borough is that each local community has its own park/recreation site, that is typically small in scale and a microcosm of larger facilities elsewhere.
- 2.21. Formal parks are generally old, having been established in the period 1870 to 1950. More recent developments of green spaces tend to be less formal and to have been generated by the land reclamation work referred to above. Some of these facilities are better than others, and certainly some suffer from being laid out on wet, low-lying and disturbed land, the consequence being that they have limited carrying capacity.
- 2.22. Wigan is reputed to be one of the greenest of the Metropolitan Boroughs, and with some justification. Wigan has the largest area of open land of any authority in Greater Manchester, 75% of its total area. A total of 2,244 hectares of land is maintained by Greenspace Management – the service’s grounds maintenance provider. This includes a range of open space classifications, including parks, countryside, woodlands, highways and other areas.

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- 2.23. Overall the provision of parks and open spaces within the Borough, in terms of numbers of sites and area of land, is reasonable. For example, there are 817 hectares of formal park provision and over 10,000 hectares of natural/semi-natural greenspaces - areas of land with minimal management and maintenance which make for good naturalistic areas, and Wigan performs well against the Natural England standards. In their recent assessment for the Local Development Framework, Knight, Kavannah and Page (KKP) identified relatively small pockets of under-provision rather than significant ones.
- 2.24. The quality of sites is however, very mixed. Up to the present time emphasis has not been placed on the achievement of Green Flag standards. The main reason for this being the extent of capital investment needed to reach at least minimum standards to satisfy the Green Flag criteria.
- 2.25. Within AGMA Wigan is the second lowest spending authority per head of population, with expenditure in Wigan some 16.5% less than the median (source – Wigan MBC/CIPFA 2007/08). This historical lower level of expenditure has contributed to three related issues – a significant backlog of repairs and maintenance work, limited ability to embark on a programme of major self funded regeneration improvements and limited ability to provide for adequate maintenance of newly completed projects and/or sites.
- 2.26. Expenditure per head does appear to have some correlation with customer satisfaction. Within AGMA, the two lowest spending authorities also have the lowest satisfaction, based on the last Best Value general survey. The two Councils with the highest rate of customer satisfaction improvement, between 2004 and 2007, have the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> highest (out of 10) rates of expenditure per head.
- 2.27. Over the past decade the attraction of regeneration funding for parks has been below regional and national levels with no major Heritage Lottery

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Fund awards having been secured in that time. The recent award for Mesnes Park will go some way towards redressing this.

- 2.28. Parks and green spaces in Wigan continue to be well used, with 76% of residents visiting a park or open space at least once per year, 30% visiting at least once per week and 16% visiting at least twice per week (source 2007 Citizens' Panel). This is a very significant footfall.

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## **Best Practice**

- 2.29. To inform the development of the strategy a review of national good practice was undertaken.
- 2.30. This is to enable learning points to be considered and incorporated. In addition the service is a member of various information sharing bodies in which benchmarking of performance and processes takes place. These include APSE and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Greenspace forum.
- 2.31. There is no one description of what constitutes best practice for parks management. There is no nationally agreed set of indicators, similar to Library Standards, for example. However, there are numerous examples of best practice that we have been able to draw from the ongoing work of local authorities and other agencies.
- 2.32. A fundamental best practice involves a consistent approach to the management and maintenance of parks across the district, reflected in the publication of an agreed Parks and Greenspaces Strategy. This sets out a longer term vision, approved and adopted at the very highest level. This document will fulfil that role.
- 2.33. A further example of best practice is the achievement of Green Flag standard parks within key sites. An indicator of best practice is that parks management services are accredited to at least one of a number of process accreditations. Within WLCT an organisation commitment to the Excellence Marque is already underway and a rolling programme of Green Flag awards has commenced.
- 2.34. A number of councils achieved Beacon Council status for this area of service in the 2002/03 round of Beacon Councils – Halton BC, Northamptonshire CC, etc. Other operational illustrations of best practice include the creative re-direction of existing budgets and resources, e.g:

- 
- designing out pockets of high maintenance
  - concentrating intensive horticultural maintenance in key areas (e.g. at entrances; near cafes)
  - use of whole life costings to inform and prioritise investment decisions
  - reducing the use of pesticides – tolerate weeds/mildew spots on flora
  - introducing staff structures based on sites rather than function, to support a sense of ownership/break down demarcation of roles
  - deploying gardeners and other maintenance staff at busy periods to address safety issues
  - combining small projects funds into larger pots and concentrating improvements on key sites in a rolling programme. Examples of local authorities that have used these methods are Bexley, Brent, Oldham and Halton
  - the flexible and creative use of Section 106 funding, eg sports and play provision, e.g. Chelmsford and Doncaster

#### 2.35. The development of partnership working, eg

- Friends of groups are common-place – more innovative relationships may be worth exploring – e.g. Oldham; Northamptonshire. Stockport has around 40 active groups – whilst in Wigan the numbers are significantly less
- support from the private sector for specific provision/facilities, e.g. Brent
- Wildlife Trusts are also common partners – there are numerous examples from around the country

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- community-led developments and initiatives can bring in additional resources, e.g. Walsall, Dudley and Hull
  - specific initiatives to address key issues, e.g. crime and the fear of crime – e.g. Bexley and dog fouling; Cheltenham and the RSPCA

2.36. Design-led improvements:

- to improve accessibility, reduce crime and the fear of crime. Good design is at the heart of strategic planning, e.g. Oldham and Sheffield

2.37. Setting quality standards for different levels of parks, e.g:

- The use of the typology described in Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG 17) – this is now adopted and reflected within this strategy, see paragraph 5.11
- Such hierarchies should signal the levels of investment required to achieve and maintain appropriate standards, e.g. Bexley, Hammersmith and Fulham
- The use of the Green Flag standard as an improvement tool, e.g. Leeds
- Low cost/high satisfaction parks services, e.g. Dudley, Sheffield, Solihull

2.38. People-led strategies:

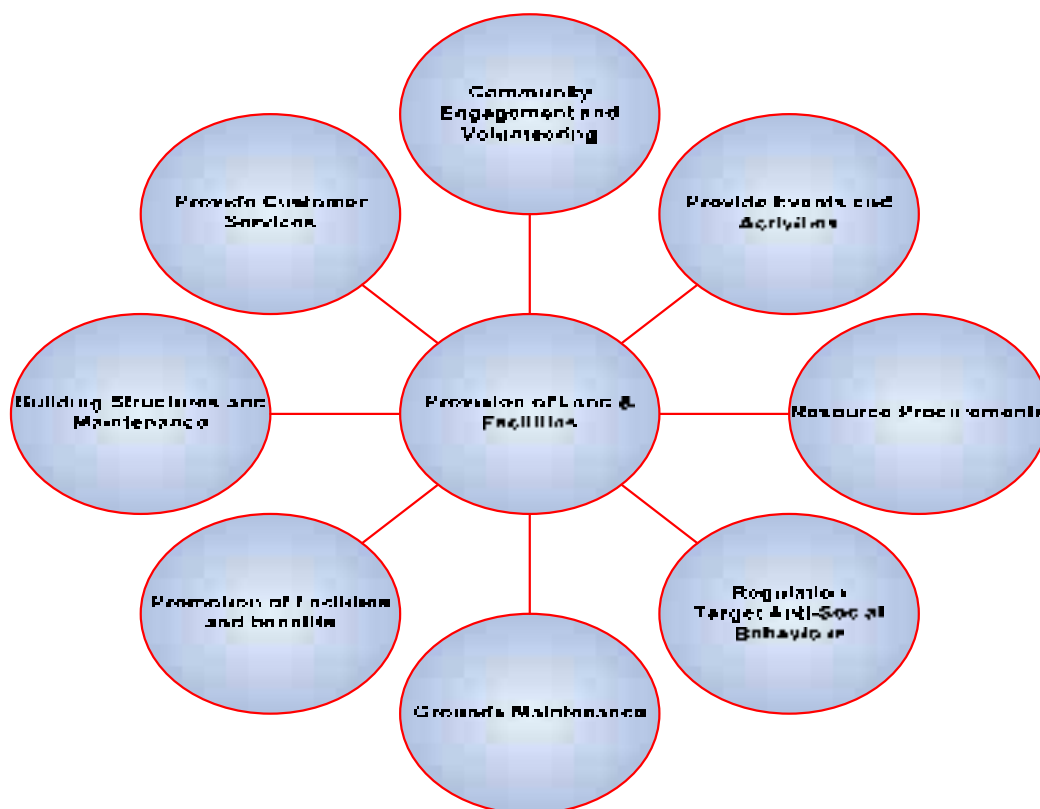
- The use of a vibrant programme of festivals arranged in-house and by the community, e.g. Sheffield

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## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

### 3.0 CURRENT SERVICE

- 3.1. This section looks at the current position of the key aspects of the service. key issues and messages are highlighted.
- 3.2. Parks Management is undertaken within the Environmental Management and Sustainability Division, ie, the Service. Overall the Service in Wigan scores well when measured against some criteria; poorly when measured against others.
- 3.3. The Grounds Maintenance strand of the Service performs exceptionally well, holding the Association of Public Service Excellence “Best Performer 2006” award. However, up to now the borough has not had a Parks and Greenspaces Strategy or any Green Flag parks. Resident satisfaction is in the lower quartile, and 70% of people want to see improvement.
- 3.4. The Service embraces a number of strands of activity, shown in the following diagram.



3.5. These are discussed in more detail below, i.e:

- the provision of land by Wigan Council. This includes projects that create new sites, features and facilities and/or improve existing ones
- the maintenance of ground (and, in conjunction with Wigan Council, structures, equipment and buildings)
- provision of customer services and information
- regulation of use and enforcement of rules and regulations (as well as, in conjunction with other agencies, anti-social behaviour)
- events that aim to provide enjoyment, as well as those linked to health promotion, education and learning and culture
- promotion and marketing of the use of the facilities, activities and events

- engagement with local communities and the management and promotion of volunteering / community involvement
- procurement of resources through bidding for external resources, fees and charges and trading

### Provision of Land and facilities

3.6. This is at the heart of the service. Without the appropriate provision, all the issues relating to use, access, satisfaction and the many positive benefits cannot be realised. However, this strategy is concerned in the main about how to manage the portfolio rather than to fundamentally re-assess its distribution. That exercise, the “big picture”, is available as the Wigan Council: Open Spaces and Recreation Strategy & Action Plan (2007).

3.7. A full schedule of the various park sites is shown at **Appendix D**. In summary, parks occupy a sizeable area of land, in total 817 hectares. The table below illustrates the number of parks provision per township, the related area and population.

Township	Local formal provision		District Parks		Borough Parks		TOTAL provision		Population ONS 2005	
	No	Ha	No	Ha	No	Ha	No	Ha	Total	ha / '000
Ashton Bryn	1	1.9	2	5.8	1	59.8	4	67.5	23,526	2.87
Atherton	2	2.2	1	3.6	-	-	3	5.7	20,114	0.28
Golborne Lowton	1	1.7	1	19.9	-	-	2	21.7	23,270	0.93
Hindley Abram	3	2.6	3	17.7	2	168.7	8	189.0	38,780	4.87
Leigh	5	1.9	5	23.6	1	164.9	11	190.4	43,480	4.38
Orrell, Billinge, Winstanley	1	0.1	2	12.5	-	-	3	12.5	22,669	0.55
Standish, Aspull, Shevington	3	1.5	4	20.5	2	189.1	9	211.1	35,404	5.96
Tyldesley Astley	2	0.1	1	3.5	-	-	3	3.6	23,959	0.15
Wigan North	2	1.1	3	33.8	-	-	5	34.9	36,842	0.95
Wigan South	4	2.9	3	25.9	2	52.0	9	80.8	36,744	2.20
<b>WIGAN</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>166.8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>634.4</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>304,788</b>	<b>2.68</b>

Source - KKP Open Spaces Assessment with additional data on population included

3.8. There is some variation in categories between the above and this strategy. The Open Spaces Assessment identifies 33 sites as either Borough or

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District. This strategy identifies 18 key sites, of which 3 serve the Borough and beyond, together with 15 “Township” sites. The location of the 18 key sites is shown at **Appendix H**.

- 3.9. Overall the provision of parks and open spaces within the Borough, in terms of numbers of sites and area of land, is reasonable. For example, there are 817 hectares of formal park provision and over 10,000 hectares of natural/semi-natural greenspaces - areas of land with minimal management and maintenance which make for good naturalistic areas, and Wigan performs well against the Natural England standards. As discussed previously Knight, Kavannagh and Page (KKP) found that no catchment gaps exist in the provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace, with a deficiency in formal park provision within the Goldborne/Lowton area, although recognising that the land managed by Environmental Services, the “Bonk”, does go some way to address this.

#### **Maintenance of Grounds**

- 3.10. Parks vary considerably in layout, style and intensity of management. The grounds maintenance strand of activity is not only the biggest, but underpins the whole area of service. There is a long list of features which are maintained, from bowling greens, soccer pitches and golf courses, to flower gardens, trees and sensitive wildlife habitats. It is an inherent part of this strategy that, where feasible, high maintenance is managed out.
- 3.11. The workforce that is employed to undertake this work has responded to the drive to be more effective and efficient. A drive for quality has resulted in external accreditation. This area of the service stands out regionally and nationally as a high performing / low cost operation, having achieved the 2006 Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) best performing grounds maintenance service in the UK and was shortlisted for the award in 2007. APSE compare all aspects of service, such as value for money, quality assurance and environmental practice in determining which service provides the best overall standards.

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3.12. For example, 118 front line staff maintain a total of 1,733 hectares of land, including 817 hectares of intensively maintained parks. This level of performance places the service in the APSE top quartile for productivity of hectares maintained per front line employee.

### **Maintenance of buildings and structures**

3.13. Responsibility for the repairs and maintenance of buildings and structures rests with Wigan Council in its role as landlord. This includes a wide range of items – paths, roads, fences, drainage, lighting and some fixed equipment such as multi-use games areas and teen shelters.

3.14. The Council's repair and maintenance budgets as a whole are under funded, and the level of repairs and renewals over a long period of time have taken their toll on the parks infrastructure.

3.15. As an illustration a sample asset "suitability and sufficiency" survey of parks undertaken between 2001/02 and 2005/06 indicated that out of the 23 sites surveyed only 4 passed the satisfactory standard and the remainder could be said to be "unfit for their purpose". The majority are graded as either "poor – with limited potential to improve" or at "a minimum standard with potential to improve". The full survey results for 2002; 2004 and 2006 are shown at Appendix I.

3.16. On a day to day basis, responsibility for systematic inspection of sites rests with WLCT staff. Items for repair are notified to the Council by means of Maintenance Requests (MR's). Clearly, the volume of maintenance work that can be undertaken in any one year depends on the availability of resources.

### **Customer Services**

3.17. Wigan has a population of some 305,000 people. Surveys indicate that significant numbers of the residents have some use of the service. Clearly, there is huge scope for contact from residents and service users.

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The two country parks have site-based staff, and it is possible to contact staff directly on those sites via telephone. Other park sites, whilst they may have a staff presence, do not have the capacity for direct contact. The management of customer contact is therefore of critical importance.

3.18. Due to the high volume of contacts regarding grounds maintenance a helpdesk operation is provided within the Greenspace Services Team. Currently the operation captures electronic records of all incoming requests for services and complaints. The challenge for the service is to gain greater user intelligence through improved customer information management, to enable, for example the interrogation of data down to a Township level. This is planned as a future system improvement. This service operates in conjunction with the Council's main switchboard and the WLCT Headquarters.

3.19. Service requests, relating to parks and open spaces, are also received within other areas of the service, including allotments, play area provision, sports pitches, parks and countryside ranger lead events and cemeteries. It is important that these are not dealt with in isolation.

3.20. Future operation of the above will need to be considered alongside the developing Joint Service Centre to ensure a joined up approach.

### **Consultation and Community Engagement and Volunteering**

3.21. Satisfaction surveys indicate that people in Wigan are less satisfied than residents elsewhere. Satisfaction with Wigan's parks and open spaces declined from 65% in 2004 to 62% in 2007, (according to the Government's own survey) whilst in the rest of the country it increased from 71% in 2004 to 73% in 2007. Regionally the AGMA average satisfaction increased marginally from 67.6% to 68.2% over the same period. The general survey places residents' satisfaction in the Wigan Borough in the lower quartile.

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3.22. Satisfaction is also gauged through the Wigan Borough Council Citizens' Panel, and used to track changes over time. Using information from the Surveys undertaken in 2004 and 2007, it is apparent that:

- overall there was a marginal increase in people who have visited a park / country park within the Borough in the last 12 months, ie up from 75% to 76%
- no significant changes on satisfaction with a range of items including seating, signage, playgrounds. maintenance and feeling of safety
- there are more people visiting Haigh (up from 59% to 63%); Pennington Flash (from 37% to 40%); 3 Sisters (from 18% to 22%); Pennington Hall (from 11% to 15%) comparing 2004 to 2007
- there were fewer people who reported the reason for visiting parks to take children to play areas - a drop from 47% in 2004 to 34% in 2007
- the main reasons for visiting parks continues to be "walking/exercise/relaxing", followed by somewhere for children to play and dog walking
- The reasons for not visiting a park also remain the same – nothing of interest to do; no children to take and lack of time.

3.23. A fuller picture of satisfaction is shown at Appendices A-C. **Appendix A** pulls together all of the headline satisfaction results over the past 4 years, broken down to Township level. **Appendix B** provides the results from the overall satisfaction survey conducted at key sites and is based on the views of some 1,250 respondents. **Appendix C** illustrates the residential location of parks users relative to the most deprived Super Output Areas across the borough.

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- 3.24. The above statistics reflect the overall borough-wide position. Both surveys referred to above have been broken down to Township level, where there is a widespread mix of ratings, both between parks in different locations, and between some of the features and facilities within them. **Appendix A** points to an east/west split in terms of satisfaction and usage levels. The service needs to better understand why this is the case and to determine whether there is a real need to respond to this imbalance through more focused interventions.
- 3.25. Most public consultation exercises place parks at or near the top of the community agenda. The above satisfaction data would support the fact that 70% of people want to see improvements in parks (source: Citizen's Panel June 2006). Their inclusion in almost all the priority action plans of the Townships is also an illustration of their continuing importance at the local level.
- 3.26. Volunteering plays a major role in the delivery of parks services. It is critical that volunteering expands significantly to achieve the expansion of Green Flag parks and to achieve the targets set for volunteering.

### **Regulation of Use**

- 3.27. Many of the older parks were the subject of a set of bye-laws dating back to their creation. These were either site-specific or generic across a district. They were enforced through a hierarchy of park keepers and superintendents. However, while some of these bye-laws may still exist, their enforcement is not part of current parks management. Equally, there are a number of issues which occur quite frequently – anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, trespass by motorcycles, vehicles and quadbikes, as well as the occasional incidents of wildlife disturbance and shooting and the like. It is part of the Parks Management Service's role to contribute to the responses to these issues.

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3.28. Partnership working with all agencies within the borough is of critical importance in addressing anti-social behaviour.

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### **Events and Activities**

- 3.29. Generally, parks in Wigan do not lend themselves to large-scale events. The Wigan One World Festival at Mesnes Park attracts up to 10,000 people, and this is one of the largest events. Even events at the country parks are constrained by the nature of the sites, access, security and car parking.
- 3.30. There is a role for events in attracting new audiences and retaining existing ones. However, they can be relatively costly to run compared to the benefits that they deliver. Approximately 150 events take place in Wigan's parks annually.

### **Promotion of Facilities and Benefits**

- 3.31. Historically, promotion and marketing of parks has been limited to general promotional leaflets and the marketing of events. In recent years, this information has been available on the WLCT web site, and some efforts have been made both to improve the quality and rationale of this activity. However, very little is known about park users as customers, and therefore promotion and marketing has been relatively undirected. This is reflected nationally – it is surprising that considering the high footfall, there is virtually no hard data about who park users are, how often they visit, what they want from their visit, let alone how much they might be prepared to contribute (financially or otherwise).

### **Procurement of Resources**

- 3.32. Whilst local authority funding of parks is still by far the most important source of revenue and investment, the parks economy is increasingly dependent on external funding. There is a wide range of funding streams that can potentially benefit parks from those that specifically target parks, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, to others that, whilst targeting regeneration objectives, can also benefit parks.

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## 4.0 EMERGING ISSUES

- 4.1. There are a number of emerging issues which will impact upon the delivery of the Parks Vision. These include government policy changes set out in the **Local Government White Paper - Strong and Prosperous Communities** and developments already taking place within the Wigan Borough, many in response to the White Paper.
- 4.2. This section of the document sets these out and highlights the challenges that parks will face.
- 4.3. Externally, the strategic influences are:
- the **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007**, which provides the legislative framework for parts of the White Paper – this includes: new national performance indicators; the new Local Area Agreement (LAA), comprehensive area assessment (CAA) - Parks will have a fundamental role in improving neighbourhoods, in contributing to local people's perception of the value of their community, in contributing to the delivery of LAA targets and in demonstrating the effect of joined up service subsequent CAA judgements
  - **a duty to involve local people (from 2009)** – central government's commitment to build stronger, involved and more active communities is particularly relevant to the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy. Through the involvement of eg, friends of parks organisations and volunteering the service can play a leading role and be a key part of the borough wide strategy . Elsewhere in this report we highlight best practice Councils which have made community involvement a major part of their improvement strategies. The challenge in Wigan is to have active friends groups, represented from all areas, for all of the 18 key sites

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- **Climate change** – the parks service is well placed to play a significant and unique role here. Whilst it will contribute through effective environmental best practice in its day to day operations, and as a consumer of resources, its greatest contribution will be in its educational role. This will be through tailoring its offer to children, young people and all visitors, to include, eg, an appreciation of the harm done to eco-systems through global warming and pollution. This is already under development

4.4. Internally, and within the borough, the following are the main issues that need to be considered:

- **The Local Strategic Partnership and the Local Area Agreement (LAA)** – the impact that parks and parks activities have in promoting well being will be measured in large part through the LAA. The priorities within Wigan Borough’s LAA, to which the parks service makes its biggest contribution relate to: community perceptions over place and locality, participation in community and cultural activities, improving the cleanliness and greenness of the borough, enhancing children and young people’s well being, reducing anti-social behaviour and improving things to do and positive activities for young people. The service will need to ensure that it can respond to the needs of the LSP in meeting the borough’s agreement with central government
- **the Local Development Framework- (LDF)** – the LDF will both influence and be influenced by the Core Spatial Strategy for the Borough being delivered from 2010 and 2026. The Parks and Greenspaces Strategy must become an important supplementary planning document within this process
- **Area based / neighbourhood working** – management structures within the parks service will need to work in tandem with the new developing local neighbourhood structures being implemented by Wigan Council

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- **Partnership and Communities together (PACT)** – management structures within the parks service will need to be fully involved in the PACT model being implemented across the borough and in the tailored approaches and joint approach to problem solving that the PACT model promotes. Friends of Parks Groups will be integral parts of evolving neighbourhood models
  - **Joint Service Centre (JSC)** – the JSC aims to provide a seamless “One Council” face for residents within the borough accessing Council services. It is imperative that residents making enquiries and raising issues about Trust managed parks services, are dealt with, within a similarly seamless transaction but ensuring that the Trust branding and identity is retained
  - **Greenheart Regional Park and its development across the borough** – as this project develops the service will need to ensure that it plays a leading role in integrating the Trust’s parks and green spaces offer, including outdoor community and cultural events, within the expanding network of Greenheart sites
  - **Cultural Olympiad** - The Cultural Olympiad is a four-year period of cultural activity, running from 2008 to 2012. Its aim is to celebrate the Olympic spirit throughout the UK, and to use that spirit to enhance cultural involvement. Wigan’s own Cultural Olympiad programme is focused around 5 areas: inspiring and involving young people, volunteering; sport; culture and sustainability. The Olympic theme will be used to promote and engage people in cultural and community participation. The Wigan Cultural Olympiad and the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy are mutually supportive and will converge on projects such as the Mesnes Park Training Centre and the Three Sisters Wetland project
  - **“closing the gap”** across a range of deprivation indicators between the most deprived areas and the most affluent – the strategy needs to ensure that it provides a focus on deprivation

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## WHERE WOULD WE LIKE TO GET TO?

### 5.0 THE NEW VISION

#### The Need for a New Vision

- 5.1. So, parks are both a component of the local environment and part of local community life. For many years they have been simply taken for granted. They used to be attractive places to visit, to take children to play, to take part in sports and other pastimes, and were generally perceived to be “safe”.
- 5.2. Following their period of decline, they cannot be taken for granted in the same way. At worst, they not only fail to make a positive contribution to the local quality of life, they can detract from it. For example because they can be the venues for anti-social behaviour.
- 5.3. Therefore, in order to begin to move forward again, parks need to re-state their purpose, their *raison d’être*. The statement needs to be significant, in that it should say what parks are there for. It should provide a positive link to establishing an environmentally friendly borough – Cleaner, Safer, Greener. Secondly, it provides a link to increasing the use of parks (Participation) by the local community. Crucially, it should put local communities in the driving seat.

#### The Process

- 5.4. The process of arriving at a new vision commenced with stakeholder sessions in late 2005. These identified a number of emerging issues and outlined the process to be followed.
- 5.5. Since then the strategy has been developed through further consultation and through some of the actions that have been initiated. The emerging strategy has been tested in a number of forums –the WLCT Board, the Cultural partnership, the Trust’s consultation panel, Members’ seminar,

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Township managers, the Strategic Partnership Team of the Council and an Executive Briefing to Cabinet.

### **The Vision**

5.6. A vision statement was drafted at the start of the process based on an analysis of the emerging issues. This draft vision has been positively received throughout the process and no challenges have been raised.

5.7. Therefore the vision proposed is:-

*“Parks and green spaces will aim to make a significant contribution to the quality of life in the borough. They will offer local communities the opportunity to shape and influence the features and facilities provided and, above all, the chance to **get active** – physically, mentally and creatively, and as citizens in the community.”*

5.8. This is significant in that it moves on from the previous service vision that made a contribution to the quality of life in a passive way, to one which puts emphasis on the role of local communities in shaping the service. This has not always been evident in the past. It also, of course makes direct reference to *Getting Wigan Active*.

### **Location**

5.9. The next key element of the strategy involves establishing a management framework – in practice, this means a classification of sites so that appropriate and consistent management practices can be applied across the service. This should assist both equity and transparency of provision, which can be sensitive to issues for stakeholders.

5.10. The current conventional wisdom is to adopt a classification that takes the form of a “hierarchy” based on the size of the site, its catchments and its functionality. The national standard for this is set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG 17). The model proposed for this strategy is as follows:-

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- Principal Borough parks (serving a 3.2 Km catchment)
  - Township/district parks (serving a 1.2Km catchment)
  - Playing fields (catchments vary)
  - Local/community green spaces (generally serving a 400m catchment)
  - Local nature sites/reserves (target of 1Ha per 1,000 residents)

5.11. This generally follows the PPG 17 classification, but the names of the groups have been amended for local circumstances.

5.12. Again there has been broad acceptance of this as a sensible way forward, but some concerns remain amongst stakeholders that this will be a “league table” and that sites in the lower leagues will be starved of resources or even disposed of altogether. The classification of particular sites within this hierarchy is probably the most sensitive issue within the strategy as a whole.

5.13. The key sites are proposed as follows:-

<b>PRINCIPAL PARK SITES</b>	
PPG 17 Definition:- Sites above 20 Ha, large specialised areas, attracting a large number of visitors from a wide area.	
<b>Park name</b>	<b>Township</b>
<b>1) Mesnes Park</b>	Wigan North
<b>2) Pennington Flash &amp; Country Park</b>	Leigh
<b>3) Haigh Hall &amp; Country Park</b>	Shevington, Standish & Aspull

Haigh and Pennington Flash meet the PPG 17 Standard of being greater than 20Ha and serve a wide area. Mesnes Park, which although smaller, is included here because it attracts by far the largest number of visits and visitors and has significance across a substantial area of the borough.

<b>TOWNSHIP PARK SITES</b>	
PPG 17 Definition:- Sites between 2 and 20 Ha, areas that attract a significant proportion of users from particular parts of the local area, serving the recreation needs of the local population	
<b>Park name</b>	<b>Township</b>
<b>4) Abram Park</b>	Hindley, Abram, Platt Bridge & Bickershaw
<b>5) Alexandra Park</b>	Wigan South
<b>6) Ashfield Park</b>	Shevington, Standish & Aspull
<b>7) Aspull Civic</b>	Shevington, Standish & Aspull
<b>8) Astley Street park</b>	Tyldesley & Astley
<b>9) Central Park</b>	Atherton
<b>10) Golborne Bonk</b>	Golborne & Lowton
<b>11) Jubilee Park</b>	Ashton-in-Makerfield & Bryn
<b>12) Leyland Park</b>	Hindley, Abram, Platt Bridge & Bickershaw

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<b>13) Lilford Park</b>	Leigh
<b>14) Orrell Water Park</b>	Orrell, Billinge & Winstanley
<b>15) Pennington Hall Park</b>	Leigh
<b>16) Shevington Park</b>	Shevington, Standish & Aspull
<b>17) Three Sisters Recreation Area</b>	Ashton-in-Makerfield & Bryn
<b>18) Walmesley Park</b>	Wigan North

5.14. Potentially other sites could be included as “Township” Parks, but the intention is to identify key priorities within a balanced and realistic package of provision in line with Township priorities.

A summary of the proposed management actions for the key sites is shown at **Appendix E**

5.15. There are further parks sites that are managed by the WLCT and these are shown at **Appendix D**.

5.16. Two are Local Nature Reserves (Borsdane Wood and part of Orrell Water Park). The intention is to seek Local Nature Reserve designation for parts of other sites, such as Low Hall Park and Pennington Flash.

5.17. One particular issue that was raised during the consultation process, is the relationship between the principal and township park sites and the spatial framework of the Borough, particularly Townships, and the most deprived Super Output Areas. See Plan: “Key Sites and Deprivation” attached at **Appendix C**.

5.18. In terms of the Townships, there will be at least one “Township Park” in each township, supplemented in some cases by a Principal Park, and in all cases by a range of other provision (playing fields - including school grounds where possible- play sites, local green spaces etc) to make up the township “offer”.

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5.19. In terms of the areas of deprivation in the Borough, clearly none of the Principal or Township Parks sit within these areas. However, around half are located close enough to be of value, eg, Alexandra Park.

5.20. However, there are many smaller sites (local green spaces etc ) that form a key part of the local environment within the more deprived super-output areas. It is here that the strategy can make the greatest contribution to these areas, by setting a framework that facilitates the bending of all mainstream resources into these areas.

### **What Will The Service Aim To Achieve?**

5.21. While there are no National Standards for parks and green spaces, there are some clear indicators of expectations from stakeholders.

5.22. There is a high footfall, with 76% of residents visiting a park or green space at least once per year (2007 Citizens Panel survey). The expectation is that this will continue, if not increase. The country park sites can be at or over full capacity at their most popular times and there are certainly some very busy sites in the Borough.

5.23. However, overall satisfaction rates have been falling, and in the last General Residents Survey the Wigan score of 62%, kept the Borough in the lowest quartile nationally. Equally, many of the parks are in poor condition and 70% of residents wish to see improvements (Citizen's Panel – 2006). Clearly there is an expectation that the service should respond to these figures. The aim will be to move the residents satisfaction score into the “mid-quartile”. Over the coming years a greater understanding of what drives customer satisfaction, at a Township level, will start to emerge.

5.24. The Green Flag award scheme for parks is nationally recognised. Quite a few local authorities have 10 or more in their areas. Wigan has none. There is general support for the Green Flag scheme and therefore, the service will aim to achieve a number of these over the next few years.

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- 5.25. The Trust has begun some thinking on how to measure social impact, particularly in relation to lifelong learning and health. A robust method of assessment is being trialled that attempts to measure the impacts of parks activities. For example, there will be more emphasis on providing for young people, particularly to support the new facilities that have been installed at some sites (skate parks, multi-use games areas etc) and to measure the impacts of this work.
- 5.26. In terms of environmental impact, the *Natural England* target of 1 Ha of designated Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 head of population is a useful one. Wigan currently has 203 Ha of LNR's, so a further 98 Ha is required to meet the target. The Parks and Greenspaces Strategy will make a significant contribution to addressing this gap. There is also a great opportunity to raise awareness of climate change issues, and these will be built into new programmes of events and activities.
- 5.27. At a more operational level the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy will support the achievement of initiatives such as *Wigan in Bloom* and cleanliness targets, particularly on those local green spaces that are located in the super-output areas.
- 5.28. Performance measures which were developed in 2007/08 will establish the baseline for a number of areas, including:
- **Footfall** (using electronic counters – installed at four trial sites across the Borough)
  - **Satisfaction** with a range of quality factors, collected at park level, and through the Citizen's panel
  - **Participation** within a range of event settings, including learning and health
  - **Audience development**, eg. participation and usage by young people

- **Impact** - especially in relation to the most deprived Super Output areas

5.29. A full schedule of satisfaction results for 2007/08 from our in-house key site surveys appears at **Appendix A-C**.

5.30. A schedule of our aspirations for each element of the service is shown below.

Service Activity	Aspiration
<b>Provision of Land and Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an optimum match with community aspirations within available resources and periodically test the validity of the provision</li> <li>• Add new sites, facilities and features to the portfolio only if they can be shown to be adequately financed, and once a robust and sustainable business case backed up by whole life costing is made</li> <li>• Remove sites, features and facilities from the portfolio if they have a detrimental effect on provision</li> <li>• To resolve “split site” anomalies in the parks portfolio particularly in relation to the Environmental Services Department</li> </ul>
<b>Grounds maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain a high performing, value for money service against national industry benchmarks</li> <li>• Roll out and retain quality accreditations eg. ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OCHAS 18001, Chartermark</li> <li>• Provide an appropriate area- based service</li> <li>• Deploy “static” ground staff/rangers on all principal and township parks</li> </ul>

<b>Maintenance of Buildings and Structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All principal and township parks at or above the minimum standard of sufficiency in terms of their asset management score</li> <li>• A number of parks at the Green Flag Standard</li> </ul>
<b>Customer Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record, monitor and report on all customer contacts in a systematic manner</li> <li>• Provide a joined up customer service (with other relevant services and partner organisations)</li> <li>• Deploy sufficient customer services staff to be able to provide a prompt and reactive operational service, linking to the forthcoming “hub and spoke” model</li> </ul>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake regular and systematic consultation with service users, stakeholders and general residents</li> <li>• Provide appropriate support to facilitate the establishment of community involvement with the management of parks and green spaces</li> <li>• Provide appropriate support to established “Friends of ....groups etc”</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for volunteering, devolved/community management</li> <li>• Join up with area-based and neighbourhood management initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation of use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to an up to date and legally enforcement set of byelaws and/or regulations</li> <li>• Provide an effective enforcement service,</li> </ul>

	<p>either directly or in conjunction with partner organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide positive diversionary activities, education and awareness raising to achieve appropriate use, behaviours and conduct in parks and open spaces</li> </ul>
<b>Events and activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide programmes of events and activities that encourage people to use parks and green spaces</li> <li>• Ensure equal access to events and activities, especially to the most deprived areas of the Borough</li> <li>• Provide programmes that can demonstrate clear impact to people's lives – on their health, learning and work opportunities etc</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion of facilities and benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate the benefits of parks and green spaces in a way that can be understood locally</li> <li>• Join up with partner organisations in “selling” the benefits</li> <li>• Use appropriate media to disseminate the message</li> <li>• Strong brand identity exists for the different “offers” with the overall service</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement of investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve a sustained level of investment in the portfolio</li> <li>• Enter into new arrangements with partners and other service providers to unlock potential investment and/or reduce the management burden</li> </ul>

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## HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

### What Will The Service Provide?

5.31. The service has historically provided a range of inter-related functions that collectively manage parks and green spaces. These are shown in the diagram in section 3 above. Most, but not all are delivered by the WLCT, but all involve varying degrees of partnership working with Wigan Council, other agencies, users, residents and other stakeholders.

5.32. While these services will continue to be available at all sites, the mode of delivery will vary:

- the “full weight” of WLCT resources will be put into the regeneration of the 3 Principal Parks, together with appropriate management plans, site based staff and a programme of events and activities
- the 15 Township Parks will be managed to exploit the range of opportunities that are available. These will be different in each case, but overall the aim will be to meet the Township expectations for each site. So for example, the opportunities will be different at Orrell Water Park than they are at Alexandra Park. Named WLCT staff will cover these sites in clusters rather than individually, and will provide/support a programme of events and events
- playing fields and in particular the playing pitches on them will be the subject of more detailed work. The existing grass playing pitch strategy has come to the end of its life. There have been a number of significant improvements over the last few years at sites like Scot Lane, Parsons Meadow, Laithwaite Park and Leyland Park, together with a new site at Howe Bridge. These, together with changing requirements and expectations (such as 9 vs 9 junior soccer) will need fresh impetus to be given to this aspect of the service. The Trust will work proactively with the Leagues and clubs

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to seek further improvements, including where viable, the encouragement of self management.

- local green spaces, which include the smaller parks and play sites, will be managed as part of the mosaic of the local environment. In practice the weight of management will be towards grounds maintenance and the joining up with other *Streetscene* and neighbourhood services that are delivered by other agencies. An operational structure, and processes, will be put in place that support this approach to management.
- Local nature sites lend themselves towards community engagement, volunteering and community management. The opportunities for this will be developed wherever possible.

5.33. In the light of the vision statement, one significant area of growth in the service needs to be in the support given to and the development of, community engagement and audience development. This will be factored in to both the deployment of existing resources and bids for additional resources.

5.34. While this strategy has more to say about the principal and township parks than other groups, it is not the intention to downgrade or de-value the local green spaces.

5.35. As a minimum, the aim is to maintain the *status quo*. The aspiration will be to present the local green space group of sites as *Clean, Safe and Welcoming*, adopting the same principles as anywhere else. The only difference being that the range of facilities and features will be smaller than the Township Parks. The range of facilities and features will be clearly defined in response to customer aspirations.

5.36. They will be managed in conjunction with the evolving area/neighbourhood based structures currently being developed and implemented by the Local Strategic Partnership, Wigan Council and its partners.

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5.37. In terms of their future improvement, this is more likely to be driven and resourced at a local level. The WLCT management structure will provide for named officers to be the points of contact who will facilitate community aspirations within the level of resources available. The operational structure and procedures will provide for:-

- Quality control
- Accessibility
- Named and accountable officers
- Responsiveness

#### **How Will The Service Be Delivered ?**

5.38. The majority of the service will be delivered with in-house staff within the Environmental Management and Sustainability Division of the WLCT. The management of the Division has been substantially re-structured over the last two years, with the emerging Parks and Greenspaces Strategy in mind.

5.39. In it is proposed that there will be four operational sections within the Division, plus another group concerned with service planning, investment procurement and performance. These are:

- Greenspace Management (that now deals with all matters relating to local/community green spaces)
- Parks and Countryside Activities (that deals with principal parks, township parks and playing fields)
- Play (that deals will all matters relating to childrens play areas, play schemes and development)
- Bereavement (which is outside the scope of this strategy)

- 
- Forward planning (that deals with major developments such as Mesnes Park, Green Flag applications, Local Nature Reserves, performance management etc)

The operational structure is shown at **Appendix F**.

5.40. Therefore, in terms of progress, most of the delivery mechanism for the emerging strategy is in place. The most significant piece of work still in progress is the re-structure of the Parks and Countryside Activities section.

5.41. In an effort to kick start the strategy, a number of initiatives and projects are worthy of mention:

- Mesnes Park (which was approved to Stage Two of the Heritage Lottery Fund process in September 2007)
- Alexandra Park ( for which a total of £380,000 investment has been secured, with a view to achieving the first Green Flag award in the Borough)
- The designation of part of Orrell Water Park as a Local Nature Reserve
- An additional £80,000 of base revenue funding from the Council to fund “Cleaner, greener, safer” outputs. (This will be used to further the Green flag/Wigan in Bloom work and audience development in parks, especially young people)

5.42. In terms of identity, each of the sections described above has its own “brand”.

5.43. A new logo/house style has been produced for parks and countryside activities as that is in effect a new area of service, and the one that will deliver enhanced community engagement. The intention is to build a strong service brand that focuses less on “place” and more on “people – hence the strap line .....*“BE ALIVE....Discover Wigan’s parks.”*

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5.44. The new vision needs to be delivered not only in a physical and managerial way, but also in the way it is packaged and presented. In marketing terms, there needs to be brand development that gives users and residents a mental image of what they can expect. It is proposed that the principal and township parks are branded as a group. The core of the brand will be “people”, with a very positive brand message to encourage users to take up the offer. The brand will be developed as the strategy is rolled out – an example of some of the work done so far is shown below:-



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## CAN WE AFFORD IT?

### 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. It is likely that the proposed strategy will need to be delivered broadly within the current WLCT revenue budgets. More detailed forecasts will be prepared to support the Trust's emerging business strategy, the annual "zero-based" budget approach used by the WLCT, and the development of capital programme and external funding bids.
- 6.2. Each of the Principal Parks ideally requires a major refurbishment scheme to bring them up to expectations, and that will cost several million pounds.
- 6.3. In terms of achieving Green Flag Standards, it is estimated that generally at least £200,000 of capital expenditure would be required to bring each Township Park up to standard, with a consequent revenue uplift of at least 30%. In most cases the capital element will be significantly more than this, and an average figure of £500,000 would not be unrealistic. Whilst these are estimated figures they are based on practical experience of regeneration work undertaken over recent years.
- 6.4. Where opportunities can be identified or created to increase revenue streams or inward investment, these will be focused on the principal or townships sites.
- 6.5. With the scale of investment required every opportunity for creative approaches to funding and resourcing needs to be explored.

#### **Principal Parks - Assessment of Improvement and Investment Needs**

- 6.6. There are three of these:
- Mesnes park
  - Haigh Hall and Country Park

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- Pennington Flash Country Park
- 6.7. Mesnes Park has been subjected to a full master planning and detailed cost estimating exercise as part of the preparation of the Heritage Lottery Fund restoration scheme. The full capital cost is estimated at approximately £6.5 million. Additional revenue requirements have been estimated at approximately £1 million over a 10 year period. While this latter figure is partly presentational, nevertheless there will need to be a focusing of management and maintenance effort in the restored park that will be an extra cost to the existing park's budget.
- 6.8. No comparable exercise has yet been undertaken at Haigh Hall Country Park, but the scale of the park would suggest a comparable capital figure of around £4 - 5 million for the park areas in addition to the renovation costs of the main Hall and the other structures.
- 6.9. Pennington Flash Country park is a creation of the 1970's, and subsequent, land reclamation programmes. It is therefore quite different in character than Mesnes and Haigh and its needs are different. There is still an element of refurbishment necessary, but probably more opportunity for new developments. Initial work undertaken by consultants suggests that a modernisation programme would cost approximately £3 – 4 million. Pennington Flash has a substantial footfall, and potentially significant opportunity to generate additional income. Therefore, with an appropriate re-development scheme the impact on revenue could be neutral or even positive.
- 6.10. A particular issue to be addressed at Pennington will be that if/when the new golf centre opens at the nearby Bickershaw Country Park, the existing course is expected to be closed. This will have a negative impact on the income at Pennington. However, it will also free up a substantial area of land within the Country Park for appropriate re-development.

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## **Township Parks – Assessment of Improvement and Investment Needs**

- 6.11 In addition to the three principal parks, there are fifteen Township parks that strategically cover the borough. All are currently managed by the WLCT with the exception of two – Shevington Park and Golborne "bonk". Having said that, the WLCT manages the play areas on both those sites.
- 6.12 Clearly, the cost of bringing all of the 15 Township Parks up to the Green Flag Standard would be substantial. For example, a full master planning exercise has been carried out at Jubilee Park in Ashton and a total capital cost of around £800k has been established. This would provide a comprehensive development scheme and includes aspirations for new features, as well as achieving the Green Flag Standard. In practice, no funds have been identified to implement this so far, but it has been a useful exercise to establish the scale of the Township's aspirations.
- 6.13 Whilst the total investment package for all township parks appears daunting, this strategy is proposing a rolling programme over the longer term - this phased and planned investment approach will be more realistic. The critical question then becomes one of prioritisation.
- 6.14 In 2006/07 an opportunity became available to upgrade Alexandra Park using funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund with a view to achieving the Green Flag Standard. Pennington Hall Park in Leigh appeared to be close to the Green Flag Standard and therefore has also been submitted. In the case of the former, the capital cost is estimated at approximately £500,000 and the latter £250,000. The opportunity to apply for the Green Flag Standard at these two parks was based on achieving the standard in both the east and west areas of the borough.
- 6.15 Similar master planning exercises need to be carried out on the rest of the group, but these in themselves consume valuable staff resources. The strategy therefore proposes the adoption of a formal methodology for

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prioritising the sequence of investment – in terms of time and resources to achieve the Green Flag standard.

6.16 A set of criteria to prioritise improvement and investment has been developed and has been used to present an outline schedule covering the life of this strategy. The model adopted applies a scored judgement for each park against 4 criteria.

6.17 The judgement is applied to:-

- Where the site sits in the Township priorities
- The strength of local structured community support
- The likely availability of capital/grants etc
- The potential for Green Flag (ie the size of the gap)

6.18 A score is made using the following generic guidelines:

<b>Score</b>	<b>Where the site sits in the Township Priority</b>
0	Not considered within priorities
1	Low priority within the list of park development priorities
2	The park priority within park development for that township
3	The township priority within all service priorities

<b>Score</b>	<b>The strength of local structured community support</b>
0	No community support
1	Identified community support but not constituted
2	Newly established constituted (minimum 12 months) Friends of Group

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3	A long established constituted (more than 12 months) and effective Friends of Group
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<b>Score</b>	<b>The potential for funding opportunities (as measured by the “Grant Finder” System</b>
0	Minimal funding opportunities (eg, Awards for All - up to £5k)
1	Some opportunities of linking together small grants (eg, Awards for All, Brighter Borough – £5k to £20k)
2	Opportunity for funding from £20k upwards)
3	Major funding opportunities (eg, NRF - £250,000)

<b>Score</b>	<b>The potential for Green Flag (ie the size of the gap)</b>
0	Land management issues need resolving
1	Major infrastructure works and management processes are needed
2	Major infrastructure works needed
3	Only minor infrastructure works needed

6.19 This assessment will also be informed by the wider deprivation issues facing a particular area of the community.

6.20 It is proposed that the scoring is undertaken annually to review priorities for future years. An appraisal group, comprising officers from WLCT and the Council, will assess the criteria and present proposed updated priorities for consultation and approval. Over time it is anticipated that the assessment process could include community representatives.

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- 6.21 A summary of the outcome of the application of the model to the key sites is shown at Appendix J.
- 6.22 Therefore it is proposed that using the above model, Astley Street Park and Jubilee Park will be the focus of development planning from 2008 onwards. These parks will therefore move towards the achievement of Green Flag status in future years.
- 6.23 Resources will be channelled into supporting the community engagement process, developing and building capacity, master planning, site development, procurement, events and activities planning.
- 6.24 An indicative timeline for the improvement of the principal and township parks is shown at Appendix K.

### **Local Green spaces**

- 6.25 These are the most numerous of the groups within the hierarchy of sites. In common with the other groups they are commonly multi-functional, in that they contain sports pitches, play areas or areas of wildlife interest. However, in general they are either smaller or simpler than sites in the other groups and have fewer costly features within them.
- 6.26 Therefore, individually they are generally less costly to consider, and more impact can be made for more modest sums.
- 6.27 Having said that, some of the larger sites in the group, such as Firs Park and Westleigh Park are close to Township Parks in terms of their size and content, so the group is a broad continuum from small simple sites up to these larger ones.
- 6.28 The general principle here will be to continue to provide a best value service for these sites, financing improvements and developments from external funding as and when it arises, and based on local aspirations and community involvement. The principal challenge in this group will be to maintain what is currently provided. In many instances projects and

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developments have been carried out in the past, financed by external funding, but without a direct link to increased revenue streams, these are at risk.

- 6.29 Equally, radical developments in the future and/or those which result in a more intensive and costly maintenance requirement, would be resisted from a financial perspective.

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## **Sports Pitches**

- 6.30 There are some 112 sports pitches managed by the WLCT. Over the last few years there has been significant investment in the stock, as a result of the Grass Playing Pitches strategy. This has been funded from a variety of sources, including the Football Foundation and Regeneration Funds. In the main the investment has been on the western side of the Borough.
- 6.31 Based on the findings of the Wigan Council Open Spaces Strategy, and consultation with the user forums, a portfolio bid for the Eastern side of the Borough is in the early stages of preparation.
- 6.32 This is a complex area in its own right and the financial details of any future development proposals will be included in a separate strategy. However, it is important to note that the revenue consequences of any significant capital developments in this area need to be considered, otherwise there will be further downward pressure on quality standards.

## **Play Areas**

- 6.33 There is a similar story for equipped play areas. The base revenue budget to support play area repairs for example, is low. As there are over 130 play areas this is a severely under funded activity.
- 6.34 Funding for play refurbishment is generated from external sources, but particularly as a result of “Section 106 Agreements” with housing developers. The improvement priorities and work programmes are managed through the Township Forums. Annual capital expenditure runs into several hundred thousand pounds.
- 6.35 These agreements now also generate an income stream from capital that is invested, but this is in reality only a contribution to the real costs that are incurred. Therefore, again there is not necessarily a link between capital expenditure and the associated revenue consequences. Coupled with a

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very substantial backlog of dilapidations, this is a complex area in its own right. The existing Community Play Area Strategy is under review.

### **Local Nature Reserves and Other Wildlife Sites**

- 6.36 Wigan is well provided by this group although only a small number currently have formal designation. Often they are components of larger sites.
- 6.37 Their management is by definition of a lesser intensity than formal parks, but nevertheless they still require some input. Gaining formal designation has advantages, not only in performance terms, but it can open doors to specific funding streams.
- 6.38 Part of Orrell Water Park, known as Greenslate Water Meadows, was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 2006/07. The cost of this in staff time and work on the ground was approximately £30,000. However, this has established a very active community group, one which delivers volunteer inputs and one which has now started to secure funding for the site (£8,500 from the BIG Lottery in 2008).
- 6.39 There is potential for a series of these across the Borough, and the costs are likely to be similar.

### **Financial Summary**

- 6.40 The total net operational annual revenue budget that is currently available is approximately £3.5m. This breaks down approximately as:
- Grounds maintenance of key sites - £750,000
  - Grounds maintenance of Greenspaces - £900,000
  - Grounds maintenance of playing fields - £400,000
  - Other management functions, Ranger Service, events, etc - £1,000,000

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- Service Development - £400,000

6.41 Some further work is needed to understand the infrastructure maintenance (eg, path repairs, building maintenance, drainage improvements) carried out by the Council.

6.42 Any reductions to these budgets would make the challenge of improvement even harder. Ideally significant growth is needed.

6.43 The aspirations discussed in this strategy would imply very substantial costs, and in the absence of major capital funding and significant revenue growth they will not be delivered in full. Clearly the strategy will help to inform funding bids.

6.44 The two key groups and the financial consequences of their aspirations in terms of capital investment are estimated at :-

- Principal Parks: £14 -18 million

- Township Parks: £6 - 8million

6.45 Any significant improvements to the other groups of sites, eg Greenspace sites, would be in addition.

6.46 A summary of the estimated capital required, existing grounds maintenance budgets and the pressure that the capital improvement would put on these is shown at Appendix K.

6.47 It is important to see this in the context of the time span of the strategy (2008 - 2020). Over that length of time, there will be opportunities for both significant grant-based investments and for creative solutions involving partner organisations.

### **Conclusion on financial implications**

6.48 Trends in the key indicators of the past few years have been downwards – as evidenced in the overall satisfaction figures and the “suitability and

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sufficiency” asset scores. This strategy first needs to stabilise, then reverse these trends. This strategy should enable some progress to be made within existing budgets. However any step change will depend on significant success with external funding bids and/or revenue growth.

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## HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN WE'VE GOT THERE?

### 7.0 PERFORMANCE / DELIVERY MONITORING

7.1. In terms of the overall outcomes for the strategy, these are intended to make positive impacts on the quality of people's lives.

7.2. Going back to the new vision:

*"Parks and green spaces will aim to make a significant contribution to the quality of life in the borough. They will offer local communities the opportunity to shape and influence the features and facilities provided and, above all, the chance to get active – physically, mentally and creatively, and as citizens in the community."*

7.3. Therefore, in answer to the question **How will we know when we've got there?** A range of indicators is currently being developed which have:

- meaningful data on the levels of and patterns of use
- satisfaction
- objective quality indicators and accreditations
- more sophisticated data on participation, new audiences and the impact on people's lives ie benefits to health and learning outcomes

The following headline indicators will be developed to gauge progress

- Number of residents visiting parks and open spaces at least once per year (Source – Citizen's Panel)
- Residents satisfaction with parks and open spaces (Source – Citizen's Panel to replace BVPI 119e)
- Users perception of safety in parks and open spaces (Source – WLCT Ranger Surveys)
- Satisfaction by children and young people with parks and play areas (Source – Single set of National Indicators)

- 
- Number of parks with Green Flags (Source – Civic Trust)
  - Service-wide quality accreditations
  - Average asset management score (Source – Wigan Council Sufficiency and Suitability Review)
  - Cost of the parks per head of population (Source – Wigan Borough Treasurer)
  - Level of investment achieved (Source – WLCT)
  - Number of Friends groups or similar (Source – WLCT)
  - Number of people participating from target groups/areas (Source – WLCT Event Monitoring)
  - Perception of benefits of parks activities to users (Source WLCT Surveys)
  - Impact/outcome measures – to be defined

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## **APPENDICES A - L**

Analysis of Resident and User Satisfaction Surveys between 2004 and 2007

Survey Description, Commissioned by and Date	Satisfaction/Usage Data	Total Borough	Analysis of Responses by Township									
			Ashton / Bryn	Atherton	Golborne / Lowton	Hindley / Abram	Leigh	Orrell / Billinge / Winstanley	Standish / Aspull / Shevington	Tyldesley / Astley	Wigan North	Wigan South
Central Government Best Value Residents Survey 2006	Overall satisfaction (BVPI 1119e)	62%	73%	51%	68%	59%	57%	52%	70%	54%	72%	67%
	Overall dissatisfaction (BVPI 1119e)	21%	10%	32%	19%	21%	28%	25%	12%	26%	15%	15%
	% of respondents visiting a park once per month or more frequently	58%	64%	49%	59%	55%	61%	62%	65%	48%	63%	52%
Central Government Survey Change in Parks and Open Spaces between 2003 and 2006	Parks and Open Spaces have got better (2003 to 2006)	22%	37%	18%	16%	20%	20%	14%	23%	16%	26%	29%
	Parks and Open Spaces have stayed the same (2003 to 2006)	59%	53%	60%	70%	58%	54%	63%	66%	60%	56%	55%
	Parks and Open Spaces have got worse (2003 to 2006)	19%	10%	22%	14%	22%	26%	23%	11%	24%	18%	16%
Wigan Council Survey Citizen Panel Nov 2007	% of Population who have visited in the previous 12 months	76%	75%	55%	80%	73%	81%	77%	84%	64%	83%	67%
	The flower beds, trees and shrubs are attractive and well maintained	69%	63%	72%	74%	64%	61%	81%	75%	55%	82%	59%
	The park is tidy and free from litter	59%	78%	69%	69%	49%	38%	77%	59%	37%	65%	62%
	The park pathways are level and well surfaced	58%	63%	74%	43%	61%	56%	74%	63%	51%	48%	60%
	I feel safe using the park during the day	84%	99%	82%	88%	72%	79%	88%	80%	84%	84%	90%
Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust Parks User Satisfaction Survey 2007	Overall Satisfaction by Users (15 Key EM&S Sites)	73%	75%	64%	N/A	74%	74%	76%	65%	51%	83%	74%

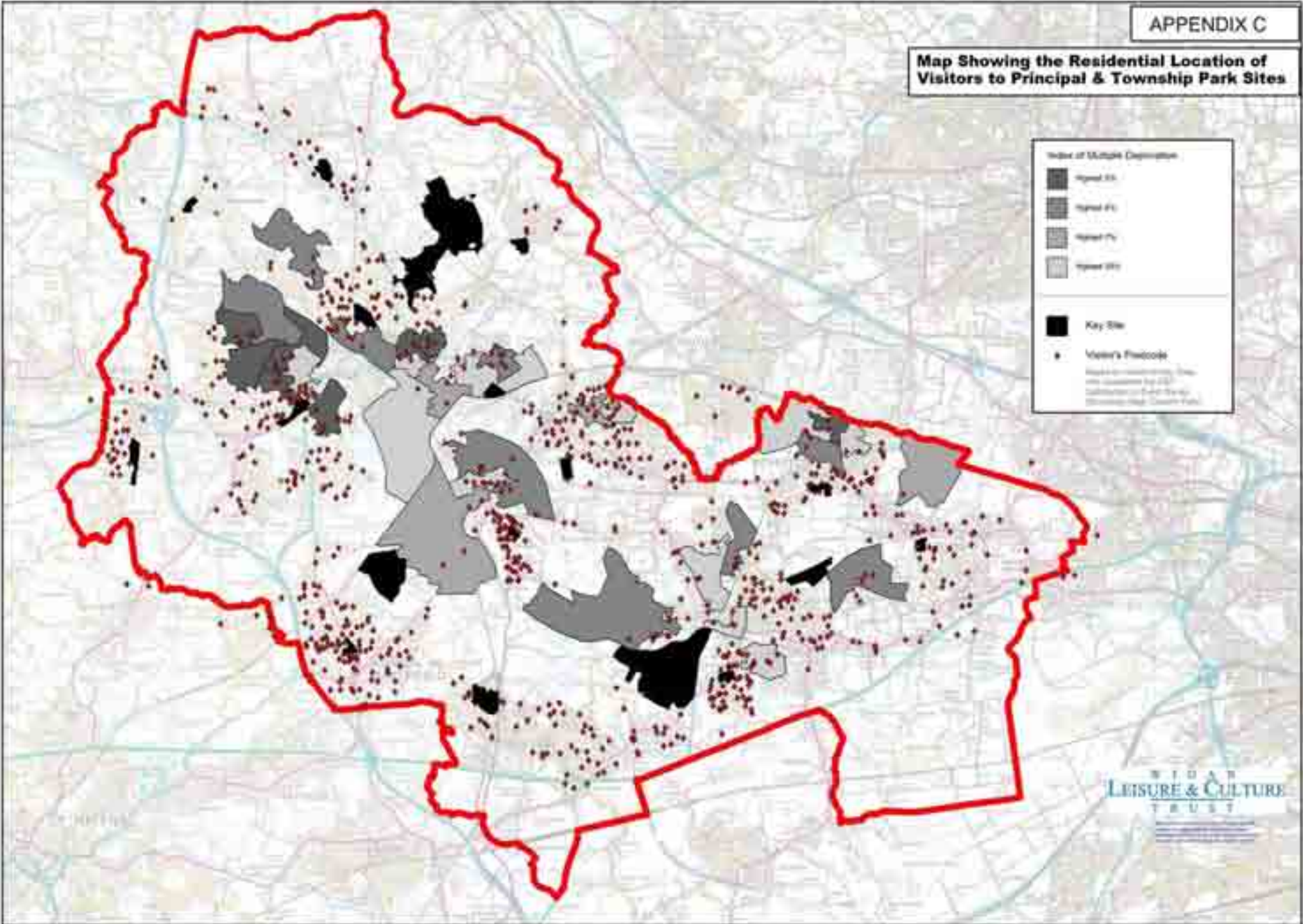
Highest / best Response 

Lowest / worst Response 

## Analysis of Visitor Satisfaction Survey 2007 - Key Sites within the Wigan Borough

	<b>All Parks</b>
<b>Sample size - total respondents</b>	<b>1339</b>
Gender - Male	53.7%
Gender - Female	46.3%
Age up to 18	17.1%
Age 19-30	14.7%
Age 31-59	45.0%
Age 60+	23.2%
<b>Population aged 16+ based on 2001 Census data.</b>	
3% most deprived	3.8%
7% most deprived	10.1%
<b>Respondents to Survey</b> - Used as a proxy measure to gauge usage from people that live in the most deprived areas of the borough - this indicates that usage from these areas is under-represented	
3% most deprived	3.0%
7% most deprived	7.5%
<b>Percentage walking to park</b>	
	44.6%
<b>Reasons for visiting park</b> - percentage of total responses	
For a walk	20.7%
Fresh Air	12.9%
Visit Play Area	10.9%
Stay fit	11.3%
Enjoy nature	8.4%
Walk dog	9.6%
Improve health	8.5%
Birds/Wildlife	6.5%
Eat/drink/picnic	4.3%
Ride bike	3.4%
Attend event	1.9%
Take a short cut	1.7%
<b>Satisfaction with quality / customer care</b> - Percentages shown are those who "agree/strongly agree" with the statement	
The place is welcoming and inviting	86.5%
Information/signage is good and easy to follow	62.2%
There are enough seats and benches	63.2%
The grounds are well maintained	85.9%
Paths and walkways are well maintained	78.2%
Facilities are accessible to all abilities	78.1%
Generally it is clean and free from litter	81.2%
The park is kept free from dog mess	65.4%
Play facilities are good for all ages	64.3%
The building are well maintained	61.5%
The toilets (where provided) are well looked after	55.7%
Staff are present in the area	61.0%
Staff are approachable and helpful	75.1%
I feel safe coming here	89.1%
Average satisfaction - agree/strongly agree with the above	72.5%
<b>Benefits to parks users</b> - Percentages shown are those who "agree/strongly agree" with the statement	
Coming to the park improves my health	87.9%
This is a good place to exercise	88.3%
Coming here helps me cope better with everyday stresses	75.6%
Coming here helps me appreciate nature and the outdoors	80.8%
Using the park/open space helps me to relax and unwind	84.6%
<b>Overall how satisfied are you with this park or open space</b>	<b>90.5%</b>
<b>Frequency of Visits</b>	
<b>Summer</b>	
Daily/almost daily	27.7%
More than once a week	25.6%
Once a week	18.6%
Once or twice a month	17.5%
Less than this	10.5%
<b>Winter</b>	
Daily/almost daily	19.8%
More than once a week	18.7%
Once a week	19.6%
Once or twice a month	22.0%
Less than this	19.8%

Map Showing the Residential Location of Visitors to Principal & Township Park Sites



## APPENDIX D

### Principal park sites

Site name	Township
Pennington Flash Country Park	Leigh
Mesnes Park	Wigan North
Haigh Hall Country Park	Standish, Shevington & Aspull

### Township Park sites

Site name	Township
Jubilee Park	Ashton & Bryn
Three Sisters Recreation Area	Ashton & Bryn
Central Park / Morley Street Park	Atherton
Golborne Bonk	Golborne & Lowton
Leyland Park	Hindley & Abram
Abram Park (Lee Lane)	Hindley & Abram
Lilford Park	Leigh
Pennington Hall Park	Leigh
Orrell Water Park	Orrell, Billinge & Winstanley
Ashfield Park	Standish, Shevington & Aspull
Aspull Civic	Standish, Shevington & Aspull
Shevington Park	Standish, Shevington & Aspull
Astley Street Park	Tyldesley & Astley
Walmesley Park	Wigan North
Alexandra Park	Wigan South

### Other park sites

Site name	Township
Edmund Collins Park	Ashton & Bryn
Stubshaw Cross Recreation Area	Ashton & Bryn
Morley Street Park	Atherton
Peoples Place	Atherton
Heywood Avenue Recreation Area	Golborne & Lowton
Amberswood	Hindley & Abram
Low Hall Park	Hindley & Abram
Platt Bridge Park	Hindley & Abram
Platt Lane Park	Hindley & Abram
Raynor Park North	Hindley & Abram
Raynor Park South	Hindley & Abram
Bedford Park	Leigh
Butts Corner	Leigh
Courtaulds Garden	Leigh
Crankwood Play Area	Leigh
Dootsons Park	Leigh
Firs Park	Leigh
Pennington Gardens	Leigh
Westleigh Park	Leigh
Holgate Park	Orrell, Billinge & Winstanley
Borsdane Wood	Standish, Shevington & Aspull
Quakers Garden	Standish, Shevington & Aspull

Standish Formal Garden	Standish, Shevington & Aspull
Castle Street Garden	Tyldesley & Astley
Shuttle Street Garden	Tyldesley & Astley
Cale Lane Recreational Park	Wigan North
Coronation Park	Wigan North
Marylebone Park	Wigan North
Wigan Parish Churchyard	Wigan North
William Fosters Playing Field	Wigan North
Chapel Street Garden	Wigan South
Eckersley Rest Garden	Wigan South
Highfield Park	Wigan South
Laithwaite Park	Wigan South
Parsons Meadow	Wigan South
Redwood Park	Wigan South
Rose Hill Park	Wigan South
Scot Lane Ponds	Wigan South
St Matthews Rest Garden	Wigan South

KEY SITES : PROPOSED MANAGEMENT ACTION

APPENDIX E

SITE	TOWNSHIP	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	CONDITION	BRIEF MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION
<b>Haigh Hall Country Park</b>	Standish, Shevington and Aspull	121 Ha	Extensive historic estate with formal features near the Hall – Walled Gardens etc. Some sections listed by English Heritage. Extensive woodlands (The Plantations) with picturesque landscape features	Varies – Golf course area refurbished in 2002, remainder of the estate fair/poor, including some derelict features.	Requires fresh development and management plan, based on the historical fabric and woodland habitats  <b>Requires a corporate approach</b>
<b>Mesnes Park</b>	Wigan North	11.23 Ha	Ornamental park opened in the late 1870's, and typical of the period. Listed by English Heritage as Grade II.	Some good features. Generally fair with some derelict structures.	Requires fresh development and management plan, based on the historical fabric. Funding possible <b>(In progress)</b>
<b>Pennington Flash Country Park</b>	Leigh	445 Ha	Extensive informal parkland and water body, developed in the 1970's as part of post-industrial land reclamation work. Renowned for its wildlife especially birds.	Generally good, but with some features in need of modernisation.	Requires fresh development and management plan in the light of nearby developments at Leigh Sports Village and Bickershaw North. <b>(Imminent)</b>

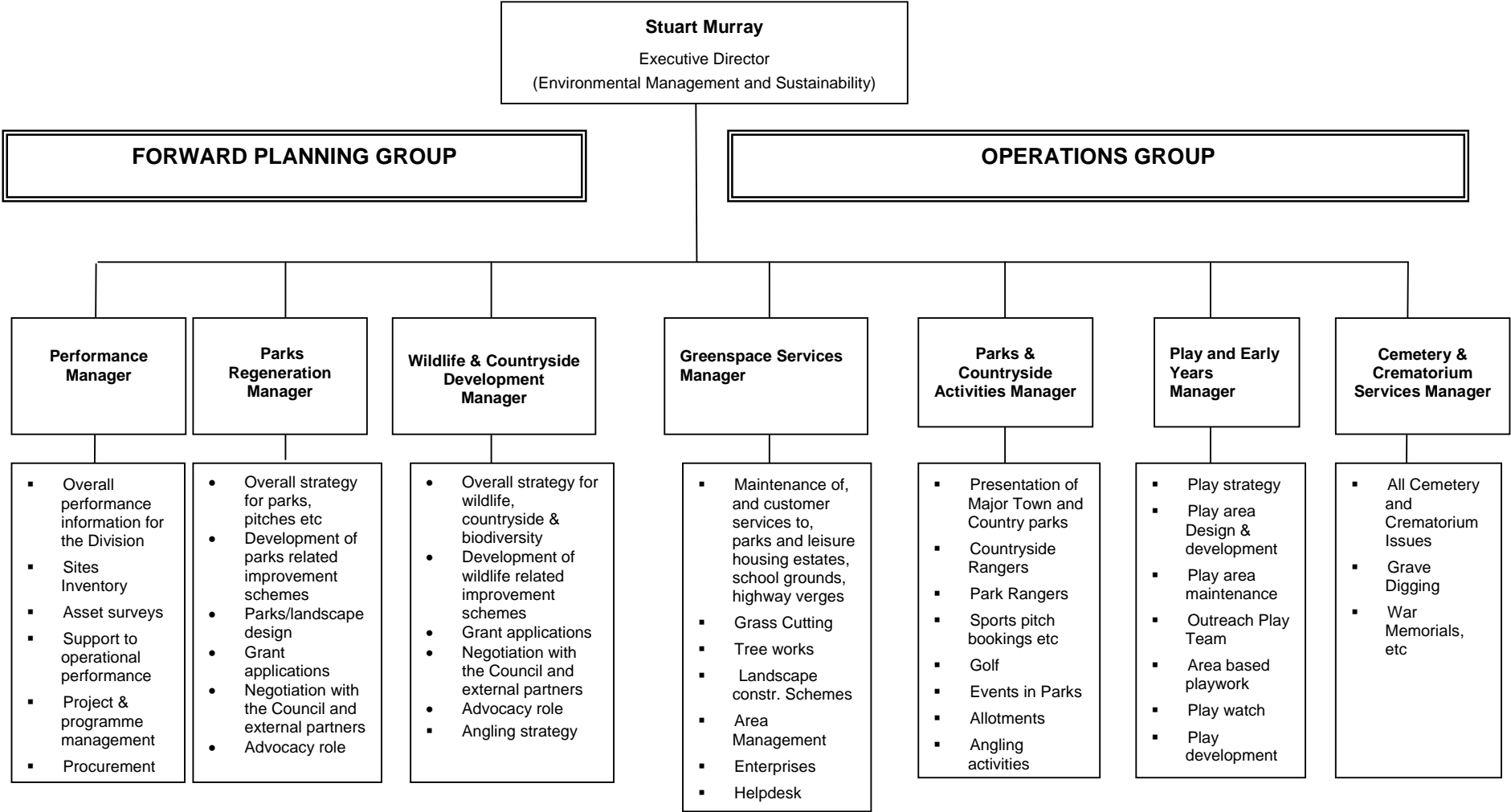
SITE	TOWNSHIP	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	CONDITION	BRIEF MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION
<b>Abram Park, Lee Lane</b>	Hindley ,Abram, Platt Bridge & Bickershaw	2.25 Ha	Small urban park with several sports facilities and play area	New multi-use games area, otherwise fair	Re-testing previous consultation – <b>specific features being addressed as funding allows</b>
<b>Alexandra Park</b>	Wigan South	5.50 Ha	Medium urban park with several sports facilities, play area and remnants of historical features	New skatepark, otherwise most features need refurbishment.	Development plan required. Potential Green Flag site. Some funding available. <b>(In progress)</b>
<b>Ashfield Park</b>	Standish , Shevington & Aspull	9.06 Ha	Larger urban fringe park with several grass pitches. Adjoins large informal areas of woodland etc.	Grass areas and pitches generally in good condition. Overall fair.	Some features require renewal.
<b>Aspull Civic</b>	Standish , Shevington & Aspull	7.02 Ha	Larger urban fringe park with several grass pitches and other sports features.	Generally in good/fair condition	Some repairs and maintenance required, but no major refurbishment necessary.

<b>SITE</b>	<b>TOWNSHIP</b>	<b>SIZE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>BRIEF MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION</b>
<b>Astley Street Park</b>	Tyldesley & Astley	3.50 Ha	Medium urban park with several sports facilities, play area and remnants of historical features	Fair/poor. Particular issues with anti-social behaviour and its consequences	Specific features in new of urgent renewal - <b>funding issues to be addressed</b>
<b>Central Park (and including Morley Street)</b>	Atherton	3.57 Ha	Medium urban park with several sports facilities, play area etc	Fair	Some repairs and maintenance required, but no major refurbishment necessary.
<b>Golborne Bonk</b>	Golborne & Lowton				Site managed by the Environmental Services Department
<b>Jubilee Park</b>	Ashton & Bryn	3.45 Ha	Medium urban park with several sports facilities, play area and flower garden	Flower gardens generally very good. Sports and active section fair/poor	Development plan agreed – <b>specific features being addressed as funding allows</b>

SITE	TOWNSHIP	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	CONDITION	BRIEF MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION
<b>Leyland Park</b>	Hindley ,Abram, Platt Bridge & Bickershaw	7.61 Ha	Larger urban fringe park with several grass pitches, sports areas. Recent extensive woodland planting.	Fair. Grass pitches & changing pavilion have been improved recently – good condition	- <b>specific features being addressed as funding allows</b>
<b>Lilford Park</b>	Leigh	20.49 Ha	Larger urban fringe park with remnant formal structure & features Adjoins large informal areas of woodland etc.	Generally fair /poor. Former zoo site and bowling green areas derelict or near derelict.	Development plan agreed – <b>specific features will be addressed when funding allows</b>
<b>Orrell Water Park</b>	Orrell, Billinge & Winstanley	9.65 Ha	Larger naturalistic site, based on reservoirs. Part of the site being developed as a Local Nature Reserve.	Generally good/fair	Some repairs and maintenance required, but no major refurbishment necessary. Local nature Reserve plan agreed – <b>to be implemented in conjunction with partners</b>
<b>Pennington Hall Park</b>	Leigh	4.80 Ha	Ornamental park opened in the 1920's, and typical of the period.	Generally good/fair	Development plan being developed. Potential Green Flag site. <b>(In progress)</b>

SITE	TOWNSHIP	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	CONDITION	BRIEF MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION
<b>Shevington Park</b>	Standish , Shevington & Aspull				Site managed by the Parish Council
<b>Three Sisters Recreation Area</b>	Ashton & Bryn	44.1 Ha	Extensive informal parkland with water bodies, woodlands, visitor centre etc. Developed in the 1970's as part of post-industrial land reclamation work. Adjoins the Wigan Flashes. Includes the Race Circuit.	Generally good, but with some features in need of modernisation.	Some repairs and maintenance required, but no major refurbishment necessary. <b>Potential for the renewal of specific features, as well as new developments as part of the Greenheart Regional Park</b>
<b>Walmesley Park,Ince</b>	Wigan North	6.72 Ha	Medium urban park with several sports facilities, skatepark, play area and remnants of historical features	Skatepark and play area very good. Other areas fair/poor.	Some repairs and maintenance required, but no major refurbishment necessary. Ideally, the fishing lake needs to be de-silted.

**APPENDIX F**



Play Provision - All Categories by Township

APPENDIX G

TOWNSHIP	Casual play		Youth provision		LAP (Small - local)		LEAP (Medium)		NEAP (Larger)		Unclassified Sites		Total sites		Average per Township	
	MUGA, basketball areas, kick-a-bout areas, shelters & games walls		Skate parks and BMX		A local area for play		A local <b>equipped</b> area for play		A neighbourhood <b>equipped</b> area for play							
	number	Size (ha)	number	Size (ha)	number	Size (ha)	number	Size (ha)	number	Size (ha)	number	Size (ha)	number	Size (ha)	Population 2005 Estimates Age 0-15	Sites per 1,000 Age 0-15
Ashton Bryn	-	-	-	-	4	0.56	4	0.31	1	0.04	-	-	9	0.91	4,513	501
Atherton	-	-	-	-	6	0.29	1	0.01	1	0.09	1	0.02	9	0.41	3,836	426
Golborne/Lowton	1	0.02	-	-	4	0.55	6	0.47	-	-	-	-	11	1.04	4,505	410
Hindley/Abram	-	-	2	0.06	11	0.4	10	1.19	-	-	-	-	23	1.65	7,854	341
Leigh	-	-	2	0.16	7	0.96	6	0.81	1	0.07	-	-	16	2	8,667	542
Orrell/Billinge/Winstanley	1	0.08	1	0.05	5	0.22	2	0.11	-	-	-	-	9	0.46	4,210	468
Standish/Aspull/Shevington	-	-	1	0.01	9	0.32	9	0.76	1	0.14	1	0.03	21	1.26	6,735	321
Tyldesley Astley	-	-	-	-	2	0.02	2	0.07	2	0.75	-	-	6	0.84	4,828	805
Wigan North	1	0.16	1	0.04	7	0.86	2	0.58	2	0.28	-	-	13	1.92	7,034	541
Wigan South	1	0.07	2	0.12	4	0.19	8	0.4	-	-	-	-	15	0.78	7,266	484
<b>BOROUGH TOTALS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>4.71</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1.37</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>11.41</b>	<b>59,448</b>	<b>450</b>

Source - KKP Open Spaces Assessment with additional data on population included

## APPENDIX H

### **Wigan Borough's Townships**

Borough Plan showing:

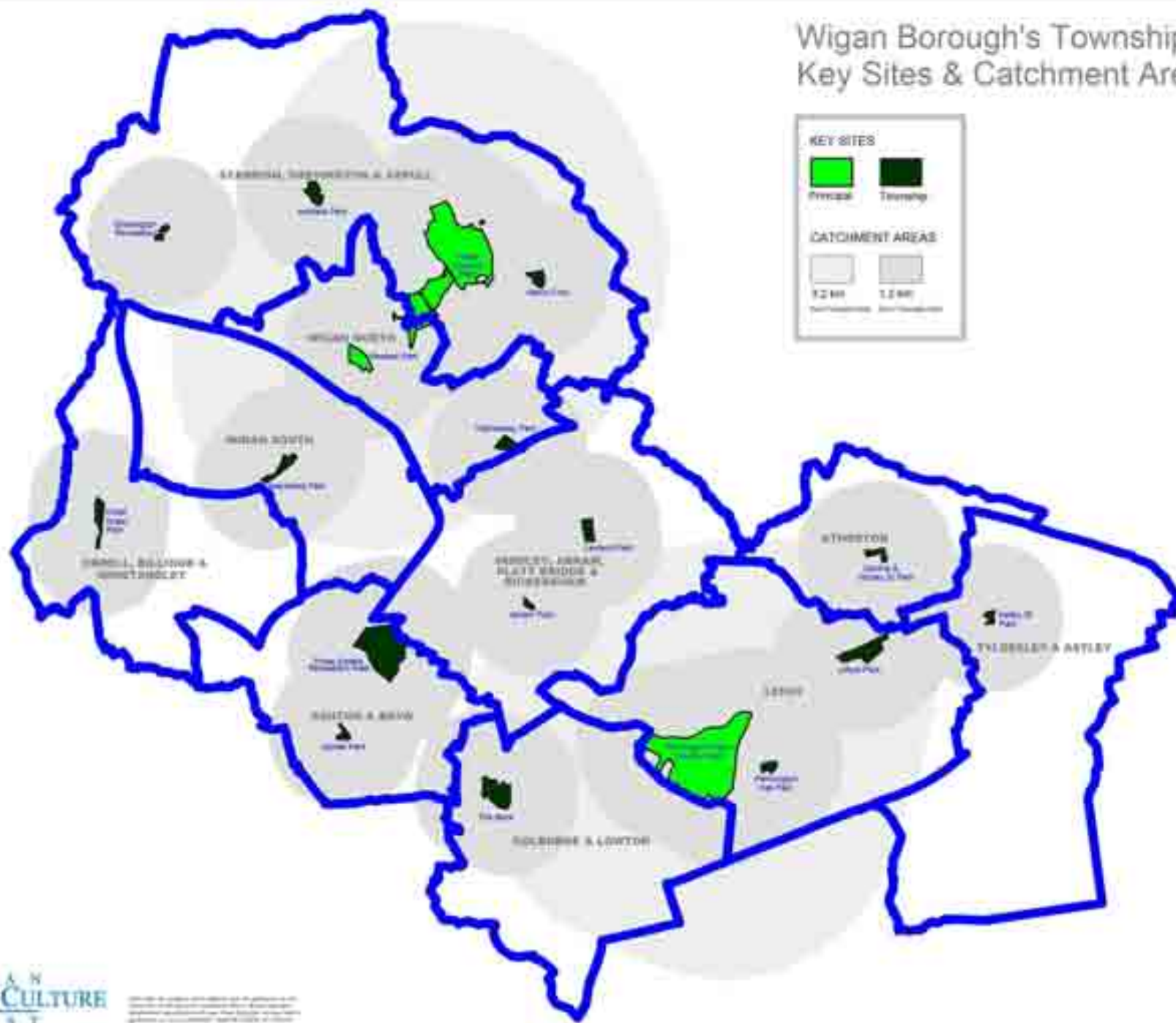
- Townships
- Principal & Township Parks
- Catchment Areas
  - Principal Parks 3.2km & 1.2km
  - Township Parks 1.2km
- Sport Pitches and Play Areas

### **Township Plans**

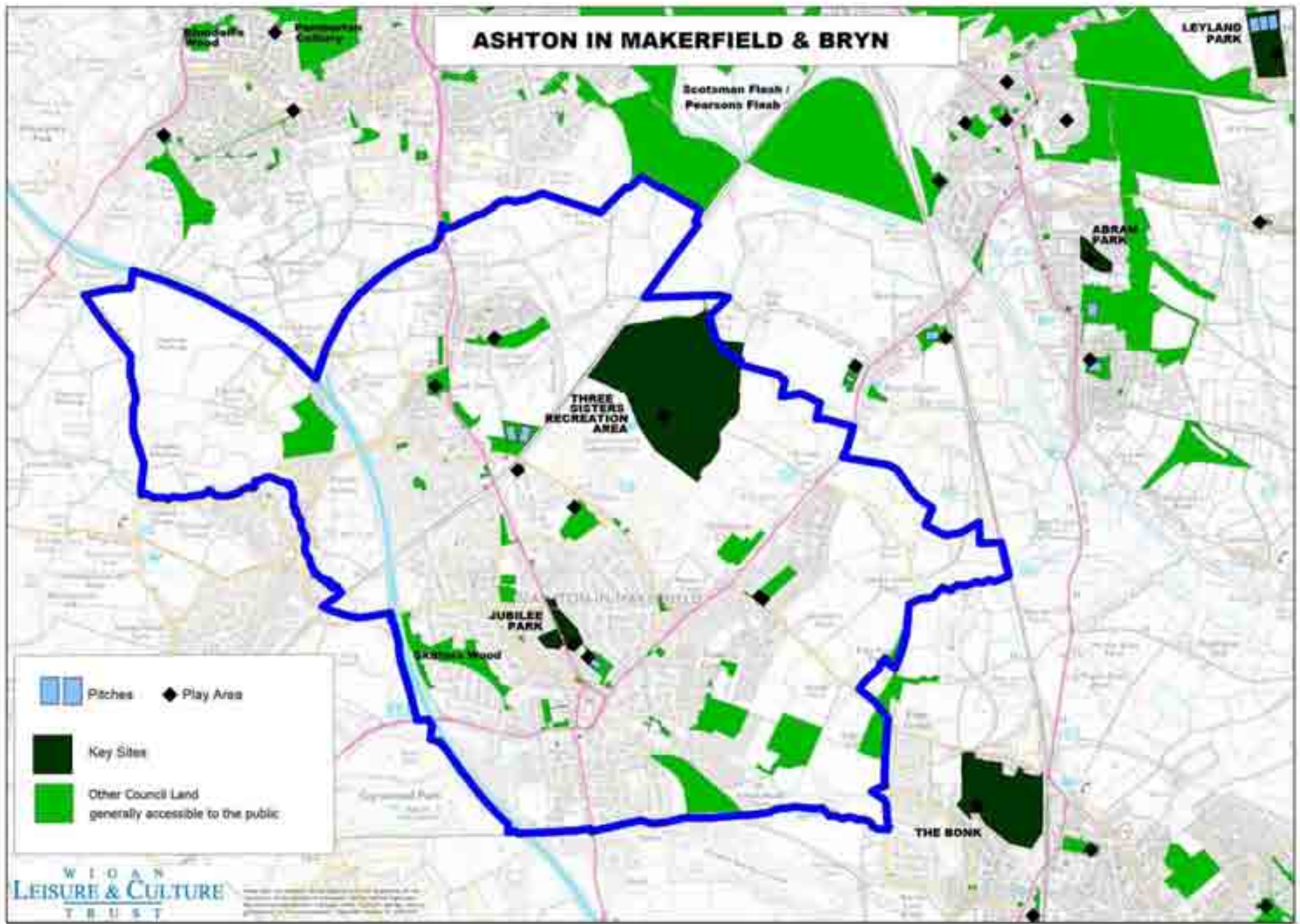
Individual Township Plans showing:

- Principal & Township Parks
- Other Council Green Spaces
- Sport Pitches and Play Areas

## Wigan Borough's Townships Key Sites & Catchment Areas



# ASHTON IN MAKERFIELD & BRYN

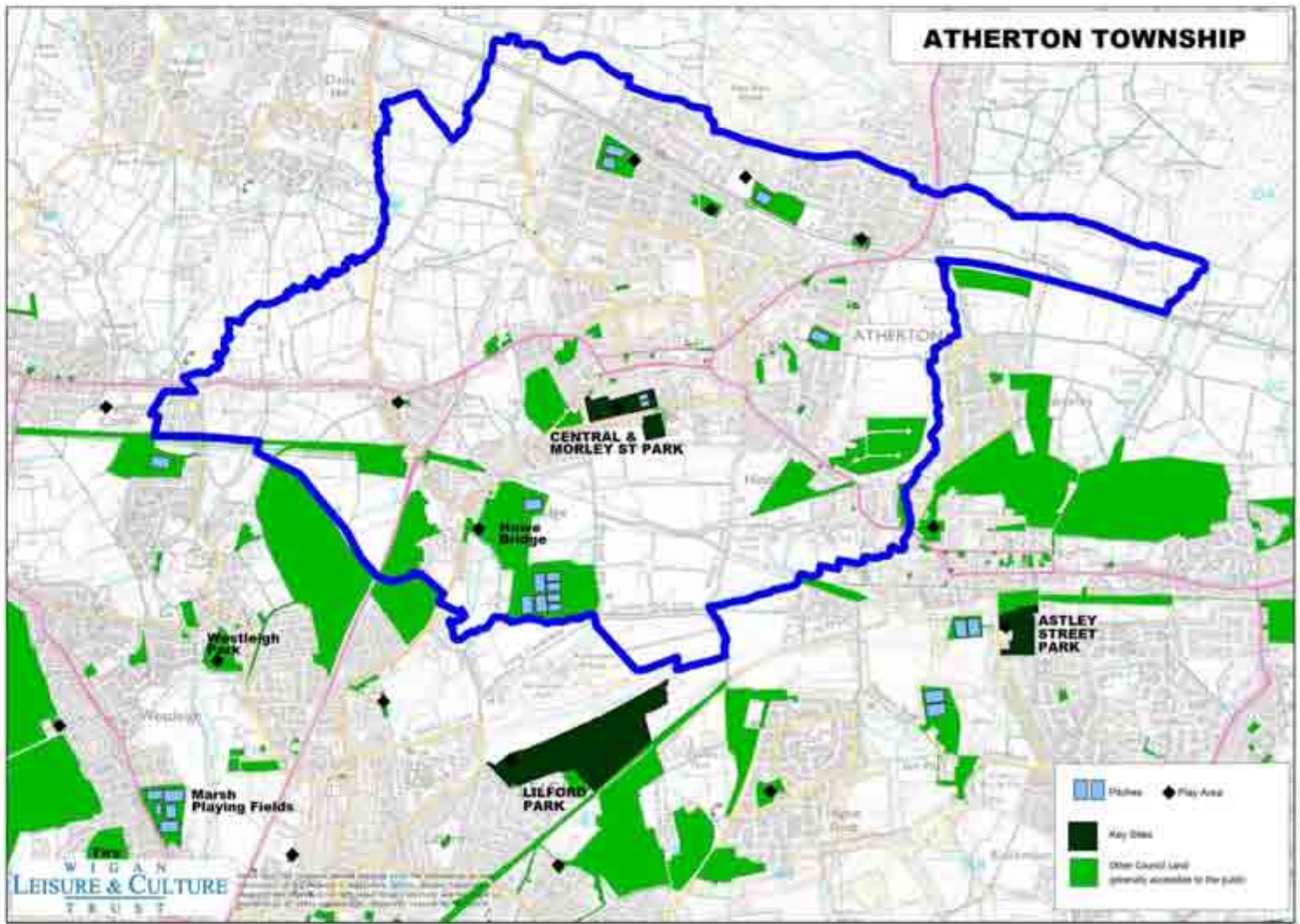


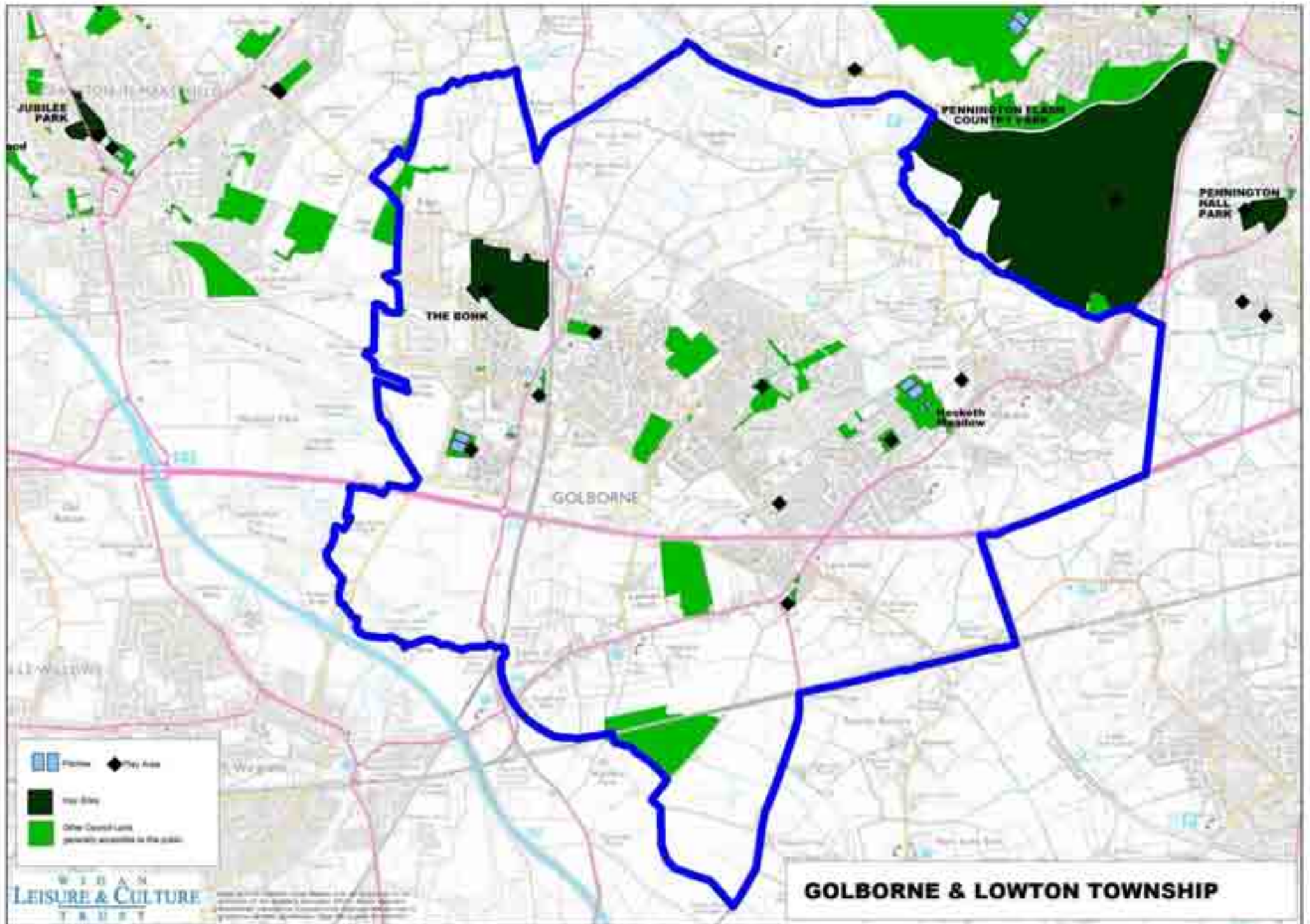
 Pitches     Play Area

 Key Sites

 Other Council Land generally accessible to the public

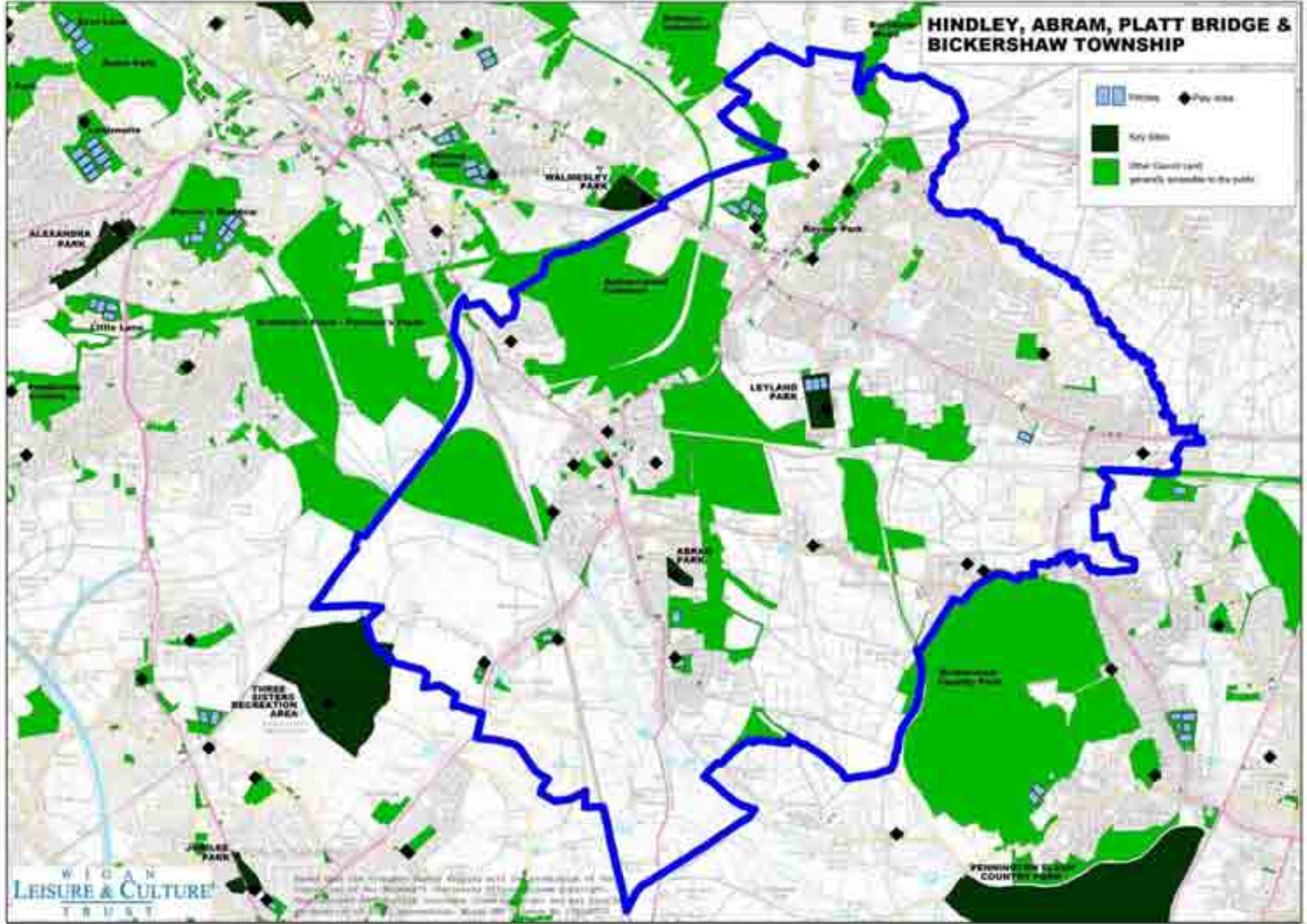
# ATHERTON TOWNSHIP



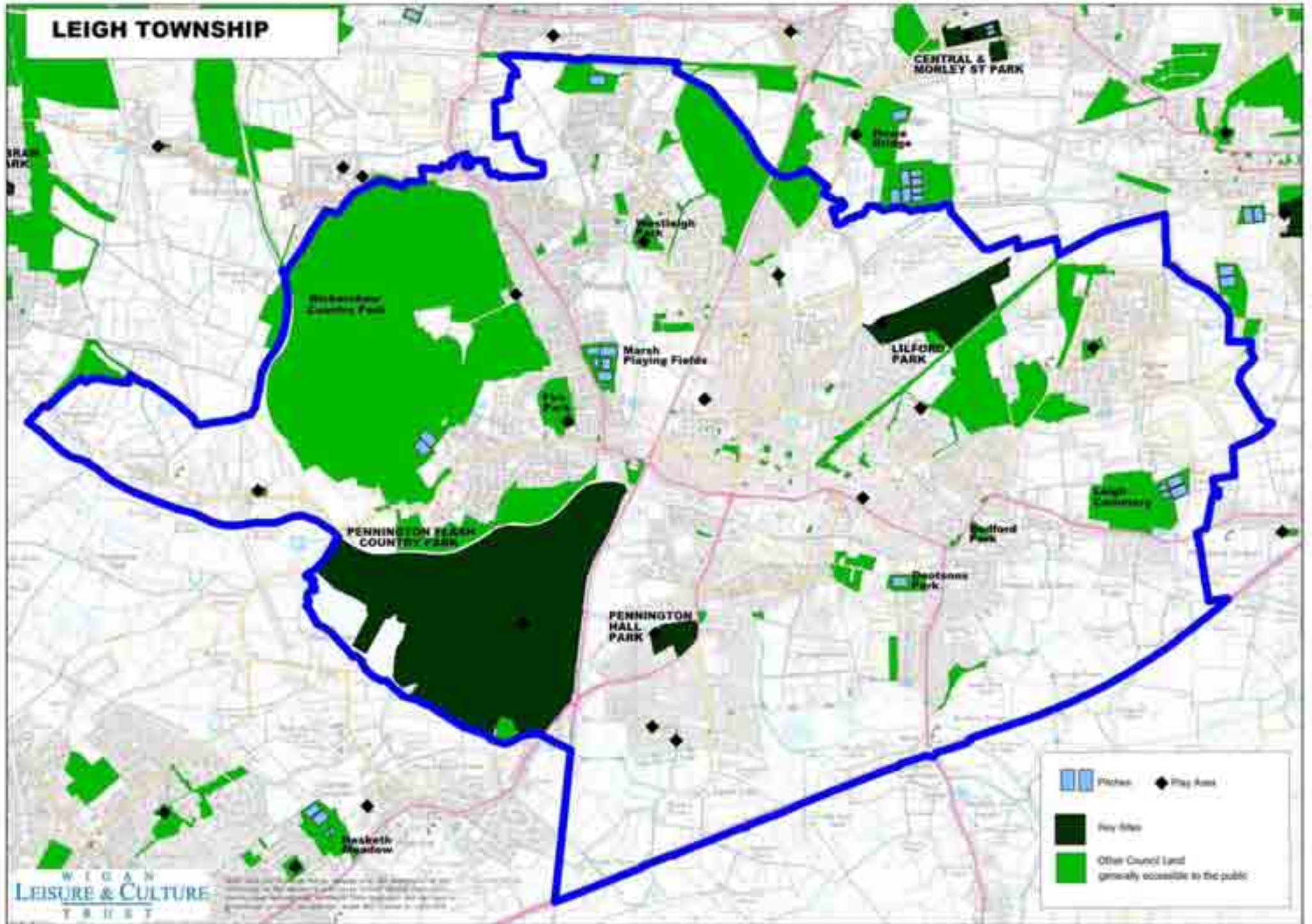


# HINDLEY, ABRAM, PLATT BRIDGE & BICKERSHAW TOWNSHIP

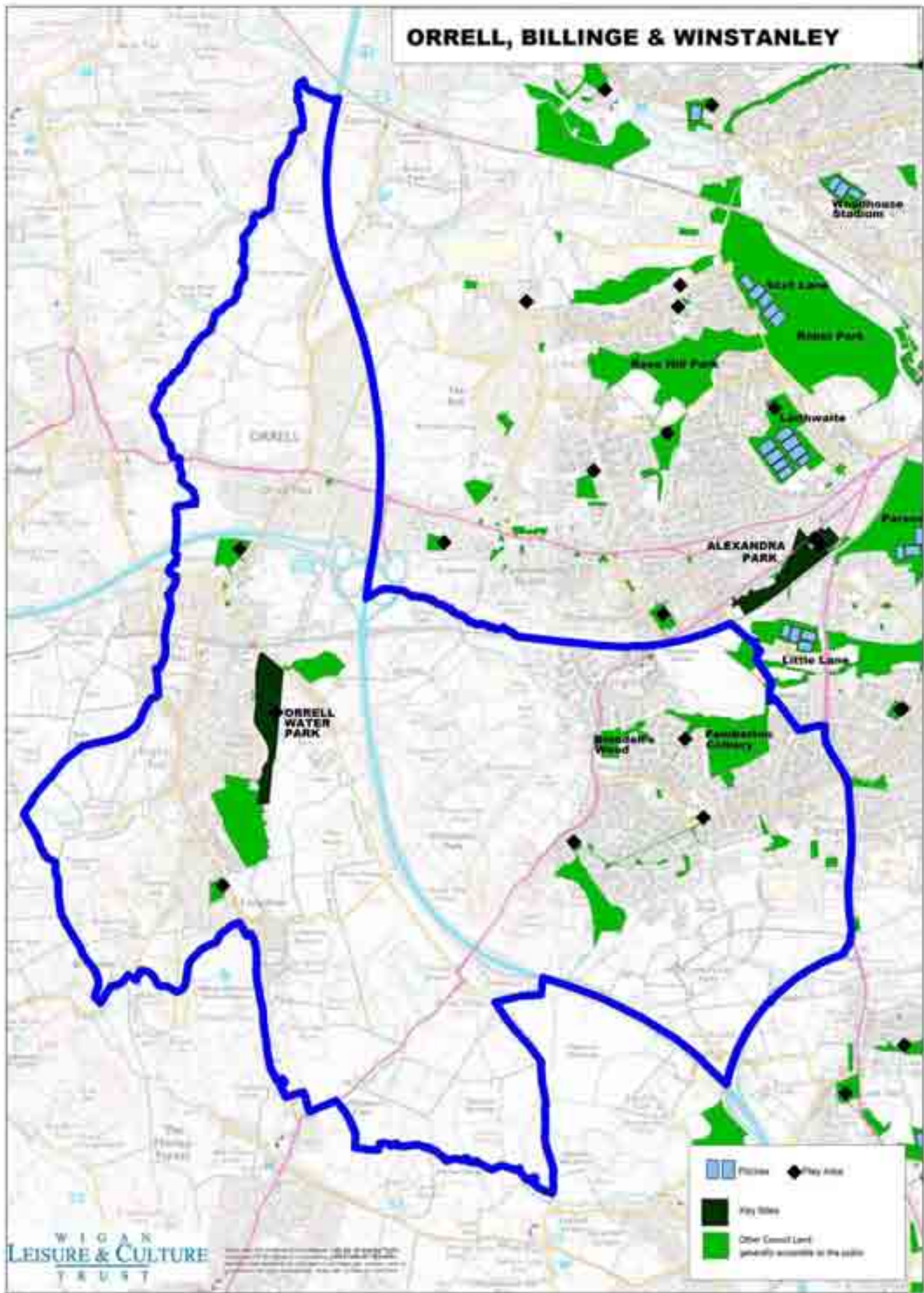
- Sites
- Key sites
- Other land use generally accessible to the public



# LEIGH TOWNSHIP



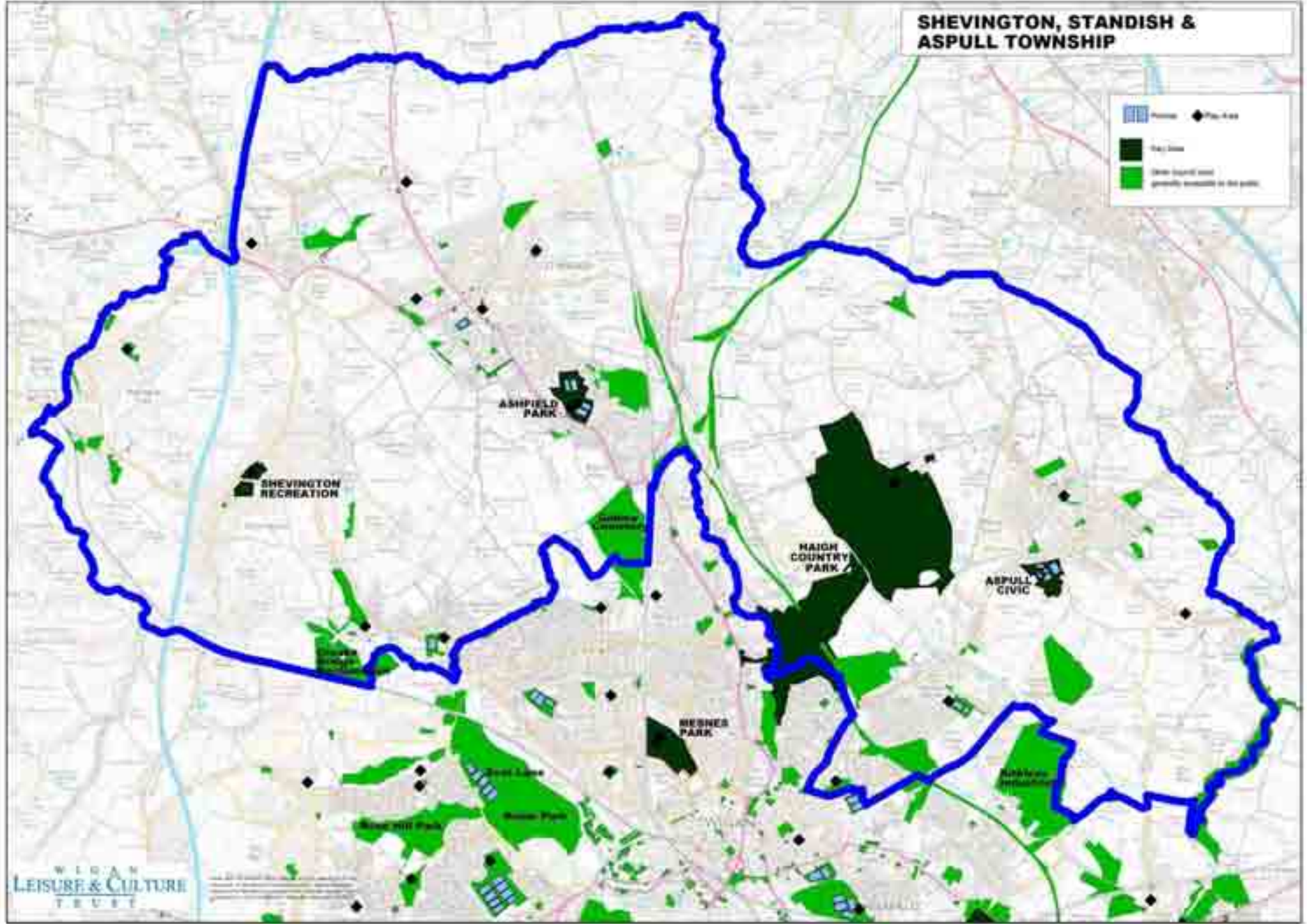
# ORRELL, BILLINGE & WINSTANLEY



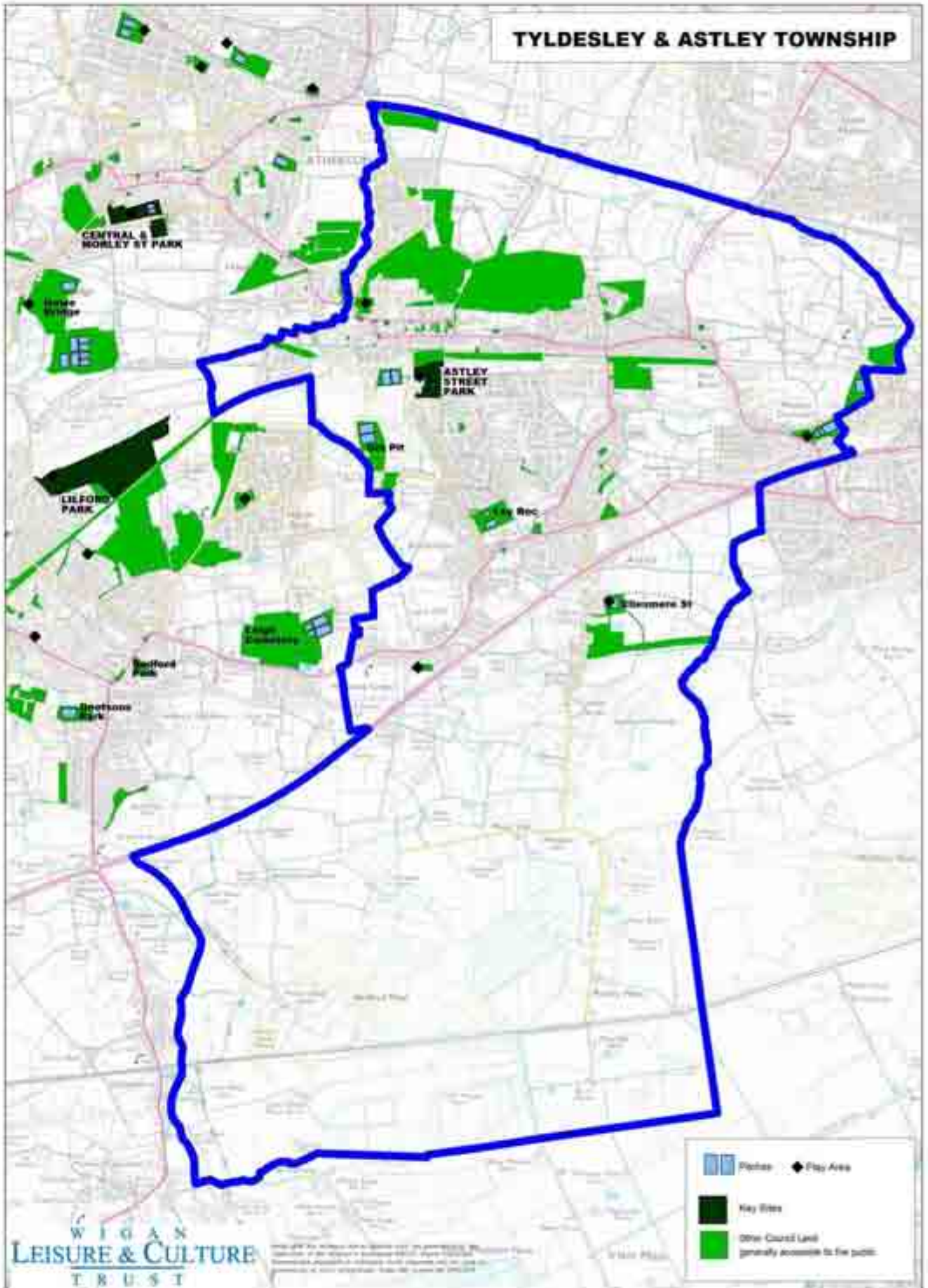
	Playing Fields		Play Areas
	Play Sites		
	Other Council Land generally accessible to the public		

# SHEVINGTON, STANDISH & ASPULL TOWNSHIP

- Blue hatched box: Tennis
- Black diamond: Play Area
- Dark green box: Play Zone
- Light green box: Other Special Land generally available to the public



# TYLDESLEY & ASTLEY TOWNSHIP



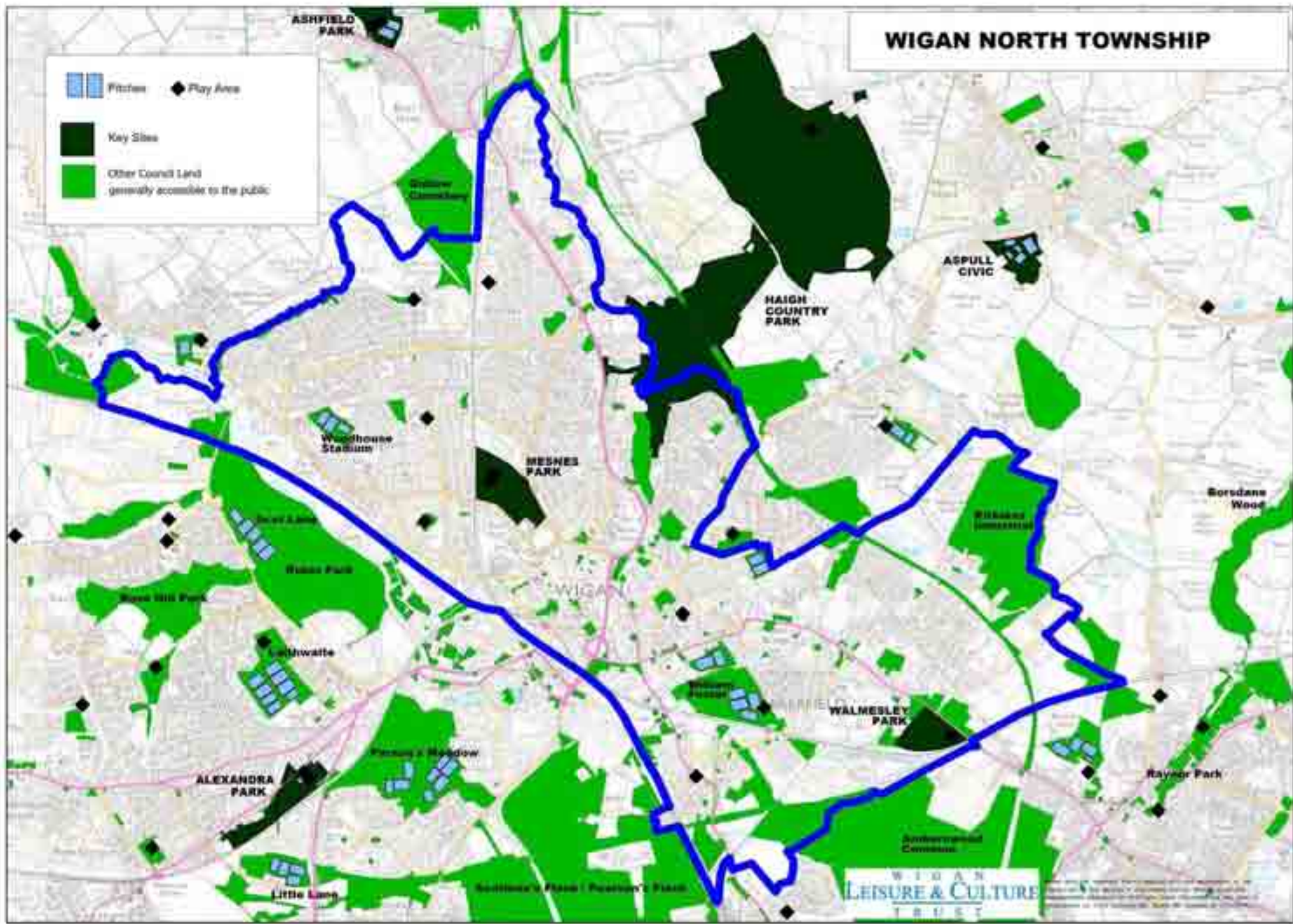
	Pitches		Play Area
	Key Sites		
	Other Council Land generally accessible to the public		

# WIGAN NORTH TOWNSHIP

 Pitches     Play Area

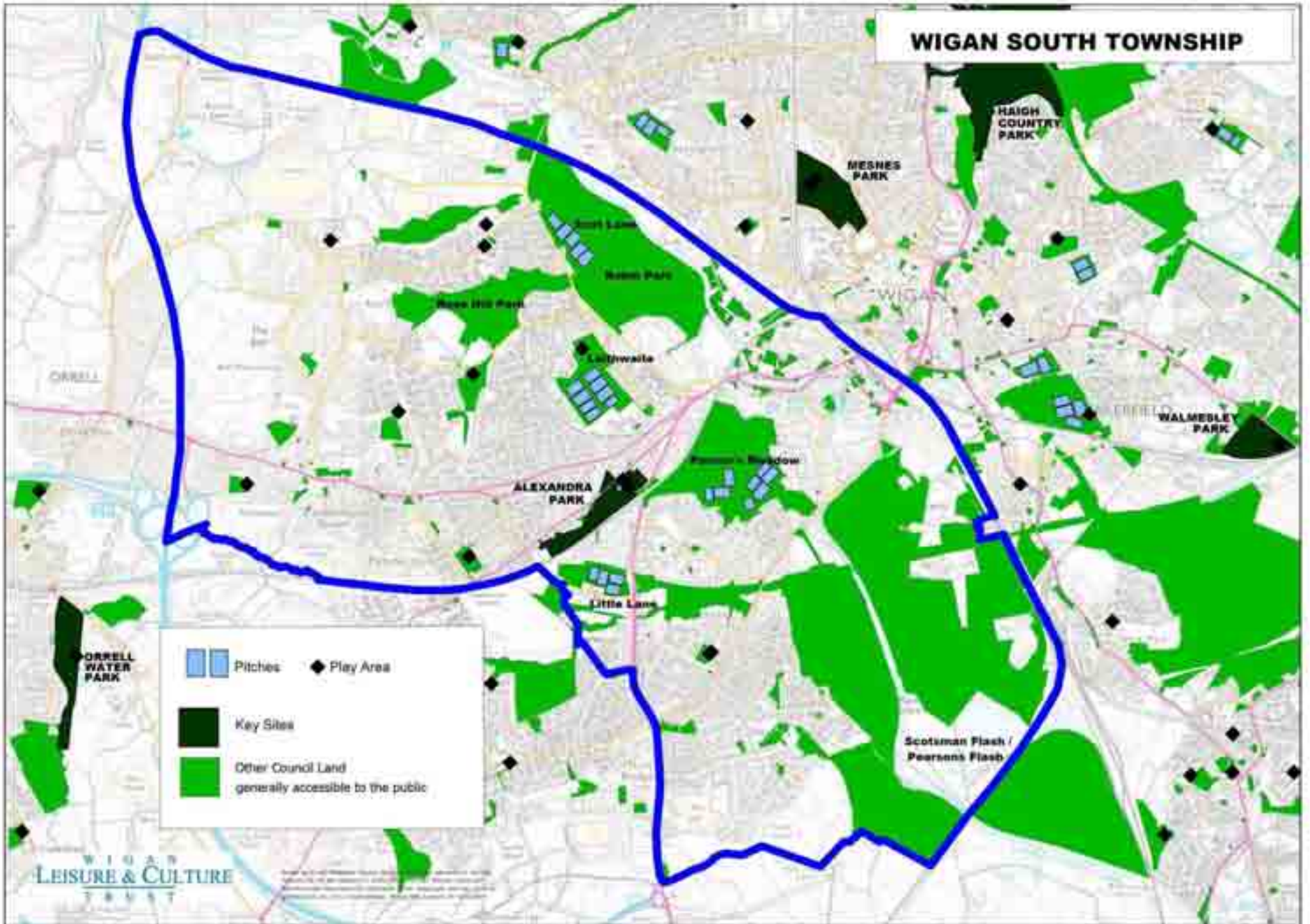
 Key Sites

 Other Council Land generally accessible to the public



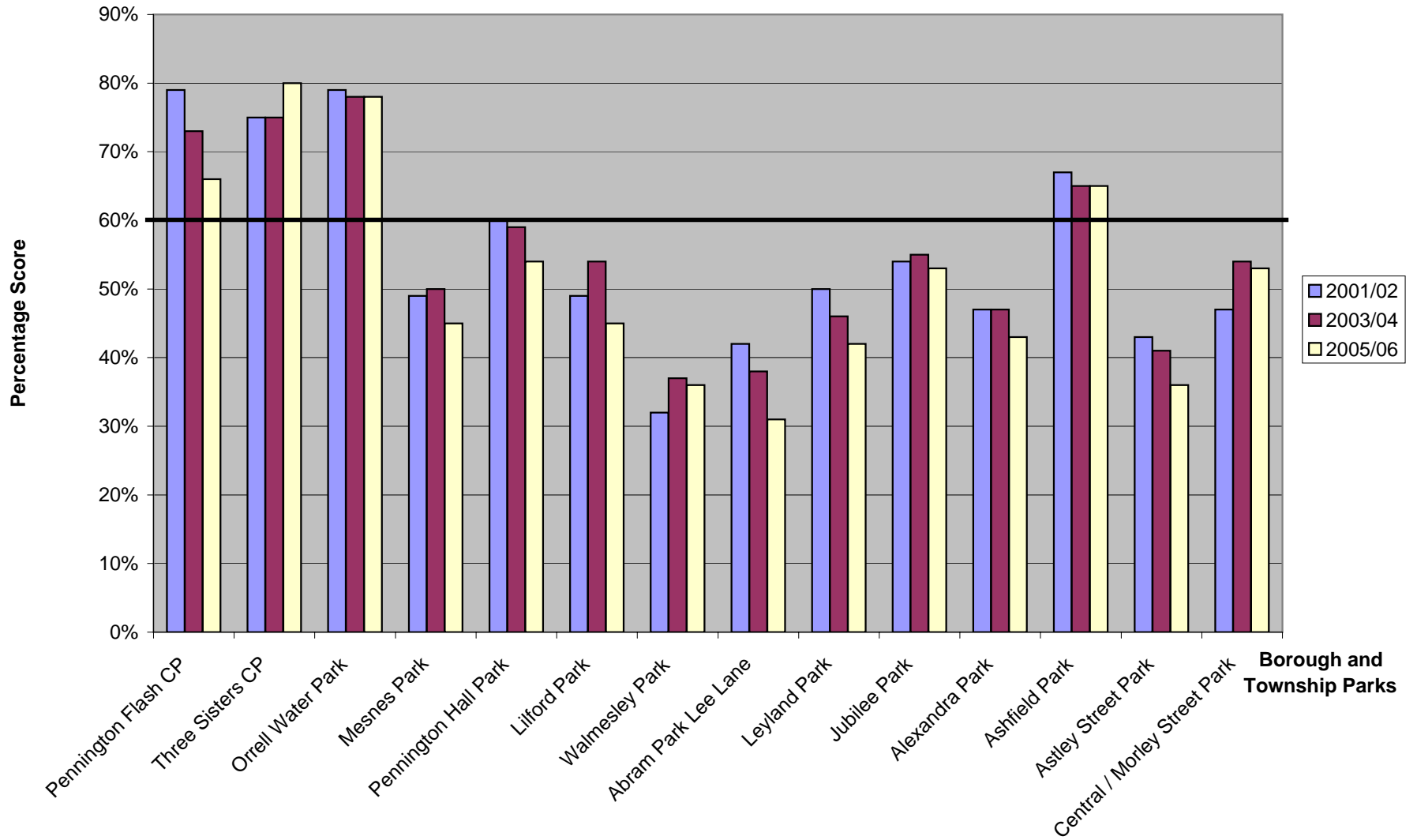
WIGAN  
LEISURE & CULTURE  
TRUST

# WIGAN SOUTH TOWNSHIP



Principal and Township Parks - Suitability and Sufficiency Review

(Note - excludes Haigh; Goldborne Park, Aspull Civic and Shevington Park - An explanation of the methodology is attached overleaf)



## **CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING RESULTS – AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

There is a requirement for all local authorities to prepare a Corporate Asset Management Plan that enables the strategic allocation of funds, improves property management and fulfils best value requirements, in relation to the effective and efficient use of buildings. This process and methodology has been used to conduct an analysis of the leisure and cultural service's building portfolio.

The plan includes suitability (fit for purpose) and sufficiency (capacity) assessments/scores for each of the assets. This evaluation process has been taken a stage further by including 'quality' assessment/score in relation to identified service provider requirements.

The process details/methodology and findings are provided hereunder (NB: it should be acknowledged that the primary focus of the plan has been Active Life Services and Libraries, which together account for the majority of the leisure building stock).

### **Process details/methodology**

- Key criteria for quality issues were drawn together from national guidelines and discussions with service areas.
- A core range of criteria, including issues such as access, disabled provision and health and safety were applied to all service areas.
- The assessment process can be cross-referenced with industry guidelines, more specifically, the Building Quality Assessment. The BQA system is an identifiable measure of initial quality for the whole building and covers nine key issues, all of which were covered in the departmental assessment process.
- Matrices for the weighting, key issues and scoring of issues were drawn up and a service area representative and member of the departmental asset management team scored all facilities.
- All results were crosschecked for consistency and tabulated across service areas and the department.
- Key issues strengths and weaknesses were summarised for each service area.
- Year 1 and Year 2 corporate asset management submissions for the Leisure & Cultural Services Department were based on the above work.

Individual scores were correlated to the corporate grading system, as shown below: -

<b>Grade D – badly unsuitable and insufficient</b>	<b>0 – 10%</b>
<b>Grade C – poor, with limited potential to improve</b>	<b>10 – 40%</b>
<b>Grade B – to a minimum standard and/or potential to improve</b>	<b>40 – 60%</b>
<b>Grade B – satisfactory standard and/or potential to improve</b>	<b>60 – 80%</b>
<b>Grade A – well suited and sufficient</b>	<b>80 – 100%</b>

The Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust has established a 'departmental standard' that all facilities should aspire to achieve. The level has been set at: **Grade B – satisfactory standard and/or potential to improve – 60%**

## Priority Scores for Green Flag Development

## Appendix J

Site name	Township	Where the site sits in the Township Priority	The strength of local structured community support	The likely availability of capital / grants etc	The potential for Green Flag (ie the size of the gap)	Priority Score at April 2008
Mesnes Park	Wigan North	2	3	3	3	11
Pennington Flash Country Park	Leigh	1	2	3	3	9
Haigh Hall Country Park	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	1	0	1	1	3
Alexandra Park	Wigan South	2	1	3	3	9
Pennington Hall Park	Leigh	2	1	1	3	7
Jubilee Park	Ashton & Bryn	1	1	2	3	7
Astley Street Park	Tyldesley & Astley	2	1	2	2	7
Three Sisters Recreation Area	Ashton & Bryn	1	2	2	2	7
Lilford Park	Leigh	2	1	1	2	6
Orrell Water Park	Orrell, Billinge & Winstanley	2	1	2	2	7
Central Park / Morley Street Park	Atherton	2	1	1	2	6
Abram Park (Lee Lane)	Hindley & Abram	1	1	2	2	6
Ashfield Park	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	1	1	2	2	6
Leyland Park	Hindley & Abram	1	0	1	1	3
Walmesley Park	Wigan North	1	0	1	2	4
Aspull Civic	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	1	1	2	2	6
Golborne Bonk	Golborne & Lowton	2	2	2	0	6
Shevington Park*	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	1	1	2	0	4

**Planned Maintenance (A); Responsive Maintenance (B);  
Total Maintenance (C); Estimated Capital Investment Required (D)  
Forecast Total Grounds Maintenance Cost (E)**

**Appendix K**

Site name	Township	Routine Planned Maintenance Provision 2008/09  <b>A</b>	Cost of Responsive Maintenance 2007/08  <b>B</b>	Total Annual Maintenance cost  <b>C(A+B)</b>	Estimated capital investment required  <b>D</b>	Forecast total grounds maintenance cost following Development  <b>E (C x 1.3)</b>
Mesnes Park	Wigan North	£122,178	£12,671	£134,849	£6,500,000	£175,304
Pennington Flash Country Park	Leigh	£15,839	£22,118	£37,957	£3,500,000	£49,344
Haigh Hall Country Park	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	£68,816	£41,913	£110,728	£4,500,000	£143,947
Alexandra Park	Wigan South	£34,422	£8,962	£43,383	£700,000	£56,398
Pennington Hall Park	Leigh	£67,420	£12,606	£80,026	£500,000	£104,033
Jubilee Park	Ashton & Bryn	£48,580	£4,916	£53,496	£800,000	£69,545
Astley Street Park	Tyldesley & Astley	£10,367	£3,148	£13,515	£500,000	£17,570
Three Sisters Recreation Area	Ashton & Bryn	£8,558	£380	£8,938	£1,000,000	£11,620
Lilford Park	Leigh	£33,816	£1,069	£34,885	£800,000	£45,351
Orrell Water Park	Orrell, Billinge & Winstanley	£4,223	£1,241	£5,464	£500,000	£7,103
Central Park / Morley Street Park	Atherton	£34,804	£7,511	£42,315	£300,000	£55,010
Abram Park (Lee Lane)	Hindley & Abram	£10,651	£5,639	£16,290	£300,000	£21,177
Ashfield Park	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	£19,858	£7,168	£27,026	£800,000	£35,134
Leyland Park	Hindley & Abram	£35,977	£6,908	£42,885	£600,000	£55,750
Walmesley Park	Wigan North	£20,544	£2,065	£22,609	£100,000	£29,391
Aspull Civic	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	£32,521	£18,560	£51,080	£200,000	£66,405
Golborne Bonk	Golborne & Lowton	£13,488		£13,488	£500,000	£17,535
Shevington Park*	Standish, Shevington & Aspull	£1,123		£1,123		£1,460

\* Mainly maintained by Parish Council

£583,184	£156,874	£740,058	£22,100,000	£962,075
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**INDICATIVE TIMESCALE FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND TOWNSHIP PARKS**

**APPENDIX L**

<b>PARK (Principal /Township)</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Mesnes</b>	Finalise Bid Capital scheme	Major Capital works	Major Capital works	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance
<b>Pennington Flash</b>	Maintain <i>status quo</i>	Options/funding Appraisal	Improvement works?										
<b>Haigh</b>	Options/funding Appraisal	Options/funding Appraisal	Improvement works?										
Alexandra	Improvement works	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance
Pennington Hall	Improvement works	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance	Enhanced maintenance
Jubilee	Development Planning	Improvements as funding allows											
Astley Street	Development Planning	Improvements as funding allows											
Three Sisters	Development Planning	Improvements to visitor centre											
Lilford	Development Planning	Improvements as funding allows											
Orrell Water Park	Support the Friends Group	Support the Friends Group											
Central	Maintain <i>status quo</i>												
Abram	Maintain <i>status quo</i>												
Ashfield	Maintain <i>status quo</i>												
Leyland	Maintain <i>status quo</i>												
Walmsley	Maintain <i>status quo</i>												
Aspull	Maintain <i>status quo</i>												
Golborne Bonk	Explore options with the Council												
Shevington	Parish Council site												

<b>Key</b>			
Maintain <i>status quo</i>	Major works in progress	Significant physical / development work in progress	Some physical / development work in progress