

# Dublin City Parks Strategy

2017 - 2022



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Dublin City Council



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# FOREWORD

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the first strategy prepared for Dublin City Council's Parks Services. It presents the wide range of resources and services under the Parks Services portfolio and states current policy and intended actions to seek the strategic vision of a greener and more liveable Dublin. The strategy comprises 6 chapters which are outlined below:

## Section 1. Introduction:

The introductory chapter outlines the purpose of the strategy, the expected users, its vision and objectives and the methodology. The strategic vision statement is defined as: *Growing towards a greener and more liveable Dublin City.*

The strategic vision of city parks and landscapes is to provide and enhance the experience of living in Dublin, working in Dublin and visiting Dublin through the provision of park resources and services befitting Ireland's capital and its role as an international city.

## Section 2. Parks and Landscapes in Perspective:

This chapter relates the development of the city landscape over time from the original natural landscape centred on the River Liffey, through the Viking and Norman period, medieval period, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian eras and on to pre and post war periods to contemporary Dublin. The parks and landscapes that we have today help to tell the story of the historical

development of the city. The policy context in which Park Services operates based on international, European, national and local level policy is then reviewed.

This chapter also outlines the value of our city parks, including their contribution to meeting the recreation needs and contributing to the good health of the population, contributing to the identity of the city, enhancing social and community interaction, providing environmental benefits, enhancing biodiversity and contributing to Dublin's tourism economy. The chapter concludes with an international case study review highlighting some contemporary achievements including Singapore's garden city vision, and New York's One New York vision with a focus on revitalising its public spaces.

## Section 3. The Public's View:

A public online questionnaire was created in advance of the main strategy work as part of the strategy's public consultation process and this chapter reviews the findings. The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions to determine the views of the public on park resources and services. Just under 1000 responses were received and results include the importance of parks as a local community resource, the importance of providing a balanced range of facilities within parks, the issues that act as barriers to visiting parks, the importance of recreation as the key value of parks to the city, as well as a very positive view of engaging further with

parks through volunteering. The objective of engaging with the public is expanded further in this chapter with a look at volunteering and contemporary communication through digital and wayfinding methods.

## Section 4. Resources and Services:

This key chapter examines the full resources and services of Parks Services and includes parks and their recreational facilities, visitor facilities, natural areas and biodiversity, public realm, public housing, cemeteries, trees, civic decoration, allotments, planning and development control, art in parks and research. Under the first chapter section a park typology is defined which categorises parks into Flagship and Community Parks. The quantity of parks (approximately 17% of the City Council's administrative area) and their distribution is then analysed, which indicates an unequal city-wide distribution. A key policy proposal of providing a range of 2.5ha to 3.8ha of parks per 1000 population is concluded.

Access to parks is then analysed and this indicates unequal access to flagship parks and relatively good access to community parks. In the city centre areas, while access is reasonable, it is typically to smaller sized parks. Solutions to address access and quantity deficits are outlined, including the provision of a series of new city centre parks themed on Dublin writers.

Recreational facilities (playgrounds, playing pitches, etc) are analysed. Access to these facilities is examined on their geographical distribution and deficits are addressed.

Dublin's natural areas and biodiversity form part of the urban ecosystem in which human activity dominates. Parks play a key role in providing natural areas and their proper management enables conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. The recent designation of the UNESCO Dublin Bay Biosphere highlights the value of the bay as Dublin's key natural resource. The Biodiversity Action Plan, which is reviewed every 5 years, outlines our

approach to biodiversity. The Parks Services biodiversity section has a strong community engagement role with projects involving business organisations, schools and NGOs.

Parks Services provide input into enhancing the city public realm by building on the shared vision under the Dublin City Public Realm Strategy. Key projects include the completed Liberties Greening Strategy, the current City Centre Masterplan and the Docklands Public Realm Masterplan.

Public housing remains a key issue for the City Council. Parks Services continue to play a role in design and implementation of the associated housing landscape provision including the current redevelopment of St Teresa's Gardens and Dolphin Estate.

Park Services manages and maintains a number of smaller closed cemeteries in the city that are somewhat hidden, yet provide a curious insight into those who lived and contributed to the development of Dublin. The Jewish cemetery in Fairview and Huguenot cemetery on Merrion row are monuments to two distinct communities, many of whom settled here to escape persecution in other countries. Appropriate interpretation of these graveyards is a policy initiative under this strategy.

City trees, both in public and private management, form the urban forest which benefits Dublin by greening, carbon sequestration and urban beautification. Park Services manages public street trees and those within our parks. A new City Tree Strategy has now been prepared to comprehensively define city tree policy and present a five year action plan. Parks Services are also active in promoting appreciation of trees in the city through tree trails and assisting with the annual National Tree Week event.

Civic decoration in the form of flags, floral decoration and Christmas trees helps to bring vibrancy to Dublin and mark particular events. Development of further civic decoration through

engagement with community and business groups forms part of the proposed policy of Park Services.

Allotments in Dublin have had a resurgence in popularity in recent years. Park Services contributes in the provision and management of a number of allotments for public use as they are seen as a strong community building activity. The proposed policy under this strategy is to provide allotments subject to demand and to enhance overall coordination through the appointment of an allotment officer.

Landscape planning and development control is undertaken by Park Services with assistance given to the Planning Department on planning application assessments and Development Plan preparation. Industry consultation through the Irish Landscape Institute was conducted as part of this strategy and areas were identified that would help improve the planning application process, including updating current guidance for landscape and arboriculture submissions.

Parks provide an outdoor gallery for art in the city and Park Services are fortunate to hold over 30 public sculptural artworks. Park Services in association with the Arts Office manages and promotes appreciation of art in parks. A comprehensive guide to the artwork was recently completed as well as a smartphone multi-lingual guide to the popular Oscar Wilde sculpture in Merrion Square. The proposed policy includes the desire for a more equitable distribution of public art across city parks and assessing the potential to create a Dublin City Sculpture Park.

Parks Services use and commission research that directly contributes to its role in planning, designing, implementing and managing its resources. Current research includes conservation studies on historic parks as well as a Dublin Tree Canopy Study in partnership with UCD, the OPW and the other Dublin local authorities.

## **Section 5. City Landscape Plan:**

This chapter presents a broader discussion of the city landscape under the headings of the coast, arrivals and departures, the inner and outer city landscape, city waterways and greenways. It sets out broader concepts for the city landscape and will act as a precursor to more detailed city landscape plans, commencing with our waterways and coast that aim to bring these concepts to reality.

## **Section 6. Action Plan:**

In this concluding chapter the implementation of the proposed actions described in the strategy are categorised into short (1-5 year) medium (5-10 years) and long-term (10 years plus) actions. As this is the first parks strategy it is expected that conditions and constraints affecting delivery of actions will change over time and this will be reflected in future strategy versions.

# Section 1: Introduction

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the major contributory elements to the ‘liveability’ of a city is the quality and quantity of parks and open space. The city landscape, being the accumulation of our entire open spaces, gardens and trees canopy, is a precious asset to Dublin, the majority of which is not quantifiable, particularly in economic terms. City parks and landscapes are important for numerous reasons; environmental, cultural, historic, community and economic.

The landscape is the living component of the city, it is dynamic in itself and as a result of the influences and changes occurring in the city, such as population growth.

It is a valuable asset, providing a living link to our past through the eras of city development. Our parks, and open spaces express the evolution of landscape design in the city from Georgian square parks to contemporary parks with contemporary themes, such as at Fr Collins Park or Grand Canal Dock. They facilitate the concentration of life that is found in the city, creating the spaces for nature to live alongside man while also providing the spaces of respite for man to tolerate, live and enjoy the city.

Now more than ever, after a period of intense urban growth and development during the Celtic Tiger boom years, it is time to reflect on what makes Dublin city's parks and landscape unique and inspiring and how they should be guided into the future.

The strategy examines the resources, facilities and services that are available to residents and visitors and how the current provision can

be improved. The community's view has been fundamental in the formulation of this strategy through public engagement and consultation and will continue to inform and develop the services and resources offered by Dublin City Council's Parks and Landscape Services.

The Dublin City Parks Strategy is the first of its kind for the city. It is envisioned that this document will guide Parks and Landscape Service's delivery of service over the coming years and will evolve with updated versions in the future. The Strategy's policies aim to further connect people and communities with parks, advance greening, biodiversity and environmental sustainability, improve the provision of parks and facilities, foster innovation and create a legacy for future generations to enjoy.

*“The more successfully a city mingles everyday diversity of uses and users in its everyday streets, the more successfully, casually (and economically) its people thereby enliven and support well-located parks that can thus give back grace and delight to their neighborhoods instead of vacuity” – Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

The purpose of the Parks Strategy is to:

- Provide an over arching framework and strategic direction for parks and landscape development and future management.
- The Strategy will inform city wide policy-making and guide decision-making.
- Provide a review and understanding of existing resources and services.
- Provide the wider community's view as part of the community engagement process.
- Inform investment and management decisions by the Parks and Landscape Services Division of Dublin City Council.

## 1.3 USERS OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy has been developed for five main audiences:

- Residents – The public engagement process let us know what the public think of the current provision of parks and green spaces in the city and informed the vision and objectives of this Strategy.
- Public and Private Interface – The Strategy ensures that there is a clear understanding of the relationships between new development and the parks and landscape resource.
- Council – The Strategy has been developed to reflect Council priorities and to assist Council with decision-making, particularly through the Dublin City Development Plan.
- Dublin City Council Staff – The Strategy proposes directions and actions to address issues and emerging trends that will require collaboration between departments.
- Visitors – The Strategy aims to enhance visitor's connection with the Dublin's parks and landscape resource. Their impression of Dublin as a destination is influenced by the quality and experience of its public spaces.



# “Growing towards a greener and more liveable Dublin City”

## 1.4 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### 1.4.1 Vision Statement

The vision statement of this strategy is: “Growing towards a greener and more liveable Dublin City”.

The strategic vision for Dublin’s city parks and landscapes is to provide for a greener Dublin, both through enhancing its visual quality and providing environmental services for the city. Additionally the experience of living in, working in and visiting Dublin is improved through the provision of good park resources and services befitting Ireland’s capital city and it’s role as an international city.

### 1.4.2 Objectives

The identified objectives are summarised below:

- Defining and understanding parks resources and services and their contribution to Dublin at the present time and planning for the future.
- Assessing quantity, quality and accessibility of park resources to the public and addressing shortfalls where they occur.
- Understanding the public’s view and how to engage further with the public.
- Defining policy on resources and services.
- Reviewing international cities and their vision and approach to their park and landscape resources.
- Expressing Dublin’s history and culture through its parks and enhancing the visitor experience .
- Protecting and enhancing parks, landscape and biodiversity into the future as the pressure for development continues.

## 1.5 METHODOLOGY

A number of actions form the methodology for this strategy as follows:

The initial step in the development of the strategy was to take cognizance of the context in which it will operate. To do this the historical development of the city landscape was reviewed to look at what has influenced our present day parks, as what we have today is a product of our past. The contemporary policy context which is defined by international, European and domestic policy is also reviewed with emphasis on the key policy and guidance affecting the development conservation and management of our park and landscape resources.

As part of the consultation process on the strategy an online public questionnaire was used to gauge the public’s interaction and views on Dublin’s parks. Parks are provided for the enjoyment of the public so their experience of them together with our experience in their provision and management assists to frame relevant policy. The consultation process concluded with a public online consultation on the draft strategy document which informed the final published strategy.

Parks form the key component of the strategy. A hierarchy/typology of parks was determined based on defined characteristics of parks. Data collection and analysis deploying GIS was used to further look at their distribution and accessibility and quantity which allowed the determination of deficit areas and policy on levels of provision.

GIS analysis was also deployed to review provision and access to recreational facilities provided within parks. Deficits in provision. of facilities were determined and potential solutions outlined for future action.

Biodiversity, public realm and arboriculture (city trees) are resources with existing strategies and this document provides an overview and outlines their key policies.

Other services and resources, including civic decoration, allotments, planning and development control, cemeteries, public housing landscapes and art are reviewed. This review is based on the many years of experience in their provision by the Parks and Landscape Services and in collaborations with other sections of the Council.

A broader conceptual understanding of the city landscape is presented in the City Landscape Plan. It takes an unrestricted look at the city and is intended as a precursor to the future development of more detailed landscape plans for the city.

## Section 2: Parks and Landscapes in Perspective

### 2.1 GROWING DUBLIN

Dublin's landscape today is the product of many years of evolution of both natural and man-made development. What our city is today, particularly its defining landscape, reflects the collective values of our predecessors and ourselves.

#### 2.1.1 Geology and Vegetation

Dublin City originated where the River Liffey meets the Irish Sea. Originally this landscape consisted of the unhindered Liffey meandering its way to the coast with its many contributory streams and rivers forming a broad drainage basin. It is notable that many of these waterbodies have since disappeared underground in our contemporary city.

The underlying geology is largely of calc limestone bedrock formed by marine sediments and harder Leinster granite is also present from the Blackrock area in South Dublin.

Overlaying the bedrock is glacial till of sediments deposited by the ice sheets (over 10,000 years ago) and the predominant soil that is derived from this till is grey brown podzolics which are typically well drained and fertile. Alluvial deposition from the rivers and coast is also present. This fertile land would have been forested with species established since the retreat of the ice sheets and was dominated by oak and ash.

Mesolithic fish trap  
(Image:Melanie McQuaid)



#### 2.1.2 Pre-Historic Dublin

The arrival of man after the ice age commenced with the hunter gatherers of the Mesolithic period (7,500–3,500 BC). They lived throughout the country and depended mainly on the sea and rivers for their survival. Evidence of Mesolithic-era fish traps formed of interwoven hazel and alder was found in what is now Spencer Dock.

The Neolithic period (3,500–2,500 BC) followed and with it people who farmed the land by grazing and shifting cultivation. They formed settlements, cleared woodland and left burial mounds and tombs. The Phoenix Park contains evidence of their existence by the presence of a burial mound at Knockmary.

Later Bronze Age (2500–500BC) sites are evident around Dublin. These include fulacht fiadhs cooking pits, one of which was found in Fr Collins Park in Donaghmede and an interesting wooden revetment at Islandbridge formed with willow, hazel, oak, blackthorn and elm. Later in the Iron Age (500–400BC), a hurdle path and brushwood platform was constructed at what is now Ormond Quay.

The trend of human interaction with the then original natural environment within these very early historical periods slowly moves from one living as part of the environment into one commencing its control and management.

### 2.1.3 Viking and Norman Dublin

By the 9th and 10th centuries, two settlements were in existence on the south side of the river — Duiblinn, named after a tidal pool on the river Poddle and Atha Cliath or ford of the hurdles, a crossing point of the Liffey.

The arrival of the Vikings (840AD) and Normans (1169AD) saw further developments, with the surrounding landscape being cleared of woodland for permanent agriculture. Such settlements could be defended and remained through the Middle Ages.

The Vikings brought craft skills, and introduced planned settlements. The old street pattern and parts of the defensive city wall that are evident today in the areas of Dublin Castle and Temple Bar.

### 2.1.4 Medieval Dublin to 18th century Dublin

The arrival of the Anglo-Normans (1171) saw the establishment of a town council and craftsmen guilds, creating structured development in the city, along with fortifying the city walls with stone. The River Poddle (augmented by the Dodder) supplied water to the city.

The city spread outside the walls forming four distinct areas. The old Dubh Linn district, a common pasture area stretching from St Stephens Green to St Patrick's Cathedral; Oxmantown, from St Mary's Abbey to Oxmantown Green, the western area from Thomas Street, and the eastern area encompassing Hoggen Green (now Trinity College). These areas developed around

monastic abbeys, which provided services such as hospitals. The religious orders were also landlords in the area, thus ensuring a stable suburb was established; with income used for charitable purposes. Following the Reformation in 1541 many churches were converted to industrial use.

Speed's map of Dublin of 1610 depicts the extent of development on both sides of the Liffey where land was reclaimed and the quays were developed. Christ Church Cathedral was also central to the urban area of that era. By the end of the 1600s the population of Dublin was at 60,000. The city started to develop further as private citizens acquired and developed former monastic land, particularly after the reinstatement of the Irish Parliament in 1661. Hoggen Green, formerly a priory was gifted back to the city, and Trinity College was established on that site.

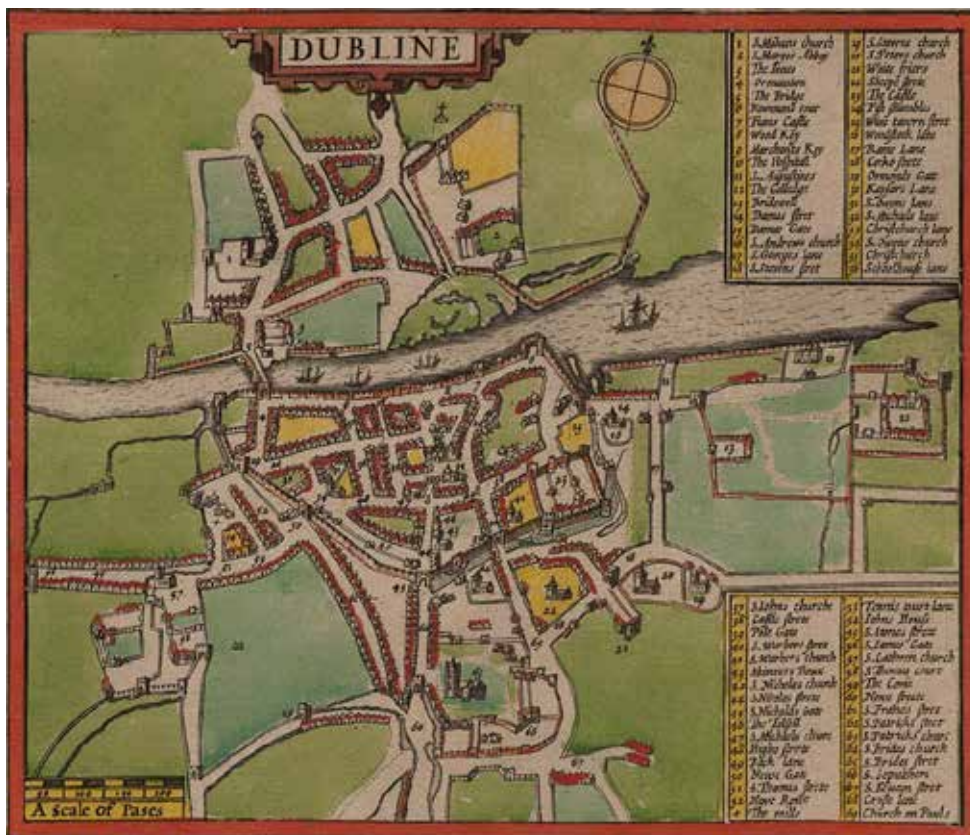
Oxmantown Green became a cattlemarket in 1541, and was due for development in the 1660s, however there was a petition to the council for the space to be kept for the citizens to walk and take the open air in 1665, it was then named Smithfield, with walls built and trees planted to keep out cattle.

The development character of the city in the 1700s moved away from being defensive to a more open settled character surrounded by agricultural fields and orchards. The presence of Dublin's first and oldest park, St. Stephen's Green, created in the 1660s, is present on Molls map of 1714 and while the Phoenix Park, was also formed in this period it did not permit public access.

The City Basin water reservoir, located near the modern Guinness distillery, was built in 1724, and became a popular promenade area for the next century with walkways planted with elms and lime trees.

In summary, these centuries of early Dublin saw the establishment of the pattern of the centre that is familiar today and the commencement of the provision of public spaces, some of which fortunately remain.

Dublin 1610





Stephens Green 1796

### 2.1.5 Georgian Dublin

Dublin's population expanded rapidly from 75,000 in 1710 to 150,000 in 1756.

The Georgian era Dublin (1714-1830) saw a more plan led and controlled form of development. Due to major congestion in the medieval streets, the Wide Streets Commission was established in 1757. The Commission widened medieval streets, and constructed bridges which changed the axis of the city from east-west to north-south. The Grand Canal and the Royal Canal were also constructed in the 1700s, and had an influence on the development of the city, with the suburbs developing outside these city "rings". They were the transport corridors of this time but now serve the city as linear recreational and biodiversity resources.

One of the most significant characteristics of this period, and indeed to the development of parks within the city, was the emergence of well designed terraced residential squares

with a central open space. The park was the established feature with, in some cases, a double line of trees surrounding the perimeter which later became enclosed by railings. As these squares were developed by the ruling elite, many of the parks adopted a 'Jardin Anglaise' (English garden) approach with contoured grass areas, informal tree clumps, sunken curved paths and perimeter planting. Access to these parks was restricted to keyholders living in the surrounding elegant residences.

On the northside (bound by the North Circular Road), which was considered a more upmarket area of the city at this time, two major squares emerged – Parnell Square (formerly known as Rutland Square) and Mountjoy Square. Rutland Square was the first Georgian Park developed (early 1750s), and was intended as a grand termination of Sackville Mall (O'Connell Street). Mountjoy Square (1793) was considered the best planned square, and is the only "square" square.

The southside saw the development of three new squares – Merrion Square, Fitzwilliam Square and Mount Pleasant Square. These squares are still present and form the centerpieces of Georgian Dublin which attracts many visitors. The original park layouts have changed over the years, (except for Fitzwilliam Square) and now continued conservation and restoration is ongoing to help maintain their historical character.

Dublin ceased to be the seat of the Irish Parliament in the early 1800s, and entered into a period of economic downturn. The elite of Dublin society left the city and impoverished rural Irish migrated en masse. Many of the grandiose Georgian houses were subsequently converted in to multiple tenement units and fell into disrepair, notably in the north inner-city.

Dublin's new tenement museum at 14 Henrietta Street relives the hardship of that period.





### 2.1.6 Victorian and Edwardian Dublin

In the Victorian and Edwardian period (1837–1910), the city expanded beyond the perimeters of Georgian Dublin, in particular to the southern suburbs of Ballsbridge, Terenure, Rathmines and Rathgar which accommodated the middle classes and wealthy who left the central areas of the city.

Parks in the early part of the century were limited and exclusive and it was only in later years that the general public gained access. St Stephen's Green, was only opened up to the middle classes in the 1860s and after remodeling of the park in 1880, it opened its gates to all. The People's Park in Phoenix Park was originally opened as Promenade Grounds in 1840, and was improved and re-opened as The People's Garden in 1864. It was completed by the 1870s at the eastern end of the Phoenix Park, inclusive of Victorian era bandstand, kiosk and seating which are still present.

By 1880, the northside development expansion was less pronounced and concentrated along the coast beyond the North Circular Road.

The formation of Bull Island, now an important city nature reserve, occurred after the construction of the Bull Wall in 1825. The new wall facilitated tidal scouring at the River Liffey mouth, to assist shipping, however it also created deposition north of the wall that over time created the island.

New parks were developed in the suburbs towards the end of the century, such as Palmerston Park and Belgrave Square, contributing to what we now describe as Dublin's leafy suburbs. In between these new suburbs and beyond was rural in nature, with large houses and their demesne, many of which would give their names to modern day suburbs. Development of rail systems, tram and bus routes also contributed to this suburban expansion.

19th century Dublin however included many living in extreme poverty and overcrowded conditions with the potato famine (1845–52) exacerbating conditions as many people moved to the city from rural areas to survive. Outbreaks of cholera and typhoid then followed in poverty-stricken areas of Dublin, creating a crisis of health and housing.

In 1875 the Government passed legislation giving favourable loans to those involved in building working class housing, and the building of artisan housing commenced. As slums were cleared some small pocket parks opened in spaces left behind, such as Blessington Street Basin and St. Audons, 1889 and Hill Street in 1898.



## Henrietta Place 1913

### 2.1.7 Dublin in the Early 1900s

In the first half of the 1900s, Ireland's political status changed through a period of turmoil from the 1916 Easter Rising to the Civil War and the establishment of the Free State and later the Republic in 1948. Dublin's population rose through the 1900s from just over 400,000 in 1926 to over 1 million in 1980. Nationally the trend was towards an urbanised population.

Dublin remained a compact city at the start of the century but expanded its suburbs significantly to create better housing to accommodate the growth of population. The inner-city slums were gradually cleared and improvement of sanitary conditions through new sewer and waste disposal systems occurred. Slum clearance helped form St Patricks Park which was opened in July 1902 by Lord Iveagh, (creator of the Iveagh Trust), who actively acquired land with existing tenements which were cleared in order to construct the park.

Town planning emerged during this time, and the recently established Civics Institute, held a competition on planning for Dublin, which was won by Sir Patrick Abercrombie in 1914. The Abercrombie plan envisaged river parkways along the Tolka and Camac which are still objectives of contemporary city landscape planning.

Ireland's first Town and Regional Planning Act was introduced in 1934 and allowed for the preparation of planning schemes which gave power to authorities to reserve lands for parks and open space, however there was little uptake of planning systems until the later 1963 act.

Waste disposal for Dublin at this time included sea dumping and on land dumping. A night time tram was used to dump on Fairview slobbs which subsequently formed present day Fairview Park.

**Newly completed St Patricks Park (1904)**



### 2.1.8 Post-war Dublin

Decentralisation and Garden City concepts formed a focus of emerging town planning principles which included the provision of open space as a central feature. Suburban growth pushed the city to new limits each decade (Marino in the 1920s and 1930s, Crumlin and Cabra in the 1940s, Ballyfermot and Artane in the 1950s and Finglas and Ballymun in the 1960s).

With decentralisation, the inner-city population decreased. Even as the county's population increased over the years, Dublin's inner-city continued to decline and urban decay blighted areas. Some older city parks changed during this period as new demands required new facilities. Mountjoy Square, for example, changed from a park with restricted public access, to a public park with tennis courts by the 1930s.

While the new housing suburbs succeeded in creating better housing, its provision of public open space tended to be quantitative rather than qualitative. Large areas of grassed and featureless green space were common, in direct contrast to the earlier elegant city parks that were focal points and received more design attention and investment. These new parks required further input and this has been a focus of work for the Parks and Landscape Services of Dublin City Council since its establishment in the 1950s.

### 2.1.9 Contemporary Dublin

The growth internationally on concern for the natural environment, particularly in the second half of the 20th century, influenced the city landscape through designations and management for conservation value.

Following the Planning and Development Act of 1963, the first Special Amenity Area Order was made for the Liffey Valley (1987) and subsequently for North Bull Island (1994) and

Howth (1999). Irishtown Nature Park (1987) which was formed on a landfill site and the linear parks along other city rivers (Cammock, Dodder and Tolka), have all enhanced and conserved the natural environment within the city as well as creating recreational assets as walking and cycling routes.

Contemporary global environmental issues of sustainability, biodiversity and climate change now influence decisions in the design and management of city parks and natural areas. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 also brought about significant changes in how the city has developed with a strong emphasis on the principles of sustainable development. The enhancement and provision of natural resources can be seen in the development of constructed wetlands at the Tolka Valley Nature Park as well as the introduction of a Biodiversity Action Plan.

The majority of the City Council administrative area is now developed with little green-field lands left. This has resulted in intensified development density toward the city centre which raises particular issues for the city landscape. These include reduction of private open space for residents and a reliance on public parks for recreation, drainage problems due to the increased run off from man-made surfaces, pressure on space for good tree growth and pressure on historic parks to fulfill less compatible functions.

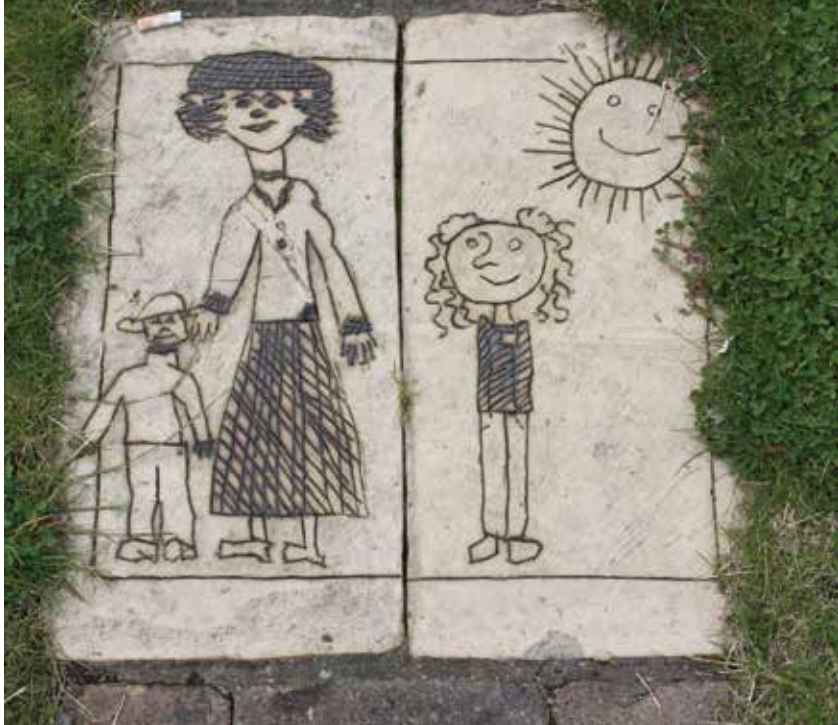
Demand for land has however promoted urban regeneration with the transformation of Ballymun and the docklands as primary examples. Institutional lands, many with significant attendant grounds, are also being redeveloped with impact on original parkland style landscapes that surround their buildings.

International influence is also a trend in contemporary provision of public space in the city. Design competitions and direct appointments, such as for the award winning Fr. Collins Park and Grand Canal Square, has allowed for the creation of parks by designers from abroad and introduced fresh thinking

and inspiring new places. The adoption of contemporary new design is balanced by advancing the conservation and restoration of Dublin's historic designed landscapes. To this end conservation and restoration plans are underway for the City Council's earlier parks which complements the fine work undertaken by the Office of Public Works on their city parks, notably the National Botanic Gardens where restoration of the glasshouses received a Europa Nostra award.







The Diamond Park —  
Community Artwork

Grand Canal Square  
Image: Martha Swartz Partners



## 2.2 GUIDING POLICY

The work of Parks Services takes cognisance of international, European, national, regional and local policies and standards to ensure compatibility. The key policy and guidance is reviewed below.

### 2.2.1 International and European Policy

#### EU Habitats Directive/EU Birds Directive

These Directives give protection to species of flora and fauna, habitat types and species of birds. Designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) by EU member states is central to the objective of both Directives. Both South Dublin Bay and North Dublin Bay (including Bull Island) are designated SACs.

#### The European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention)

This convention promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. The convention was adopted in 2000 and came into force on 1 March 2004. Ireland is a signatory to this convention. The general purpose of the Convention is to encourage public authorities to adopt policies and measures at local, regional, national and international level for protecting, managing and planning landscapes (natural, rural, urban and peri-urban) throughout Europe so as to maintain and improve landscape quality. This in turn aids the public, institutions and local and regional authorities to recognise the value and importance of landscape and to take part in related public decisions. In response to Ireland's commitment to this convention a National Landscape Strategy was published by the Irish Government in 2015. This Strategy is in part Dublin City Council's fulfillment of obligations of this Convention.

#### ICOMOS (The Florence Charter 1981)

ICOMOS, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, is an advisory organisation to UNESCO.



National Landscape Strategy for Ireland



Dublin City Public Realm Strategy

The Florence Charter sets forth the principles and guidelines for the preservation of historic gardens and has relevance to historic parks in the city. The Charter defines historic gardens as architectural compositions and recommends their preservation as living monuments. It outlines strategies for maintenance, conservation, restoration and reconstruction of gardens, including their plans, vegetation, structural and decorative features and use of water. It recommends limiting use in order to protect the gardens' fabric and cultural message. It also addresses legal and administrative issues.

### 2.2.2 National Policy and Guidelines

#### The National Landscape Strategy (2015–2020)

This policy document was delivered by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht as a response to meeting Ireland's obligations under the Florence Convention. It recognises the complexity and relevance of the Irish landscape and seeks to protect, manage and plan for the sustainable stewardship of the Irish landscape.

Six key objectives are defined:

1. Recognise landscapes in law.
2. Develop a National Landscape Character Assessment.
3. Develop landscape Policies.
4. Increase landscape awareness.
5. Identify education, research and training needs.
6. Strengthen public participation.

### Planning & Development Act

The Planning and Development Act is the legislative framework controlling development in Ireland which includes requirements for the preparation of Development Plans by Local Authorities. Development Plan objectives include the zoning of land for recreation and open space, as well as the conservation and protection of natural heritage. The Act also gives Local Authorities the power to create Landscape Conservation Areas (LCA) for preservation of the landscape and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). There are currently no LCAs designated in Dublin City, however the Phoenix Park, North Bull Island, the Botanic Gardens and St Anne's Park are under consideration. There are 6 existing Tree Preservation Orders. Development control duties by Park Services includes the provision of public open spaces.

### National Planning Guidelines

The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas guidelines sets out the key planning principles which should be reflected in Development Plans and Local Area Plans and guide the preparation and assessment of planning applications for residential development in urban areas. Qualitative and quantitative guidance is given in relation to the provision of open space.

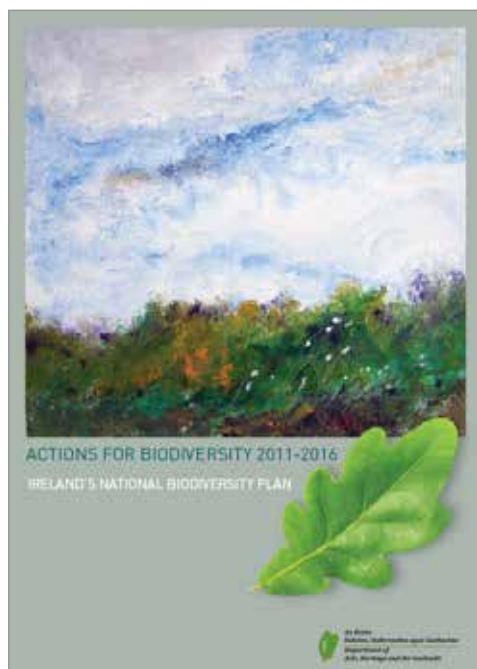
### Ready, Steady, Play: National Play Strategy Guidelines

The Government, under the National Children's Strategy, launched in November 2000, included a commitment to develop National Play and Recreation Policies. This policy aims to create better play opportunities for children. Its overall objective is to plan for an increase in public play facilities and thereby improve the quality of life of children living in Ireland by providing them with more play opportunities.

### Actions for Biodiversity 2011–2016

The National Biodiversity Plan (currently under revision) is developed in line with the EU and International Biodiversity strategies and policies. The measures Ireland will take are presented as 102 actions under a series of 7 Strategic Objectives. Some of the objectives include the mainstreaming of biodiversity across the decision making process in the State, the strengthening of the knowledge base on biodiversity and increasing public awareness and participation.





Actions for Biodiversity



National Play Policy

### 2.2.3 Local Policy

#### Dublin City Council Corporate Plan

The corporate plans vision for Dublin states it is the best place in which to be, to live, to work, to do business and to enjoy. A city that has everything by being friendly, progressive different and brilliant. The councils' mission is to provide quality services for its' citizens and visitors and act to protect and promote Dublin's distinct identity in a way that acknowledges these key points. Under the plans' goals this strategy will contribute to Goal 4 of the place to be theme: To manage and promote city parklands and support the development of biodiversity measures and projects.

#### Dublin City Development Plan

Dublin City Development Plan guides and acts as a blueprint for the future development of the city. It includes land use zoning for the whole administrative area thus planning and controlling development on or adjacent to open space areas. The current plan also outlines key policy and objectives within the Green Infrastructure, Open space and recreation chapter.

#### Dublin City Council Policy, Strategies and Plans

The following is a list of key Council strategies and plans whose directions and recommendations are relevant to the effective delivery of parks and landscape services:

**Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan, 2015–2020:**  
[www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/RecreationandCulture/DublinCityParks/Biodiversity/Documents/DublinCityBiodiversityActionPlan2015-2020.pdf](http://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/RecreationandCulture/DublinCityParks/Biodiversity/Documents/DublinCityBiodiversityActionPlan2015-2020.pdf)

**Dublin City Sport and Welbeing Strategy, 2017–2020:**  
[www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/RecreationandCulture/SportsFacilities/Documents/STRIDE2017-2020.pdf](http://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/RecreationandCulture/SportsFacilities/Documents/STRIDE2017-2020.pdf)

**Dublin City Local Economic & Community Plan, 2016–2021:**  
[www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Community/DublinCityLocalCommunityDevelopmentCommittee/Documents/Dublin%20City%20LECP%202016%20-%202021\\_Web%20version.pdf](http://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Community/DublinCityLocalCommunityDevelopmentCommittee/Documents/Dublin%20City%20LECP%202016%20-%202021_Web%20version.pdf)

**Dublin City Play Plan, 2012–2017:**  
[www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Community/childrenservicesunit/Documents/DublinCityPlayPlan2012-2017.pdf](http://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Community/childrenservicesunit/Documents/DublinCityPlayPlan2012-2017.pdf)

**Your City, Your Space – Dublin City Public Realm Strategy, 2012:**  
[www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Planning/Documents/YDYVPublicRealmFinal.pdf](http://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Planning/Documents/YDYVPublicRealmFinal.pdf)

**Public Realm Masterplan for the North Lotts & Grand Canal Dock SD2:**  
[www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Planning/PublicRealm/Documents/PRMasterplanDocklands-SDZ-2017](http://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/Planning/PublicRealm/Documents/PRMasterplanDocklands-SDZ-2017)



## 2.3 VALUE OF CITY PARKS

### 2.3.1 Recreation and Health

The value of parks as recreational space is widely recognised as highlighted in the public survey findings outlined in Chapter 3.

Recreation is either passive (e.g. strolling) or active (e.g. sports), and generally suitable for all age groups and abilities. Parks also provide space to relax away from busy city living. Research supports the importance of green spaces on better mental health. The World Health Organisation (WHO), in its European Mental Health Plan, states actions under Healthy Places, Healthy Communities, which highlight the importance of recreation and contact with nature for mental well-being.

Currently one of the most significant health concerns in Ireland and Europe is obesity and its associated health problems, including premature death and diabetes. Of particular concern is the rise in childhood obesity. The financial costs of these resulting health problems are also significant (€1.13 billion in 2012, Safefood).

Diet and physical activity are the key methods of combating this problem, the latter being assisted through the adequate provision of accessible public open space and recreation facilities. Over 17% of Dublin City's land area is green space. The provision of playing pitches and playgrounds assists in the promotion of active healthy lives through sport and play. The natural areas of the city landscape also allow people to have contact with nature, to de-stress and relax.

Healthy places, healthy communities:

- (j) promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for all age groups, through sport and other activities, and provide safe play space for children;
- (k) promote the establishment and protection of healthy places outdoors and contact with nature;

Report extract: The European Mental Health Action Plan, World Health Organisation, 2008

*In Ireland at the present time 39% of adults are overweight and 18% are obese. Of these, slightly more men than women are obese and there is a higher incidence of the disease in lower socio-economic groups. Most worrying of all is the fact that childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions in Europe, with body weight now the most prevalent childhood disease.*

Report extract: Obesity –The Policy Challenges, National Taskforce on Obesity, 2005.







### 2.3.2 Identity of the City

Cities around the world espouse different identities. For Paris it's romance. For Oxford it's learning and for New York it's ambition. A city's identity is made up of numerous components or attributes, none more important than the provision of exceptional and accessible parks and open spaces. Dublin's identity influences perceptions both at home and abroad. It influences decisions, from where people wish to live or visit or to where companies wish to invest.

Dublin's parks and urban landscape contribute to a greener, more liveable city identity for Dublin. The recent designation of the Dublin Bay Biosphere is an important step in the development of Dublin as a green city at an international level.

Parks also contribute greatly to historical identity. Dublin's landscape is steeped in history which is a physical record of its development over time from the earliest archaeological monuments to the Georgian-era parks; Dublin's past can be read through its parks.

Culture and art are further components of Dublin's identity that parks contribute to. Its the fourth city in the world to be designated as a UNESCO City of Literature. This identity provides a unique cultural experience with literature, thus spreading the city's literary importance on an international scale. Its relationship with such literary greats as Oscar Wilde and James Joyce along with its cultural, arts and social scene create a powerful international image of the city as a place with literature at its core. This strategy

recognises this strong identity and proposes a series of new city centre parks that reference recent writers connected with the city.

Art has played an important role in the development of Dublin Parks, and over the years a collection of sculptural art has evolved adding further interest to the parks that exhibit them. To celebrate this and to interpret the story of the artwork and the artists who created them Parks and Landscape Services have recently published an Art in Parks Guide and created a smartphone orientated multi-lingual guide to the Oscar Wilde sculpture in Merrion Square.

Dublin City parks are also used for many regular and once-off cultural and community events for example the annual Rose Festival in St. Anne's Park and the Harold's Cross Festival. There are also regular community fun-runs, Hallowe'en festivals and pop-up events such as open-air cinema. These events bring life and enjoyment to the city.





### 2.3.3 Social Interaction & Community

Dublin's parks and landscapes provide space and facilities where all members of society can interact. This interaction helps to break down barriers between social groups and enhances integration and the concept of community within the city.

Today some 19% of the city's population are of migrant origin and the majority live in the inner-city area. The diverse population of Dublin was also reflected in the Parks questionnaire, with 12% of respondents being of non-Irish nationalities.

Parks Services has an ongoing relationship with many organisations from sporting to community. The changing population demographics has an impact on the change in use of sports facilities, an example is the refurbishment of Bushy Park Tennis courts and pavilion, where padel courts are being installed, based on public demand. Padel is a racket sport, similar to a cross between tennis and squash, and is a fast-growing sport, particularly popular in Spain and South America.

Diversity in the resident population will continue to grow with globalisation and Dublin's role as an international city and Park Services will continue to adapt.

*"Dublin City is a city of welcome, that creates trust, appreciation and protection for all its people, all its communities and consciously celebrates diversity." – Vision Statement of the Dublin City Inegration Framework*



### 2.3.4 Environmental Benefits

Our parks and open spaces perform specific environmental services for the city. The generation of carbon dioxide through human activities, in particular the use of fossil fuels, is recognised as a leading contributor to greenhouse gases and global warming. In Dublin the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per head of population is 9.72 tonnes (The Green City Index), which is higher than the European average for cities.

Balancing Dublin’s carbon footprint to significantly reduce our above average CO<sub>2</sub> emission is assisted by city greening. City vegetation, through the process of photosynthesis, actively takes in carbon dioxide and stores it, which is known as carbon

sequestration. Air pollution is mitigated in urban areas by green spaces providing a setback from sources of air pollution, as well as filtering out components of this pollution. Particulate matter (PM), for example, which is known to be produced by vehicular traffic and causes breathing problems such as asthma, is filtered by tree leaves. Research in London indicates that between 850 and 2000 tonnes of PM<sub>10</sub> (particles less than 10 microns in diameter) are filtered out per year by urban trees in the Greater London Authority.

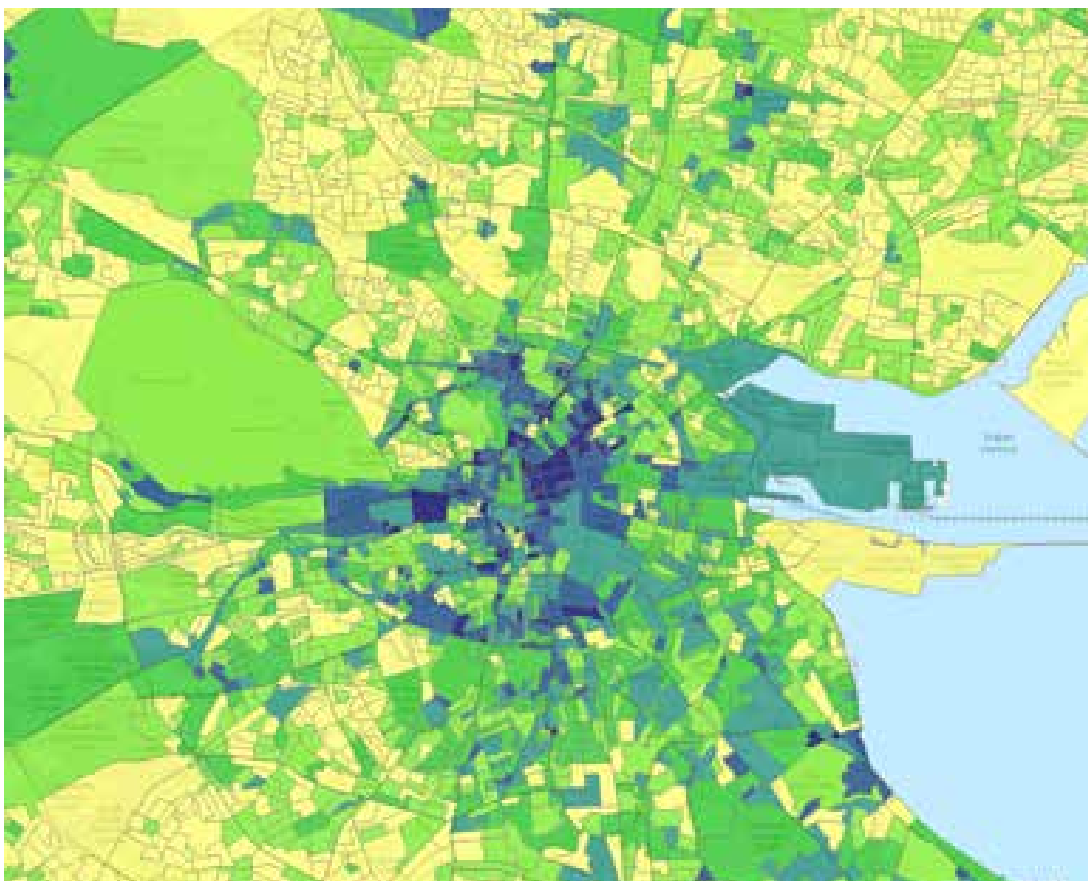
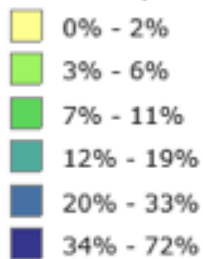
Flooding is also a problem which the city experiences on a regular basis, both from coastal waters and during high rainfall periods. Impermeable surfaces, which are extensive within built up areas (e.g. roofs, roads and pavement), produce unwanted water which is directed to the sewer systems. The volume of water runoff during high rainfall periods can exceed the capacity of the system to drain it effectively, resulting in flooding. In addition, rising sea levels together with tidal and wind events can lead to coastal flooding along Dublin’s shoreline.

Dublin’s green spaces help to alleviate the problem by providing permeable surfaces, thus allowing natural drainage as well as providing space to alleviate both coastal flooding and river flooding. Vegetation also helps to protect surfaces from washing away and by taking up water through the process of transpiration.

Improving the city’s resilience to high rainfall events can be assisted through improved city greening initiatives, such as planting on road corridors and buildings.

#### Nationality

% Nationality: Rest of World, '11 SAs







Viking Festival at St Anne's Park



Terenure Village Market at Bushy Park

### 2.3.5 Biodiversity

In an age of accelerating biodiversity loss, Dublin City Council was the first local authority in Ireland to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan in line with international, European and national legislation and policies. The purpose of this Plan is to increase community awareness of biodiversity, to protect local biodiversity hotspots and Natura 2000 sites and provide guidance on conserving Dublin City's natural heritage.

Biodiversity contributes to our general wellbeing by providing the raw materials for good health. Strong communities and a thriving economy need a healthy natural environment. The city's natural heritage and ecosystem is a mosaic of natural features and functions that include watercourses and associated riparian areas, floodplains, wetlands and beaches.

The city's green space provides habitats for flora and fauna to thrive and thereby enhances our biodiversity. In particular, Dublin's coastal habitats provide a space for marine and coastal species such as seals and migrant geese to survive. The wide range of habitats, biodiversity and ecology raises Dublin city's environmental protection profile on an international level, attracting thousands of visitors and enthusiasts each year.

Other environmental benefits can also be seen in our coastal wetlands. Such areas can improve protection against rising sea levels. Healthy floodplains and other wetland ecosystems can also limit the effects of river flooding. Inland parks and gardens, even with the demands of the visiting public, allow a range of wild species to thrive.

### 2.3.6 Tourism

Tourism is important to Ireland, and also to Dublin, with visitor figures continuing to increase annually. In 2015 8 million overseas tourists visited Ireland with 4.9 million people spending all or part of their visit in Dublin.

Parks and gardens are a significant draw for tourists. The National Botanic Gardens achieved in excess of 540,000 visitors in 2015 and over 1.5 million overseas tourists visit gardens in Ireland per year.

While statistics are not available for visitor numbers to all Dublin parks, it is expected that they are a significant component within Dublin's overall tourism portfolio which generated overseas visitor revenue of over €1.7 billion in 2015.

Visitor numbers are enhanced with events, such as the Bloom Garden Festival (120,000 visitors in 2017) in the Phoenix Park, and the Rose Festival in St Anne's Park, (up to 5000 visitors per day).

Parks express the culture and the story of the city and are therefore potential visitor attractions. In particular, historic parks can relate to particular periods in the capital's history, such as Georgian-era Dublin. Contemporary parks also play a role in expressing Dublin as a modern city by incorporating relevant themes into their design. Fr Collins Park for example, puts a focus on sustainability and particularly on renewable wind energy.

Faillte Ireland's Destination Dublin Strategy identifies a Culturally Curious sector of leisure

tourism with growth potential to direct marketing investment. Culturally Curious visitors are mostly older couples or solo travelers with time to spend. They are independent 'active sightseers' looking to explore new places, they want to 'do a place', both its culture and the beauty of its landscape. They respond well to a range of information, and are best disposed towards Ireland as a destination of all visiting groups. The Strategy indicates city parks and squares and their link, in particular, to the Culturally Curious groups' interest in gardening.

Parks as a tourism resource require further research to determine what levels of visits are achieved, how they can be successfully marketed, what visitors enjoy about Dublin's parks and what further work is needed to be done to enhance their appeal to visitors.

*"...to find ways of packaging Dublin as a city that offers an interesting mix of the built and natural environments..."* – Destination Dublin, A Collective Strategy for Tourism Growth to 2020









City Cycling (Image: Coca-Cola Zero Dublinbikes)

## 2.4 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Key international trends influence Dublin; how we live here and how we compete in the global community. In this section, such trends are reviewed with respect to Dublin and its parks resources.

### 2.4.1 Population and Urban Areas

The world's population has grown at an increased rate since the 1800s. In 1820 the population was 1 billion, by the 1970s it was 3 billion and today it is 7 billion. This growth will lead to further demand on resources and the environment unless more sustainable growth levels are achieved.

Reflecting the growth of population is the rise in urban areas. It is estimated that half of the world's population now live in urban areas. As this trend continues, it is essential to plan and design sustainable new urban areas that are liveable places as well as investing in the renewal of older urban areas.

In Ireland the historical population trends reflects the global trend with a growth in population from about 3 million in the 1970s to 4.75million people today. The population has also become more urbanised with a shift of people from the west to the east of the country due the importance of Dublin and its hinterland as an urban and

employment centre. In Dublin the population has risen from just under 500,000 a century ago, to 1.3 million today.

The trend in population increase and urbanisation (including denser urban development) is likely to influence the city landscape in the following manner:

- The need to service an increasing population will require identification of new parks, in particular in the denser central areas or those areas with a concentration of apartments where private garden space is limited.
- Development on remaining institutional lands with private/semi-private landscape may reduce the greening and recreational benefits to the city.
- Loss of greening, due to conversion of private open/green areas to parking areas or amalgamation of older housing stock into larger development blocks.
- Greater need and use of public space for infrastructure and services, such as underground utilities.
- New and revived methods to green urban areas and urban living such as living walls, green roofs, edible gardens, urban farming, allotments, etc. will continue to evolve.

### 2.4.2 Sustainability

Sustainable development is defined by the Brundland Commission as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The city landscape helps urban sustainability by:

- Providing accessible park facilities and recreational resources close to the growing urban population.
- Providing carbon storage and other environmental services through maintaining the urban forest.
- Recognising opportunities for biodiversity lands for conservation into the future.
- Recycling resources, for example, the use of construction and demolition waste in parks construction, the composting of green waste and the avoidance of the use of peat in horticultural practices.
- Facilitating green transport such as a walking and cycling through linked green urban spaces (e.g. greenways).

The principle of sustainability must continue to permeate through the planning, design, management and operation Dublin's parks and natural areas.



Clontarf Promenade Flooding

### 2.4.3 Climate change

Climate change is defined as the significant change in the environment due to both natural and human influences. This change has been more significant in recent times due to the negative effect of an increase in greenhouse gases, for example, by the use of fossil fuels for energy.

This is a global issue where temperatures are increasing, sea levels are rising and extreme weather conditions are becoming the norm. In response to these issues, international binding agreements, such as the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement (2015) were undertaken, to target reduction in greenhouse gases, emissions and global warming. Dublin City must play its part and aim to reduce its contribution to climate change but also take measures to protect itself from the worst effects of it:

- An increase in flooding, both coastal and inland pluvial flooding, due to high rainfall, continues to impact Dublin. The city landscape has the potential to alleviate this to some degree. In Clontarf, for example, the waterfront promenade park acts as a buffer to sea flooding while city parks and river corridor landscape provide permeable surfaces and natural drainage systems for water to make its way to the sea.

- With increased intensity of development in the city, there will be a greater rate of potential runoff affecting drainage capacity. Greening of development sites and individual buildings provide a means of mitigating this problem and will need to be considered in planning stages of development. Examples of green building infrastructure include, living walls, green roofs, rain gardens and permeable paving.
- City-wide greening and tree canopy enhancement, both in public and private land will assist to reduce carbon emissions due to the uptake and storage of carbon by plants. This however will not fully compensate Dublin's carbon footprint and more innovative ways may be considered, such as woodland planting projects in surrounding counties.









Singapore's Gardens by the Bay  
(Image: CPG Consulting)

#### 2.4.4 City Comparison and Competition

Cities are in competition with each other on a European and global basis. This competition is for trade, investment, tourism and human capital. The quality and liveability of cities is fundamental to their attractiveness and creating a city environment with access to good parks and green spaces plays an important role.

The environment of cities is now becoming an important factor in making comparisons and rankings between cities. The Green City Index (Siemens/Economist intelligence Unit), for example, evaluated 120 cities globally based on 30 indicators, one of which was green space policies. This 2009 study ranked Dublin in 21<sup>st</sup> position out of 30 European cities reviewed. There is an opportunity for Dublin to learn from environmental best practice methods of other better performing countries to improve its environmental performance and endeavor to become an internationally recognised Green City.

Different city rankings, however, use different 'green' criteria and obtaining impartial comparisons may be a challenge. In response to this the International Organisation for Standardisation has issued a new standard, ISO 37120:2014, which will allow cities to compare themselves with peer cities in terms of sustainable development for communities. This standard establishes indicators to measure the performance of services and quality of life in cities. Of particular importance to park services are indicators for green area per 100,000 population and the number of trees

planted yearly per 100,000 population. Such standardised systems are useful if comparing cities but can also help implement and formalise city plans and help streamline environmental programmes and resource management.

A number of cities are promoting and developing their green credentials which set an example for others to follow:

#### Singapore – A City in a Garden

Singapore has a small land area of just over 700km<sup>2</sup> (less than the area of County Dublin) and a population of 5.4 million. Between 1986 and 2007, the population grew by 68%, yet the green cover grew from 35.7% to 46.5%.

It is the top performer in the Asian Green City Index. Since gaining independence in the 1960s, the government has strongly emphasized the importance of sustainability through high-density development, and green-space conservation with the idea of a green city environment that improves the quality of life for its' citizens. This was the start of its development into a Garden City, strengthening Singapore as a destination for tourism and foreign investment.

The city has developed a 15 year vision, with one of the major themes being the importance of greenery for a quality living environment with a City in a Garden approach.



School of Art, Design & Media,  
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore  
(Image: CPG Consulting)



All London Green Grid  
(Image: Kinnear Landscape Architects)

### Green Space can be everywhere

Engagement with the public and government has been key. The Public Utilities Board has opened up and developed its water bodies for recreational activities, developing an initiative which aims to transform the country's water bodies beyond their functions of drainage and water supply into beautiful clean rivers and lakes with new spaces for community bonding and recreation.

Due to Singapore's limited land space, rooftop 'skyrise' greenery has increasingly become an important component of sustainable 'green' urban development and is being incorporated into new iconic buildings such as the Nanyang Technological University's School of Art Design and Media and the Solaris building.

### Green Links

A matrix of park connectors as green links and recreational corridors among parks is one of the ways Singapore is expanding its green space in the city. The park connector network is a series of seven connecting cycle or green paths.

### Gardens by the Bay

One of the most iconic contemporary projects is the Gardens by the Bay, a development of three world-class gardens around the Marina Bay waterfront built on 250 acres of reclaimed land. This has attracted over 20 million visitors since its opening in 2012.

### London – The All London Green Grid

London has developed the concept of a "Green Grid", which integrates green, blue and open spaces. The All London Green Grid policy framework promotes the delivery of green infrastructure across London, conserves landscapes and environments through strengthening green infrastructure and urban greening, shifting the focus from grey to green infrastructure.

Key benefits are increased recreational space, reduced flooding, improved air quality and cooling of the urban environment, thus adapting the city to the impacts of climate change. Biodiversity and ecological resilience also improve.

In a city as large as London there are a large range of projects. The River Wandle Valley Trust is a project that coordinates four boroughs developing a regional park stretching from Croydon to Putney. A charitable trust coordinates the projects, leading the vision for the 830 hectare space, enhancing links, improving biodiversity and water quality. A key aim is that the environmental benefits improves the quality of life for its citizens, and brings economic regeneration to the area.

In contrast the Victoria Business Improvement District run by the Borough of Westminster, has an innovative approach, developing a Green Infrastructure Audit that is used as a baseline for "green" developments, where flooding and overheating are key issues. Completed projects include a large green living wall, bee-keeping on roofs, and a rain garden project replacing cobbled paving.

### Copenhagen – Carbon Neutral Capital

Copenhagen has developed in a planned manner over the past 60 years with the suburbs developing in five fingers from the city centre palm as the transport system grew. Copenhagen has been at the centre of good urban design, in particular with the influence of Jan Gehl, the world renowned urbanist who developed the concept of Strøget – the car-free zone and walking street. 96% of the population live within 15 minutes walk of a large green or blue open space.

In 2011, Copenhagen experienced major flooding from a sudden storm, causing \$800 million worth of damage. A 'Cloudburst Management Plan' was developed to safeguard against extreme weather, and seek an holistic solution, incorporating the blue into the green infrastructure, similar to London, but for different reasons. The concept is to manage rainwater locally, using sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), thus preventing the water entering the main sewage system.

Copenhagen intends to be carbon neutral by 2025, and has developed ambitious plans to achieve this target.

Cycleways are key to the carbon neutral plan, with a network of over 390 km green cycleways. In peak commuting hours, traffic lights are coordinated for continuous flow for cyclists, known as the green wave, which is reversed in the afternoon.





**Copenhagen's Strøget**  
(Image: Wonderful Copenhagen)



**One New York** (Image: Hyperakt)

### Barcelona – Nature and urbanity converge

The Barcelona Olympics held in 1992 started the transformation of the city with Olympic facilities developed in neglected urban areas. Realignment of the railways and the creation of artificial beaches changed the alignment of the city from the mountains to the sea.

Barcelona is creating a network of green spaces, ensuring they are part of the city infrastructure, serving an environmental and social function. The Barcelona Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Plan 2020 is a strategic document that sets out long terms actions.

It is a compact and dense city bounded by two rivers, the coastline, and two mountain ranges, all of which create a wide variety of habitats. The various habitats and spaces were evaluated and a ranking system developed which gives a structure to develop the plan. Other forms of urban green infrastructure such as vacant spaces, roofs and balconies were also included. A strategy was developed of strengthened environmental infrastructure, biodiversity appreciation and community involvement. The plan also allows the city rebalance the urban density of the city, using the green network as a guide.

A key project is the creation of six green corridors into a network, which create structural green fringes that interconnect with pedestrian and cyclist priority.

### New York City – A strong and just city

New York City recently published One New York, which outlines plans to make New York a sustainable, resilient and equitable city.

The plan involves significant investment in revitalising existing parks and public spaces, and strategically planning new spaces. The plan targets the areas with growing population and changing needs and with areas of higher than average poverty.

An objective has been set that 85% of the population will be within walking distance of a public space by 2030. New York City Park's Without Borders program which enhances neighbourhood access to parks and increases connectivity within areas. The plans also engages the citizens with a core plan of expanding the use of streets as spaces to play and congregate.

New York has been at the centre of innovative solutions for creating new green spaces. The High Line in Manhattan is a public led initiative which turned a disused railway line to an aerial linear park stretching 2.33 km. The popular park has had an economic impact on local neighbourhoods with reinvestment occurring.

New York is also converting landfill sites into public parks, with the largest being Freshkills Park, which will be over 2,200 acres when completed. The city also facilitates urban agriculture and community gardening, with the city actively targeting vacant spaces for use as community gardens ,along with commercial and community farms on building rooftops.

## Section 3: The Public's View



### 3.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The City Council's parks resources and services are provided for the benefit of the Dublin community, the people and visitors who use them. In order to appreciate the public view, a consultation was held at the beginning of this Strategy's preparation and this is presented in this chapter. How to further engage with the public and help connect people with their parks is also explored.

#### 3.1.1 Questionnaire

A public questionnaire was created as part of the development of this strategy. Its objective is to find out the views of the public on Dublin City Council parks, and act as a first step in the consultation process. The responses analysed have helped quantify and develop policy presented in this document as well as giving practical opinions on particular parks that individual respondents use.

The questionnaire was distributed online by Dublin City Council from September 2013 until August 2014, and by hardcopy questionnaires which were also placed in city libraries.

The replies to the questionnaire provide a sample of the general population's views. Dublin City Council's administrative area contains a population of approximately 500,000 and the actual number of completed questionnaires received was almost 1,000, which represents a good sample size.

#### 3.1.2 Findings

The survey set out to investigate 14 specific questions which were themed on the following:

1. Local Parks
2. Other Parks
3. Concerns, Activities and Impressions
4. Value of Parks and Volunteering
5. Respondent Characteristics





Theme 1:  
**Local Parks**

**Question 1:**  
**What is your local park / What street is it on?**

Most people’s opinion on parks will be influenced by their local park, with which they are most familiar. This question was responded to by over 97% of respondents.

**Question 2:**  
**How often do you visit?**

The question was answered by over 98% of respondents.

The majority of respondents use their local parks on a weekly basis (42%) and on a daily basis (26%). This indicates that parks as a resource in the City are frequently used by the majority of the population, with only 2% stating they never use their local park. The returns indicate that parks are a valuable asset to the city.

**Question 2a:**  
**When visiting, where do you travel from?**

The majority of the respondents travel from their home (90%) with only 4% from the work place and a surprising low 1% from schools/colleges.

This reinforces the importance of parks to the resident population, however with the city serving as a major place of employment a higher usage by city workers would be expected.

Accessibility may be a factor in a low return for usage by the work force. There also appears to be an opportunity for greater participation/use from schools and colleges of local parks where education programmes could be explored and developed.

**Question 2b:**  
**How long do you normally stay?**

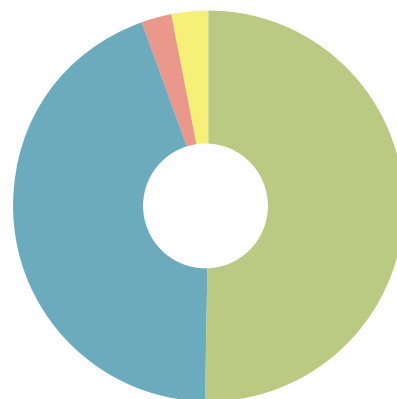
The majority of park visitors stay for more than 20 minutes (61%) while 28% stay between 5 and 20 minutes.

This is a positive result and indicates that parks are places that the majority of people want to spend time in.

**Question 3:**  
**How long does it take to get there?**

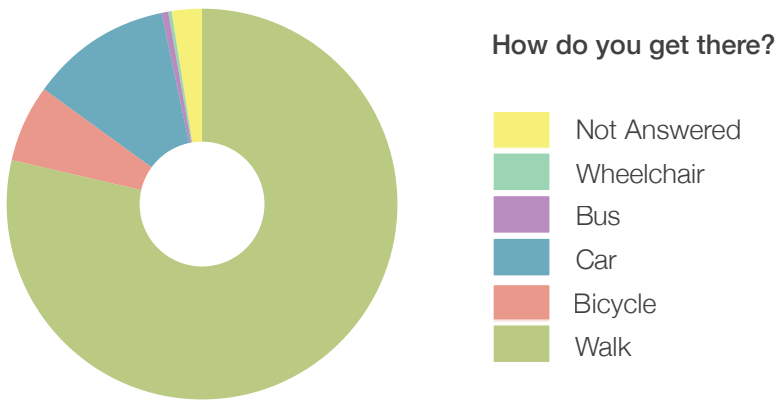
50% of respondents indicated that it took up to 5 minutes to get to their park while 44% indicated it took 5 to 20 minutes.

This indicates a reasonable travel distance for about half the population. As a rule of thumb, 5 minutes equals a walking distance of approximately 300 to 500 meters. 5 to 20 minutes presents a longer distance and could pose problems to those with children and disabilities. The closer park resources are to the population, the greater the value they are to them. Improving access to parks and the facilities they contain is examined further in the next section.



**How long does it take to get there?**

- Not answered
- 0-5 Minutes
- 5-20 Minutes
- More than 20 Minutes



**Question 4:  
How do you get there?**

Walking is the most frequent mode of transport to parks at a high 79%, followed by car at 12% and bicycle at only 6%. This indicates that transport modes used to go to parks are highly sustainable. It also indicates that accessibility by bicycle is preferably improved.

Access by cars at 12% indicates a need to allow for parking near parks. Access by wheelchair is low at 0.2% and on review of this particular group of respondents it is noted they all indicated barriers to visiting parks. Use of most forms of public transport to go to parks is also quite low according to the survey returns.

Accessibility standards for parks are based upon reasonable walking distances from residents' homes. It is therefore helpful to confirm that the majority of people walk, as it supports the methodology.

Where possible more sustainable means of travel to parks should be encouraged, not only for environmental reasons, but also as there is normally only limited car parking available.



Theme 2:  
**Other Parks**

**Question 5a:  
Do you visit other parks in Dublin?**

The majority of the population visit other parks (90%) besides their own local park. In the main, parks such as the Phoenix Park, St Stephen's Green, Iveagh Gardens, Merrion Square, Herbert Park and St Anne's figure prominently as destinations, with the Phoenix Park being the most popular other park destination.

The stated reasons why people go to other parks are variable, however dog walking, events, bringing children to the park or running are frequent responses with park size and quality being important.

It is important to note that most stated reasons are for some form of active recreation, which underlines the importance of parks and green space for healthy communities. It is also notable that the majority of these parks are of 'flagship' status under this Strategy.

**Question 5b:  
How often do you visit other parks?**

Respondents visit other parks occasionally (35%), weekly (34%) and monthly (20%) which overall is less frequent than their local parks visits. Again this highlights the importance of highly accessible local parks forming the broader community resource for a city parks hierarchy.



Theme 3:

### Concerns, Activities and Impressions

#### Question 6:

#### Does anything prevent you from visiting any parks?

55% of respondents considered that something does prevent them from visiting a park.

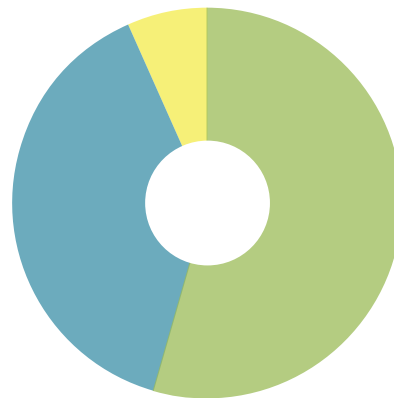
The key responses given were vandalism/anti-social behavior (30%), dog fouling/control (20%), lack of facilities in parks (19%), safety concerns (17%), distance (14%), other reasons (10%) barriers to getting there, e.g. roads or bridges (6%), disability (0.7%).

Other reasons stated included issues with park opening times, events held in parks and difficulty parking.

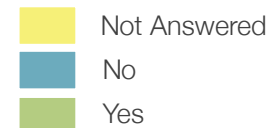
Anti-social behaviour was highlighted as a significant issue. The percentage affected is relatively large when considering the whole population and highlights, in particular, issues on the policing and control of public open space.

It is interesting to note the 20% response rate preventing people visiting parks due to dog fouling/control is in contrast to the 27% (in Question 7) who state walking the dog as their reason for visiting parks.

A range of solutions will require consideration to satisfy both camps including stricter control on leash requirements and dog fouling, fenced dog run/off-leash areas, better provisions for dog waste disposal and possible dog-excluded parks.



#### Does anything prevent you from visiting any parks?



#### Question 7:

#### What do you do when visiting parks?

The majority of respondents stated passive recreation activities in their replies, including walking (89%), relax/peace & quiet/fresh air (68%), enjoy flowers & trees (62%) enjoy nature & wildlife (48%) and meet friends (37%).

Active recreation responses were however not insignificant with answers of sports; football games (19%), jogging (24%), cycle (26%), keep fit exercise/health (30%), bring kids to playground/play (43%) being the most prominent. Other prominent activities stated include photography and reading.

The results indicate the importance of providing parks with a balance of facilities to serve the majority of the population and avoidance of excessive areas with a single function. This is an issue in some city parks where there is a high level of provision of pitches to the detriment of other activities and uses.

The results indicate the importance of providing space in parks for all recreation types and to promote healthy communities.

The results also reveal the underlying importance of parks that appeal to certain sectors of communities such as families with children, sports clubs and dog owners for example.

#### Question 8:

#### What is your overall impression of the quality of your local park in Dublin?

The overall impression is that Dublin parks are of good (39%) to very good quality (27%). This is a positive result but indicates room for further improvement. Only 7% indicated a poor to very poor result.

**Question 9:**

**How would you rate the following ?**

**Design & appearance of parks:**

Very good (28%)  
Good (42%)  
Fair (17%)  
Poor(6%)  
Very poor (4%)  
None: (2%)

**Cleanliness & maintenance:**

Very good (24%)  
Good (37%)  
Fair (20%)  
Poor(7%)  
Very poor (8%)  
None: (1%)

**Range of facilities available:**

Very good (12%)  
Good (27%)  
Fair (28%)  
Poor(15%)  
Very poor (10%)  
None: (6%)

**Trees & planting:**

Very good (31%)  
Good (38%)  
Fair (16%)  
Poor(6%)  
Very poor (4%)  
None: (1%)

**Wildlife/nature:**

Very good (22%)  
Good (29%)  
Fair (23%)  
Poor (10%)  
Very poor (7%)  
None: (6%)

**Seating/lighting/signage:**

Very good (10%)  
Good (26%)  
Fair (28%)  
Poor (15%)  
Very poor (12%)  
None: (6%)

**Sports facilities:**

Very good (13%)  
Good (27%)  
Fair (19%)  
Poor (9%)  
Very poor (5%)  
None: (20%)

**Playgrounds:**

Very good (21%)  
Good (31%)  
Fair (17%)  
Poor (6%)  
Very poor (5%)  
None: (15%)

**Art:**

Very good (5%)  
Good (7%)  
Fair (13%)  
Poor (17%)  
Very poor (10%)  
None: (42%)

Based on these results the key areas of concern and areas for improvement are in the range of facilities, seating/signing/lighting, sports facilities, playgrounds and art. There may be a greater need to consult with sports groups and schools to further establish the need for sports facilities.

**Question 10:**

**What recommendations would you suggest for your local park?**

This open ended question was answered by over 84% with a variety in the responses given. Common recommendations included, better areas for surveillance, a better variety of play equipment for different age groups, additional seating, cafes, toilets, events and art and more control of dogs and anti-social behaviour.

A large number of answers were park specific which is useful information for future park upgrades and improvements.



Theme 4:  
**Value of Parks and Volunteering**

**Question 11:  
What do you consider is the value of all parks to Dublin?**

The majority of respondents (93%) answered this question with recreation as the main value, followed by greening and peace/tranquility.

It is also worth noting that some of the respondents stated lack of private residential open space and the significance of parks to city (apartment) living. Yet again the points raised in Section 2 on the value of parks to Dublin City have been raised and supported by the views of the community survey.

**Question 12:  
Would you consider volunteering in parks?**

This question was answered by 94% of which 50% said yes and 44% said no.

Half the respondents indicated a significant interest in volunteering which is a positive outcome for successful community engagement in parks services and programmes. When asked what areas of volunteering they would like to engage in, most responded with cleaning or planting activities. Volunteering is discussed further in the next section.



Theme 5:  
**Respondent Statistics**

**Question 13:  
About you.**

A series of questions were asked to help profile the respondents including age, gender, ethnic/cultural group, nationality, where respondents live, work or study and their use of social media.

The results indicated that the average respondent is 25 to 44 years old, female, Irish, living and working in Dublin City.

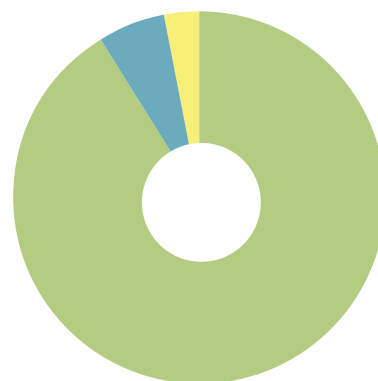
Nearly 40% of respondents were male, and 58% were female.

91% of respondents live in Dublin city with 6% answering as not living in the city. Finally, 70% worked in Dublin, 15% were students and the majority used social media.

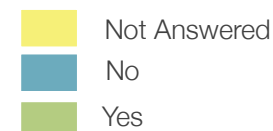
**Question 14:  
Any other comments?**

This question was answered by 56% of respondents. In the main, the comments were positive with a general sense that people are happy with park provision and resources.

Again, some respondents issued concern at the amount of anti-social behaviour and control of dogs. Some park specific recommendations were also made.



**Do you live in Dublin City?**





## General Findings

The response rate to the online questionnaire is low for the older age group. This may reflect the level of familiarity with information technology, as the majority of questionnaires were filled out online.

When age, gender, ethnic/cultural group and nationality is compared to the CSO national data for the same characteristics it is found:

- The survey response is not similar in age distribution with a much lower response percentage in the younger and older age groups.
- The survey response is not similar to CSO data in terms of gender, with a higher female response.
- The survey response is almost similar for Irish nationality (88% compared to 83% for CSO) but does reflect the fuller range of nationalities or population make up percentage of other nationalities in CSO data.

Overall the questionnaire gives useful data and opinions which are directly relevant to the formation of the strategy policy and actions discussed in later sections of this report.



Ringsend Allotments

### 3.2 ENGAGING WITH PEOPLE

Parks services and resources are at the heart of the communities that make up Dublin. This section looks at some of the areas where engagement with the public can be enhanced through volunteering, parks events, technology and wayfinding.

#### 3.2.1 Volunteering and Parks Events

The public response to the parks questionnaire indicated a strong and positive attitude towards the concept of volunteering within parks.

Volunteer programmes allow positive engagement with the public. In addition, many volunteers contribute through community-based, organised events. In order to explore this area, a number of case studies have been examined.

#### 3.2.2 Case Studies

##### Dublin Mountains Partnership

The Dublin Mountains Partnership is a group of partners, both public and private, formed to improve the recreational experience of the public in the Dublin Mountains.

The key focus of the group is to manage the area as an integrated entity for recreation, along with creating a sustainable development plan.

The Dublin Mountains Partnership run a Volunteer Ranger Service. The volunteers give two days a month on a range of activities from leading guided walks, assisting the public, conservation and trail maintenance. Education is a key part of the ranger role, along with practical conservation. The volunteers are an essential part of the organisation and are characterised by having a passion for the Dublin Mountains and the outdoors. Their interaction with the public is vital in the conservation of the mountains.

Selection of volunteers includes six month training and those who proceed are identifiable by their uniforms.





Dublin Mountain Partnership  
Volunteers (Image: DMP)



Baisley Pond Park New York  
(Image: City Parks Foundation)

### City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation

The City of Toronto runs a number of Parks, Forestry and Recreation volunteering programmes throughout the city in order to engage the public in taking ownership of its parks, open spaces, greening and wildlife.

Trees Across Toronto is the city's native tree and shrub planting program that responds directly to the tree canopy goal of 40% coverage and is a major step forward in reclaiming some of the city's underdeveloped lands. It is Toronto's signature tree planting event, funded by corporate partners, that takes place each year in April.

### City Parks Foundation New York

The City Parks Foundation is a non-profit organization that creates volunteer programs in parks throughout New York City with the aim of connecting New Yorkers through free and accessible arts, sports, education and community-building initiatives.

It's My Park Day activities are coordinated by local community groups, City Parks Foundation and NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. Activities include litter picks, bulb planting, painting benches and fencing, along with more intensive events such as beach and coastal area clean-ups. The programme offers corporate groups team-building events, and ad-hoc events in non-profit institutions and local parks.

Free events are also hosted including tennis lessons, face painting, historic house tours and nature walks.

### 3.3 VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME FOR DUBLIN

A parks volunteer programme is proposed to be established. The key components of the programme will include:

- Establishing a parks and volunteer coordination section
- Development of an individual volunteer programme
- Development of a corporate volunteer programme

The volunteer programme will not be established to undertake normal parks services, but for volunteers to take part in specific activities that gives them an opportunity to contribute to their local community and environment, and enjoy the social and educational benefits of volunteering.

Examples of possible volunteering activities include giving guided tours of parks within the city, establishing a photographic archive of city parks, helping with key events such as the annual Rose Festival in St Anne's Park, Culture Night, Open House events or National Tree Week.

Corporate volunteer examples include working in specific areas around conservation and biodiversity, such as on Bull Island, thereby giving participants a unique opportunity to learn about natural heritage in Dublin City.



#### Policy

- To create a Dublin City Parks Volunteer Programme to realise public goodwill and enhance engagement with the community in their local environment.



#### Action

- To study the feasibility of establishing a Dublin Parks Volunteer Programme, including its potential structure, funding and range of activities.



Oscar Wilde Sculpture in Merrion Square Park

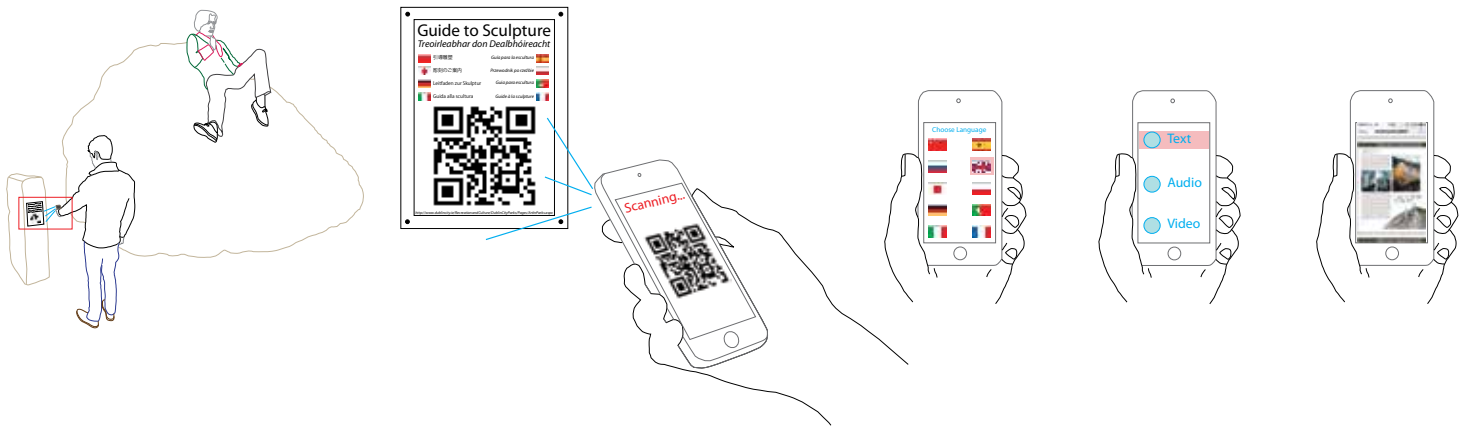
### 3.4 TECHNOLOGY

#### 3.4.1 Digital Media and Devices

How we obtain information has changed significantly in the last few decades. Traditional sources are competing with social media sites and the internet, with the trend in favour of online mediums. Smartphone usage is also growing, with a high percentage of ownership amongst the younger generation. Information on park services needs to adapt to the new formats and devices to maintain engagement with the public.

Connecting to smartphones to enhance both residents and visitors experience for parks services, is a significant area which can be developed. This ability to send information directly to the public creates new opportunities for parks.





### 3.4.2 Parks Information Portal

The project envisages a digital archive of reports, drawings, maps and images linked to a map of Dublin's parks and open spaces, which will be available on a City Council website. It will act as a source of general and detailed information that is available, such as ecological reports for Bull Island, park management plans or historical mapping of parks. A multi-lingual component will be adopted for key visitor information.

#### Policy

- To enhance information availability on park services and resources through contemporary media and digital devices.

#### Actions

- To further develop smartphone orientated multi-lingual guides for art works located in Merrion Square Park. A multi-lingual guide was launched in 2015 for the popular Oscar Wilde sculpture (see [www.dublincity.ie/DublinArtinParks](http://www.dublincity.ie/DublinArtinParks)). This pilot project incorporates a video, audio and text description of the sculpture, with the intention to expand it to the other artworks within the park.

- To develop multi-lingual digital guides to historic parks. This project aims to bring the wealth of historical information on Dublin's older parks directly to smartphone users. The scheme will enable smartphone users to open interpretation information as they enter parks.
- To develop orientation tools for visitors to Dublin's parks and in particular wayfinding, activity planning and trails to let the user create their own special parks experience in Dublin.
- To develop a parks information portal in cooperation with adjacent Dublin local authorities and the OPW.

### 3.5 INTERPRETATION AND WAYFINDING

City parks have an array of different information, interpretation and wayfinding signage and in some cases there is an absence of such information. As a capital city and international city it is important to help guide both visitors and locals with appropriate information in an appropriate format. The installation of Dublin's new street wayfinding signage sets a good standard of this with a focus on formats for the visually impaired.

#### Policy

- To improve city parks signage and interpretation by enhancing their design coordination, quality and content.

#### Actions

- To undertake a study for the development of a Parks wayfinding system that includes an analysis of existing signage, reviews case studies and proposes a system that appeals to park visitors from home and abroad.
- To update the city parks brochure which was originally produced in the 1990s. This will give an overall guide to the key city parks and be available as a high quality publication and online.

## Section 4: Resources and Services



Dublin City Centre

### 4.1 PARKS

Dublin city has over 120 public parks of various size, distribution and character within its administrative area. These parks function to create recreational, cultural, environmental and social benefits to Dublin and the key function of Park Services is to plan, design, maintain and manage this resource.

City parks are not evenly distributed or of consistent quality throughout the city. This strategy assesses these issues so that it can inform future parks provision, funding policy and management.

A parks typology is defined below to organise the array of existing parks which are described and assessed in terms of quantity and accessibility.

#### 4.1.1 Park Typology

Dublin, like many other European cities, did not benefit from a pre-determined masterplan for the provision of its parks and open space. Instead, as the city grew organically each development era left its own kind of park, which we now collectively value and manage.

In order to analyse this resource a typology of parks and open space is derived as follows:

- Flagship Parks
- Community Parks (Grade 1)
- Community Parks (Grade 2)
- Greenways
- Other typologies: Graveyards, Incidental Open Space, Housing

#### 4.1.2 Flagship Parks

These parks are the top city parks and are defined as significant visitor/tourist attractions because of their historical context and location or their natural and built heritage or the high standard of design and horticultural presentation. They welcome thousands of visitors each year.

The key purpose and function of Flagship Parks are:

- Provide natural environment connections, specialised functions and features higher levels of activity for the entire city
- Managed to the highest standard
- Acts as a destination for tourists
- Serves users from across the city and beyond in particular parks.

The main characteristics of Flagship parks are:

- Large-sized park that can extend across large areas of the city, providing connections and accommodating significant trail systems
- Can range in size and shape
- Can contain natural heritage, built heritage or cultural features and visitor facilities
- Typically many entrances
- Easily accessed by public transport
- Adequate provision of parking



City Parks

There are currently 13 Flagship parks in Dublin City which are indicated in the following table. These parks are managed by both the City Council and The Office of Public Works. In order to maintain and enhance their functions and characteristics management plans shall guide their future as Flagship parks. Currently management plans have been prepared for the North Bull Island, St Anne’s Park, Merrion Square Park and Herbert Park and the OPW have prepared plans for The Phoenix Park and St Stephen’s Green and The Irish National War Memorial Gardens.

### Flagship Parks

| Park                                      | Management | Character                    |
|---|------------|------------------------------|
| Father Collins Park                       | DCC        | Contemporary park            |
| North Bull Island                         | DCC        | Biodiversity reserve         |
| St. Anne’s Park                           | DCC        | Historic park                |
| Merrion Square                            | DCC        | Historic park                |
| St. Patrick’s Park                        | DCC        | Historic park                |
| Herbert Park                              | DCC        | Historic park                |
| Phoenix Park                              | OPW        | Historic park                |
| St. Stephen’s Green                       | OPW        | Historic park                |
| National Botanic Gardens                  | OPW        | Historic and botanical park  |
| Iveagh Gardens                            | OPW        | Historic park                |
| Garden of Remembrance                     | OPW        | Contemporary park            |
| The Irish National War Memorial Gardens   | OPW        | Historic park                |
| Formal Garden, Royal Hospital, Kilmainham | OPW        | Historic park reconstruction |



#### Policy

- Flagship parks under the management of the City Council shall be maintained and enhanced through park management plans.



#### Action

- To develop management plans for Fr Collins Park and St Patrick’s Park.
- To prepare management plans for all designated flagship parks under the management of the City Council.



**Fr Collins Park in Clongriffin.**  
(Image: Anthony Woods)

**Irish Suzhou Garden at St Anne's Park.**  
(Image: by Steve Humphries, Irish Independent)



## North Bull Island

North Bull Island is unique in Dublin as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, as well as being part of the Natura 2000 network, a National Nature Reserve and the first national bird sanctuary in Ireland.

The island, of some 300 ha. in size was formed after the city carried out works in the 1800s, including the building of the South and North Bull walls to deepen the sea channel in Dublin Port. This changed the natural tidal effects, causing silt to be deposited, north of the Bull Wall resulting in a new island being formed.

The island is only 200 years old, and supports sand-dunes and a saltmarsh habitat, along with supporting protected species under the EU Habitats Directive. Bull Island is part of the Dublin Bay Biosphere, one of the most highly designated biodiversity areas in the country.

Its unique habitat is widely studied by students and academics.

Dollymount Strand, the 5km long beach on the island is a Blue Flag beach. Swimming, windsurfing and kite-surfing are all popular sports on the Strand and it's also a popular walking area.

The focus of management of this natural area is:

- Conservation management of its flora & fauna
- Development and improvement of visitor facilities including a new interpretation centre and interpretation
- Improving traffic management



## Actions

- To prepare appropriate traffic management solutions for access to the island
- To prepare a feasibility study for a new visitor centre followed by its construction subject to planning approval and funding availability

## Father Collins Park

Ireland's first sustainable park was completed in 2009. It is the result of the open space requirement of a sustainable Action Area Plan in 2000 on one of the City Council's last remaining greenfield sites now called Clongriffin and Belmayne.

The park design, which called for environmental sustainability and linked green space, was a result of an international competition won by an Argentinian firm called Abelleyro and Romero Architects. It is a contemporary design focusing on sustainability and deploys an array of wind turbines to demonstrate the use of renewable energy and to act as an iconic landmark to the area.

The park also promotes biodiversity through the inclusion of an extensive planting scheme and constructed wetland using native plants. The delivery of the park took place with the arrival of new residents and provided an immediate recreational resource for them.

The focus of management of this park is:

- to maintain it to the original competition design as far as practicable
- to study the effectiveness of the wind turbines and promote sustainable design

## St Anne's Park

This is the second largest public park in Dublin and is approximately 97 ha. in size. It is formed of the historic core of an original estate property of the Guinness family, which was purchased by Dublin Corporation in 1937 and used for housing and the creation of the current public park.

Major changes in the park have included the loss of the estate's mansion through fire in 1943, the formation of the Rose Garden in the 1970s and the introduction of sports facilities, an arts centre and an allotment garden. New features continue to be added including the Irish Suzhou Garden which was gifted by the Peoples Republic of China to the City. The focus of management of this park is:

- to study its historic landscape and conservation value with the objective of retaining the historic estate character
- to develop the current master landscape plan to guide future development and conservation, in particular its role with regards, to the Dublin Bay Biosphere.
- to enhance visitor facilities, in particular in the area of the Red Stables.



## Action

- To develop a destination playground
- To obtain ideas for development of the original site of the mansion
- To restore the historic follies



### Herbert Park

This park formed part of the Pembroke Estate and was gifted to the then Pembroke Council as lands for a public park, named after Lord Herbert.

The lands were first used as the grounds of the successful Irish International Exhibition of 1907. Following this a competition was held for a new design which was won by J Cheal and Sons.

The current park contains original historical features such as the pergola and the lake, that contained the Canadian Water Chute, a key attraction of the exhibition in 1907. The land on which the park stands was first opened to the public in 1911.

The park is approximately 11 ha. (27 acres) in size and has numerous amenities including three tennis courts, a croquet lawn, a bowling green as well as gaelic and soccer pitches.

The key management objectives of this park are:

- to study its historic landscape and conservation value with a view to appropriately balance historic conservation and contemporary recreational demand.
- to enhance park visitor facilities.

### St Patrick's Park

St Patrick's Cathedral, which dates from 1220, lies adjacent to this inner-city park. It is one of the top visitor attractions in Dublin and is the final resting place of notable Dubliners such as Jonathan Swift.

The park was developed by Lord Iveagh under a plan by Arthur Dudgeon in 1904 and involved demolition of existing slum buildings in that area. It provides a graceful setting for the cathedral and is largely used for passive recreation with a large central fountain and pond feature.

A 'Literary Parade' of sculpture plaques was installed in 1988 to honour some of Ireland's greatest literary figures and the park also holds Vivienne Roche's sculpture entitled Liberty Bell. The park also contains newly refurbished tea-rooms and a playground.

The key management objectives of this park are:

- to maintain its historical design layout and its landscape as a setting for the adjacent Cathedral.
- to enhance visitor facilities adjacent to the Cathedral, which is a key tourist attraction in Dublin.



### Action

- To undertake a conservation and management study of the park

### Merrion Square

This is one of the City's popular historic parks which was developed in the Georgian-era by the Pembroke Estate. It is one of five Georgian parks in the city. In typical Georgian fashion, the park is central to surrounding terrace dwellings whose occupants would originally have had exclusive access to the park. The park was purchased from the Estate in 1930 by the Catholic Church and was intended as a site for a cathedral, that did not proceed. Dublin Corporation leased it from the church in 1974 to manage it as a public park.

The railed park includes extensive lawns that provide event space, a flower garden, a miniature arboretum, heather garden and tree arched pathways.

It covers over 12 acres and offers a retreat from the outside world through its wide thick border of shrubs within enclosed railings. The square contains a number of sculptural artworks and a newly refurbished playground themed on the Oscar Wilde children's story called 'The Selfish Giant'.

The focus of management of this park is:

- to study and appropriately enhance this historic landscape in accordance with its conservation plan.
- to enhance visitor facilities





The Garden of Remembrance  
(Image: OPW)



### Action

- To design and construct a park tea room in sympathy to the historic landscape character
- To interpret the historic park and artwork within, in particular to exploit the use of digital media for interpretation .
- To upgrade perimeter paths and seating in sympathy with the original Georgian-era park character.

### OPW Flagship Parks

These parks and gardens are under the management of the Office of Public Works (OPW) and serve as flagship parks for the purposes of this strategy. Their management policy is determined by the OPW.

### Phoenix Park

The Phoenix Park is the largest enclosed city park in Europe with an area of 707 ha. It is also one of Dublin's oldest parks. The park was created in 1662 when James Butler, Duke of Ormonde enclosed the lands and stocked it with fallow deer from England.

The park is home to a number of institutional uses such as Aras an Uachtarain, the United States Ambassador's residence, the Garda and Army headquarters and the Zoological Gardens.

The management objectives of the park are set out in the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan under the overall vision of:

*“To protect and conserve the historic landscape character of the Phoenix Park and its archaeological, architectural and natural heritage whilst facilitating visitor access, education and interpretation, facilitating the sustainable use of the Park’s resources for recreation and other appropriate activities, encouraging research and maintaining its sense of peace and tranquillity.”*





### St Stephen's Green

St Stephen's Green lies at the heart of Dublin and evolved from a peripheral marshy common of the 1600s to a very popular Victorian-era public park today. Its current 9ha. layout was designed by William Sheppard, funded by Sir A.E Guinness and opened in 1880. The park contains a collection of notable sculpture, including a Henry Moore work dedicated to W.B. Yeats. The park won the Academy of Urbanism Award for Ireland in 2006.

The park's Conservation Management Plan vision statement is:

*"The long-term vision for St. Stephen's Green combines its protection, conservation and, where appropriate, restoration as an important and unique historic landscape with the facilitation of appropriate access and use."*

### The National Botanic Gardens

The National Botanic Gardens serves a dual role in providing functions associated with botanic gardens worldwide, such as research, education and conservation, but in addition it also provides passive recreation normally associated with a public park.

It is a major tourist attraction for Dublin and achieves visitor numbers in excess of 500,000 per year. This significance undoubtedly has been aided by the investment in the award winning restoration of historic glasshouses and expansion of quality visitor facilities in recent years combined with their tradition of excellence in horticulture and maintenance.

### Iveagh Gardens

This park has a secluded character although it is located in central Dublin. Its current design by Ninian Niven dates from the Victorian-era and has influences of the French and English styles. It was originally a private pleasure garden, and was then developed as the site of the Dublin Exhibition Palace and Winter Garden in 1865.

The park came into state ownership in 1991, and a program of restoration followed, which has allowed conservation of the original features. The park also functions as an event space, and hosts the successful annual Taste of Dublin festival which attracts some 30,000 visitors.





**The Irish National War Memorial Gardens**  
(Image: OPW):

### **The Garden of Remembrance**

This contemporary 1960's memorial space lies on what was originally the northern area of Georgian-era Rutland Square, called the Vauxhall Gardens that were attached to the Rotunda Hospital.

The garden was opened on Easter Monday 1966 to commemorate the Golden Anniversary of the Easter Rising.

The garden was designed by Dáithí P. Hanly, former City Architect of Dublin City Council. The design features a cruciform pool with a mosaic surface depicting broken spears, a reference to the Celtic custom of throwing weapons into lakes and rivers after battle.

Sculptor Oisín Kelly was commissioned to design the garden's main sculptural piece, the Children of Lir which depicts the transformation of King Lir's children into swans as a symbol of the birth of the Irish State.

### **The Irish National War Memorial Gardens**

Designed by the celebrated architect Edward Luytens, this garden is a memorial to Irish service men killed in both World Wars.

The gardens were built by Irish and British war veterans, mainly using manual labour, and was completed in 1937.

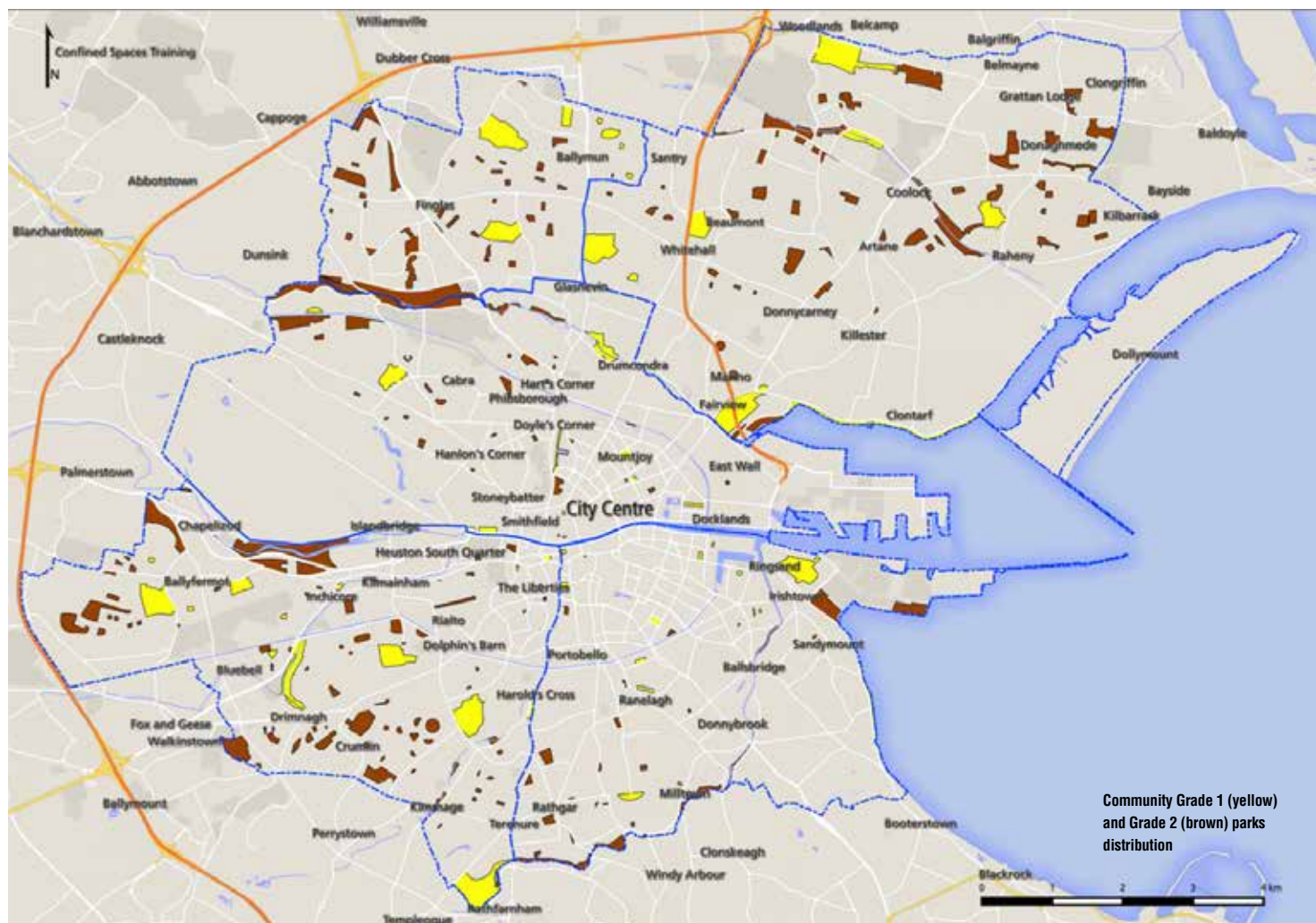
The design centres on an altar War Stone with adjacent fountains containing obelisks, representing candles. Four granite Bookrooms, representing each province are at the edge of the central space. The Bookrooms contain the Books of Remembrance with the names of those who died in the wars. Two sunken rose gardens lie east and west of the central altar. A planned bridge linking across the River Liffey to the Phoenix park north of the garden was never realised.

### **The Formal Garden, Royal Hospital, Kilmainham**

The gardens lie within the grounds of the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Kilmainham, formerly the Royal Hospital, which was established in the 1680's.

The Hospital was given to the Irish Free State in 1922 after the last occupants were transferred to the Royal Hospital in Chelsea. Substantial restoration was carried out in the 1980s which included the creation of the gardens.

They were built interpreting a French formal style that was in vogue during the time the hospital was built.



### Adjacent Councils

The adjacent councils of Fingal, South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire manage the following parks which are considered of Flagship status and are accessible to all of Dublin.

- Ardgillan Demesne
- Malahide Demesne
- Newbridge House and Farm
- Santry Demesne
- St. Catherines, Lucan
- Marlay Park

### 4.1.3 Community Parks

The majority of parks within the administrative area are Community Grade1 (approx. 279 hectares) or Grade 2 (approx. 438 hectares) parks.

**The Community Parks are defined into two grades as follows:**

#### Community Grade 1

Serve local communities, have a good range of amenities and have a high standard of design or horticultural presentation.

#### Community Grade 2

Serve local communities and have a range of amenities or are primarily used for active recreation.

The following examples of Community Parks demonstrate the difference between a Grade 1 and Grade 2 park.

Purpose and Function of Community Parks:

- Serves local communities and acts as a focal point
- Provides natural environment connections, specialised functions and features
- Can connect to other City Parks through natural features and trails
- Provides active and passive recreation

Characteristics:

- Can range in size and shape
- Can contain natural heritage or cultural features
- Have a good range of amenities
- High standard design or horticultural presentation
- Within walking distance of communities
- Adequate provision of parking





**Kylemore Park**  
(Image: Anthony Woods)

**Brickfield Park**  
(Image: Siobhan McNamara)

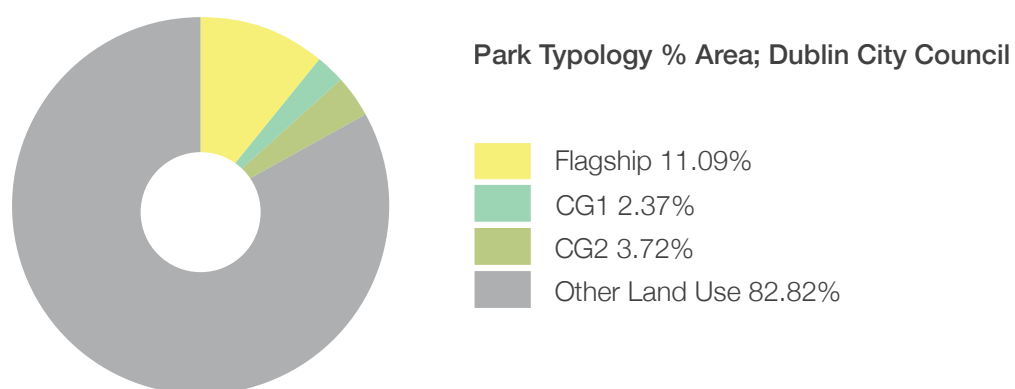
**Kylemore Park**  
**(Community Grade 1 Park)**

This community park of .5ha located in Ballyfermot, was refurbished in 2008–2009 with funding of approximately €1 million and strong involvement from the local community during the design consultation process. The park provides a balance between active and passive recreation areas so that there is something for all. As part of the park design, high quality materials were used including natural stone and sculptural corten steel lamp standards. The active recreational facilities provided include all weather basketball, a football pitch and children's play areas. The park refurbishment also received a commendation from the Irish Landscape Institute Awards in the 2009 annual awards.

**Brickfield Park**  
**(Community Grade 2 Park)**

As it's name suggests, this park was previously used as a brick works. As urban development expanded in the 1940s, the land was constrained by the previous excavations and today uneven surfaces caused by settlement are visible within the park. This is a highly active park of 11ha in size and is dominated by playing pitches and other facilities including changing rooms and a playground. One of the key issues associated with similar parks is the dominance of playing pitches which are used for only a specific period during games for only one section of the community. A more balanced provision of active and passive areas within parks catering for all age groups and abilities within communities is more desirable.





#### 4.1.4 Quantity of Parks

Within the Dublin City Council administrative area, there are 13 Flagship Parks, 59 Community Grade 1 Parks and 228 Community Grade 2 Parks.

| Park Typology Area | Total DCC (ha) | Central (ha) | North Central (ha) | North West (ha) | South Central (ha) | South East (ha) |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Flagship           | 1,304.55       | 727.10       | 505.77             | 0               | 40.43              | 31.24           |
| CG1                | 278.50         | 24.08        | 101.08             | 39.04           | 88.51              | 25.79           |
| CG2                | 437.71         | 86.65        | 132.30             | 97.85           | 131.74             | 42.18           |
| Total Park Area    | 2,020.76       | 837.83       | 739.15             | 136.90          | 260.68             | 99.22           |
| Total Land Area    | 11,761.12      | 2,650.01     | 3,701.61           | 1,099.75        | 2,320.40           | 1,989.35        |

| Park Typology % Area | Total DCC | Central | North Central | North West | South Central | South East |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Flagship             | 11.09     | 27.44   | 13.66         | 0          | 1.74          | 1.57       |
| CG1                  | 2.37      | 0.91    | 2.73          | 3.55       | 3.81          | 1.30       |
| CG2                  | 3.72      | 3.27    | 3.57          | 8.90       | 5.68          | 2.12       |
| Total                | 17.18     | 31.62   | 19.97         | 12.45      | 11.23         | 4.99       |

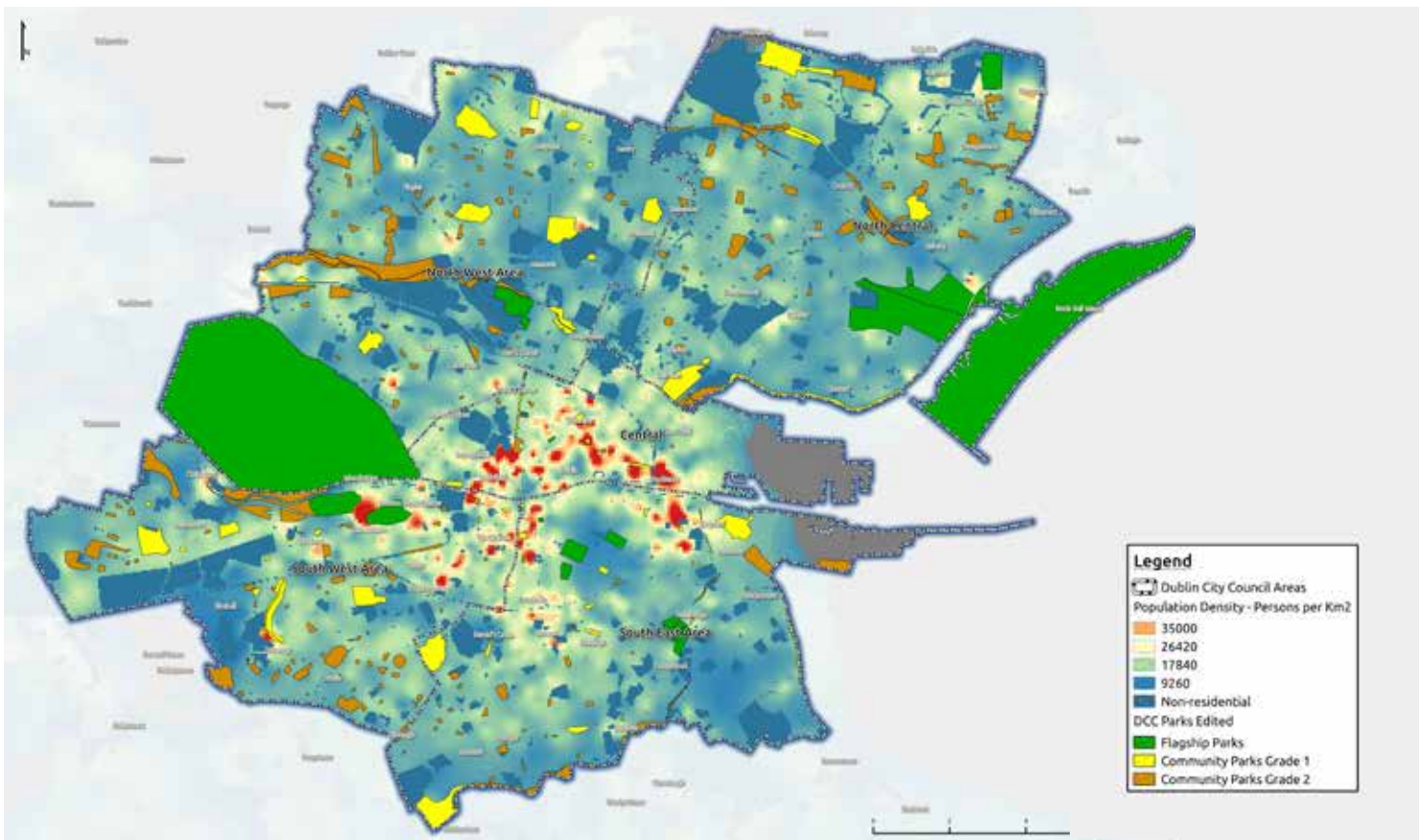
  

| Population (Census 2011) | Total DCC | Central | North Central | North West | South Central | South East |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Population               | 527,612   | 114,075 | 140,581       | 52,053     | 117,070       | 103,833    |
| Flagship                 | 2.47      | 6.37    | 3.60          | 0          | 0.35          | 0.30       |
| CG1                      | 0.53      | 0.21    | 0.72          | 0.75       | 0.76          | 0.25       |
| CG2                      | 0.83      | 0.76    | 0.94          | 1.88       | 1.13          | 0.41       |
| Total                    | 3.83      | 7.34    | 5.26          | 2.63       | 2.23          | 0.96       |

Parks form just over 17% of the land area of the city, that is some 2020ha of the 11,761ha available. Flagship parks form the bulk of the provision due to the extensive size of the Phoenix Park, Bull Island and St. Anne’s Park. The remainder is community Grade 1 and 2 parks. When compared internationally the provision in Dublin is good, however it is important to look towards the future and expect the city population to continue to grow with associated demand for recreational space. The protection of existing open space is therefore crucial to meeting both current and future recreational demands.

The density of residential population within the administrative area varies. A notable higher density zone is located in the inner-city between the canals as indicated (red & orange areas) on the map below. Between 1991 and 2011 the population of Dublin City increased by just 9.8 per cent. However, in the - there was an increase of 62% in the same period. This increase reflects the high level of apartment building in the inner-city from the late 1980s onwards. Apartments typically have less open space for occupants compared to individual houses and therefore there is a greater need for good access to public open space.

**Dublin Population Density**







The geographic location and size of parks are not uniform throughout the city, which reflects the organic growth of the capital over many years. In order to quantify their distribution more clearly, analysis of the 5 management areas (Central, North Central, South Central, North West and South East) within the city has been conducted in terms of total park area.

As can be seen in the diagrams above, the Central and North Central areas indicate the highest percentage area of flagship parks in the city at 27% and 13.6% respectively, whereas the North West has 0%. However, it is noted that the high percentage in the Central area is due to the large area of the Phoenix Park. The opposite can be said regarding community grade 1 and 2 parks, where the North West has the highest provision at 12.5% and the Central area has the second lowest provision at 4.2% after the South East at 3.4%.

In terms of total provision, the South East has the lowest parks provision at 5%, compared to 32% for Central and 20% for North Central. Taking account of the entire city, parks area per 1,000 population indicates a total provision of 3.83 hectares or 38m<sup>2</sup> per person. Based on the recommended standards for local authorities of 2 – 2.5 hectares per 1,000 population (25m<sup>2</sup>

per person) as indicated in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) and the guiding figure of 18 hectares per 10,000 population in the 1987 Parks Policy for Local Authorities, the aforementioned figure represents an above average provision.

Only the South East area falls below this average where the provision is 0.96 ha per 1,000 population or 9.6m<sup>2</sup> per person. The South East area has in fact a lot of open space but this is in private or institutional use and may or may not be freely accessible.

The size of parks is not uniform. Fewer and smaller parks are located in the inner-city where there is a higher population density. While the average provision of open space per person is 38m<sup>2</sup> per person city-wide, this reduces to 5m<sup>2</sup> per person in the city centre area excluding the Phoenix Park.

The inner-city, between the canals is deficient both in community open space and public recreational resources due to the small unit size of the parks.

The key measures identified to address open space deficit and small park unit size are as follows:

- Create new parks by rezoning lands within the city centre. This requires a review of existing vacant lots or derelict sites to determine current potential to convert land use.
- Land ownership, value and accessibility. Conversion of private open space to public open space. This potentially includes Fitzwilliam Square, Mount Pleasant Square, Kenilworth Square and Brighton Square.
- Combining smaller open space provision from individual developments into large more meaningful units of open space through land swap arrangements or financial contributions in lieu of open space.
- To seek financial contributions in lieu of open space provision for proposed developments in areas outside the city centre already adequately serviced by open space and to deploy these funds to provide or upgrade parks in inner-city deficit areas.
- To enhance the general public realm quality of the inner-city to compensate for the lower provision of parks.

In a preliminary review of the city centre the potential for new park spaces has been identified as illustrated in the map below. They represent an investment into the liveability of the city. It is recommended that their design and park name reflects Dublin contemporary literature to reinforce the UNESCO City of Literature designation and to commemorate writers who had a connection to the city.



### Policy

- Dublin City Council will maintain a provision of between 2.5ha and 3.8ha of parks per 1000 population in its administrative area. This accommodates the existing provision while allowing for expected future population growth.

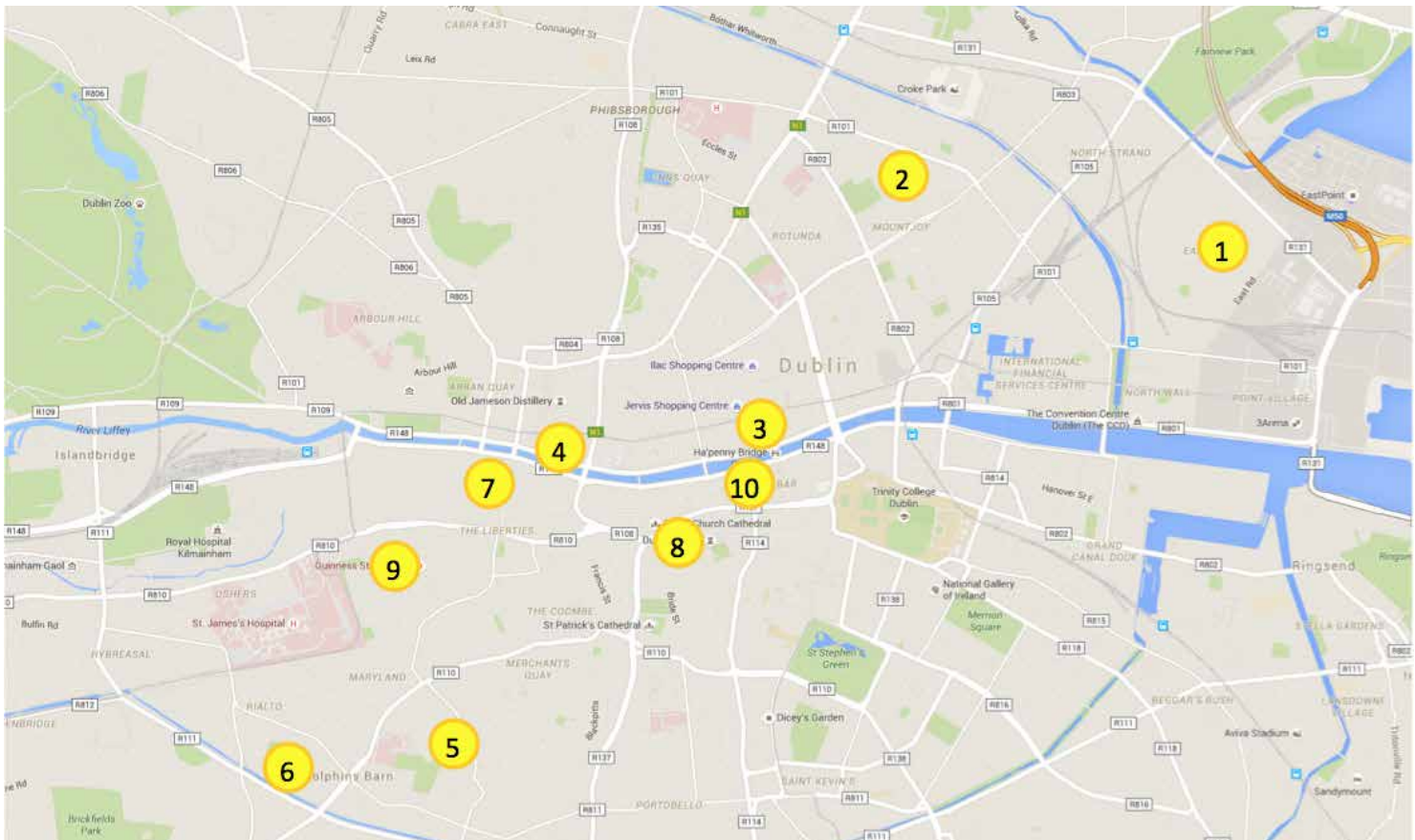


### Action

To undertake a feasibility study into the provision of new city centre parks to service this area of high population density and to contribute to the identity of Dublin as a City of Literature.

**Potential for new inner-city park map:**

1. East Wall Area 2. Great Charles Street 3. Abbey Street Upper 4. Hammond Lane 5. St Teresas Gardens  
6. Dolphin House 7. Bridgefoot street 8. Werburgh Street 9. Temple Bar Area





New City Parks commemorating contemporary writers  
(Images: RTE Archives)

#### 4.1.5 Access to Parks

An assessment of accessibility seeks to demonstrate the area serviced by city parks and those that are not. This analysis will determine deficit areas where policies can be focused.

Accessibility standards are based upon reasonable walking distances from residents' homes. It is therefore helpful to confirm, as indicated in the results of the questionnaire in Chapter 3, that the majority of people walk to their local park, as it supports the methodology.

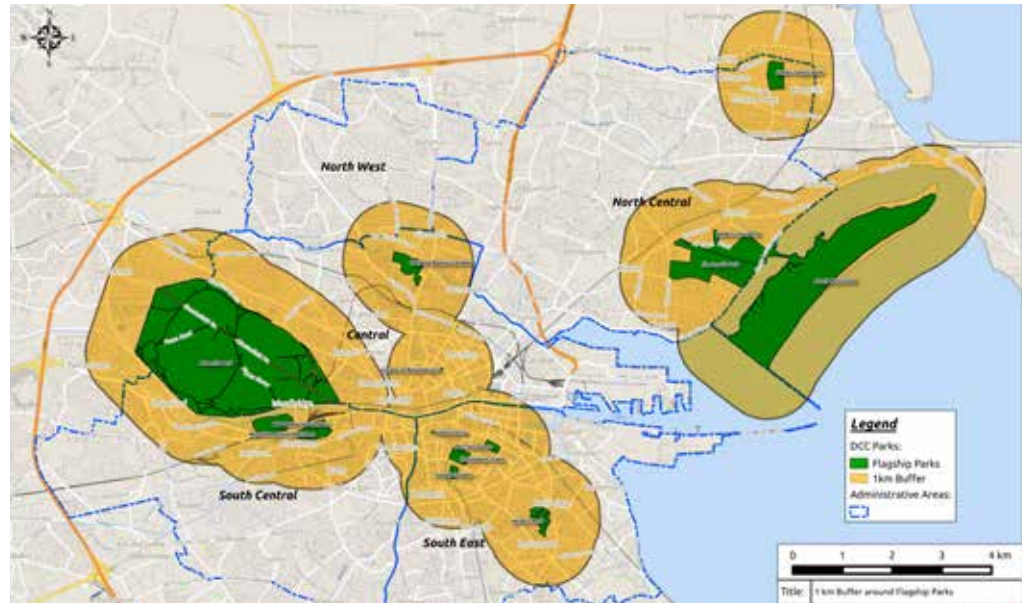
Where possible more sustainable means of travel to parks in Dublin should be encouraged, not only for environmental reasons, but also as there is normally limited car parking available.

#### Access to Flagship Parks

The distribution and access to flagship parks is illustrated on page 54. A 1km buffer zone, illustrated in yellow, has been provided which indicates a reasonable walking (10–20 minutes) or cycling distance to get to flagship parks. While access to these parks is also possible by public and private transport and it was also noted in the questionnaire returns that residents anywhere in the city will use flagship parks. The use of a 1km buffer provides a good indicator for sustainable access in the city.

It can be seen in the plan that flagship parks are clustered to the centre of the city and along the north coastal area. Two key deficit areas are prominent in the North West, North Central, South Central and to a lesser extent in the South East.



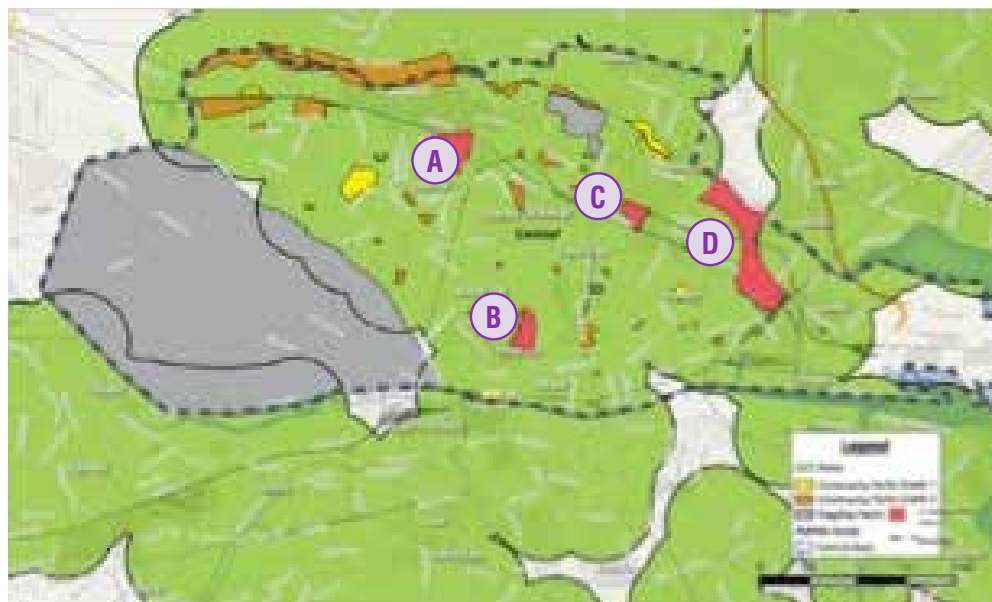


Access to existing Flagship parks

To address the deficit of flagship parks provision in areas of the city, an up-grading programme is proposed. This long-term objective will upgrade a number of existing community grade parks to flagship status (see table below).

Overall this will bring the provision of flagship parks from the current provision of 13 to 19. This will bring new flagship parks to peripheral areas and elevate the overall quality of city parks to a higher standard reflecting Dublin’s position as a capital city and an international city.

| Area          | Proposed Flagship Park  | Attributes  |
|---------------|-------------------------|---|
| Central       | Mountjoy Square Park    | A Georgian period park that requires historic landscape reconstruction in accordance with its conservation study proposals.   |
| North Central | Fairview Park           | Original tidal mud flat before reclamation and development into a park in the 1920s.  |
| North West    | Poppintree Park         | Developed as part of Ballymun Regeneration. Investment required to complete the masterplan and enhance overall quality of the park.                                     |
| South Central | Le Fanu Park            | Named after the author Sheridan Le Fanu and developed in the 1960s through suburban expansion. A park masterplan is required. Ballyfermot leisure centre lies adjacent. |
|               | Bushy Park              | Formed from the original estate called Bushy Park and lies adjacent to the Dodder River. Requires a masterplan based on its historical layout.                          |
| South East    | Fitzwilliam Square Park | A Georgian period park that is in private ownership. Requires a conservation and historical landscape study, followed by sensitive restoration.                         |



Access to Community parks in Central Area

### Access to Community Parks

Access to community parks is assessed for each of the five management areas of the city administrative area.

A 500m buffer zone, illustrated in green on plans is used to indicate the areas that are well serviced by the parks and equates to a 5 – 10 minute walking distance. A review of areas showing reduced service (indicated in red) by management area is also given.

Overall and presently, there is limited scope to introduce new public parks into these deficit areas. Opportunities to create new open space could however occur as a result of new residential development where provision of public open space is required.

Furthermore, it is noted that some areas benefit from access to local institutional lands such as schools and colleges. In deficit areas, quality public realm and improved linkages to open space can alleviate service deficit.

### Central Area

The mapping of the Central area indicates adequate access to local parks overall, however it is noted that the unit size of parks decreases towards the city centre. Therefore residents and visitors have good access, but it is to smaller parks compared to suburban areas.

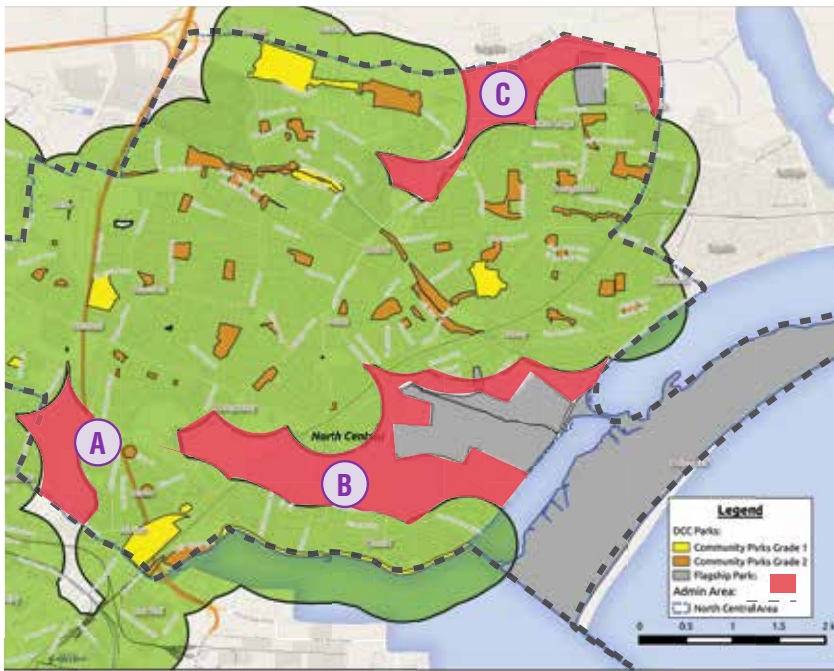
Small pockets of the Central Area not within the 500m serviced zone are as shown in the following table.

| Area of Reduced Service |                           |  |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| A                       | Cabra West – Bannow Rd    | This area primarily contains residential and industrial uses. There are no new parks proposed for this area. However, residents have the benefit of the Royal Canal being immediately adjacent. Improvements to the canal open space corridor are desirable.                             |
| B                       | Stoneybatter              | This is a largely mixed use area, dominated by institutional uses and the new Dublin Institute of Technology campus at Grangegorman. There are no new parks proposed for this area, however residents will be able to avail of passive recreation within the grounds of this new campus. |
| C                       | Drumcondra – Whitworth Rd | This area mainly serves residential and some mixed uses. There are no new parks planned for this area. However, residents have the benefit of the Royal Canal being immediately south of this area for both passive and active recreation.   |
| D                       | Drumcondra – Clonliffe Rd | This area mainly serves residential and some mixed uses. There are no new parks planned for this area. However, residents have the benefit of the Royal Canal and Tolka Valley Park adjacent for both passive and active recreation.   |

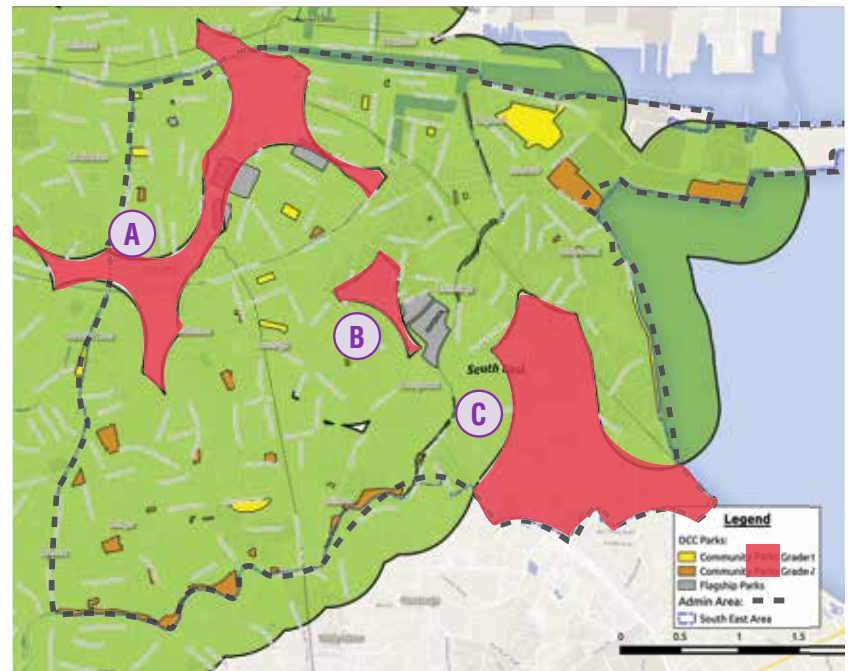








Access to Community parks in North Central Area



Access to Community parks in South East Area

### North Central Area

The North Central Area indicates adequate access overall with a mix of park sizes. However, there are 3 key areas that have reduced service:

#### Area of reduced service

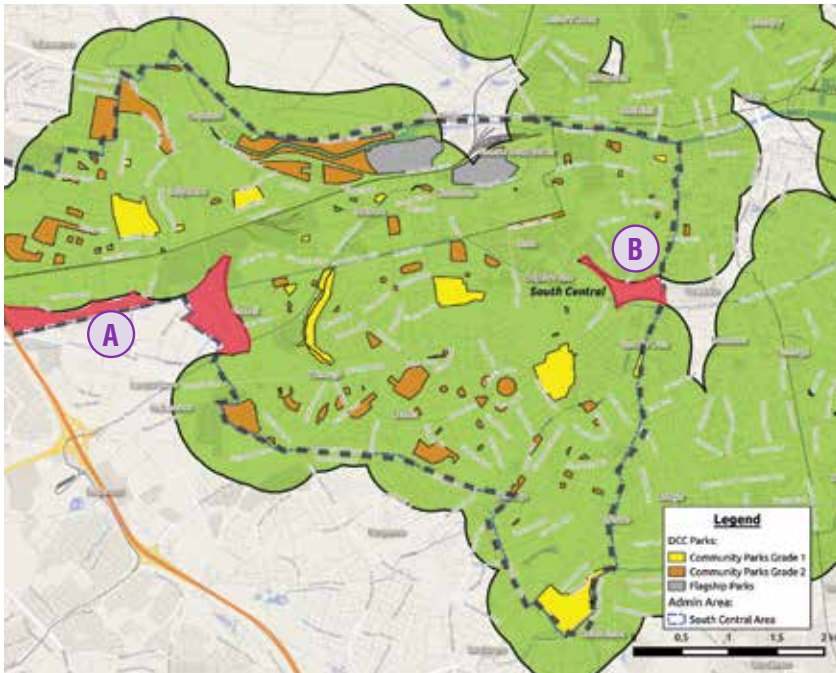
|   |                               |  |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| A | Drumcondra - Grace Park Road, | This area is dominated by institutional lands including sports grounds. It merges with Clonliffe Rd in the aforementioned deficit area in the Central Area. There is a proposed new park within the grounds of St Josephs which will help service this area on completion.   |
| B | Donnycarney                   | This is a largely mixed use area, with a number of private sports facilities such as Clontarf Rugby and Golf Club. The grounds of the Casino under the management of the Office of Public Works is also within this area which provides adequate open space. St Anne's Park (Flagship) also services this area. There are no new parks proposed for this area. |
| C | Belmayne                      | This area is characterised by new housing estates surrounded by undeveloped lands. There are also some retail and industrial uses. The undeveloped land is zoned for residential uses. A Community Grade 1 park will be provided as part of new residential development and further open space will be provided along the River Mayne corridor.                |

### South East Area

The South East Management Area, has reasonable access overall to community parks however they are of smaller unit size. There are a number of privately owned open spaces, including Fitzwilliam Square, Mount Pleasant Square as well as a number of private sports grounds.

#### Area of reduced service

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| A | Portobello/ Rathmines Area                      | This is a largely residential and mixed use area with a military barracks in Rathmines. The Grand Canal intersects this area and provides opportunities for passive and active recreation. There are no identified opportunities for new park provision. The area is also served by the flagship parks of St. Stephens Green and the Iveagh Gardens. |
| B | Ballsbridge (Centering on Wellington Road Area) | This is a well established residential area. There are no identified opportunities for new park provision, and the area is serviced by Herbert Park, which is a Flagship park.   |
| C | Sandymount/ Donnybrook/ Merrion/Belfield Area   | This is a well established residential area with some institutional uses. There are no identified opportunities for provision of new parks. There are several private sports facilities such as Elm Park Golf Club, Old Belvedere Rugby Club and Wanderers Football Club.  |



Access to Community parks in South Central



Access to Community parks in North West

### South Central Area

The South Central Area has good overall access to community grade parks. However, similar to other areas, there is a smaller unit size of park towards the city centre in comparison to outlying suburban areas. Key deficit areas in the South Central are Bluebell and Portobello.

#### Area of reduced service

|   |            |   |
|---|------------|---|
| A | Bluebell   | This area is dominated by several large industrial estates on the southern and western perimeters, with some residential use. The Grand Canal, immediately north provides opportunities for passive and active recreation. There is no identified requirement for new park provision. |
| B | Portobello | This area is dominated by residential and institutional (Griffith College) uses. The Grand Canal immediately south, provides linear recreational space for active and passive recreation. There are no identified opportunities for new park provision.                               |

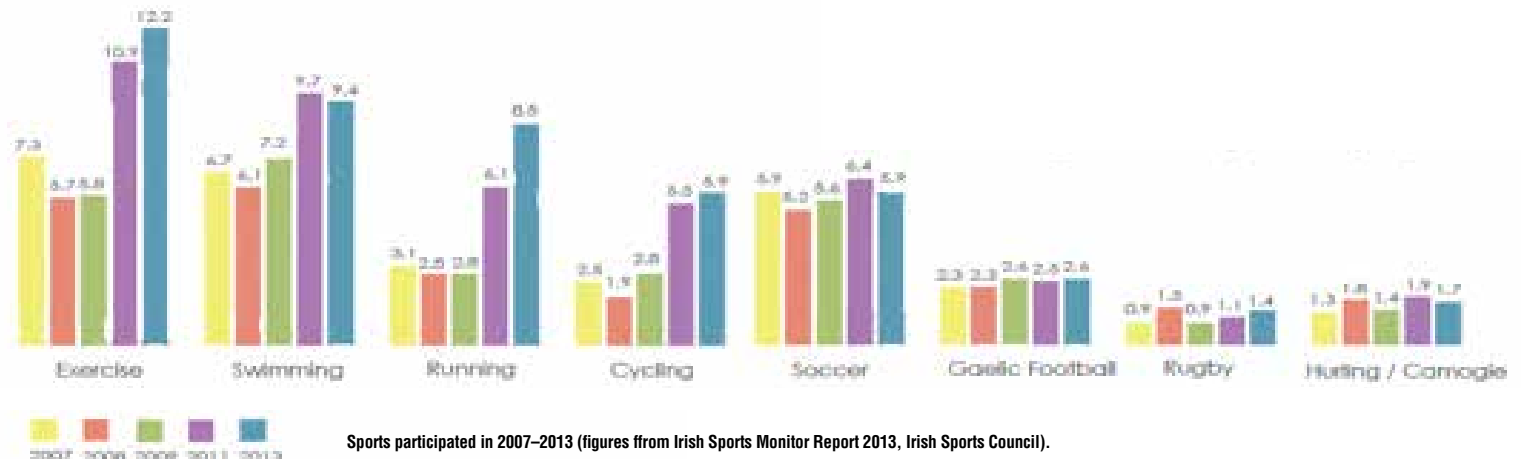
### North West

In the North West area there is overall good access to community grade parks. Notable to this area is the cluster of contemporary designed Grade 1 parks developed as part of the Ballymun regeneration scheme. No deficit areas are present.









## 4.2 Parks and Recreation

The parks and open spaces of the City provide for a wide range of sporting and recreational uses which are available to all ages to engage in exercise to suit their individual needs and abilities. This includes tennis, bowling, boules, athletics and field sports of many codes. More recently, outdoor gyms have been installed in many of our parks and their use has increased significantly as the experience of exercising in public has gained greater resonance with the public than it once might have had.

The main form of exercise however is walking and people particularly favour walking through and around parks, along rivers, canals and the ribbon of open spaces which follow the coastline. It is noticeable that where pavements have been improved or new ones provided there is an increased use of the park for walking. Pavements facilitate access for the elderly or infirm and parents with small children who would not otherwise be able to use the park unless an adequate surface is available for walking. There are in additions many 'trails' in the larger parks and the Bull Island which are favoured by more able walkers and which provide a sense of countryside in the City.

Running and jogging are becoming increasingly popular in parks. Thousands of people participate in weekly runs in St. Anne's Park, Bushy Park, Poppintree Park and others organized by local running groups. Boot camps and fitness classes are also a common sight in parks. These are commercial activities and so are granted a permit to use any particular park.

Facilities in parks are typically allocated by a letting arrangement, licence or permit to community clubs who schedule their games and manage some facilities. This is the case for changing room pavilions (for field sports), tennis, bowling, boxing and the national velodrome in Sundrive Park, Crumlin.

Silloogue Golf Course is administered and marketed by a commercial golf company for public use.

## Guidance on Participation and Provision

Active recreation in Ireland is monitored by the Irish Sports Council. Their research indicates that there is increasing participation in sport and most noticeably in general exercise and walking.

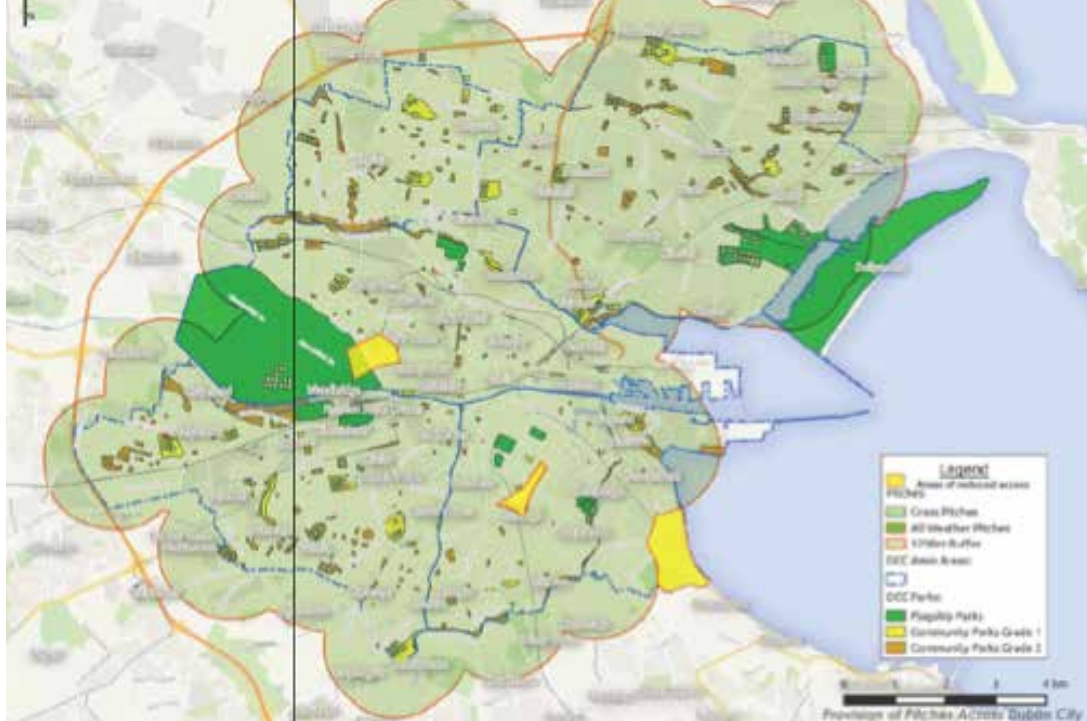
The City Council operates 5 leisure centres and 3 swimming pools. However, sports that require Indoor facilities such as swimming, gymnastics, etc. are not considered as part of this report.

There is guidance from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government on facilities provision in the 1987 report 'A Policy for the Provision and Maintenance of Parks, Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreational Areas by Local Authorities'. This would be considered somewhat out of date but it remains the only guidance in Ireland on the provision of recreational facilities. The report 'Planning & Design for Outdoor Sport & Play' by the UK's Field in Trust Organisation provides useful guidance on the quantitative provision and travel threshold for the public to access facilities.

For example The Fields in Trust document recommends a standard of 1.15 hectares per 1,000 population of playing pitches in urban areas and we have used this as a best practice model for our assessment of access to playing fields in Dublin.

Other factors may also impact on the availability of recreational lands across the City such as the conversion of private and institutional lands with playing fields to other uses (e.g. residential). The loss of such playing fields would inevitably increase the pressure on public parks to be developed for active recreation thereby displacing other uses.

However, planning for recreation facilities involves much more than applying just a rigid set of standards. It requires the development of criteria that are sensitive and flexible to the requirements of each neighbourhood and community.



Access to Playing Fields

### 4.2.1 Field Sports/ Playing pitches

There are in the order of 230 playing pitches set out in Dublin City Councils public parks and open spaces primarily for soccer and gaelic games. It is estimated that up to 5,000 people participate weekly in field sports in City parks. Other field games such as rugby, soft ball, tag rugby, cricket, ultimate frisbee, etc. are also accommodated on these pitches. Playing pitches are allocated following an annual application by clubs for their use for a ‘season’. The soccer season generally begins in September and finishes in May. There is some debate at present to vary these times so as to facilitate a close down of pitches for the winter months and to allow the clubs to avail of the better weather and ground conditions between March and October, similar to the GAA season.

The UK Fields in Trust recommend a standard of 1.15 hectares per 1,000 population for playing pitches in urban areas. The total parkland allocated for field sports by Dublin City Council and OPW (grass and all weather) is in the order of 495.73 hectares or 0.1 ha per 1,000 population. This however does not take into account the pitches on private grounds, schools and colleges.

A 10 minute walk is considered in the UK (Fields in Trust) to be a reasonable distance for people to walk to a playing pitch which equates to a 1.2km distance. Using this buffer for each playing pitch, indicates that the city is reasonably well catered for as regards playing pitches as shown on the following plan. However, there are anomalies which relate to Dublin City which would not be replicated in many UK urban areas. Firstly, the size of a senior GAA pitch is almost twice the size of a senior soccer pitch and it is may be difficult therefore to set out a pitch of this size in many open spaces.

Also there are no public pitches in the city centre within the Grand canal and North Circular Road (Trinity College, Blackhall Place and Grangegorman Campus are the only private pitches in this area), which is an issue for communities in the city centre who have to travel outside the canals to access playing fields. Consequently, the provision of all weather training facilities within the canals is an important consideration.

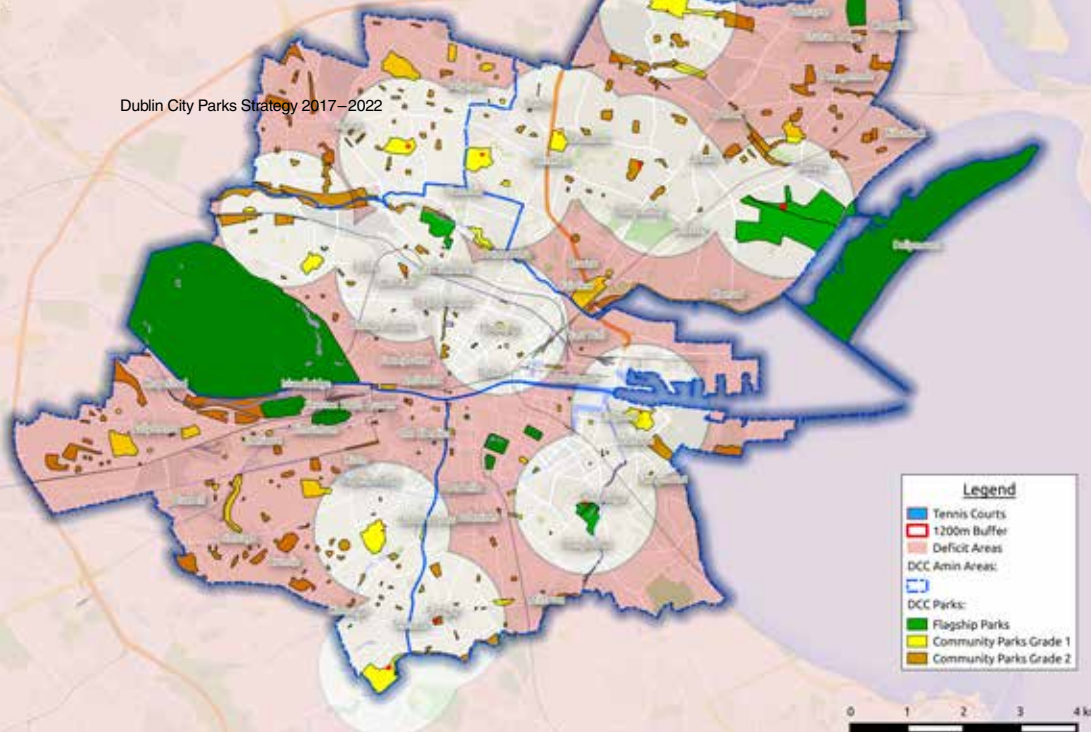
This situation has been highlighted as a particular problem in the south west inner-city and Dublin City Council has committed to identifying opportunities for developing all weather training facilities closely associated with schools.

It should be noted that school facilities and other all weather facilities under private management have not been included in this analysis, such facilities provide further opportunities for community sports clubs to train.

The breakdown of the 231 playing pitches on the table below would indicate that there is greater access to soccer pitches on public lands and soccer has the highest participation rate in the City.

However, these figures do not reflect the fact that many of the soccer pitches are for ‘small sided games’ compared to the larger sized GAA pitches and that many GAA, rugby and cricket clubs (and to a lesser extent soccer) have their own grounds.

| Playing Pitches | Total Provision | Provision per population 2016 census | DoEHLG 1987 Policy Guidelines | Fields In Trust (UK) |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Soccer          | 169             | 1:3,272                              | 1:5,000                       | } 1.15 ha/1000       |
| Gaelic          | 60              | 1:9,216                              | -                             |                      |
| Rugby           | 2               | 1:276,500                            | -                             |                      |
|                 | 231             | 1:2,393                              | 1:1,666                       | 607.2ha              |



Provision and deficit of existing Tennis Courts across Dublin

#### 4.2.2. All Weather Pitch and Training Facilities

There is an increasing demand for all-weather facilities for training and indeed league matches. The development of synthetic surfaces is improving the ability of such surfaces to simulate natural grass. They increase the frequency of use for games and reduce the wear and tear on grass pitches which would otherwise be used for training. There is significant investment required to plan for all-weather facilities and the City Council has an obligation to ensure that any such investment on its lands is sustainable both in terms of the community use and financing the on-going maintenance and renewal of such facilities.

Retro-fitting all weather pitches into existing parks is problematic as these facilities are fenced and so parts of the public open space are isolated solely for the use of football clubs (which are often the most vocal of the representative groups that use a park) to the exclusion of those who value the open and green nature of a public park for informal play, walking, rest and relaxation and general passive recreation.

All weather pitches also require careful planning with regard to flood light spill onto residential areas, provision for changing room and storage facilities and car parking

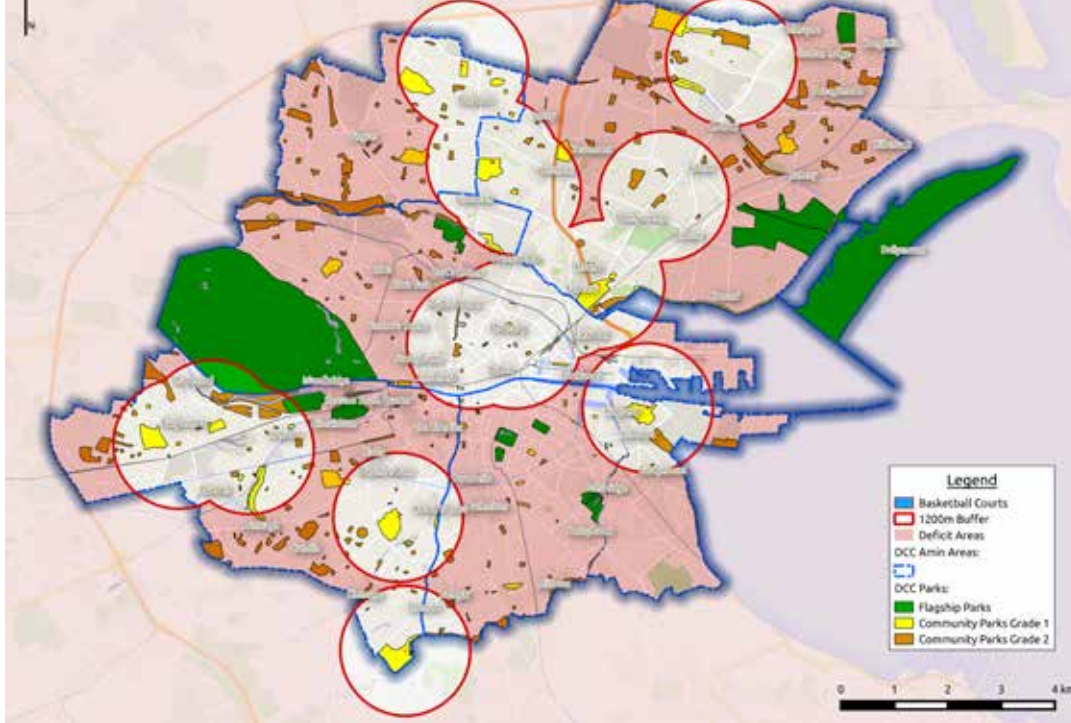
To achieve suitable accessibility we will be guided by sports governing bodies such as the GAA and FAI to identify the locations in the city which they consider the most appropriate for the development of all weather and training facilities which will then be available to local clubs to utilize. Partnerships with schools and other institutions/organizations will also be considered to develop sustainable community all weather facilities which will not deplete the available greenspace in any particular part of the city.

#### 4.2.3. Tennis

The Parks Service supports the development of public courts and community tennis clubs. The infrastructure for establishing these clubs is planned and provided by the City Council and licenced to a community group to operate the courts and pavilion for the benefit of the local community. This model has been very successful in the wider Dublin area and will be replicated where there is an identified need. Provision will typically include a cluster of 8/10 courts with club house facility. Existing public courts and community clubs are located as follows:

| Public Tennis Courts       | No of Courts |                   |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| St Annes Park              | 18           |                   |
| Herbert Park Public Courts | 11           | Not yet available |
| Albert College, Glasnevin  | 6            |                   |
| Ringsend Park              | 4            |                   |
| Ellenfield Park            | 3            |                   |
| Sundrive Park, Crumlin     | 3            |                   |
| Johnstown Park, Finglas    | 10           |                   |
| Belcamp Park               | 3            |                   |
| Courtlands, Glasnevin.     | 2            |                   |
| May park                   | 1            |                   |
| Ashington Park             | 1            |                   |
| Mount Bernard Park         | 3            |                   |
| Mountjoy Square Park       | 2            |                   |
| Eamonn Ceannt Park         | 2            |                   |





Provision and deficit of existing Basketball Courts across Dublin

| Community Tennis Clubs                     | No of Courts           |                   |
|--|------------------------|-------------------|
| Herzog Park (Rathgar Tennis Club)          | 10                     |                   |
| Bushy Park Padel and Tennis Club, Terenure | 11 tennis plus 4 padel | Not yet available |
| Rockfield Tennis Club, Edenmore            | 8                      | Not yet available |

This equates to 88 public courts in total or a ratio of 1:6,285 courts/population which falls short of the 1987 guidelines target ratio of 1: 1,000. There are also a number of private tennis clubs in the City, predominantly in the south-east which add to the overall provision of tennis facilities in the city.

The most significant deficit areas include the city central area, the west of the city (including Chapelizod, Ballyfermot, Inchicore, Drimnagh, Kilmainham) and the north east (Donaghmede, Coolock and Darndale).

Dublin City Councils objective therefore in association with Tennis Ireland is to increase the accessibility to this sport throughout the city with a target provision of 1 court per 4500 persons in the medium term. The enhancement of existing facilities is ongoing and future projects include the provision of a new clubhouse and upgraded courts at Rockfield Park and refurbished courts at Bushy Park and Herbert Park.

#### 4.2.4 Athletics

It was acknowledged earlier that running is one of the most popular sports, however the infrastructure requirements in parks for this form of exercise is minimal. Indeed most runners would prefer to run on soft ground rather than a pavement. A standard 400m synthetic athletics track together with the ancillary but essential physical enclosure, changing rooms and car park is a significant size and investment and there are such facilities located in Irishtown and Santry. These facilities are also of a regional nature so people travel to other facilities in the wider Dublin area in Tallaght, Clondalkin, Marlay, Cabinteely and UCD.

A smaller facility operates successfully at Chapelizod, managed by Donore Harriers. This is a model for athletics which requires greater consideration for other location in the City and a feasibility study will be carried out with Athletics Ireland In this regard.

#### 4.2.5 Non-core facilities

Facilities for non-core sports are unevenly distributed throughout the city. As part of our study, golf courses/pitch and putt greens, bowls, boules, skateparks, table tennis, handball and fitness trails/outdoor gyms were audited. A 1200m buffer was used and as can be seen, overall, there is an adequate provision of these facilities combined with a few small pockets in deficit. The provision of these facilities should be developed where significant interest arises or on a one per electoral area basis.

#### Basketball

There are 20 basketball courts provided within city parks of varying size and associated facilities. In comparison to other core facilities, their provision is relatively low. As can be seen their distribution is indicated above, highlighting the deficit areas of Finglas/Cabra, Kilmore/Beaumont, Donaghmede/Raheny/Clontarf, Donnybrook/Ranelagh/south inner-city.

Basketball provision typically consists of individual courts or sometimes as part of a MUGA (Multiple Use Games Area). The usage levels of the city's public basketball is unknown, however the sport is considered to be one of the top 6 participatory sports in the country, the number one indoor sport and the premier sport for females under 16 years old.

New core facilities plan

### Golf / Pitch and Putt

There are no golf courses in the City however there are a number of courses located on the periphery of the City including the Dublin City Council operated Sillogue Park Golf Course near the Airport. This is an 18 hole championship public golf course, officially opened by Christy O'Connor Senior in 1984. Since then the golf course has matured beautifully with tree lined fairways in a parkland setting.

The provision of pitch and putt courses is not based on a specific demand but the availability of suitable locations which can accommodate the land requirement. Dublin City Council operates 5 golf and pitch and putt facilities, each offering its own unique experience and benefits for every type of user.

St Anne's Park (Par 3)  
Longmeadows  
Bellcamp Park  
Edenmore Park  
Tolka Valley Park

### Lawn Bowls

Kenilworth Bowling Club, based in Kenilworth Square in Rathgar was built in the 1890s and was the first in Dublin. Apart from Herbert Park Bowling Club, which is over 60 years in existence, and Crumlin Bowling Club, the provision for lawn bowls in Dublin City is by private clubs with competitions organised by the Bowling League of Ireland.

The provision of new facilities in parks will be considered subject to the formation of a club who will use the facility.

### Boules /Petanque

This game which is normally associated with France and Italy is played in St Annes park, Herbert Park, Bushy Park and Albert College Park. The game, involving teams competing to throw their boules as close as possible to a target ball, requires the provision of a gravel piste or playing surface. The game can be played informally or through clubs organised by the Irish Petanque Association.

### Cycling

Traditionally cycling in parks has been banned by bye-laws but this makes less in the context of encouraging more active life styles. 'Greenways' are defined in the context of cycling as non-motorised transport routes for cyclists which are shared by walkers and other park users. Conflict does arise however where cyclists come in conflict with other park users because 'cycletracks' which are constructed as part of road carriageways specifically for commuters are now being confused with greenways. Cycling through a public park whether a river valley or an urban park needs to be done responsibly and with due respect for other park users. The City Council is yet to develop a policy for how signage and awareness raising can be integrated with pavement improvements for which significant funding is now available.

The outdoor velodrome in Sundrive Park provides for track cycling training and events managed by Cycling Ireland. The original track was constructed in the 1950s and more recently upgraded in 2009.

### Outdoor gyms

The number of outdoor gyms has increased over the past decade and a greater range of quality products have also become available. They typically comprise of equipment designed for particular gym exercises for general fitness and instructions for use are given on the equipment. Currently there are outdoor gyms located along the Sandymount and Clontarf promenades, California Hill Park, Blessington Street Basin Park and Fr Collins Park. Many more will be installed over the next few years subject to funding.

### Sea based water sports

Sea bathing and swimming is increasing popular and to facilitate this on the Bull Island we have provided solar powered showers on the beach which is maintained to a Blue Flag standard. Shelters on the Bull wall are being considered for adaption to provide greater shelter for the bathers who use this location daily. Other shoreline locations will be considered for improvements to steps, handrails, shelter and solar showers to facilitate sea bathing.

The Bull Island has developed as a key location for Kite surfing and similar water sports and is considered to be one of the best locations in Ireland for this activity. Consideration is being given to providing a seasonal recreational centre on the beach at Dollymount for this activity. Beach VolleyBall Ireland has requested areas to be identified in the city in addition to the use of Dollymount beach. There is increasing interest in this sport. Boat and yacht clubs access the bay from various locations particularly on north Dublin bay. Each of these locations require investment to promote these activities.

### Other Sports

One handball court is provided in St Michan's Park in the city centre. Handball as a sport was widely popular throughout the country from the 1940s to the 70s, however its popularity declined and the modern development of the game is provided for now by the GAA using indoor facilities.

Table tennis developed from a Victorian-era pastime into an Olympic sport with world-wide appeal. The sport is largely an indoor pursuit and in Ireland its governed by Table Tennis Ireland. However, one outdoor concrete table is provided for in Mountjoy Square Park and consideration will be given to providing others in appropriate locations.





## Policy

- Dublin City Council will continue to provide and maintain a range of recreational opportunities within its parks and work with governing bodies of sport and activities to strategically plan development of facilities without impact on passive uses or character of particular parks or open spaces.
- To ensure that any future all-weather facilities are available to as wide a range of sports as possible in the local community, that local schools have access during the day and early evening and that all the users of the facility contribute to a fund which will cover the cost of renewal of the facility at the end of its efficient use period, e.g.: 8 to 10 years for a synthetic surface.



## Action

- To provide where possible park perimeter paths and paths between interconnecting parks to develop accessible walking routes and promote jogging.
- To assess the potential of provision of new all-weather pitch facilities within the canals area and the Terenure area, in particular where opportunities of new open space provision arise.
- To identify opportunities to partner with schools within the canals area, to develop community training facilities particularly in the South Central District.
- To prepare an audit of playing fields to ensure that the quality and maintenance is in accordance with best practice.
- To enhance tennis facilities at Rockfield Park, Bushy Park and Herbert Park.
- To develop a policy for managing and signing cycling in greenways so as to better manage the conflict between cyclists and other park users.
- To assess the potential of new beach volleyball sites in coastal parks/beaches
- To provide for 3 new skateparks city-wide, commencing with LeFanu Park in Ballyfermot.



### 4.3 Parks and Play

Play is an important activity in the development of children as it promotes their physical and cognitive development and encourages socialisation. The provision of public playgrounds creates space in the city for children and their guardians to come together and enjoy play and they have become important places for local communities. Dublin City Council's vision is for Dublin to be a playful city where all children can enjoy their right to play. Children's right to engage in play and recreational activities is enshrined in Article 31 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Playgrounds vary in size and type from large playgrounds with many pieces of play equipment in park settings, to smaller playgrounds with fewer pieces of equipment set closer to home. Significant investment has been made in playground development in parks and urban regeneration projects around the city; where children and young people have been consulted in the design process and where new and challenging pieces of play equipment have been installed.

Dublin City Council provides playgrounds (57) in public parks which are located so as to cater for the needs of local neighbourhoods. There are also play facilities (62) provided in social housing schemes which service a need for play within the individual housing schemes. These are generally not accessible to the wider community so are not categorised as public playgrounds.

In the past there has been no measure as to how widely playgrounds should be distributed within a city. However, international best practice now seeks to set thresholds for access and proximity for communities to playgrounds and this can be measured by mapping the playgrounds against population distribution and density.

There is a hierarchy of playgrounds. Larger parks, such as St Annes Park, have the infrastructure and capacity to accommodate what are termed 'destination' playgrounds. These are playgrounds which people will travel to from a wider area and where there is the space for ancillary facilities such as car parking, toilets and perhaps a café. Other than St Annes Park and the Phoenix Park there are no playgrounds which would be categorized at present as 'destination'. It should be noted that people do travel from the City Council area to park playgrounds in adjoining administrative areas such as Malahide Demesne, Tymon Park, Templeogue, Marlay Park and Booterstown. However, there is the potential to develop such destination playgrounds in the City in the north west, south central and south east as well as the city centre. In addition to St Annes Park there are local playgrounds which have a range of equipment and would each have cost in the order €150,000 to construct.

There are also a number of small playlots which have a limited range of equipment and limited value other than to the immediate environs. For the purposes of mapping play facilities citywide the facilities in social housing are also categorized as playlots.

In order to prioritise the provision of new playgrounds, census data was reviewed for deficit areas. This indicates areas with higher concentrations of children who would benefit from new playgrounds. The distribution of all playgrounds is illustrated on the plan below.

Access to playgrounds is assessed using a 500m (5-10minutes walk) and 1000m (10-20 minutes) walk in zone. The 500m zone provides a good level of access, while the 1000m represents a reduced level of access.

The mapping of play facilities based on these thresholds highlights a deficit of facilities in the north city area at Kilmore & Beaumont, Edenmore, Clontarf, Glasnevin to Finglas, in the southeast of the city centre area and in the south city area in Walkinstown, Crumlin, Kimmage and Terenure areas.

Natural play areas offer an alternative to mainstream playgrounds. They involve a more creative design of play spaces that can include use natural elements such as surface mounding, sand, water, timber logs, willow tunnels, etc. They are suitable in certain locations and may take their design inspiration from particular places, such as woodlands and coastlines and give children a link to nature, which is important in the city environment.



#### Policy

- The City Council will continue to maintain and upgrade existing playgrounds and improve access to play for all children of Dublin City with a priority on current areas lacking provision but having a high population of children.



#### Action

- To address deficit in provision in playgrounds and to prioritise their provision based on areas with higher population of children, as follows:

##### North Central Area:

Belmayne

Mount Olive or Roseglen/Greendale Park

##### North West Area:

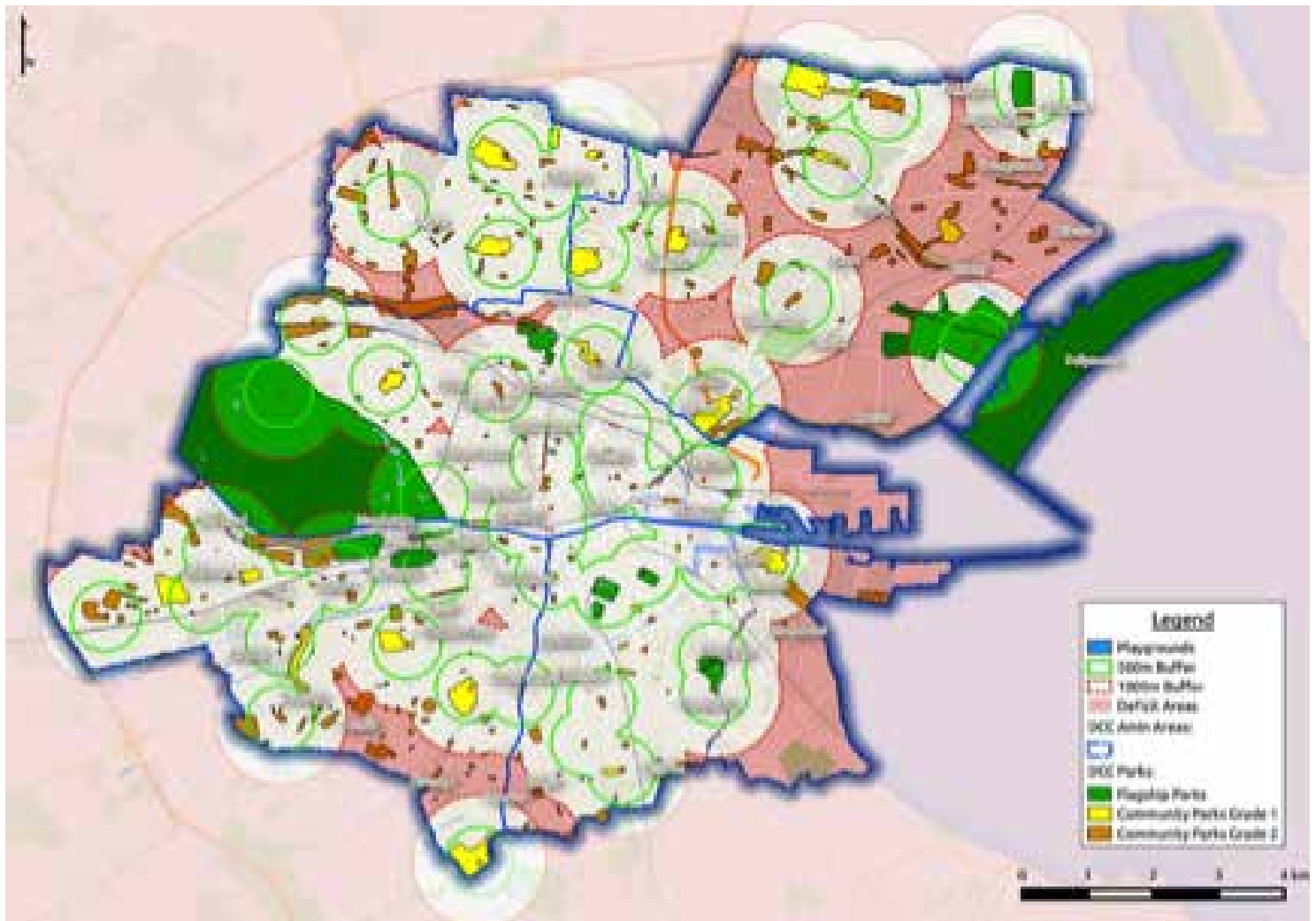
Wellmount Rd or Farnham Crescent

Pelletstown

##### South Central Area:

##### South East Area:

- To provide for new destination playgrounds in the North West, South Central, South East and City Centre.
- To assess to potential of provision of natural playgrounds on the Clontarf promenade open space .



Access to playgrounds

New Priority Provision Areas



Image: Peter Kavanagh



#### 4.4 Park Visitor Facilities

Dublin's parks have strongly emphasised the provision of recreational facilities over the years and in many cases have not fully met the requirements of modern day visitors to the city, in particular tourists.

It is therefore important that Dublin's parks, especially flagship parks provide for such facilities and cater as quality destinations that allow visitors to stay longer and enjoy city parks.

##### Parking

The provision of car parking within city parks is limited and not normally provided as it would limit space for other park facilities. Typically external parking is available or access by walking, cycling or public transport is possible.

External parking adjacent to parks requires careful planning and design. Key issues relating to on-street parking provision include excessive bus parking around the perimeter of parks that block views and pedestrian safety at crossing points into parks.

Cycle parking will be facilitated internally in the majority of parks, however in certain historic parks it may not be appropriate and external provision will be sought. In general, suitable bike parking arrangements will be provided for in all inner-city parks to further facilitate this mode of transport. Convenience and security will guide the placement of bicycle parking facilities in city centre parks.

##### Toilets

The provision of public toilets in Dublin has proved too difficult due to anti-social activity.

All stand alone facilities within city parks have failed and further provision will only be made as part of other facilities within parks such as cafes/tearooms or sports buildings, where active management and monitoring exists.

##### Café, tea rooms & restaurants

The provision of cafés, tea rooms and restaurants encourage visitors to meet and stay longer in city parks as well as providing some income from operator licences. Currently there are tea rooms located in St Patricks Park and Harolds Cross Park where existing buildings have been converted to accommodate this new use. The Red Stables in St Anne's Park, which were part of the original estate buildings, have been converted to accommodate a restaurant. The provision of these facilities takes into account commercial viability, food quality as well as the park character so that they are in keeping with the park setting. Ideally a range of food outlets allowing a price range option for visitors is preferable, however this may only be possible in larger flagship parks.

Food concessions, such as mobile ice cream vending and coffee stands, are also given by the City Council for various parks within the city.

##### Visitor Centre

Visitor centres provide the benefit of coordinating facilities such as toilets, cafes and interpretation into one building and there are a number of successful ones in Dublin's parks and historic demesnes. In the City Council

parks one visitor centre is provided on the Bull Island, which caters for the interpretation of this coastal conservation area. Plans are now being developed for its reconstruction to an international standard facility providing for the Bull Island and the wider Dublin Bay Biosphere.



##### Policy

- Visitor facilities will be developed and provided in parks and in particular flagship parks, to enhance their appeal and enjoyment.
- The provision of café/tea rooms and restaurants will be promoted and expanded following consideration of their commercial viability and character of the receiving park.
- No internal public parking will be provided within inner-city parks or beaches. Parking within parks in other areas will be considered on a case by case basis and where needed, priority will be given to disabled carparking and family carparking. Cycle parking will be facilitated internally in most parks.
- The provision of toilets will be considered within parks as part of other built facilities where active management & monitoring is present.



Bull Island interpretation center development sketch



### Actions

- New tea rooms facilities are being planned in Merrion Square & Bushy Park and are under consideration for Mountjoy Square and Blessington Street Basin.
- Bicycle parking facilities will be provided for in all inner-city parks. A review of current provision will be made followed by implementation works where deficits are identified.



## 4.5 Park Management

Through the consultation process on this strategy particular issues on park management were highlighted and this section reviews these.

### 4.5.1 Park Opening Hours

Parks within the city are either enclosed parks with a boundary around them or open parks. Many of the original city parks were enclosed to exclude the general public, however today reasons include preventing anti-social activity such as unauthorised access by vehicles.

Opening hours for enclosed parks are standard and respond to available daylight through the seasons, with shorter opening hours in the winter months and longer in the summer months. The City Council does not currently have night parks, where a park is open and active all night, however evening openings to allow for particular events are catered for.

| Month              | Opening time | Closing time      |
|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| December – January | 10am         | 5pm               |
| February           | 10am         | 5.30pm            |
| March              | 10am         | 6.30pm/<br>7.30pm |
| April              | 10am         | 8.30pm            |
| May                | 10am         | 9.30pm            |
| June – July        | 10am         | 10pm              |
| August             | 10am         | 9.30pm            |
| September          | 10am         | 8.30pm            |
| October            | 10am         | 7.30pm/<br>6.30pm |
| November           | 10am         | 5.30pm            |

### 4.5.2 Dogs in parks

Parks provide space for dog owners to exercise their pets; however dogs also raise concerns to other park users, including fear of attack and the effects of dog fouling which can create a barrier to their enjoyment of parks.

Dog owners who use City Council parks are required under park bye-laws to prevent it causing annoyance and worrying and are responsible for its conduct and are liable for it causing damage or injury. While these regulations are in place the City Council also welcomes responsible dog owners to its parks and has developed initiative to facilitate this including:

- The Green Dog Walkers Programme, which is run with the other Dublin Local Authorities and aims to combat dog fouling
- Dog parks, which are fenced in areas within larger parks where dogs are free to run
- Dog training and obedience sessions, which have been provided in parks
- Dog charity events are regularly approved in parks, such as the Irish Blue Cross Bark in the Park event in St Anne's Park.

### 4.5.3 Pesticide use

Pesticides are in use in public parks and open spaces to control pests and diseases, such as unwanted weed growth in pavement areas or planting areas. There is growing concern on their use in general, since the mid-1900s where incidences of ecological damage and concerns on impact on human health were first documented. As a result of introduced controls on toxic chemicals, the early offenders, such as DDT and Dieldrin, have been removed from the market. Alternative approaches, such as integrated pest management seek to minimise the use of chemical intervention. In an ideal situation a pesticide-free management approach in city parks would be preferable; however the appropriate use of approved pesticides by trained staff still presents an effective solution. Parks Services will continue to monitor and minimise its use of chemical pesticides and assess alternatives such as the use of steam in control of weeds.



#### Policy

- Parks Services will continue to maintain standard opening times for its enclosed parks and allow access at alternative times, such as for events, on a case by case basis.
- The City Council encourages use of public spaces including its parks by responsible dog owners. It will continue to seek and provide initiatives to encourage responsibility and enjoyment of these spaces and seeks the cooperation of dog owners to ensure other park users do not feel hindered by dogs in parks.
- Parks services will continue to work towards the vision of a pesticide-free park system by monitoring and minimising its use of chemical pesticides and will seek alternatives to them.





#### Nature in Dublin

### 4.6 Natural Areas & Biodiversity

#### 4.6.1 Nature in Dublin

Dublin has an urban ecosystem in which human activities largely direct the existence of species to survive in a highly fragmented landscape. Some species have not survived these human actions, due to loss of habitats, particularly those which have specialised requirements.

There are still areas of high nature value within Dublin City which remain as fragments of our historic landscape. Most of these are in public ownership, and the role of parks to preserve our connection with our natural history is vital.

Our connection with nature is crucial to maintaining our quality of life and the uniqueness of where we live. Therefore, it is essential that we recognise the importance of nature, not just for ourselves, but in terms of its own intrinsic qualities, which enrich our city and need to be respected in how we manage the environment.

Biodiversity is short for biological diversity, which is defined as ‘all living things’ and includes soil. Ireland is committed to implementing international agreements, therefore, our parks

are managed not only for the people in the greater Dublin area that are using them, but also for the continuation of ecological networks spanning across Europe, North America and Africa and their migratory species.

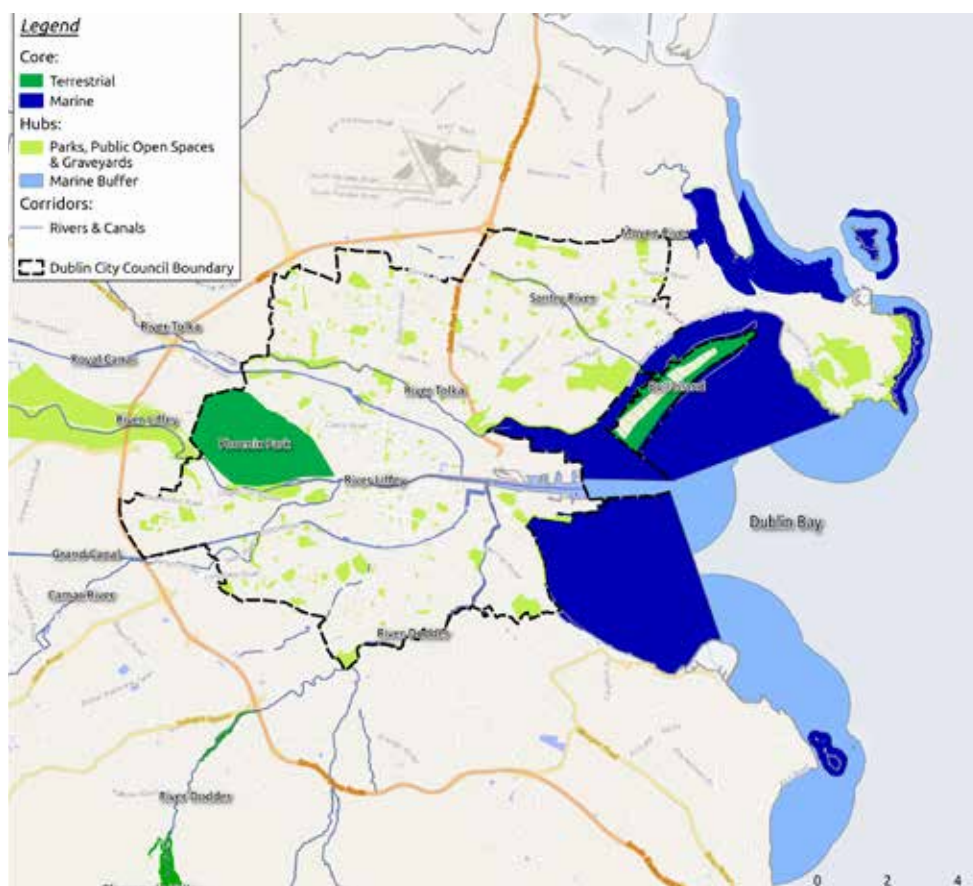
In this way, it is recognised that biodiversity operates on many scales from the global level to city level to habitat level and parks are managed to reflect this.

The remaining natural areas in Dublin City have populations of native flora and fauna that date back through time several thousand years or more. They can be viewed as reservoirs or gene ‘pools’, which store the original genetic biodiversity in Dublin for these species. By keeping habitats intact for flora and fauna, the associated genes are banked. This can ensure survival of species into the future from threats such as diseases, by encouraging more strains or genetic families to avoid extinction.



#### Policy

- To ensure parks management practices prioritise the protection of habitats for globally threatened species and for protection of rare species and habitats in our parks.
- To protect genetic biodiversity by planting only native species of Irish provenance (where available) in areas of high ecological importance, including river corridors and coastal habitats.



City Green Infrastructure

#### 4.6.2 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

Biodiversity is a building block of green infrastructure. Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined as an interconnected network of green space that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations. The European Union has a commitment in its biodiversity strategy to promote and restore green infrastructure.

Green infrastructure systems are spatially made of three different parts:

##### Core Areas

Core areas which are the nucleus of the network and provide essential habitat for sensitive native species to avoid extinction. Cities can have high biodiversity in terms of the total number of species, but many of these are not native. Core areas within and adjacent to cities provide source populations of native species which can be essential to maintain biodiversity in an urban region.

Core areas may need to be sufficiently large to meet the needs of some species, such as larger mammals. Core areas may be highly designated to preclude any development within them, although direct impacts may occur. Development can threaten or damage green infrastructure networks by indirect impacts on the environmental quality (air, land and water) of core areas or by increasing pressures on them from increased human populations surrounding them.

##### Hubs

Hubs are places buffering the core areas, made of the largest, least fragmented continuous areas of forest, wetlands, stream systems, or other native landscape types. They can protect core areas from disturbance by human activities and can have rich biodiversity. Development can threaten or damage green infrastructure networks by fragmentation or removal of hubs or the habitats within them. Management of hubs can be critical as species don't always stay within designated conservation sites.

##### Corridors

These are vital to maintain connectivity in the landscape and provide for animal movement, seed and pollen dispersal, and plant migration. Connections between core areas can sustain populations of protected species by effectively increasing their breeding range or feeding territories. These 'stepping stones' are legally required under Article 10 of the Habitats Directive to support conservation of designated sites. Development can threaten or damage green infrastructure networks through severance of corridors, effectively cutting off options for wildlife to thrive.



##### Policy

- To manage our parks, open spaces and cemeteries as a connected network of green infrastructure which provides habitats of international importance for protected species and sustains ecosystems.





**Wildflower Meadow  
at Cherry Orchard**

The promotion of a Green Infrastructure network in Dublin City is an action of the National Biodiversity Action Plan, the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Dublin City Development Plan (2017-2022). Dublin City's green infrastructure network is influenced by its historical landscape prior to urbanisation, its situation on Dublin Bay and the impact of over a million people each day using its resources. The Dublin City Green Infrastructure network is comprised of:

- Core areas of designated habitats and species of national and European importance:
- Dublin Bay (and its associated terrestrial, estuarine and marine ecosystems) including all Natura 2000 sites
- The Phoenix Park, a flagship park which lies adjacent to the River Liffey.
- Dublin City Council lands at Bohernabreena and Glenasmole Valley SAC.



### Action

- To ensure that management plans are prepared and implemented for each of the core areas with reference to other relevant statutory bodies (DAHG for Natura 2000 sites and the Office of Public Works as owners and managers of the Phoenix Park).

Hubs, consisting of public parks, cemeteries and open spaces, as well some privately-owned green spaces and brownfield sites, which provide support to the core areas. Many public parks are situated over former brownfield sites such as reclaimed lands, quarries and landfills. These include:

- Irishtown Nature Park, Ringsend Park
- Clontarf Promenade
- Fairview Park
- California Hills Park
- Pope John Paul II Park
- Cemeteries



### Policy

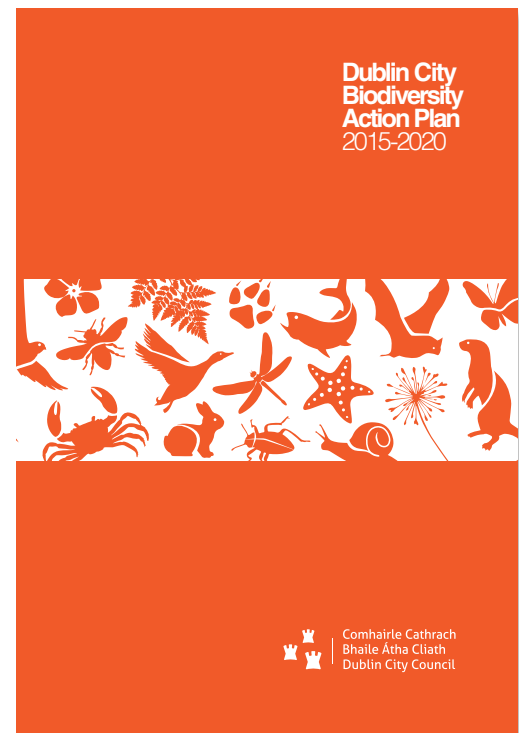
- Biodiversity initiatives which are specific to the protected habitats and species will be developed for all public green spaces which are hubs supporting core areas. These will be prepared with reference to the management plans for the core areas.

Corridors are the City's rivers, inland waterways and wetlands, which contain designated species of national and European importance. All of the river corridors in the City have impacts on the receiving waters of Dublin Bay, which are designated as of European importance for birds and wetlands and also for RAMSAR wetlands. The main corridors and their key parks and open spaces include:

- River Mayne: Fr. Collins Park, River Mayne Linear Park flowing into Baldoyle National Nature Reserve and Natura 2000 sites
- River Santry/Naniken: Oscar Traynor Road playing grounds, Springdale Road, Silloge Golf Course, Stardust Memorial Park, St. Anne's Park
- River Tolka: Tolka Valley Park, National Botanic Gardens, Griffith Park, Fairview Park, flowing into Tolka Estuary Natura 2000 site
- River Liffey: Liffey Valley SAAO and NHA upstream, flowing into South Dublin Bay Natura 2000 sites, Liffey Valley Park,



## Biodiversity Action Plan



Islandbridge War Memorial Gardens

- River Dodder: beginning at Glenasmole Valley Natura 2000 site and NHA, flowing into River Liffey and Dublin Bay Natura 2000 sites
- River Camac: flowing into River Liffey and Dublin Bay Natura 2000 sites
- Royal Canal NHA and Grand Canal NHA



### Policy

- To ensure that corridors are maintained throughout the DCC administrative area as continuous elements of green infrastructure to afford passage for wildlife and prevent severance of habitats by 'grey' infrastructure. To work to restore connectivity of corridors where insensitive development has taken place previously or where there are opportunities to work cooperatively with landowners to promote this.

### 4.6.3 Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan

Dublin City has had a Biodiversity Action Plan in place since 2008. The current plan establishes four key themes, all of which will be implemented through parks management activities. There are specific actions related to the operations and management of parks.



### Action

- To implement the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan (2015-2020) fully by all DCC Parks staff.
- To renew and update the Biodiversity Action plan in 2019.

As part of the Biodiversity Action Plan, an Invasive Alien Species Action Plan for Dublin City will be implemented.

Invasive alien species (IAS) are flora and fauna (plants and animals) which are not native to Ireland and can take over Irish habitats without the usual predators and limits in their own native ecosystems to stop them. Examples in Ireland include Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and American Mink. They are the second greatest threat to biodiversity world-wide after habitat destruction.

Parks and open spaces often are affected by this serious threat to biodiversity, especially since these are areas where people pass through and can deposit garden waste, unwanted pets or even just carry IAS with them by passing through soil or water. Therefore, it will be necessary to make parks and open spaces a focal point of DCC's efforts to control IAS and raise awareness.



### Action

- To implement the Dublin City Invasive Alien Species Action Plan (2015-2020) by all DCC Parks staff.

#### 4.6.4 Biodiversity and the Community

Communities have a key role to play in protecting biodiversity and having a high level of biodiversity will improve the quality of life of neighbourhoods. The City Council has for many years encouraged citizens to take an active role in protecting their local environment, and stewardship projects can be a way to overcome social inclusion, promote health and well-being and strengthen community spirit while increasing biodiversity and raising awareness of it. Business organisations have taken part in conservation activities in parks and open spaces as part of their corporate and social responsibility programmes. Third-level institutions have been working with Parks Services to provide training and support volunteerism for students in biodiversity management. These programmes are facilitated by the Parks Services' Biodiversity Section, working with many non-governmental organizations, community groups, businesses and voluntary bodies.

The City Council has taken a leading role in the implementation of national plans and programmes for biodiversity and citizen science. For example, it was the first local authority to implement Birdwatch Ireland's National Action Plan for Urban and Suburban Birds.

Dublin's parks and open spaces provide an important resource for learning about the environment and climate change. Educational bodies from primary through to third-level regularly use our parks network as 'outdoor classrooms'. Parks staff provide guided walks, lectures and information for schools and organise environmental education events and programmes year-round in parks, many coinciding with national events such as World Wetlands Day, National Tree Week, International Biodiversity Day and National Heritage Week. The development of Native Tree Trails in our parks is an example of an educational resource. North Bull Island Interpretative Centre hosts school tours and is a National Discover Science Centre in association with Science Foundation



Beach clean-up at Dollymount Strand

Ireland to promote sustainability. The National Biodiversity Training Centre hosts public educational training workshops in DCC parks. These are just some of the many educational resources provided.

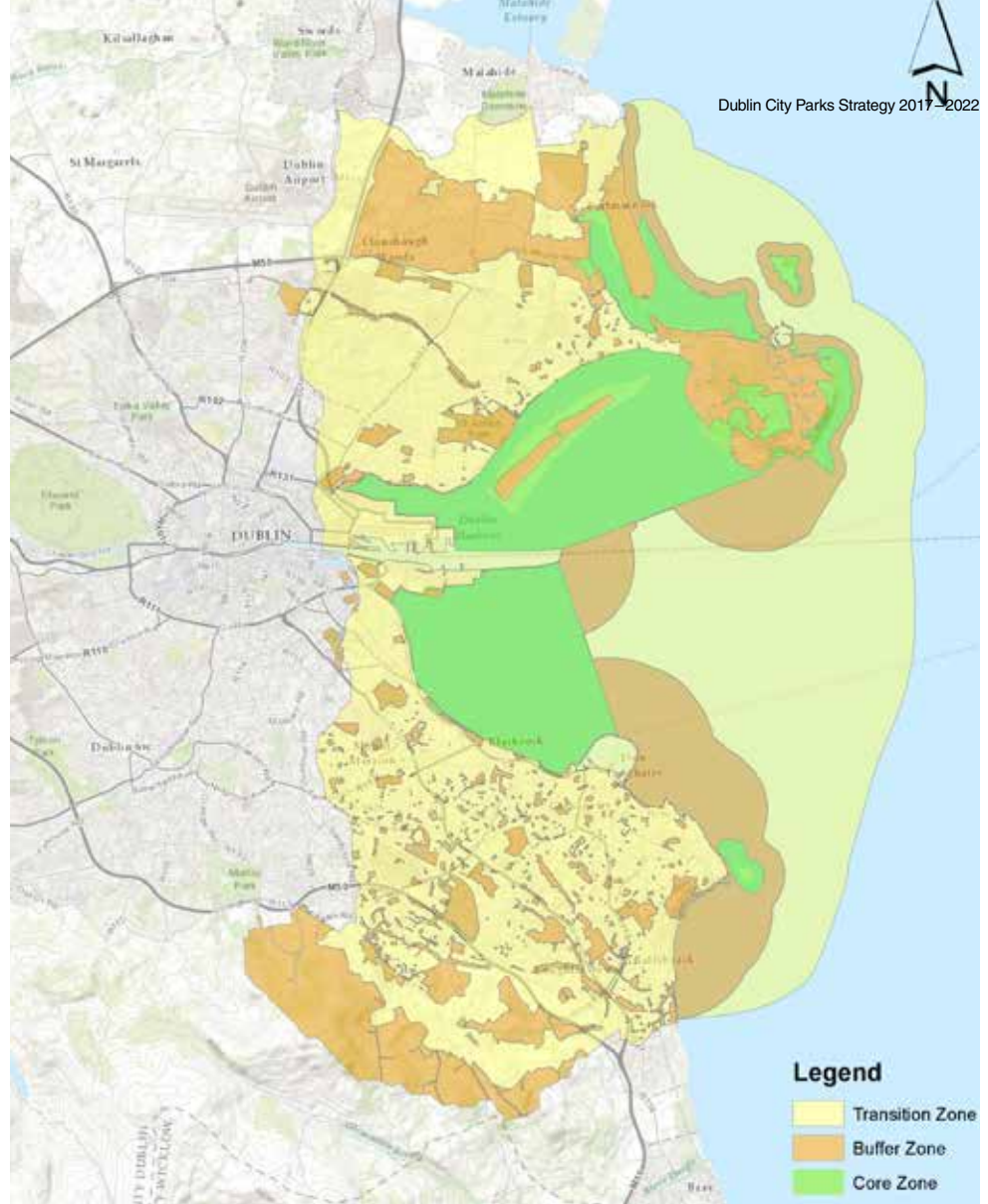
#### Policy

- To support programmes to promote environmental stewardship of public parks and open spaces by the community to improve biodiversity and provide environmental and social benefits. This will include a Parks Stewardship Programme for the UNESCO Biosphere.

- To continue to work to enable NGO's to implement national strategies for nature conservation through public parks and open spaces.
- To develop the educational resources of Dublin City parks to promote sustainability and biodiversity through providing facilities for the public to use, making information about parks freely accessible online and through organisation of formal and informal activities through Parks staff.



Dublin Bay Biosphere



#### 4.6.5 Dublin Bay Biosphere

The designation of Dublin Bay as a Biosphere by UNESCO in June 2015 acknowledges the value of Dublin Bay and its environs to Dublin City. It recognises the biodiversity of the area, as well as the economic, cultural and tourism importance of this biodiversity, and the need for an ecologically sustainable economic model for the Biosphere. It is an important opportunity in the development of Dublin as a 'Living Bay' and a green tourism destination.

All Biospheres have three goals:

1. Conservation: promoting the protection of landscapes, habitats, wildlife and cultural values
2. Learning: supporting education and research, for a better understanding of nature and global issues
3. Development: fostering a sustainable economy and society for people living and working in the area

Under the auspices of the Dublin Bay Biosphere Partnership, a five year Conservation Programme, a five year Research Strategy, a three year Business Development Plan and an Education and Awareness Programme will be developed.

The Biosphere is divided into three distinct zones, which are managed in different ways: The *core zone* consists of protected areas, which are managed for the conservation of landscapes and biodiversity. It includes the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) at North Bull Island, the Tolka Estuary, North Dublin Bay and South Dublin Bay, among others.

North Bull Island Nature Reserve is managed by Park Services. Work is being undertaken to control Sea-buckthorn on the site. If uncontrolled, this invasive species would spread with the loss of the native dune vegetation, which is protected under the EU Habitats Directive.

The *buffer zone* surrounds or adjoins the core zone and is managed to support the core zone. Scientific research, monitoring, training, education and other environmentally sustainable activities are encouraged here. It includes public and private green spaces such as parks and greenbelts. e.g. Dublin City Council has developed a wildflower meadow in St Anne's Park, in close proximity to North Bull Island. This meadow contributes to the biodiversity of the area, supporting uncommon plant species such as orchids, and is also used for recreation, environmental education and cultural events.

The *transition zone* is the outer part of the Biosphere. Sustainable social and economic development is strongly promoted here. It includes residential neighbourhoods, harbours, ports and industrial and commercial areas. e.g. Dublin Port Company, a member of the Dublin Bay Biosphere Partnership, maintains pontoons within the port to provide nesting spaces for Common and Arctic terns, which are protected species under the EU Birds Directive.





#### 4.7 Public Realm

The public realm is made up of parks, streets, squares, accessible open space and the space around civic buildings. Together, these elements define the physical components of place-making and create a unique identity for Dublin City. Because the public realm is so essential to the everyday unique experience of the city, how it is planned and designed is very important.

The Dublin City Public Realm Strategy – Your City, Your Space, has been developed as an agreed vision that is shared by those who use it, design it, build it and manage it. This Strategy aims to build on the strengths of Dublin City’s public realm, linking the aforementioned components into a whole that is of greater value than its parts.

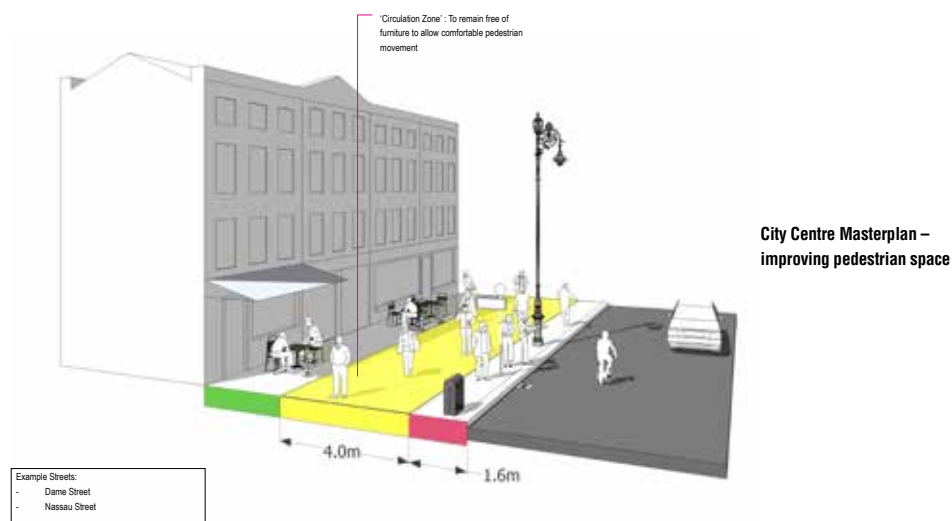
It offers a vision on how development can coincide with fundamental improvements to the area’s parks, open space and streetscapes to ensure the city’s continued vitality and quality of life for its residents, workers and visitors. It incorporates safety elements, opening spaces up rather than closing them off and mobilising ignored lanes and streets. The Strategy also serves as a practical manual for all parties engaged in all development that interface with the public realm.

The presence of green space is a city’s most fundamental element in creating vitality and quality of life. As the city develops, the scale, location and connectivity of parks and open spaces need to be planned and designed to better respond to the needs of the growing population. It ensures that in areas where the provision of parks is low, public realm can still create an open space network that is meaningful and connected. It ensures that green space does not have to end at their edges, but extend along the streets, expanding and enhancing the public realm.

Dublin’s public realm is uneven and lacks definition in many parts. There are opportunities to develop an agreed vision for the public realm with all the stakeholders; one that is inspired by its historic context and shared by those who use it. Crucially, this includes agreeing the standard of public realm Dublin needs and identifying the important spaces and routes within that. A number of public realm initiatives have been and are being implemented around the city by Parks Services, which aim at creating a better experience of connected space with people’s interaction at its core.

City Centre Proposed Strategic Tree Planting





**City Centre Masterplan –  
improving pedestrian space**

#### 4.7.1 Liberties Greening Strategy

The Liberties area of the city occupies the southwest quadrant of the inner-city and was historically located outside of the city walls where lands were granted to the control of monks who were given powers and control of trade within their liberty.

The area developed as a centre of traditional Dublin industry including brewing, weaving, tanning and crafts and as an area where associated workers lived within poor housing conditions. Its current provision of open space and overall greening is poor and presents a marked contrast to the master-planned Georgian squares and streets of the southeast inner-city quadrant.

The Parks Services greening strategy for the area proposes to address this issue through the provision of new parks, creating new civic spaces and greening linkages between.

#### 4.7.2 City Centre Masterplan

The centre of any city is a key area and reflects the values and identity of its people. In Dublin the centre falls over the River Liffey, the key element in the establishment of the city. It's a focus for life in the city and an area that all city visitors will experience.

This project builds on the public realm strategy with the intention of delivering a high quality public realm there. The project will produce an overarching masterplan from which a series of further projects will be developed.

Key objectives under the project are to improve and enhance linkages as well as developing recommendations for outdoor seating and dining areas, outdoor markets and performance areas, street furniture, greening and biodiversity.

#### 4.7.3 Docklands Public Realm Masterplan

The docklands of Dublin have gone through extensive change following decades of urban regeneration in what was a decaying part of the urban fabric.

Its developing public realm vision is contemporary, international and reflects the ambitious nature of the area.

Following the economic downturn new impetus is being given to its continued development there by the creation of a Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) for the North Lotts and Grand Canal. The resulting SDZ Planning Scheme recognises the value of a quality public realm with particular reference to the maritime character of the docklands and developing central squares in each of the five hubs of the scheme.

A public realm masterplan to reflect the vision of the SDZ planning scheme which provide the framework for future implementation projects has now been produced.



#### Policy

- Parks & Landscape services will assist to provide for the implementation of the Dublin City Public Realm Strategy with particular emphasis on the role of parks, city greening and biodiversity.
- Given the current lower provision of public open space per person in the inner-city area particular emphasis will be put there on creating a quality public realm that extols the virtues of parks.





Chancery Street House  
and Chancery Park





**Dolphin Estate Landscape Masterplan**  
(Image: Paul Hogarth Company)

#### 4.8 Public Housing

The provision of housing to those who can't afford their own is the responsibility of the Housing Authority of Dublin City Council and this is undertaken through various schemes, including the direct development of public housing for subsequent renting. Public housing in the capital has and continues to be a significant issue.

In the 1880's only small scale provision by Dublin Corporation was undertaken to address the very poor housing conditions for the working classes of that time. Little was done until the 1930s to address the issue comprehensively and in that decade a Report of Inquiry indicated that there were just over 28 thousand families living in just 6,307 tenement houses in Dublin. Since the 1930s thousands of public housing units have been provided and Parks Services have been involved in the design and provision of public housing landscapes and subsequent refurbishment projects.

#### Chancery Street House

This apartment building was developed in 1935 by Dublin Corporation and is located adjacent to the Four Courts in the inner-city. The flat complex was of exemplary modern design for its time and currently holds 27 apartments. While the provision of recreational space was not common in the earlier years of public housing this scheme did provide a small park on its northern side.

A full upgrade of this park was undertaken in 2010 by the Parks & Landscape Services, while the building was being refurbished. An original central cast iron fountain was restored back to working order together with a new landscape of formal yew topiary plants. Refurbishment of an adjacent weighbridge building was also undertaken, which included the provision of a new clock by Stokes of Cork.

#### St Teresas Gardens & Dolphin Estate.

These two estates are currently under a redevelopment programme. They were developed in the 1950s as large housing complexes following the modern architectural style. Their layout consists of blocks in grid layout pattern with little in terms of quality landscape provision. The redesign and refurbishment of these estates will involve demolition of existing blocks and development of new layouts. In order to provide a better living environment the landscape provision will be designed to provide both a residential landscape and community landscape typically with the provision of a community park.

In developing new public housing landscapes or refurbishing existing public housing there are a number of particular issues that require attention:

- Public housing estates can have poor reputations in the wider city and may not be well integrated into the urban fabric. The quality of what is provided can help improve their identity and in particular the architectural quality and landscape design quality can improve the visual appearance of estates, as well as creating physical linkages to the surrounding urban areas.
- It is important that public housing landscapes are well designed, contain appropriate facilities for recreation, both passive and active and are constructed using quality materials and workmanship.
- Vandalism and neglect has been prevalent in public housing provision and there is a need for greater involvement of the residential community in the care of what is provided. Community consultation at the design stage together with their support of housing management on completion can assist in the success of schemes.
- Private open space should be provided in housing schemes to give peace of mind and better security to residents as well as an area they can recreate in. In refurbishment projects opportunities to create courtyard arrangements can assist to provide better privacy.



Home zone in Frieburg Germany

#### 4.8.1 Home Zones

Home zones are a concept whereby the physical layout of residential roads are designed to create safer spaces with reduced speeds as well as spaces that can be used for on street recreation. It has evolved from the Dutch woonerf concept of the 1970s and there are a number of different forms within Europe. Its application to public housing schemes requires consideration and the possibility of implementing a pilot scheme within a full scale housing scheme refurbishment should be considered.



#### Policy

- Public housing landscape provision should be of a good quality and provide both private residential space as well as community orientated space.
- Consultation with the residential community on landscape proposals shall be sought where existing housing estates are refurbished.
- Design of public housing landscape should aim to encourage provision of facilities (e.g. playgrounds) into locally accessible parks rather than solely within the boundary of the housing so as to encourage integration and connection with the wider community.
- Public housing landscape design shall be innovative and look to incorporating community gardens /allotments, sustainable urban drainage systems, green roofing, home zones and public art.



#### Action

- To implement a new community grade 1 park in the re-development of St Teresa's Gardens.



Fairview Jewish Cemetery



## 4.9 CEMETERIES

Cemeteries in their own right provide a valuable resource to communities in Dublin. They are primarily places of burial and their use by the public must respect this. To those who visit they may offer a peaceful setting for respite or places where the city's history can be discovered. Parks Services have a significant role to play in the management of the following cemeteries:

- St. John the Baptist, Clontarf
- Bluebell, Drimnagh
- St. Canice's, Finglas,
- St. Assam's, Raheny Village
- Killester Cemetery
- Donnybrook Cemetery
- Bellevue, Merrion Road
- St James Cemetery
- Huguenot Cemetery

### 4.9.1 Historical Graveyards

Historic graveyards are a valuable asset to the city and are key in promoting genealogical tourism and heritage conservation. There are a number of historic graveyards around the city which are no longer in use and are less accessible to the public. Such cemeteries, steeped in history, have the potential to provide a unique heritage experience for those wishing to learn about their importance and link to the historical periods which shaped Dublin's heritage.

It is not an intention to make these spaces fully accessible to the public, rather promote awareness of the importance of their heritage and culture.

#### Fairview Jewish Cemetery

This is Dublin's oldest Jewish cemetery dating back to 1718. It is part of the story of the small but vibrant Jewish community in Dublin and Ireland. The earliest records indicate a visit in 1079 by Jewish men to the King of Munster and by the 1230s it is considered that there probably was a Jewish community in Ireland located mainly in Dublin. Records of 1745 indicated a Jewish community of about forty families consisting of some 200 persons. This community grew with many arriving in Ireland to escape persecution from other countries. The community reached its greatest numbers by the early 1900s with nearly 4800 estimated to reside in the city.

The Jewish community in Fairview are thought to have settled there in the early 1700s and were Marrano Jews who escaped persecution from the Inquisition in Spain & Portugal.

Originally this plot of land was rented for 4 years from a Captain Chicester Philips of Drumcondra Castle, however the London Jewish Congregation bought the land and rented it back to the community for the annual price of 1 peppercorn. In 1857 a wall was erected around the grounds to prevent headstone and grave robbing which was a regular occurrence at this time. A gate lodge was also built and inscribed with the numbers 5616 which in the Jewish Calendar is 1857. Burials took place until the early 1900s with only 4 taking place between 1900 and 1956. Today there are some 148 headstones still in place inscribed in both Hebrew and English. As with other historic cemeteries, access to the public is by appointed only.





Donnybrook Cemetery plaque



The Huguenot Cemetery

### Donnybrook Cemetery

This cemetery was once the location of a Celtic church founded by Saint Broc in the 7th century. In the 1700s Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic churches were built on the grounds and the remains are still present.

The period of use of this cemetery dates from 800 to the late 1800s after which the congregation outgrew the premises and moved to a new location at Simmons Court Road. A number of restoration works have been carried out over the last decade which resulted in a comprehensive list of burials and a number of historical accounts of the walled cemetery. Some 7000 burials have been recorded in the cemetery with the last taking place in 1936.

There are notable burials at this location such as Edward Lovett Pearce, a famous architect of the early 1700s responsible for introducing Palladian architecture to Dublin. His works include the House of Commons (now Bank of Ireland) on College Green, and Castletown House in County Kildare. Bartholomew Mosse, surgeon and founder of the Rotunda Hospital is also interred here. The cemetery fronts on to Donnybrook Road with an impressive cut-stone entrance arch, erected in 1893 by members of the Dublin Stock Exchange in memory of their registrar.

An interpretation plaque was recently erected by Parks Services with the assistance of the Ballsbridge, Donnybrook and Sandymount Historical Society.

### Huguenot Cemetery

The Huguenot Cemetery located on Merrion Row, references a particular point in European history and the establishment of a significant community in Dublin. The Huguenots were French protestants and mainly Calvinists who were escaping religious persecution in France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. They established a thriving community in Dublin and became an integral part of its commercial and civic life, particularly in textiles, watch making and finance.

The cemetery dates from 1693, a time when the majority of Huguenots arrived in Ireland under the encouragement of the 1st Duke of Ormonde, James Butler, who became Viceroy of Ireland in 1662 following exile in France.

An inscribed plaque on the gate walls lists the 239 surnames of people buried there. One of the most notable families listed is that of the Becquett family, who were relatives of one of Dublin's most important literary figures, Samuel Beckett. Other notable Huguenot names prominent in Dublin life include D'Olier and leFanu. D'Oleir Street was named after Jeremiah D'Olier a Huguenot goldsmith, City Sheriff and member of the Wide Street Commissioners. Le Fanu park in Ballyfermot is named after Sheridan le Fanu the Victorian-era writer and Huguenot descendent.



### St James Graveyard

The former Church of St James and its cemetery are located in the Liberties on St James Street where its origins date to 1190. The original church was rebuilt twice with the foundation stone of the current church being laid by Daniel O’Connell in 1844. Design of the church is attributed to Cork born architect Joseph Welland. By the early 1960s both the cemetery and church were closed and the church building was sold to private ownership.

More than 30,000 burials are registered for the cemetery and include both Catholics and Protestants. Notable are the burials of the Channel Row Nuns who persevered in their religious lives in a convent near Brunswick street during the 1700s in a time when the Penal Laws oppressed Catholics.

In 2010 the Parks Services, who maintain the cemetery developed a landscape masterplan for the church & cemetery grounds with the objective of sensitively linking it to the surrounds.

This proposed the use of an elevated walkway over the cemetery taking advantage of the original slope of the lands down to the Liffey while minimising ground level impacts where there are burial plots. The scheme or a modified version will, when complete, add to the cultural & tourism resource of the area.



#### Policy

- To manage and maintain historical graveyards to enhance their historical and cultural significance to Dublin while maintaining the dignity of these burial places.



#### Action

- To develop appropriate forms of interpretation to promote knowledge of historical graveyards and assist research of cemeteries in co-operation with historical, educational and government organisations.



## 4.10 TREES

Trees form an integral part of the urban fabric of Dublin City and are located in both public areas and private lands. Together they form the city's urban forest.

Our relationship with trees is very strong and they remain an emotive issue for many Dubliners.

Trees bring extensive benefits to the city, including greening, improvement of visual quality, defining spaces, habitat creation and environmental services including carbon sequestration and pollution mitigation. Internationally, cities are now setting targets for tree cover due to their recognition of the value of urban trees.

### 4.10.1 Public Trees

Parks and Landscape Services manage public trees in the city which are located in our streets and parks. The key aspects of tree management are:

- Selecting and planting new trees or replacement trees
- Managing risk associated with public trees
- General tree care (for example, watering, checking stakes & ties, disease control, etc.)
- Tree surgery to maintain good tree health and form
- Tree felling and removal

### 4.10.2 Private Trees

Trees on private lands come under some legislative control through the development management process and by use of tree preservation orders, however their management and contribution to the city is primarily under the control of property owners.

The encouragement of private landowners to take care of their trees properly and plant new ones is therefore important.

### 4.10.3 City Tree Strategy

A Dublin City Tree Strategy 2016-2020 has been published and can be viewed on the Dublin City Council website. The strategy will seek to provide a coordinated approach to the management of trees in Dublin City.

The strategy sets out a vision for the management of public trees according to a long term plan. It will also create a greater awareness of, and appreciation for this valuable resource within the local authority, other relevant agencies and among the public.

The tree strategy comprises of three main sections:

- Trees in Dublin - outlining the status of trees in Dublin, their current management and available data.
- Tree Policy – A description of the general and specific policies Dublin City Council has regarding trees and tree work.
- Action Plan – A framework to implement the tree policy, setting out appropriate objectives and associated actions, responsibilities and target dates for completion.







#### 4.10.4 City Tree Survey

To develop a fuller understanding of the population of public trees in Dublin will require a full tree survey that determines the location, species, dimensions, condition, risk and recommendations for remedial works for each public tree. This is a substantial task considering that the number of trees is expected to exceed 60,000 on streets alone.

To assist in this work a computer based tree management software system is intended to be deployed. This will allow in-the-field mapping and entering of data by staff and subsequent data analysis of information collected, such as assessment of the overall health condition of city trees. It will also allow development of management systems, such as coordinating pruning cycles or assessing the possible impacts to trees from development proposals.









#### 4.10.5 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

The creation of TPOs is provided for under Section 205 of the Planning and Development Act, 2010. This protection can be applied to individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands in the interest of amenity or the environment.

This protection includes the prohibition of cutting down, topping, lopping or willful destruction of such trees and requires the owners to enter into an agreement on their proper management.

In the Dublin City Council administrative area, there are six tree preservation orders as follows:

- Dublin Corporation Tree Preservation (Watermill Road/All Saints Drive, Adjoining St Anne's National School) Order 1989
- Dublin Corporation Tree Preservation (St Patrick's House) Order 1994
- Dublin City Council (Dartmouth Square Park) Tree Preservation Order (No. 1) 2008
- Dublin City Council (Dartmouth Square Park) Tree Preservation Order (No. 2) 2008
- Dublin City Council (Dartmouth Square Park) Tree Preservation Order (No. 3) 2008
- Dublin City Council (Dartmouth Square Park) Tree Preservation Order (No. 4) 2008

#### 4.10.6 Trees and Public Engagement

Dublin City Council has developed a number of measures to engage with the public on city trees over the years.

A series of nine tree trails have been established and developed, which are located at Tolka Valley Park, St Anne's Park, Poppintree Park, Lansdowne Park, Markievicz Park, Johnstown Park, Bushy Park, Albert College Park and Herbert Park. Each park has a display map on site and a downloadable guide which provides details on the trail and individual trees which are native to Ireland.

This initiative is very much an educational tool, aimed at schools to provide information for students on nature and the environment.

#### Arboreta

Dublin City is fortunate in having a number of arboreta where space is given to the growth of numerous different species of trees for educational and research value. The National Botanic Gardens holds a substantial tree collection distributed throughout the property within plant family groupings. Trinity College Botanic Garden in Dartry is the current location of this university's facility that originated in the

college's physic garden of the 1600s. The gardens include an arboretum and functions to provide living plant material, controlled growth environments and experimental facilities for the college's botanical teaching and research.

The Dublin City Council arboretum is located in St Annes Park. It was planted in 1988 to celebrate Dublin's millennium, in collaboration with the Tree Council of Ireland. The collection, features over 1,000 trees which were sponsored by 1,000 people.

The City's arboreta conserve tree species for research, education and cultural value. They indicate the many tree types that can grow within an urban environment given the right conditions, as well as growing and conserving tree species and varieties that may not be commercially available.







Tree Day at St Anne's Park  
(Image: the Tree Council of Ireland)

### National Tree Week

Dublin City Council along with the other Dublin Local Authorities are active partners in the annual National Tree Week events, which take place in March and are coordinated and promoted by The Tree Council of Ireland. Events such as tree planting ceremonies, forest and woodland walks, nature trails, workshops, woodturning displays and talks are included.

### 4.10.7 Champion and Heritage Trees

The Tree Register project was conducted by the joint efforts of the Tree Council of Ireland and The Irish Tree Society and has now recorded over 11,000 Champion Trees throughout the country.

A champion tree is defined as the tallest or oldest or most massive example of its species or kind in a given region. In County Dublin over 500 Champion Trees have been recorded with many on golf courses, school grounds and within the National Botanic Garden.

Heritage trees are described as trees with biological, cultural, ecological or historical interest. These are recorded trees with a particular story attached and includes some in Dublin.



### Policy

- To incorporate the policies of the Dublin City Tree Strategy to protect, maintain and enhance the city's urban forest.
- Parks Services will support the conservation of the city's arboreta and their role in education, research and culture.
- Parks Services will promote tree knowledge and appreciation to the public with particular emphasis on engaging with children.
- Parks Services recognise that Champion trees and Heritage trees are of significance and will therefore give due consideration in favour of their protection if the potential of impact from development arises.



### Actions

- To carry out a comprehensive public tree survey
- To enhance the experience of visiting St. Anne's Arboretum through interpretation.



#### 4.11 Civic Decoration

Civic decoration and planting are good measures to enhance and green the public realm, which in turn contributes to the overall visual quality of the city.

In Dublin city, civic decoration is not just a colourful representation of planters and hanging baskets but as a resource, it also includes flags, seasonal decoration such as Christmas trees and an entire workforce that work to ensure the city presents itself in a way that would equal any other international city.

The majority of civic decoration and enhancements are directed to the city centre, the banks of the River Liffey and the city historic core, including key historic buildings as well as other city nodes. They help define areas, mark occasions and events and generally improve the outdoor experience for citizens, commuters and tourists alike.

##### 4.11.1 Provision of Flags

The provision of flags, bunting and banners to celebrate or highlight events around the city is also a major feature of civic decoration such as on St Patrick's Day. Flags are procured, flown and maintained by Park Services and also mark occasions such as major sport events held in the city or international occasions such as biodiversity week.

##### 4.11.2 Floral Displays

Floral displays throughout spring and summer are a very important seasonal feature of civic decoration. Displays help to bring colour and life to urban environments that can otherwise be dominated by hard, grey surfaces and buildings.

Dublin City Council provides all seasonal flower/shrub planters that are placed around the city centre in the form of bedding plants, hanging baskets, tubs/bowls and planter boxes. Many of the display plants are grown, prepared and maintained by Park Services at St Anne's Park nursery.

##### 4.11.3 Civic Functions / Celebrations / Events

Park Services provide assistance to many civic functions and events over the course of a year, which require indoor flags and poles, public address systems and special floral arrangements.

Each year approximately 40 Christmas trees are also provided at key locations throughout the city centre, most notably on O'Connell Street.





#### 4.11.4 Other Services

Park Services also provides support throughout the year to community groups who do their own planting by preparing areas and supplying plants.

Technical support and procurement is also provided to City Council Area Offices for items such as planters and hanging baskets.



#### Policy

- Parks Services recognise the importance of civic decoration to the city and continue to provide and maintain this resource.



#### Action

- To produce a Civic Decoration Plan in consultation with local community & business groups on possible enhancement opportunities in their area. It would also look at ways that civic decoration can be incorporated into unique themes defining particular areas of the city or particular events (e.g. the Bloom Garden festival).





#### 4.12 Allotments

Allotments are small plots of land used to grow vegetables and flowers for personal use. They have a long history in Ireland and Europe as a means of providing additional garden space for horticulture and indeed respite from city living. The war years saw a surge in their popularity due to the genuine belief of imported supplies being cut off and it became government wartime policy in the UK to 'Dig for Victory'.

Recessionary times have also seen a resurgence in their popularity and this may be due both to a back to basics public sentiment, as well as providing for low cost food.

There are a number of key benefits in the provision of allotments:

- Providing a social, community orientated activity
- Providing physical activity to all age groups and different abilities
- Providing locally grown food
- Bringing vacant lands into active use

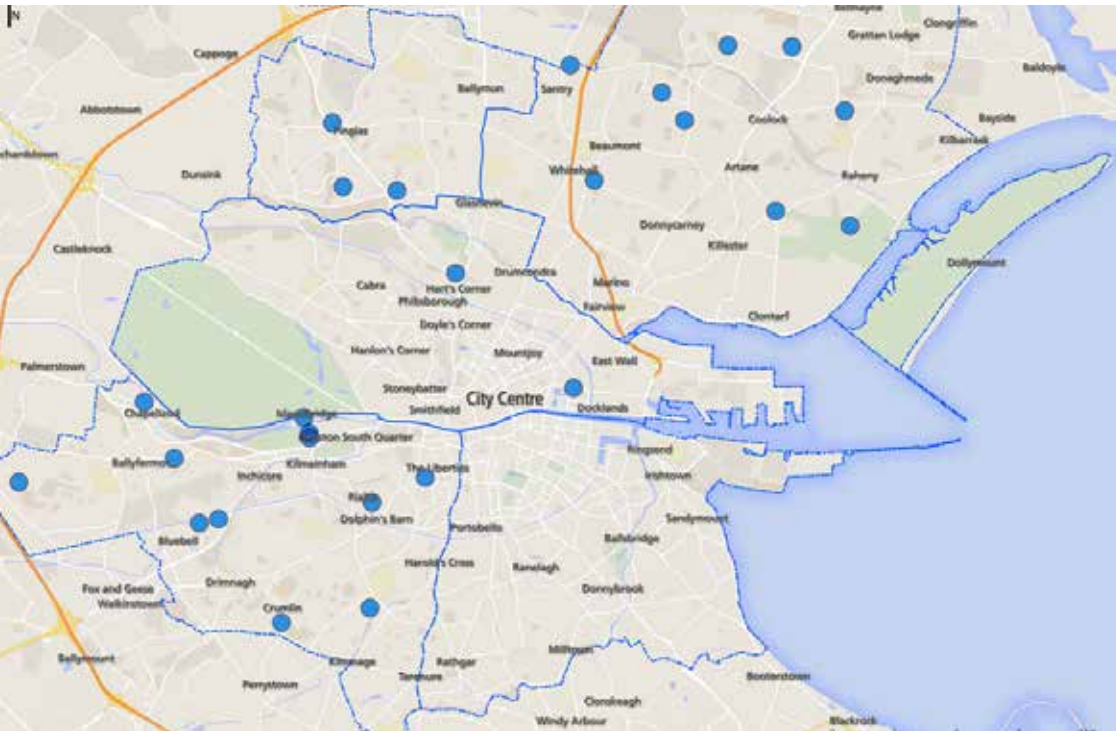
There are two pieces of legislation concerning allotments – the Acquisition of Land (Allotment) Act 1926 and the Planning and Development Act 2010. In the former, legislative power was given to Local Authorities to provide land for allotments subject to a defined demand for them. In this earlier legislation, an allotment is defined as:

*'a piece of land containing not more than one-quarter of a statute acre let or intended to be let for cultivation by an individual for the production of vegetables mainly for consumption by himself and his family'*

In the latter act the definition is given as follows: *'allotment' means an area of land comprising not more than 1,000 square metres let or available for letting to and cultivation by one or more than one person who is a member of the local community and lives adjacent or near to the allotment, for the purpose of the production of vegetables or fruit mainly for consumption by the person or a member of his or her family.*

The current legislation includes that local authorities may reserve land for use and cultivation as allotments and regulating, promote, facilitate or control the provision of land for that use.





**Distribution of Allotment Gardens.**

**Grattan Crescent Allotments**

**4.12.1 Distribution of DCC Allotments**

Park Services and Housing and Residential Services provide and let allotments to the general public across Dublin. This provision typically includes the provision of paths, raised planting beds, fencing enclosure and a water supply.

Currently letting of allotments is made when a new allotment scheme is developed. Successful applicants are given an 11 month letting which can be renewed subject to letting fees being paid and meeting the conditions of the letting agreement. Typically, applications exceed the availability of allotments.

It is proposed that the coordination and management of allotments in the city is strengthened to provide a better service and meet the ongoing demand and would include:

- Managing the existing allotment lettings and coordinate activities for allotment holders, such as horticultural training events, allotment awards etc.
- Coordinating applications and waiting lists using online applications for all city allotments
- Identifying locations city-wide for new allotment sites and assess demand for their implementation.



**! Policy**

- To make provision of allotments for the benefit of local communities subject to existing or anticipated demand for such facilities and to enhance the coordination and management of allotments on a city-wide basis.

**⚙️ Actions**

- To appoint an Allotment Officer within Parks Services to oversee all allotments provided by Dublin City Council.

### 4.13 Planning and Development Control

Parks Services assist the City Council's Planning Department in the area of forward planning and development control. The key policy relating to this area of work is within the Dublin City Development Plan which is produced every five years.

Guidance on landscape and openspace is provided for in the: "*Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*" (2009). This provides detailed guidance on the provision of open space in new development areas which is considered one of the key elements in defining quality of development. They advocate approaching the provision of open space on a hierarchical basis, from the strategic level down to more detailed plans, such as local area plans. The guidelines emphasise the need for quality in public open spaces in terms of design, accessibility, biodiversity and passive supervision. There should also be a clear definition between public, semiprivate and private spaces.

The Parks Service has also produced its own guidance in the document: "*Guidelines for Open Space Development and Taking in Charge*" which is available on the City Council's website.

Development control includes providing guidance and advice on development proposals with regards to open space, landscape, greening, biodiversity and arboriculture. During the development management process input is provided at the following stages:

- Planning guidance through the Development Plan and stand alone guidance documents.
- Pre-application meetings with applicants and their agents
- Provision of observations on submitted planning applications
- Facilitating handover of public open space
- Advice on compliance with planning approval conditions
- Advice on enforcement issues

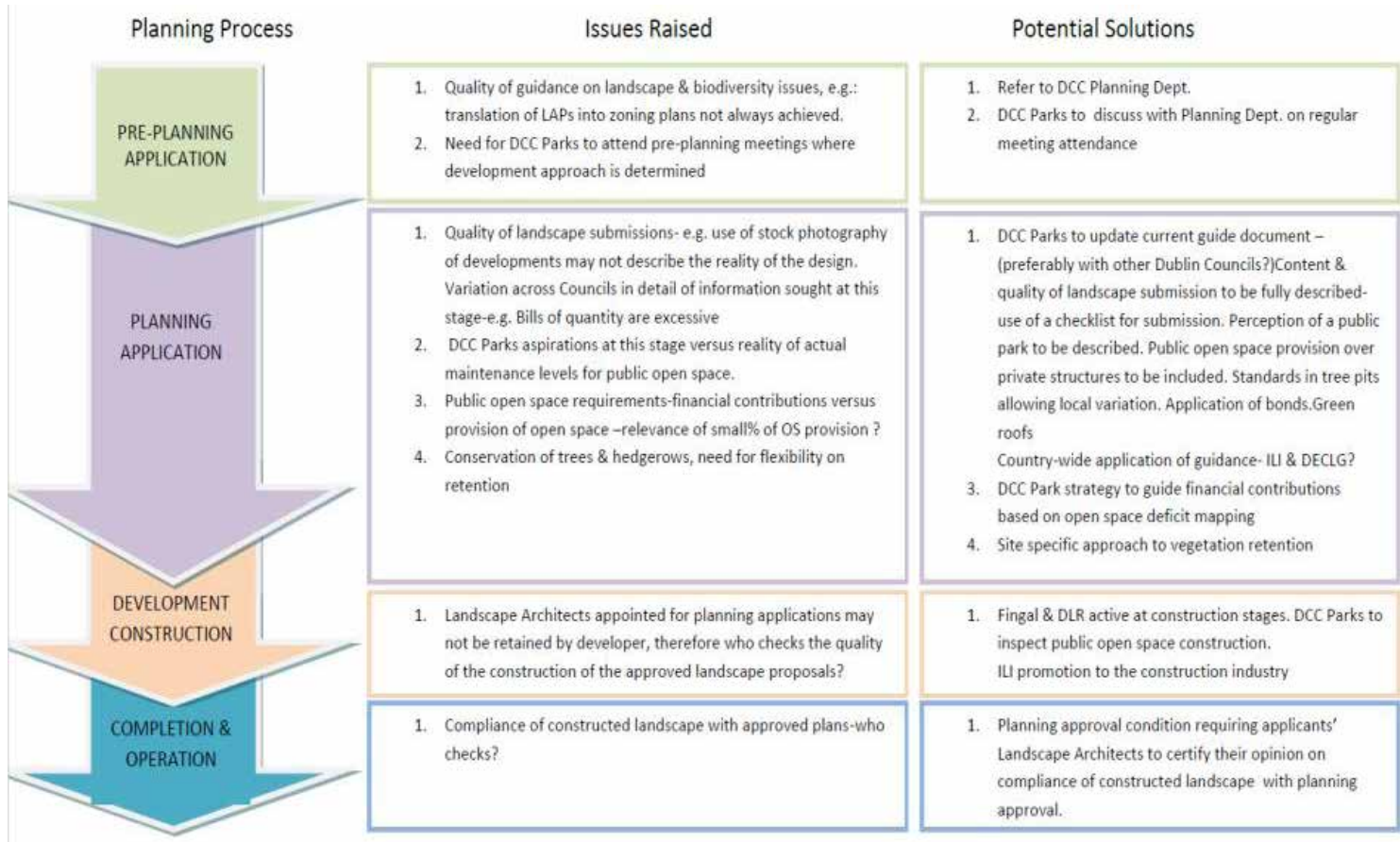
The key trends and issues that are occurring in the ongoing development of the city are related to the overall intensification of development within the finite space available. This puts pressure on existing landscape resources, such as trees, which require certain spatial conditions to survive. There is concern on the loss of existing trees, in particular large canopy species within the city and greater cooperation between those involved in development and Parks Services is required to maximise their retention on sites.

The ongoing demand for more development space in the city involves the ongoing redevelopment of institutional lands. These lands, such as convents and colleges, typically contain a cluster of buildings within a parkland landscape. They usually contain significant trees and have in many cases served as publically accessible private open space within the locality. In their subsequent re-development the open space provision and layout of new development should maximise the retention of high value trees and provide suitably accessible recreation to serve the local area. Where original buildings are retained the open space provision should also allow for the conservation of their visual setting, such as by retaining original driveway approaches and frontages.

The development of public open space over structures, such as underground carparks, is also becoming more frequent. In these cases the design and structural loading capabilities of the subsurface structures requires an integrated approach with the open space proposals above. In all cases the provision of a fully designed public open space with required recreational facilities shall not be compromised. The future maintenance responsibility of such provisions if taken in charge by the City Council will require clear delineation vertically both in drawings and physically within the development.

There is greater potential impact on remaining natural spaces in the city, such as along river courses, as the demand for more and more development increases and the population also increases. Parks Services will practice conservation of such spaces, in particular where no existing conservation designations exists, so that natural habitats are retained and biodiversity protected.





#### 4.13.1 Industry Consultation

The majority of planning applications within the city have open space and landscape proposals prepared by Landscape Architects and consultation with the profession was arranged through the Irish landscape Institute for this strategy. The key outcomes of those discussions are indicated in the diagram above which indicates the key issues raised and the potential solutions at each stage of the planning process. While potential solutions to issues can be identified the ability to achieve them may depend on resources available. The consultation with professionals will continue with the objective of improvement of the planning application process for landscape submissions. In particular, the updating and enhancement of guidance for landscape professionals will be a priority for Parks Services.

#### 4.13.2 Landscape Conservation Areas

The designation of Landscape Conservation Areas is provided for under Section 204 of the Planning and Development Act for the purposes of the preservation of the landscape. In particular, the legislation allows for further control of exempted development under the Act. Currently there are no such designations in the Dublin City Council administrative area, however it is intended to investigate key landscape areas with a view to determining their suitability for LCA designation. The areas identified for investigation are:

- The Phoenix Park
- North Bull Island
- The National Botanic Gardens
- St Anne's Park

Undertaking the initial investigation will require a review of the context of the identified sites and in particular, if existing zoning and other designations could provide adequate or additional measures for landscape conservation.



**The National Botanic Gardens,  
a potential Landscape  
Conservation Area?**

#### 4.13.3 Development Contribution Scheme

The Planning and Development Act provides for the payment of contributions for public infrastructure and facilities as a condition when granting planning permissions. They are commonly known as levies and financially assist Parks Services in the provision and upgrading of parks resources throughout the city.

The distribution of open space in the city is not uniform and where new development is proposed in an area already well served by open space, or where proposed open space under a development is too small or inappropriate there is an additional option under the Development Plan of a financial contribution in lieu of all or part of the open space required. This will be applied on a case by case basis. The key areas to which such contributions will be used are:

- The upgrading of current open space, in particular Community Grade 2 parks, which may lack balance between facilities provided or need of an uplift in their overall quality.
- The provision of particular facilities (e.g. playgrounds) where there is an identified lack of access to such facilities in an area in accordance with this strategy.
- The provision of new open space within the city and in particular for areas identified with a lack of provision of parks.



#### Policy

- Parks & Landscape Services will continue to assist the provision of a sustainable green city through the planning and development control system, with particular focus on achieving a balance between development and conservation. Emphasis will be placed on conservation of trees, historic designed landscapes and natural areas. While the continued development of the city poses challenges it also contributes to the provision of new public space, the enhancement of existing parks and the supply of better recreational facilities.



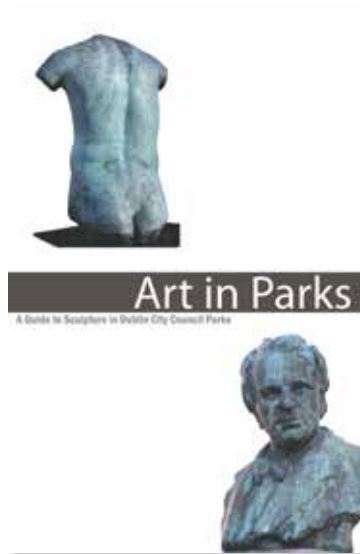
#### Actions

- Parks Services will update current guidelines to planning applicants in submission of landscape proposals (including open space, biodiversity and arboriculture aspects). Coordination with the adjacent councils (Fingal County Council, Dun Laoghaire, Rathdown Council & South Dublin County Council) will be sought.
- Parks Services will prepare guidelines on green building/structures to encourage greening within city development.
- Parks Services will investigate the Phoenix Park, North Bull Island, the National Botanic Gardens and St Anne's Park for suitability as designated landscape conservation areas.





Distribution of Art in City Parks



#### 4.14 Art in Parks

Parks create an outdoor gallery for public art and currently over twenty parks contain artworks. The subject matter is wide and variable from pieces dedicated to notable individuals, to those of a more abstract nature. Art appreciation is subjective, sometimes controversial, but overall a welcome addition to our city parks that can greatly enhance their cultural value, reflect the identity of Dublin and display the creative talent of sculptors and artists.

Artwork is obtained through donations of pieces to the City Council as well as through commissioning. A city wide policy on public art has been prepared and is administered by the Public Art Advisory Group. Artwork for donation will be assessed on artistic merit, site suitability, appropriateness to the city context and on cost and maintenance implications. These criteria are also suitable when art is commissioned and in particular, the relevance to the receiving park's character is considered important. This is illustrated in the selection of artwork for Father Collins Park, a place which promotes and demonstrates the use of sustainable energy. The chosen artwork 'Inverted Oil Rig' by artist Alan Phelan suitably reflects the park's theme by the notion of returning oil to the ground in favour of sustainable energy sources.

#### 4.14.1 Distribution of Art

The location of artwork in Dublin's parks is not currently uniform and there is a concentration of artwork in the city centre parks, in particular in Merrion Square Park. It is desirable to distribute art more evenly throughout the city and make it easily accessible to all.

No further works of art or memorials will be located within Merrion Square due to the high concentration there and due to the need to maintain the historic landscape character of this Georgian-era park. Current art pieces located in this park will be reviewed to determine if any may be appropriately relocated to other park locations.

#### Policy

- Art within the City Council's parks is important, welcome and encouraged. Donations and commissioning of art work and their positioning within parks requires careful consideration and is therefore controlled.
- It is the intention to distribute artwork more evenly throughout the Council's parks and to review the concentration of art located in Merrion Square Park.

**Inverted Oil Rig**  
by Alan Phelan  
Father Collins Park



#### 4.14.2 Art Interpretation

A guide to art located in city parks, called Art in Parks has been prepared by Dublin City Council (<http://dublincity.ie/main-menu-services-recreation-culture-dublin-city-parks/art-parks>).

This presents an introduction to the park, the artwork and the artist who created it, which will enliven the experience viewing art for visitors. With the high usage of mobile technology and social media, as reflected in our Parks Survey, it is desirable to make interpretive material easily available in new formats. More detailed background stories or video clips of artists in digital format will add value to how art is experienced in city parks. To further advance this a pilot smartphone interpretation project was undertaken for the Oscar Wilde sculpture in Merrion Square, which may be accessed at [www.dublincity.ie/DublinArtinParks](http://www.dublincity.ie/DublinArtinParks). This provides a multi-lingual text and audio description of the artwork as well as a video of the sculptor by access for smartphones using a quick response (QR) code located at the sculpture.

**Adult and Child**  
by Jim Flavin  
St Catherine's Park



#### Action

- To update the Art in Parks guide on a regular basis, to explore the possibility of introducing versions in other languages for visitors and to look at methods to link the guide with mobile technology.





**Nuria and Irma**  
by Juame Plensa  
Yorkshire Sculptor Park

### 4.14.3 Sculpture Park

A park dedicated to sculpture does not currently exist in the City Council administrative area. Well known international examples of sculpture parks include the Musée Rodin in Paris, the Louisiana Skulpturparken in Denmark and the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in England. The Yorkshire park was established in 1977 with the goal of 'Great art for everyone'. This park is set within 500 acres on an 18th century estate and attracts 300,000 visitors each year, which is estimated to contribute £5 million annually into the local economy.

There is potential to develop a well regarded sculpture park in one of our city parks to display both local and international artworks. This would contribute to the range of outdoor city visitor attractions currently available and help enhance the international identity of Dublin. Potential locations include St. Anne's Park and Liffey Valley Park.



**60 Degrees**  
by Kevin O'Dwyer  
Lough Boora  
Sculpture Park

The establishment of a sculpture park may be linked to a future sculpture symposium or a major cultural event for the city.



#### Action

- To carry out a feasibility study into the creation of a Dublin City Sculpture Park.



#### 4.14.4 Temporary Art

Non-permanent artwork is installed within parks for limited durations only, due to the nature of the artwork or to celebrate a particular event. As the works are non-permanent and of limited availability to view, it is essential that publicity is maximised to allow the public to see it and that a record of the artwork is made before it is removed.

The 'Touring Tama' by artist Miriam McCannon is an example of a recent temporary art installation. The piece was formed by handkerchiefs and reflects the tradition of remembrance of loved ones by hanging a handkerchief on an ancient tree in Cyprus. It was installed on a tree canopy in Merrion Square Park to commemorate The Cyprus Presidency of the EU in 2012.

A further international example of temporary art is Christo and Jeanne-Claude's temporary installation entitled *The Gates*, which was installed in New York's Central Park in February 2005. The installation consisted of 7503 metal and fabric gates erected along 37 kilometers of path in the park. The work was financed by the artists and attracted over four million visitors, generating an estimated \$254 million for the city's economy.

#### ! Policy

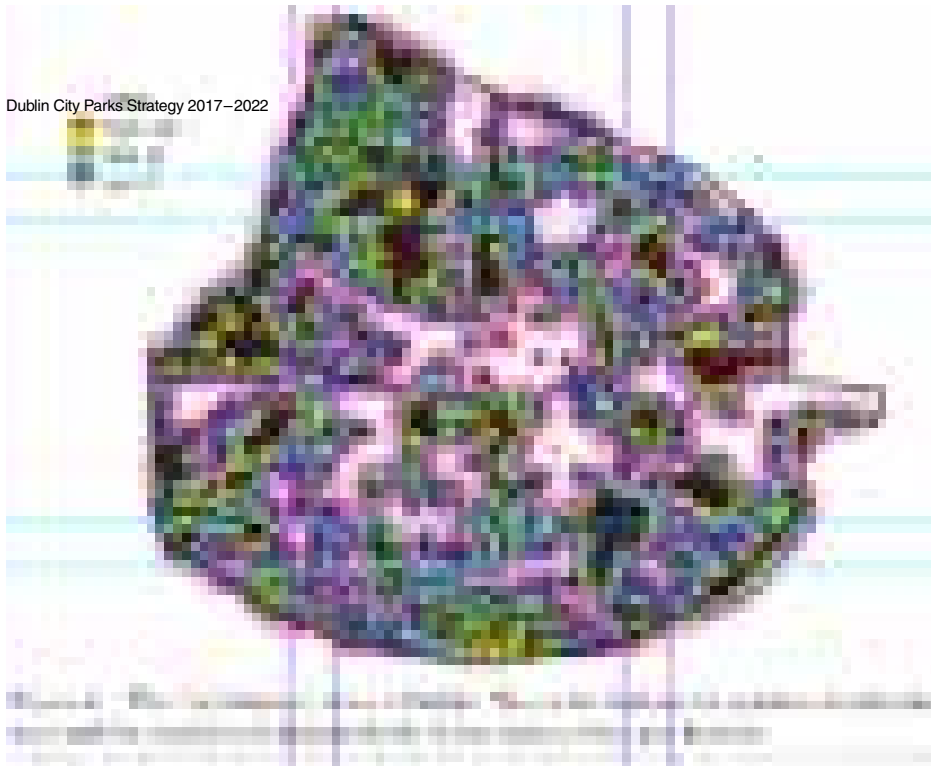
- In order to maintain the quality of landscape character in Dublin's historic parks strict control is practiced on temporary art, memorials and events. In all cases written approval is required with a stated commencement and conclusion date.



**The Gates by Christo and Jeanne-Claude**  
Central Park, New York City  
[www.christojeanneclaude.net](http://www.christojeanneclaude.net)



**Touring Tama**  
by Miriam McCannon  
Merrion Square Park



#### 4.14.5 Artist in Residence

There are currently three parks, St Anne's Park, St Patrick's Park and Albert College Park supporting the City Council's artist in residence programme. It is administered by the Council's Arts Office and consists of living and studio space within the parks.

The programme provides work space for both local and international artists, as well as giving a specialised and appropriate use for the historic park buildings where studios are located. Engagement with the public forms part of the requirements of selected artists and resulting events add to the visitor experience at these parks. The programme is considered successful and over 40 artists have availed of it since its commencement.

#### 4.15 Research

There is considerable general research material available on many aspects of work undertaken by the Parks Services and this has influenced how resources are planned, designed, implemented and managed.

Research originating in Ireland is more limited and to overcome this direct commissioning by Local Authorities of universities and consultants is undertaken. This has the advantage of focused study on a particular subject that results in the practical application of findings. Parks and open spaces are also used as a resource by university researchers as part of their academic studies or careers and such activity is welcome.



#### Policy

- Parks Services will continue to support the Artist in Residence scheme and seek further opportunities to provide new premises for artists within parks subject to demand and availability.



CONSERVATION PLAN &  
HISTORIC LANDSCAPE STUDY

Final Report

July 2019

Parks & Landscape Services  
Mountjoy Square Society

LOWEY HAYES ARCHITECTS

### Conservation Research

A number of conservation studies have been commissioned for the historic parks of Mountjoy Square Park, Merrion Square Park and St Anne's Park. They have researched the original historic fabric of these places and their components, described the change that has occurred to them over the years and highlighted their significance. Copies of the reports can be found on the Parks section of the Dublin City Council website.

Study recommendations, including repair, restoration and reconstruction will be implemented so that these parks maintain their historic and cultural value for future generations. Interpretation to visitors of the history of parks will be enhanced, so that an understanding of why conservation work is carried out can be widely appreciated.

### Dublin Tree Canopy Research Study

The Dublin Local Authorities and the Office of Public Works commissioned the School of Geography at University College Dublin to map the distribution of the tree canopy within County Dublin, following earlier research carried out independently by the university on the city centre area.

In addition to mapping the canopy the study also analyses its distribution with regard to land use, potential environmental services and presents a comparison with other European cities. This study will allow strategic targets to be set to increase the percentage tree canopy cover in Dublin and how Parks Services can contribute to this with public tree planting.

### Further Research

Further research is being considered for the following areas :

- (a) Park visitor numbers – to indicate the visitation rates and use of city parks and record the key reasons for visits the characteristics of visitors comparison with other key visitor attractions in Dublin. In particular, this research should seek to obtain view from younger, older and foreign nationals/non-Irish origin sections of the population, which was not captured in surveys for this strategy. This research will be used to influence the design and planning of new parks and park upgrading, for example in implementing or upgrading visitor facilities.
- (b) Economic value of parks- to research the economic contribution of parks to the city as part of the tourism economy of Dublin and in addition to review existing and potential revenue streams generated from parks. This research will be used to influence park funding and investment.
- (c) Street tree planting techniques – to research the various newer techniques in street tree planting and compare to determine best practice for Dublin. This will be used to develop standards for Dublin's public street tree planting that are proven to be more successful for the longterm survival of trees in urban environments.
- (d) Biodiversity-to carry out research outlined in the Dublin Bay Biosphere Conservation and Research Strategy 2016-2020.



### Policy

- Parks Services will continue to commission and use research that directly contributes to its role in planning, designing, implementing and managing its resources. In addition, it supports access to its resources by research organisations and individuals undertaking their own research studies.



### Action

- To undertake research studies on the following subjects:
  - (a) Park visitation assessment.
  - (b) Economic assessment of Parks contribution to the tourism economy of Dublin
  - (c ) Street tree planting techniques
  - (d) Biodiversity research associated with the Dublin Bay Biosphere.



# Section 5: City Landscape Plan

The city landscape is complex, it is formed by the continued human development over the original existing natural landscape, which until relatively recently grew without overall planning. In this section a broader approach to this landscape is taken with the intention of providing vision on its key components including the coast, routes in and out, the inner-city and outer city and the waterways.

## 5.1 The Coast

The coast, where the city meets the sea, is a complex linear zone with varying levels of access, connectivity and activity. It is a product of the organic development of the city spreading north and south along the bay without an overarching plan. The city coastal landscape is an area that deserves greater attention to its planning and design. How many of those who visit or work in Dublin every day actually experience the sea?

The existing spatial characteristics along the coast varies, from highly accessible linear parks at Clontarf and Sandycove to less defined connections at the Docklands where the Liffey severs connectivity. Nodes of activity along the coast include beaches, promenades, quays, sea walls and parks and the coastal nodes of Howth and Dun Laoghaire harbours.







The city landscape plan conceptually envisages a continuous green coastal corridor accessible from Howth to Dun Laoghaire, providing green transport, recreational use and biodiversity areas.

This corridor provides for bicycle and pedestrian routes as well as serving recreational needs to local areas along the route, connecting north and south and back into the city centre and suburbs along the way with a coordinated use of materials, way finding and interpretation. To develop this further a Dublin Coast Landscape Plan is envisaged that would be a coordinated project between the Local Authorities and relevant management agencies, such as Dublin Port.



### Policy

- Park Services will promote a continuous green coastal corridor along Dublin Bay



### Action

- To assist in the preparation of a Dublin Coast Landscape Plan with other partners to enhance recreation, greening, biodiversity and green transportation.

## 5.2 Arrivals & Departures

People arrive into and depart the city by road, rail, sea and air. First impressions and memories are made in the process and the image of a green Dublin City creates a lasting positive impression.

### Access by roads

The landscape plan proposes the protection and promotion of the greening along the main road corridors leading to and from the city centre, which are the M1, N2, N3, N4, N7 and N11 from the M50.

The M4/N4/Chapelizod Bypass route into/from the city centre provides an excellent example of a successful green road corridor, in particular along the Bypass section where mature median and road edge planting is now well established.

The success of this lies in the provision of adequate space to accomplish greening, which may not exist along all routes. While the above example consists of public lands the concept of route corridor greening can be assisted with the contribution of private land where planting is established and maintained by the owner.

Modern road corridors can appear quite similar due to standards of design and the use of landscape and art can help bring out identity. In approaching the city both the M50 junctions and inner-city canals can provide identity thresholds to the inner-city and outer city area. It is proposed to signify these thresholds by creating large scale landscape/art features at each of the main M50 junctions. An example of this effect can be seen in the Angel of the North sculpture in England which is located close to the A1 road corridor south of Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne. To achieve this an ideas competition in cooperation with the National Roads Authority and Dublin local authorities is proposed.

A more subtle approach is proposed for the canal threshold to the inner-city. Many road corridors crossing the canals are distinguished by the older hump-back bridges with stone parapet walls. Improvement to their appearance is suggested through upgrading the public realm in the immediate vicinity, the introduction of seasonal planting and bridge name stones/signs.





### Access by sea

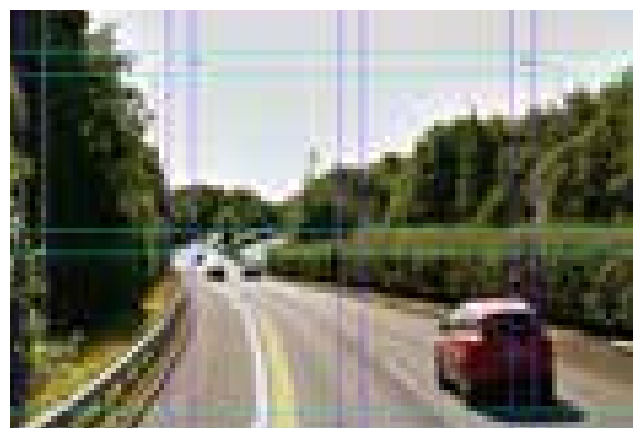
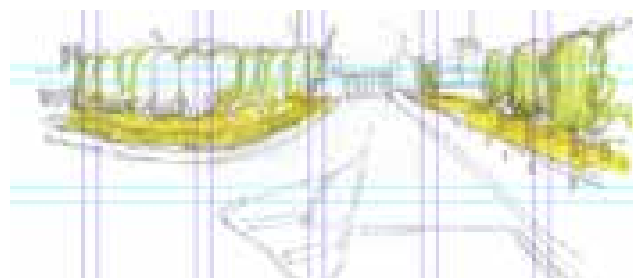
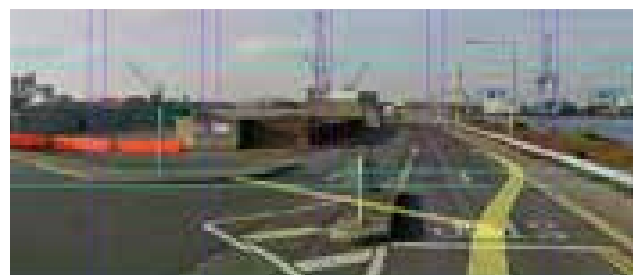
Passenger arrivals and departures by ship, ferry and cruise liners is increasing through Dublin Port and will continue with port masterplans proposals including a new cruise terminal. An estimated 1.7 million ferry and cruise passengers pass through the port every year. The entry into the port terminals passes working docks with facilities for goods import and export set within a working landscape.

In contrast to the regenerated docklands further up the Liffey there is little greening within the vast areas dedicated to port operations.

The potential for greening to enhance the quality of arrival and departures is extensive and may include key areas such as terminals to break up extensive car parking areas, quaysides in working docks and derelict areas.

A port greening plan is suggested to bring these greening possibilities to fruition in a coordinated manner.

Creating a landscape/ sculptural gateway is also suggested subject to feasibility at the eastern most end of the port lands delivered through the process of a design competition. Signifying the gateway to a city by sea is experienced in New York by the Statue of Liberty, the Gateway of India in Mumbai and the Opera House in Sydney.





Dublin



Singapore

### Access by air

Dublin Airport provides both domestic and international arrivals and departures for the city and was used by 15 million passengers in 2015. The airport landscape is variable in quality with extensive areas for parking, roads and paved areas with poor appearance, while other areas provide good roadside screening by planting. The airport would benefit from a master landscape plan to provide a distinctive landscape treatment to enhance identity on arrival and departure from Dublin by air and include the main road corridors to which it connects. International examples of airport greening are experienced in Singapore's Changi Airport and the developing Schipol Airport landscape plan in Holland.



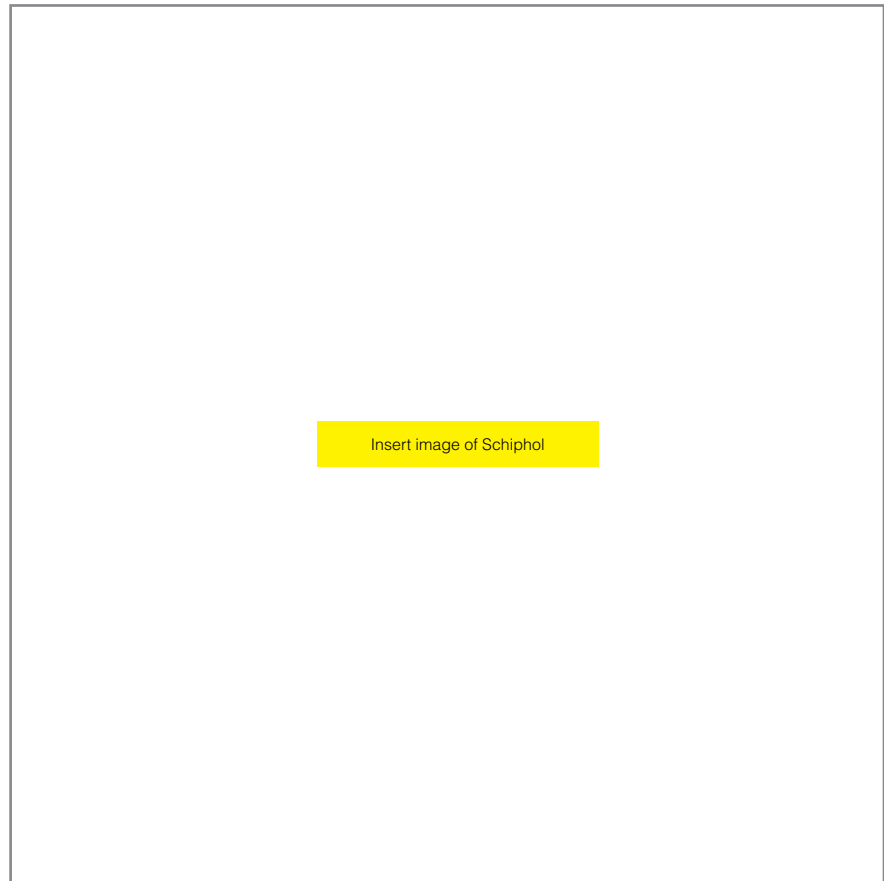
### Policy

- Parks Services will promote the greening and sense of identity at city entry points and routes.



### Action

- To assess potential of enhancing M50 junctions and canal bridges with partners to act as thresholds to the city.
- To assess the potential of a port greening plan with Dublin Port to enhance greening and identity of arrival and departure by sea.
- To assess the potential of an airport environs greening plan with relevant authorities to enhance greening and identity of arrival & departure by air.





### 5.3 The Inner and Outer City Landscape

#### The Inner-city landscape

Dublin's inner-city is the centre of activity, it's the historical and cultural heart and an area that has seen renewed development over the last few decades with an increase in the resident population. It is the location that every visitor (5.9 million in 2014) to Dublin will experience, with the contrasting experience of the quality of the O'Connell Street public realm intersecting with the traffic-laden Liffey quays as its centrepiece.

This strategy envisages the development of new city centre parks to address the current imbalance of open space, whereby inner-city residents have less area of parks per person. These are suggested to link with the UNESCO City of Literature designation by designing them as writer's parks. In addition, greening and public realm strategies for the Liberties, Centre and Docklands provide to enhance the core city landscape by providing quality to the exterior streets and spaces of the city.

The majority of Dublin's historical parks also lie within the central area which contribute to telling the story of Dublin. The strategy provides for their preservation and restoration in the context of the modern city as well as interpreting their significance to both residents and visitors to the city.

The docklands urban regeneration area provides a new chapter in the development of the city centre landscape. Here, Irish and international designers are introducing contemporary placemaking which contrasts to the older heart of the city.

#### The Outer City landscape

The city's suburban areas (from the canals to the M50 corridor) are well serviced by the provision of public open space, however the key issue is the quality of these parks. Many were provided during the surge in suburban expansion from the 1950s with the provision of space for parks but with minimal input of design and facilities. The strategy addresses this with the intended upgrading of parks from Community Grade 2 to Grade 1, with the intention of providing existing parks with a balanced provision of active and passive recreational facilities. In addition, a select number of Community Grade 1 parks shall be brought to Flagship standard.

While the quantum of open space available to suburban dwellers is larger than that for those in the inner-city, it is not proposed to reduce it beyond the range of 2.5-3.8ha per 1000 persons given in this strategy as future population growth will overtime largely rely on the current provision.

The provision of open space differs in the southeast area in that there is significantly less public open space and more private provision in the form of privately owned parks/squares and recreational grounds. For the longterm protection of these spaces from development the use of appropriate zoning and the transfer of privately owned lands to public ownership may be considered.

The outer city landscape also contains some remaining historic house and gardens which may be worthy of conservation. Typically these historical holdings have been broken up for development with only remnants remaining. Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Council's recent acquisition of Fernhill house and gardens with



its celebrated Robisonian-style landscape is a commendable example of direct conservation intervention. In the city administrative area the an example requiring further investigation is the intact 17th century house and garden landscape called Woodlands, located in Clonshaugh. The architectural design has been attributed to the architect Edward Lovett Pearce (1699-1733). The house together with a glasshouse located on the grounds are protected structures. The threat of impact lies in the expansion of an adjacent industrial estate and road corridor proposals through the property's core historic landscape .The conservation of this property and others remaining in the administrative areas requires proactive study so that those of unique value to the City are identified and protected into the future.



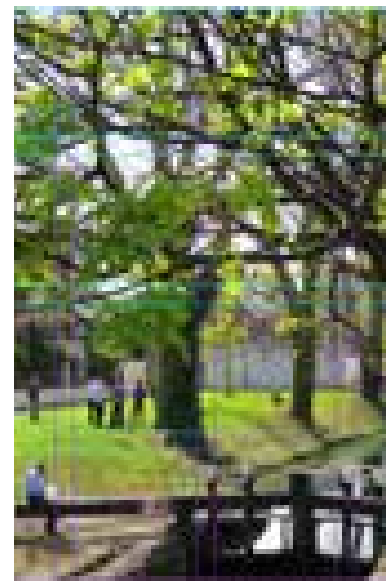
### Policy

- Parks Services will proactively review the city landscape to determine historic or culturally relevant landscapes for conservation.



### Action

- Parks Services will support a conservation study in consultation and with the agreement of the property owners of Woodlands house and landscape to determine its significance and conservation value.
- Park services will prepare a City Historic Landscape plan to record previously existing and remaining landscapes of historic value.



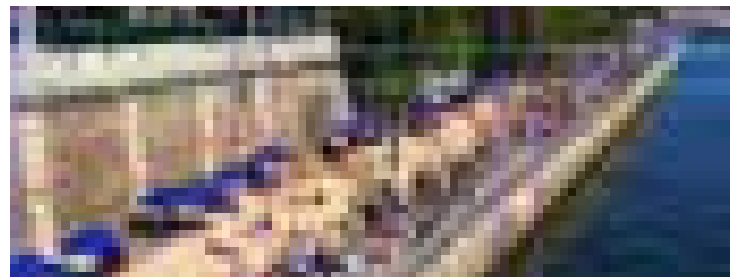
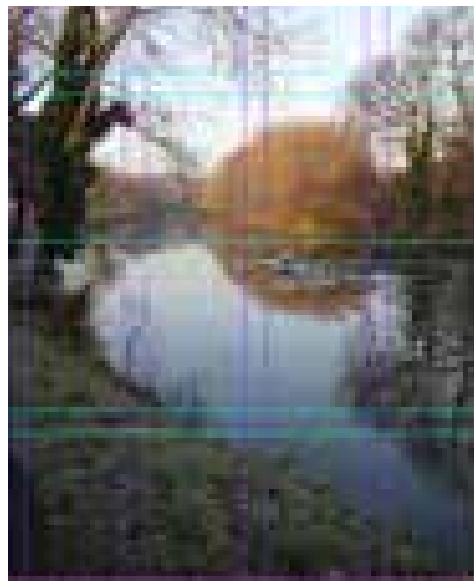
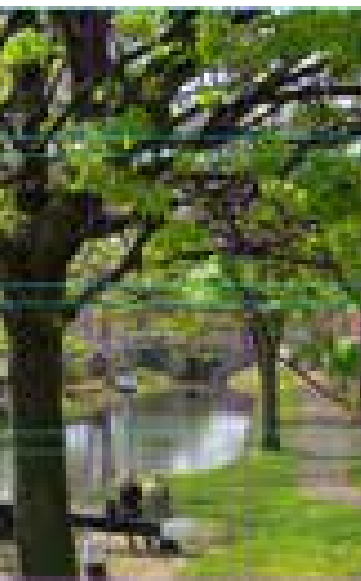


### 5.4 City Waterways

The city waterways comprise of the rivers and streams that flow into Dublin Bay as well as the constructed canals. They function to provide drainage, recreation and natural habitats for city flora and fauna. Like many other cities Dublin has gone through a phase of turning its back on its watercourses but has now moved to an appreciation of their value to urban life.

The Grand and Royal Canals are linear man-made water landscapes embracing the inner-city. They are under the management of Waterways Ireland. Within the city they provide a strong sense of identity connected to the city's transport and industrial heritage. Today they are also valued green walking and cycling routes and meeting places for residents and city workers.

To promote and interpret the canal's industrial heritage it is proposed to assess the potential for the restoration of the St James basin area which was originally used by barges transporting



Guinness into the midlands of Ireland. This assessment will look at the possibility of establishing it as a heritage canal park and visitor centre and link it into the adjacent popular Guinness storehouse visitor experience.

The main river corridors include the Santry and Tolka on the northside and the Camac, Poddle and Dodder on the southside and the central river Liffey. The encroachment of development has, over the centuries, removed and compromised many of Dublin's original rivers and streams with some no longer visible as they have been culverted underground.

Integrated management plans are recommended for the main river corridors with the objectives of balancing the various demands of drainage /flood risk, recreation, green transportation and biodiversity.

The potential to expose culverted watercourses has also considerable potential where redevelopment is proposed. In such cases the provision of open space in connection with unearthing watercourses will enhance their value and will assist to overcome level differences when such watercourses are at a deep level.

The River Liffey is central to the origins and present day identity of Dublin. Its character changes from the urban central city quays to the more natural vegetated banks in the upstream sections. Within the city centre a greater relationship with the river can be established through enhancing the river corridor, however this will require balancing space for traffic with space for people and landscape treatment. In the upstream sections from Island Bridge to the Strawberry Beds greater access by walkers and bicycle by continuous routes requires assessment to determine the potential for a long distance Liffey recreational route.



### Policy

- Parks Services will seek the appropriate development, conservation and management of the city waterways which are an asset to Dublin's landscape. Where required cooperation with relevant management authorities, such as Waterways Ireland will be sought.
- Parks services will seek to unearth culverted watercourses where feasible and appropriate in an effort to improve the natural environment and create landscape linkage along such corridors.



### Action

- To assess the feasibility of the creation of a canal heritage park in the St James basin area.

### City Greenways

City greenways are defined as linear spaces that can provide for green transport and recreational use. A good example is the Great Western Greenway, which is located along a disused railway in Mayo and provides over 40 km of trails for recreational use with links to accommodation and activities along the way. In Dublin linear connections are possible where adequate open space provision exists along river corridors, canals and the coast. They serve as good alternative cycle and walking routes that are typically more pleasant than roadside routes. Constraints to creating full connections do exist, in some cases existing private property may block potential routes and in others habitats for flora & fauna are preferably conserved without disturbance.

The Tolka Valley Greenway is currently under planning by Park Services. This potentially provides a riverside route along the River Tolka from Tolka Valley Park across to Fairview Park, connecting to the S2S (Sutton to Sandycove) cycleway along the coast there. The route includes public parks, the botanic gardens and institutional lands however it is not fully linked at a few locations.

The Dodder Greenway is also under planning and development. This greenway intends to link up the city centre to Tallaght and beyond and will include flood prevention measures as part of the scheme.

Further greenway routes for consideration include the Turnapin/Mayne River Greenway and the Santry River Greenway.





# Section 6: Implementation

The implementation of actions described in the strategy will be undertaken over short-term (1-5 years), medium-term (5-10 years) and long-term (over 10 years). While it is desirable to complete actions within the stated time periods, constraints such as financing, changes to strategy and necessary approvals for actions may affect actual delivery.

## The Public's View



### Policy

- To create a Dublin City Parks Volunteer Programme to realise public goodwill and enhance engagement with the community in their local environment.
- To enhance information availability on park services and resources through contemporary media and digital devices.
- To improve city parks signage and interpretation by enhancing their design coordination, quality and content.



### Actions

|  | SHORT-TERM | MEDIUM-TERM | LONG-TERM |
|--|------------|-------------|-----------|
| To study the feasibility of establishing a Dublin Parks Volunteer Programme                          | S          |             |           |
| To further develop smartphone multi-lingual guides for art works located in Merrion Square Park      | S          |             |           |
| To develop multi-lingual digital guides for Dublin's historic parks                                  | S          | M           |           |
| To develop a Parks Information Portal (PIP) website with the adjacent local authorities and the OPW. | S          | M           |           |
| To undertake a study for the development of a Parks Wayfinding System                                | S          |             |           |
| To update the city parks brochure  | S          |             |           |

## Resources and Services Parks



### Policy

- Parks Services objective is to plan, design, maintain and manage the city park resource to best serve the recreational, cultural, economic, environmental and social needs of Dublin.
- Flagship parks under the management of the City Council shall be maintained and enhanced through park management plans.



### Actions

|  | SHORT-TERM | MEDIUM-TERM | LONG-TERM |
|--|------------|-------------|-----------|
| To prepare management plans for all designated flagship parks under the management of the City Council.                  | S          |             |           |
| <b>North Bull Island</b>   |            |             |           |
| To prepare appropriate traffic management solutions for access to the island   | S          | M           |           |
| To prepare a feasibility study for a new visitor centre  | S          |             |           |
| To construct a new visitor centre subject to planning approval and funding availability                                  | S          | M           | L         |
| <b>Father Collins Park</b>   |            |             |           |
| To prepare a park management plan  | S          |             |           |
| <b>St Anne's Park</b>  |            |             |           |
| To develop a city-wide destination playground  |            | M           |           |
| To obtain ideas for development of the site area of the original mansion.  | S          |             |           |
| To restore the range of follies which form part of the historic estate landscape.  | S          |             |           |
| To explore the use of St Annes as a sculpture park, possibly linked with a sculpture symposium event.                    | S          | M           |           |
| <b>St Patrick's Park</b>   |            |             |           |
| To undertake a conservation and management study of the park   | S          |             |           |
| <b>Merrion Square</b>  |            |             |           |
| To design and construct a park tea room in sympathy to the historic landscape character                                  | S          |             |           |
| To interpret the historic park and artwork within, in particular to exploit the use of digital media for interpretation. | S          |             |           |
| To upgrade perimeter paths and seating in sympathy with the original Georgian-era park character.                        | S          |             |           |



## QUANTITY OF PARKS



### Policy

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- Dublin City Council will maintain the average provision of between 2.5 and 3.6ha of parks per 1000 population in its administrative area. This accommodates the existing provision while allowing for expected future population growth.



### Action

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SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To undertake a feasibility study into the provision of new city centre parks to service this area of high population density and to contribute to the identity of Dublin as a City of Literature.

S

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## ACCESS TO PARKS



### Policy

- To maintain a hierarchy of parks within reasonable access of the residents of Dublin.



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To improve access to Flagship parks by the upgrading of community parks to flagship status as follows:

|  | SHORT-TERM | MEDIUM-TERM | LONG-TERM |
|--|------------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>Central Area:</b> Mountjoy Square Park                    | S          |             |           |
| <b>North Central Area:</b> Fairview Park                     |            | M           |           |
| <b>North West Area:</b> Poppintree Park                      | S          |             |           |
| <b>South Central:</b> Le Fanu Park and Bushy Park            | S          | M           |           |
| <b>South East:</b> Fitzwilliam Square (not in DCC ownership) | S          | M           |           |

## PARKS AND RECREATION



### Policy

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- Dublin City Council will continue to provide and maintain a range of recreational opportunities within its parks and work with governing bodies of sport and activities to strategically plan development of facilities without impact on passive uses or character of particular parks or open spaces.
- To ensure that any future all-weather facilities are available to as wide a range of sports as possible in the local community, that local schools have access during the day and early evening and that all the users of the facility contribute to a fund which will cover the cost of renewal of the facility at the end of its efficient use period, e.g.: 8 to 10 years for a synthetic surface.



### Action

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- To provide where possible park perimeter paths and paths between interconnecting parks to develop accessible walking routes and promote jogging.
- To assess the potential of provision of new all-weather pitch facilities within the canals area and the Terenure area, in particular where opportunities of new open space provision arise.
- To identify opportunities to partner with schools within the canals area, to develop community training facilities particularly in the South Central District.
- To prepare an audit of playing fields to ensure that the quality and maintenance is in accordance with best practice.
- To enhance tennis facilities at Rockfield Park, Bushy Park and Herbert Park.
- To develop a policy for managing and signing cycling in greenways so as to better manage the conflict between cyclists and other park users.
- To assess the potential of new beach volleyball sites in coastal parks/beaches.
- To provide for 3 new skateparks city-wide, commencing with LeFanu Park in Ballyfermot.



## PARKS AND PLAY



### Policy

The City Council will continue to maintain and upgrade existing playgrounds and improve access to play for all children of Dublin City with a priority on current areas lacking provision but having a high population of children.



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To address deficit in provision in playgrounds and to prioritise their provision based on areas with higher population of children, the following locations will be assessed for the provision of new facilities:

#### North Central Area:

Belmayne (New playground to be provided under new residential development)

S

Roseglen/Greendale Park

S

Coolock Lane Park

S

Croydon Park

M

Clontarf Promenade (Natural Play)

M

#### North West Area:

Wellmount Rd or Farnham Crescent or Tolka Valley Park

S

Pelletstown (New playground to be provided under new residential development)

S

#### South East Area:

Sandymount Promenade (Natural Play)

M

- To provide for new destination playgrounds in the North West, South Central, South East and City Centre.

M

- To assess the potential of provision of natural playgrounds on the Clontarf and Sandymount promenades.

S

M

## PARK VISITOR FACILITIES



### Policy

- Visitor facilities will be developed and provided in parks and in particular flagship parks, to enhance their appeal and enjoyment.
- The provision of café/tea rooms and restaurants will be promoted and expanded following consideration of their commercial viability and character of the receiving park.
- No internal public parking will be provided within inner-city parks or beaches. Parking within parks in other areas will be considered on a case by case basis and where needed priority will be given to disabled carparking and family carparking. Cycle parking will be facilitated internally in most parks.
- The provision of toilets will be considered within parks as part of other built facilities where active management & monitoring is present.



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| New tea rooms facilities are to be provided in Merrion Square Park & Bushy Park and are under consideration for Mountjoy Square Park and Blessington Street Basin. | S | M |  |
| Bicycle parking facilities will be provided for in all inner-city parks.   | S | M |  |

## PARK MANAGEMENT



### Policy

- Parks Services will continue to maintain standard opening times for its enclosed parks and allow access at alternative times, such as for events, on a case by case basis.
- The City Council encourages use of public spaces including its parks by responsible dog owners. It will continue to seek and provide initiatives to encourage responsibility and enjoyment of these spaces and seeks the cooperation of dog owners to ensure other park users do not feel hindered by dogs in parks.
- Parks services will continue to work towards the vision of a pesticide-free park system by monitoring and minimising its use of chemical pesticides and will seek alternatives to them.

## NATURAL AREAS AND BIODIVERSITY



### Policy

- To ensure parks management practices prioritise the protection of habitats for globally threatened species and for protection of rare species and habitats in our parks.
- To protect genetic biodiversity by planting only native species of Irish provenance (where available) in areas of high ecological importance, including river corridors and coastal habitats.

## BIODIVERSITY AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



### Policy

- To manage our parks, open spaces and cemeteries as a connected network of green infrastructure which provides habitats of international importance for protected species and sustains ecosystems.
- Biodiversity initiatives which are specific to the protected habitats and species will be developed for all public green spaces which are hubs supporting core areas. These will be prepared with reference to the management plans for the core areas.
- To ensure that corridors are maintained throughout DCC administrative area as continuous elements of green infrastructure to afford passage for wildlife and prevent severance of habitats by 'grey' infrastructure. To work to restore connectivity of corridors where insensitive development has taken place previously or where there are opportunities to work cooperatively with landowners to promote this



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To ensure that management plans are prepared and implemented for each of the core areas with reference to other relevant statutory bodies (DAHG for Natura 2000 sites and the Office of Public Works as owners and managers of the Phoenix Park).

S

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## DUBLIN CITY BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To implement the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan (2015-2020) fully by all DCC Parks staff. To renew and update the Biodiversity action plan in 2019.

S

To implement Dublin City Invasive Alien Species Action Plan (2015–2020) by all DCC Parks staff.

S



## BIODIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY



### Policy

- To support programmes to promote environmental stewardship of public parks and open spaces by the community to improve biodiversity and provide environmental and social benefits. This will include a Parks Stewardship Programme for the UNESCO Biosphere.
- To continue to work to enable NGO's to implement national strategies for nature conservation through public parks and open spaces.
- To develop the educational resources of Dublin City parks to promote sustainability and biodiversity through providing facilities for the public to use, making information about parks freely accessible online and through organisation of formal and informal activities through Parks staff.

## DUBLIN BAY BIOSPHERE



### Policy

- Dublin City Council will in association with the Biosphere partners assist with achieving the goals of conservation, learning and development of the Dublin Bay Biosphere.



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

Development of a Conservation Programme, Research Strategy, Business Development Plan and Education and Awareness Programme.



## PUBLIC REALM



### Policy

- Parks Services will assist to provide for the implementation of the Dublin City Public Realm Strategy with particular emphasis on the role of parks, city greening and biodiversity.
- Given the current lower provision of public open space per person in the inner-city area particular emphasis will be put there on creating a quality public realm that extols the virtues of parks.

## PUBLIC HOUSING



### Policy

- Public housing landscape provision should be of a good quality and provide both private residential space as well as community orientated space.
- Consultation with the residential community on the landscape provision shall be sought where existing housing estates are refurbished.
- Design of public housing landscape should aim to encourage provision of facilities (e.g. playgrounds) into locally accessible parks rather than solely within the boundary of the housing so as to encourage integration and connection with the wider community.
- Public housing landscape design shall be innovative and look to incorporating community gardens /allotments, sustainable urban drainage systems, green roofing, home zones and public art.



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To implement a new Community Grade 1 park in the re-development of St Teresa's Gardens.

S

## CEMETERIES



### Policy

- To manage and maintain historical graveyards to enhance their historical and cultural significance to Dublin while maintaining the dignity of these burial places



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To develop appropriate forms of interpretation to encourage better understanding of historical graveyards and assist research of cemeteries in co-operation with historical, educational and government organisations

S

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## TREES



### Policy

- To incorporate the policies of the Dublin City Tree Strategy to protect, maintain and enhance the city's urban forest.
- Parks Services will support the conservation of the city's arboreta and their role in education, research and culture.
- Parks Services will promote tree knowledge and appreciation to the public with particular emphasis on engaging with children.
- Parks Services recognise that Champion trees and Heritage trees are of significance and will therefore give due consideration in favour of their protection if the potential of impact from development arises.



### Actions

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To carry out a comprehensive public tree survey

S

M

To enhance the St Anne's arboretum through use of interpretation.

S

## CIVIC DECORATION



### Policy

- Parks Services recognise the importance of civic decoration to the city and continue to provide and maintain this resource.



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To produce a Civic Decoration Plan in consultation with local community and business groups on possible enhancement opportunities in their area. It would also look at ways that civic decoration can be incorporated into unique themes defining particular areas of the city or particular events (e.g. the Bloom Garden festival).

S

M



## ALLOTMENTS



### Policy

- To make provision of allotments for the benefit of local communities subject to existing or anticipated demand for such facilities and to enhance the coordination and management of allotments on a city-wide basis.



### Action

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

To appoint an Allotment Officer within Parks Services to oversee all allotments provided by Dublin City Council.

S

M

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL



### Policy

- Parks Services will continue to assist the provision of a sustainable green city through the planning and development control system, with particular focus on achieving a balance between development and conservation. Emphasis will be placed on conservation of trees, historic designed landscapes and natural areas. While the continued development of the city poses challenges it also contributes to the provision of new public space, the enhancement of existing parks and the supply of better recreational facilities.



### Actions

SHORT-TERM

MEDIUM-TERM

LONG-TERM

Parks Services will update current guidelines to planning applicants for submission of landscape proposals (including open space, biodiversity and arboriculture aspects). Coordination with the adjacent councils (Fingal County Council, Dun Laoghaire, Rathdown Council & South Dublin County Council) will be sought.

S

Parks Services will prepare guidelines on green building/structures to encourage greening within city development.

S

Parks Services will investigate the selected sites of the Phoenix Park, North Bull Island, the National Botanic Gardens and St Anne's Park for suitability as designated Landscape Conservation Areas.

S

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## ART IN PARKS



### Policy

- Art within the City Council’s parks is important, welcome and encouraged. Donations and commissioning of art work and their positioning within parks requires careful consideration and is therefore controlled.
- It is the intention to distribute artwork more evenly throughout the Council’s parks and to review the concentration of art in Merrion Square Park.
- In order to maintain the quality of landscape character in Dublin’s historic parks strict control is practiced on temporary art, memorials and events. In all cases written approval is required with a stated commencement and conclusion date.
- Parks Services will continue to support the Artist in Residence scheme and seek further opportunities to provide new premises for artists within parks subject to demand and availability.



### Actions

SHORT-TERM      MEDIUM-TERM      LONG-TERM

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| To update the Art in Parks guide on a regular basis, to explore the possibility of introducing versions in other languages for visitors and to look at methods to link the guide with mobile technology. | S | M |  |
| To carry out a feasibility study into the creation of a Dublin City Sculpture Park.  | S |   |  |

## RESEARCH



### Policy

- Parks Services will continue to commission and use research that directly contributes to its role in planning, designing, implementing and managing its resources. In addition, it supports access to its resources by research organisations and individuals undertaking their own research studies.



### Actions

SHORT-TERM      MEDIUM-TERM      LONG-TERM

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| To undertake studies on the following subjects:                             |   |   |  |
| Park visitation assessment.   | S |   |  |
| Economic assessment of Parks contribution to the tourism economy of Dublin. | S |   |  |
| Street tree planting techniques.  | S |   |  |
| Biodiversity research associated with the Dublin Bay Biosphere.             | S | M |  |

## CITY LANDSCAPE PLAN



### Policy

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- Park Services will promote a continuous green coastal corridor along Dublin Bay
- Parks Services will promote the greening and sense of identity at city entry points and routes.
- Parks Services will proactively review the city landscape to determine historic or culturally relevant landscapes for conservation.
- Parks Services will seek the appropriate development, conservation and management of the city waterways which are an asset to Dublin's landscape. Where required cooperation with relevant management authorities, such as Waterways Ireland will be sought.
- Parks Services will seek to unearth culverted watercourses where feasible and appropriate in an effort to improve the natural environment and create landscape linkage along such corridors.
- Parks Services will promote the development of greenways for green transportation and recreational use in the city.



### Actions

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- To assist in the preparation of a Dublin Coast Landscape Plan with other partners to enhance recreation, greening, biodiversity and green transportation.
- To assess potential of enhancing M50 junctions and canal bridges with partners to act as thresholds to the city.
- To assess the potential of a port greening plan with Dublin Port to enhance greening and identity of arrival and departure by sea.
- To assess the potential of an airport environs greening plan with relevant authorities to enhance greening and identity of arrival & departure by air.
- Parks Services will support a conservation study in consultation and with the agreement of the property owners of Woodlands house and landscape to determine its significance and conservation value.
- Park Services will prepare City Historic Landscape plan to record previously existing and remaining landscapes of historic value.
- To assess the feasibility of the creation of a canal heritage park in the St James Basin area.
- To prepare greenway plans for the Tolka and Turnapin/Mayne River corridors.







