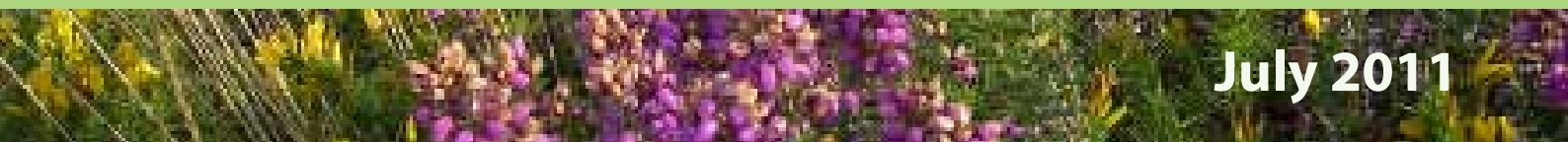
Investing in Green places

South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy



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Incorporating Changes arising from the Dorset and South Wiltshire Planning and Transportation Liaison Committee (Paras 2.29 a-e)

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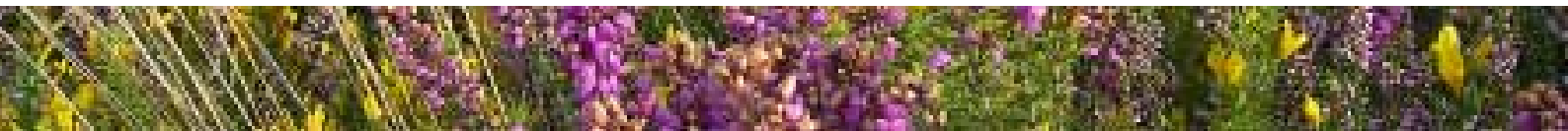

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

1. To work in partnership to deliver multi-functional green infrastructure
2. To improve health & well-being, reduce inequality & encourage community participation
3. To strengthen the competitive advantages of South East Dorset's economy
4. To prepare for climate change through mitigation & adaptation
5. To conserve & enhance the unique natural environment & to maximise the positive contribution of economic & housing growth
6. To create & manage sustainable places informed by local people & local character

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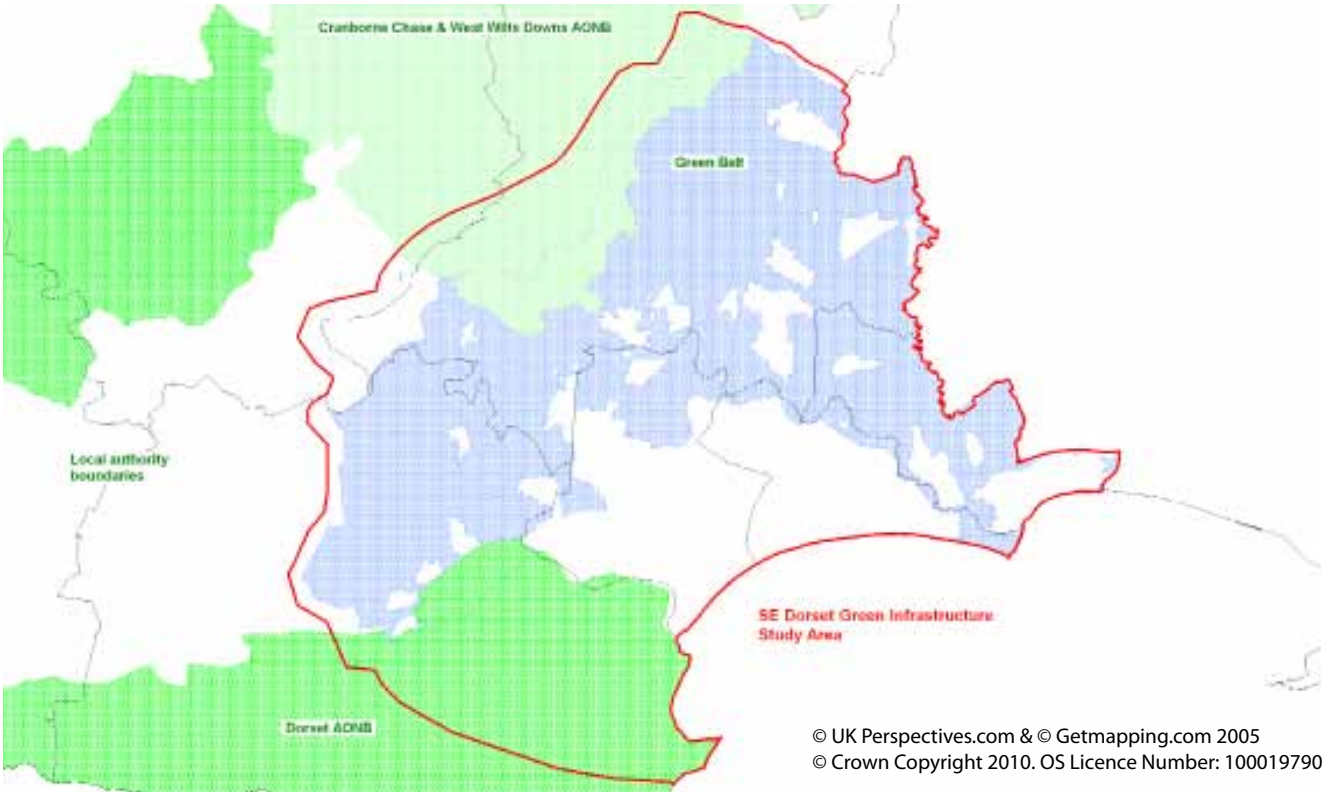
2: INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

2.1 Green infrastructure is about using the natural environment as a way to deliver services essential to quality of life. Green infrastructure can have many functions and offers ways to prepare for climate change, build economic success, manage flood risk, provide alternative active travel options, provide green spaces for exercise and socialising and conserve and enhance wildlife and habitats. Green infrastructure is a valuable asset should be seen as a good investment offering a new approach rather than a drain on resources.

2.2 South East Dorset has a unique natural environment on which its economy relies. Maintaining and improving this valuable asset is an advantage in terms of a wider economic strategy for the area as well as the social and environmental benefits. In recognition of the value of green infrastructure, the councils in South East Dorset[1] are working with the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the area. The strategy creates a bold vision for South East Dorset and sets a framework for high quality accessible green infrastructure. The strategy is set at the strategic level and will provide a basis for the delivery of projects and a robust evidence base for other policy makers to draw upon.

2.3 The South East Dorset sub-region is defined in Map 1.



MAP 1 South East Dorset

1 Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset County Council, East Dorset District Council, Borough of Poole and Purbeck District Council.

2.4 The Councils and partner organisations are being supported by CABE Space Enabling. This is a mentoring and knowledge transfer programme to support and challenge urban green space and public space and strategies. The Councils and partners have also jointly funded and appointed Dorset Environmental Records Centre to collate data on existing assets and Land Use Consultants to carry out the data analysis work.

Role of the Strategy

2.5 The Green Infrastructure Strategy has three key roles:

- to promote the multi-functional approach of green infrastructure across a wide range of agendas;
- to set out an overarching strategy to deliver, manage and maintain current and future green infrastructure assets;
- to guide a joint approach towards strategic green infrastructure for councils preparing local development framework documents.

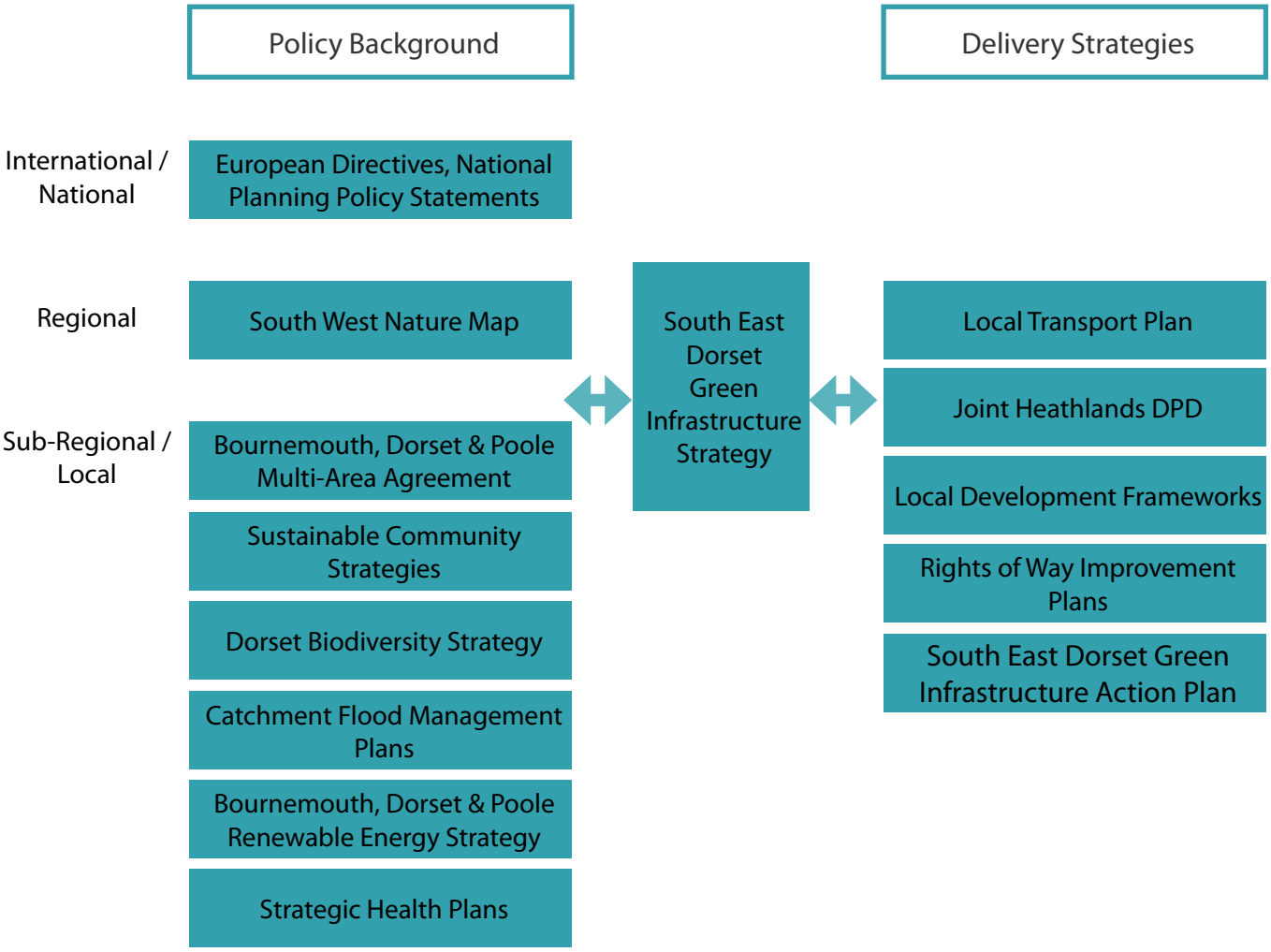
2.6 These three elements of the strategy will form part of the delivery mechanisms for the strategy.

2.7 This document promotes the concept of green infrastructure and explains the benefits it can deliver. Green infrastructure is about using the natural environment to provide ways to deliver solutions. It can offer many functions and contribute to the delivery of sustainable communities, economic success, healthy active lifestyles, climate change, biodiversity and open space and recreation by joining up the work of a range of agencies. In South East Dorset, green infrastructure can specifically contribute to the objectives and targets of the Multi-Area Agreement for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and Sustainable Community Strategies. Delivery of the strategy will also occur through Local Development Framework documents, the Local Transport Plan and Rights of Way Improvement Plans. Figure 2 shows the links between other plans and strategies which both influence and deliver green infrastructure.

2.8 The strategy is about recognising the assets we already have and managing them in ways that contribute to a wider network of green infrastructure. It is about making the best use of the assets we already have in a cost effective way. There is also a need for some new green infrastructure to support growth of the population. Standards will be identified for strategic green space and other aspects of green infrastructure. These standards will guide new provision of green infrastructure and be reflected in improving and managing existing assets. In light of reduced funding levels, innovative approaches will need to be considered to fund, manage and maintain new and existing assets. However, the use of green infrastructure offers the opportunity to make savings by co-ordinating resources and reducing spending elsewhere.

2.9 Each council is preparing Core Strategy, Site Allocation and other Development Plan Documents that will include green infrastructure proposals. The Green Infrastructure Strategy will allow a consistent approach to be taken across boundaries by setting out a clear vision, objectives and framework. Alongside the Strategy, the Land Use Consultants Report (South East Dorset Green Infrastructure: Evidence and Opportunities Study) provides a consistent evidence base to support individual councils to prepare Development Plan Documents. Whilst the strategy concentrates on strategic scale projects, it sets an overall approach within which small scale local projects can connect into a wider network.

Figure 1 Links to Other Plans and Strategies



Summary of Legal and Policy Context

European

2.10 A wide range of European Directives and international agreements are relevant to how green infrastructure is protected and managed:

- Conservation of Wild Birds, Council Directive 79/409/EEC (The Birds Directive)
- Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, Council Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive)
- Air Quality Framework Directive, 96/62/EC and daughter Directives 99/30/EC, 2000/69/EC and 2002/3/EC
- Water Framework Directive, 2000/60/EC
- Assessment and Management of Flood Risks, Directive 2007/60/EC
- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (1971)
- European Landscape Convention (EU, 2000)

National Policy

2.11 National policy and the legal framework cover issues as wide ranging as transport, health, biodiversity and climate change and are also relevant to green infrastructure. In planning, Planning Policy Statements (PPS) set out national policy for a range of issues. Those listed below show the range of issues that green infrastructure can contribute positively to.

2.12 PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development promotes planning policies that contribute to the delivery of sustainable development. Planning and Climate Change (supplement to PPS1) recognises the role of green infrastructure in mitigating and adapting to climate change, specifically in terms of urban cooling, sustainable drainage systems, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity. It also states that local authorities should expect new development to provide public and private open space as appropriate, recognising the opportunities for flood storage, wildlife and people provided by multifunctional green spaces.

2.13 PPS 5 - Planning for the Historic Environment sets out the Government's planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. The PPS promotes the need for positive and proactive responses to the Historic Environment and a greater understanding of the significance of conserving and enhancing heritage assets.

2.14 PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas sets out policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.

2.15 PPS12 - Local Spatial Planning states that a core strategy should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area. It also makes infrastructure planning a key part of a robust evidence base for a core strategy.

2.16 PPG 13 - Transport sets out the objectives to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level and to promote more sustainable transport choices both for carrying people and for moving freight.

2.17 PPG17 - Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation recognises that well planned and maintained open spaces and good quality sports and recreational facilities can play a major part in improving people's sense of well being in the place they live. It requires local authorities to undertake audits of the existing provision of open space, sport, and recreational facilities, and to identify the existing and future needs for improved or new facilities.

2.18 PPG17 also establishes Government's belief that open space standards should be set locally, and should include quantitative, qualitative and accessibility components.

2.19 PPS22 - Renewable Energy sets out the approach to renewable energy and how its further implementation can contribute to all areas of sustainability.

2.20 PPS 25 - Development and Flood Risk ensures that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process.

2.21 The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) is key legislation for controlling flood risk. Lead Local Flood Authorities, such as Dorset County Council, will have responsibility for adopting, managing and maintaining Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs), a key feature in green infrastructure, for which some funding will be provided.

2.22 Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism is a note focusing on broad principles and general criteria that are relevant to most types of tourist development. Tourism is recognised to be of crucial importance to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the whole country.

2.23 Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment is a draft PPS (March 2010) revising and consolidating parts of existing PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural areas), PPS 9 (Biodiversity and geo-conservation), PPG 17 (Open space, sport and recreation) and PPG20 (Coastal Planning). It provides national planning policy on the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and the habitats and species it supports, green infrastructure open space and land and related facilities for sport, recreation and play.

2.24 The contribution the planning system can make to mitigating and adapting to climate change through the provision of well planned green spaces is recognised. A number of other benefits of strategic networks of green spaces, or green infrastructure, are also highlighted:

- 'ecosystems services' such as flood water storage, sustainable drainage, urban cooling and shading;
- creating and enhancing wildlife and habitats and 'green corridors' for wildlife;
- creating attractive and sustainable communities as well as links to the past and history of an area. The various roles of trees are specifically highlighted;
- open space can serve as a vital focal point for community activities and plays a vital role in promoting healthy living and in the social development of children through sport and interaction;
- quality of life and well-being of rural communities through access to local sports and recreation facilities;
- countryside and coast provide opportunities for recreation.

2.25 Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate, also a draft PPS (March 2010), recognises the benefits green infrastructure can make in terms of preparing for the effects of climate change. Increases in summer temperatures and the risk of flooding and droughts are likely to have devastating consequences. Local authorities must, therefore, plan for climate change for both new development and in terms of adapting existing areas. Green infrastructure is identified as having a strong role. Local authorities are directed to plan for green infrastructure to optimise its many benefits, as part of wider networks, as this will support local biodiversity and healthy living environments through providing urban cooling, local flood risk management and local access to shady outdoor space.

2.26 The draft Marine Policy Statement (March 2010) indicates that marine and terrestrial spatial planning will need to be integrated. Marine planning has clear links to coastal habitats and activity.

Sub-National Policy

2.27 Planning policy at the regional level was to be provided by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South West. The new government proposes to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies in the Decentralisation and Localism Bill. However, even if the proposal to abolish regional policy takes place, there is a continued need for local councils to plan for economic, housing and other needs and so a need for supporting infrastructure. Currently, there is consensus among the councils of South East Dorset that it is important to consolidate and enhance the area's green infrastructure.

2.28 Whilst the RSS may no longer be taken forward, the approach it set out is supported by background evidence that can be used to develop local proposals. It is therefore, still relevant in broad terms for developing this strategy. Key elements included:

- proposals about the general scale and location of new development in the Bournemouth and Poole Housing Market Area;
- a vision for the area that sought to transform Bournemouth and Poole town centres through new employment and high density housing growth;
- the need for Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGs) to relieve recreational pressure on the Dorset Heaths Special Protection Area;
- identifying Green Infrastructure as an integral part of development, including the provision of new areas of open space, not just more intensive use of existing spaces;
- recognising that a number of designated sites are at risk due to recreational pressure, including: Poole Harbour and the Avon Valley (both Ramsar and SPA sites) as well as the Dorset Heathlands SPA, the Dorset Heaths SAC and the Dorset Heathlands Ramsar (henceforth called the Dorset Heathlands) in South East Dorset. Just outside the area, the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and the New Forest SAC are also recognised as being particularly at risk;
- the need for planning and delivery of major development to provide for, amongst other things, amenity space and green infrastructure that meets community need and supports improved biodiversity. Green infrastructure is also recognised as way to ensure high housing densities can result in good quality living environments;
- recognising the considerable reliance being placed on mitigation measures to prevent adverse effects on the integrity of many of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Further testing is needed at the local level and will need to be carefully monitored to ensure that actual outcomes are as anticipated.

2.29 At the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and local levels there a number of policy and strategy documents and programmes that will support green infrastructure. Also, green infrastructure is a way help to deliver the aims and objectives of these. Key sub-regional documents include:

- Multi-Area Agreement for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole including the Green Knowledge Economy Strategy and Action Plan;
- Local Area Agreements for Bournemouth, for Dorset and for Poole;
- Sustainable Community Strategies for Bournemouth, for Dorset, for Poole and for District Council areas;
- Dorset Biodiversity Strategy, Poole Nature Conservation Strategy and Bournemouth Nature Conservation Strategy;
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans for Dorset and Bournemouth and Poole;
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Renewable Energy Strategy;
- NHS Strategic Plans for Bournemouth and Poole and for Dorset;
- Catchment Abstraction Management Plans and Catchment Flood Management Plans for Dorset Stour, Frome, Piddle and Hampshire Avon;
- Shoreline Management Plan for Hurst Spit to Durlston Head;
- AONB Management Plans for Dorset and for Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs;
- Forest Design Plans for East Dorset, Purbeck Heath and Cranborne Chase Woodlands;
- South West Woodland and Forestry Framework (Forestry Commission, 2005) and Implementation Plan (2009-12) form key elements of the Government's sub-regional woodland and tree strategy
- emerging Marine Spatial Plans for Dorset (inshore and offshore);
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3). The South East Dorset Multi-Modal Study helped inform development options;
- Dorset Minerals and Waste LDF.

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership

2.29a On 20 May 2010 the Coalition Government published its 'Programme for Government' which included the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). LEPs are joint local authority-business bodies brought forward by local authorities themselves to promote local economic development.

2.29b A prospectus for the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership was submitted to Government on 28th June 2011 and was officially approved on 7th July. The partnership has been invited to form an LEP Board. The Dorset LEP area matches the area administered by the authorities of Dorset County Council (including the district/borough councils within the DCC Dorset area) and the two unitary authorities of Bournemouth Borough Council and Borough of Poole.

2.29c A key source of evidence which the LEP will use is the Local Economic Assessment for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (June 2011). This assessment notes that the environment gives Dorset a unique competitive advantage which complements aspirations to promote a green knowledge economy. It also refers to the importance of green infrastructure in supporting this objective.

2.29d The Local Economic Assessment (LEA) emphasises how Dorset's environment is crucial to tourism, an important part of the local economy. It notes that the comprehensive package of rural, coastal and urban attractions distinguishes the sub-region's tourism industry and provides an opportunity to secure higher skilled and better paid tourism jobs. South East Dorset also possesses international gateways at Bournemouth International Airport and Poole Port.

2.29e Green infrastructure is a significant component of the area's tourism offer. Features such as harbourside parks, beaches, and linear parks all play a key role in attracting visitors and providing desirable links between places and facilities. It is also worth noting that, by helping to absorb the impact of new development upon habitats, green infrastructure supports economic growth and so its contribution to economic, social and environmental prosperity is an important one.

Definition of Green Infrastructure

2.30 The draft PPS on Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment defines green infrastructure. It is proposed to adopt this definition:

> 'Green infrastructure' is a strategic network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life in sustainable communities. It delivers a broad range of functions and provides vital socio-economic and cultural benefits which underpin individual and community health and wellbeing.
>
> These functions include: conserving and enhancing the natural environment; providing wildlife corridors; reducing noise and air pollution; and helping communities to adapt to a changing climate through water and carbon management. In urban areas, functions include providing routes (e.g. footpaths and cycleways) which link areas of open space within settlements; providing sustainable drainage, flood storage and urban cooling; and providing a wide range of opportunities for engagement and active citizenship, relaxation and quiet contemplation, sport, recreation and children's play.

Local Context

2.31 South East Dorset has a population of about 458,000 and includes the settlements of Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, Wimborne, Colehill, Corfe Mullen, Ferndown, Verwood, St Leonards and St Ives, West Moors, Upton and Wareham.

2.32 Generally, indicators of deprivation are low with few areas falling within the most deprived 10% in England. The exceptions are areas of Bournemouth that fall within the most deprived 10% in England in terms of the indexes of multiple deprivation and the specific health and disability index. Poole also has pockets of deprivation in terms of health and disability.

2.33 The environment is a key driver for the South West's economy. Tourism is a leading industry in South East Dorset. The coast and countryside are at the heart of the local economy. The extensive coastline, two harbours, maritime history and diverse marine environment are a major draw for visitors to the area. The links between the coast and main urban areas also support tourism. Despite the beautiful and varied countryside, Dorset's rural areas are the least visited part of the county.

2.34 Over 12% of the South West's economy relies on the land and landscape. Agriculture is a main source of income in many of South East Dorset's rural areas. There is extensive woodland and forest coverage in South East Dorset. This is a mosaic of coniferous plantations (mainly used for recreation) and semi-natural broadleaved woodland, some of which is ancient woodland, which has biodiversity and fuel value.

2.35 Traffic congestion continues to grow in the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch area affecting private vehicles and bus services. Bus services are the main public transport option in the conurbation but there is much less accessibility by public transport in rural areas.

2.36 South East Dorset is located on the coast with several main rivers running through the area and entering the sea at Poole and Christchurch Harbours. A number of locations are at risk of fluvial and/or tidal flooding. These include central Christchurch, north Bournemouth, Poole and Wimborne.

2.37 Several main rivers do not meet ecological or chemical water standards. Also, many rivers are at abstraction capacity.

2.38 Climate change predictions indicate that Dorset will be affected by hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters alongside more extreme weather events – flash flooding, droughts, heat waves and storms and sea level rise. Observed changes over the last 40 years have shown these predicted changes are being experienced.

2.39 The open space network includes urban parks and gardens, large forest areas, attractive river valleys, extensive but fragmented heath and the coast. Between these areas lies a network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths but coverage varies.

2.40 There are several national and local cycle routes crossing the area, including: National Cycle Routes 2 (Dover to St Austell) and 25 (Poole to Longleat), Poole Heritage cycle route, Bourne Valley Greenway and North Dorset Trailway.

2.41 There are also a number of waymarked walking routes and bridleways including: South West Coastal Path, Stour Valley Way, Castleman Trailway, Avon Valley path, Wareham Forest Way.

2.42 Most of the area falls within the Dorset Heaths national landscape character area. Areas around the northern, eastern and southern edges fall within the Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase, New Forest and South Purbeck national landscape character areas respectively.

2.43 Two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - Dorset and Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs - are located in South East Dorset. The coast immediately to west is known as the Jurassic Coast. It is a world heritage site designated for its geodiversity and forms a distinctive coastal landscape and supports rare and important plants and animals.

2.44 Much of the area falls within the Dorset Heaths Natural Area. This is a lowland heath habitat which is recognised as being of international importance. Other significant habitats are the wide river valleys of Frome, Piddle, Avon, Allen and Stour, broadleaved ancient woodland, arable and pasture farmland and the coastal zone. The other natural areas are the South Wessex Downs and Isles of Portland and Purbeck.

2.45 The area has nine overlapping internationally designated nature conservation sites including the Dorset Heaths, Avon Valley, Poole Harbour, Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs and Studland Dunes. Other designations for nature conservation exist across the area.

2.46 Evidence of human settlement in South East Dorset exists from as early as 10,000BC. This includes indications of busy ports, hill forts and manor houses from antiquity to the more recent past. Many of these historic landmarks are still visible within the landscape and help to shape the identity of the area.

2.47 Key heritage features are:

- natural heritage features associated with heathland, ancient woodland and the Jurassic coast world heritage site
- 262 scheduled ancient monuments scattered mostly in the rural areas, including: Hengistbury Head, Badbury Rings, and Royal Naval Cordite Factory
- National Trust properties, listed and other important buildings
- 10 parks and gardens of historic interest.

3: VISION

A Vision for Green Infrastructure in South East Dorset

3.1 South East Dorset is a place with high-quality, distinctive and accessible parks, corridors habitats and spaces for people and wildlife. Green Infrastructure will complement the unique coast and harbours setting of the area and enhance internationally important wetlands and heaths as well as local wildlife sites while actively supporting the development of sustainable communities.

3.2 By 2030 the cross boundary partnership has worked with local communities to create a South East Dorset where:

- **the Green Infrastructure network plays an important role in making the area resilient to climate change**. Street trees and urban greening schemes assist in cooling and hading urban areas as well as making places safe, sustainable and attractive. Natural flood schemes in the Stour, Avon, Frome, Piddle and Allen valleys help to reduce flooding in urban areas downstream. These main rivers and the wider river systems offer potential to carry out enhancement of wetland habitats. Grasslands of biodiversity value, particularly neutral and acid grasslands provide an important natural resource across the area. These grasslands are mostly small and fragmented and their conservation is essential as part of the mosaic of habitats. Care will be required that these sites are surveyed and not damaged, for example by tree planting. Sustainably managed community woodlands provide multifunctional uses for recreation, biodiversity benefits, as well as a source for wood-fuel;
- **the unique environment within and surrouning the urban area, including Studland Bay, Poole Bay and harbour, Christchurch Harbour, the Dorset Heathlands, the Purbeck ridge and scarp slopes, AONBs and heritage features, is conserved and enhanced**. These natural assets form part of the multi-functional green infrastructure network and set the context for sustainable urban growth which does not adversely impact upon this unique environment;
- **the towns and villages of South East Dorset are connected to a network of green spaces and corridors** providing space for play, recreational activity, relaxation, reflection and growing food. Local people are proud of this network and use it regularly to take part in healthy exercise and so benefit from good physical and mental health. A variety of places exist for people of all ages to come together;
- **the local economy continues to benefit from a high quality natural and built environment**. A growing green knowledge economy respects and makes use of the natural and historic assets. Forestry, woodland, agriculture and local food initiatives are also growing contributors to the economy;
- **the historic landscape and wildlife are thriving**. Access to sensitive locations is well managed. The pressures placed on, and fragmentation of, the Dorset Heathlands by urban populations are reduced by the regular use of new attractive green spaces. Semi natural habitats are expanded and enhanced, including the range of wetland habitats along the Frome, Piddle, Avon, Allen and Stour valleys. Heathland, Woodland, Chalk Downland and Coastal habitats are thriving.

- **key assets such as local landscapes, the beaches, the Stour Valley, Upton Country Park and Moors Valley Country Park are valued by local people and visitors to the area**. They form part of the Green Infrastructure Network and are connected by the Castleman Trailway, Dorset Coast Path, Stour Valley Way, Wareham to Upton Cycleway as well as other high quality walking, cycling and horse riding routes and public rights of way. These together with improvements to the Dorset Cycle Network and public transport hubs offer desirable alternatives to the car for travel.

4: OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

Strategic Objectives

4.1 Green infrastructure is critical to the aim of creating sustainable communities and meeting the challenges of climate change. It harnesses the natural environment, offers ways to secure solutions for a range of economic, social and environmental issues and make optimal use of space through its multi-functions. The South East Dorset Green Infrastructure partners have the following overarching objectives in terms of delivering the strategy:

1. to work in partnership to deliver multi-functional green infrastructure;
2. to improve health and well-being, reduce inequality and encourage community participation;
3. to strengthen the competitive advantages of South East Dorset's economy;
4. to prepare for climate change through mitigation and adaptation;
5. to ensure that the economic and housing growth that takes place is matched by green infrastructure to conserve and enhance the unique natural environment;
6. to create and manage sustainable places informed by local people and local character.

Green Infrastructure Outcomes and Benefits

4.2 The Green Infrastructure Strategy aims to create a multi-functional network of green infrastructure for South East Dorset. The following are identified as the benefits of an adequately resourced and well managed green infrastructure asset for South East Dorset.

GI Outcomes	**Benefits of well designed GI**
1. Health & Well-being To help improve quality of life for communities in South East Dorset by providing 'green lungs' comprising an extensive network of green infrastructure and green spaces for wildlife and people. Providing for access to nature as well as opportunities for active and passive recreation particularly in socially deprived areas. Measures to adapt to and mitigate climate change are also beneficial for health.	• creates cooler microclimates making towns and cities more pleasant in hot weather (reducing the urban heat island effect through evaporative cooling, shading and providing corridors for cooler air to flow into urban areas) • improves air quality by filtering out pollutants • provides free, easy and attractive opportunities for recreation and physical activity • helps to reduce stress, improve mental health and help recovery of chronic diseases through enjoyment of open space and nature • provides safe, easily accessible green routes for walking and cycling. Active travel is one of the easiest ways to exercise • provides space to grow fresh food • reduces crime (and the perception of crime) through natural surveillance in well-used public spaces

GI Outcomes	Benefits of well designed GI
2. Sustainable Economic Development To support the local economy by maintaining and creating attractive places for inward investment and desirable business locations as well as encouraging rural regeneration. Increasing the amount of land which can be used by communities to grow local food, including a network of allotments and community gardens, is also important.	• increasing green space can lead to an increase in average house prices in an area • attractive landscape design encourages businesses to relocate to and stay in a place • good green spaces and landscape design improve an area's image and encourage inward investment (but as secondary role to workforce skills, innovation and connectivity) • quality of the immediate office environment is of most interest to high-value added, knowledge intensive industry • high quality, accessible green spaces can support a more productive workforce by improving health, alleviating stress and increasing motivation • the green infrastructure 'sector' is a major employer nationally • providing food, timber and industrial crops (e.g. biofuels)
3. Tourism To support and provide further sustainable opportunities for the area's key tourist industry by opening up and increasing access and mobility to wider areas for people to explore and enjoy. The coastline, harbours and inland countryside are key assets for the tourism sector.	• a high quality environment encourages tourism • makes places more attractive and gives them a better image
4. Access & Transport To enhance overall access, mobility and connectivity within the green infrastructure network, in particular from existing and new urban areas from areas deficient in green space and in areas of deprivation, to help promote social inclusion. This includes prioritisation and consideration and promotion of transport systems that offer alternatives to cars.	• provides safe, easily accessible green routes for walking, cycling and horse riding • active travel routes can help with fitness and reduce car dependency • provies for the needs of diability groups and those with mobility problems

GI Outcomes	Benefits of well designed GI
5. Water Management & Climate Change To ensure that the green infrastructure network achieves its potential in providing flood and water management, local climate control, dispersing air pollution and filtering water to enhance quality, and therefore supporting opportunities for climate change adaptation.	Helps adapt to the effects of climate change by: • creating cooler microclimates and reducing the need to cool buildings • creating cooler microclimates and making towns and cities more pleasant in hot weather • storing and intercepting rainwater and encouraging natural drainage, to prevent flooding. Woodland, heathland, wetland and parkland can all slow down run off • storing river flood water to reduce the risk of fluvial flooding e.g. through the restoration of floodplains • providing shelter and protection in extreme weather Mitigates climate change by: • absorbing and storing carbon • reducing travel by providing local recreation opportunities • providing walking and cycling routes to reduce carbon emissions from vehicles • supplying biomass to directly replace fossil fuels • supplying timber to replace less sustainable construction materials • increasing local food production to reduce food miles
6. Open Space & Recreation To reduce open space deficiency in existing and new communities, ensuring all open space provision is high quality, attractive and safe, and that recreational pressure on the Dorset Heaths is alleviated through the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANGS). Maximising opportunities along the less sensitive stretches of coast is a key objective as it is well used and accessible to large numbers of people.	• providing free, easy and attractive opportunities for recreation • providing local recreation opportunities • encouraging community cohesion through bringing people together and using green spaces for social events • providing places for growing food locally • high quality, accessible green spaces can support a more productive workforce by improving health, alleviating stress and increasing motivation
7. Landscape Character To maintain and enhance landscape quality and condition, ensuring that the green infrastructure network appropriately reflects landscape character, heritage assets and historic landscapes, context and sense of place.	• reflects a setting for the wider landscape character of the area • provides a recreation and visitor resource and helps to divert pressure from landscapes which are sensitive

GI Outcomes	Benefits of well designed GI
8. Ecology & Biodiversity To conserve and enhance existing biodiversity assets, whilst increasing the potential of the green infrastructure network to provide space and corridors for wildlife, particularly new areas of heathland habitat which can be colonised by Dorset heathland species.	• provides greater extents of planned wildlife habitat within urban and rural areas • provide new and alternative opportunities for biodiversity • creates sounds ecological networks through green corridors between otherwise isolated areas of wildlife habitat and reverses habitat fragmentation • provides a recreation and visitor resource and helps to divert pressure from landscapes which are sensitive • provides a biodiverse landscape that is far more desirable than an urban desert
9. Cultural Heritage To protect , conserve and enhance South East Dorset's cultural heritage. In part this might involve the provision of appropriate interpretation of key features for the benefit of local communities and visitors to the area.	• reflects a setting for the wider landscape character and cultural heritage of the area • provides safe, easily accessible green routes for walking and cycling

5: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK

5.1 The multi-functional Green Infrastructure Framework is the heart of the Strategy. A framework of green infrastructure will help to make connections for people, wildlife and the environment. Green infrastructure will complement the unique coast and harbours setting of the area and enhance internationally important wetlands and heaths as well as local wildlife sites while actively supporting the development of sustainable. The previous sections set out the vision and objectives for the Strategy. This section sets out geographic features and core principles forming the Strategy which are identified as the Green Infrastructure Framework. From this, the key priorities for green infrastructure can be identified.

5.2 The Framework takes account of the key issues that the Strategy should try to address, as well as the vision and objectives set out in previous sections. The principles will inform policy makers and those delivering projects on the ground. Figure 1, which acts as the Executive Summary, shows the links between the vision and objectives, the framework and the projects delivering the Strategy.

5.3 The Framework is made up of geographic elements of corridors and zones. The principles of the Framework are identified as themes. Map 2 shows in diagrammatic form the main geographic elements of the Framework as it is expected to develop. Further details of these and the themes are set out in the following paragraphs.

Corridors

- Coast and Harbours
- Active Travel Network
- River Valleys

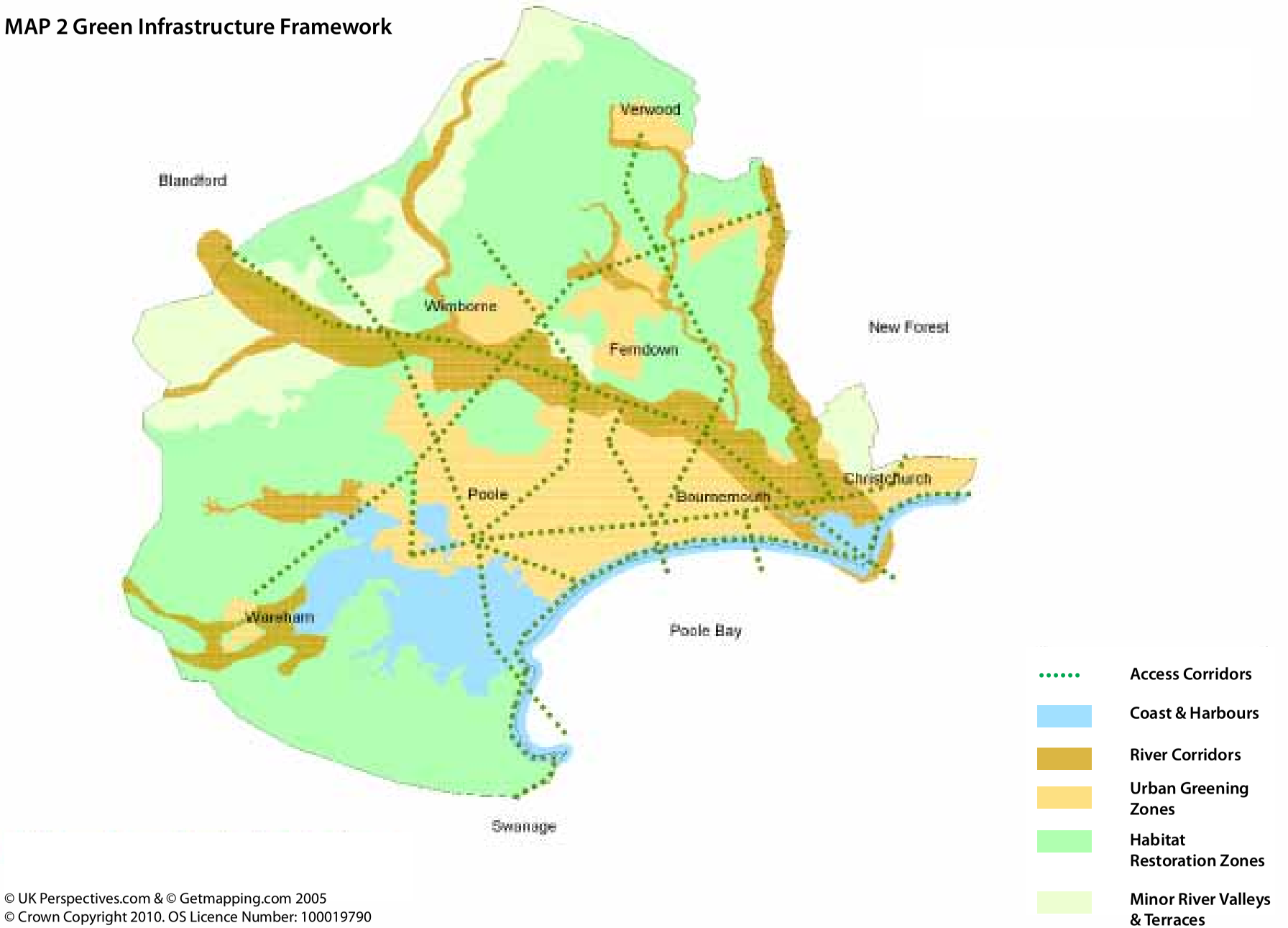
Zones

- Urban Greening Zone
- Habitat Restoration Zones:

Themed Initiatives

- Coast – A Year Round Destination
- Active Travel Routes
- Water and Flood Management
- Greening the Urban Environment
- Green Space Creation and Enhancement
- Habitat Creation and Restoration
- Celebrating Heritage

MAP 2 Green Infrastructure Framework



Coast and Harbours

5.4 The coast and harbours corridor includes Poole and Christchurch harbours and the coast and its beaches between Studland and Christchurch.

5.5 The coast, beaches and harbours are existing green infrastructure assets and provide an opportunity to enhance recreation and access to nature on a year round basis. These locations also include sensitive habitats which need to be conserved and enhanced. The two objectives need to be balanced. The framework identifies the coast and harbour as key elements. Enhancements will include improving the public realm and creating stronger links with the access network to encourage people to arrive at the coast by walking and cycling. It will be important to explore options for promoting and linking existing routes, such as round-harbour trails and cycle routes, where possible. This might involve working with local businesses (for instance to offer park and ride facilities which would intercept traffic and reduce pressure upon the highway network, particularly on busy summer weekends), or organisations such as Network Rail (for example where there is a need to consider new or enhanced crossing facilities for cyclists and pedestrians).

Active Travel Network

5.6 The Active Travel Network will link main commuting destinations within the Urban Greening Zone. These are Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch, Wimborne and Wareham town centres and the major employment areas of Bournemouth Airport and Ferndown. Main recreation routes will also be linked into the network. These are the Castleman Trailway, Dorset Coastal path, Stour Valley Way and Wareham to Upton Cycleway as well as enhancing the north south links between the conurbation, the countryside to the north and coast to the south. Linking up to the North Dorset Trailway would represent one such enhancement. Many of these routes fulfil both a recreational and commuting function. The chines provide potential links to the coast.

5.7 The Active Travel Network gives the opportunity to encourage the greater use of alternative modes of travel such as cycling and walking for commuting and recreation. Cycling and walking also offer benefits in terms of physical and mental health and in terms of reducing congestion and air pollution.

River Valleys Corridor

5.8 The river valleys of the Rivers Stour, Frome, Piddle and Avon and their tributaries are identified as corridors, subject to the sensitivity of certain habitats. River valley recreational routes should be carefully planned to ensure that banks are not damaged and important aquatic species and bird populations are not unduly disturbed.

5.9 The river valleys offer the opportunity to enhance and create new areas of open space, recreation routes, habitat restoration, wildlife corridors and flood management.

Urban Greening Zone

5.10 The urban greening zone is the main built up area of the South East Dorset conurbation. It includes all areas, including residential, business and town centre, in Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, Wimborne, Colehill, Corfe Mullen, Ferndown, Verwood, St Leonards and St Ives, West Moors and Wareham.

5.11 Within the urban greening zone the opportunities for green infrastructure investment are focused on two priorities:

- Creating a healthy sustainable transport network, which promotes cycling and walking over less sustainable transport modes. Details are set out above;
- enhancing semi-natural habitats and integrating small scale green infrastructure within both existing urban areas and new development.

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Habitat Restoration Zones

5.12 The South West Nature Map identifies habitats of importance and their extent at the landscape scale. Conservation at a landscape scale focuses on restoring the underlying ecological functions that maintain species populations within the habitats of concern. By increasing habitat patch size, quality, concentration in the landscape, and the ecological permeability of intervening land, we can help species to 'percolate' through the landscape increasing immigration and emigration rates, and reducing population isolation and vulnerability.

5.13 Four habitats are identified in South East Dorset for expansion and restoration. These have been translated into zones for restoration and are shown on Map 2. The four zones are:

- Woodland Restoration Zone
- Lowland Heath Restoration Zone
- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh Restoration Zone
- Chalk Downland Restoration Zone

Woodland Restoration Zone

5.14 This zone relates mainly to UK BAP Priority Habitat type Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland but also Wet Woodland and to a lesser extent Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland.

5.15 Woodlands have suffered severe loss of area and are generally highly fragmented, albeit with some concentrated expanses on river valley sides and scarp slopes. Despite past losses woodland contributes substantially to landscape identity. Woodlands offer great scope for expansion of native broadleaved species, and can be restored or recreated on a wide range of soils and landforms. Restoration of semi-natural canopies to Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) is a particular opportunity.

5.16 Two main areas are identified as priorities for woodland restoration:

- north east of Wimborne Minster and west of Holt Heath
- between Lytchett Matravers and Bloxworth north of the B3067.

Lowland Heath Restoration Zone

5.17 This zone relates to the UK BAP Priority Habitat type Lowland Heathland. Lowland heath is characterised by the presence of plants such as heather, dwarf gorses, and cross-leaved heath and is generally found below an altitude of 300 metres. Areas of good quality heathland should consist of an ericaceous layer of varying heights and structures, some areas of scattered trees and scrub, areas of bare ground, gorse, wet heaths, bogs and open water. Acid grassland is often an important component. The presence and numbers of characteristic birds, reptiles, invertebrates, vascular plants, bryophytes and lichens are important indicators of habitat quality. Dorset contains a key concentration of the remaining UK lowland heathland resource.

5.18 The areas identified as priorities for restoration are:

- Mainly centred on and extend the Dorset Heaths SACs;
- in and around Wareham Forest north of the Piddle valley;
- on the Isle of Purbeck, for example, in the large areas of forestry plantation named Wytch Heath, Rempstone Heath and Newton Heath;
- west of the urban areas at Ferndown and West Moors and around the current Holt Heath SSSI;
- North of Bournemouth Airport where there are several large forestry blocks.

Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh Restoration Zone

5.19 This zone relates to UK BAP Priority Habitat type Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh. Grazing marsh describes a number of coastal and riparian landscapes. It is defined as periodically inundated pasture, or meadow with ditches which maintain the water levels, containing standing brackish or fresh water. The ditches can be especially rich in plants and invertebrates. Almost all areas are grazed and some are cut for hay or silage. Sites may contain seasonal water-filled hollows and permanent ponds with emergent swamp communities, but not extensive areas of tall fen species like reeds, though fen and reed swamp communities may be embedded within them. Grazing marshes are particularly important for the number of breeding waders such as snipe, lapwing and curlew they support. Internationally important populations of wintering wildfowl also occur including Bewick swans and whooper swans.

5.20 The areas identified as priorities for restoration are:

- valley of the River Allen as far south as Wimborne Minster;
- valley of the River Avon including Christchurch Harbour;
- valleys of the Piddle and Frome including Poole Harbour;
- valley of the River Stour, consistent with the approach in the Stour Valley Project.

Chalk Downland Restoration Zone

5.21 This zone relates to UK BAP Priority Habitat type Calcareous Grassland. Lowland calcareous grasslands occur on shallow lime-rich soils generally overlying limestone rocks, including chalk. These grasslands are now largely found on distinct topographic features such as escarpments or dry valley slopes and sometimes on ancient earthworks in landscapes strongly influenced by the underlying limestone geology. More rarely, remnant examples occur on flatter topography over chalk. The definition of calcareous grasslands covers a range of plant communities in which lime-loving plants are characteristic. Lowland calcareous grasslands support a very rich flora including many nationally rare and scarce species such as the bastard toadflax, *Thesium humifusum* and the dwarf sedge, *Carex humilis*. The invertebrate fauna is also diverse and includes scarce species like the adonis blue *Lysandra bellargus*, the silver-spotted skipper *Hesperia comma* and Duke of Burgundy fritillary *Hamaeris lucina*. These grasslands also provide feeding or breeding habitat for a number of scarce or declining birds including stone curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* and skylark *Alauda arvensis*.

5.22 The cover of lowland calcareous grassland in the region has suffered a sharp decline over the last 50 years, being highly vulnerable to agricultural improvement. Dorset is a major UK concentration of this habitat.

5.23 The chalk area known locally as the Purbeck Ridge, along high ground in the far south west in the general area between Corfe Castle and Studland and incorporating Nine Barrow Down, is identified for restoration.

Themes

The themes set out the core principles for the Green Infrastructure Framework. These principles guide the development of existing and new green infrastructure in South East Dorset.

Theme 1: Coast - A Year Round Destination	
Purpose	To promote the coast to local residents as a year round alternative destination for recreation and access to nature.
Context and Issues	The coast is a very important feature of South East Dorset's natural and semi natural environment. The areas designated for nature conservation should be conserved and enhanced. Key features include Poole Harbour SPA and RAMSAR, Poole Bay Cliffs and Christchurch Harbour SSSIs, Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Dorset Heaths (Purbeck and Wareham) SAC and Studland Dunes SAC. SNCIs along the coast are also a key feature. Climate change predictions for Dorset point to hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters alongside more extreme weather events and sea level rise. Erosion and flooding is likely to damage coastal amenities and infrastructure as well as beaches. Planned growth for the area will increase demand for green infrastructure. There are existing deficiencies of green space in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. There are also hot spots of deprivation – multiple, health and disability, especially in Bournemouth and Poole. For many of the areas, existing green space assets are the internationally designated nature conservation sites of the Dorset heathlands where recreational pressure is affecting the sensitive habitat of the heathland. Green infrastructure provision will also help alleviate recreational pressures on wildlife sites in general. The coast is one of South East Dorset's natural assets that are vital to the area's economy. However, many local residents and visitors to the coast arrive by car. This is due to poor access by cycling, and walking particularly in rural areas. It can lead to high levels of traffic congestion.
Policy Drivers	Sustainable Communities, Biodiversity, Economy and Tourism.

Theme 1: Coast - A Year Round Destination	
Opportunities	Developing and promoting alternative places for recreation and access to nature will help to reduce the pressure on the Dorset Heaths and other sensitive habitats and landscapes. The seafront area is already is a major tourist draw in high season. There is an opportunity to better celebrate South East Dorset's special and valued coastline throughout the year. The coast of from Studland to Christchurch will be promoted as a year round location for recreation and access to nature. Measures will continue to conserve and enhance designated nature conservation areas. Increasing activity at the coast should not put extra pressure on sensitive coastal habitats. Outside these sensitive areas, measures to enhance the coast should take a long-term approach to offer high quality facilities for residents and visitors alike to attract them to the coast all year round. The following will be made along the seafront and other coastal locations: • making improvements to the public realm and environmental quality; • including natural measures to reduce flood risk and provide coastal defence as part of green space; • creating key gateways to the coast. This includes providing clearly signed walking, cycling and public transport links so residents and visitors will be able to enjoy the coast without using a car; • providing information about important heath, maritime cliff and slope and woodland habitats and diverse geological heritage such as Poole Bay Cliffs SSSI and Studland Cliffs SSSI; • developing the seafront area to educate about low-carbon lifestyles by including example features; • continuing tourist, art and community events at key gateway locations.
Priorities	Existing gateways would be priority locations. These are Studland, Wareham Quay, Poole Quay, Poole Head, Durley Chine, Bournemouth Pier, Boscombe, Southbourne, Highcliffe, Hengistbury Head, Christchurch Harbour/Mudeford Quay. Also need to create links from the urban areas to the coast using the chines such as Flag Head Chine, Branksome Chine, Branksome Dean Chine, Alum Chine, Durley Chine, and Chewton Bunney.

Theme 2: Active Travel Routes	
Purpose	To create an active travel network of routes for commuting and for recreation beyond the conurbation.
Context and Issues	High levels of traffic congestion affect areas of South East Dorset. This detracts from the attractiveness of the area and has a negative effect on the local economy. There is poor access to green space, countryside and coast by public transport, walking and cycling. This is a particular problem in the more rural areas. There are also hot spots of deprivation – multiple, health and disability - in Bournemouth and Poole and, to a lesser degree, in Christchurch..
Policy Drivers	Sustainable transport, Climate change adaptation/mitigation, economy, health.

Theme 2: Active Travel Routes	
Opportunities	A sustainable transport network for commuting and recreation, particularly where active travel is used, will have economic, environmental and health benefits. This is vital in terms of improving the quality of life and environment. There is the opportunity to use new and existing cycle routes, green corridors and green spaces to create an improved network for commuting and recreation. Routes and infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians to key work, shopping and recreational destinations will need to be enhanced to create a network that is attractive to users. Links should also be made to public transport hubs. Within the Urban Greening Zone the focus of the network will be commuting routes. The key element for improving commuting routes and infrastructure will be to improve and develop new routes between major employment centres and conurbation. Beyond the Urban Greening Zone, the focus of the network will be to improve recreational routes. The opportunity is also there to improve corridors for wildlife. Recreation routes should link into the commuting network. The key elements are: • to make continuous and link the Castleman Trailway, Dorset Coastal path, Stour Valley Way and Wareham to Upton Cycleway; • to enhance north south links between the conurbation, the countryside to the north and coast to the south; • to develop a complete round Poole Harbour walking and cycling route, subject to the sensitivity of certain designations and habitats.
Priorities	The active travel network should prioritise routes to/from Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch, Wimborne and Wareham town centres and the major employment areas of Bournemouth Airport and Ferndown. Boscombe West, East Cliff and Springbourne, Strouden Park, Kinson South and Central are wards in Bournemouth with multiple deprivation or health and disability deprivation scores in the 10% most deprived in England. Poole Town is a ward in Poole with health and disability scores in the worst 10%. These locations will also be priority locations for improving the Active Travel Network. Also, there are pockets of multiple deprivation in Poole and Christchurch that are amongst the 20% most deprived in England. Recreational routes should prioritise existing rights of way and take opportunities to invest in new links and use roads where necessary.


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Theme 3: Water and Flood Management	
Purpose	To provide natural measures to improve water quality, manage water quantity and to reduce the risk of flooding for urban areas located downstream.
Context and Issues	Central Christchurch, north Bournemouth, Poole and Wimborne are particularly at risk of fluvial and/or tidal flooding. Diffuse water pollution from agriculture and erosion threaten the quality of water bodies. All rivers in the area are identified as having poor ecological status. Also, the Stour and Frome rivers have poor chemical status. Many rivers at abstraction capacity but there is continued demand for water resources.
Policy Drivers	Climate Change adaptation/mitigation, Water management.
Opportunities	In terms of managing flood risk, there are three complementary water management functions that green infrastructure is able to provide: slowing down (reducing run-off), infiltration (reducing run-off volume) and storage. There is the opportunity to identify flood risk management measures that are not simply engineering solutions but also give benefits in terms of conserving and enhancing habitats and providing green space. The Stour, Frome, Piddle, Allen and Avon valleys offer opportunities to provide natural measures to reduce the flood risk to urban areas downstream. Natural measures for reducing flood risk will include: • bank-side flood storage to manage water flow during times of peak and low flow • re-establish broadleaved woodland to improve the replacement of underground water stores Natural flood schemes should also consider the need to restore floodplain habitats for waterfowl and waders but also local fish populations and fishery interests. New native trees and woodlands in suitable locations can improve water quality and quantity as well as alleviating and slowing the rate of flooding. As well as water management, woodlands offer opportunities to contribute to other objectives in terms of biodiversity, timber, carbon storage and access to nature. New development should incorporate opportunities for multi-use green infrastructure. For example, sustainable drainage and greywater systems should be integrated into new developments and retrofitted into existing areas.
Priorities	Christchurch, Poole and Wimborne are particularly at risk from fluvial and/or tidal flooding.

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Theme 4: Greening the Urban Environment	
Purpose	To enhance semi-natural habitats and small scale green infrastructure in the urban greening zone.
Context and Issues	There are existing identified deficiencies of green space in Bournemouth and Poole and the amount and quality of private green space is reducing. The predicted effects of climate change of hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters alongside more extreme weather events – flash flooding, droughts, heat waves and storms - and sea level rise will affect wildlife and habitats. Increased temperatures will also alter how people carry out their day to day lives.
Policy Drivers	Creating sustainable communities, Climate change adaptation/mitigation, Biodiversity.
Opportunities	Enhancing semi-natural habitats and small scale green infrastructure brings a number of benefits to existing and new urban areas in the urban greening zone. For example, it helps to create attractive places, provide access to nature, improve ecological connectivity and contribute to climate change adaptation through urban cooling, slowing down run-off and reducing energy use. Trees and urban woods have a particular role to play in these. New development should be planned and designed to include semi-natural and multi-functional green infrastructure features. Wherever possible planting should be of native species. Also, where an opportunity arises, existing urban areas should be enhanced. Such features include: • developing small scale green infrastructure elements such as: planting street trees and creating urban woods, promoting green roofs, walls and bridges; • the use of sustainable drainage systems (incorporating habitat features such as ponds, reed beds and wetland vegetation types); • encouraging mowing regimes to foster development of meadow grasslands in green spaces; • planting native species rather than standardised alien species; • providing for nesting and roosting sites for sparrows, swifts and bats in new build features and adding to existing buildings. The Councils will develop guidance on how to include multi-functional green infrastructure in planning and designing for new development through a Green Infrastructure and Design Toolkit. This will include guidance on masterplanning, the early inclusion of green infrastructure the design of a project, planting for safety and natural surveillance and the need to involve the local community will be promoted in the toolkit.
Priorities	Prioritise areas which currently suffer from a poor quality living environment and where residents have less access to gardens. Locations where there are opportunities to create 'Green corridors' for people and wildlife should also be a priority.

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Theme 5: Green Space Creation and Enhancement	
Purpose	To provide a range of new or expanded multi-functional and attractive green space within and adjoining the urban area.
Context and Issues	Planned growth for the area will increase demand for green infrastructure. There are deficiencies of green space in Bournemouth and Poole. There are also hot spots of deprivation – multiple, health and disability - particularly in Bournemouth and Poole. For many of the areas existing green space assets are the international designations of Dorset heathlands where recreational pressure is affecting the sensitive habitat of the heathland. The coast is one of South East Dorset's natural assets and is vital to the area's economy. However, many local residents and visitors to the coast arrive by car. This is due to poor access by cycling and walking particularly in rural areas. It leads to high levels of traffic congestion. The green infrastructure audit identified open space deficiency and health deprivation within the Poole/Bournemouth/Christchurch conurbation. This deficit should be met. The planned new growth will also place extra demand for new green space. For example, demand for allotments currently exceeds supply in many areas.
Policy Drivers	Sustainable Communities, Health, Biodiversity, Sustainable Transport.

Theme 5: Green Space Creation and Enhancement	
Opportunities	Green space is an important element of infrastructure to support the health and well-being for both the existing and new population. It is important to recognise existing assets and make sure they are of high quality and connects with other assets to form a Green Infrastructure Framework. New green space should be provided as part of a multi-functional green infrastructure package. For example, new native woodland can play a key element in green space provision. Woodland is a robust habitat that can help to reduce visitor pressure on other ecologically sensitive sites. Native woodland restoration and expansion should therefore be pursued for the wide range of benefits it can offer. New urban extensions and other development should also deliver multi-functional green infrastructure which connects into the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Framework. The proposed urban extension at Christchurch is one such opportunity, where green infrastructure is an integral element of the master-planning process. Where deficiencies exist new green space opportunities should be planned: • at a strategic level, the Stour Valley Project and extensions to Upton Country Park and Moors Valley Park will partly address the existing deficiency. Further opportunities for green space and access to nature are the coast and Wareham Forest • at a local level, authorities should aim to identify sites within the conurbation where there is potential to create new green space. Where it is not feasible to deliver green spaces within the urban area of 2ha or more in size, the green space provided should meet local quality standards Creating new Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANGS) is one way to reduce recreational pressure on sites where ecological sensitivity is high. Sites must be carefully designed to offer a similar visitor experiences to large extensive semi-natural heathland sites which are much valued by residents. To be effective, SANGS must be supported by measures such as ranger staff and education outreach work. Restored mineral sites offer potential locations for SANGS. Also, a network of local open spaces linked by an active travel network can act as alternatives to reduce pressure on ecologically sensitive sites. Allotments and community gardens are important assets. New provision should be sought. Allotments tend to have single plots where individuals grow their own food and community gardens are a single piece of land tended collectively by a group of people. Both bring benefits in terms of growing affordable fresh produce locally, improving health through diet and exercise and creating a place for social interaction.
Priorities	Areas of open space deficiency. The green infrastructure audit identified open space deficiency and health deprivation within the Poole/ Bournemouth/Christchurch conurbation. Areas most reliant upon heathlands and other sensitive habitats for green space provision. Boscombe West, East Cliff and Springbourne, Strouden Park and Central are wards in Bournemouth with health and disability deprivation scores in the worst 10% in England. Poole Town is a ward in Poole with health and disability scores in the worst 10%. Areas of deficiency for allotments and community gardens should be priority locations for these.

Theme 6: Habitat Creation and Restoration	
Purpose	To conserve, create and connect the wildlife habitats important to South East Dorset – Woodland, Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh, Lowland Heath and Chalk Downland – to contribute to a coherent and resilient ecological network, reduce biodiversity loss, and achieve social and economic benefits.
Context and Issues	It is important to stop the decline of wildlife rich habitats to maintain biodiversity. Many nature conservation sites are in poor condition. Wildlife is threatened because habitats have become fragmented, functional ecosystem processes are disrupted and the viability of some wildlife populations are threatened by climate change. Lowland Heath in South East Dorset is threatened by pressures from recent and new urban growth and human activity such as travel causing air pollution and recreation visitors.
Policy Drivers	Biodiversity, Climate Change, Sustainable Communities. The South West Biodiversity Action Plan sets targets for maintaining and enhancing the region's distinctive habitats and species. The Dorset Biodiversity Strategy ensures that national targets for species and habitats (as specified in the UK BAP) are translated into effective action at the local level. The Environment Agency's Frome Rehabilitation Plan and Avon Restoration Strategy are designed to deliver measures for the restoration and creation of habitat. Similar projects for the Moors River and Lower Stour are under consideration.
Opportunities	The South West Nature Map identifies the habitats of importance and their extent at the landscape scale. Four habitats are identified in South East Dorset for expansion and restoration. These have been translated into zones for restoration. Developing a coherent and resilient ecological network for South East Dorset will include: • core areas: the most important habitats containing source populations of the rarest and/or most vulnerable species e.g. the Natura 2000 network, SSSIs, SNCIs and LNRs. These areas should be managed, buffered, linked and enhanced; • enhancement areas: land of moderate to low ecological value but which could benefit from enhancement measures eg. urban parks and areas of intensive agriculture to the north of the area; • areas for creation and restoration: land having potential for large-scale habitat creation eg. former quarries, areas of semi-improved pasture, planted ancient woodland, conifer plantations on former heathland, and canalised sections of rivers and streams and opportunities for native woodland creation; • wildlife corridors: linear habitats and habitat 'stepping stones' which would promote species dispersal across the area.
Priorities	The South West Nature Map identifies the best areas in the South West Region to conserve, create and connect wildlife habitats at a landscape scale.

Theme 7: Celebrating Heritage	
Purpose	To link key heritage features of the landscape and townscape into the Green Infrastructure Framework.
Context and Issues	Natural and built historic features form part of the unique environment and history of South East Dorset. Many features form part of the wider landscape and townscape setting and contribute to the existing green infrastructure network. A number of pressures, such as development pressures, changing farming practices and the cost of repair and restoration affect heritage features.
Policy Drivers	Creating Sustainable Communities, Landscape and Townscape.
Opportunities	There is the opportunity to make stronger links between heritage features of the landscape, seascape and townscape and the Green Infrastructure Framework by widening the range of functions of the setting of key historic features. Examples include recreation, flood schemes and biodiversity. Swanage Railway, Poole Harbour, Holton Heath, Badbury Rings and Kingston Lacy, Wimborne Minster and Christchurch Priory, Hengistbury Head and Corfe Castle are key heritage features located in South East Dorset. Measures to link such features into the green infrastructure framework include: • working with heritage stakeholders and landowners (such as the National Trust) to incorporate multiple functions into landscape settings; • linking key heritage features into the green infrastructure network through with walking and cycling routes. Promoting recreational routes that give information about the surrounding landscape. Old and significant individual ancient trees resonate with the history of the landscape and form markers in the lives of individual people and communities. Ancient trees can also provide niche habitats and contribute to the urban environment. Ancient, veteran and notable trees should be identified, protected and celebrated as part of the area's living cultural and landscape heritage.
Priorities	The key heritage features listed form the priorities.

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6: STANDARDS

6.1 Standards are positive planning tools for providing high quality green infrastructure assets and for its long term management. It is important that standards set for spatial planning purposes are also used to by local authorities and others who manage and maintain existing green spaces and green infrastructure.

6.2 Standards for green space provision are well developed. Standards for green infrastructure are less so.

6.3 Standards for green space are relevant in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) is a nationally recognised standard for green space provision in terms of quantity and accessibility Green Flag and Blue Flag are national level standards for quality in terms of parks and green spaces and beaches. Service Standards cover a range of core facilities and services that visitors should expect to find at different types of park, reserve or other destination site. Natural England has developed visitor service standards for National Nature Reserves, Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves.

Standards for Strategic Green Space in South East Dorset

6.4 PPG17 assessments have been undertaken by individual unitary and district councils:

- Bournemouth and Poole: Sport and Recreation Facilities Assessment Report (May 2008)
- Bournemouth Borough Council - Green Spaces Strategy 2007-2011
- Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council - Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (May 2007)
- Borough of Poole – Open Spaces Strategy (December 2004)
- Purbeck District Council - Sport and Recreation Audit and Assessment

6.5 The method and output may vary but these assessments give details of the green space assets for each local authority area and the evidence on which to base green space standards.

6.6 A number of studies on green space and heathlands are also relevant to standards and include:

- Access Patterns in South East Dorset. Dorset Household Survey and Predictions of Visitor Use of Potential Green Space Sites (Footprint Ecology, 2008)
- Poole Growth Point Green Infrastructure Audit (Land Use Consultants, 2008)

6.7 In terms of local green space, local standards and related developer contributions will be set at individual local authority level. However, there is the opportunity to develop a joint methodology to ensure future assessments of green space are consistent across South East Dorset. The approach should promote different standards for urban and rural areas.

6.8 Strategic green space will meet the needs of a wider catchment area than individual local authority areas. Standards for strategic green space are therefore identified in this strategy. These will ensure that a consistent approach is applied across South East Dorset. Standards for strategic green space are defined for:

- the **quantity** of provision per 1000 population;
- **accessibility** – the population within a threshold distance of travel. Whether parts of the population are outside the accessibility distances for relevant types of strategic GI. This will identify deficiency areas for us to prioritise new or investment in existing;
- **quality** - a set of standards relating to Accessibility, Safety, Maintenance and Management, Welcome, Design, Community Involvement and Multi-functionality. Site managers should work towards these standards and identify those sites that require investment to meet quality standards.

Defining Strategic Green Space

6.9 The first stage in defining standards for strategic green space is to define and identify what is strategic green space. To define strategic green space the following criteria are relevant:

- **size**: sites over 100 hectares and those sites meeting the majority of the remaining criteria. This recognises that in urban areas smaller sites can meet the demands of a wide catchment population;
- **linear features**: linking at least one strategic site to:
  - another strategic site; or
  - a key destination (such as a town centre) and/or
  - which act as a vital green space for a large catchment population
- **public access**: sites with unrestricted public accessibility;

Accessibility Level	Description
Unrestricted	Sites have unrestricted public access although some sites may have limitations to access between dusk and dawn.
Limited	Sites may be publicly or privately owned but access is limited either by a physical barrier such as membership, of a psychological barrier such as a feeling that an open space is private.
Not accessible	Sites are out of bounds to the general public.

Source: Walsall Greenspace Strategy 2006-2011 (other definitions are available)

- **wider than local catchment**: sites attracting visitors from a distance of more than 5km. Footprint Ecology research for South East Dorset residents suggests a significant drop off in visitors for all types of greenspace – parks and gardens, heathlands, rivers and other after 5km. Visitors to the coast appear to be willing to travel 15km and more;
- **destination attraction**: sites acting as destinations for visits lasting typically 2 to 4 hours and more;
- **visitor numbers**: sites attracting high numbers of visitors;
- **range of facilities**: Sites offering a good range of facilities eg. sports facilities, refreshments, toilets, interpretation, seating, activities and events, educational opportunities and volunteering;
- **type of site**: typically strategic sites will be country parks and estates, seafront and waterfront, beaches and chines, woodlands and community forests, open access sites, strategic and long distance trails.

6.10 Taking account of the criteria to define strategic green space, a number of sites have been identified. These are listed in Appendix 1. This includes:

- sites covering 6,897 hectares, of which 6061 hectares are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or internationally designated sites for nature conservation;
- 26.7 kilometres of beaches;
- strategic linear routes, some of which stretch beyond South East Dorset;
- key sites serving South East Dorset residents but outside the area or with managed access (These sites are not included in the calculations).

6.11 Further work will be undertaken to complete the sections on quantity and accessibility below to take account of the consultation exercise.

Standards for Strategic Green Space

Quantity

6.12 The current provision for South East Dorset is 6,897 hectares of strategic green space. This equates to a provision of 15 hectares per 1000 population.

6.13 However, 88% of this (over 6,000 hectares) is covered by SSSI or international designations. This has implications for the usability of strategic green space and means that accessibility to it has to be carefully managed. As a consequence, the remaining 12% may have added user pressures placed upon it.

Accessibility

6.14 A 5km buffer will be drawn around the strategic green space sites to determine whether there are areas of deficiency in terms of accessibility.

6.15 The highly protected nature of much of the area's strategic green space means that accessibility may need careful management. It will be important, therefore, to promote Sites of Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs) and to improve links to other strategic sites.

6.16 A consequence of this is that smaller urban greenspace sites will take on added significance in terms of meeting the needs of residents. This is one of the reasons why local open space is listed as a strategic project in this strategy (refer to Appendix 2, project 10).

Issues about Strategic Site Provision and Nature Conservation Sites

6.17 Given the proportion of strategic sites designated as nature conservation sites a grading approach has been used to identify sites to be managed in line with their ecological sensitivity. Other less ecologically sensitive sites will continue to be managed to attract residents and visitors. This approach also helps to identify the sites on which to concentrate future investment. Three grades are identified and details are set out for individual sites in Appendix 1.

Grading	Characteristics
Grade 1 Strategic Green Space Investment Sites	• unrestricted public access • high levels of facilities for residents and visitors • low ecological sensitivity • manage to continue or improve public access and levels of facilities
Grade 2 Potential Strategic Green Space Investment Sites	• some restrictions to public access • medium levels of facilities for residents and visitors • low/medium ecological sensitivity • potential to improve public access and levels of facilities
Grade 3 Sites Managed for Nature Conservation	• some managed public access • low levels of facilities for residents and visitors • high ecological sensitivity – national and international designations • manage to restrict public access to the benefit of ecological assets

Quality

6.18 A set of standards relating to Accessibility, Safety, Maintenance and Management, Welcome, Design, Community Involvement and Multi-functionality. Councils and site managers should work towards these standards where relevant to a specific site and identify those sites that require investment to meet quality standards. These standards include generic and specific requirements for different types of sites. However, it is not the intention to create with identical characteristics; there should be flexibility to reflect the local natural environment.

Generic – applies to all sites	
Accessibility – how accessible it is, both to reach and to navigate within	• access suitable for all • paths/rights of way – good access suitable for all abilities , using surface and other materials appropriate to the local context • ease of access between external housing/ streets and internal paths • linkages to other green spaces/corridors • public transport access • car parking but a level of provision which encourages users to consider alternative means of transport, other than the car.

Generic – applies to all sites	
Safety – how safe it is and how safe it feels to be in	• flow of people through the park to achieve self surveillance • availability of alternative routes and exits in all parts of the open space to avoid entrapment • evidence of persistent vandalism and other anti-social behaviour • level of informal surveillance from neighbouring properties
Management & maintenance – how well it is managed and maintained	• general 'cared for' appearance • maintenance appropriate to character and use • appropriate management and maintenance of parkland trees • location, condition and repair of site furniture - litter bins, seats, signs and other infrastructure • design, location and repair of lighting • cleanliness of site re litter and dog fouling • maintenance of footpath surfaces • maintenance and definition of boundaries • vandalism and graffiti occurrence
Welcoming – how welcoming the site is, including signage and the appearance of entrances	• entrances attractive and welcoming and well maintained, visible and accessible for all • signs within the open space well designed and informative • ambiance - rating as an attractive place to be
Design – how well designed it is to fulfil its function and to enhance the surrounding area	• is its design appropriate to its use • views within the space • balance of areas of shade and light • contribution to look of the neighbourhood
Community involvement – the level of community involvement with the site	• capacity of site to provide opportunities for community involvement • provision of educational / interpretation for the community • involvement - evidence of community involvement taking place
Multi-functionality existing and potential - ability of site to deliver on a number of themes	• health and well-being • sustainable economic development • tourism • access and transport • water management and climate change • open space and recreation • landscape character • ecology and biodiversity • cultural heritage

Specific requirements – the test of multi-functionality	
Outdoor sports - capacity to provide for active recreation and outdoor sport	• grass sports pitches - management and maintenance of grass pitches • artificial sports pitches / courts - management and maintenance of artificial pitches & courts • MUGAS - management and maintenance of MUGAS • wheels Parks - management and maintenance of wheels parks • informal active recreation/play provision - management and maintenance of informal active recreation areas • sports building - management and maintenance of sports buildings
Built features / hard landscape – the quality of hard landscape features	• hard surface areas/walls/seating - design/ usability • shelter/open buildings - condition • café/public buildings - design/usability • café/public buildings - condition/maintenance • toilets - condition/maintenance • art/sculptures -appropriate provision and maintenance
Formal designed landscape – the quality of formal horticulture	• design, layout, quantity of both soft and hard landscape treatment • condition and maintenance of soft and hard landscape treatment
Natural & semi-natural features – the ability of the site to provide natural and semi-natural environments and to deliver improved levels of biodiversity	• population composition of trees appropriate to the site • management and maintenance of trees • population composition appropriate to the site (primary and secondary) • management and maintenance of woodland compartment and edge • management of meadows/unimproved grassland areas • management of rhynes ponds for biodiversity • management of streams for biodiversity • management of wetlands for biodiversity • positive Management for species diversity or protection
Ecosystem services – the contribution that the site makes to ecosystem services i.e. cooling, drainage etc.	• sustainable urban drainage • cooling • adaptation • CO_2 reduction

Developing Priorities for Strategic Green Space

6.19 The partnership will identify priorities for investment in strategic sites and areas requiring new sites taking account of the quantity, accessibility and quality standards. The Green Infrastructure Framework sets out the core principles and priorities of the strategy and these should be taken into account when identifying priorities for investment. The grading approach gives an initial view on this prior to a full assessment of the quality of sites. This information will also provide a basis on which to determine a levy for strategic green infrastructure.

Standards for Multi-Functional Green Infrastructure

6.20 Standards for other aspects of multi-functional green infrastructure will need to be determined. It is proposed to use existing standards, but some flexibility will be required to reflect the needs of the local natural environment and circumstances. Where no standards can be found, relevant guidance is listed. Examples are set out below:

		Coast – Year Round Destination	Active Travel Network	Water & Flood Management	Greening the Urban Environment	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Habitat Creation & Restoration	Celebrating Heritage
Beach	Blue Flag A prestigious, international award scheme acting as a guarantee to tourists that a beach or marina they are visiting is one of the best in the world. It is awarded to coastal destinations achieving the highest quality in water, facilities, safety, environmental education and management. http://www.blueflag.org.uk/default.asp	√						
Nature Conservation	Maintain nationally designated habitats in a favourable condition. Maintain non-statutory habitats and wildlife sites in a favourable condition.	√		√				
Strategic Green Space	Standards or quantity, accessibility and quality defined by this strategy.	√				√		
Local Green Space / Open Space	Standards for quality, accessibility and quantity defined by local open space or local planning documents. It is proposed that the quality standards for strategic green space are also adopted for local green space/open space.	√				√		

		Coast – Year Round Destination	Active Travel Network	Water & Flood Management	Greening the Urban Environment	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Habitat Creation & Restoration	Celebrating Heritage
Active Travel	Cycle Design Standards LTN 02/08 Cycle Infrastructure Design (Department for Transport, 2008) London Cycling Design Standards (Transport for London, 2005) Connect2 Greenway Design Guide (Sustrans, 2010) The National Cycle Network - Guidelines and Practical Details issue 2 (Sustrans, 1997) Making Ways for the Bicycle - A guide to construction of traffic-free paths (Sustrans, 1994)	√	√					
Water Quality	Water Framework Directive All water bodies need to achieve good ecological status or potential. http://wfdconsultation.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfdcms/en/southwest/Intro.aspx			√				
Flood Risk	Building a better environment: A guide for developers - Practical advice on adding value to your site, Environment Agency, 2006. http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/1_GETH1106BLNE-e-e(1).pdf PPG25: Development and flood risk			√				
Sustainable Urban Drainage	Code for Sustainable Homes National standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes. Standards are set out for categories including: Energy/CO2, Water, Materials, Surface Water Run-off, Waste, Pollution, Health and well-being, Management, Ecology. http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/code_for_sust_homes.pdf			√	√			
Design	CABE Building for Life Criteria to promote design excellence and celebrate best practice in the house building industry. The 20 Building for Life criteria embody CABE's vision of functional, attractive and sustainable housing.				√			

		Coast – Year Round Destination	Active Travel Network	Water & Flood Management	Greening the Urban Environment	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Habitat Creation & Restoration	Celebrating Heritage
Design	Code for Sustainable Homes National standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes. Standards are set out for categories including: Energy/CO2, Water, Materials, Surface Water Run-off, Waste, Pollution, Health and well-being, Management, Ecology. http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/code_for_sust_homes.pdf				√			
Street Tree Canopy	80 trees per kilometre of road Biodiversity by Design: A guide for sustainable communities, TCPA, 2004 pg 18				√			
Native Plant Species	Horticultural Code of Practice, DEFRA Advice and guidance on safe use, control and disposal of invasive non-native plants for everyone involved in horticulture and activities that involve the use of plants.				√	√		
SANGS	Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space standard, Natural England 8-16 hectares per 1000 people (the standard identified by Natural England for Thames Basin Heaths. Further development of the standard will take place as part of the joint Heathlands DPD). Heathlands DPD					√	√	
Parks & Green Spaces	Green Flag Award The national standard for parks and green spaces in England, Wales and Scotland and recognises and rewards the best green spaces in the country. The Green Flag Award® welcomes parks/green spaces to apply for three awards: Green Flag Award, Green Pennant Award or Green Heritage Site Accreditation. Sites are judged against eight key criteria relating to a welcoming place; healthy, safe and secure; clean and well maintained; sustainability; conservation and heritage; community involvement; marketing; and managing. http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/Green-Flag/Default.aspx					√		

		Coast – Year Round Destination	Active Travel Network	Water & Flood Management	Greening the Urban Environment	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Habitat Creation & Restoration	Celebrating Heritage
Natural Green Space	Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) This advocates that every home should be: • within 300 m of an accessible natural green space of at least 2 ha, plus: • at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km • at least one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km • at least one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km Woodland Trust Woodland Access Standard The trust promotes the opening up more woods to public access, and the creation of woods close to where people live. A Woodland Access Standard has been developed that the trust believes every local authority should meet. This says that: • no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size; and • there should also be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km round-trip) of people's homes					√	√	
Access to Nature	Natural England Visitor Service Standards Visitor service standards for three distinct types of natural green space: National Nature Reserves (particularly sites with high visitor numbers under management), Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves. These cover a range of core facilities and services that visitors should expect to find at each site type. It may be possible to adapt these to apply to other green space typologies. www.naturalengland.org RSPB VisitEngland's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) aimed at ensuring a high quality visitor experience on their reserves.					√	√	

		Coast – Year Round Destination	Active Travel Network	Water & Flood Management	Greening the Urban Environment	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Habitat Creation & Restoration	Celebrating Heritage
Forests	UK Forestry Standard Defines the government's requirements for sustainable forest management and link to the Guidelines for Forests and: Landscape, Historic Environment, Biodiversity, Soil, Climate Change, People and Water. http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs					√	√	
Ancient Trees	BS 5837:2005 Recommendations for Trees in Relation to Construction Provides guidance on the retention and protection of veteran trees in relation to development. English Nature's 'Veteran Trees: a Guide to Good Management' (Read, H, 2000). Provides valuable guidance on the care of ancient trees. Woodland Trust and Ancient Tree Forum Producing a series of more detailed guides on the care of ancient trees.						√	√
Heritage Features	PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment							√
Equality	Equality Impact Assessments Delivery mechanisms and projects should be assessed in terms the likely effects upon sections of the community in terms of race, gender, disability, faith, sexuality and age.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

7: IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

7.1 The strategy will be delivered through a number of strands of activity:

- promotion, leadership and governance;
- translating the strategy into planning policy documents and other relevant strategy and investment documents;
- identifying funding opportunities for existing and future green infrastructure assets;
- key strategic projects;
- planning and co-ordination through an Action Plan.

Promotion, Leadership and Governance

7.2 The success of the Strategy depends upon the commitment of a wide range of bodies, strong leadership and co-ordination. A wide range of partners have developed the strategy and an even wider set of partners will be involved in its delivery. A strong partnership and dedicated resources are required to drive and co-ordinate the delivery of the strategy and action plan effectively.

7.3 The Strategy has been developed by a number of local authorities and environment partners. The approach has consisted of an Officer Steering Group and involvement of Council Members through stakeholder events and the Dorset and South Wiltshire Planning and Transportation Liaison Committee at key stages. The partners will investigate the options for strengthening the partnership and identifying dedicated resources to progress and co-ordinate delivery of the strategy. There are a number of options for the partnership to develop to enable delivery and long term management of green infrastructure assets. The options set out below will be considered against some key principles:

- maximising the ability to deliver;
- cost effectiveness;
- engaging with local communities.

Current arrangements	Community Interest Company	Charitable Trust	Contracted Operations
Direct provision and management of services but needs dedicated resources Funded by council tax and income from public use of assets. Developer contributions are collected for transport and heathland mitigation	Manages and maintains neighbourhood and cultural facilities Can trade to provide additional income May hold assets through leases or freehold Funded by external public and private investment, council tax and income from public use of assets	A charitable limited company or a charitable industrial provident society May hold assets it maintains through leases or freehold or may be charged with management and maintenance of assets vested in the Council	Management and maintenance through a contract arrangement Possibly in partnership with private or other public sector providers Funding primarily through Council Tax

7.4 Communicating and promoting the benefits of green infrastructure and the role of the strategy is important in terms of its delivery of the projects. It is also important to influence a wide range of partners, interest groups and the local community to support and get involved in delivering projects. The partners will prepare a Communications and Marketing Strategy for this purpose. It will include proposals for:

- promoting the Partnership;
- raising awareness for the strategy and projects;
- dedicated web pages and interactive mapping tool;
- recruiting green infrastructure ambassadors such as tree wardens.

Planning Policy and Other Strategies

7.5 The planning system provides a framework where components of green infrastructure can be conserved and enhanced. The new government has announced significant changes to the planning system through the Decentralisation and Localism Bill. The Bill proposes to devolve more powers to councils and neighbourhoods and gives local communities greater control over local decisions. This will strengthen the opportunities for local communities to have a say and manage local green infrastructure assets.

7.6 This will take time to come into effect. Local authorities should continue to translate the Green Infrastructure Strategy into Local Development Frameworks by:

- making relevant references to green infrastructure;
- identifying specific green infrastructure projects, land allocations and protected areas;
- including policies to protect and enhance green infrastructure assets and considering section 106 developer contributions and the community infrastructure levy.

7.7 Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset, East Dorset, Poole and Purbeck councils are preparing the Joint Heathlands DPD to protect designated heathlands by managing the pressures of development.

7.8 Supplementary Planning Documents cover detailed issues. For example, the green infrastructure partnership will prepare a Green Infrastructure and Design Toolkit.

7.9 Other strategy documents also set out policy and action plans that rely on green infrastructure to contribute to meeting their objectives. The Local Transport Plan (LTP3) establishes a range of interventions which together aim to contribute to achieving five strategic goals of supporting the economy, reducing carbon emissions, better safety, security and health, equality of opportunity and improved quality of life.

7.10 The Dorset Rights of Way Improvement Plan aims to develop an efficient and effective Countryside Access Network. This will bring not only recreational and sporting benefits but also support many other policy objectives aligned to green infrastructure. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan identifies and prioritise actions and plan for the improved management and development of the countryside access network.

7.11 The Strategic Plan for a Healthier Dorset 2010-2014 has a number of programme areas. Programme 1 'Staying Healthy' is about supporting people in leading healthy lives and reducing avoidable illness.

Green Infrastructure and Design Toolkit

7.12 This toolkit will provide practical guidance on how to include multi-functional green infrastructure when planning and designing new development. The toolkit will inform masterplanning and detailed design processes as well as the development of green space management plans. It will include information on wildlife habitat creation, improvement and links; access routes; greening of transport corridors; open space and recreation; sustainable urban drainage; and community involvement.

Funding Opportunities

7.13 A wide range of funding opportunities will need to be pursued to ensure delivery of projects and their long term management. These fall into three main areas:

- consolidating and aligning existing public sector funding to recognise crossover of services and infrastructure;
- generating new public, private and third sector funding and management arrangements;
- securing private sector funding through the planning system where there are gaps in funding.

7.14 The work on standards will help to set priorities for strategic green spaces in terms of whether new provision is needed and where investment is required to bring existing green space assets up to an appropriate standard. Green space and green infrastructure will in many cases require an ongoing cost in terms of management and maintenance.

7.15 It is widely recognised that securing public sector funding for ongoing management and maintenance costs for green infrastructure schemes is difficult and unlikely to improve in the short term. It is important that long term funding for management and maintenance is established at the planning stage of a project to ensure the benefits are long term. New approaches will need to be found to fund this ongoing cost.

7.16 The following are potential sources of funding relevant to South East Dorset:

New and potential models
Tax Increment Financing
New Homes Bonus
Habitat/biodiversity banking
Carbon off setting
Energy Supply Company
Existing funding sources

Planning and development:

Planning conditions – require restoration, enhancement or creation of green spaces as part of planning consent for a specific development.

Planning obligations - section 106 agreements enable local authorities to secure financial contributions to fund capital or maintenance for green infrastructure. Changes to legislation will alter how section 106 can be used. The Councils in southeast Dorset currently secure financial contributions for transport infrastructure and heathland mitigation. Councils also secure contributions towards open space.

Community infrastructure levy (CIL) – came into effect in April 2010. CIL is a levy to fund new infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. Proposed reforms suggest that CIL can be used for ongoing costs relating to infrastructure.

Private management charges.

Public agencies:

EU funding: LIFE, LEADER, INTERREG IV

Land management and improvement funding from national public agencies such as:

- Natural England's Environmental Entry or High Level Stewardship schemes
- Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant
- English Heritage – Historic buildings, monuments and designed landscapes grant scheme

Infrastructure funding from national public agencies eg. The Environment Agency's investments programme in managing flood risks and coastal erosion.

Lottery funds

- Big lottery: eg Community Spaces, BIG Local Trust
- Heritage Lottery: eg Heritage Grants, Landscapes Partnerships programme, Parks for People programme

Local authority capital and revenue programmes

Local authority grant schemes e.g. for countryside and conservation projects

General revenue budget of a local authority in relation to publicly-owned land, leisure services, highways, rights of way, countryside and regeneration are the most commonly tapped into for green spaces.

The transfer of responsibilities for local health improvement from Primary Care Trusts to local authorities and combined with ring fencing of public health budgets creates an improved opportunity to integrate public health and green space programmes.

Land management budgets of large institutional land owners

Endowments

Tax related: Landfill tax
Third sector Third sector members funds eg: RSPB, Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, National Trust Charitable giving eg: Esmee Fairbairn Foundation biodiversity and food grants Local Charitable Trust
Private sector Local business / organisation sponsorship Market led schemes and income generation Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

7.17 Along with options for partnership arrangements, these opportunities will be fully explored in developing the key strategic projects.

Key Strategic Projects

7.18 A number of key strategic projects have been identified to strengthen the existing green infrastructure network. A range of smaller projects which are consistent to the principles of the Strategy will also contribute. The smaller projects are likely to fall under the remit of individual partners.

7.19 The key strategic projects will be developed by the partnership. The lead partners will need to work closely with local communities to ensure that projects meet the needs of the local community and where appropriate include the local community in managing the projects.

7.20 The key strategic projects are:

- Lower Stour Valley Project
- Upton Country Park
- Castleman Trailway
- Cycleway Project
- Enjoying Water Project
- Greenway, Coast and Chine Project
- Moors Valley Extension

- Avon Heath Enhancement
- Local Food & Community Garden Initiative
- Local Open Space Project
- Woodland Restoration Project
- Heath Restoration Project
- Urban Street Trees
- Historic Environment Liaison Project

Lower Stour Valley Project

7.21 This project will develop a strategy for the river Stour and its floodplain from Sturminster Marshall to Christchurch. It would be an exemplar of sustainable land management and would be a flagship resource. Key aspects are to:

- provide accessible routes for walking / cycling and to interlink communities in a sustainable way;
- encourage access to / sustainable development of existing 'hubs' (recreational facilities, greenspace, visitor centres, etc);
- encourage multifunctional use by providing public footpaths, cycle routes, access to the river and opportunities for canoeing, flood attenuation and biodiversity / landscape enhancements.

Upton Country Park

7.22 This project will provide new greenspace with outdoor recreation facilities to serve residents across South East Dorset. It will compliment the existing network of Country Parks, such as Moors Valley and Avon Heath and links well to the conurbation via the Castleman Trailway. The Upton Country Park project would deliver:

- approximately 60 ha of newly accessible greenspace;
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace to alleviate recreational pressure from lowland heaths;
- new outdoor recreation facilities such as cycling routes;
- improved tourism experience;
- habitat creation adjacent to the Poole Harbour SPA, designed for wildlife and people.

©Borough of Poole

Castleman Trailway

7.23 This project will develop the quality and usage of this key strategic access route, which runs from Upton Country Park northwards to Wimborne and connecting on towards Avon Heath Country Park and the New Forest National Park.

7.24 The Castleman Trailway is a key access route that benefits Purbeck, Poole and East Dorset. The basic route exists but with some improvement to signage, promotion, community engagement and habitat enhancement the route could be far better used and provide a key greenway linking parts of the conurbation to the surrounding area and providing good accessible circular routes, for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders alike.

Cycleway Project

7.25 Cycling has the potential to offer a low cost, low carbon, healthy and fun way of accessing urban and rural green space within South East Dorset and using green infrastructure to reach centres of employment, education, retail and leisure. Improving cycle routes and the permeability of the highways, parks and green spaces of South East Dorset to cycling is therefore key in delivering the Healthy Sustainable Travel Network and a core part of the Urban Greening Zone theme.

7.26 This project will identify and prioritise for upgrade/implementation existing and new cycle routes between major employment centres, residential areas and green open space. These will focus on using green infrastructure corridors, primarily within the urban area to provide linkage to:

- the north and south of South East Dorset;
- major employment sites at Ferndown and Bournemouth Airport;
- areas of green space deprivation;
- other strategic GI cycle networks e.g. the Castleman Trailway and Stour Valley;
- Wareham and Upton.

7.27 The project will determine the type of infrastructure upgrades required, provide estimated costs, develop a prioritised implementation programme and identify funding sources and partners.

Enjoying Water Project

7.28 An 'Enjoying Water Strategy' has been recently developed by the Environment Agency in partnership with other organisations. The strategy aims to maximise the economic, environmental and social benefits of water-based recreation in the South West for the period 2009-2014. It seeks to maximise the potential of inland and coastal waters, encouraging sustainable and responsible opportunities for everyone. It identifies coast and water-based sport and recreation activities which can excel in the South West. The potential of water bodies needs to be recognised and valued; the concept of 'Blue space' can help to improve habitat for wildlife, provide areas for recreation, such as canoeing, and improve people's quality of life in urban and rural areas. A full copy of the strategy can be downloaded from: www.brighton.ac.uk/waterrecreation

Greenway, Coast and Chine Project

7.29 Between Poole Bay from Sandbanks to Hengistbury Head and to Chewton Bunny in Christchurch there is an outstanding opportunity to provide a multi-functional link both east and west and northwards into the urban area. The coast is the main attraction for a distance up to 15km. east to west there is an excellent existing coastal link between Poole and Bournemouth. Existing open spaces and the Chines provide the potential for access links penetrating the urban areas north of the coast. Encouraging better use of facilities by local people and tourists alike will have a number of benefits:

- reducing congestion by encouraging more sustainable access to the coast;
- supporting the coastal focussed tourism industry by linking to facilities not directly

located on the coast;
- providing coastal access hubs deep into the urban area signing links to the Chines;
- increasing the use of natural greenlinks for safe recreational and commuter cycling;
- enhancing biodiversity on the Chines by making their landscape more open and safe through removal of tree and dense shrubs.

Moors Valley Extension

7.30 An extension to Moors Valley has the potential to link areas together to make a north-south recreational area with Moors Valley as a regional recreational hub. There is also potential to link Moors Valley to Avon Heath Country Park, together with the Forestry Commission land around West Moors and Hurn Forest and then onto St Catherine's Hill. Linking the area more closely to the Castleman Trailway would give good access to the New Forest in the east and to Ferndown and Poole in the west. It may also provide an off-road route from Bournemouth Airport, Throop and St Catherine's Hill to link with the Trailway.

7.31 The Moors River SSSI runs through the area and there may be benefits in a large part of the river system being managed as one unit. The Environment Agency has a project of river restoration on the Moors River SSSI.

Avon Heath Enhancement

7.32 This project will enhance Avon Heath Country Park by creating a strategic hub for an area of high conservation value and mitigating the effects of an increasing requirement for recreation. It will link Avon Heath Country Park with Moors Valley Country Park, the New Forest, Bournemouth and Christchurch. The project aim is to provide high quality green infrastructure that mitigates pressures on the more sensitive areas of the site. This will be achieved by improving the educational aspects at the park and creating a unique interactive educational / recreational facility around the Heathland Discovery Centre.

Local Food/Community Garden Initiative

7.33 This project would promote, encourage and support a range of co-ordinated community gardens across South East Dorset. The main aims would reflect the multi-functionality of Green Infrastructure and include:

- promote sustainable urban gardening;
- support local food growing for local use;
- conserve and enhance local areas of green space for wildlife, amenity and wellbeing ;
- promote the sustainable use and value of public and private land;
- promote social inclusion through horticulture and land management;
- promote healthy outdoor exercise and healthy eating;
- also consider: small scale renewable energy, demonstration projects e.g. for visiting school groups, preparing local food onsite, 'free tree' scheme.

Local Open Space Project

7.34 Smaller parks and open spaces are vital to quality of life and can help to build healthy communities. They might provide equipped play areas, casual play or amenity space,

meeting areas or merely offer a refuge from busy urban streets. Such spaces can attract users from a wide area and for a multitude of purposes and, with opportunities for new open spaces at a premium, most local authorities will be keen to enhance their role or capacity. Individually, such open spaces would normally be a matter for local recreation strategies rather than a sub-regional green infrastructure strategy. However, in developing their recreation strategies, it will be important for local authorities to consider the role that local space can play in supporting wider green infrastructure priorities. In particular, local open space:

- can provide 'stepping stones' or links between larger linear features, strategically important parks, or wildlife corridors;
- can be managed in a way that supports broader recreational objectives, for example by addressing local needs and thus reducing demands on other under- pressure facilities;
- can help to deliver local health or community agendas by promoting physical activity and social interaction;
- may be capable of forming part of a larger strategic project within the urban greening zone which can address a variety of cross-cutting priorities.

Woodland Restoration Project

7.35 This project will focus on the support through planning policy for the retention and enhancement of existing areas of unimproved grassland and Ancient Woodland across the area. It will provide direction for the planning authorities about the restoration of planted ancient woodland and protection of individual and stands of trees through Tree Preservation Orders. Key objectives will include supporting the priorities of the South West Nature Map and the delivery of projects developed by the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and Wild Purbeck.

Heath Restoration Project

7.36 Conservation and enhancement of the internationally important lowland heathlands in South East Dorset is a key priority. This project will focus on the opportunities for heathland expansion and in securing land adjacent to heathlands which will allow the species and habitats to be more robust against urban related pressures and predicted changes in climate.

Urban Street Trees Project

7.37 The key elements of this project are to promote and carry out an audit of existing trees, to implement a major planting programme of native species street trees and to develop sustainable mechanisms to secure their long term management.

7.38 As a key part of the Urban Greening Zone, trees in towns play a vital role in the urban areas of South East Dorset in the following ways:

- helping to mitigate carbon dioxide emissions by absorbing and storing it via photosynthesis and by releasing oxygen;
- providing amenity, wildlife and aesthetic benefits and therefore promoting general health and well being;
- helping to reduce the urban 'heat island' effect by their evaporative cooling and shading.

7.39 Many existing trees in the area are over mature or in poor condition. This initiative provides new opportunities for additional tree planting but also a means to help ensure the long term management of existing stock. Areas in most need will be targeted first for new tree planting, which will focus primarily on native trees, and consider a variety of areas to plant from highway land and open space to private gardens and open space. Working in partnership, with highway and planning authorities and the statutory undertakers, the project will consider setting up a charity or trust to run the initiative based on the 'Trees for Cities' charity (see http://www.treesforcities.org/index.php). Street tree planting opportunities along major highways routes will be a key target and working with the Local Transport Planning team will therefore be essential.

Historic Environment Liaison Project

7.40 This project will build on the parish Historic Environment Liaison Officer scheme to increase the coverage of this volunteer based scheme. The main aims are to develop community recording and celebratory events to encourage greater participation and active enjoyment of the historic environment. The use of local contacts and recording exercises will help to identify under-used areas for recreation of the historic environment. In particular, identify those areas and monuments accessible (either physically or visually) from rights of way.

Developing an Action Plan

7.41 A broad action plan has been developed which summarises the actions needed to deliver the Strategy. Clearly, any action must take account of existing policies and designations relating to an asset. At this stage the Strategy reflects current commitments and forms the starting point for more detailed work.

7.42 A more detailed action plan to guide the work of the partnership will be developed when the strategy is finalised. The summary Action Plan is set out below.

Project	Theme	Relevant Standard	Cost Estimate	Mechanism (e.g. LDF; Heathland IPF)	Committed Funding	Milestones / Stages
General						
Investigate delivery and management vehicle options	All			SED GI Group		Consider delivery and management vehicle options Agree approach Implement approach
Communications & Marketing Strategy	All			SED GI Group		Develop a communications and marketing strategy
Research economic data for South East Dorset	All					Undertake research on the specific economic benefits of GI for SED
GI data mapping – Dorset explorer	All			SED GI Group		Complete GI version of Dorset Explorer
GI interactive mapping tool	All			SED GI Group		Investigate options for an interactive GI mapping tool
GI & Design Toolkit	Enhancing the Urban Environment					Scope role and function of toolkit Develop and consult Adopt
Data collection – funding sources, existing projects	All			SED GI Group		Undertake data collection on existing projects and funding sources
Key Strategic						
Lower Stour Valley Project	Water & Flood Management		Unknown	Heathlands DPD Developer contributions	None secured	Develop a strategy

Project	Theme	Relevant Standard	Cost Estimate	Mechanism (e.g. LDF; Heathland IPF)	Committed Funding	Milestones / Stages
Upton Country Park	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Strategic Green Space	£500,000	Heathlands DPD Developer contributions Income generation	£170,000 Heathland Mitigation Fund	Land acquisition Open new green space Establish new recreation activities
Castleman Trailway	Active Travel Routes	Cycle Route Design	£250,000	Heathlands DPD	£65,000 Heathland Mitigation Fund £45,000 East Dorset developer contributions Dorset County Council	Improve route infrastructure Improvements for wildlife
Cycleway Project	Active Travel Routes	Cycle Route Design	£50,000	Local Transport Plan 3 LDF proposals Developer contributions Planning conditions Potential Sustrans funding	None secured	Identify opportunities and priority routes Identify and secure funding Design and deliver routes
Enjoying Water Project						
Greenway, Coast & Chine Project	Coast – A Year Round Destination			Bournemouth Core Strategy Coastal Enhancement Zone Developer contributions	Staff time	Scope role, function and geographical coverage of project Develop approach

Project	Theme	Relevant Standard	Cost Estimate	Mechanism (e.g. LDF; Heathland IPF)	Committed Funding	Milestones / Stages
Moors Valley extension	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Strategic Green Space			None secured	Agree extension design Identify and secure funding Implement design
Avon Heath enhancement	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Strategic Green Space	£250,000		£125,000	Develop pre-school outdoor education Develop interactive play Improve infrastructure around Heathland Discovery Centre
Local Food & Community Garden Initiative	Greening the Urban Environment		£70,000	Obtain grants from Lottery and partner organisations	None secured	Identify opportunities Set up community gardens and allotments
Local Open Space Project	Green Space Creation & Enhancement	Local Open Space		Co-ordinate investment opportunities – leisure, schools, developer contribu-tions, NHS, LTP3	Developer contributions	Local authorities to consider how local open space can contribute to the objectives of the GI strategy
Woodland Restoration Project	Habitat Restoration	Forestry Standard Ancient Trees		Continue existing initiatives: Veteran Trees, Beneath the Trees, Wild Purbeck etc	None secured	Bring together information on ancient woodlands, planted ancient woodlands, veteran trees and heritage areas

Project	Theme	Relevant Standard	Cost Estimate	Mechanism (e.g. LDF; Heathland IPF)	Committed Funding	Milestones / Stages
Heath Restoration Project	Habitat Restoration	Nature conservation SANGS		Dorset Urban Heaths Partnership Dorset Grazing Partnership Heathland DPD Access to Nature?	Some funding secured	Increase areas of suitable land secured for heathland expansion and support
Urban Street Trees	Greening the Urban Environment	TCPA Street trees	£200,000 - £300,000	Obtain grants from Lottery	None secured	Condition survey and audit of street and highway trees Feasibility study for funding, delivery, management and programming of street trees Implement
Historic Environment Liaison Project	Celebrating Heritage			Volunteer based	None secured	Establish volunteer recording scheme for woodlands, heathlands, river valleys and inter-tidal zone

Monitoring and Review

7.43 The strategy will be kept under review by monitoring key indicators, assessing progress of the key strategic projects and developing and reviewing an action plan on an annual basis.

7.44 The following key indicators are identified:

- Blue Flag beaches
- cycle route design
- habitats in favourable condition
- water quality – good ecological status
- Green Flag parks
- quantity, accessibility and quality of strategic green spaces

7.45 The key strategic projects will also have specific monitoring requirements.