

# Draft Open Space Strategy

March 2010



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## 1. Introduction

This is a consultative draft of an open space strategy for Edinburgh. It will be the subject of public consultation from March to May 2010. Once finalised it will be reviewed and updated every five years.

### Purpose

To ensure that a coordinated approach is taken to meeting Edinburgh's open space needs and protecting and developing the city's network of open spaces.

### What is open space?

This strategy addresses:

- All open space within urban area and main rural west settlements, except most private and shared residential gardens and all agricultural land
- Significant open space is generally that above a size threshold of 500 square metres Both Council and non-Council owned
- Includes accessible spaces (free of charge during daytime) and inaccessible
- Classified by type in an audit carried out in 2009

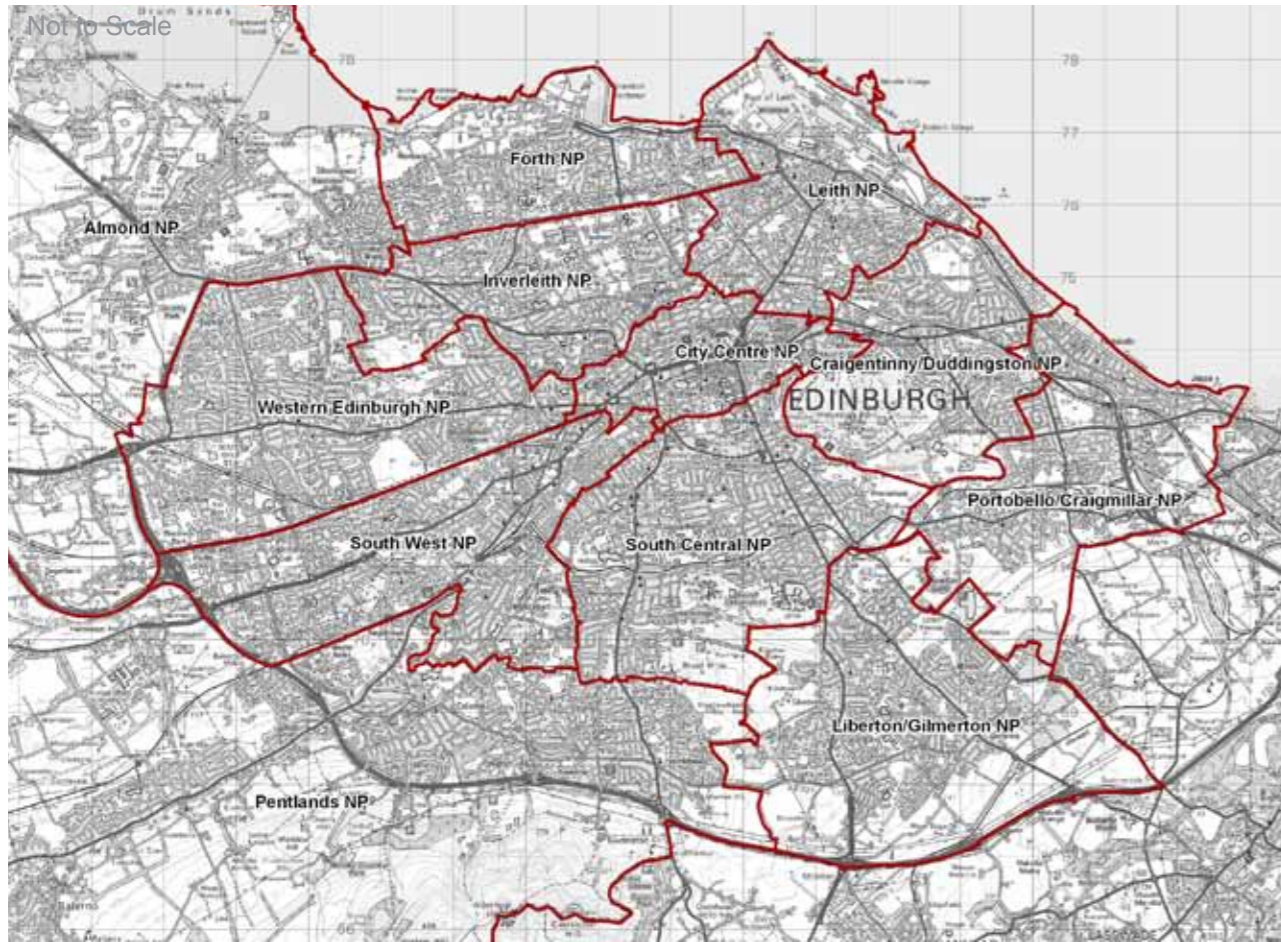


*Sherriff Brae  
Residential amenity  
space*

### What does this strategy do?

The strategy sets standards for different types of open space. These are statements of what kind of open space provision there should be in Edinburgh. The strategy also estimates needs for certain types of open space, and proposes sites which could help address those needs.

The standards have been proposed following consideration of the findings of a questionnaire survey carried out during consultation on the draft open space audit. The standards also take into account the characteristics and historical development of Edinburgh as a compact city.



Map 1: Neighbourhood Partnership Areas

The strategy is supported by 12 action plans, one for each neighbourhood partnership area.

The strategy, audit and action plans will be used:

- To inform planning decisions on the loss of open space and the provision of open space in new development.
- To inform investment and site-management decisions by the Council and potentially other organisations responsible for open space

The strategy will also inform the preparation of the first local development plan for Edinburgh, due to start in 2011.

Some areas of Edinburgh already meet the standards. Other areas will if the actions proposed here are carried out. There are some areas in which the standards cannot be met due to the existing housing layout as explained in the Chapter 4.

The standards are being set at a time when the public, private and voluntary sectors have more limited resources than in recent years. The standards will not be met citywide in the first five year period, but are considered to be widely achievable as and when resources become available over the medium- to long-term (10-15 years).

The action plans propose the following types of actions:

- New open spaces, often provided as part of new built development
- Creating or improving access to existing spaces
- Changing from one type of open space to another
- Making a strategically significant improvement to an open space (one that directly helps meet the standards in this strategy)

In a few cases actions will be delivered through built development on open space. Those actions will result in less open space overall, but higher quality open spaces which better meet the standards and needs identified in this strategy.

Actions will be carried out by:

- the Council
- Developers
- Council partners

Details of the actions are set out in the separate action plans.

## 2. Current Provision

### Historical Context

Edinburgh’s open spaces have been established in the following ways:

- Urban expansion, in which new development has been laid out with new parks and gardens or amenity space, or has incorporated existing spaces, often semi-natural areas of high landscape value.
- Creation of open spaces to meet specific leisure and functional needs, such as playing fields, golf courses and other sports areas, cemeteries, school grounds and allotments.
- Acquisition of private grounds and former railway lines for public access.
- Urban regeneration of former industrial areas, often in the form of new civic spaces.



How big is a hectare?

A hectare is 10,000 square metres. It is equivalent to 2.471 acres. St Andrew Square garden in the city centre is almost exactly 1 hectare.

The last comprehensive look at open space provision in the city was in 1969. A like-for-like comparison for urban Edinburgh finds that there has been a net increase of around 220 hectares in the last 40 years (1969: 2,828ha, 2009: 3,051 ha excluding types not counted in 1969). Taking into account the dip in population over this period, there has also been an increase in area of open space per population. Over this period there have been individual sites which have been wholly or partly lost through development. Latterly these have typically been playing fields where loss in quantity has been made up for through improvement in quality and usefulness, for example at Meggetland.

### Audit Overview

Across the Council area:

- There are 3,503 hectares of significant open space, of which 1,955 hectares are publicly accessible.
- This equates to 4.15 hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 people (based on a population of 471,650 as estimated in 2008 by the General Register Office for Scotland). This compares well with the National Playing Field Association’s recommendation of 2.4 hectares, however it does not take account of type.



The full open space audit can be viewed at: [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/openspacestrategy](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/openspacestrategy)

- 88% of houses and flats are within 400 metres walking distance of significant accessible open space, including civic spaces.
- 23% of the urban area is open space identified in the audit (map 2). A further 26% of the urban area is covered by private gardens.
- The proportion of the total area covered by different types of open space is shown in Figure 1.
- 61% of public parks and gardens met the city-wide quality standard of ‘good’ (see Chapter 5).
- The 2009 quality survey of residential amenity, green corridors and other semi-natural greenspaces found that:
  - 2 in 5 spaces surveyed are rated as ‘good’.
  - Half are rated as ‘fair’.
  - 1 in 10 are considered to be of ‘low’ quality.
  - 1 in 4 residential amenity spaces are rated as ‘good’. 3 in 5 are ‘fair’.
  - 3 in 5 green corridors and other semi-natural spaces are rated as ‘good’.
  - In many cases, spaces received lower ratings due to intrinsic shortcomings in their design and layout rather than insufficient levels of maintenance.

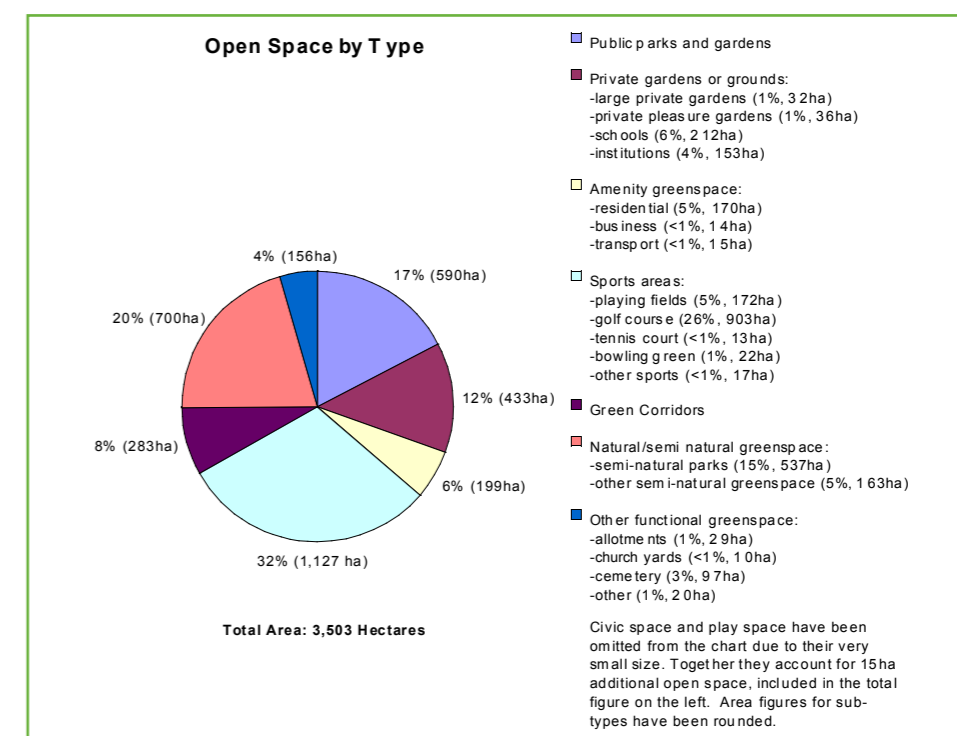
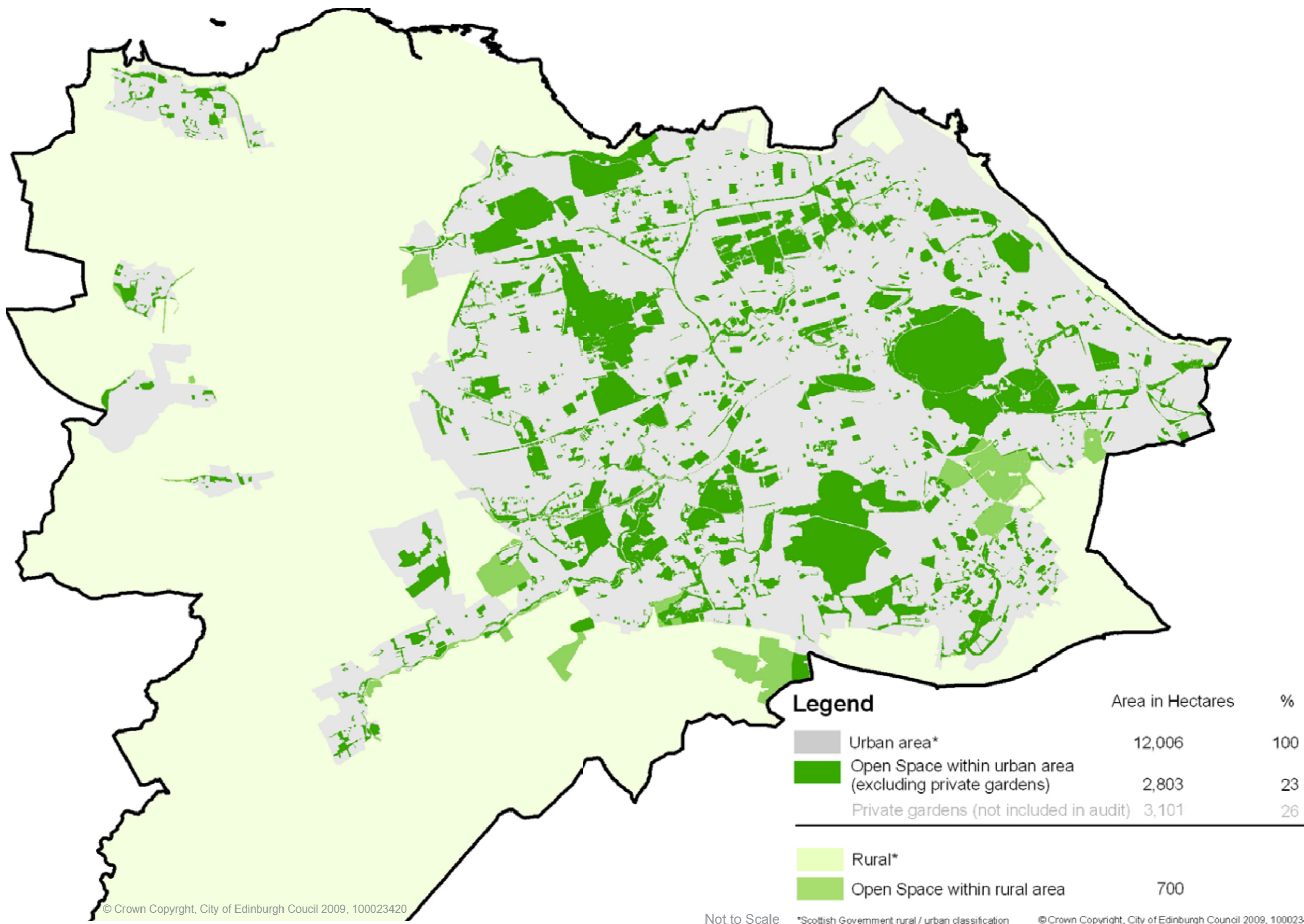


Figure 1: Split of total open space in audit by type



Map 2:

Overview of open space in audit

## 3. Green Network

### Identifying and Connecting the Green Network

There is an increasing interest in connecting green spaces as part of a network for people to walk or cycle through. The audit survey found that most respondents visit open spaces when walking through or in them.

The current network is extensive and well-integrated with the surrounding countryside. The Edinburgh Green Belt provides a landscape setting for the city, but not all of it is publicly accessible.

Two projects, the Central Scotland Green Network and the Central Scotland Forest Habitat Network, seek to identify and strengthen connections between both publicly accessible greenspaces and areas of habitat for wildlife. The latter proposes 'habitat priority areas', in which enhancements to green habitat will particularly benefit the spread of wildlife.

For planning purposes, the parts of the green network of particular importance in terms of landscape, wildlife habitat or flood management are identified and protected in the Council's local plans.

Map 3 identifies the open spaces which are important elements of the city's publicly accessible green network as 'networked open space'. Spaces which are not generally publicly accessible and accessible spaces which do not connect with others are identified in dark grey. Other related access proposals, such as cycleways or new streets, which are identified in other documents, are shown in orange.

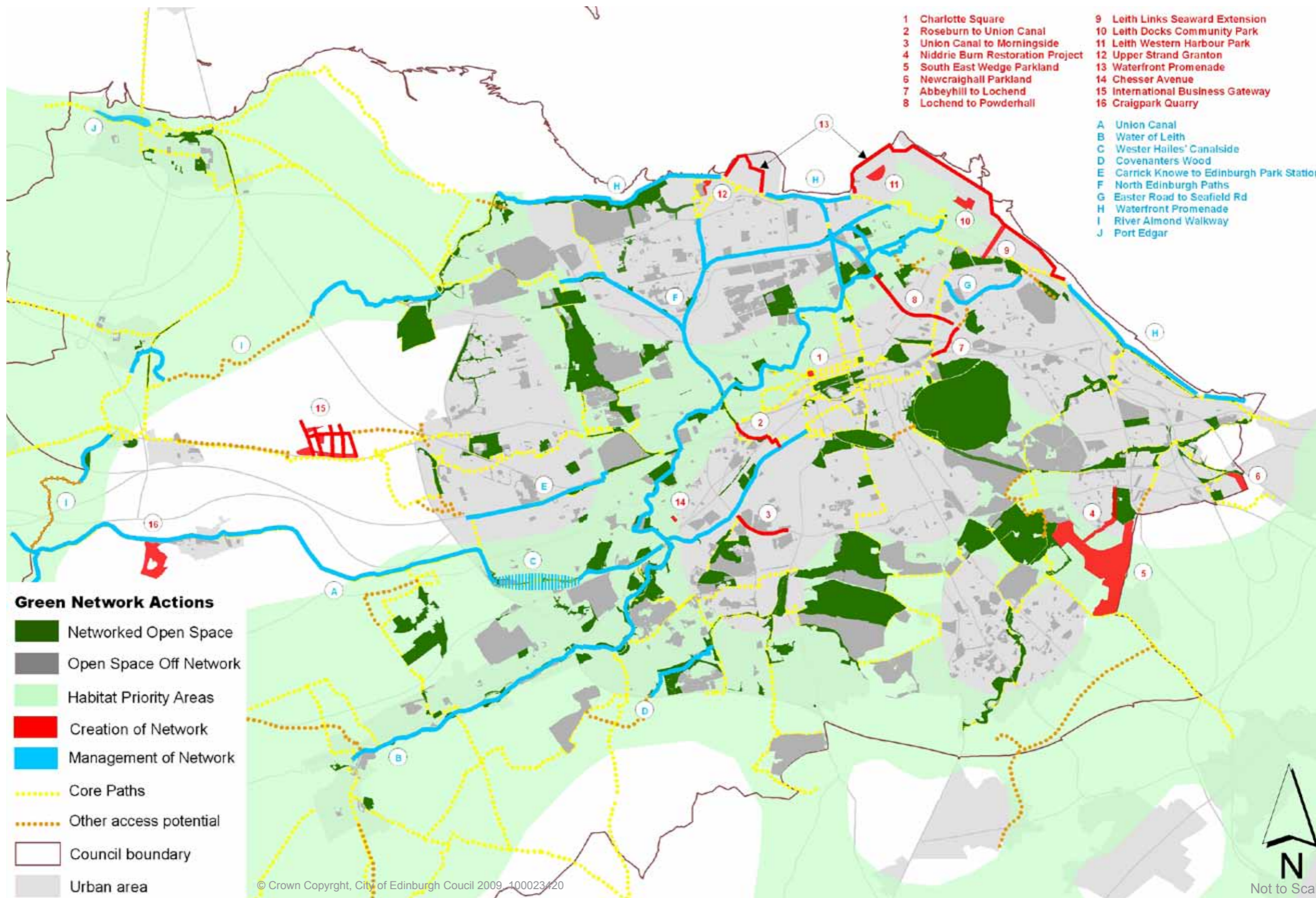
Map 3 also identifies the following actions proposed to connect the network:

- Leith Waterfront parks and Edinburgh Promenade (which will predominately be civic space but is included here as important connection)
- New green corridors if the Powderhall and/or Abbeyhill Loop railway lines close in future
- New pedestrian/cycle route connecting Roseburn to Dalry Community Park to Union Canal using disused railway embankments and new bridges

- Off-road pedestrian/cycle link creating green corridor access from the Union Canal to Morningside, running alongside the South Suburban Railway route from Colinton Road to Maxwell Street
- New green network at International Business Gateway in West Edinburgh
- South East Wedge Parkland
- Niddrie Burn Restoration Project - Realignment of 1,800 linear metres of the Burn, associated works, landscaping, habitat creation, and road, footpath and bridge construction
- Opening of Charlotte Square for public access
- New publicly accessible park land at a local plan housing site east of Newcraighall
- Opening up to public access open space which forms the setting of a listed building at Chesser Avenue
- Creation of public open space at Craigpark Quarry, in association with new housing

Map 3 identifies the following proposed management actions on parts of existing green corridors:

- Improving the recreational and habitat value of disused rail corridors
- Upgrading existing sections of the waterfront promenade
- Creating connections to the linear walkways of the Union Canal towpath and Water of Leith where the opportunity arises
- Enhancing canal side green space at the Wester Hailes node of the Union Canal
- New paths and tree planting along the green corridor between Carrick Knowe and Edinburgh Park Station, as part of the implementation of the tram project.
- Improving access from the city to Bonaly Country Park and the Pentland Hills Regional Park
- Upgrading the riverside route along the Almond
- Improved access through existing woodland at Port Edgar subject to redevelopment.



Map 3:

Networked open spaces with actions to connect or improve the network, also showing off-network open spaces, core paths, habitat priority areas and access proposals set out in other documents.

## 4. Greenspace Standards

### Quantity and Quality

Some open space features generally cost more to create and maintain per unit area than others (see example). Accordingly, the standards in this strategy seek to balance quantity and quality of greenspace, in order to avoid large areas of featureless or poor quality space.

*Harrison Park  
sample annual  
maintenance costs.  
Size - 6.81 hectares*

Item	Annual Cost	% of total cost
Grass maintenance	£8,564	24.9
Flowers, shrubs and hedges	£6,890	20.0
Litter removal	£7,457	21.6
Play area maintenance	£9,275	26.9
Marking and maintaining pitches	£1,188	3.4
Tree maintenance (~230 trees)	£1,085	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>£34,460</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Volunteers' Time (~40 hours/year)	£500	-



The GeoInformation Group 2005

### Local Access to Greenspace

Beyond the citywide network, there is a need for local access to greenspace. The following is a basic standard which does not factor in type or size of spaces. It excludes civic spaces. It is based on an audit survey finding, that almost half of respondents walk for less than 400 metres to reach the greenspace they normally visit. This is about 5 minutes walk for most adults. Access to local publicly accessible greenspace can be particularly important for residents of tenemental areas.

### Local Greenspace Standard

Houses and flats should be within 400 metres walking distance of a significant accessible greenspace of at least 500 sq.m. and good quality (for parks and gardens) or fair quality (for other types).

Maps 4a & b analyse citywide provision in terms of this standard:

- 86% of dwellings are within the standard distance
- A further 9% are within 400-600m.
- The quality score for parks and gardens is taken from 2009 Park Quality Assessment (PQA) scores. Quality information for residential amenity spaces, green corridors and other semi-natural greenspaces is taken from the 2009 audit quality survey. All other accessible greenspaces are assumed to be of fair quality.

Proposed actions to improve local greenspace provision:

- New parks in Leith Waterfront
- Create public access to west side of Newington Cemetery
- Create new pedestrian/cycle access from Yeaman Place to Union Canal as part of potential new development
- Improvement of parks and gardens to a PQA score of 'good' (see next chapter):
  - Leith Links
  - Hunters Hall Park
  - Jewel Park
  - Portobello Park
  - Inch Park
  - Gilmerton Park (The Dell)
  - Drum Park
  - Braid Hills
  - Paties Road Recreation Ground
  - Redhall Park
  - Saughton Park
  - Colinton Mains Park
  - Redford Wood
  - Kingsknowe Park (Dovecot Park)
  - Curriemuir End Park
  - East Pilton Park
  - Gypsy Brae Park and Recreation Ground
  - Inverleith Park



Improvement of other greenspaces to address standard:

- Piershill Square East & West
- Harvester Way – Hailesland Road

Details on the proposed actions, including their implementation, are set out in the relevant action plans. These actions will lead to 88% of existing dwellings receiving the standard provision. The remaining areas outwith the above standard mostly consist of established housing with access to private gardens, for example Craigentenny or Merchiston. Their layout and the lack of other types of open space significantly restrict opportunities to improve provision of publicly accessible open space.



Craigentenny

The GeoInformation Group 2005"



Merchiston and Churchill

The GeoInformation Group 2005"

### Neighbourhood Access to Greenspace

The audit survey results indicate that people are willing to walk further to large and high quality open spaces. The following standard recognises the particular importance of good quality parks in meeting neighbourhood needs.

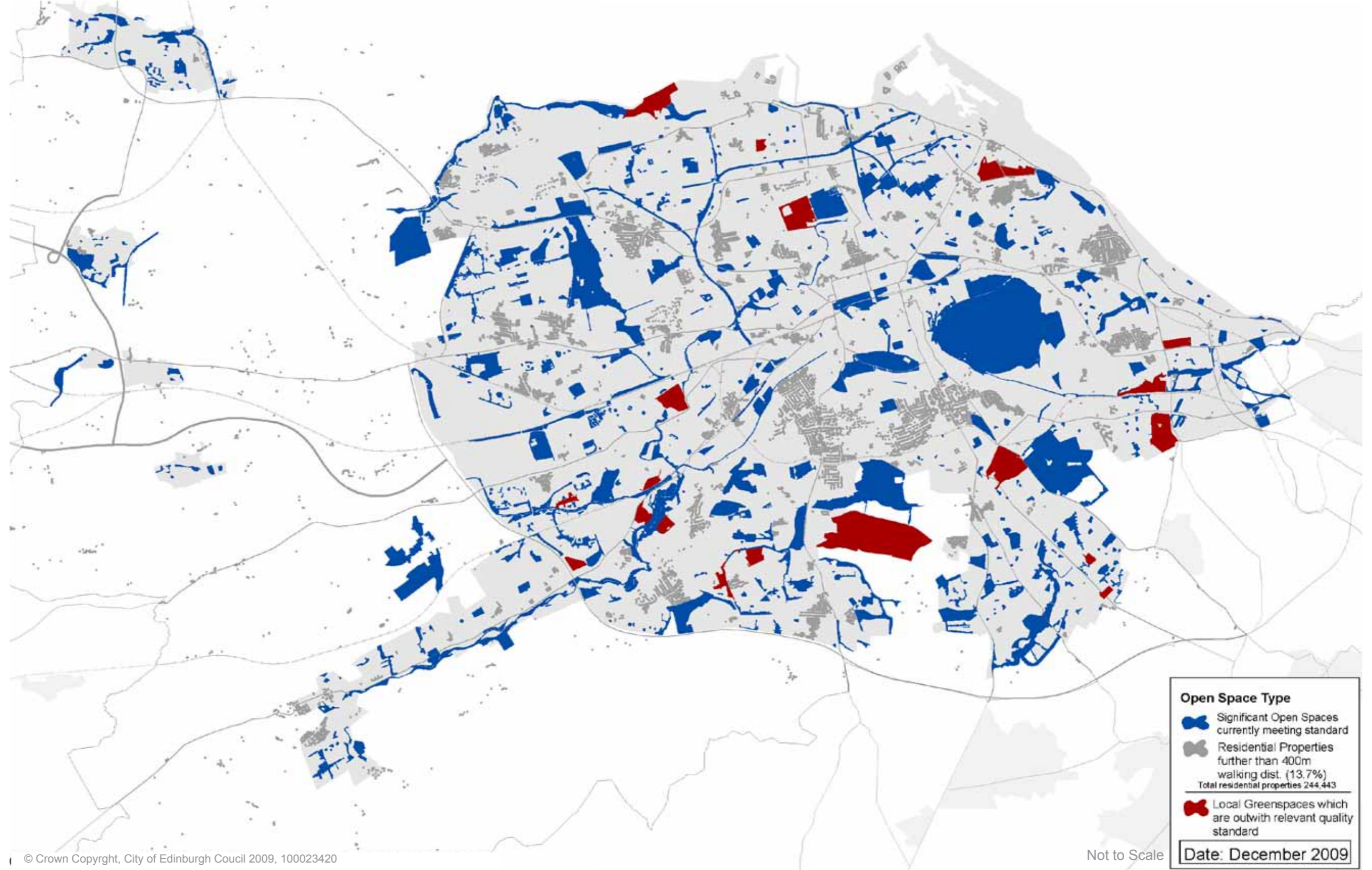
#### Large Greenspace Standard

Houses and flats should be within 800 metres walking distance of a significant accessible greenspace of at least 2 hectares and good quality (for parks and gardens) or fair quality (for other types).

Maps 5a & b analyse citywide provision in terms of this standard:

- 88% of dwellings currently fall within the standard
- The proposed actions will lead to 95% of existing dwellings receiving the standard provision.

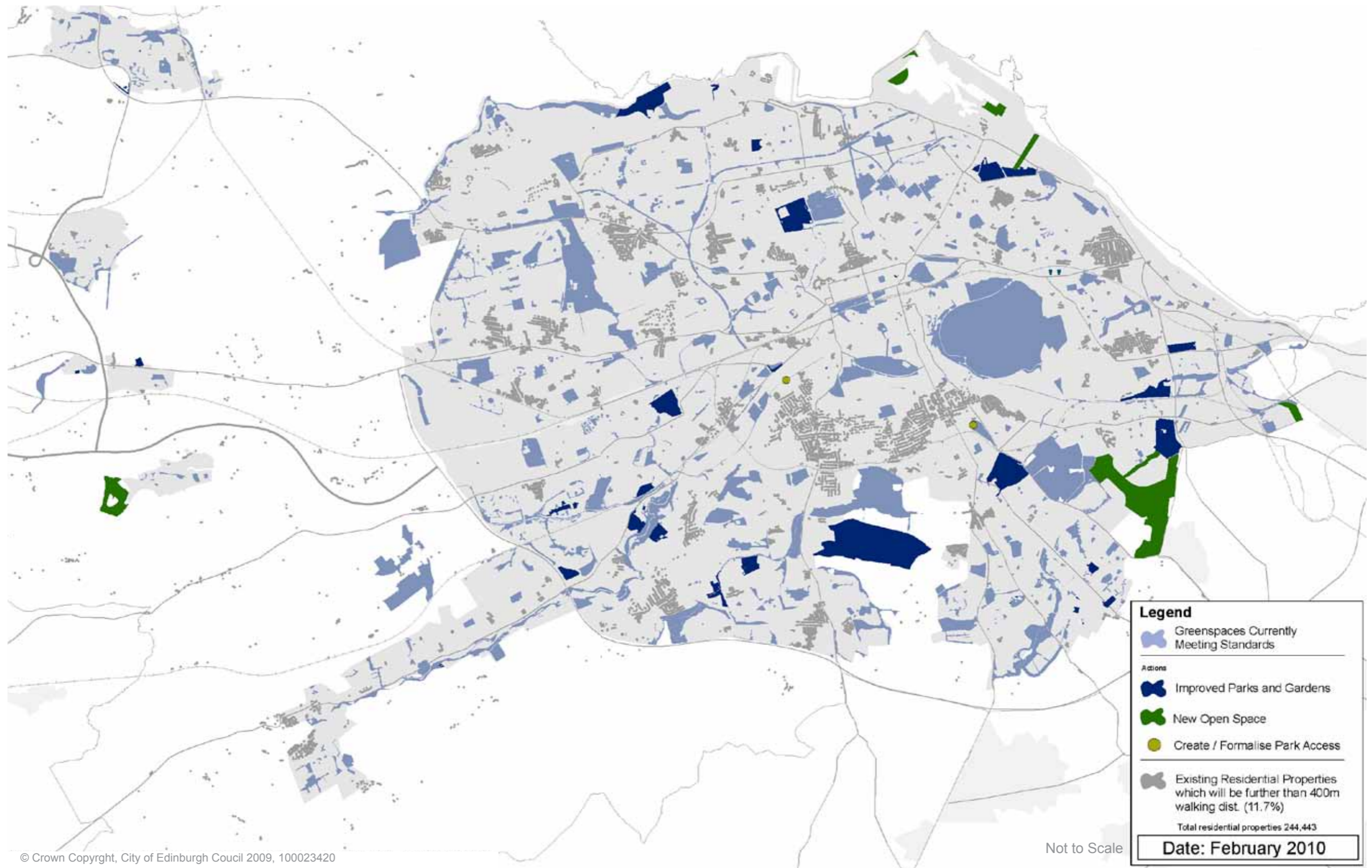
Opportunities to provide new large open space are generally restricted to large-scale urban expansion areas such as the Waterfront. Map 5b shows the effect of the actions identified in the previous sections.



Map 4a:

Local greenspace standard analysis

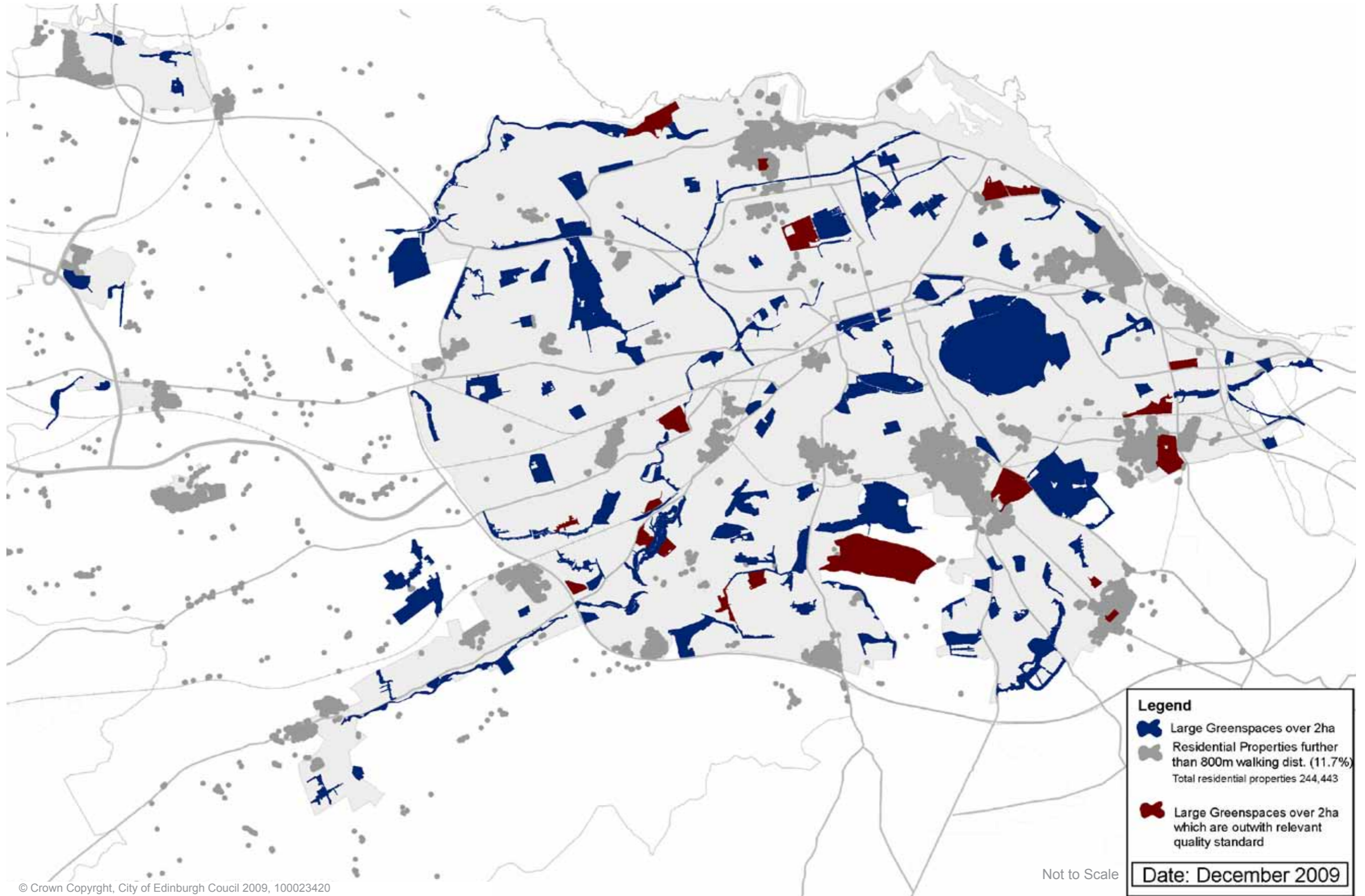
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Map 4b:

Effect of actions

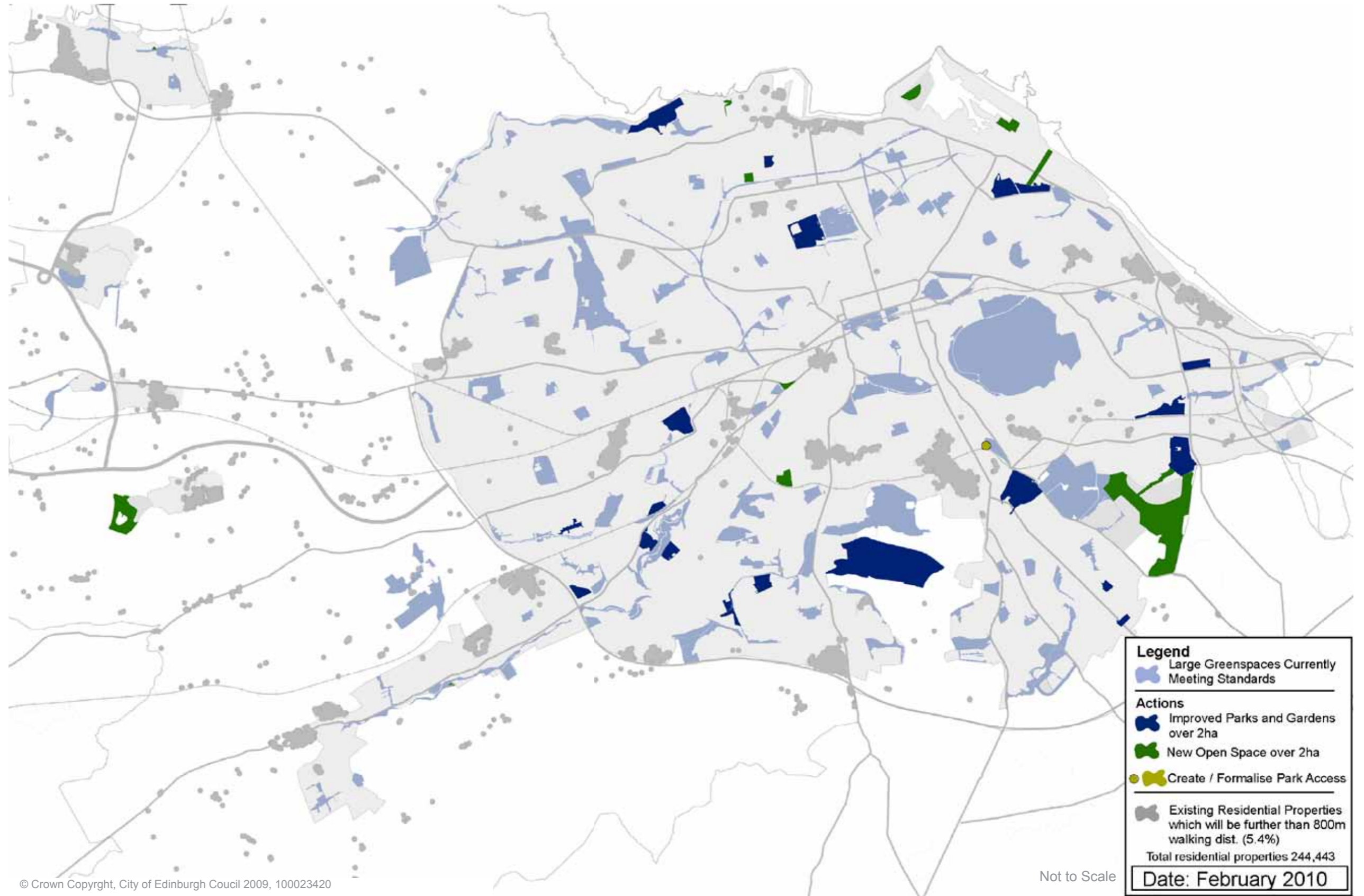
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Map 5a:

Large greenspace  
standard analysis

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Map 5b:

Effect of actions

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## 5. Parks, Gardens and Cemeteries

Parks and cemeteries are the main types of large, publicly accessible green spaces which help meet the relevant standard set in the previous chapter.

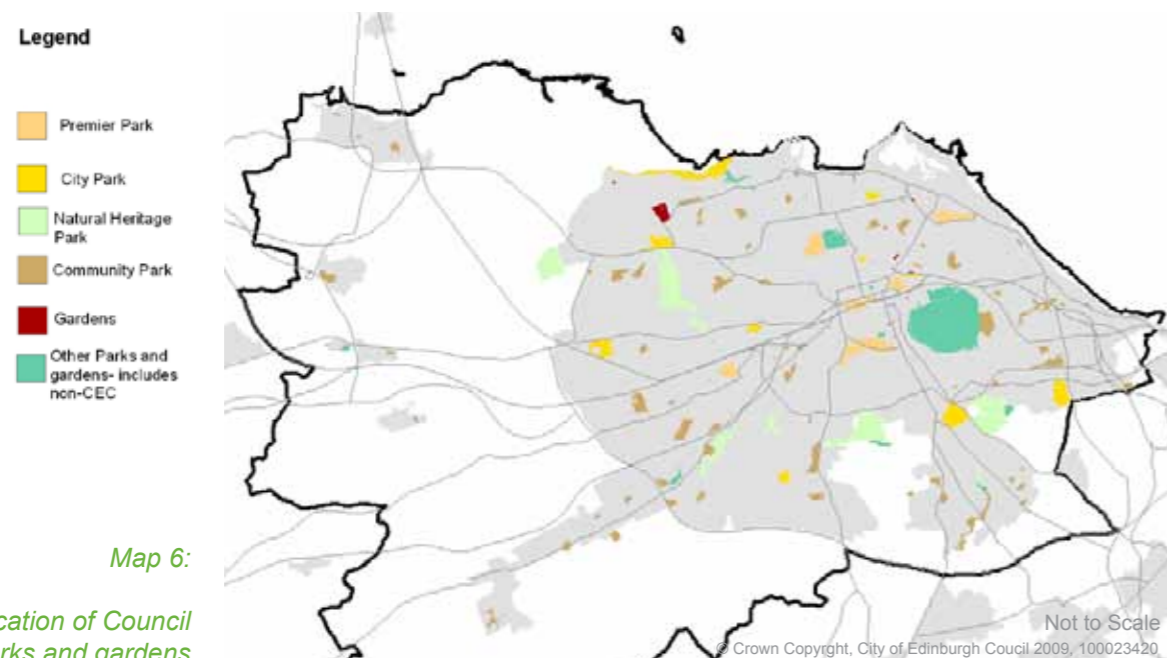
### Parks and Gardens

The Council has a Public Parks and Gardens Strategy (2006) which classifies sites using the following hierarchy:

- Premier Parks – six large diverse parks serving international and national visitors as well as local and citywide needs.
- City Parks – serve citywide and local needs.
- Natural Heritage Parks – semi-natural greenspaces managed as public parks, usually large and featuring hills or woodland.
- Community Parks – serve local needs.
- Gardens – generally small areas with flower beds, shrubs and seating.

In addition to the Council's parks and gardens, new publicly accessible parks are being created through major urban expansion and regeneration projects at the Waterfront and South East Wedge.

Map 6 shows distribution and classification of the Council's parks and gardens.



Map 6:  
Classification of Council  
parks and gardens

The Council carries out a quality assessment of its parks and gardens annually. The results are recorded as a Park Quality Assessment (PQA) score. The results for 2009 are recorded in the open space audit. The Council's medium-term aim is for all relevant sites to attain a PQA score of 'good' or better, as reflected in the standards and actions in the previous chapter. Premier Parks and City Parks are expected to demonstrate a higher standard in order to achieve a PQA score of good. Accordingly, Leith Links and Saughton and Inverleith Parks, though already attractive, well-used spaces, require improvement in order to achieve a score of good.



Hopetoun Crescent  
Garden  
Green Flag Award

The Council also participates in the national Green Flag award programme. Each year candidate parks and gardens are nominated and assessed independently. Those that meet the criteria are awarded Green Flag status for one year. Successful parks have to be resubmitted and assessed every year. In 2009 five sites had Green Flag status: Braidburn Valley Park, Harrison Park, Easter Craiglockart Hill, Pentland Hills Regional Park and Hopetoun Crescent Garden.

### Cemeteries

The new cemetery at Craigmillar Castle Park is expected to provide for city's needs for the next 50 years. A need for future burial grounds has been identified for the Queensferry and Kirkliston area, where present capacity is estimated to run out by 2020.

In central parts of Edinburgh, there is potential for those cemeteries no longer used primarily as active burial grounds to be managed as public gardens. This would help enhance provision in terms of the Large Greenspace Access standard proposed in the previous chapter. For example, Dalry and Eastern Cemeteries are the only publicly accessible greenspaces over 2ha in their respective areas. The analysis in Maps 4a & b and 5a & b assumes that all cemeteries are of fair or better quality, however it is intended to carry out a quality survey prior to finalising the strategy and action plans.

## 6. Playing Fields

The Council and the Scottish Government wish to increase participation in sports. Information on participation in pitch sports by adults is not available for the most recent years, but national trends and anecdotal evidence for Edinburgh suggest that it remains steady (Figure 3).

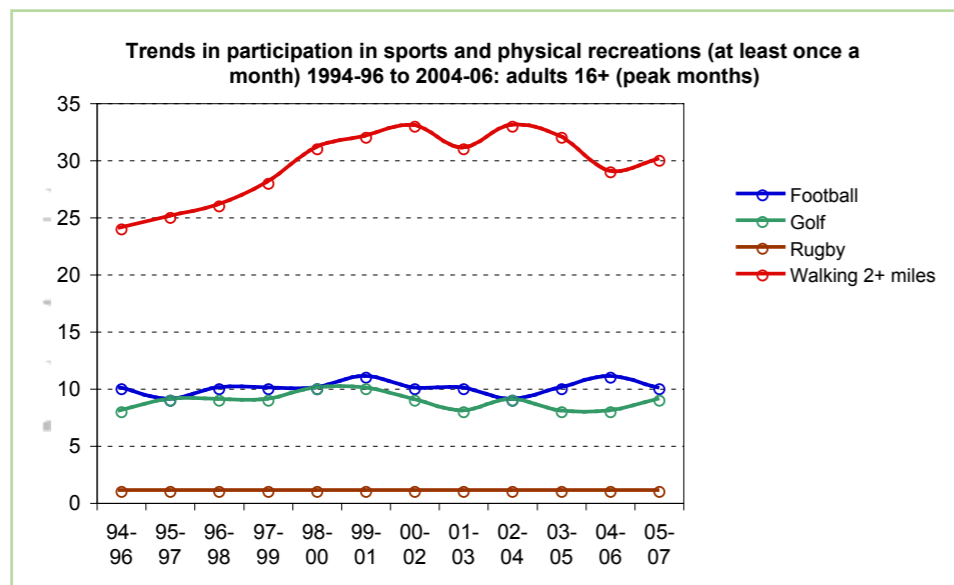


Figure 3:

National Trends (Scottish Household Survey to 2007)

There is evidence that children’s participation in football, rugby and hockey is increasing (e.g. Figure 4). Anecdotal evidence suggests that cricket participation remains steady for adults and children.

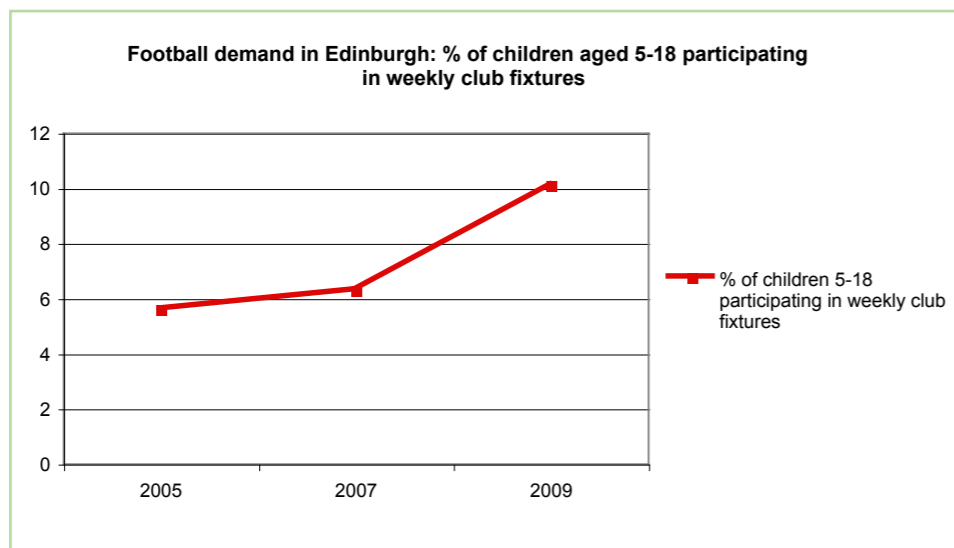


Figure 4:

Growth in Youth Football Source: SFA

Formal playing fields which can be booked for matches and training are the key resource used to support and encourage growth in school and club pitch sports. High quality pitch surfaces can be used more frequently and in poorer weather conditions than lower quality pitches. Improving pitch quality increases the city’s capacity to support the above increases in participation. High quality pitches and changing facilities stimulate further demand and higher levels of skill.

The Council’s pitch strategy prepared in 2005 found that the number of pitches citywide is sufficient to meet demand, but that there need to be significant improvements in quality. The strategy proposed that this be done through concentration of investment in six multi-pitch venues. One such venue has now been established, at Meggetland.

The Council intends to prepare a strategy for its sports estate in 2010. That work will take place in parallel with the finalisation of this open space strategy, and will look in more detail at pitch provision. It will take account of the effective increase in pitch capacity expected to come from more centralised management of several Council school pitch locations.

The current criteria defining a multi-pitch venue are:

- One semi-final/final pitch (essential)
- At least two A or B quality supporting pitches (essential)
- At least one floodlit synthetic grass full size pitch (essential)
- Grade 1 changing facilities (essential)
- Facilities fully open to public use (essential)
- Social facilities (desirable)

### What is a synthetic pitch?

These synthetic surfaces generally comprise a long pile carpet part filled with sand or water and topped with rubber crumbs. They are often used for outdoor training and five-a-side pitches for football and rugby but they can also be used for full-size pitches, mainly for football due to their likeness to real grass. The surface can withstand levels of use which grass pitches cannot match and so are particularly suited for supporting intensive use of pitches at venues in urban areas. Floodlighting and fencing are often sought to allow synthetic pitches to be used to their intended capacity but can have an impact on the character of an area and light nuisance may adversely affect neighbouring amenity. They are sometimes referred to as 3G or third generation pitches, in reference to a common type. Synthetic pitches generally have a lifespan of around 10 years depending on intensity of use.

For the purposes of public consultation, this draft open space strategy sets out options for sites to be upgraded or managed as multi-pitch venues. The number of such locations required will be established in the sports facilities strategy. The long-list of options proposed is as follows (Map 7):

- Paties Road Recreation Ground
- Saughton Park
- Forresters/St Augustine's High Schools\*
- Gyle Park
- North Edinburgh Football Academy (Ainslie Park)\*
- Broughton High School\*
- Jack Kane Centre
- Seafield
- Wardie
- Bangholm
- Duddingston /Cavalry Park\*
- Kirkbrae (Double Hedges)

\* site already upgraded, action refers to management as a multi-pitch venue

These locations are relatively free from constraints on investment in synthetic pitches, such as inclusion in conservation areas. They could potentially be implemented without significantly impacting on the provision of publicly accessible open space as sought by the local and large greenspace standards in Chapter 4.

Comments are invited on these options.

As further multi-pitch venues are established, there may no longer be a need to retain formal pitches in some public parks. In particular, those parks and playing fields where there is only a single pitch may be better used for other open space purposes.

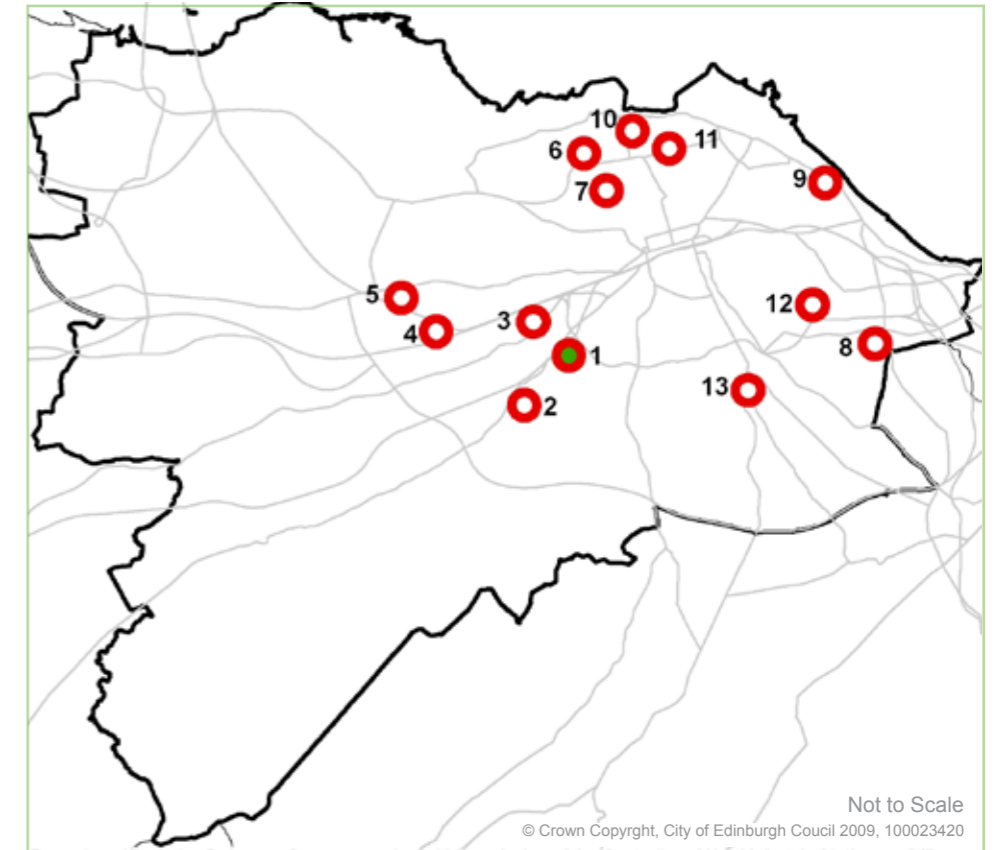
**Legend**

- Existing multi-pitch venue
- 1 Meggetland
- Options for further multi-pitch venues
- 2 Paties Road Recreation Ground
- 3 Saughton Park
- 4 Forresters/St Augustine's High Schools\*
- 5 The Gyle
- 6 North Edinburgh Football Academy (Ainslie Park)\*
- 7 Broughton High School\*
- 8 Jack Kane Centre
- 9 Seafield
- 10 Wardie
- 11 Bangholm
- 12 Duddingston/Cavalry Park\*
- 13 Kirkbrae (Double Hedges)

\* Sites already upgraded - action relates to management

Map 7:

*Existing multi-pitch venue at Meggetland and options for further locations to be developed or managed as multi-pitch venues*



Not to Scale  
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## 7. Golf and Other Sports

### Golf

Demand for golf appears to be changing. Membership of clubs has fallen in recent years but national trends suggest that the proportion of people regularly participating in golf remained relatively steady up to 2007 (Figure 3). The number of visits to municipal courses in Edinburgh has dropped recently (Figure 5). There is a lack of equivalent information on use of private courses, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of visits by adults remains steady. The number of children participating in golf has increased in Edinburgh as a result of clubgolf, a national programme established in 2003 for that purpose (Figure 6).

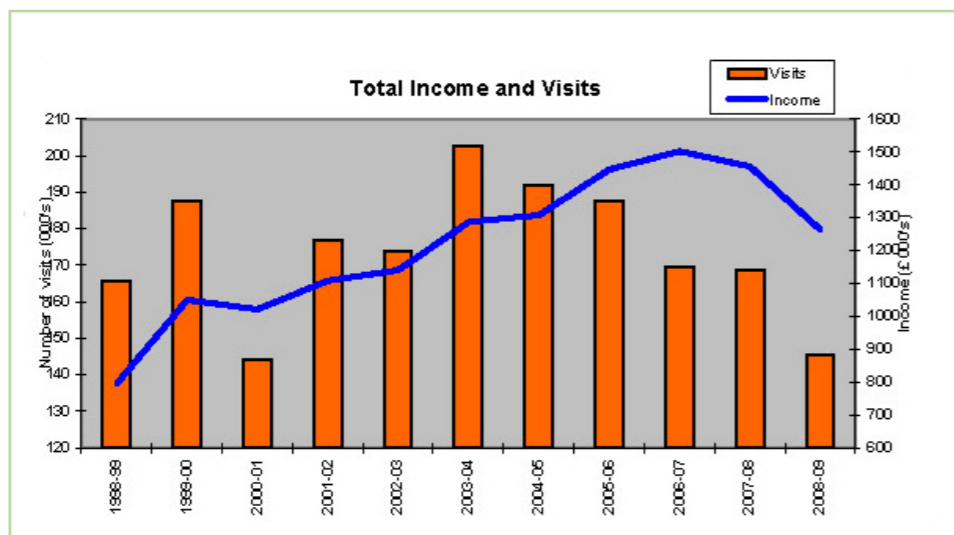


Figure 5:

Visits and income for six municipal course (source: Edinburgh Leisure)

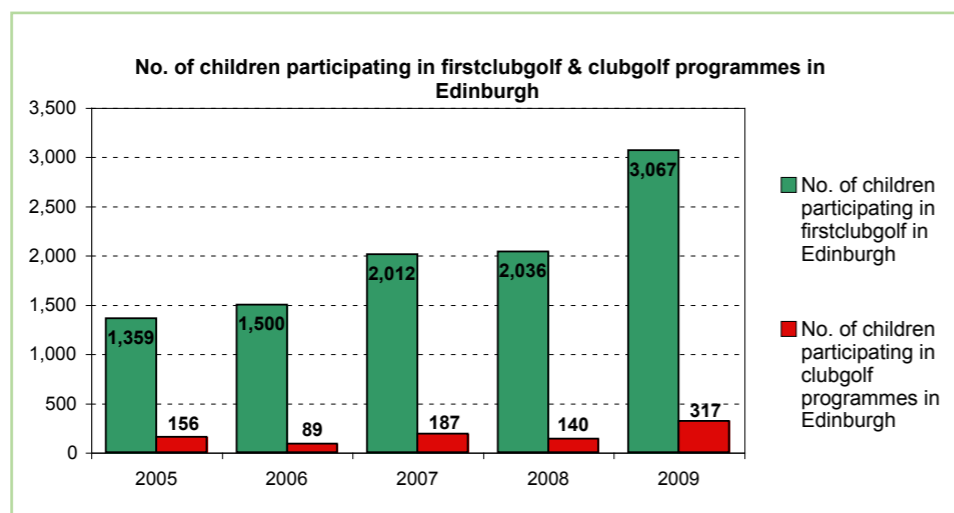
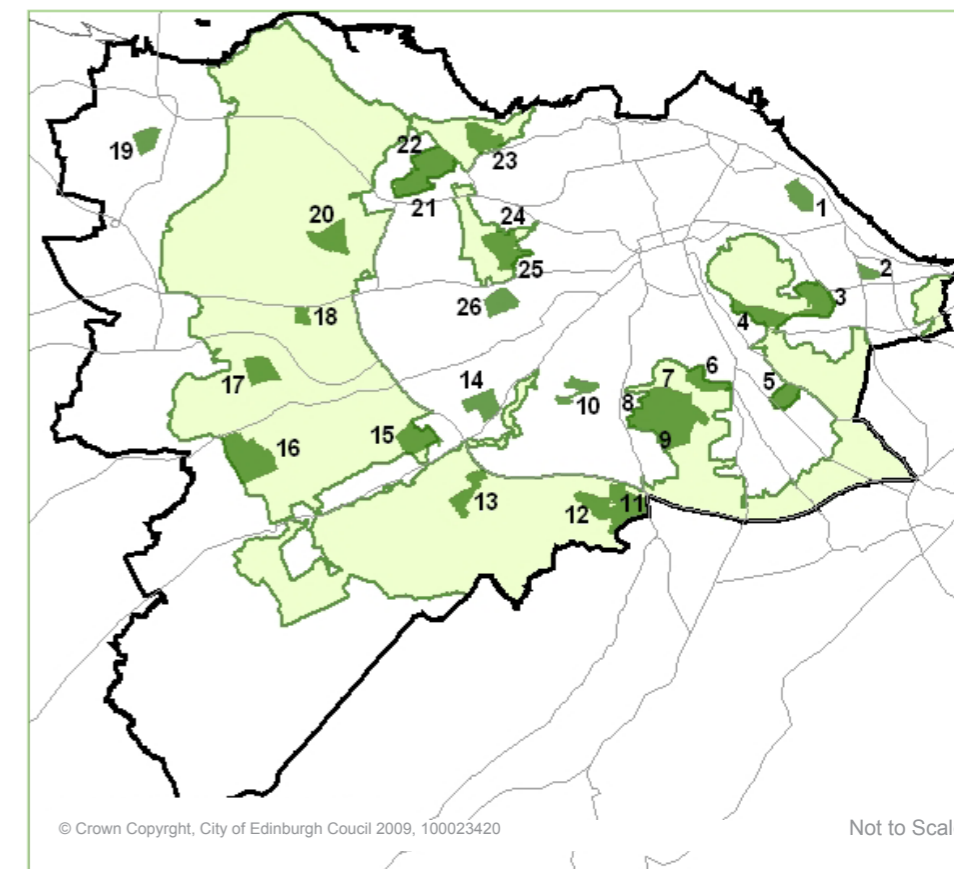


Figure 6:

Growth in youth participation (source: clubgolf)

Golf courses constitute a significant proportion (26%) of Edinburgh's open space (Figure 1). 20 of the 26 golf courses in the Council area lie within the Edinburgh Green Belt (Map 8) and play a role in the landscape setting of the city. Accordingly, it is important to understand how golf is changing and what this might mean for the provision of golf courses and related facilities.

- Legend**
- Green Belt
  - 1 Craigtinny \* (M) +
  - 2 Pentonello (M) +
  - 3 Duddingston
  - 4 Prestonfield
  - 5 Liberton
  - 6 Craigmillar Park
  - 7 Hermitage \*
  - 8 Braid Hills/Princes \* (M)
  - 9 Mortonhall
  - 10 Merchants of Edinburgh +
  - 11 Lothianburn \*
  - 12 Swanston
  - 13 Torphin Hill \*
  - 14 Kingknowe \* +
  - 15 Baberton \*
  - 16 Dalmahoy
  - 17 Ratho Park
  - 18 Gogarburn \*
  - 19 Dundas Park +
  - 20 Turnhouse \*
  - 21 Royal Burgess
  - 22 Bruntsfield \*
  - 23 Silverknowe \* (M)
  - 24 Ravelston
  - 25 Murrayfield
  - 26 Carrick Knowe (M) +
  - \* Courses participating in clubgolf programme
  - (M) Municipal courses
  - + Courses outwith the Green Belt



Map 8:

Location of golf courses and Green Belt boundary

The main issues driving changes in golf are:

- A decline in some clubs' membership. This may be caused by individuals making savings on membership fees in response to the current recession. It may also reflect a more general trend for visits to the outdoors to be shorter than in the past, as identified in a recent study (Macauley Institute for SNH).
- A rise in more casual golfing, such as pay-and-play on private courses previously only available to members and guests, and a preference for shorter games rather than full 18-hole rounds.
- Increasingly demanding ground maintenance requirements due to a series of wet summers.

- A need to establish and maintain access to a well-distributed set of affordable courses providing opportunities for children and young people to take up and keep up the sport. Map 8 shows those courses currently used for the clubgolf programme.
- Pricing policies for some private and municipal courses which do not respond to the above factors.
- A concern among Edinburgh's private clubs that at least one club may go out of business in the near future.

At this stage firm conclusions cannot be drawn on what these issues may mean for physical golf course provision over the next five to ten years. Potential changes include the following:

- The creation of an additional 6- or 9-hole course to cater for casual and young golfers. Such a course would not necessarily be municipal. It is unclear whether such a course would need to be in addition to the current stock of courses, or would be created from an existing 18-hole course.
- Diversification of leisure facilities at private courses to attract a wider range of customers, such as families, or to encourage appropriate access by walkers. There can be scope for such diversification within the limits set by green belt policy.

### Other Sports

Bowling greens and tennis courts take up a small proportion of the city's open space (Figure 1). The Council is preparing a sports facilities strategy which will address issues relating to general sports provision.

## 8. Play Space

Play is essential for children's healthy development. The city's play strategy, reviewed in 2009, sets out a vision and principles for the Council and its partners. These include the principle that children and young people have the right to well maintained, quality play environments which provide stimulation and challenge relevant to their age.

### What is play space?

*'Play space' is any area used by children and young people to play or hang out, and can be equipped or unequipped. 'Play areas' and 'play parks' generally refer only to places with purpose-built play equipment. The term 'play space' is generally used in this strategy*

As part of the consultation on the draft open space audit, the Council carried out a play space survey. 450 children and young people in schools and clubs and the parents of younger children completed short questionnaires on the spaces where they play or spend time.

The survey found that most respondents walk or cycle to the play spaces they use. The average distance walked to play spaces is 750 metres. Respondents travel further to play spaces they rate highly. A few spaces, such as the large all-ages play park in the east Meadows or the semi-natural park covering Blackford Hill, draw children from several kilometres away, presumably travelling by cycle, bus or car.

The survey results identified several residential amenity spaces where children play regularly. Further locations suitable as unequipped play spaces were identified in the quality survey carried out in the open space audit.



*Bonaly Brae  
unequipped play space*

The standard as proposed below is based on the above findings and recognition of the following:

- Access to appropriate spaces is needed for all age groups.
- Access to spaces suitable for play is primarily by foot or cycle, and so needs to be reasonably local.
- Quality of play space is also important.
- Space for play is not solely about play equipment. Good quality residential amenity spaces can also be appropriate, and for older children semi-natural spaces can offer a stimulating environment for play.

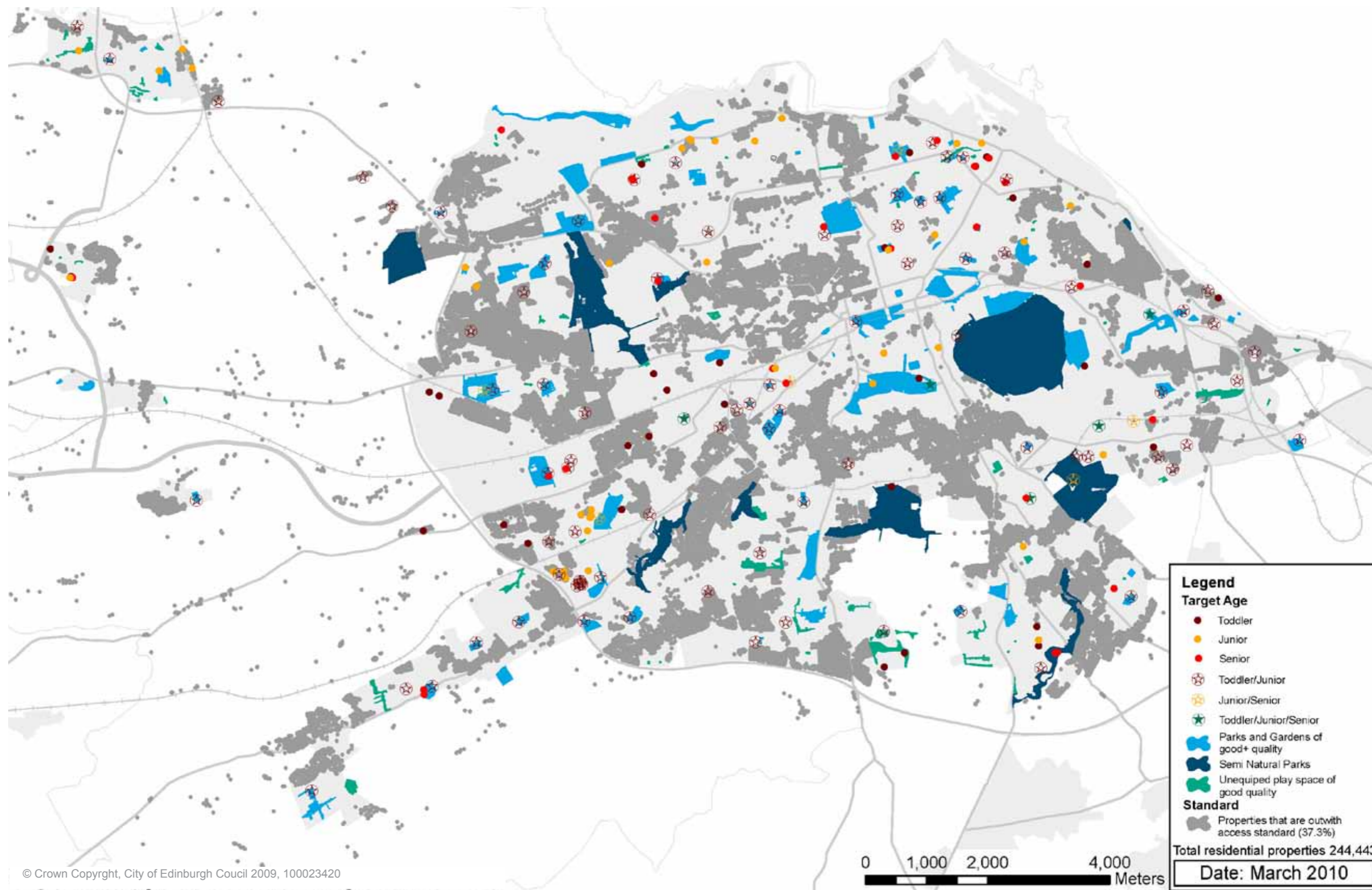
The greenspace improvement actions identified in Chapter 4 improve provision in terms of this standard. Further actions will be identified through consultation with the Neighbourhood Partnerships.

Beyond the local level, it is intended that the improvement of Saughton Park and Leith Links will include the establishment of city-wide play areas serving the west and north of the city.

<b>Play Space Access Standard</b>	<p><b>Houses and flats should be within 400m walking distance of an identified unequipped play space or park of good quality and at least 500sq.m. or:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 800m walking distance of an equipped play space designed for toddlers and</li> <li>● 800m walking distance of an equipped play space designed for juniors or a semi-natural park and</li> <li>● 800m walking distance of an equipped play space designed for seniors or a semi-natural park</li> </ul> <p><b>all in fair or better condition</b></p>
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Map 9 analyses which areas currently meet this standard. 63% of dwellings currently fall within this standard. The condition of equipped play spaces reflects the age rather than their safety. All Council play equipment is checked regularly and is safe for use.

The standard requires access to spaces suitable for all three age groups. Accordingly, several areas of deficiency exist even where there is an equipped play area, because it is only suitable for a specific age group.



## 9. Allotments and Community Gardens

### Allotments

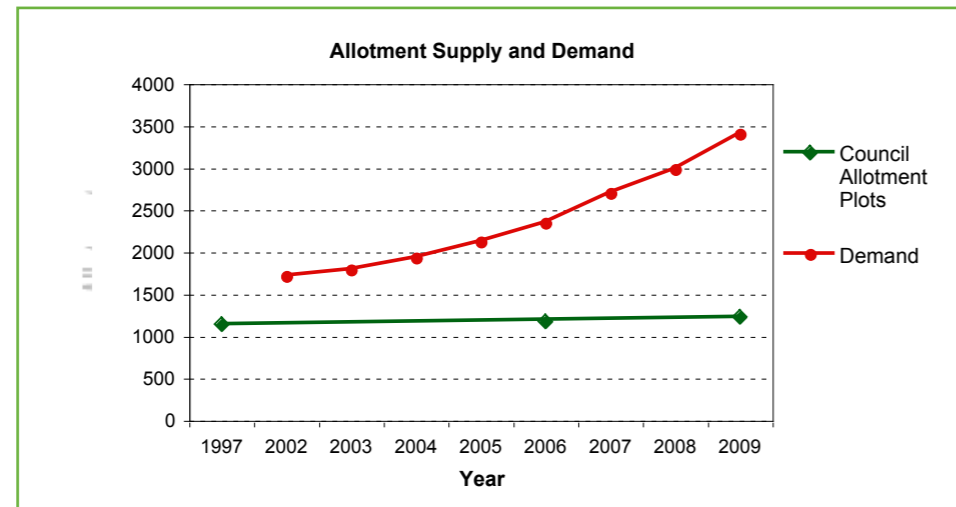


Figure 7:

Supply of Council allotment plots and demand [met demand (number of occupied plots) + unmet demand (number of people on waiting list)]

Demand for allotment gardening is increasing. Figure 7 shows supply and demand of Council plots. In 2009 there was a list of 2,152 people waiting for 1,233 plots. The current waiting time for a Council plot is between 4 and 7 years, depending on the area of the city.

An updated allotment strategy is in preparation. The draft proposes measures to improve the facilities and administration of existing Council allotments. It identifies the need to find new allotment sites and sets out site selection criteria as follows:

- current land ownership
- previous land use
- soil quality
- services on site
- potential number of plots
- waiting list demand in area (by postcode)

- proximity to public transport
- proximity to social housing
- site security
- potential for car parking on site

Three new sites already agreed by the Council are:

- Stenhouse Phase 2
- Stenhouse Phase 3
- Carricknowe Phase 2

During consultation on the open space audit the Council received a number of suggestions for new allotment sites. These have been assessed for suitability. The Council is seeking further suggestions for suitable new allotment sites to be identified in the finalised open space strategy.

As a starter, the following site options are proposed

- Alnwickhill Reservoir
- Balgreen Road
- Blinkbonny Park
- Burgess Road
- Cammo Walled Garden
- Campbell Park
- Craigentenny Avenue North
- Cramond Walled Garden
- Davidsons Mains Park
- Dovecot Park
- Frogston Road
- Gracemount Walled Garden
- Gypsy Brae
- Hailes Quarry Park
- Harrison Park East
- Inch Park
- Jocks Lodge (Baronscourt Park)

- ❑ Joppa Quarry Park
- ❑ King George V Park
- ❑ Lauriston Castle
- ❑ Liberton Park
- ❑ Lochend Park
- ❑ Midmar Field 3
- ❑ Niddre Marischal Road
- ❑ Pilrig Park - allotment extension
- ❑ Playing fields associated with old Dumbryden School
- ❑ Redhall - allotment extension
- ❑ Restalrig Crescent
- ❑ Seven Acre Park
- ❑ Silverknowes farmland
- ❑ St Marks Park
- ❑ Whinhill Park

Together with the three sites already agreed these would provide around 2200 new plots, covering 70 hectares. This would match the current waiting list.

Comments on the above sites or suggestions for alternative or additional sites are invited.



Bridgend Allotment

### Community Gardens and Other Alternatives

A different way for people to grow their own food is provided by community gardens. These do not involve the same legal rights and duties as allotments, and tend to be created informally and on shared private open space.

NHS Lothian proposes to create a new community garden on its land to the west of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital in Morningside.



Redbraes Community Garden

Small-scale communal food growing areas have also been created in tenemental backgreens, often facilitated by the Edinburgh Community Backgreens Initiative.

Care and Repair Edinburgh run a scheme which aims to match garden owners who are struggling to maintain their gardens with people who are keen to garden but have no garden or access to land.

## 10. Implementation

### Delivery

The draft action plans state who is responsible for leading implementation of each action. This strategy is being prepared at a time of decreasing resources in the public and private sectors. For most draft actions the cost of implementation has not yet been estimated and the source of funding has not yet been identified. Some actions will be implemented through the Council's locally-prepared Neighbourhood Environment Programmes as resources allow. The delivery of sports actions will be considered in the separate sports facilities strategy. The delivery of new allotments will be considered in the revised allotments strategy.

Many actions will not be implemented for several years. Some proposals for new open spaces and links in the green network will only take place in step with new development. Some of these may take several decades to complete, for example Edinburgh Promenade.

The standards proposed in this strategy will help prioritise investment in actions which will have maximum benefit for residents and will help meet the city's most pressing open space needs.

### New Development

The Edinburgh City Local Plan (ECLP) and the Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan set the policies used to guide and assess proposals for new development. In the city:

- ECLP Policy Hou 3 sets the amount of open space sought in housing developments
- ECLP Policy Os 3 seeks the provision of open space in other types of development.

(see [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/eclp](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/eclp) for full text)

### Housing

The focus of Policy Hou 3 is private open space for the use of residents, either as private gardens or as communal areas. The Edinburgh Standards for Housing provide detailed guidance on design and quality of this space.

Where proposed housing would meet the three standards set in chapters 4 and 8 in this strategy, the Council will normally expect the requirements of Policy Hou 3 to be met wholly within the development site.

Where proposed housing would not meet one or more of the standards in this strategy, the development should address the deficiency. Depending on whether the deficiency is in terms of quality, size, type or access and on the size of the development site, this can be done in the following ways:

- By providing sufficient new publicly accessible open space, either within the development site if large enough or wholly or partly off-site.
- Through financial contribution towards the cost of a relevant action or actions identified in this strategy. The amount of contribution negotiated will depend on the estimated cost of the relevant action(s) and will be proportionate to the shortfall in on-site open space in terms of Policy Hou 3.
- Through other actions as identified in a relevant approved development brief or other site-specific guidance.



Forthquarter Park

courtesy of National Grid Property

### Non-residential Development

Policy Os 3 and its supporting paragraph set out the Council's policy. This strategy identifies the green network and some major opportunities to connect and extend it. These opportunities should be taken in appropriate non-residential developments, and elsewhere when the opportunity arises.

The Council has prepared separate guidance on landscaping in new developments.

### Loss of Open Space

ECLP Policies Os 1 – Open Space Protection and Os 2 – Playing Fields Protection set out criteria for assessing development proposals which would involve the loss of open space.

This strategy will be used to inform use of those policies. In particular, part of criterion b) in Policy Os 1 allows for instances where there is a significant over-provision of open space serving the immediate area. Such over-provision will be the case where loss of the open space in question would neither create a deficiency in terms of the standards in this strategy nor remove an opportunity to address an existing deficiency or need identified in this strategy.

## Consultation

Comments on the draft strategy or action plans should be sent in writing by 21 May 2010 to:

Local Planning Policy  
Level G.1 Waverley Court  
4 East Market Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 8BG

Or by email to: [OpenSpaceStrategy@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:OpenSpaceStrategy@edinburgh.gov.uk)  
General queries: 0131 469 3411 or the above email address

The draft action plans and information on public consultation events can be viewed at:  
[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/openspacestrategy](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/openspacestrategy)

## References

- Open Space Plan for Edinburgh, Corporation of the City of Edinburgh 1969
- Scottish Household Survey <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/16002>
- Key Trends in Outdoor Recreation, Brown, K.M. Invited presentation to SNH Policy Seminar 'Fit for the Future? Formal Provision for Enjoying the Outdoors in Scotland, 9 March 2009.
- Edinburgh Leisure Annual Report 2009

### City of Edinburgh Council Strategies

- Draft Allotments Strategy 'Cultivating Communities: A Growing Concern', February 2010
- Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015
- Edinburgh Public Realm Strategy, December 2009
- Play in Partnership: A Play Strategy for the City of Edinburgh, July 2009
- Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy 2006
- Pitch Strategy 2005
- Capitalising on Access: An Access Strategy for the City of Edinburgh, February 2003
- Urban Forestry Strategy 1991 (currently under review)

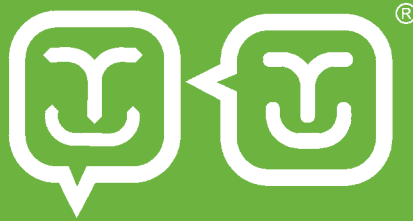
Images of the Forthquarter at Granton courtesy of National Grid Property

Cities Revealed aerial photography copyright The GeoInformation Group 2005



This draft open space strategy sets out standards and actions to improve open space provision in Edinburgh. It is accompanied by 12 action plans, one for each Neighbourhood Partnership area. Further information on the project and on public consultation events can be viewed at: [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/openspacestrategy](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/openspacestrategy)

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يسعدنا توفير الترجمة MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ 很樂意翻譯

◆ EDINBURGH ◆  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Dave Anderson - Director of City Development - The City of Edinburgh Council

Produced by the City Development Department, Planning  
4 East Market Street Edinburgh EH8 8BG  
March 2010