

# Parks and Green Space Strategy

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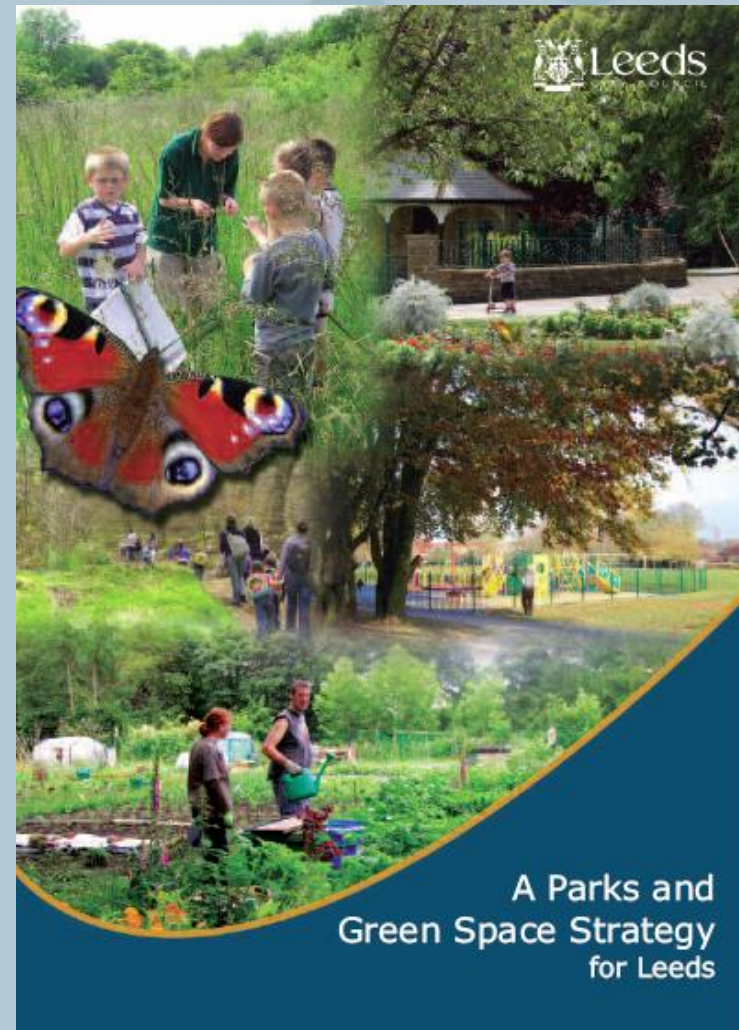
# Parks and Green Space Strategy

- Service context and strategy themes
- Key aims and progress
- Measuring performance using the Green Flag standard
- Importance of feedback: results of recent resident survey



# Parks and Green Space Strategy

- Sets out vision and key priorities to 2020
- Based around 5 key themes
  - *Places for people*
  - *Quality places*
  - *Sustaining the green realm*
  - *Creating a healthier city*
  - *An enabler for regeneration*
- Endorsed by the Council's Executive Board in 2009



# Parks and Green Space Strategy

## □ Key aims:

- to develop an investment strategy
- To establish a parks and green spaces forum
- to develop a city centre park during the life of the strategy
- for all community parks to meet the Green Flag standard for field based assessment by 2020

# Parks and Green Space Strategy

## □ Investment strategy:

- S106 planning gain focussed around community parks
- HLF funding for Middleton Park (major park)
- Speculative borrowing to improve visitor attractions
- Fees and charges: bereavement services, allotments, playing pitches, visitor attractions
- Maximise commercial opportunities: concessions, sponsorship and events
- Apprenticeship scheme
- New plant nursery 'The Arium'
- Leeds Parks Fund

# Parks and Green Space Strategy

## □ Parks and Green Space Forum:

- Established in 2012 as an independent body
- Meets quarterly with input from Leeds Parks service
- Now 117 members from 85 different organisations
- Political influence
- Partner in Leeds Parks Fund



**LEEDS parks and green spaces forum**

# Parks and Green Space Strategy

## □ City centre park:

- Proposals agreed February 2018 for 3.5ha park
- Former brewery site south of railway station
- Part of city centre expansion





# Parks and Green Space Strategy

## Measuring Progress

- Leeds Quality Park standard is based on field based assessment for Green Flag award
- A key target in the strategy is for all 63 community parks to reach Green Flag standard by 2020
- Two service indicators:
  - 'The percentage of 63 community parks that meet the Green Flag criteria'
    - **23% in 2006, 67% in 2017**
  - 'The percentage of 144 sites assessed that meet the Green Flag criteria'
    - **10% in 2006, 50% in 2017**
- Widely communicated to community committees and the council's Executive Board



# Parks and Green Space Strategy

## Leeds Quality Parks

- Methodology:
  - Use the field based criteria only as per the revised standard
  - Therefore maximum of 26 scored criteria marked out of 10 in line with current Raising the Standard guidance
  - Maximum score is 70 with 48 required to achieve Leeds Quality Park standard
  - A report is produced with strengths and recommendations for each site assessed
- There are 80 staff at all levels who undertake judging (including apprentices) plus 9 volunteer judges

# THE LEEDS PARKS PROJECT

Anna Barker, David Churchill and Adam Crawford



# THE LEEDS PARKS SURVEY

## AIMED TO INVESTIGATE:

- The use of parks across the city and by different social groups;
- The experiences and expectations of park-users regarding their main park;
- The overall satisfaction with parks and priorities for the future.
- The survey asked respondents to identify their **main park** and answer questions about their frequency of use, experiences, expectations, and priorities for that park.



# THE LEEDS PARKS SURVEY

## METHODOLOGY

- Online and postal survey (20k randomly selected households in Leeds)
- Available to complete June – November 2016
- Asked about use and non-use in the preceding year
- 6,432 responses weighted by gender and ethnic group (weighted sample of 5,745 respondents)



## USE OF PARKS IN LEEDS



**91%** OF RESPONDENTS  
VISITED A PARK IN THE  
PRECEDING YEAR.



**50%** OF PARK-USERS VISITED  
THEIR MAIN PARK AT LEAST  
ONCE A WEEK IN THE SUMMER  
MONTHS.



ON AVERAGE, PARK-USERS  
VISIT **MORE THAN 5 PARKS**  
**PER YEAR** ACROSS THE CITY.



# USE OF PARKS IN LEEDS



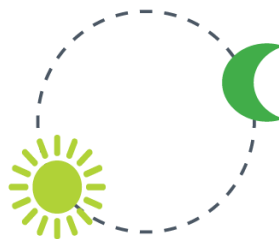
PARK-USERS NORMALLY STAYED FOR BETWEEN **30 MINUTES** AND **2 HOURS**.



MORE PARK-USERS WALK TO THEIR MAIN PARK (**50%**) THAN DRIVE (**40%**).



**90%** OF PARK-USERS WERE 'SATISFIED' OR 'VERY SATISFIED' WITH THEIR MAIN PARK.



**26%** OF PARK-USERS AVOIDED THEIR MAIN PARK AT CERTAIN TIMES OF THE DAY OR WEEK.



# EXTRAPOLATING FROM THE VISIT PROFILE EXHIBITED IN THE SURVEY TO THE ADULT POPULATION OF LEEDS AS A WHOLE, THERE ARE...

**45**  
**MILLION**

ESTIMATED ADULT VISITS TO  
PARKS IN LEEDS EACH YEAR.  
**63%** AT 'COMMUNITY PARKS',  
**37%** AT 'MAJOR PARKS'.





# PARK USE & NON-USE BY DEMOGRAPHICS



MOST PARK-USERS CHOSE A PARK THAT MEETS **LEEDS QUALITY PARK** STANDARDS AS THEIR MAIN PARK TO USE. ONLY **6%** USUALLY VISIT PARK BELOW THESE STANDARDS.



PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS ARE **JUST AS LIKELY** TO HAVE VISITED A PARK.



PEOPLE AGED OVER 75 AND DISABLED PEOPLE WERE **SIGNIFICANTLY LESS LIKELY** TO HAVE VISITED A PARK IN THE PRECEDING YEAR.



MALES AND FEMALES ARE **JUST AS LIKELY** TO HAVE VISITED A PARK.



## VISITOR USE & EXPERIENCES BY AGE

- **Park-users aged over 75 were *more* likely than all respondents to:**
  - **Visit fewer parks** across the city (3 on avg. compared to 5)
  - Use their **closest park** (75% compared to 69%)
  - **Drive** (49%) than walk (39%) (compared to 40% and 50%)
  - Rate their park as '**difficult**' to get to (8% compared to 4%)
  - **Lower-frequency visitors** (25% compared to 14%)
  - Rate time in their park less importantly to their **quality of life**
  - Experience the last visit as '**very pleasant**' (82% compared to 77%)



- **Park-users aged 35-44 were *more* likely than all respondents to:**
  - **Visit a park** in the preceding year (98% compared to 91%)
  - Visit a **range of parks** across the city (6 compared to 5)
  - Use their park at least **once per week** (56% compared to 50%)
  - Rate spending time in their park as essential or very important to their **quality of life** (67% compared to 57%)



- **Park-users aged 19-24 were *more* likely than all respondents to:**
  - **Visit fewer parks** across the city (3 on avg. compared to 5)
  - **Avoid** their park (47% compared to 26%)
  - **Walk** (70%) than drive (16%)
- **Park-users aged 19-24 were *less* likely than all respondents to:**
  - Rate their park in '**excellent condition**' (24% compared to 33%)
  - Feel '**very safe**' visiting (42% compared to 57%)
  - Experience the last visit as '**very pleasant**' (61% compared to 77%) (NB: 'very pleasant' experiences increase by age )
  - Rate spending time in their park as essential or very important to their **quality of life** (40% compared to 57%)



## DISABLED PARK-USERS

- **Disabled park-users were *more* likely than non-disabled park-users to:**
  - Visit fewer parks across the city (3 on avg. compared to 5)
  - Use their park **less than once per month** (20% compared to 14%)
  - **Avoid** their park (34% compared to 26%)
  - **Drive** than walk to their park (compared to 40% and 52%)



DISABLED PARK-USERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO TRAVEL BY CAR (**52%**) THAN WALK (**27%**).

## THE LEEDS PARKS SURVEY

Report included 16 recommendations which will help inform the future Parks and Green Space strategy

Further Information (including technical note on calculating visitor numbers):

[www.futureofparks.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.futureofparks.leeds.ac.uk)



# Parks and Green Space Strategy

## Conclusion

- Key strategy aim of getting community parks to Green Flag standard has retained focus on sustaining and improving quality
- Investment strategy has proved the key means by which the strategy has been delivered with a focus on income and S106
- Measuring and communicating performance against the Leeds Quality Park standard has engaged staff and elected members in targeting investment
- Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum has grown and is becoming more influential capturing passion for parks
- The Leeds Parks Survey demonstrates the importance of parks as quality places to visit with a range of features and facilities
- The survey will be used to inform the development of the future Parks and Green Space strategy beyond 2020