



people spaces places



Cheltenham Stakeholder Survey Analysis Report v3

in association with Cheltenham Borough Council



Cheltenham Stakeholder Survey Analysis

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1. Introduction

As part of the development of a green space strategy, Cheltenham Borough Council commissioned CFP to deliver a stakeholder survey by which to ascertain the views of key stakeholders on the future of green space within the borough.

Using the Green Space Audit completed in 2007, subsequent quality audits and a large scale household survey (10,000 households) to inform the emerging strategy, the following themes were identified as the focus of the Stakeholder survey:

- Quality of green space
- Allotments
- Low quality sites
- Biodiversity

2. Methodology

A list of key stakeholders was established by Rosemary Mansbridge (Project Co-ordinator CBC) that included contacts from community groups, residents groups, environment groups, youth groups, disability groups and additionally council members and staff (see Appendix a for a full list of the stakeholder groups that were contacted). The survey was then made available online and as a printed copy. Stakeholders were either sent an email including a link to the survey or sent a hard copy of the survey to complete. The survey was also used to invite the stakeholders to a stakeholder workshop to be held on 13th May 2009 as a further opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the survey.

3. Results

Q2 Do you feel there is enough accessible green space in Cheltenham?

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	
Base	42 100.0%
Do you feel there is enough accessible green space in Che...	
Yes	23 54.8%
No	19 45.2%

Q3 Please tell us your views (for example do you think that there are certain types of space that we do not have enough of, or certain areas of the borough that are lacking in space).

1. Community Farm; there is scope for development of a community farm to include growing spaces, animal rearing, education and training 2. More junior football pitches and "impromptu" football facilities e.g. mini pitches/goals. 3. Larger parks could have better food / drink provision; more consistent better quality better located. 4. Consideration of town-wide social goals when charging for facilities such as Pittville lake. Discounted charges can reduce overall costs by encouraging use not misuse 5. Accessibility by foot and bike should be encouraged

I believe that more spaces should be allocated for the production of local food. This does not necessarily mean allotments alone but more 'supported' and 'community managed' areas too. (many people would like to grow food but need to learn how to do this and require support, and motivation sometimes). We are running a 'share and train' scheme in Cheltenham and the atmosphere and motivation is fantastic.

There should be a greater provision of football pitches suitable for under 11s and under 12s such as the junior pitches at The Beeches and Naunton Park, and also of mini soccer pitches.

True, there are areas with not as much as others but quite often the best use is not made of what is there. Or it is not well maintained by the residents/CBC.

There is need for the space that we have to be better publicised and to ensure that we preserve and maintain it for the future. It is the ever issue of finance and building needs. We are fortunate to have beautiful surroundings and a good race course all of which contribute to our environment.

There is a real lack of engaged space, i.e., space where people can engage with nature at a physical level to gain the knowledge and understanding of natural systems that will be necessary for moving towards local food production and creating resilient communities. Allotments, community gardens, wild gardens, managed biodiversity spaces where people can experience a great diversity of life, nature trails etc are really important - manicured lawns are not.

There is a shortage generally of quality grass pitches. The numbers of pitches are becoming saturated and their respective quality is declining.

Lack of playing fields.

Insufficient 'wilderness'. A continual steady erosion of the little greenspace that there is, often for admirable reasons to meet public demand, e.g. for playground, cafes, seating, parking, traffic signs, display boards, vehicle access - but all of it to the detriment of wildlife, ultimately leading to the progressive 'tarmac' of what was once a spa. Aerial photos from years back show the extent to which the erosion has occurred, exacerbated by

vehicles, increasingly parking on pavements, paved 'gardens', ruining grass verges - even allowed to park in the parks themselves on occasions such as the Music Festival. The parks department's own vehicles set the precedent by 'trespassing' on the green space. The 'public' which is never consulted are the non-human species. We wonder what they would say about Cheltenham 's decay. On the positive side, the Honeybourne Line cycle-path is a 'role model' for how to access the centre of Cheltenham in an environmentally-friendly way. If only the policy were to provide access to Cheltenham from its perimeter by such means as the spokes of a wheel meet the hub. Separate pedestrian/cycle access from vehicle access wherever possible. Why should pedestrians have the continual threat from vehicles ('lethal missiles') bearing down on their shoulders. As for cyclists, they're not properly provided for, being at the peril of the motorist or imperilling the pedestrians. They need their own lanes. Cheltenham needs to outlaw the private motor vehicle if our greenspace is to survive the 'Formula 1' mentality that takes over once you're in a driver's seat. Re Accessibility. Two observations on the failure of planning. A) The admirable Chelt Walk which joins the Honeybourne Line via the old St. James station site has quite unnecessary twists and turns with the result that pedestrians and cyclists in a hurry ignore the path and walk across the green space. Put the paths where the natural foot falls are, not at the whim of some landscape architect's romantic vision. B) Access to the Pittville Park Recreation Centre is denied to pedestrians heading there from the eastern side of the park. They're made to behave like cars and enter from the west. All because the car users fear vandalism, I suppose. In this context it is the car user that is the vandal - driving to a Recreation Centre so they can pretend to be a cyclist when they exercise inside. Finally, re Planning Permission. We have reached the point now where no plan that reduces the net amount of greenspace within the Borough should be permitted. Thus the current plan to build on the Dunalley Wildlife Garden should be refused since there would be a net loss of greenspace in consequence. The solution would be to demolish dilapidated properties and rebuild with the new requirement on the space recovered. The Portland Street to Brewery Car Park could provide some green space. All that provision for the motor car could be reduced and provide extra green space if only those car users would convert to bike or bus. Take a pot of paint and turn each car parking space into four quadrants so that the bigger the vehicle the more they pay. As it is, that huge area provides not even one bike rack. Cheltenham, in effect, advertises itself as a motor-car friendly Borough. Mr. Pitt would turn in his grave.

It has to be acknowledged that certain parts of the borough are not well enough served with green space devoted to football pitches, as not all teams that are named after parts of the town are able to play in an area that is associated with that location.

The South West of Cheltenham in particular is poorly served for publicly accessible recreation and sporting green space. The Reddings is an example of an area that it extremely poorly served in that it has undergone a large expansion in house building over the last 10 years with no provision for recreation green space.

'Space' cannot be conjured up out of no where but we can protect what we have and question why every bit of available land in the city must have bricks on it! how about even creating temporary peace gardens and quiet spaces or play areas where developments are in the waiting...

In Charlton Kings the local parish council have closed their waiting list to new applicants. My particular interest in spaces which have been bought by developers where local residents clearly have shown concern on any building plans. Is there any possibility that councils can buy these for local residents to use as allotments

The parks in Cheltenham I have seen seem well managed. The allotments are very well managed and are a credit to council and the staff that work in them. Many of the Greenspaces seem under funded and under managed, some of the areas have started out on a three year funding plan and are now forgotten areas unloved and undervalued.

There are plenty of parks, but what about allotments? I've been on a waiting list for almost two years now, and I have friends who have been on the list for even longer! If there is so much demand, can't you dedicate more space to allotments?

Leckhampton SCT covers Leckhampton, Tivoli, Hatherley, Reddings, Benhall and Charlton Kings. In these areas we have a number of open spaces and being on the outskirts of the town, travelling to larger parks etc is easy.

Making spaces in urban areas more informal might send the wrong message to some users that the area need not be treated with respect. An area better for wildlife might appear uncared for and attract litter and misuse. This should be taken into consideration if planning any changes.

We need several Community Farms and Community Allotments in order to feed the local population over the next few decades. Since you say in your introduction to this survey that in some areas the waiting list for allotments is up to 7 years and I understand that the Council has a duty to keep up with the demand for allotment space in its locality, please can you tell me what plans you have to rectify this situation given the serious resource depletion issue of Peak Oil that we are currently experiencing?

Cheltenham does not have enough space to grow our food. This is very serious. According to petrol company insiders we are likely to hit peak oil by the end of this decade. Peak Oil will usher in a recession that will make the credit crunch look like a walk in Pitville Park – unless we all plan for it. Or put another way that isn't simply my opinion: A report published by the US Department of Energy in 2005, argued that unless the world begins a crash programme of replacements ten or twenty years before oil peaks, a crisis "unlike any yet faced by modern industrial society" is unavoidable. Industrial farming is dependent on the Haber-Bosche process which uses fossil fuels to make nitrate fertilizers, which produce nitrous oxide – a greenhouse gas 300 times more powerful than carbon dioxide. So, even if peak oil wasn't a spectre

looming in our faces, industrial agriculture is a major contributor to global warming. All fertilizers contain phosphates and we are also getting close to a Peak Phosphate situation. According to a report from 2004, entitled, 'Oil depletion: no problem, concern or crisis', 95% of all food products requires oil use. In the fuel protests of 2000, the chairman of Sainsbury's warned Tony Blair that the UK was days away from foodless supermarkets. Last summer, Lord Cameron, a farmer and first head of the Countryside Agency coined the expression: 'nine meals way from anarchy'. In his estimation it would take just nine meals or three days without food on supermarket shelves, before law and order started to break down. Our current food system invests 10 calories of fossil energy to get 1 calorie of food energy out. We import more than 40% of our food. Climate change and water depletion will impact on the ability of these countries to export food and feed themselves. Food security and food sovereignty are now fundamental for the UK and no longer the just concern of the poor majority world. In 2008, there were food riots and protests in over forty countries as global food prices have increased by 75% within the year. The price of wheat, increased by 130% in twelve months. In Asia, the price of rice doubled in just three months, leading to farmers sleeping in their fields with Kalashnikovs to ward off rice-rustlers. The World Bank has warned that 100 million more people are facing hunger and malnutrition because of rising food prices. In April 2008 the EU said that 'the era of cheap food is over'. In May 2008 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UN Food and Agricultural (FAO) forecast that food prices will remain high for a decade. Increased prices in bread, wheat and dairy products are already affecting the poor in the UK. There is not enough land in Cheltenham for the well being of animal and human life. Green spaces are very important for human well being and mental health.

Allotment lists are long and intimidating; I feel strongly that further allotment spaces and potential for wider community agriculture initiatives would be beneficial for a range of reasons, not just for food production, but also as a way of improving and maintaining green spaces for wildlife and 'quality of life' benefits. Also, surrounding the top area of the Honeybourne Line and bordering Midwinter Allotments are some areas of unused, fenced-off or neglected areas of green space - potentially biodiverse corridors or possible locations for recreational and wildlife-friendly space, or even community orchards, which would align well with green infrastructure and broader landscape conservation principles if maintained. This is just an example, as there may be similar unused green spaces / corridors in Cheltenham. I am new to the town. Some areas of Cheltenham have more trees than others (i.e. Bath Road area, Suffolks and The Park). I feel that St Pauls, for example, would benefit from more leafy trees and where possible - green space corridors. However parking and housing is often close together in this area, which may make tree planting difficult along streets. Perhaps areas of the High Street could also benefit from more greenery. It sometimes feels as though Cheltenham divides its green space features according to where the white Georgian buildings are!

Not enough activities in the parks and too little funding going into green spaces generally.

From the perspective of the area my organisation covers and the area in which I live there is a good range of green space provision.

There will never be enough open space however compared to other towns and cities I think Cheltenham does quite well. The issue is over the quality of that space and again although Cheltenham does quite well there is always room for improvement. People judge areas by the quality of their open space and I would suggest that some areas quality could be improved.

There is 'enough', but it would always be good to have more. Less 'safe' play areas, not 'dangerous' but less 'sanitised'. Children need to learn how to deal with hazards, without being exposed to excessive risk.

There is insufficient well drained sports fields in the Borough.

We needs lots more growing spaces made available to the general public.

Lack of sufficient park space Children's Play areas Informal sports play areas.

I think you could make open spaces more disabled friendly.

There could be more allotments as I believe the waiting list is high, perhaps utilising some of the green corridor spaces that are fenced-off. An example of this is near Midwinter Allotments (where our allotment is based) and the Honeybourne Line where there are some areas of green space that are not accessible or left to scrub. Some of the paths around this area could be tidied and maintained for cyclists and dog walkers, as there are many brambles here. St Pauls and perhaps other areas (I am new to Cheltenham) would benefit from more green space features incorporated into the streets and residential areas, such as more trees planted. However this area is heavily compacted with parking and houses, so this may be difficult and may require research into how to make the most of smaller areas and what to plant. Permaculture techniques may offer interesting ideas here.

We have insufficient allotment areas, but if we were to increase this facility research would have to be carried out to position the allotments in areas in which a demand is clearly established. Children Play areas are also in short supply, e. g. some users of Pittville Play area tell me they have driven from Benhall, so the inference is that the facility in Benhall is inadequate, compared to Pittville Park.

Quiet gardens - places specifically designed for people to sit, reflect and enjoy - the one behind the town hall is an example but in notice it is mostly closed Open spaces and parks that promote and highlight the natural world we live in Jungle size adventure playground(s)for children of all ages to enjoy. We do not have any in Cheltenham!

My own ward, Fairview, is distinctly lacking in green space. I'm sure there are plenty of other areas in the town in the same state.

WE ARE CONCERNED TO STOP LARGE-SCALE, INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT ON THE ATTRACTIVE GREEN FIELDS IN AND AROUND LECKHAMPTON. WE DO NOT TAKE A VIEW ON THE REST OF CHELTENHAM, EXCEPT THAT WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY TOWN AS LARGE AS CHELTENHAM SHOULD BE CLOSE TO OR CONTAIN ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACE WITH A TRUE "COUNTRYSIDE FEEL". WE BELIEVE THAT THE LAND FORMERLY KNOWN AS "THE WHITE LAND AT LECKHAMPTON" DOES PROVIDE THIS FACILITY FOR CHELTENHAM RESIDENTS, AND THE FACT THAT IT IS SO EASILY ACCESSIBLE FROM THE TOWN CENTRE MAKES IT BOTH MORE VALUABLE AS AN OPEN-SPACE FACILITY AND MORE VULNERABLE TO DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE. WE BELIEVE THE VALUE OF THIS LAND AS "COUNTRYSIDE GREEN SPACE" WILL INCREASE AS CHELTENHAM GROWS AND SHOULD BE PRESERVED FOR POSTERITY AS WELL AS FOR TODAY. ALTHOUGH LECKHAMPTON HILL ALSO PROVIDES SUCH OPEN COUNTRYSIDE SPACE CLOSE TO CHELTENHAM SHOULD ALSO MOST CERTAINLY BE PRESERVED AS IT IS,BUT IT IS ONLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE FAIRLY FIT, SO THE RELATIVELY FLAT NATURE OF "THE WHITE LAND" MAKES IT AN IMPORTANT COMPLEMENTARY RECREATIONAL FACILITY TO THE MORE RUGGED LECKHAMPTON HILL. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT GIVEN THE PROTECTION OF "COUNTRY PARK" STATUS.

AS A COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER WORKING IN WHADDON, ST PAULS AND PRESTBURY I BELIEVE WE ARE EXTREMELY PRIVILEGED TO HAVE GREEN AREAS WHICH ARE WELL MAINTAINED AND ACCESSABLE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.I WOULD HOWEVER, LIKE TO SEE MORE SPORTS FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.I HAVE RECENTLY HAD A MULTI USE GAMES AREA ERECTED IN CLYDE CRESCENT AND I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT IT IS EXTREMELY WELL USED BY ALL AGES; IN AN AGE WHEN HEALTHY LIFESTYLES ARE TO BE PROMOTED I FIRMLY BELIEVE THESE FACILITIES ARE INVALUABLE. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE LAND GIVEN OVER TO THE COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY GARDENS.I HAVE SUCH A PROJECT RUNNING IN ST PAULS AT THE MOMENT.IT HAS PROMOTED COHESION WITHIN DIFFERENT FACTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY AND HAS HELPED TO PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING TO A SOCIALLY DEPRIVED AREA.

Most park space is large areas of grass or play equipment. I'd like to see more wooded areas, these provide shade in summer and places for varied children's play, they also provide for wildlife. How about wooded areas with play equipment, such as balancing beams, a platform, etc... I see from the survey that the areas if Parks and St. Pauls are very lacking in green space, this should be improved, but all children need much more green space than they get these days.

Not enough accessible wheelchair friendly areas.

Cheltenham seems to me to be well served with green space in all areas of the town.

Our Borough does not have anything like enough allotment sites/plots to help satisfy the very high demand. The hundreds on the waiting list will have to wait many years before they obtain a plot. Besides providing fresh, tasty vegetables, having an allotment is a very healthy occupation; helps care for our environment; brings people together which helps build and develop communities and gives people a keen sense of pride and wellbeing.

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We represent the area originally known as "South Town" encompassing the Bath Road shopping district, The Suffolks and Tivoli. This area is bordered by green spaces such as Naunton Park, Hatherley Park and Montpellier Gardens but has none of its own. The nearest equivalent is the Exmouth Arms garden and the large Bath Road car park.

I have viewed maps and Google Earth and believe there are sufficient areas available although I must admit I only have personal experience of a few of those sights. It is my personal belief that a lot more facilities could be provided within those space provided but I am a realist and do realise that these items are a greater attraction to the vandals than the potential customers.

There needs to be green space that links all parts of the town with the centre and in particular that links the north and south through the town centre. Currently the north of the town is cut off from Pittville Lawn to the High Street. Walking and cycling paths, separated from roads need to be more available to more parts of the town.

"Garden" grabbing threatens the availability of green space as does the use of hard landscaping in front gardens. We do not support the paving over of existing green spaces and would oppose such ideas as paving the Long Gardens in the Promenade as some have proposed.

Q4 Should the council be concerned about setting standards for quantity of space (i.e. a set target of the amount of space per 1000 head of population) or is quality (i.e. what standards the spaces should be managed to) and accessibility (i.e. that everyone should have something with a set walking distance of their home) more important? What are your views?

The Council needs to be concerned about all factors, standards, quality, and accessibility. There needs to be green space where children can play safely and where people are encouraged to walk and where the community can take pride and responsibility

The quality of existing spaces is essential to promote best usage. Facilities should be diverse and attractive to all age groups. Emphasis should be placed on improving facilities in areas of multiple deprivation. Spaces should only be lost to other development if appropriate replacements can be found.

There is a recommended amount 'in environmental/sustainability terms'. I will check this.

People are more mobile these days and can find green space not too far away.

Yes the Council be aware of Green Space availability. Once space established then it should be properly monitored and cared for. Do not think you have to go as far as measuring the distance people have to walk.

Not quantity but quality. ideally everyone should be able to walk but that is not really feasible. nicer walks, e.g. more trees in some streets would make the walk more appealing.

People can travel if they wish to the larger sites but there is need to provide space, play/relaxation areas in all developments.

The most important is creating high quality space - space where people can engage (see above) and biodiversity areas linked into corridors. Access is important too but should be measured in terms of local schemes (e.g., wild gardens) available, not whether there's a patch of green grass. So quality first and then, importantly, increasing the quantity of high quality space.

Quantity and quality are equally important. If there is enough quantity, then all can play an appropriate number of games on the pitches and their quality will not be diminished by overuse. However, if there are a limited number of pitches that are overused, then they must be kept at a good enough quality to allow a large number of games on them.

Open Spaces need to be owned and managed by the Local Authority. Dependence on Private Open Space is risky.

Quantity and quality are paramount. As for accessibility, consider how the non-human population would respond - the fewer human beings, the better. Quality requires wilderness. Incidentally, the Honeyboure Line beyond the Recreation Centre, heading to the Racecourse, is a real treasure, unknown to most inhabitants. It needs to remain relatively inaccessible, though maybe some day it would return to being an alternative, non-vehicular route to Bishop's Cleeve. Then where will the cuckoo go?

Quality of management is more important to the Cheltenham League. The football pitches and changing facilities provided by the Borough Council are adequate but would benefit from renovation and additional maintenance on an ongoing basis.

Just maintaining and improving the existing space is fine.

This is an absolute must.

I think the last thing any one needs is some more targets! suprised that you would even consider this unless you are after the job of creating and keeping more stats!

a) allocate to local residents to use for allotments with priority to people who live closest to these plots b) sharers to show dedication on applying for space b) the users allocated such precious places have to maintain standards by productivity and house keeping standards and with an option to be voted out if proven not to follow a good code of conduct.

More and more areas will be needed in this recession. Communities need good quality Greenspace for their recreation, health, wellbeing and education. Global warming makes high quality Greenspaces vital for Cheltenham's sustainability.

Accessibility is the most important.

It is important that everyone should be able to walk to a green space, to encourage their usage.

Accessibility is of prime importance.

Quality of soil is important for growing food and it is important that every citizen of Cheltenham has some land within walking distance of their residence where they can participate in a food growing project, either communal or individual.

Overall your audit 'found that Cheltenham Borough had 3.1 hectares of accessible green space per 1000 population. This space was not evenly distributed and there were some electoral wards which had as little as 0.07 hectares and others with over 16 hectares. Ward'. This sounds like perilously little. The audit needs to calculate how much green space is required to feed Cheltenham. There are also other issues that our land must satisfy this century in a globally warmed world that has past the topping point of peak oil.

All biodiverse ecosystems must be protected and as many ecosystems as possible must be restored. Oil amongst other things helps clothe us, feed us, provide plastics and powers and heat our homes. We must not try and replace these uses with land. The photosynthesis of one year can not hope to replace the millions of years it took to form fossil fuels. We must not make the same mistake of biofuels that have increased global warming rather than reducing it. There is not enough land to heat our homes. Your audit 'found that Cheltenham Borough had 3.1 hectares of accessible green space per 1000 population'. A well insulated home (many of which are not) needs a hectare of land to supply it with biomass to heat it. Biofuels, like biomass will exacerbate climate change, biodiversity loss, the food crisis and human rights abuses in the global south by displacement of crops to places like Indonesia, if we are using our land to grow wood for our homes instead of food. The council should set standards for how much green space is needed for people's well being and good mental health. The council should set standards for biodiversity and ecosystem health as ecosystem vitality helps regulate climate, water quality and quantity, mitigate floods and droughts.

My views are that quality of green space is more important - so issues such as accessibility, management standards and the general surroundings people live within may have more importance than setting specific targets per capita. However, allotments, for example have quantifiable lists of names - something which must not be ignored, but this ties in also with quality. If public consultations show a need for something then quantifying may be a useful tool. But this will only be sustainable if the spaces provided can be managed to a high standard by community groups, individuals or the council. Some areas may need higher management than others - e.g. parks and recreational spaces, but wildlife habitats and allotments will be easier to manage after establishment, especially as communities and individuals can be involved in their upkeep as a leisure activity.

I think that it is the quality not quantity of the space available that is more important. A lot of poor quality space will not be used, though fewer or smaller, accessible spaces will be.

Quality and accessibility.

The town is recognised for the quality of its parks and gardens. This is important to attract visitors to the town which in turn will help the local economy.

Quality and accessibility are the most important with quality being the biggest priority.

Trying to create new space within existing urban areas is almost impossible. The challenge is to make best of the existing asset. Space needs to relate to a wide cross section of the community and will need investment to achieve that. In terms of new development then requiring a certain amount of open space should be straight forward.

The quality and design are more important than the distance, although all communities need to have access to a range of facilities.

The prevalence of clay within the Borough means that it is not suitable for the playing of games due to water logging or cracking in dry weather. Thus it is more important for developers to provide suitable fields for sports use rather than large areas of grass though this ought to be combined with providing a network of routes away from vehicular traffic. Other areas could be planted up with trees.

Quantity standards relative to demand, such as "Land will be bought up/land (e.g. parks, playing fields, grass verges) turned over to growing whilst there is a waiting list of more than 100 in total waiting for an allotment in Cheltenham". Ideally every one should have access to growing land within walking/cycling distance.

Both are important but with a set walking distance should be a priority.

It is more important to have open space close to your home than every one can use them.

I think quality is more important than quantity. For example creating new allotment space should consider the quality of space individuals are given (not just dealing with large waiting lists) - to allow for families and small groups to share space, as well as individuals and use it recreationally to cook and socialise especially in areas where gardens are small. Adequate productivity and good quality space over fitting as many plots in as possible is important in my view, especially when there are unused green spaces around.

Accessibility is also important - smaller pockets of green space (not just large parks), cycle tracks and green corridors or wildlife habitats that form part of a connected landscape across urban fringe would be more coherent. This would also allow more people access to the quality of life benefits greener surroundings provide, not just when they specifically want to visit a park - but all the time. Educating people about how they can make more from their own gardens and green space is also important. Community farms or orchards can serve to coordinate workshops and activities.

I do believe that minimum standards should be agreed and laid down for quality, i. e. parameters should be set and where these cannot be attained then to the nearest degree and/or a plan to achieve a set parameter at some future date. Parking arrangements should be adequate to allow for reasonable distances to be taken and prams and pushchairs unloaded.

Yes, standards for quantity and quality are important and need to be set in order to protect the green spaces of the town to ensure a good quality of life for people living and/or working here. These standards could be used to control housing and business development, perhaps promoting the town as a GREEN TOWN. And if no such GREEN TOWNS exist then maybe Cheltenham could become the first!

Set walking distance is probably the most practical, but I don't have strong views.

QUALITY RATHER THAN QUANTITY IN MY OPINION,BY PROVIDING WELL MAINTAINED,WELL RESOURCED FACILITIES FOR ALL TO USE. I think the green space needs to be close to home so people don't feel the need to drive to it, and it should be of adequate quality such that it gets used. I'd like to see wilder areas with trees and shrubs that provide more interest than large expanses of grass, these would require less management.

Yes particularly when you have a high percentage of disabled residences and students within this catchment area.

It is quality of space rather than quantity that is lacking.

Yes, our council must be concerned about providing the allotment land / space to help satisfy the high demand for allotment plots, for the reasons given above. The numbers on the waiting list should help you to calculate the space currently required. Whilst it is ideal to be able to walk to your plot it is not an essential requirement. Many people are happy to make the short journey to their plots. The quality of the space should be considered but is not a key element. Space and workable soil are the key requirements. With your help, a keen tenant will always work hard to improve his soil conditions.

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The quality of the open spaces is important. We would not advocate creating more open spaces if these could not be managed effectively and sustainably. Otherwise urban open land might seem to be derelict, detract from the general appearance of the area and attract low level crime such as graffiti or litter.

As I said in the previous paragraph my preference would be for better and more facilities within the current spaces to encourage greater use by those people who might then appreciate them. This is instead of those current typical users who are or seem to be more interested in drinking too much or making a nuisance of themselves.

Q5 How should the council address its shortfall in supply of allotments (e.g. reuse low quality, low value green space, allocate areas in parks for local food production)? What other options do you think are available?

We do not feel particularly qualified to comment on the supply of allotments except in that they provide green space and are thus part of the "garden" town. We would suggest that allotments need to be most available where there are low levels of garden space. We also suggest that developers should contribute towards the provision of allotments and green space when the density of a site exceeds certain levels.

1. Reduce allotment sizes 2. Offer taster allotments on 1/4 or 1/8 size plots to new allotment holders. 3. Invite a "grow in your neighbours garden" scheme 4.

The reuse of low quality, low value green space as well as allocating areas in parks for local food production are all great ideas. Larger spaces for community farms would be welcomed too and would be TRULY sustainable. All of the above are sensible and would make Cheltenham a fine example for other Districts. To not take advantage of our green spaces when we know that food security is going to become an issue would be a massive mistake.

No comment.

Depends whether the having an allotment is just a momentary phase, once people realise what hard work it is they may not be so keen. There may well be areas that could be used for allotments. When I was little we had a large garden full of fruit trees of various kinds and my father grew almost every kind of vegetable but it was hard work.

Use existing under used space. don't interfere with existing parks such as Pittville park. but could use west side as lots of under used space there.

There are many properties and businesses with spare land - why not encourage a system whereby those people made their 'surplus' land available to those who wish to have an allotment. There are retired people who have gardens far too large and which they can no longer maintain but they may be grateful to have someone come and do the gardening and grow some crops etc - it would provide the necessary security and for a share of the vegetables etc the owner may do some of the watering?

Allocate areas in parks, but not for allotments, instead for permaculture forest gardens managed by communities. There are lots of vacant lots and green spaces that could be turned into community gardens, e.g., by teams of unemployed people. Some pump priming via community pride projects could get people creating these spaces themselves.

Use land in the Green Belt for allotments

Demolish properties. Re-allot the Portland Street Car Park. How about roof gardens?

Reuse low quality, low value green space but not allocate areas in parks.

Provide smaller plots.

Low value greenspace should be converted to allotments. New housing developments should have a certain proportion of the site given over to allotments. Allotment land should be protected from building development.

Rental of field and farmland from private enterprise land is sometimes used to keep inappropriate crops or grow more linseed and farmers might also want to break the cycle.

Find public building where roof tops can be transformed into roof top vegetable gardens using latest technological ideas to make the roof tops waterproof and safe.

Look to other departments to make the saving allotments are too important to the local community.

Low value green space, definitely. But if you put allotments in local parks, they would have to be fenced off separately.

Using the less used green space for allotments is an excellent idea, especially if they are near residential areas. This would hopefully discourage any anti social behaviour as generally we do not get too many problems with this is existing allotments - occasionally sheds are broken into and therefore crime generated, but reports of this nature are less than reports of ASB in other green spaces.

It would be a good idea to re-use low quality, low value green space for allotments. Let's hope the soil is not too low quality. Using areas in public parks is not a desirable option. Allotments do require a certain amount of security these days.

1. Not to build on the Midwinter Allotment site; 2. Meet current demand by using all available green spaces for individual allotments and / or communal allotments; 3. Re-introduce the practice of local market gardens situated both within (using the Parks and other green spaces if necessary) on the outskirts of the town to provide ALL citizens of Cheltenham town with adequate supply of locally-grown fresh fruit and vegetables.

Since the council has a duty to keep up with demand and demand is up to a 7 year waiting list, this really is a challenge. The easiest and most obvious is not to build houses on Midwinter allotments, which given the previous sentence is beyond comprehension. I do not know what the definition of 'low quality, low value green space means' but it would seem sensible and an absolute necessity to use these for allotments as well as your suggestion of local

parks. All derelict land should either be used for allotments or returned to wilderness to encourage biodiversity. All schools should have a majority of their playing fields converted to allotments. No more out of town retail parks should be given planning permission. This land should be used for allotments. All derelict manufacturing and retail should be converted into market gardens to supply local shops and catering. The council should make both of their farms into community farms, which are affectively very big allotment s that cater for many people. Any new housing development must not be granted planning permission without land being available for allotments to cater for all families housed. It is interesting that these planning restrictions apply to car parking spaces. The council should encourage the use of green roofs and make money available to give advice and incentives so that companies know how to safely strengthen roofs to accommodate soils. The council should incentivise the conversion of landscaped lawns and car parking spaces within local business so that employers can enjoy a company allotment. The council or national government will have to do this to all car parks when Peak Oil hits us. Please see Power of Community to show how Cuba had to do this when the embargo was applied. One allotment that could be built on immediately is where Black & White bus station was. This would encourage people to use the Park and Rides. The Council should not allow any more shopping malls to be built following the financial breakdown, which is a foretaste of Peak Oil. The council should stop trying to win Cheltenham in Bloom. Growing flowers produces greenhouse gases and depletes water (& destroys biodiversity and is implicated in human rights abuse if the peat comes from Indonesia). It should use its allotment space to grow food instead of flowers, given the seriousness of the allotment shortage and the planetary crisis we face. I understand the Pitville pitch and put is contaminated. The Council should investigate how this can be rectified, so that it can be turned into allotments. Finally the Council should work with Gloucester City in line with the commitments of your Climate Change Strategy's and either close Gloucestershire Airport down and turn it into a community farm and/or market garden or greatly curtail activity so that most of the land can be used for allotments. The old railway line/cycle path, can be made into 'vertical forests' using permaculture practise. This will provide greater yields than industrial agriculture. Cheltenham is famous for its deciduous trees. It must become equally famous for planting nut trees, which are high in protein, as we must all move away from a meat diet to mitigate climate change.

All of the above seems a good idea, as long as the issue of contaminated land is taken into consideration. I definitely feel that smaller patches of green space closer to residential areas or even busy areas of work could be used for allotments. Other options may include wider scope for education and practical workshops, such as V21's Get up & Grow Scheme - to inspire more families and individuals to make better use of their own green space. Using green spaces in schools, universities, colleges and hospitals as well as encouraging public houses and restaurants to allocate land for allotments could be a worthwhile experiment. The land share idea is great - allowing individuals / landlords to advertise available green space for volunteers to manage and grow food. Community orchards could be planted in smaller spaces or alongside public path ways for individuals to help themselves to. A

few fruit trees even in corridors of green space would be productive, not quite the same as allotments but still conveying a similar message.

I don't think that areas in parks should be allocated, I think that low quality and low value green spaces should be reused.

Reuse low quality low value green space.

Garden sharing schemes. There are a lot of people who have gardens who do not care for them, particularly on some of the council housing estates. There are also older people who cannot care for their gardens who might appreciate help and some fresh produce if someone else looked after their garden. Don't dig up our parks - they are important to Cheltenham's character. Unless they are poor quality and underused as parks.

Ensuring existing allotments are used is the first step. The second is subdividing plots up as they come for renewal. Third new development should provide for allotments in the same way as POS. If that can not be done then a commuted sum should be levied. I would be concerned if POS was dug up for allotments however there are always small parcels of land that may be bought into productive use. Here section 106 money could come into play.

Where possible use urban brownfield sites for new allotments - providing that there is sufficient demand for them - rather than building infill, particularly in areas where there is a shortage of 'green space'.

Cheltenham is surrounded by Green Belt. It is a popular residential area now but it used to accommodate small holding activities. The present residents do not use the land, or have an inappropriate use such as building material store, and seem happy to have a large lawn. The Borough should attempt to acquire this surplus land and create allotments on it. This could be funded by the sale of allotments in areas where redevelopment for residential use would be easy such as Alma Road.

Buy more land; turn over park space to growing; land attached to community centres turned over to growing; grass verges/areas instead of sterile grass moved by the council at great cost turned over to growing; playing fields turned over to growing; think back to what Cheltenham did during the war for "Dig for Victory" and replicate it.

Re use low quality sites

Allotments and community farms or even community orchards may be a good way of reusing low quality green space (as long as there's no contamination of course). Smaller green spaces near residential areas could be used, not just large allotment sites. I also think planting fruit trees in residential areas and smaller patches of green space could provide productive and attractive green areas for all to benefit from. Some public buildings may also have unused green space suitable for allotments, such as schools, universities and hospitals. Perhaps the council could follow a similar scheme to Landshare -

letting individuals with green space advertise their land for food production to volunteer groups and families, forming an online / printed map or database.

I believe there is a huge dearth of allotments. A re-examination of the history of the allotments adjacent to Pittville Park is a good illustration of need and usage. Here we had a 100% take up of allotments, lovingly tended over the years, and brought to an abrupt halt when foreclosures from GCC were received in 1998 stating the land was to be used for housing. The land was never used for housing and the allotment land lay fallow. Dunalley School was built on adjacent school playing fields in 2002 and the allotment land is today known as the Dunalley Wildlife garden. I am personally for allotments but not at the expense of robbing Park land to achieve this goal. The allotments user derives a great amount of satisfaction producing crops, and crops/plants are more environmentally friendly than bricks, mortar and tarmac. Due to reduced income from the farming industry farmers have had to diversify into other business ventures to generate income and remain viable. Those nearest to the town may be encouraged to rent, say an acre, or two, subdivided into allotments. This should not impinge on the green belt due to a similar use of the land (crop production). I realise some legislation may be necessary before implementation. A downside to allotments is their ramshackle huts which tend to make them look unsightly so they are best when positioned within a screened area, or a strict adherence to a single standard and approved shed should apply.

Work with the Soil Association to rejuvenate low quality/value green space. Set up a Community Farm on the outskirts of the town to set an example of the Council meaning business and use the enterprise to (re)train, (re)educate people into living directly off the land. This would be a great opportunity for young and old people alike to become green fingered!

Depends what you mean by low-quality-low-value! some land of that quality would never come to good. I don't see a lot of land available in parks either, though that would presumably be better quality. As we are going to have to think in terms of reducing car use, maybe some of (say) North Place car park could be so used! Some churches have adjacent land (All Saints has splendid allotments). Some schools are already planting up some of their land and could perhaps allocate more. We are certainly in trouble for enough land.

PARTS OF THE WHITE LAND COULD VERY APPROPRIATELY BE USED AS ALLOTMENTS - PARTS ARE ALREADY IN USE FOR SMALL HOLDINGS, SUCH AS ROBINSWOOD, OFF KIDNAPPERS LANE. (ALSO THE BROKEN DOWN GREEN HOUSES SHOULD BE BROUGHT BACK INTO USE FOR THE PRODUCTION OF LOCAL PRODUCE.) WE SHOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF THIS LAND FOR THE GROWING OF ORGANIC PRODUCE FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION BY SMALL COMPANIES. OVER THE RECENT PAST, A LOCAL ORGANICS COMPANY - TRIED IN VAIN TO OBTAIN LEASEHOLD OF LAND HERE FOR AT LEAST A THREE YEAR PERIOD - WHICH IS REQUIRED FOR ORGANIC PRODUCE.

It should reuse low quality space and allocate areas of parks. So called 'low quality' sites would be massively improved with some green planting, in raised bed, etc... if the surface/soil isn't suitable. In parks massive progress could be made with dual usage, e.g. community orchards. They provide a lovely place for children to play, providing shade in summer and fruit can be grown too, which is generally low maintenance. Combining parks with allotments is great way for parents with children to grow food because they can combine play for their children with tending to their crops. I see in the allotment review that CBC says it has run out of space but what about the large amount of land that Gloucester County Council owns to the NW of Cheltenham? Can't some of this be used for allotment sites?

Use waste ground.

Allocation of areas in parks for food production not appropriate as will result in loss of valuable leisure space. Allocation of low value green space adjoining existing parks would be good idea and create areas of interest.

Yes, all the above examples must be thoroughly investigated, including large open spaces. Brown-field sites must also be considered as these are normally going to be close to communities. Workable soil can be transported onto these sites. Encourage developers to include allotment sites into their plans in the same way as you require Supermarkets Groups to include amenities into their new store development plans.

The poor economic outlook, taken together with the need to encourage low-carbon lifestyles and the threat of Peak Oil would seem to favour the creation of more allotment provision. The maintenance of existing allotments should be reviewed before any steps are taken to increase the land area given over to this purpose. For example more rigorous inspection of allotments should be carried out to ensure that existing plot holders are keeping to high standards and allotments should be confiscated and re-allocated if appropriate. There may be scope to divide up existing allotments to allow more people to participate. Parks find many uses and are enjoyed for diverse reasons. The allocation of space for food production could be considered but this should be on a limited basis, so as not to seriously reduce their amenity value to the wider population. However planting fruit trees in some parks might achieve the production of food (if it could be harvested) and retain the broader amenity value (e.g. for sport, play, dog walking etc). A council sponsored private garden sharing scheme should be considered. This would put people with gardens they cannot manage in contact with people who want land to tend. There may be examples of how this could work in other towns.

I do not know enough about current policy to make a comment about the policy on allotments but in my opinion any land not used for better purposes should be given over to allotments. Allotments may give a lot of persons who currently are out of work because of the recession a use for their additional time.

Q6 What ideas do you have on alternative uses for low quality, low value green spaces?

Low Quality sites can surely be used for wildlife and recreational space. Accessibility will determine what its use might be. The Environment claim to be using the towns green waste to improve the quality of poor green space and this is to be encouraged.

Plant trees.

Shared allotments. Some supported (so informal/formal training taking place). Using the space to teach people how to grow for them to apply to their own spaces too. Space for a community farm would be welcomed. For larger areas of land that are available but only temporarily these could easily be used too for any of the above. Food can be grown very quickly and with a little notice sheds/ground can easily be put back as found.

None

I do not know what a low value green space would look like or how big it would be or where it would be situated so unable to make comment.

Could make special types of gardens, e.g. cactus, desert, alpine, Mediterranean, organic vegetables, herb, grasses, etc. depending on the location and make a feature of it as a Cheltenham attraction.

We have valuable sites being inappropriately used e.g. skate boarding area in Pittville it detracts from the peacefulness of the park area ; discourages tennis and generates vandalism and litter. There is ample space around the swimming pool e.g. the large unused car park at the side - ideal for the skate boarders - even when there is a function at the pool this car park is unused. If there are low value green spaces perhaps they should be made know and then ideas for their use may be forthcoming from the local community; e.g. a boules rink or put some decking down and create a sitting area.

Forest gardens and allotments.

Creation Play Space

Invite the Garden Centres to restore them to bio-diverse cultivated areas suitable for allotments.

Without knowing where they are, it would be difficult to say, although the reuse of these areas for allotments seems, on the face of it, to be the most straightforward manner in which to realign use of these spaces

Provide adventure play areas for Children e.g. off road bike tracks.

Play areas peace gardens allotments - see above!

Encourage more organic compost production from household waste by allocating a special waste disposable bin for this.

All green spaces are of high value for the local residents.

Allotments!

See above.

1. Use to plant fruit and nut trees if possible; 2. Cultivate as areas of biodiversity; 3. Use as areas for beehives - an apiary - as preserving bees is crucial to the survival of many of our fruit and vegetable crops; 4. Use to erect local wind-farms to generate energy for the residents in the surrounding area.

As I say, I do not know what the definition of 'low quality, low value green space' means, but the only alternative to feeding people in a globally warmed, post peak oil world is to return the land to as biodiverse ecosystem as possible, which will help mitigate climate change and is good for the 'psyche' of human beings. It might be argued that they could become wind farms and this could be a third choice, but this would be extremely regrettable as we need land to feed us. The best place for wind farms are out at sea.

Sculpture trails perhaps - educational workshops and creative activities to make unused low quality green spaces attractive and valued spaces, especially if close to schools and community areas. Use of natural materials such as willow or wood. Planting more trees. Planting more nectar-rich flowers and herbs to encourage bees, butterflies and beneficial pollinating insects (which could be especially useful close to allotments). Could make less attractive areas more appealing to walk through. Observing local biodiversity of a low quality site for what thrives there, and enhancing its surroundings or introducing more diversity to potential habitats. Connecting low quality green areas with simple but accessible footpaths, identifying more pleasant routes for cyclists and walkers - away from busy roads. Better quality recreational facilities for skateboarders, young cyclists and outdoor recreation in general.

Allotments or community gardens.

Wildlife areas.

I am not sure where these are as I have not seen any. But if they do exist these are the ones that should be converted to allotments.

If open space is low quality then you have to ask why. If gang mown grass land does not deliver community benefit then other uses should be explored. Unused open spaces may need revenue investment i.e. events or possible capital - skate parks etc. I do not believe that any open space in Cheltenham does not have potential

Some low value green spaces could be given up for residential building development, in exchange for land that might be more suitable or better positioned for creating green space. E.g. swapping green field and building land with developers where appropriate.

The council's policy of not dictating to developers the layout of new estates often makes the connectivity of the parks that are required to create circuitous. As there is an oversupply of such areas some could be turned over to allotments or wooded areas.

Turn over to coppice, nut trees and other productive yields.

Make them more attractive to wildlife.

Skateboarding or rollerblading areas / parks, links to cycle networks, establishing suitable wildlife habitats that will thrive once established and require low management (such as wild flowers suited to the habitat) or planting trees and supplying wooden picnic benches.

The obvious answer to this question is to raise the quality to such a degree that they no longer fit the category of 'Low Quality Sites' having being upgraded to 'High Quality Sites' and therefore fit for the most suitable nominated and apt purpose.

Investigate opportunities with the Environmental Agency and others to transform them into habitats for wildlife and, perhaps, quiet gardens for young and old to frequent. These could be maintained by local residents in partnership with schools and parents.

Rough land is good for children to knock about in. The main interest of CTG is TREES, of which we need very many more in the town, and perhaps some of these spaces would be suitable for certain types of tree, which in turn could be contributing to making the land more fertile.

NOT APPLICABLE TO OUR AREA.

CYCLING/ BMX AREAS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. RAISED BEDS FOR PLANTING

There are different reasons why spaces are low value. I suggested they may be rented out at low cost to the local communities or families for growing fruit and vegetables. This is particularly good if they are surrounded by housing in built areas. Some sites seem to be marked low-quality because they are small, this is not necessarily bad for bio-diversity unless perhaps they are particularly isolated. Otherwise they could be turned into more wild play areas.

Make them into picnic areas with BBQ facilities ensuring adequate wheelchair access.

Teenagers "free space" if there is such an animal i.e. a space where teens could meet chat etc without feeling they are being watched by the rest of us. Ownership of the space s would have to be taken by the teens who would be encouraged to "create their own space".

All Low Quality Sites are like 'blank canvases'. They can be made good!

Even low quality sites need to be managed effectively to prevent dereliction. Consideration could be given to encourage community gardens where near neighbours are offered the opportunity to grow fruit and vegetables. Alternatively, selective tree planting would enhance biodiversity and improve the attractiveness of land.

If suitable they should be given over to low cost housing. I can see no value in unused/empty sites especially as they end up attracting rubbish, vandalism and vermin.

Q7 How much should maintenance regimes / practices be changed to encourage wildlife?

Tewkesbury Road is an area that appears devoid of green space and with little regard for wildlife (and the general character of the town). It is a challenge that should be tackled but it requires professional expertise and a strong will to execute.

Park edges could be sown as wild flower meadows. Small copses could be established with local flora.

Many food growing sites could easily incorporate areas for biodiversity too. Vision 21 is creating a vegetable growing project in Tewkesbury that will also have a wildlife area. Another site, in Cheltenham, that is not yet secured would also have a fantastic wildlife area.

I suppose as long as nasty chemicals are not being sprayed everywhere then there would be hedges/bushes and trees for wild life.

Plenty of shrubs and trees that attract birds; put up breeding boxes where appropriate.

Certain Wildlife should be encouraged e.g. birds but not foxes. In all development programmes and those concerning maintenance of our green spaces there should be consideration - acknowledging the need for safety and crime deterrence to providing trees/shrubs/nesting boxes etc for birds/butterflies etc. The same goes for the Pittville lakes. Let's have more pride with public participation in the programmes. Why not greater sponsorship in maintenance programmes - the roundabouts around Cheltenham are a disgrace, so is the golden valley - the roundabouts at Gloucester where they have sponsorship are well maintained and are quite delightful. Travel down

into Wales and compare how well the main road verges are maintained in comparison. Cheltenham can and must do better.

Should be changed completely - the ideal is not abandoning areas but reducing drastically the amount of manicured lawn (very low biodiversity/educational/play value) and planting managed biodiversity spaces, preferably capable of supporting human food at the same time as wildlife.

Limit open space maintenance at designated locations

Essential that every school has access to a bio-diverse wildlife area where children can learn about and relate to the natural world.

Different planting in the future, grass allowed to grow longer in areas.

I don't think it would be a good idea to neglect maintenance since unkempt land quickly attracts anti social behaviour such as fly tipping however many more trees need to be planted in green areas to attract bird life and to act as green lungs for the town.

A few more bird boxes wouldn't go a miss.

Educating through local (WI, children and young adults clubs and churches) means about the existing wildlife and how we can support this. We can get advice from Cotswold wildlife centre, the bird sanctuary and any such setups.

All sites should be managed for wildlife.

Can you use more perennials in planting and have some areas left as 'wildflower meadows' (further from paths to be kind to hay fever sufferers).

From a police perspective, well trimmed hedges mean that criminals cannot be so well hidden etc. The width of green link hedges is not so important, but the height can be a problem. At the same time, hedges are used well to obscure houses from the main roads.

The use of pest controls harmful to wildlife should be avoided. Presumably in non formal areas mowing of grass could be done less often and blades set somewhat higher than at present.

Consultation with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to ensure this is a top priority - without biodiversity management of land our local ecosystems will cease to function. See my previous comment on the importance of preserving bees - biodiversity is key to this.

Absolutely and completely. The use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers must be ceased. Any intervention with soil must be organic and managed by permaculture principles. If this knowledge is lacking within the council, this must be rectified as a matter of urgency.

Considerably, especially in residential areas that lack biodiversity and have unused land. Perhaps some regimes could be more experimental - for example learning from self-sustaining maintenance techniques such as permaculture. Aiming for diverse wildlife areas that can support themselves once established with resilient local plants.

I am not sure what practices or regimes are currently in place, but I do feel that some areas should be left, as much as possible, untouched and undisturbed to encourage wildlife and ensure their safety.

It was good to have the wildflower meadow at Springfields Park and Hesters Way Park. Maybe more of the same elsewhere

As much as possible.

Wildlife management is not management on the cheap. Creating habitats such as meadows and ponds is more costly than just mowing it. Community groups may help in initial start up but should not be relied upon for long term maintenance. Tree planting perhaps is the exception where long term wildlife benefits can be delivered with fairly modest outlay. Given that temperatures are to increase significantly over the next 40 years and beyond and that trees play a vital role in moderating the temperature of urban areas then I would advocate a massive increase in tree planting across parks and other open spaces.

Formal 'gardens', like Imperial Square, or Naunton Park etc. should not be changed to encourage wildlife, apart from insects that gather pollen from flowers. Larger parks, like Pittville, should have areas designed to encourage wildlife. For example, mowing paths through grass and allowing longer grass and flowers to grow up in between.

I live close to Warden Hill. It has access only from the south. It cannot be used as a through route. Thus it has to be a destination and few visits are made by casual locals. It is primarily used as a dog walking area. The grass is used for hay-making. However the local children enjoy making dens in the old orchard area and hedges. Where in the past animals such as cows and deer would browse the trees these are absent. Gentle breeds such as Belted Galloway should be reintroduced. They provide useful manure and so encourage natural regeneration. The elevated aspect of Warden Hill makes it unsuitable for residential development so this is another suitable site for allotments. Alternatively it could be used as a cemetery.

Just do nothing if you want wilderness regeneration - set aside areas of park and let them grow back if you want, but people growing a vast range of crops will also encourage biodiversity.

Unable to comment

As part of wider landscape conservation initiatives, especially in urban areas, wildlife corridors would help to provide a more connected landscape (bird boxes, suitable trees and foliage for protection from predators and avoiding busy roads). Allowing areas for pollinating insects (especially threatened bee species!) would be especially valuable close to gardens and allotments. It would be nice to see more of this instead of abandoned scrub land or brambles taking over.

It is accepted in many areas of the world that Biodiversity should be used as a health check and measurement of any given area. Similarly to the question No. 4 on "what standards should be managed?" it follows that again parameters should be set on the optimum level to be attained for each area and regular measurements taken, and recorded. The Council has a duty to ensure that the schools have a section in the schools curriculum dedicated to teaching the appreciation of wildlife generally so that the work associated with Biodiversity can be easily maintained and promoted, in future years/generations. Who can tell that this may be one of the most important areas, when it may become more essential for all concerned to concentrate more effort in this important field?

Wouldn't it be great if the talents, skills and vision of council workers and local folk could be engaged to make this happen, and the information shared with school children to talk up their local area and thus demonstrating the pride workers and residents have in the local environment?

A lot. Much less mowing, for a start. Putting down some of the flower beds to prairie-style planting? More trees/shrubs, which could include evergreens.

THERE IS PLENTY OF WILDLIFE IN THE WHITELAND! WE DON'T WANT CHANGE.

LESS USE OF PESTICIDES.MORE LAND LEFT TO FALLOW.

Practise organic principles and provide lots of trees and shrubs to increase wildlife habitats. Leave areas uncut to provide additional habitats. Grow wildflower meadows to provide habitat and food for pollinating insects. Open up heavily wooded streams to encourage more wildlife.

We would consider there to be considerable scope to manage green space for biodiversity and people. This not only benefits wildlife but gives people more opportunity to come into contact with local wildlife.

To be aware of plants being used to encourage wildlife without creating un-kept areas.

Parks should be like golf courses - "greens" where areas are cultivated and people are encouraged to use. "The rough" where wildlife can inhabit without interference but nature can be observed from a distance.

You simply have to follow the cycles of nature to help ensure that the minimum of damage to wildlife. e.g. don't fell trees and cut back hedges in the nesting period. Or is this a deeper question?

Each open space needs a documented management plan which takes into account the setting. It is important to encourage biodiversity as species come under pressure from climate change to assist their survival. However some parks are valuable for their playing fields (although these are low biodiversity - just manicured grass) and any management plan should take this into account. Even playing fields can be enhanced however by planting a variety of trees and shrubs on the perimeters. Consideration should be given to native tree species where these would fit into the urban environment. In general steps should be taken to encourage biodiversity and this should be the default management plan for all open spaces in the absence of any other considerations. It is noticeable that many gardens managed by Cheltenham Borough Homes are pretty boring grassed areas - some front on to busy highways and selective tree and shrub planting would not only assist biodiversity but provide screening from the traffic. In all this the cost of maintaining land must be taken into account - any changes must be sustainable and be designed to hold or reduce maintenance costs if the town is not to appear "scruffy".

While properly maintaining hedgerows and trees for tree and birds and etc I believe that there should be no other encouragement of wildlife. In my opinion to encourage additional wildlife leads to raising vermin numbers instead of the more acceptable types of animal.

Q8 Is it important that we have accessible green links between spaces for wildlife, cycling and walking? If so how could we go about creating more links?

Part of the character of the town is the green corridors which enable people to walk and cycle into town. They are also important for wildlife and biodiversity forming healthy arteries for the town.

More one way streets. Single lane roads.

Listen to the people that use them. Be aware of safety.

Again what would a green link look like? Would it be pavement ?

Not sure how feasible this is but would be nice. would have to close some narrower streets to cars etc.

I cannot see how you can expect meaningful answers without there being a publicised plan of these areas. Then there needs to be planned footpaths/bridges and planting.

Extremely important. I suggest decreasing traffic and turning some roads into cycle ways/ wildlife corridors. The honeyborne line is a brilliant example, and Cheltenham needs to be criss-crossed by similar lines. If roads are essential for cars then making them one way and using half for green space.

?

Through Planning Process. 106 contributions and sustainability arguments

More Honeybourne Lines. Our Town Planners in recent decades have made some appalling decisions. E.g. building a so-called 'Northern Relief Road' through the centre of Cheltenham, instead of a Circular Road around the perimeter, connecting Swindon Lane, New Barn Lane, Priors Road, Hales Road and/or up over the former GCHQ Oakley site via Harp Hill and Greenway Lane. Instead of providing linear access for pedestrians and cyclists, with passage-ways between residences, one is obliged to zigzag along car-dominated roads like fore-lock pulling peasants, at the mercy of the driver's competence. Just try walking/cycling directly from the town centre to Pates Grammar School. Or in most other directions. E.g. To cross from the Pittville Pump Room to the Welland Lodge Road Estate one is obliged to take extravagant detours to North or South when one could so easily have passed between Pittville School and the Pittville Campus. Such detours are typical of our modern suburbia in contrast to the pre-motor-car era. Security concerns have come to dominate planning, but this is self-defeating. Pedestrians are feared, but the fewer pedestrians there are around, the more the risk of misbehaviour. The Honeybourne Line is now far more congenial, being well-lit and more populated.

The idea of green corridors is not new, so there must be lots of ideas around. Sarah Raven on BBC2 Gardeners World established one in Sussex, looked very impressive. Can only be achieved by planting up a corridor for wildlife-very high maintenance in a town where litter and vandalism are big issues.

Yes it is important since this greatly improves the health and quality of life for inhabitants. Where there is existing development the Council will have to purchase land to facilitate this. For future developments green links must be included as a vital integral component of any plans.

I'm not sure what a green link is.

Approach users to ask their ideas for encourage any links.

The maintenance of hedges should be top of the agenda.

There are already great links through Sandford Park, Pitville Park and along the Honeybourne line that I use regularly. Thank you!

Yes it is important. How = use the town's car parks as green spaces and in the long term convert them into community allotments / food growing spaces.

It is absolutely vital that you do, as I understand that without doing so, it is almost pointless creating them in the first place. You could create more links by viewing the area aerially from a macro point of view and making links the criteria for all planning decisions.

Yes, sorry, I have already mentioned this quite a bit! It could avoid habitat fragmentation and provide more resilient green spaces that can look after themselves more easily if the flow of diversity is more consistent. More links could be created by mapping all unused green space in Cheltenham (using GIS), including lower quality areas and unused space belonging to public buildings. Liaising with local community groups and volunteers could help create a green link campaign with willing helpers donating time and materials.

I personally feel that the parks and green spaces in Cheltenham are accessible by car, bus and walking, though do feel that work is required to cycle paths in Cheltenham. They are too fragmented, cycles are allowed in some areas and then not in others, resulting in cyclists having to mount and dismount throughout the course of their journey.

Yes

Very important and the Honeybourne line is an excellent example of where this works. I can't think of anywhere else that might provide this type of opportunity.

Yes but doing it is very difficult. It is a matter of using the existing asset better. Simple things can help such as having different mowing regimes along hedgerows or by encouraging private landowners to do more (I am thinking of institutional bodies). New development of course offers significant potential to link urban areas with the more rural hinterland.

Stop development that restricts any existing links, or insist that links are maintained. Ensure that any new developments create such links where appropriate. Cheltenham has a wonderful network of footpaths (many of which should be upgraded to permit legal cycle use - with priority given to pedestrians). This network should be extended in any new developments.

There is a great need to provide continuous routes for walkers and cyclists. The Chelt Walk from Village Road needs to be upgraded to a cycle path and a new railway under bridge with creation of link path behind the Cheltenham Trade Park. Another easily achievable route would be through Benhall Open Space along the railway line to the Honeybourne shared use path. There needs to be a new access onto the Honeybourne shared use path from Swindon Road for postmen going south. A ramp could be built on the eastern side of the viaduct on the south side of Swindon Road. The use of surrounding countryside needs to be encouraged. This ought to include the creation of new routes which do not flood and are surfaced where clay is encountered. This could be buying fields on the lower slopes of the escarpment and leasing the land back to the farmer.

Not important.

New housing development should whenever possible incorporate same

Yes, by utilising bordering green space near to cycle tracks like the Honeybourne Line, areas close to allotments and unused areas of public parks and public buildings such as hospitals and schools.

There are existing corridors along river banks already established and these should be expanded, where possible. Wyman's Brook, at the rear of the Prince of Wales Stadium, e. g. as it has a section created for a joint cycle-track and rear-entrance for recently build houses. I don't know the history behind this scheme but I'd like to believe it was part of a grand plan to be applied in other areas. The Honeybourne Line Cycle track is another established green link space , Pittville Park and Churchill Gardens are linked and could be expanded.

Would suggest mapping the links that already exist, the impact they've had or not had, explore what can be done to improve them, and then promote to the folk of Cheltenham to increase awareness and suggest new links.

Yes, very important, but I think it's the town planners who will have to sort that out.

YES, THEY ARE IMPORTANT, AND AT PRESENT THEY ARE QUITE GOOD AROUND LECKHAMPTON. DON'T DESTROY THEM! NO SPACE HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR FURTHER COMMENT - SO AM TAKING THE LIBERTY OF REFERRING HERE TO THE LANDSCAPE DESIGN ASSOCIATES OF WORTON PARK, OXFORD, REPORT TO CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL IN JULY, 2003, WHICH WE TRUST YOU WILL READ WHEN CONSIDERING THE VIEWS RECEIVED: THE CONCLUSIONS IN THE FINAL REPORT READS: "The landscape character and value of the study area derives from the strongly rural and largely unspoilt character of the landscape, the condition and diversity of existing landscape features, the relationship of the landscape with historic buildings and features, the character of the local lanes, the visual prominence of the landscape in views to and from the AONB, and the contribution the area makes to the setting of Leckhampton Hill and the character of the main gateway into Cheltenham from the west. It represents a valuable and sensitive landscape which is well used by local people as an area of countryside close to the urban area within which large scale development would be visually intrusive and adversely affect views to and from the Cotswold AONB. Whilst the site could accommodate small scale change and development, it is considered highly vulnerable to the effects of large scale development. The protection of the landscape should, therefore, continue to be the primary objective.

Yes, I'd like green links of all sorts. The old railway line used as a cycleway is good but we need more safe off-road cycleways around town. These should be suitable for commuting cyclists, i.e. smooth surfaces such as tarmac which encourage their use rather than rough surfaces which discourage travelling any distance across them. Cycleways and access points should be wide enough to allow child bike trailers. Create more green links by closing some roads in the town centre and pedestrianizing them, making a more pleasant environment.

Definitely. In the face of climate change species may well have to shift and it is important that wildlife sites - even from common species - exist within connected networks rather than as fragmented sites. This could be planned through the Green Infrastructure initiative.

Create links of interest for young people.

More natural habitat areas should be allowed to develop rather than total cultivation / management of all areas of parks. Open up - close down pathways throughout their length rather than equal width.

In this crowded country, we have to live alongside spaces for wildlife without invading the wildlife space. Our paths and cycle paths must skirt the wildlife space with good and interesting paths, which may need to be fenced-off in places. These fences should remain rustic/in keeping with the relevant environment. For extra protection, elevated paths could be considered; again to be in keeping with the environment.

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Identify the wildlife corridors and produce a management plan for each of them. This might include private land - engage the owners and involve them in the plans. Some householders might be pleased to participate in tree and shrub planting if they are aware of the plan for their street/ area. Could the council consider donating trees appropriate to the objectives of a particular plan? In addition some streets (e.g. upper Bath Road) are devoid of trees - could this be investigated and some appropriate trees planted? These would necessarily need to have a compact shape to avoid interfering with the buses and lorries. Investigate.

I do not believe it is right to encourage animals into or through the urban environment. as I said above we do not need more vermin we have enough four and two legged vermin within Cheltenham.

Q9 How do you think we could create opportunities to encourage children and young people to use green space.

Safe open green space near to home will be used by children to play and to socialise and are an important part of growing up. Playing fields are an essential part of healthy living, encouraging team sports and community responsibility.

The proposal to lose the wildlife area at Dunalley School to St Vincents sends out the wrong message to both the children and the community. It is not an either or but rather both are important and an alternative site should be found for St Vincents so that the wildlife garden retained.

Innovative safe, play spaces. Opportunities to participate in food growing sites so 'something meaningful to do' which is also getting you fit and socialising.

See earlier answer on provision of football pitches for younger children.

There is already a good example in Pittville. The play area is reasonably safe, there are other attractions (the animals birds) it does lack a small cafe; I know you have looked into that during the research for the HLF bid. I am not sure what can be created for the younger teenagers, sadly so many good ideas are trashed because of bad behaviour. Whatever it is it needs to be monitored so that it is not wrecked almost as soon as it has been opened.

Have family activities for younger children; more playgrounds; work with local youth and church groups on park-based/outdoor activities.

The facility has to be of interest, tranquil and provide enjoyment/pleasure - the gardens in the promenade and Montpellier are well used and so is Pittville park . There has to be encouragement to use i.e. provision of parking/clean toilets/ feel safe factor.

Community gardens, forest garden where they can harvest fruit, lots of logs to play with and build cabins, nature paths to explore, basically things to physically do in green space rather than looking at it or kicking a ball around. How to productively use green space needs to be a skill learned in schools and universities.

By providing safe and clean accessible spaces that are free for all to use.

Play Stations on site?

By providing all schools with wildlife gardens and teaching about the natural world in a 'hands-on' way. E.g. providing allotments dedicated to each primary school. Could be done at the margins of some playing fields. Not everyone wants to play competitive sports games. By creating a society/environment where they are able to walk/cycle around safely without having to be driven.

Better policing and monitoring of green space to ensure that the environment is conducive to use by families.

Send child (5-11 version and 11-18 version) friendly leaflets to each (primary/secondary)school informing them of the facilities in their particular catchment area, e.g. Hatherley Park toddler area, junior area, basketball, pond, lake, football, large open space. Contact details of football coach etc. Details could be on web site. "What's in my local park?" Details of natures reserves etc

Make sure green space is provided in the first place! Too many houses are being built where the nearest amenity space or sports fields are not in walking distance.

'Set some targets' for activity and less screen time in schools. (I'm not serious about more targets btw!) Organise mini marathons and intro days so kids can try new sports and try new activities - ask the gyms to sponsor fun and open days and to do likewise.

Have taster sessions and involvement from Schools, Girl guides and Boy scouts, Church groups.

Family events- Outdoor singing, music, art etc.

Accessibility - if there are spaces close to residences they are more likely to be used, parents will feel safer letting their kids play there. How about jogging tracks: show the measurements for the lengths of footpaths so people can time themselves? It would introduce a competitive element to running that might get more youth (and others) involved.

The MUGA in Brizen has recently been opened and this is well used. - a good result so far with no reports of ASB.

There could be more emphasis on gardens for children and young people in the grounds of schools, youth centres etc. Information boards about the wildlife to be seen might be appropriate in some spaces.

By ensuring that a large percentage of parks, gardens and playing fields are given over to growing food, fruit, nuts, tea, herbs, hemp for clothing and community farms with animal grazing areas - this will engage children and young people. Also ponds and reed-beds for cleaning school's water - areas of wilderness given over to biodiversity.

By making every school 'green space' into an educational tool that copies the principles of The Eden Centre. All school playing fields would be primarily for this purpose. They would include allotments, an apiary (our bee numbers are in crisis and without bees we can pollinate our food or eat), an orchard, nut trees, a biodiverse area to encourage insects, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and birds, hemp for growing clothes, a pond and reed bed for cleaning schools water. All this would be backed up by information about global ecosystems, carbon sinks and ecological debt to show our interdependence and reliance on nature to ensure our survival.

Work closely with schools, colleges and educational establishments combining education, marketing and practical taster sessions and workshops. Also consultations with these groups may be useful - find out what they would like to see and experience from green spaces. Getting as many influential community groups involved as possible through networking and support.

Make them more exciting and varied. Too often there are only swings and those things that on which you can rock back and forth. I think that interesting seated areas should also be created to allow for older children to be with their friends, but not hang around the streets.

More activities for them for instance the things that Play Gloucestershire do.

More of what is already being done. Fun activities in the parks that appeal to the whole range of children and young people. Think of the parks as outside rooms, use them as festival venues.

By holding more events.

Better 'policing'/wardening of children's play areas to discourage misuse, particularly in school holidays and evenings. Make play areas more 'exciting' (see answer above about excessive safety). Use more 'natural' (e.g. timber) apparatus, rather than steel. Provide more 'dynamic' equipment, like the new tyre roundabout in The Beeches, or the tyre swings in Pittville.

Cheltenham has many nature reserves. These should be visited by school pupils with their teachers to make the children more knowledgeable about plants and natural environment.

Giving over more land to growing...the rest follows

Make them attractive spaces Encourage wildlife walks with information readily available Encourage schools to include more outside activity.

Encouraging schools that don't have access to varied green space (other than for recreation / sport) to have access somewhere locally to wildlife areas and allotments, so that children can learn about the varied uses of green space beyond sport and play (pond dipping, bird watching, growing food, cycling etc). Promoting and maintaining key facilities such as skateboard parks or providing cycling areas with jumps and rough terrain for more adventurous cycling (and to use low quality green space or rough ground). Finding out what young people want from green spaces by conducting surveys or research in schools and colleges.

I'm forever amazed at the coupling of children and playing in the park as seemingly the only exclusive activity that is on offer. I was pleasantly surprised when my suggestion of a Pittville Park a 'Tree Walk' was taken up. We have natural resources in a Park and efforts should be seen to be made, again by schools and the Council to use these natural resources of the park to keep all interests alive. By all means keep and improve the existing Play Areas, encourage games, walking and cycling but please don't totally disregard the natural resources which need the same time and effort spent on them.

Lobby to make it part of the school curriculum for C&YP to be active in their local environment. This would increase their local knowledge, build community spirit and therefore pride in the area. There is a particular issue with litter in some parks around the town and this approach could help to curb the blight, which only re-affirms "don't care" or "know no better" attitude of some folk. By embedding such "making it real", out of the classroom, field work through all years of the school curriculum will help to change attitudes in an engaging/leadership manner.

LET THEM PLAY IN IT! MAINTAIN FOOT PATHS IN GOOD CONDITION. DON'T "TIDY UP" TOO MUCH. LEAVE SPACE FOR IMAGINATIVE GAMES. HAVE SWINGS, ROUNDABOUTS AND THE LIKE AVAILABLE FOR THE KIDS. THIS REPORT APPEARS TO GIVE NO FACILITY FOR THE WRITER TO RETAIN A COPY: KINDLY FORWARD A COPY OF THIS TO THE SECRETARY - LEGLAG: AT MWHITE11@TALKTALK.NET. or send to: Mrs. M. White, 11 Arden Road, Cheltenham, GL53 0HG. YOUR ASSISTANCE WILL BE MUCH APPRECIATED. THANK YOU.

BY PROVIDING MORE SPORT FACILITIES, SUCH AS MUGAS, WHICH ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IN TO THE PARKS AND OFF THE STREETS.

Yes. Provide more varied and wild play spaces with trees and shrubbery. Build play equipment into wooded spaces, rope swings/bridges, stepping stones and balancing beams. Provide more challenging play equipment and wilder areas for older children that will teach them about the real world rather than the world of standardized play equipment.

Get them more involved in developing green spaces.

School competitions with prizes from BC or local groups like ourselves would create greater "ownership". Without participation and ownership young people will not treat spaces with the best intent.

First of all our children and all people must feel safe in our parks and green spaces. Vandals and people intent on damaging our environment, including litter louts and still a minority of selfish dog owners, must be banished from our green spaces. Bring back the park keepers, supported by police where necessary. Where viable provide good, attractive amenities such as cafes, clean and well maintained toilets and wash facilities, occasional good entertainment such as concerts/musical events, more picnic / bbq areas.

Make the parks and gardens more varied and interesting. Could the various parks be themed in some way? For example they could be fruit and nut tree, semi-tropical, colourful, native species only etc by means of different planting strategies.

I suggested in an earlier answer that more and better facilities within our open spaces are a good idea but I am pragmatic and realise that unless they are extremely strong they will be prone to vandalism and therefore the high cost of monitoring and maintenance.

Appendix a

Green Space Strategy: Stakeholder Groups

Community groups

1. Cheltenham Sustainability Forum
2. Cheltenham Strategic Partnership
 - Stronger communities partnership
 - Children and Young peoples partnership
 - Community safety partnership
 - Low carbon partnership
 - Health and wellbeing partnership
 - Strategic Economic Development Partnership
3. Cheltenham Borough Homes
4. Cheltenham Disability Forum
5. Cheltenham Business Partnership
6. Cheltenham Voluntary and Community Action
7. Cheltenham Tree Group
8. Cheltenham Civic Society
9. Cheltenham Local History Society
10. Cheltenham Horticultural Society
11. Cheltenham & District Allotment Society
12. CBC Allotment Site Wardens
13. Hesters Way Partnership
14. Oakley Regeneration Partnership
15. West End Partnership (St Pauls & St Peters)
16. St Paul's Community house
17. CBC BME capacity worker
18. University of Gloucester
19. CBC Community Development Team
20. Leisure @ Cheltenham
21. Local PCT
22. The Pensioners Forum
23. Park Watch schemes (via the rangers)
24. PCSO's

Residents groups

1. Friends of:
 - Leckhampton Hill & Charlton Kings Common
 - Montpellier
 - Naunton Park
 - Pittville Park
2. Benhall Residents Association
3. Clyde Crescent Residents Association
4. Pittville Park Residents Association(PARA)
5. Springbank Environment Group
6. St Paul's Residents Association

Environment Groups

1. English Heritage
2. Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust
3. Natural England

Youth Groups

1. Gloucestershire Youth Service
2. Gardeners Land Children's Centre
3. MAD Young People's Council
4. Play and Freetime Forum
5. Play Ranger Service
6. Local schools
7. Junior Wardens Scheme (via Cheltenham Borough Homes)

Disability groups

1. National Star College
2. Cheltenham Disabled Sports Association
3. St Vincent's School for the disabled