



people spaces places



# Sandwell Green Space Audit

## Borough Report



## Sandwell Green Space Audit

### Borough Report

Issue number: 3

Status: FINAL

Date: 20 September 2019

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# Sandwell Green Space Audit

## Borough Report

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## 1 Introduction

This Sandwell Green Space Audit is the third such audit for Sandwell Council, revising and updating the earlier audit developed in 2013, which in turn replaced the original 2006 Green Space Audit. Since 2013 there has been significant change in the economic and political climate at a national and more local level. Resources for public services continue to be reduced, impacting all Council service areas including green spaces. This updated audit will allow changes since this time to be qualified and understood and used to inform future planning policy. The Council's approach to the future management of green space across the borough, taking into account the significant change in the local and national context will be set out in the separate Green Space Strategy.

A number of pieces of research, assessments and consultation have been carried out that form the basis of the Sandwell Green Space Audit. In the absence of any formal guidance since the cancellation of the Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17 – Planning for Open Space (PPG 17) the Audit will again follow this methodology to enable a comparison of the study carried out in 2006 and 2012.

The 2006 Audit was carried out in accordance with PPG 17, Sport and Recreation (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002), the Companion Guide "Assessing Needs and Opportunities" (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002). While the 2013 Audit followed the same guidance, in addition to the Black Country Core Strategy, adopted in 2011.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in February 2019, setting out the following requirements for the assessment:

*"Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate."*

This report sets out the methodologies used in undertaking analysis of the quantity, quality, value and accessibility of green spaces in Sandwell Borough along with the respective findings. This report also includes the results of the consultation undertaken as part of this study and at all stages, comparisons have been made to the findings of the previous Green Space Audits.

The study has found that Sandwell Borough continues to have a significant amount of green space, with over 2018 hectares, making up 23.7% of the total borough area. Approximately 1183 hectares (59.5% by area) of Sandwell's green space have unrestricted public access.

This is a slight decrease compared with the 2013 Audit, when there were 2044 hectares of green space, however the proportion of unrestricted green space has remained the same. Sandwell Borough is characterised by large amounts of Natural and Semi-natural Green Space contributing nearly 40% of all accessible green space. Parks and Gardens are important spaces for sports and recreation and make up 22.3% of all unrestricted green space. There are a large number of often relatively small Amenity Green Spaces making up nearly 18.1% of all unrestricted green space and these spaces offer a relief from the built development.

Sandwell has an average of 3.63 hectares of unrestricted green space per 1000 population which is lower than the other Black Country Boroughs although higher than Birmingham. Owing to a large increase in the population of the Borough, this a slight reduction when compared to the proportion of unrestricted green space per 1000 population found through the 2013 Audit (3.9 hectares) and an even larger reduction compared with the 2006 Audit (4.24 hectares). The north of the Borough has a greater amount of accessible green space per 1000 population compared to the south. There is significant variation in the quantity of unrestricted greenspace (hectares per 1,000 population) at Town level with West Bromwich having the most at 5.67 and Oldbury the least at 2.10. There is even greater variation at Ward level.

Overall, residents thought that the amount of green space was too little, with the exception of parks and gardens. The Household Survey consultation showed that respondents in all towns except for Wednesbury considered there to be insufficient provision for teenagers, while children's play provision was also considered insufficient in all towns, except Wednesbury and Smethwick. Nearly two thirds (64.5%) of children responding to the Go Play Survey suggested that they could play in some or all of the places that they wanted to. Over 9 in 10 children suggested they could do all or some of the play activities that they liked. The Household Survey also found perceived deficiencies in outdoor sports facilities and allotments and community gardens in all 6 Sandwell Towns.

Accessibility to green spaces has been mapped with buffers plotted that reflect the theoretical catchment of sites based on their hierarchy and this was modified to include the severance effects of major roads, railway lines and the canal network. Using this approach, it was found that there are some small residential areas that have no access to unrestricted green space. However, the deficiency areas have increased in number and total size since the 2013 Green Space Audit and all Towns exhibit some deficiency.

A quality assessment considered a total of 209 green spaces using the criteria from the Green Flag Award, the national standard for parks and green space quality. Of this sample 182 were also audited in 2012, (out of a

sample of 218 sites). The quality audit found a significant variation in quality with scores ranging from 6 to 75 (out of 100). The average quality score in 2019 was 34, the same as in 2006, but 4 points lower than 2013. However, the overall average mask a more complex picture where the quality of larger more significant spaces at a Borough and Neighbourhood level remain largely unchanged from 2013. The quality of local level spaces has however declined and is lower than the average recorded in 2006 and 2013.

At a town level, Smethwick had the highest average quality score (42) and Oldbury the lowest (27). The average quality of spaces in Smethwick and West Bromwich has increased since 2006 and these increased have been sustained. The average quality in Wednesbury and Tipton is now higher than 2006, but the average scores have reduced since 2013. The average quality In Oldbury and Rowley Regis is now lower than in 2006.

All 209 quality audited sites were assigned a value score based on a methodology derived from the Companion Guide to PPG17 and placed into a quality / value matrix. A similar number of sites fell into all quadrants of the matrix. Over a third of the 'high quality / high value' were Parks and Gardens. Conversely, there are 65 sites of 'low quality / low value', many of which are local level and Amenity Green Spaces. The primary purpose of these spaces (in terms of green space function) should be reviewed and if the value can be enhanced then investment should be considered to increase the quality.

Additional reports for each of the 6 Sandwell Towns have been produced as separate volumes.

## 2 Borough Profile

### 2.1 Demographic Information

Sandwell Borough contains 24 wards each with 3 elected Ward Councillors. The authority has grouped the wards into 6 Town areas each consisting of between 3 and 5 wards and containing populations of between c.40,000 and c.80,000 people.

A map showing the Borough and Town boundaries can be seen below at Figure 1.

#### 2.1.1 Index of Multiple Deprivation (2015)

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area).

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) combines information from the 7 domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation. The domains are combined using the following weights:

- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

The 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation updates previous versions published in 2010, 2007, 2004 and 2000. Sandwell's average deprivation score has improved slightly since 2010, falling 1 place to become the 13th most deprived local authority out of a total of 326 (where 1 is the most deprived).



According to Sandwell Trends<sup>1</sup> “One in five of Sandwell’s Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) fall into the most deprived 10% nationally in 2015. A further third fall into the most deprived 10-20%, so overall 55% of Sandwell’s LSOAs fall within the worst 20% nationally, and 86% within the worst 50% nationally, clearly displaying the high levels of deprivation prevalent in large parts of Sandwell. No Sandwell LSOAs are in the least deprived decile nationally”.

Large areas of Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich are heavily deprived. The less deprived Sandwell areas are seen in the north east of West Bromwich, and the peripheries of Smethwick, Oldbury and Rowley Regis.

Tipton has by far the highest proportion of its LSOAs in the most deprived decile for the IMD 2015- 52% compared with none in the most deprived decile in Oldbury. Wednesbury has by far the highest proportion of LSOAs in the 30% most deprived nationally at 92%, compared with 60% of LSOAs in Oldbury.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/deprivation>

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 1  
Town Boundaries



## LEGEND

-  Borough Boundary
-  Town Boundaries

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2.1.3 Demographic Profile

Where available, the following data has been derived from the 2018 Mid-year estimates from the Office of National Statistics. Where this was not available, data from the 2011 Census has been used.

**Gender**

According to the 2018 Mid-year estimates, Sandwell Borough has a resident population of 327,378 people. There is an almost even split of male and female residents in the Borough. The proportion of male to female residents in the borough is the same as the figure for England and Wales (Table 1).

|        | <b>Sandwell (%)</b> | <b>England &amp; Wales (%)</b> |
|--------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Male   | 49.4                | 49.5                           |
| Female | 50.4                | 50.5                           |

Table 1 Population of Sandwell Borough by Gender

**Population estimates**

Chart 1 below shows the percentage change in the population estimates of Sandwell and England & Wales since 1991. The population of Sandwell shows a rapid overall increase. When Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council was formed in 1974, the area was experiencing a steady decline in population numbers, which reached a low in 2001. Over the 17 year period between 2001 and 2018 there has been an estimated increase of 42,784 in Sandwell's population, an increase of 15%<sup>2</sup>. This percentage increase is higher than both the estimates for England & Wales and West Midlands Metropolitan County area. It is also higher than all the other Black Country Boroughs.

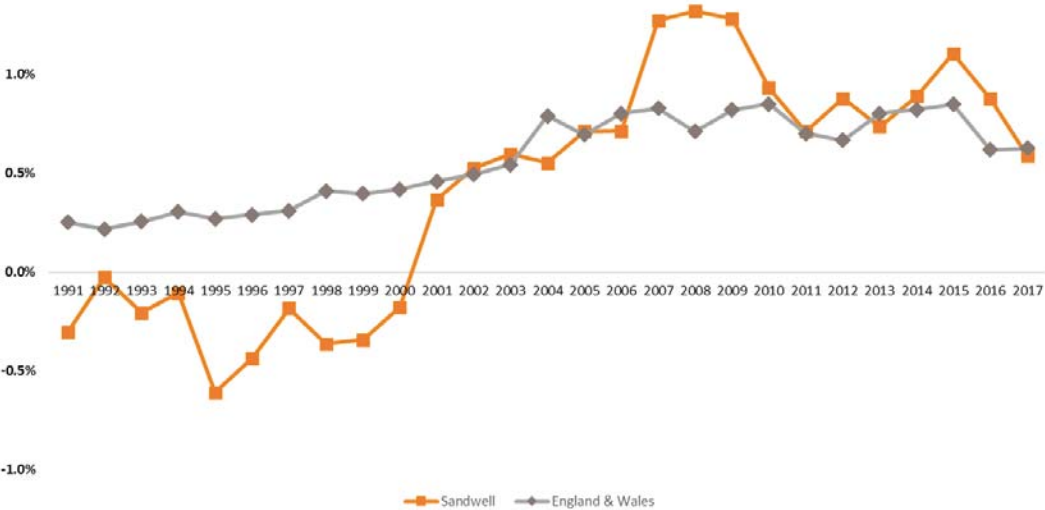


Chart 1 Percentage change in population estimates of Sandwell and England & Wales between 1991 and 2018

Table 2 below shows the population increase in Sandwell since 2001. The most recent population estimate states that the population at 327,378 in 2018. Between the 2001 and 2011 census, the population increased by 8.6% compared with a national increase of 7.3%. Since the 2011 census, the population in Sandwell is estimated to have increased by 5.9%, again higher than the national population increase for the same period of time.

|      | Sandwell   |        |          | England & Wales |           |          |
|------|------------|--------|----------|-----------------|-----------|----------|
|      | Population | Change | % change | Population      | Change    | % change |
| 2001 | 284,594    | -      | -        | 52,359,978      | -         | -        |
| 2011 | 309,042    | 24,448 | 8.6      | 56,170,927      | 3,810,949 | 7.3      |
| 2018 | 327,378    | 18,336 | 5.9      | 59,115,809      | 2,944,882 | 5.2      |

Table 2 Population estimates

<sup>2</sup> Sandwell Trends [https://www.sandwelltrends.info/population\\_estimates](https://www.sandwelltrends.info/population_estimates) (accessed 13 September 2019)

The population of Sandwell is predicted to continue to grow rapidly with estimates suggesting a further 30,000 residents by 2030.

**Number of people per hectare**

Sandwell covers a total of 8,532.09 Ha equating to 38.4 people per Ha according to the 2018 Mid-year estimates. Table 3 below shows that Sandwell has over 10 times the number of people per hectare than the England and Wales average.

| Number people per hectare | Sandwell    | England & Wales |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
|                           | 38.4 Per Ha | 3.7 Per Ha      |

Table 3 Number of people per hectare

**Age**

Table 4 below shows the age structure of Sandwell and England & Wales as per the 2018 Mid-year estimates. It can be seen that Sandwell has a younger population overall, with more people aged under 14 in Sandwell Borough (21.3%) when compared to the national picture (18.0%). There are fewer people aged over 60 in Sandwell (19.7%) compared with England & Wales (23.9%).

| Age Structure       | Sandwell (%) | England & Wales |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| People aged 0 - 4   | 7.2          | 5.9             |
| People aged 5 - 14  | 14.1         | 12.1            |
| People aged 15 - 29 | 18.9         | 18.7            |
| People aged 30 - 44 | 20.6         | 19.4            |
| People aged 45 - 59 | 19.3         | 20.0            |
| People aged 60 - 64 | 4.7          | 5.5             |
| People aged 65 - 74 | 7.9          | 10.1            |
| People aged 75+     | 7.1          | 8.3             |

Table 4 Age Structure

## Ethnicity

Data from the 2011 Census in Table 5 below shows that Sandwell has a considerably higher percentage of residents of Asian origin than the overall average for England and Wales. This is also the case for the Indian ethnic group with over 4 times the national average.

Sandwell has become a more ethnically diverse area since 2001. 1 in 3 of the population (30.6%) classified themselves as being from a minority ethnic group in 2011 compared to 1 in 5 (20.3%) in 2001.

| Ethnic Background        | Sandwell |      | England & Wales |
|--------------------------|----------|------|-----------------|
|                          | n        | %    | (%)             |
| White                    | 215,471  | 69.9 | 86.0            |
| British                  | 202,822  | 65.8 | 80.5            |
| Irish                    | 2,045    | 0.7  | 0.9             |
| Gypsy or Irish Traveller | 141      | 0.0  | 0.1             |
| Other                    | 10,463   | 3.4  | 4.4             |
| Mixed                    | 10,199   | 3.3  | 2.2             |
| Asian or Asian British   | 59,258   | 19.2 | 6.8             |
| Indian                   | 31,400   | 10.2 | 2.5             |
| Pakistani                | 13,952   | 4.5  | 2.0             |
| Bangladeshi              | 6,588    | 2.1  | 0.8             |
| Other Asian              | 6,479    | 2.1  | 1.5             |
| Black or Black British   | 18,357   | 6.0  | 3.3             |
| Caribbean                | 11,382   | 3.7  | 1.1             |
| African                  | 4,396    | 1.4  | 1.8             |
| Other black              | 2,579    | 0.8  | 0.5             |
| Other ethnic group       | 5,617    | 1.9  | 1.7             |
| Chinese                  | 839      | 0.3  | 0.7             |
| Other                    | 4,778    | 1.6  | 1.0             |

Table 5 Ethnicity (Census 2011)

## Limiting Long-term Illness

According to the 2011 Census, there is a significantly higher proportion of the Sandwell population with a limiting long-term illness when compared to the national average as can be seen in Table 6 below.

| Limiting long-term illness | Sandwell |      | England & Wales |
|----------------------------|----------|------|-----------------|
|                            | n        | %    | (%)             |
|                            | 64,403   | 20.9 | 17.9            |

Table 6 Limiting long term illness (Census 2011)

**Car or Van Ownership**

According to the 2011 Census, levels of car ownership in Sandwell Borough are much lower than the national average with over 1 in 3 households having no access to a car or van (Table 7). This reflects the relatively high levels of deprivation experienced in the borough by many households. The accessibility of Sandwell’s green space will be considered in Section 6 of this report.

| Car or Van Ownership | Sandwell |      | England & Wales (%) |
|----------------------|----------|------|---------------------|
|                      | n        | %    |                     |
| None                 | 41,197   | 33.9 | 25.6                |
| 1                    | 51,922   | 42.7 | 42.2                |
| 2 or more            | 28,379   | 23.4 | 32.2                |

Table 7 Car Ownership (Census 2011)

## 3 Typology & Hierarchy

### 3.1 Introduction

During the 2006 Green Space Strategy and using existing Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data, Ordnance Survey mapping, aerial photography and the quality assessment process all green spaces over 0.2 hectares were mapped by Sandwell MBC. This was reviewed in 2013 to reflect the changes in land use across the Borough.

All green spaces that have been identified have been assigned a unique reference number based on its geographical location at Town level (e.g. sites in Tipton are assigned a unique reference number beginning with 1 whereas sites within Oldbury have a unique reference number beginning with 2). Any new sites that have been mapped since the 2006 audit have been assigned a new unique reference number; with the unique reference number of sites that have been lost to development, retired to avoid duplication. Where a site crosses Town boundary the site has been assigned to the Town either where most of the site is located or where there is the most logical connection.



## 3.2 Typology

Open Space is defined as:

“All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity”<sup>3</sup>.

Green space is a subset of open space that includes vegetated land or water within an urban area such as parks and (public) gardens, playing fields, children’s play areas, nature reserves, woods and other natural areas, grassed areas, cemeteries and allotments along with green corridors like paths, disused railway lines, rivers and canals. Green space does not include agricultural land, private gardens or civic spaces that are part of the built landscape. Green Belt and green space are not synonymous, since the former is a specific planning designation to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

In order to classify the green space in the study a number of levels are used. Firstly, an initial classification based on land use and primary purpose. Secondly a classification of how accessible the site is to the public and thirdly a classification of the site’s significance. This section explains how these classifications were carried out.

National guidance contained in “Assessing Needs and Opportunities”, the companion guide to PPG17 sets out a suggested typology of space for local authorities to use as their starting point for defining their own local standards. This has been modified slightly based on local circumstances to form the Typology shown below;

| Level 1 Typology                 | Primary Purpose  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Parks and Gardens                | Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events. |
| Natural and Natural Green spaces | Wildlife conservation, bio-diversity and environmental education and awareness.      |

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<sup>3</sup> NPPF (2019)- Glossary

| Level 1 Typology                        | Primary Purpose  |
|---|--|
| Green Corridors                         | Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration.  |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities               | Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside and water sports. This category does not include sports provision at other Level 1 categorised sites.   |
| Amenity Green space                     | Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.  |
| Provision for Children and Young People | Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters. This category does not include the play areas and youth provision at other Level 1 categorised sites. |
| Allotments                              | Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.  |
| Cemeteries and Churchyards              | Quieter contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity. Also includes closed burial grounds used for informal recreation.   |
| Institutional Land                      | Educational land or land owned by other institutions such as hospitals and government agencies.  |

Table 8 Level 1 Typology based on PPG17 Typology

As part of this study the component parts of each green space have been considered and these have been classified using a second level of typology. The relationship between the Level 1 and Level 2 typologies is shown in the table below;

| Level 1 Typology                | Level 2 Typology (components)                    |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Parks and Gardens               | Play<br>Youth<br>Sports<br>Semi-natural<br>Water |
| Natural and Natural Green space | Semi-natural<br>Water                            |
| Green Corridors                 | Semi-natural                                     |

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Outdoor sports facilities             | Play<br>Youth<br>Semi-natural<br>Water          |
| Amenity Green space                   | N/a   |
| Provision for children & young people | Play<br>Youth                                   |
| Allotments                            | N/a   |
| Cemeteries                            | N/a   |
| Institutional land                    | Play<br>Youth<br>Sport<br>Semi-natural<br>Water |
| Institutional Land                    | N/a   |

Table 9 Level 2 Typology

The Level 1 and Level 2 typologies have been mapped on separate layers using a computer-based GIS system. Each site that was mapped on the GIS system was assigned a green space type using the Level 1 typology and where appropriate the component parts of the site were assigned green space types using the Level 2 typology.

### 3.3 Accessibility

The table below sets out the accessibility levels that were used to classify the Borough’s green spaces.

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

Table 10 Accessibility Levels

Each site that was mapped on the GIS system was assigned an accessibility level which were then checked onsite when carrying out the quality audit.

### 3.4 Hierarchy

The table below sets out the hierarchy levels that were used to classify the importance or significance of Borough’s green spaces.

| Hierarchy level | Description  |
|-----------------|--|
| Borough         | Those sites whose significance should attract people from across the entire borough. Usually large sites with a range of facilities or designated importance for history or nature conservation. |
| Neighbourhood   | Those sites which perform a function that serves a more immediate community. Unlikely to attract people from across the borough  |
| Local           | Those sites which perform a function to a small area – typically areas of amenity green space.   |

Table 11 Hierarchy Level

Each site that was mapped on the GIS system was assigned a hierarchy level which was then checked onsite when carrying out the quality audit. There have been some changes to the hierarchy assigned to some Parks and Gardens to reflect capital investment in some key spaces and changes introduced in the last Green Space Strategy.

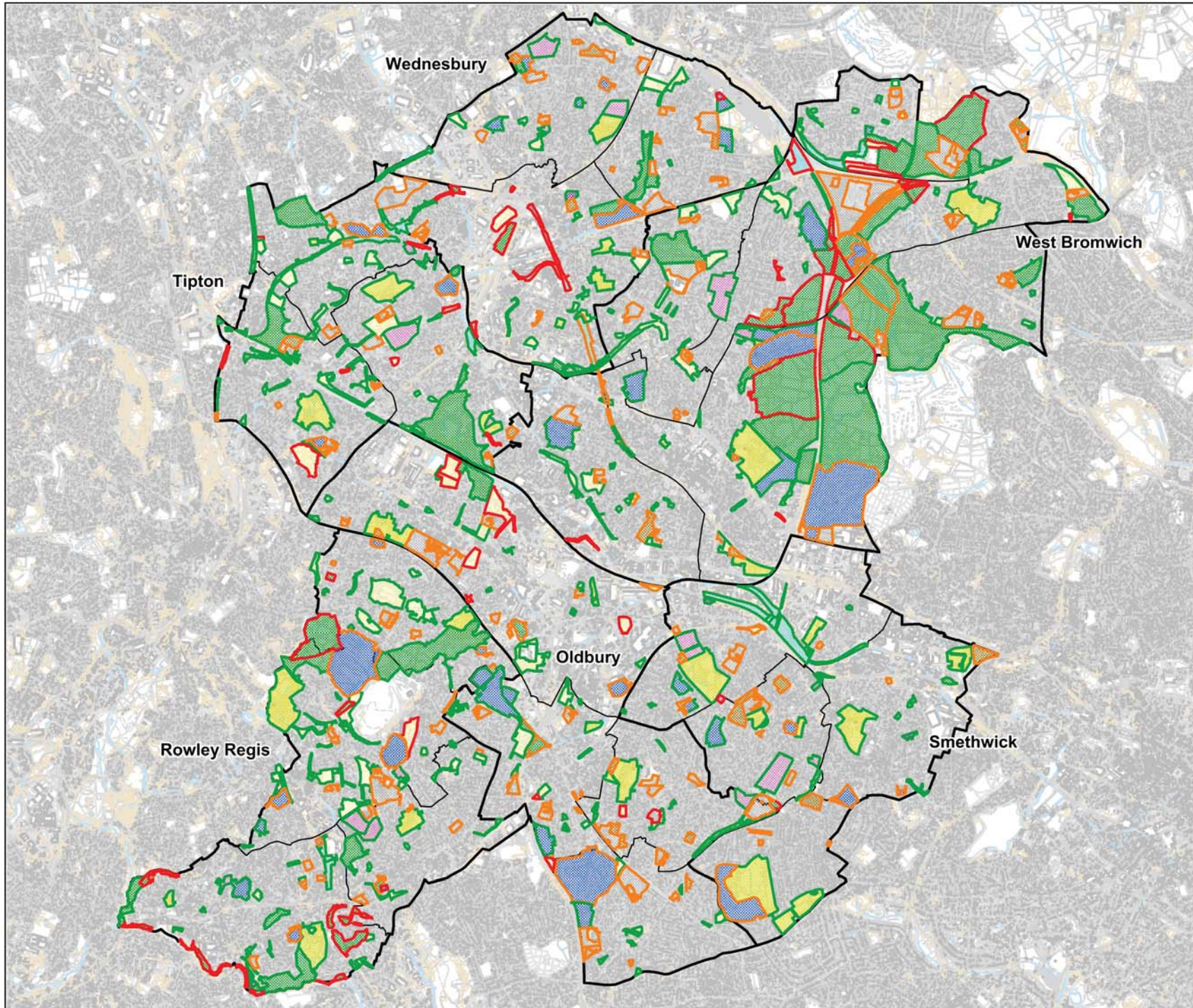
## 4 Understanding the Supply

### 4.1 Introduction

All green space within Sandwell Borough greater than 0.2 hectares has been plotted using GIS software which also facilitates the assigning of attribute or metadata about each polygon. All green spaces greater than the minimum size threshold have been plotted regardless of ownership and public access and the spaces have then been systematically classified based on their primary purpose (green space type), accessibility and hierarchy (significance). A secondary level of classification has also been used to identify play spaces and areas of Natural and Semi-natural Green Space within the overall site boundaries.

The total amount of green space identified within Sandwell Borough has been quantified and the average amount of unrestricted green space per 1000 population calculated. Quantity of green space by typology and size has also been calculated for both unrestricted and restricted sites at both a Town and Ward level. The results of the public consultation have also been used to compare the results of the analysis of quantity with the views of the local community.

Figure 2 overleaf shows the distribution of green space across Sandwell Borough. A full list of all identified green spaces within Sandwell Borough can be found at Appendix A.



## Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 2  
All sites by typology and access

### LEGEND

#### Typology

- Natural & semi-natural
- Amenity green space
- Institutional Land
- Parks & Gardens
- Provision for children and young people
- Cemeteries & Churchyards
- Green corridor
- Allotments
- Outdoor sports facilities

#### Accessibility

- Unrestricted
- Limited
- Not accessible

#### Boundaries

- Ward boundaries
- Town boundaries

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## 4.2 Borough Level Quantity Analysis

This section of the report considers supply of green space in Sandwell Borough with regard to the typology, hierarchy and accessibility.

### 4.2.1 All Sites

Table 12 below shows the total amount of green space (across all levels of accessibility) within the Borough that was recorded through this study.

| Level 1 Typology                      | Number     | Area (Ha)      | % of Total (Area) |
|---------------------------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Allotments                            | 34         | 43.72          | 6.3               |
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 211        | 269.33         | 38.9              |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 21         | 80.60          | 3.9               |
| Green Corridor                        | 22         | 75.36          | 4.1               |
| Institutional Land                    | 90         | 216.67         | 16.6              |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 75         | 727.83         | 13.8              |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 48         | 334.61         | 8.8               |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 32         | 264.89         | 5.9               |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 10         | 5.30           | 1.8               |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>543</b> | <b>2018.31</b> | <b>100.0</b>      |

Table 12 Distribution by Green space Type

Table 12 shows that in Sandwell, there are 543 sites that cover an area of 2018.31 hectares, equivalent to 23.7% of the total land area of the Borough.

| Town          | Number of Sites | Area (Ha)      | % of Total (Area) |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Oldbury       | 101             | 252.14         | 12.5              |
| Rowley Regis  | 109             | 336.37         | 16.7              |
| Smethwick     | 58              | 204.35         | 10.1              |
| Tipton        | 77              | 220.82         | 10.9              |
| Wednesbury    | 70              | 154.29         | 7.6               |
| West Bromwich | 128             | 850.34         | 42.1              |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>543</b>      | <b>2018.31</b> | <b>100.0</b>      |

Table 13 Green space by Town

Table 13 above sets out the amount of green space across the 6 towns and also expresses this as a percentage of the supply of total green space.



West Bromwich has the greatest number and area of green space with 128 sites and 850.34 hectares contributing 42.1% of all the green space in the Borough. Rowley Regis has 109 sites and 336.37 hectares of green space making up 16.7% of all green space in the Borough. These figures reflect the impact of Sandwell Valley and the Rowley Hills. Wednesbury has the smallest amount of green space with 154.29 hectares making up only 7.6% of the total green space in the Borough. However, it is Smethwick that has the lowest number of green space sites recorded through the study with only 58 sites.

| Typology Level 1                      | Oldbury    | Rowley Regis | Smethwick | Tipton    | Wednesbury | West Bromwich | Total      |
|---------------------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Allotments                            | 9          | 4            | 8         | 2         | 7          | 4             | 34         |
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 49         | 46           | 10        | 37        | 17         | 52            | 211        |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 1          | 4            | 6         | 4         | 3          | 3             | 21         |
| Green Corridor                        | 0          | 1            | 3         | 9         | 6          | 3             | 22         |
| Institutional Land                    | 23         | 16           | 9         | 11        | 13         | 18            | 90         |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 6          | 21           | 4         | 7         | 11         | 26            | 75         |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 8          | 11           | 6         | 3         | 8          | 12            | 48         |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 4          | 5            | 8         | 4         | 4          | 7             | 32         |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 1          | 1            | 4         | 0         | 1          | 3             | 10         |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>101</b> | <b>109</b>   | <b>58</b> | <b>77</b> | <b>70</b>  | <b>128</b>    | <b>543</b> |

Table 14 Distribution by Type and Town (Number)

Table 14 above shows the number of green spaces by type across the 6 Towns. West Bromwich, Oldbury and Rowley Regis have 52, 49 and 46 Amenity Green space sites respectively. Tipton has 37 Amenity Green space sites while Wednesbury and Smethwick have significantly fewer.

West Bromwich has the greatest number of Natural and Semi-natural Green spaces with 26 sites, followed by Rowley Regis with 21. Smethwick has only 4 green spaces of this type. The town with the greatest number of Green Corridors is Tipton which has 9.

Parks and Gardens are fairly evenly spread across the 6 Towns, with Smethwick and West Bromwich having 8 and 7 such sites respectively. Tipton has relatively few sports and play facilities, with only 3 Outdoor Sports Facility sites and no sites specifically classified as provision for children and young people (based on primary purpose). Oldbury has only 1 Cemeteries or Churchyard and no Green Corridors.

| Typology Level 1                      | Oldbury       | Rowley Regis  | Smethwick     | Tipton        | Wednesbury    | West Bromwich | Total          |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Allotments                            | 7.14          | 1.48          | 17.57         | 3.68          | 7.01          | 6.84          | <b>43.72</b>   |
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 59.07         | 67.28         | 6.73          | 46.95         | 24.06         | 65.24         | <b>269.33</b>  |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 3.29          | 12.67         | 20.62         | 11.09         | 12.79         | 20.14         | <b>80.6</b>    |
| Green Corridor                        | 0.00          | 4.81          | 18.35         | 20.4          | 18.57         | 13.23         | <b>75.36</b>   |
| Institutional Land                    | 63.18         | 22.08         | 12.32         | 22.00         | 24.08         | 73.01         | <b>216.67</b>  |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 20.84         | 120.02        | 3.43          | 72.82         | 27.27         | 483.45        | <b>727.83</b>  |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 70.72         | 59.01         | 34.38         | 13.06         | 22.46         | 134.98        | <b>334.61</b>  |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 27.69         | 48.67         | 88.8          | 30.82         | 16.71         | 52.2          | <b>264.89</b>  |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 0.21          | 0.35          | 2.15          | 0.00          | 1.34          | 1.25          | <b>5.3</b>     |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>252.14</b> | <b>336.37</b> | <b>204.35</b> | <b>220.82</b> | <b>154.29</b> | <b>850.34</b> | <b>2018.31</b> |

Table 15 Distribution by Type and Town (Area - Ha)

Table 15 above shows the area of green space by type and Town. Rowley Regis, Oldbury and West Bromwich each contain approximately 60 hectares or more of Amenity Green space, with significantly less of this type of green space in the other towns.

West Bromwich and Oldbury each contain 73 and 63 hectares of Institutional Land (schools and hospital grounds etc) respectively, which is significantly more than the other towns.

In terms of Natural and Semi-natural Green space, West Bromwich contains over 480 hectares, which is the equivalent of two thirds of all such green space in the Borough (66.4%). This is over 4 times more than Rowley Regis, which ranks second regarding this type of green space provision.

West Bromwich also has twice as much provision of Outdoor Sports Facilities as Oldbury and Rowley Regis (134.98 hectares compared to 70.72 and 59.01 hectares respectively). All other towns have significantly lower levels of provision.

Smethwick has the greatest number of Parks and Gardens and the greatest area of this type of provision with nearly 89 hectares of provision.

| Size Range (Ha) | Number     | %            |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| 20 <            | 20         | 3.7          |
| 10 to 20        | 27         | 5.0          |
| 5.0 to 9.9      | 43         | 7.9          |
| 2.0 to 4.9      | 104        | 19.2         |
| 1.0 to 1.9      | 101        | 18.6         |
| 0.5 to 0.9      | 110        | 20.3         |
| < 0.5           | 138        | 25.4         |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>543</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Table 16 Distribution of all sites by size

Table 16 above shows the size distribution of all green spaces within Sandwell Borough. The table shows that the provision based on size follows a “pyramid” distribution, with greater numbers of smaller sites and fewer large sites.

Around 1 in 4 sites recorded are less than 0.5 hectares in size (25.4%) and around 6 out of 10 sites are between 0.5 and 5 hectares (58.0%). There are 47 sites greater than 10 hectares, making up less than 10.0% of sites.

#### 4.2.2 Green space with Unrestricted Access

This section of the report considers only those green spaces with unrestricted access. Sites with limited access and those that are not accessible have been removed from the analysis, as these sites typically have less recreational value than sites which are freely available for public use.

| Accessibility  | Number of Sites | %            |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Unrestricted   | 323             | 59.5         |
| Limited        | 166             | 30.6         |
| Not Accessible | 54              | 9.9          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>543</b>      | <b>100.0</b> |

Table 17 Accessibility of Green spaces in Sandwell Borough

Table 17 above shows the accessibility of the green spaces in Sandwell Borough. Around 3 out of 5 sites have unrestricted access (59.5%), while about a third are limited (30.6%). 1 in 10 sites are not accessible (9.9%). Figures are shown graphically in Chart 2 below.

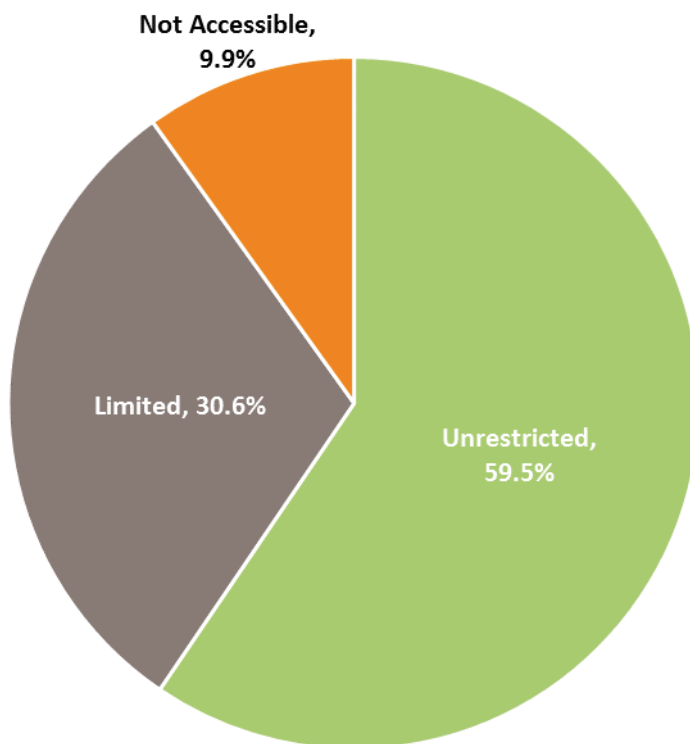


Chart 2 Accessibility of green spaces in Sandwell Borough

| Typology Level 1                      | Number     | Area (Ha)      | % of Total (Area) |
|---------------------------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 181        | 213.64         | 18.1              |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 19         | 79.76          | 6.7               |
| Green Corridor                        | 16         | 53.59          | 4.5               |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 46         | 458.15         | 38.7              |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 21         | 108.62         | 9.2               |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 31         | 264.11         | 22.3              |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 9          | 4.65           | 0.4               |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>323</b> | <b>1182.52</b> | <b>100.0</b>      |

Table 18 Distribution by type – Unrestricted Green space

Table 18 above shows the number and area of green spaces with unrestricted access by green space type.

Overall, there are 323 unrestricted green spaces covering just under 1200 hectares that have been recorded. This equates to 59.5% of all sites having unrestricted access and 58.6% of the green space area being accessible. Overall 13.9% of the total land area of the Borough is accessible green space.

Amenity Green space continues to be the predominant green space type with the greatest number of sites with unrestricted access (181), covering an area of approximately 214 hectares. This makes up 18.1% of all unrestricted green space. This is followed by Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space, with a total of 46 unrestricted sites covering 458 hectares. This covers twice the area of Amenity green spaces, making up 38.7% of all unrestricted green space in the borough. Parks and Gardens represent 31 sites covering 264.11 hectares, making up over 22% of all accessible green space by area.

There are no Institutional Land or Allotment sites with unrestricted access in the borough, as most Institutional Land, including school grounds, are not accessible and allotments are not free for anyone to use. Similarly, most Outdoor Sports Facilities have limited access, requiring membership or fee payment. Therefore, less than half of these sites are represented in this section. These sites however may offer future opportunities to address potential green space deficiencies through agreed community use or other access agreements.

| Town          | Number of Sites | Area (Ha)      | % of Total (Area) |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Oldbury       | 53              | 111.69         | 9.4               |
| Rowley Regis  | 68              | 213.00         | 18.0              |
| Smethwick     | 33              | 146.40         | 12.4              |
| Tipton        | 51              | 169.52         | 14.3              |
| Wednesbury    | 37              | 84.52          | 7.1               |
| West Bromwich | 81              | 457.39         | 38.7              |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>323</b>      | <b>1182.52</b> | <b>100.0</b>      |

Table 19 Unrestricted Green space area by Town

Table 19 above shows the area of green space with unrestricted access by Sandwell Town.

In all towns, the percentage of unrestricted green space sites is between 53-67%. However, in Smethwick and Tipton, unrestricted green space makes up around 3 quarters of the total area of green space (71.6% and 76.8% respectively), which is considerably higher than other towns.

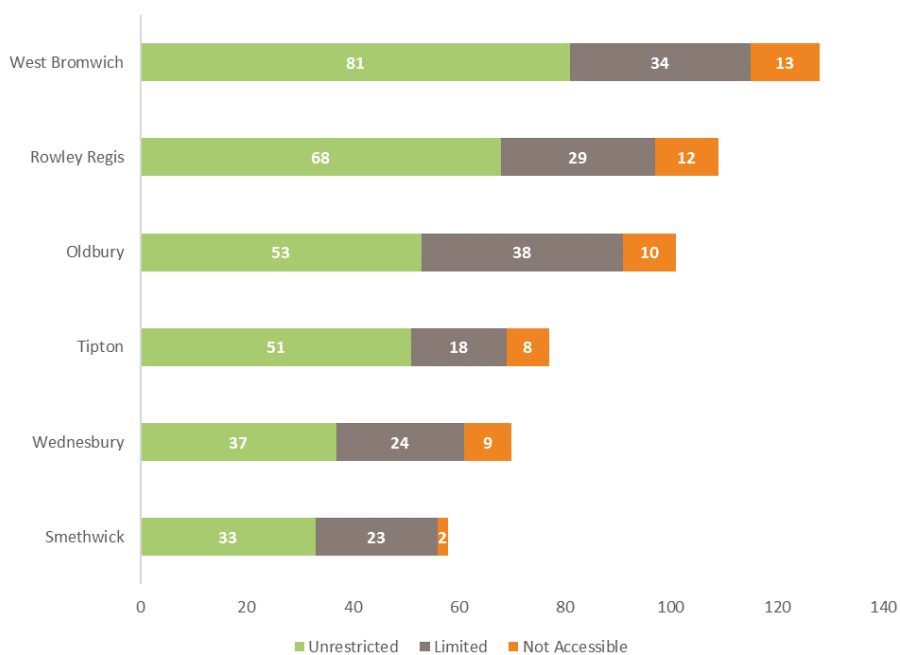


Chart 3 Quantities of unrestricted, limited and not accessible spaces by Town

Chart 3 above shows the quantities of green space by Town. West Bromwich has the largest number and greatest area of unrestricted green space. Overall, unrestricted green space in West Bromwich makes up 38.7% of the total supply of accessible green space. Rowley Regis is ranked second in terms of number and area of unrestricted green space sites, making up nearly a fifth (18.0%) of the total supply in the borough. By contrast, Wednesbury

has 37 sites with unrestricted access, covering 84.52 hectares and amounting to around 7.1% of the total amount of unrestricted green space.

| Typology Level 1                      | Oldbury   | Rowley Regis | Smethwick | Tipton    | Wednesbury | West Bromwich | Total      |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 38        | 45           | 9         | 29        | 14         | 46            | 181        |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 1         | 4            | 5         | 3         | 3          | 3             | 19         |
| Green Corridor                        | 0         | 1            | 3         | 8         | 2          | 2             | 16         |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 4         | 10           | 2         | 7         | 9          | 14            | 46         |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 5         | 2            | 3         |           | 4          | 7             | 21         |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 4         | 5            | 8         | 4         | 4          | 6             | 31         |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 1         | 1            | 3         | 0         | 1          | 3             | 9          |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>53</b> | <b>68</b>    | <b>33</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>37</b>  | <b>81</b>     | <b>323</b> |

Table 20 Unrestricted Green Space Distribution by Type and Town (Number)

Table 20 above shows the number of green space sites with unrestricted access by Town and green space type.

West Bromwich has the greatest number of green space sites with unrestricted access, of which 46 (56.7%) are Amenity Green space. The same pattern is seen in Rowley Regis, with two thirds of unrestricted green space being Amenity Green space.

In terms of Natural and Semi-natural Green spaces, the second most prominent type of green space. Over half of unrestricted sites are found in West Bromwich and Rowley Regis, accounting for 52.1% of such sites. In contrast, Oldbury and Smethwick account for only 13.0% of sites.

| Typology Level 1                      | Oldbury       | Rowley Regis | Smethwick    | Tipton        | Wednesbury   | West Bromwich | Total          |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 35.40         | 62.35        | 5.46         | 35.29         | 18.92        | 56.22         | <b>213.64</b>  |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 3.29          | 12.67        | 20.09        | 10.78         | 12.79        | 20.14         | <b>79.76</b>   |
| Green Corridor                        | 0.00          | 4.81         | 18.35        | 19.81         | 3.12         | 7.50          | <b>53.59</b>   |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 13.78         | 78.16        | 2.17         | 72.82         | 22.20        | 269.02        | <b>458.15</b>  |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 31.32         | 5.99         | 10.03        | 0.00          | 9.44         | 51.84         | <b>108.62</b>  |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 27.69         | 48.67        | 88.8         | 30.82         | 16.71        | 51.42         | <b>264.11</b>  |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 0.21          | 0.35         | 1.50         | 0.00          | 1.34         | 1.25          | <b>4.65</b>    |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>111.69</b> | <b>213</b>   | <b>146.4</b> | <b>169.52</b> | <b>84.52</b> | <b>457.39</b> | <b>1182.52</b> |

Table 21 Unrestricted Green Space Distribution by Type and Town (Area - ha)

Table 21 above shows the area of unrestricted green space by type across each Town by green space type.

West Bromwich and Rowley Regis have similar coverage of unrestricted Amenity Green space with 56.22 and 62.35 hectares respectively. In contrast, although Smethwick has 9 such sites, it has less than a tenth of the Amenity Green space area as these 2 other towns (5.46 hectares).

West Bromwich has a dramatically greater amount of unrestricted Natural and Semi-natural Green space, covering just under 270 hectares. This is more than 3 times the area of the second ranked town Rowley Regis and accounts for 58.7% of all unrestricted green space of this type in the borough. In comparison, Wednesbury, Oldbury and particularly Smethwick have little provision of this kind.

West Bromwich and Oldbury account for 76.6% of all the accessible Outdoor Sports Facilities in the Borough. On the other hand, Tipton has no unrestricted Outdoor Sports provision.

Parks and Gardens are available in all 6 Towns although Smethwick has the greatest quantity of provision with nearly 89 hectares, making up 60.7% of its unrestricted Green space. This is more than 5 times the provision in Wednesbury which has the smallest quantity of green space of this type.



| Size Range (Ha) | Number     | %            |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| 20 <            | 10         | 3.1          |
| 10 to 20        | 22         | 6.8          |
| 5.0 to 9.9      | 28         | 8.7          |
| 2.0 to 4.9      | 56         | 17.3         |
| 1.0 to 1.9      | 45         | 13.9         |
| 0.5 to 0.9      | 63         | 19.5         |
| < 0.5           | 99         | 30.7         |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>323</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Table 22 Distribution of Unrestricted Green Space sites by Size

Again, the provision of sites by size follows a 'pyramid' distribution with greater number of smaller sites and fewer larger sites (Table 23). When the accessibility of green space is considered the effect is to exaggerate this distribution (compared to Table 21).

30.7% of unrestricted sites are less than 0.5 hectares, and a half are between 0.5 and 5 hectares. Only a tenth of sites (9.9%) are larger than 10 hectares.

#### 4.2.3 Quantity of Unrestricted Green space per 1000 Population

The estimated population (Mid-Year Estimates) for Sandwell Borough in 2017 was 325,460. This figure has been used to calculate the amount of accessible green space per 1000 population for Sandwell Borough. This data has also been broken down by green space type as shown in Table 23 below. Changes between the data in this audit and previous versions are discussed in later sections of this report.

| Typology Level 1                      | Amount of Unrestricted Green space (Ha) | Amount of Unrestricted Green space (Ha) per 1000 Population |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 213.64                                  | 0.66  |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 79.76                                   | 0.25  |
| Green Corridor                        | 53.59                                   | 0.16  |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 458.15                                  | 1.41  |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 108.62                                  | 0.33  |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 264.11                                  | 0.81  |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 4.65                                    | 0.01  |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>1182.52</b>                          | <b>3.63</b>   |

Table 23 Quantity of Unrestricted Green space per 1000 Population

Overall Sandwell Borough has an average of 3.63 hectares of unrestricted green space per 1000 population. The largest proportion of this is Natural and Semi-Natural Green space with 1.41 hectares per 1000 population. This is followed by 0.81 hectares of Parks and Gardens and 0.66 hectares of Amenity Green space per 1000 population.

| Other Green space Studies                           | Hectares of unrestricted green space per 1000 population |
|---|--|
| Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (2011)       | 7.51   |
| Stoke-on-Trent City Council (2011)                  | 6.60   |
| Coventry City Council (2018)                        | 3.69   |
| Gateshead Council (2011)                            | 5.64   |
| Walsall Council (2018)                              | 4.72   |
| Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (2011)          | 4.51   |
| <b>Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2019)</b> | <b>3.63</b>  |
| Wolverhampton City Council (2011)                   | 3.60   |
| Birmingham City Council (2018)                      | 2.80   |
| Oldham Council (2011)                               | 3.14   |
| Hull City Council (2011)                            | 1.78   |
| Knowsley Council (2011)                             | 1.50   |

Table 24 Quantity of provision in other local authority areas

Table 24 above shows the quantity of provision in Sandwell and that of a sample of other local authorities. Overall, Sandwell has the least amount of unrestricted green space per 1,000 population than the other Black Country boroughs of Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton, although it has more green space than Birmingham.

It is important to note that figures other than Sandwell are mostly based on population figures from the 2011 census, while the figure for Sandwell is based on population estimates in 2017 (the 2013 Green Space audit found that Sandwell had 3.90 ha per 1,000 population).

| Town            | Amount of Unrestricted Green space (Ha) | Town Population | Amount of Unrestricted Green space (Ha) per 1000 Population |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|---|
| West Bromwich   | 457.39                                  | 80647           | 5.67  |
| Rowley Regis    | 213                                     | 51255           | 4.16  |
| Tipton          | 169.52                                  | 41080           | 4.13  |
| Borough Average | 1182.52                                 | 325460          | 3.63  |
| Smethwick       | 146.4                                   | 60033           | 2.44  |
| Wednesbury      | 84.52                                   | 39160           | 2.16  |
| Oldbury         | 111.69                                  | 53285           | 2.10  |

Table 25 Quantity of Unrestricted Green space per 1000 Population by Town

Table 25 above and Chart 4 below show the quantity of unrestricted green space by Town. It can be seen that there is considerable variation in the amount of provision between Towns.

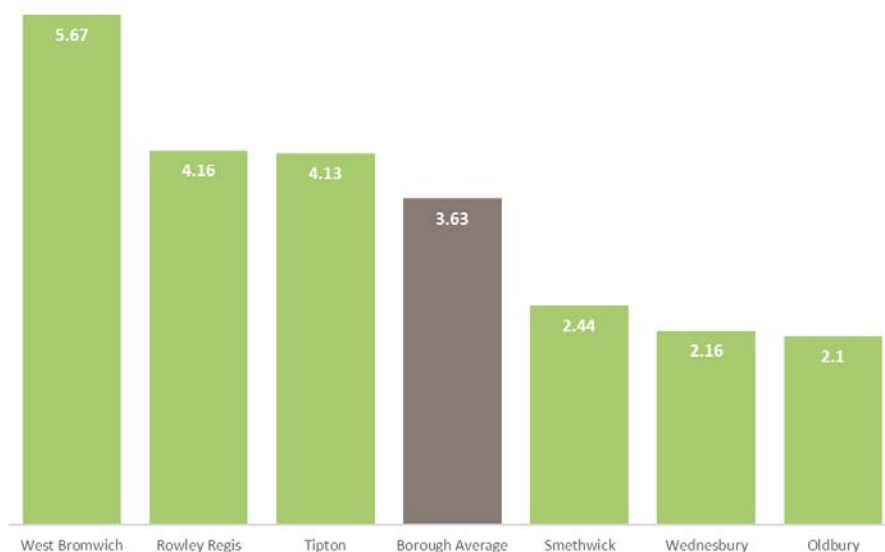


Chart 4 Hectares per 1000 population by town

West Bromwich has 5.67 hectares per 1000 population which is approximately 65% more provision than the Borough average of 3.44 hectares. Rowley Regis and Tipton also have provision that is more than the Borough average. Smethwick, Oldbury and Wednesbury all have significantly less provision of unrestricted green space than the Borough average, with Oldbury having approximately 61% less provision than the Borough average.

| Ward                       | Amount of Unrestricted Green space (Ha) | Ward Population | Amount of Unrestricted Green space (Ha) per 1000 Population |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| West Bromwich Central      | 186.66                                  | 14511           | 12.86   |
| Great Barr with Yew tree   | 85.03                                   | 12855           | 6.61  |
| Newton                     | 76.88                                   | 12612           | 6.10  |
| Great Bridge               | 79.17                                   | 13428           | 5.90  |
| Tividale                   | 68.66                                   | 12882           | 5.33  |
| Rowley                     | 60.97                                   | 11856           | 5.14  |
| Cradley Heath and Old Hill | 55.1                                    | 13988           | 3.94  |
| St. Pauls                  | 58.09                                   | 15302           | 3.80  |
| Borough Average            | 1182.52                                 | 325460          | 3.63  |
| Hateley Heath              | 53.03                                   | 15017           | 3.53  |
| Princes End                | 45.92                                   | 13487           | 3.40  |
| Tipton Green               | 44.43                                   | 14165           | 3.14  |
| Langley                    | 42.05                                   | 13716           | 3.07  |
| Abbey                      | 38.13                                   | 12537           | 3.04  |
| Charlemont with Grove Vale | 32.03                                   | 12258           | 2.61  |
| Wednesbury North           | 32.39                                   | 13223           | 2.45  |
| Oldbury                    | 36.4                                    | 15014           | 2.42  |
| Blackheath                 | 28.27                                   | 12529           | 2.26  |
| Friar Park                 | 25.92                                   | 12718           | 2.04  |
| Wednesbury South           | 26.21                                   | 13219           | 1.98  |
| Bristnall                  | 22.64                                   | 12279           | 1.84  |
| Greets Green and Lyng      | 23.76                                   | 13394           | 1.77  |
| Smethwick                  | 25.15                                   | 15115           | 1.66  |
| Soho and Victoria          | 25.03                                   | 17079           | 1.47  |
| Old Warley                 | 10.6                                    | 12276           | 0.86  |

Table 26 Quantity of Unrestricted Green space per 1000 Population by Ward

Table 26 above shows the amount of unrestricted green space per 1000 population at a Ward level. Population figures are derived from 2017 England and Wales mid-year estimates. The level of variation with respect to the Borough wide average is significantly greater at Ward level than Town level, with West Bromwich Central Ward having nearly fifteen times more green space than Old Warley Ward. This can also be seen geographically in Figure 3 overleaf.

## Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 3  
Unrestricted Green Space Provision by Ward



### LEGEND

Ward Boundaries

Town Boudaries

Ha/1000 population

|         |      |
|---------|------|
| 12 - 14 | (1)  |
| 6 - 8   | (2)  |
| 4 - 6   | (3)  |
| 2 - 4   | (13) |
| 0 - 2   | (5)  |

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| Drawn by: | Checked by: | Date:    |
|-----------|-------------|----------|
| AD        | LH          | 09/01/19 |

#### 4.2.4 Comparison over time

Table 27 shows the change in the amount of unrestricted green space recorded through the green space audits in 2006, 2013 and 2018. Overall, the supply of green space has remained largely unchanged. There has been a net increase of 2.49 hectares of unrestricted green space between 2006 and 2018, although the number of spaces has reduced slightly.

Looking at different green space types there have been some changes, in part as a result of the reclassification of the primary purpose of some spaces following. A small number of sites have been, in part or wholly, lost to development. The greatest variance has been the increase in Outdoor Sports Facilities (by area), with an additional 10.41 hectares since 2006 due to the reclassification of other sites.

This reclassification can account for the loss in other types of green space. The number of sites classified as Provision for Children and Young People has fallen by 3 since 2006. The 2 sites lost since 2013 were reclassified as Amenity Green Space, although this does not mean that the sites do function as play spaces, just that this is not their primary purpose. More detailed analysis of play provision is provided by the Level 2 (Play) mapping.

The other noteworthy variance is the drop in Green Corridor green space. While 1 site has been lost, 2 are no longer accessible, with the change to the River Tame Corridor area of 5.73 Ha having the biggest impact. The Green Space Strategy makes recommendations about improving connectivity and developing the network of green corridors and linear routes.

| Level 1 Typology                      | 2018       |                | 2013       |                | 2006       |                | Variance (Ha) |
|---------------------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
|                                       | Number     | Area (Ha)      | Number     | Area (Ha)      | Number     | Area (Ha)      |               |
| Amenity Green space                   | 181        | 213.64         | 184        | 224.83         | 181        | 219.28         | -5.64         |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 19         | 79.76          | 19         | 76.47          | 18         | 76.05          | +3.71         |
| Green Corridor                        | 16         | 53.59          | 19         | 60.65          | 17         | 56.96          | -3.37         |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Green space    | 46         | 458.15         | 45         | 457.33         | 44         | 455.58         | +2.57         |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 21         | 108.62         | 21         | 103.19         | 20         | 98.21          | +10.41        |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 31         | 264.11         | 32         | 271.76         | 29         | 263.49         | 0.62          |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 9          | 4.65           | 11         | 7.43           | 12         | 10.46          | -5.81         |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>323</b> | <b>1182.52</b> | <b>331</b> | <b>1201.66</b> | <b>321</b> | <b>1180.03</b> | <b>+2.49</b>  |

Table 27 Variance in Quantity of Unrestricted Green space

Table 28 overleaf shows that the Oldbury Ward has lost the most amount of green space between 2006 and 2018, with 10.78 hectares lost in this time period. Conversely, over 6.25 hectares of additional green space has been identified in the West Bromwich Central ward since 2006, although some space was lost between 2013 and 2018. Unrestricted green space in Soho and Victoria has steadily increased between 2006 and 2018, with over 5 hectares being added. Despite this, provision within this Ward has steadily fallen from 2.7 hectares per 1000 population in 2006 to 1.47 hectares per 1000 population in 2018 due to population growth.

Across all wards, the total area of unrestricted greenspace has increased by 2.49 hectares since 2006, yet in spite of this, green space provision has fallen by 0.61 hectares per 1000 population (from 4.24 to 3.64) as shown in Chart 5. This is largely as a result of the Borough's growing population.

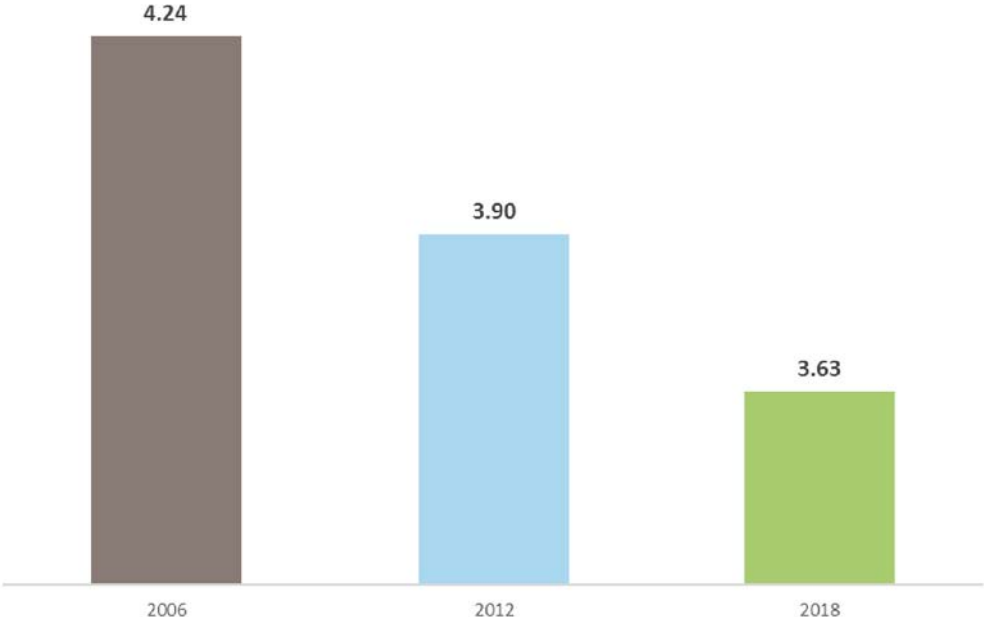


Chart 5 Change in hectares per 1000 population

Taking into account the project population increase of 30,000 additional residents by 2030, and assuming the supply of green space remains unchanged, there will be just 3.3 hectares per 1,000 population in 2030.



| Ward                       | 2018          |                    | 2013          |                    | 2006          |                    | Variance (ha) |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
|                            | Quantity (Ha) | Quantity Ha / 1000 | Quantity (Ha) | Quantity Ha / 1000 | Quantity (Ha) | Quantity Ha / 1000 |               |
| West Bromwich Central      | 186.66        | 12.86              | 187.5         | 14.11              | 180.41        | 17.21              | +6.25         |
| Soho and Victoria          | 25.03         | 1.47               | 24.13         | 1.6                | 19.76         | 2.7                | +5.27         |
| Bristnall                  | 23.76         | 1.77               | 19.38         | 1.59               | 19.3          | 1.55               | +4.46         |
| Hateley Heath              | 53.03         | 3.53               | 53.03         | 3.73               | 49.66         | 4.03               | +3.37         |
| Borough Average            | 1182.52       | 3.63               | 1201.66       | 3.9                | 1180.03       | 4.24               | +2.49         |
| Wednesbury North           | 32.39         | 2.45               | 32.39         | 2.55               | 29.94         | 2.42               | +2.45         |
| Newton                     | 76.88         | 6.1                | 76.88         | 6.65               | 74.47         | 6.54               | +2.41         |
| Friar Park                 | 25.92         | 2.04               | 26.66         | 2.11               | 23.87         | 2.1                | +2.05         |
| Tipton Green               | 44.43         | 3.14               | 44.53         | 3.47               | 42.61         | 2.66               | +1.82         |
| Rowley                     | 60.97         | 5.14               | 60.97         | 5.17               | 59.3          | 6.26               | +1.67         |
| Great Bridge               | 79.17         | 5.9                | 79.76         | 6.15               | 78.39         | 6.26               | +0.78         |
| Tividale                   | 68.66         | 5.33               | 68.66         | 5.44               | 68.59         | 5.56               | +0.07         |
| St. Pauls                  | 58.09         | 3.8                | 58.12         | 4.09               | 58.08         | 5.06               | +0.01         |
| Princes End                | 45.92         | 3.4                | 45.92         | 3.54               | 45.92         | 3.58               | -             |
| Abbey                      | 38.13         | 3.04               | 38.13         | 3.24               | 38.13         | 3.34               | -             |
| Smethwick                  | 25.15         | 1.66               | 25.15         | 1.78               | 25.15         | 2.29               | -             |
| Old Warley                 | 10.6          | 0.86               | 10.6          | 0.89               | 10.6          | 0.97               | -             |
| Blackheath                 | 28.27         | 2.26               | 28.27         | 2.3                | 28.3          | 2.29               | -0.03         |
| Great Barr with Yew tree   | 85.03         | 6.61               | 85.34         | 6.77               | 85.32         | 6.88               | -0.29         |
| Langley                    | 42.05         | 3.07               | 42.63         | 3.29               | 43.14         | 3.45               | -1.09         |
| Cradley Heath and Old Hill | 55.1          | 3.94               | 55.66         | 4.1                | 56.81         | 4.56               | -1.71         |
| Greets Green and Lyng      | 26.21         | 1.98               | 29.39         | 2.5                | 29.32         | 2.85               | -3.11         |
| Wednesbury South           | 22.64         | 1.84               | 26.98         | 2.16               | 27.2          | 2.27               | -4.56         |
| Charlemont with Grove Vale | 32.03         | 2.61               | 37.76         | 3.16               | 38.58         | 3.43               | -6.55         |
| Oldbury                    | 36.4          | 2.42               | 43.82         | 3.22               | 47.18         | 4.36               | -10.78        |

Table 28 Quantity of Unrestricted Green space per 1000 Population by Ward

### 4.3 Play Space Provision

All play spaces were included in the analysis below. Play spaces may or may not include sites containing play areas, Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) and outdoor gym equipment. In total, there are 69 sites with play spaces in Sandwell. Of these, 27 are local equipped area for play (LEAP) standard, with 7 additional neighbourhood equipped area for play) NEAP sites. There is only one strategic equipped for play (SEAP) site in Sandwell: Sandwell Park Farm. Overall, 35 sites have multi-use games areas (MUGA), 31 contain play areas or play equipment, 19 have fitness equipment, including trim trails and exercise machines, and 10 have skate or BMX facilities.

| Town          | Sites with play provision |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| Rowley Regis  | 16                        |
| Smethwick     | 14                        |
| West Bromwich | 12                        |
| Tipton        | 10                        |
| Oldbury       | 9                         |
| Wednesbury    | 8                         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>69</b>                 |

Table 29 Distribution of play spaces by Town

The table above shows that Rowley Regis has the most play areas in Sandwell (16) whilst Oldbury and Wednesbury have the least, with 9 and 8 respectively.

| Town          | Area of sites with play provision (ha) | Town Area (ha) | % of town area catered for by play provision |
|---------------|--|----------------|--|
| Tipton        | 73.61                                  | 963.68         | 7.6  |
| West Bromwich | 158.61                                 | 2481.40        | 6.4  |
| Smethwick     | 63.45                                  | 1147.62        | 5.5  |
| Rowley Regis  | 61.14                                  | 1357.76        | 4.5  |
| Oldbury       | 41.36                                  | 1450.27        | 2.9  |
| Wednesbury    | 30.15                                  | 1156.89        | 2.6  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>428.32</b>                          | <b>8557.62</b> | <b>29.5</b>                                  |

Table 30 Land area which caters for play space by Town

Table 30 shows the total area of sites with play spaces. The data shows that Tipton has the highest proportion of land area catered for by play provision, with 7.6%. The towns with the lowest provision for land area are Wednesbury and Oldbury, with 2.9% and 2.6% cover respectively.

Table 31 shows the amount of formal play space per 1,000 population by town.

| Row Labels    | Area (Ha)     | Population     | Ha/1000     |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Oldbury       | 38.25         | 53,285         | 0.72        |
| Rowley Regis  | 40.96         | 51,255         | 0.80        |
| Smethwick     | 63.63         | 60,033         | 1.06        |
| Tipton        | 81.23         | 41,080         | 1.98        |
| Wednesbury    | 33.92         | 39,160         | 0.87        |
| West Bromwich | 164.48        | 80,647         | 2.04        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>422.47</b> | <b>325,460</b> | <b>1.30</b> |

Table 31 Amount of green space with play provision per 1,000 population

Overall, there is 1.30 hectares of green space with play provision per 1,000 population at a Borough wide level. However, there is significant variation with Oldbury having 0.72 ha per 1000 population and Tipton 1.98 ha per 1,000 population.

Figure 4 overleaf shows play spaces throughout Sandwell buffered according to their designation. NEAPS and local play areas have been buffered at 400m, LEAPS at 1000m and the SEAP at 2000m. This shows that the majority of Sandwell residents have access to a local or neighbourhood play space.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 4  
Proximity to Play Provision

## LEGEND

 Play Provision

### Buffer


 400m

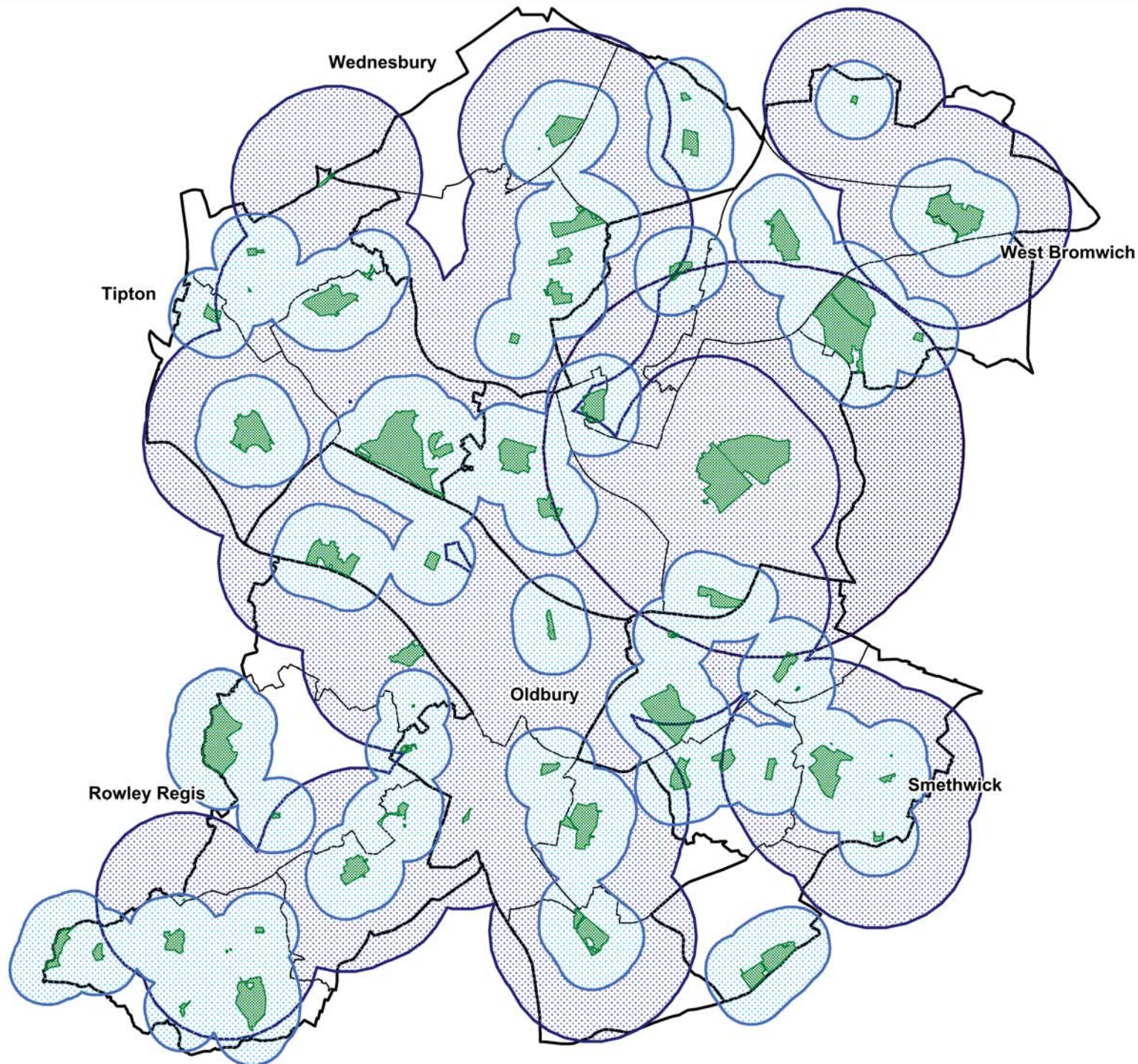
 1000m

 2000m

### Boundaries

 Ward boundaries

 Town boundaries



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## 4.4 Accessible Natural Green Space

Natural England believes that everyone should have access to good quality natural greenspace near to where they live and in 2014 produced 'Nature Nearby' guidance on Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards.

The provision of Natural and Semi-natural Green Space recorded using the Level 2 typology has been mapped and can be compared against the English Nature Accessible Natural Green Space (ANGSt) Standard.

ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural greenspace:

- of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home;
- at least 1 accessible 20 hectare site within 2 kilometres of home;
- one accessible 100 hectare site within 5 kilometres of home; and  
one accessible 500 hectare site within 10 kilometres of home; plus  
a minimum of 1 hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population

We have considered green space provision in Sandwell against the first 2 quantitative measures and the standard for LNR provision. The accessibility of 100 hectare and 500 hectare spaces has not been carried out since many sites would lie outside the Borough and the Council would have little influence on this provision.

Figure 5 below shows the accessibility of Natural and Semi-natural Green space over 2 hectares based on a 300 metre buffer. It can be seen that Sandwell Borough does not achieve this part of the ANGSt Standard since there are large areas of the Borough with no access to natural and semi-natural green space. Sandwell Valley and its component green spaces cover a large area of West Bromwich but even with this level of provision there are large areas of West Bromwich Town where households do not have access to accessible natural green space. Similarly, there are significant areas within each town where residents do not have access to accessible natural green space within 300m.

Figure 6 illustrates the proximity to natural and semi-natural green spaces over 20 hectares in size where the sites are buffered at 2 kilometres. There are 3 areas of provision under this measure, Sandwell Valley and north east West Bromwich, Rowley Regis and Tipton.

Sandwell Valley and the sites in north eastern West Bromwich are accessible to large areas of the Town and smaller areas of Wednesbury and Smethwick. This green space also serves part of Birmingham to the east.

The second largest area of the Borough with access to semi-natural green spaces over 20 hectares is centred around the Rowley Hills. Sheepwash, located to the north of this area also forms part of, and extends the buffer

into Tipton. This area of provision is accessible to the northern half of Rowley Regis, the north west of Oldbury, the south east of Tipton and parts of Wednesbury and West Bromwich.




However, approximately one third of the Borough does not have access to semi-natural green space and consequently this part of the ANGSt standard is not met.

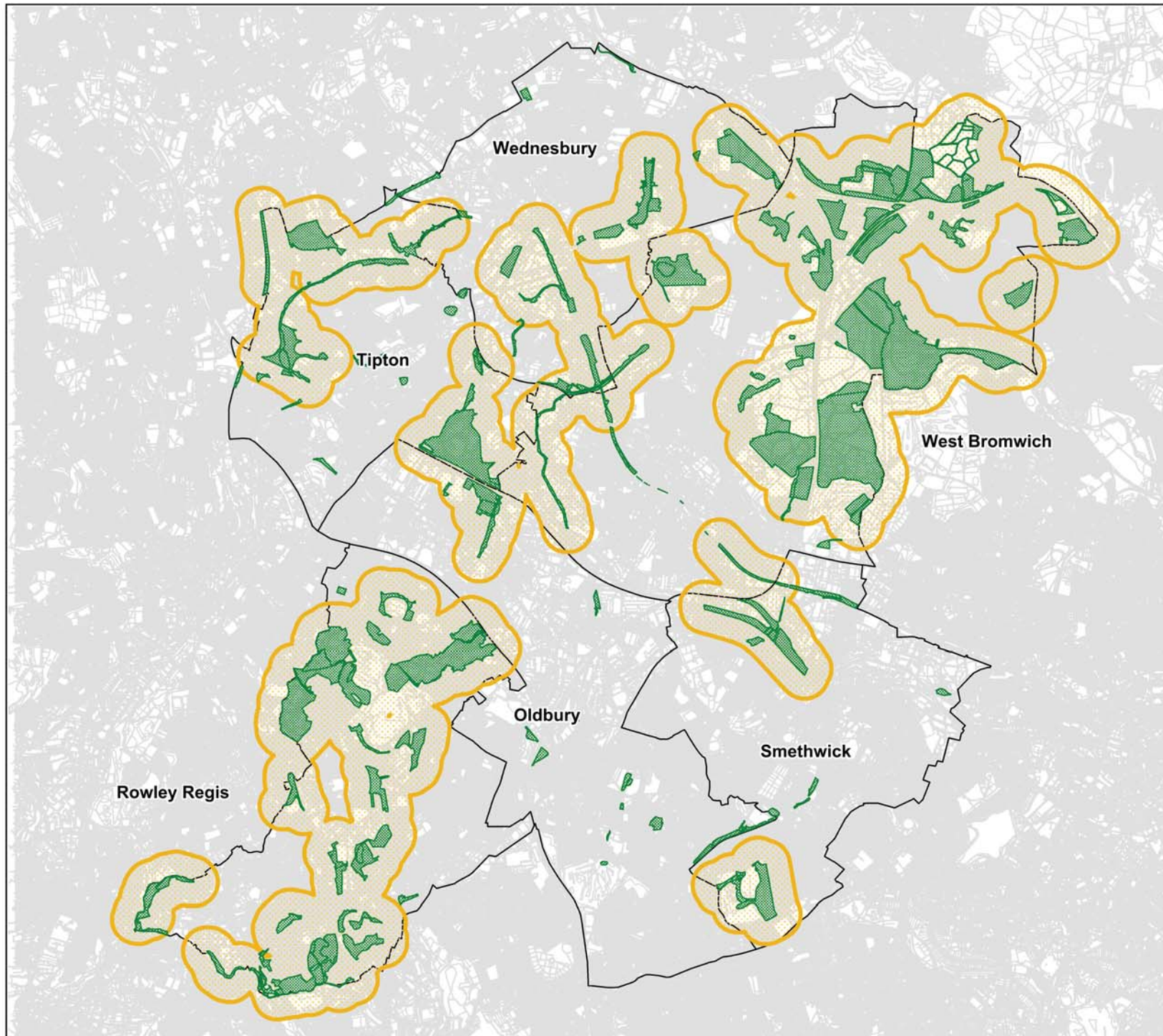
There are a total of 9 designated Local Nature Reserves in Sandwell Borough. The total area amounts to 288.60 hectares which equates to 0.89 hectare per 1000 population, which is 0.11 hectares per 1000 population below the ANGSt Standard of 1.0 hectares per 1000 population. Therefore, Sandwell requires an additional 35.80 hectares designated as Local Nature Reserve to meet the Standard.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 5  
Sites over 2 hectares  
with 300m buffer

## LEGEND

-  300m buffer
-  Green space
-  Town boundaries



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## Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 6  
Sites over 20  
hectares with 2km  
buffer

### LEGEND

-  2 km buffer
-  Green space
-  Town boundaries

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**4.5 Consultation Results**

| Level         | Quantity of Parks & Green Spaces | Quantity of Outdoor Sports Facilities | Quantity of Provision for Play | Allotments and Community Gardens |
|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Oldbury       | About right                      | Too little                            | Too little                     | Too little                       |
| Rowley Regis  | About right                      | Too little                            | Too little                     | Too little                       |
| Smethwick     | About right                      | Too little                            | About right                    | Too little                       |
| Tipton        | About right                      | About right                           | Too little                     | Too little                       |
| Wednesbury    | About right                      | Too little                            | About right                    | About right                      |
| West Bromwich | About right                      | Too little                            | Too little                     | Too little                       |
| Borough Wide  | About right                      | Too little                            | Too little                     | Too little                       |

Table 32 Household Survey Consultation Results

A Household Survey was carried out in 2018 to understand residents views about green space provision across the Borough. The survey found that respondents from all areas believed that the current quantity of Parks and Gardens were about right. However, there were concerns about the supply of outdoor sports in all town with the exception of Tipton. There was also concern noted about the quantity of play provision and allotments expressed across 4 towns and 5 towns respectively.

The findings of the consultation processes carried out as part of the Green Space Audit are set out in more detail in section 5 of this report.

## 4.6 Green Space Provision and Deprivation

The Public Parks Inquiry (House of Commons 2017) concluded that the distribution of parks is unequal across the country, with many deprived communities struggling to access the benefits which green spaces can provide. This section of the Audit compares the quantity and green space provision at a Town Level with the indices of multiple deprivation (using the overall and health domains). A similar exploration is carried out looking at green space quality later in section 7.5.

### 4.6.1 Quantity and Overall Index of Multiple Deprivation

The section below explores the links between the quantity of green space in Sandwell and deprivation. The quality assessment report looks at the quality of green space across the borough and deprivation.

| Town          | Quantity (ha/1000) | Quantity Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Overall Rank | Average IMD Overall Ranked by Town |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| West Bromwich | 5.71               | 1                  | 9181                        | 4                                  |
| Rowley Regis  | 4.16               | 2                  | 9764                        | 6                                  |
| Tipton        | 4.13               | 3                  | 6139                        | 2                                  |
| Smethwick     | 2.44               | 4                  | 6498                        | 3                                  |
| Wednesbury    | 2.16               | 5                  | 5965                        | 1                                  |
| Oldbury       | 2.10               | 6                  | 9247                        | 5                                  |

Table 33 Quantity of Green Space and Deprivation by Town

The towns of Smethwick, Wednesbury and Oldbury have lower supplies of unrestricted green space than the borough average of 3.63 hectares per 1,000 population. Wednesbury and Smethwick are ranked first and third in terms of the average levels of deprivation. West Bromwich and Rowley Regis have higher levels of green space provision and experience typically lower levels of deprivation at a town level.

| Ward                     | Quantity (ha/1000) | Quantity Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Overall Rank | Average IMD Overall Ranked by Town |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| West Bromwich Central    | 12.86              | 1                  | 4977                        | 6                                  |
| Great Barr with Yew tree | 6.61               | 2                  | 14561                       | 24                                 |
| Newton                   | 6.10               | 3                  | 14152                       | 23                                 |
| Great Bridge             | 5.90               | 4                  | 6451                        | 12                                 |
| Tividale                 | 5.33               | 5                  | 12443                       | 19                                 |

|                            |      |    |       |    |
|----------------------------|------|----|-------|----|
| Rowley                     | 5.14 | 6  | 7539  | 14 |
| Cradley Heath and Old Hill | 3.94 | 7  | 10398 | 18 |
| St. Pauls                  | 3.80 | 8  | 4854  | 5  |
| Hateley Heath              | 3.53 | 9  | 4553  | 3  |
| Princes End                | 3.40 | 10 | 5804  | 7  |
| Tipton Green               | 3.14 | 11 | 6243  | 11 |
| Langley                    | 3.07 | 12 | 6712  | 13 |
| Abbey                      | 3.04 | 13 | 13405 | 20 |
| Charlemont with Grove Vale | 2.61 | 14 | 13582 | 21 |
| Wednesbury North           | 2.45 | 15 | 6057  | 10 |
| Oldbury                    | 2.42 | 16 | 7905  | 15 |
| Blackheath                 | 2.26 | 17 | 8518  | 16 |
| Friar Park                 | 2.04 | 18 | 5880  | 8  |
| Greets Green and Lyng      | 2.00 | 19 | 3810  | 2  |
| Wednesbury South           | 1.98 | 20 | 5981  | 9  |
| Bristnall                  | 1.84 | 21 | 8622  | 17 |
| Smethwick                  | 1.66 | 22 | 4703  | 4  |
| Soho and Victoria          | 1.47 | 23 | 3029  | 1  |
| Old Warley                 | 0.86 | 24 | 14029 | 22 |

Table 34 Quantity of Green Space and Deprivation by Ward

At a ward level, 6 of the 10 most deprived wards (average deprivation score) have the lowest levels of green space provision. Soho and Victoria Ward (Smethwick) is the most deprived ward in the borough and ranks 23<sup>rd</sup> (out of 24 wards) for the quantity of green space. Greets Green and Lyng ward (West Bromwich) is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> for deprivation and 19<sup>th</sup> for the quantity of green space.

Conversely, West Bromwich Central ward has the highest level of green space provision but is the 6<sup>th</sup> most deprived ward in the Borough. St Pauls (Smethwick), Hateley Heath (West Bromwich), Princes End (Tipton) and to a lesser degree Tipton Green (Tipton) are among the most deprived wards in the borough but with relatively high levels of green space provision.

#### 4.6.2 Quantity and Health Deprivation and Disability Domain

The tables below set out the levels of health deprivation and disability against the supply of green space.

| Town          | Quantity (ha/1000) | Quantity Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Health Rank | Average IMD Health Ranked by Town |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| West Bromwich | 5.71               | 1                  | 9758                       | 6                                 |
| Rowley Regis  | 4.16               | 2                  | 8890                       | 4                                 |
| Tipton        | 4.13               | 3                  | 5722                       | 1                                 |
| Smethwick     | 2.44               | 4                  | 6718                       | 3                                 |
| Wednesbury    | 2.16               | 5                  | 6626                       | 2                                 |
| Oldbury       | 2.10               | 6                  | 9240                       | 5                                 |

Table 35 Quantity of Green Space and Health Deprivation by Town

When considering the levels of relative health and deprivation and disability at town level a similar pattern emerges when compared to the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation. Residents of Wednesbury and Smethwick have relatively little green space but experience much higher levels of health deprivation. However, Tipton ward tends to display higher levels of deprivation against the health domain than the overall combined index.

| Ward                       | Quantity (ha/1000) | Quantity Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Health Rank | Average IMD Health Ranked by Ward |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| West Bromwich Central      | 12.86              | 1                  | 5971                       | 7                                 |
| Great Barr with Yew tree   | 6.61               | 2                  | 14389                      | 24                                |
| Newton                     | 6.10               | 3                  | 13835                      | 23                                |
| Great Bridge               | 5.90               | 4                  | 5197                       | 2                                 |
| Tividale                   | 5.33               | 5                  | 11864                      | 20                                |
| Rowley                     | 5.14               | 6                  | 7244                       | 13                                |
| Cradley Heath and Old Hill | 3.94               | 7                  | 8162                       | 15                                |
| St. Pauls                  | 3.80               | 8                  | 5926                       | 6                                 |
| Hateley Heath              | 3.53               | 9                  | 6278                       | 9                                 |
| Princes End                | 3.40               | 10                 | 6003                       | 8                                 |
| Tipton Green               | 3.14               | 11                 | 5864                       | 5                                 |

|                            |      |    |       |    |
|----------------------------|------|----|-------|----|
| Langley                    | 3.07 | 12 | 8268  | 17 |
| Abbey                      | 3.04 | 13 | 11495 | 19 |
| Charlemont with Grove Vale | 2.61 | 14 | 13244 | 22 |
| Wednesbury North           | 2.45 | 15 | 6444  | 10 |
| Oldbury                    | 2.42 | 16 | 9268  | 18 |
| Blackheath                 | 2.26 | 17 | 8204  | 16 |
| Friar Park                 | 2.04 | 18 | 6682  | 11 |
| Greets Green and Lyng      | 2.00 | 19 | 5286  | 3  |
| Wednesbury South           | 1.98 | 20 | 6721  | 12 |
| Bristnall                  | 1.84 | 21 | 7762  | 14 |
| Smethwick                  | 1.66 | 22 | 5683  | 4  |
| Soho and Victoria          | 1.47 | 23 | 3770  | 1  |
| Old Warley                 | 0.86 | 24 | 11870 | 21 |

Table 36 Quantity of Green Space and Health Deprivation by Town

At a Ward level, against the health and disability domain there are fewer of the most deprived wards that have lower levels of green space provision. Just 4 of the most deprived wards (Soho & Victoria, Smethwick ward, Greets Green & Lyng and Friar Park) are in the lower half of table 24 in terms of the amount of unrestricted green space per 1,000 population.

Conversely, West Bromwich Central has the highest amount of green space at a ward level and ranks 7<sup>th</sup> out of 24 wards against the health and disability index. Great Bridge ward ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> most deprived with the 4<sup>th</sup> highest supply of green space.

## 5 Understanding the Demand

A key component of the Green Space Audit has been consultation with local communities and other providers. This has provided the opportunity to make an assessment of existing patterns of use, to explore ideas for improvement and to provide data to complement other parts of the audit such as quantity and quality assessments. In addition to comparing the findings of the latest survey with the previous surveys carried out in 2006 and 2011, the questionnaire has also generated qualitative consultation to explore key issues that arise and comparisons have been made later in this report to the results of the quantity, quality and value assessments that have been carried out.

### 5.1 Household Survey

#### 5.1.1 Summary of findings

- 1315 valid surveys were returned, of which 74.5% were paper copies.
- A greater proportion of respondents are visiting green spaces within Sandwell Borough than in 2013, increasing from 93.4% to 96.4%, and respondents are visiting more frequently, with respondents visiting weekly or more often increasing from 51.7% to 67.9%.
- Most frequently used/visited green spaces:
  - Sandwell Valley Country Park was the most frequently visited green space, being mentioned twice as much as the second most visited (19.1% compared with 10.8% for Warley Woods). It was also the most popular for events.
- The majority of respondents travel to green spaces on foot, usually for less than 10 minutes.
- The main use of green spaces was walking, with passive uses being more popular than active.
- Overall average quality ratings for green spaces was 7.3 out of 10. Warley Woods was rated highest with a score of 8.8.
- Just under 4 in 10 (39.0%) of respondents considered that the quality of their most visited space had improved, with a slightly greater proportion (40.1%) stating that quality had stayed the same.

The proportion of respondent that thought quality had improved had fallen by a third since 2013 (from 60% to 39%).

- Respondents wanted there to be more refreshment and general facilities such as toilets and for green spaces to be safer with less antisocial behaviour.
- Green spaces across Sandwell:
- The biggest barriers for all respondents were antisocial behaviour and lack of time while barriers for current non-users were not feeling safe and age/illness/disability.
- Nearly 2 in 3 (64.2%) thought there was the right quantity of parks. Over 4 in 10 considered there to be sufficient outdoor sports facilities, provision for play and allotments and community gardens. However, a greater proportion of respondents considered that there was insufficient provision for these types of green space.
- Satisfaction is fairly high for parks and green spaces, with 68.8% of respondents satisfied/very satisfied. However, satisfaction is lower for other types of provision, with all with less than half of respondents satisfied/very satisfied.
- The most important issues for respondents were standards of litter clearance and feelings of personal safety but these were rated poorly in terms of performance. The issues with the best performance were general standard of maintenance and provision of flowerbeds, trees and shrubs.
- Over half of respondents (56.9%) felt that green spaces contributed to their health and well-being and cited benefits such as a place to relax and contributing to a better local environment
- Respondents were in favour of all sources of funding except for increased charges for park facilities, which was opposed/strongly opposed by 55.6% of respondents.
- More respondents preferred fewer green spaces of higher quality than more, low quality spaces.
- Respondent profile:
- There was a larger proportion of female respondents (62.2%)

- Younger respondents were the most underrepresented age group (16-24).
- BME respondents were underrepresented compared with the population of Sandwell, particularly Asian and Asian British respondents.
- A third of respondents (33.0%) had a long term illness or disability.



## 5.1.2 Methodology

To inform the update of the Sandwell Green Space Strategy, a household survey was carried out that asked residents about their most frequently used green space, the quality of green spaces in Sandwell and what they would like to see prioritised in future. The survey ran from the 25<sup>th</sup> February to the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

The survey was mailed to a random sample of 15,000 households across Sandwell borough and included a covering letter explaining the purpose of the survey. The sample was stratified by town based on the response rate from the 2013 GSS Household Survey. The survey could also be completed online.

A prepaid envelope was supplied with each survey and there was an incentive in the form of a prize draw to help generate a good level of response.

A total of 1,315 valid surveys were returned, of which 980 were paper copies (74.5%) and 335 (25.5%) were completed online (giving an overall response rate of 6.5% for paper copies returned). Table 38 shows the response rate by town of respondents who responded to the question. However, 31 respondents did not provide their town of residence. This shows that each town was well represented, with a range of 14.5% of respondents from Tipton to 19.5% of respondents from Oldbury.

Where possible, results have been compared with household surveys in 2013 and 2006.

A copy of the survey is available in Appendix B and open question responses are presented in Appendix C.

| Town           | n    | % of total sample | Population | Population Rank |
|----------------|------|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Oldbury        | 250  | 19.0              | 53,285     | 3               |
| Rowley Regis   | 203  | 15.4              | 51,255     | 4               |
| Smethwick      | 211  | 16.0              | 60,033     | 2               |
| Tipton         | 186  | 14.1              | 41,080     | 5               |
| Wednesbury     | 194  | 14.8              | 39,160     | 6               |
| West Bromwich  | 240  | 18.3              | 80,647     | 1               |
| No town stated | 31   | 2.4               | -          | -               |
| Grand Total    | 1315 | 100.0             | 325,460    | -               |

Table 37 Level of response by town

5.1.3 Findings

**Respondent Profile**

In total there were 1,315 valid surveys returned. Male respondents were strongly underrepresented, accounting for only 37.6% of respondents, while 62.2% were female. This is very similar to the gender profile in the 2013 household survey (61.2% female). 2 respondents (0.1%) were transgender.

Table 38 below shows the age profile of the respondents compared with the whole of Sandwell Borough and England & Wales. Almost half of respondents were over the age of 55 (47.5%), compared with just over a quarter in Sandwell Borough (25.2%) and in England and Wales (28.1%), showing that older respondents are overrepresented in this survey. The most underrepresented group was respondents between 16 and 24, who accounted for 3.2% of respondents but account for over a tenth in Sandwell Borough (12%) and in England and Wales (11.9%).

| Age group | 2018 Household Survey |       | Sandwell Borough (%) | England & Wales (%) |
|-----------|-----------------------|-------|----------------------|---------------------|
|           | n                     | %     |                      |                     |
| <15       | -                     | -     | 21.5                 | 18.9                |
| 16 – 24   | 40                    | 3.2   | 12.0                 | 11.9                |
| 25 – 34   | 153                   | 12.3  | 14.4                 | 13.4                |
| 35 – 44   | 236                   | 19.0  | 14.1                 | 14.0                |
| 45 – 54   | 223                   | 18.0  | 12.8                 | 13.7                |
| 55 – 64   | 236                   | 19.0  | 10.0                 | 11.7                |
| 65+       | 353                   | 28.4  | 15.2                 | 16.4                |
| Total     | 1241                  | 100.0 | 100.0                | 100.0               |

Table 38 Age profile

Respondents were also asked if they had a limited long-term illness or disability which affected their day-to-day activities and work. A third of respondents who responded to this question (33%) said that they did, which is a much higher proportion than in the whole of Sandwell Borough (20.9%). This could be because of the high proportion of elderly respondents in the survey, who are more likely to have a long-term illness or health problem affecting their day-to-day activities.

Respondents were also asked to rate their overall physical health. Table 39 demonstrates that two thirds of respondents considered themselves in good or very good health (66.0%) and a less than a tenth considered themselves to be in poor or very poor health (8.7%).

| Health                | n           | %             |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Very good             | 219         | 17.6          |
| Good                  | 602         | 48.8          |
| Neither good nor poor | 312         | 25.1          |
| Poor                  | 78          | 6.3           |
| Very poor             | 30          | 2.4           |
| Don't Know            | 3           | 0.2           |
| <b>Grand Total</b>    | <b>1244</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

Table 39 Respondent health

Table 40 shows the ethnic profile of the survey respondents. Nearly 9 in 10 respondents were White (88.6%), which is an overrepresentation compared with the whole of Sandwell (69.9%) but in line England and Wales as a whole (86%). Most notably, Asian and Asian British respondents made up less than a tenth of respondents (7.3%) but make up nearly a fifth of Sandwell's population (19.2%). Of those that responded 'Other ethnic background', responses included Greek, Sikh and White North-African.

| Ethnic group                        | 2019 Household Survey |       | Sandwell Borough (%) | England & Wales (%) |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|----------------------|---------------------|
|                                     | n                     | %     |                      |                     |
| White (British, Irish, Other White) | 1079                  | 88.6  | 69.9                 | 86.0                |
| Asian or Asian British              | 89                    | 7.3   | 19.2                 | 7.5                 |
| Black or Black British              | 34                    | 2.8   | 6.0                  | 3.3                 |
| Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups      | 12                    | 1.0   | 3.3                  | 2.2                 |
| Other ethnic background             | 4                     | 0.3   | 1.6                  | 1.0                 |
| Total                               | 1218                  | 100.0 | 100.0                | 100.0               |

Table 40 Ethnic profile

### Spatial Analysis

1,207 respondents gave valid postcodes, which have been analysed spatially. Figure 7 overleaf, shows that there was a good spread of responses from across the Borough, with respondents from every ward. There were 10 postcodes that fell outside the Borough boundary, although 6 of these are close to the border.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

## Figure 7 Respondent Postcode Distribution

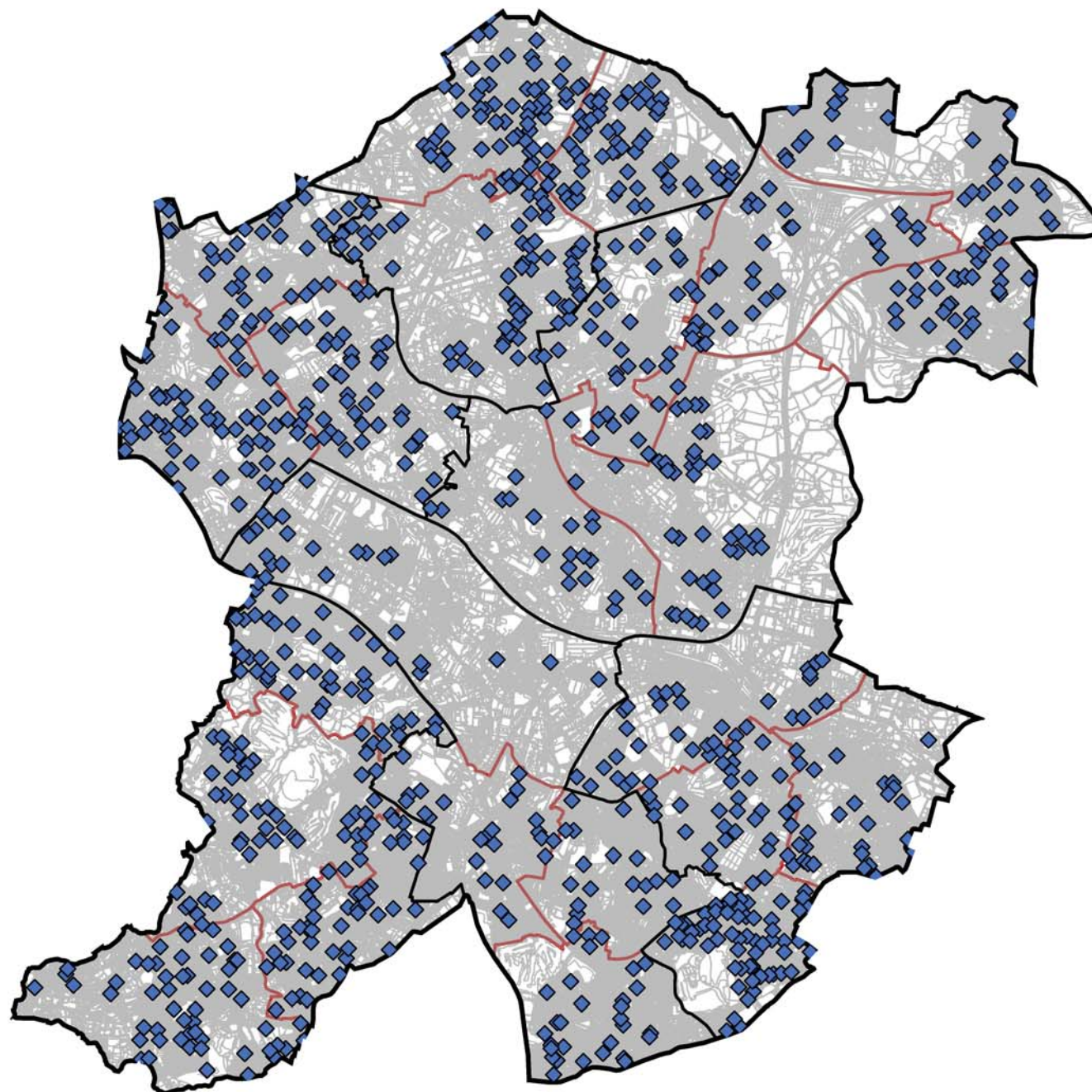
### LEGEND

◆ Respondent postcodes

▭ Borough

▭ Town

▭ Ward



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Ordnance Survey 100032119

|                 |                   |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Drawn by:<br>AD | Checked by:<br>AS | Date:<br>26/03/19 |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**Frequency of Use**

Chart 6 shows how frequently respondents to the household survey said they visited any green space in Sandwell. It demonstrates that more respondents are now using green spaces in Sandwell more than in 2013, with the proportion of respondents using green space increasing from 93.4% to 96.4%. Furthermore, respondents are using green spaces more frequently, with over two thirds of respondents visiting a green space at least weekly (67.9%) compared with just over half in 2013 (51.7%). In addition, the proportion of respondent visiting less than monthly or never at all has halved (from 30.3% to 16.1%).

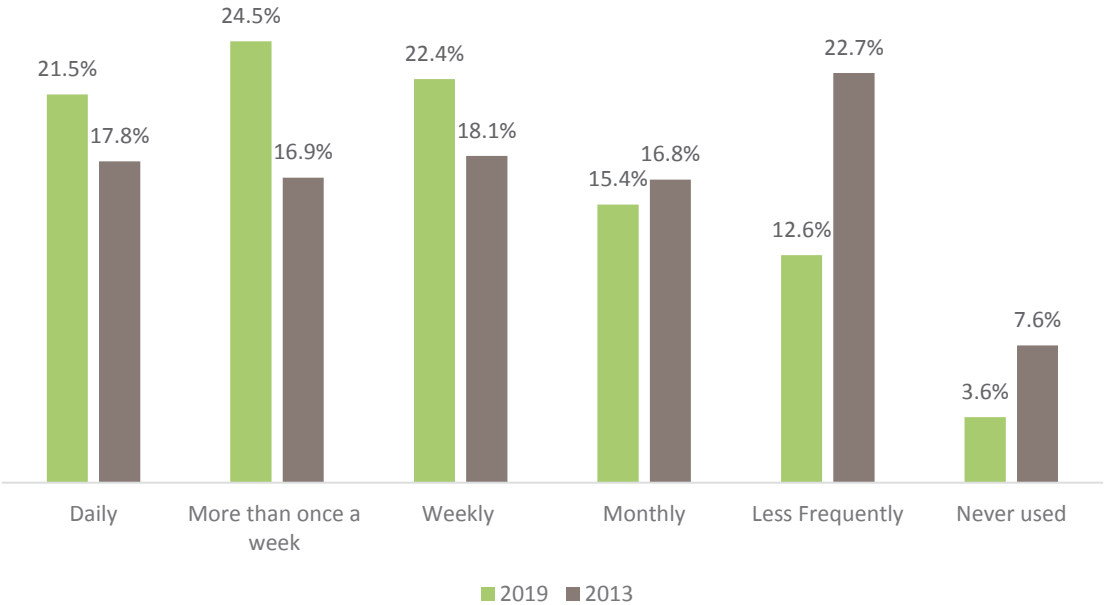


Chart 6 Frequency of use

When this is broken down by town, it can be seen that respondents living in Smethwick, Rowley Regis and Tipton visit green space more frequently than the average for Sandwell borough (Table 41). Those in Wednesbury are least likely to visit green space on a weekly or more frequent basis. However, frequency of green space use has dramatically increased in all towns, with all towns increasing from approximately half of respondents visiting weekly or more often in 2013 to at least two thirds in 2019. Notably, Smethwick that has the largest proportion of respondents visiting greenspace weekly (or more often) but has less unrestricted green space per 1000 population than the borough average.

| Town                    | Visit weekly or more frequently (%) |             | Amount of unrestricted green space per 1000 population |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--|
|                         | 2019                                | 2013        | Rank   |
| Smethwick               | 74.4                                | 51.0        | 4  |
| Rowley Regis            | 69.8                                | 55.9        | 2  |
| Tipton                  | 69.1                                | 53.4        | 3  |
| <b>Sandwell Overall</b> | <b>68.3</b>                         | <b>51.7</b> | -  |
| West Bromwich           | 67.8                                | 53.8        | 1  |
| Oldbury                 | 67.3                                | 49.2        | 6  |
| Wednesbury              | 62.1                                | 46.5        | 5  |

Table 41 Frequency of use by town

## Most Frequently Used / Visited Green Spaces

### Top 10 Most Frequently Used Green Spaces

Table 42 below shows the top 10 most frequently used / visited green spaces in the Borough. Overall, 50.8% of the total survey respondents said they visited these sites most frequently. Sandwell Valley Country Park is the most frequently visited, being mentioned by nearly twice as many respondents as the next most popular, Warley Woods (19.1% compared with 10.6%).

There is little variation in the top 10 most frequently used sites since 2013. The most notable difference is the presence of Lion Farm Playing Fields, which was not in the top 30 most used parks in 2013. Britannia park has also become more popular, while Barnford Park and Victoria Park (Smethwick) have fallen out of the top 10, although they are still popular (attracting 2.8% and 2.4% of respondents respectively).

| Rank | Site name                    | n   | %    | 2013 Rank |
|------|------------------------------|-----|------|-----------|
| 1    | Sandwell Valley Country Park | 201 | 19.1 | 1         |
| 2    | Warley Woods                 | 113 | 10.8 | 2         |
| 3    | Brunswick Park               | 76  | 7.2  | 4 (+1)    |
| 4    | Haden Hill                   | 58  | 5.5  | 3 (-1)    |
| 5    | Victoria Park (Tipton)       | 52  | 5.0  | 5         |
| 6    | Dartmouth Park               | 49  | 4.7  | 6         |
| 7    | Lightwoods Park              | 33  | 3.1  | 10 (+3)   |
| 8    | Red House Park               | 31  | 3.0  | 7 (-1)    |
| 9    | Britannia Park               | 30  | 2.9  | 11 (+2)   |
| 10   | Lion Farm Playing Field      | 30  | 2.9  | -         |

Table 42 Top 10 most used/visited green spaces in 2019

**Method and Length of Travel**

Just under two thirds (63.1%) of respondents travel to their most frequently used green space by foot, followed by a third (33.1%) travelling by car or taxi. Table 43 demonstrates that means of travel has changed very little since 2013, with slightly more visitors using the bus and slightly fewer cycling.

| Method of Travel | 2018 Household Survey |              | 2013 Household Survey |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|                  | n                     | %            | (%)                   |
| Walk / run       | 673                   | 63.1         | 61.2                  |
| Car / taxi       | 353                   | 33.1         | 31.7                  |
| Bus              | 22                    | 2.1          | 4.0                   |
| Cycle            | 17                    | 1.6          | 2.3                   |
| Metro            | 1                     | 0.1          | 0.0                   |
| Motorbike        | 0                     | 0.0          | 0.2                   |
| Other            | -                     | -            | 0.6                   |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>1066</b>           | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b>          |

Table 43 Method of travel

Regarding length of journey, the majority of respondents (86.4%) live within a 15-minute journey of their most frequently visited green space, as demonstrated by Table 44.

| Length of journey | n           | %          |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|
| 0-5 mins          | 403         | 37.2       |
| 6-10 mins         | 329         | 30.4       |
| 11-15 mins        | 203         | 18.8       |
| 16-20 mins        | 86          | 7.9        |
| 21-25 mins        | 40          | 3.7        |
| More than 25 mins | 21          | 1.9        |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>1082</b> | <b>100</b> |

Table 44 Length of journey



By breaking down journey length by method of transport, Table 45 shows that three quarters of respondents walk less than 10 minutes to reach their most frequently visited green space (75.3%), just over half of respondents who travel by car or taxi (57.7%). The largest proportion of respondents travelling by bus travelled for 16-20 minutes.

|            | Journey Length (mins) |                |               |               |              |              | Total |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------|
|            | 0-5                   | 6-10           | 11-15         | 16-20         | 21-25        | More than 25 |       |
| Walk       | 302<br>(45.2%)        | 201<br>(30.1%) | 96<br>(14.4%) | 37<br>(5.5%)  | 23<br>(3.4%) | 9<br>(1.3%)  | 668   |
| Car / taxi | 87<br>(24.7%)         | 115<br>(33.0%) | 93<br>(26.7%) | 37<br>(10.6%) | 12<br>(3.4%) | 5<br>(1.4%)  | 349   |
| Bus        | 2<br>(9.1%)           | 2<br>(9.1%)    | 3<br>(13.4%)  | 8<br>(36.4%)  | 3<br>(13.6%) | 4<br>(18.2%) | 22    |
| Cycle      | 6<br>(35.3%)          | 6<br>(39.4%)   | 2<br>(11.8%)  | 2<br>(11.8%)  | -            | 2<br>(11.8%) | 18    |
| Metro      | -                     | -              | -             | -             | -            | 1<br>(100%)  | 1     |

Table 45 Journey length by method of transport (% of row total)

**Dwell Length**

About three quarters (77.6%) of respondents spend between 30 minutes to 2 hours when visiting the green space they visit most frequently, as demonstrated by Table 46.

| Dwell time           | n    | %    |
|----------------------|------|------|
| Less than 30 minutes | 86   | 8.0  |
| 30 minutes- 1 hours  | 423  | 39.3 |
| 1-2 hours            | 411  | 38.2 |
| 2-4 hours            | 137  | 12.7 |
| More than 4 hours    | 18   | 1.7  |
| Total                | 1075 | 100  |

Table 46 Dwell time

**Reasons for Visiting**

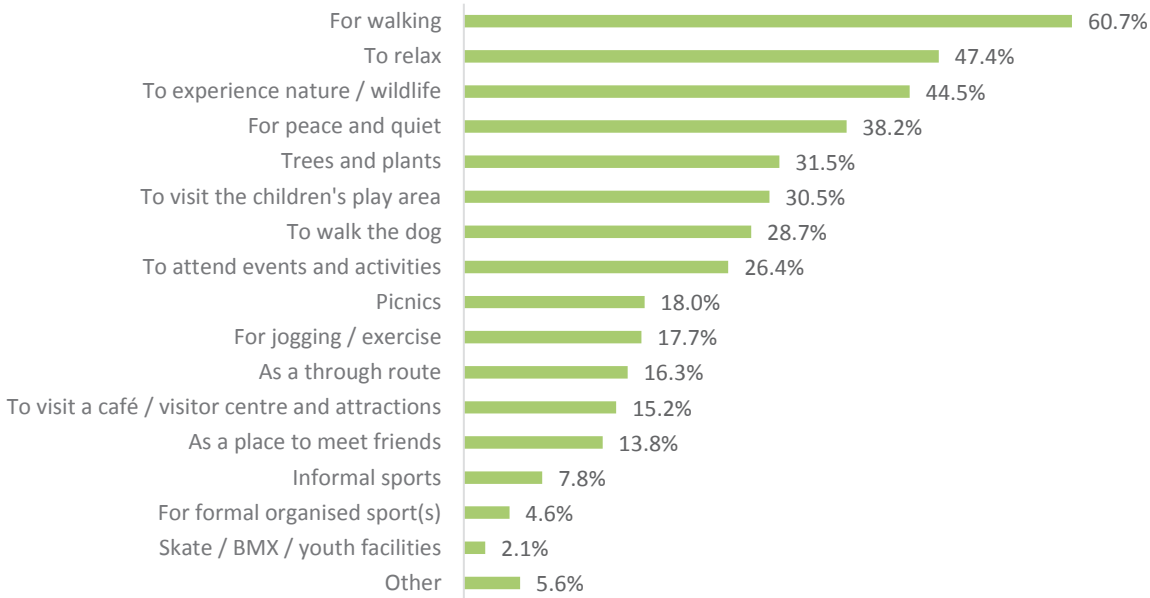


Chart 7 Reasons for using/visiting green space

The main reasons for visiting green spaces were walking (60.7%), to relax (47.4%) and to experience nature and wildlife (44.5%). About a third of respondents use their most frequently used green space for taking children to play (30.5%) and about a quarter use green space to walk dogs and for events and activities (28.7% and 26.4% respectively). Walking and relaxing have remained in the top 3 ranked reasons for visiting green space since 2013. However, walking the dog has fallen from 2<sup>nd</sup> rank to 7<sup>th</sup> rank.

The least popular reasons respondents gave for visiting their most frequently used green space were for skate, BMX and youth facilities (2.1%) and for formal and informal sports (4.5% and 7.8% respectively). The lack of interest in skate, BMX and youth facilities could be because of the underrepresentation of this age group and children under 15 being unable to complete the survey. Furthermore, outdoor sports are likely to be less popular in winter months and the household survey, being conducted in late winter/early spring, did not specify usage at different times of the year.

**Overall quality**

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of their most frequently used space on a scale on 1 to 10 (where 1 was poor and 10 was excellent). Chart 8 demonstrates that green space is generally perceived as being of good quality, with the overall average rating being 7.3 out of 10. This average is slightly lower than in 2013, where the average quality rating for all frequently used green spaces was 7.5.

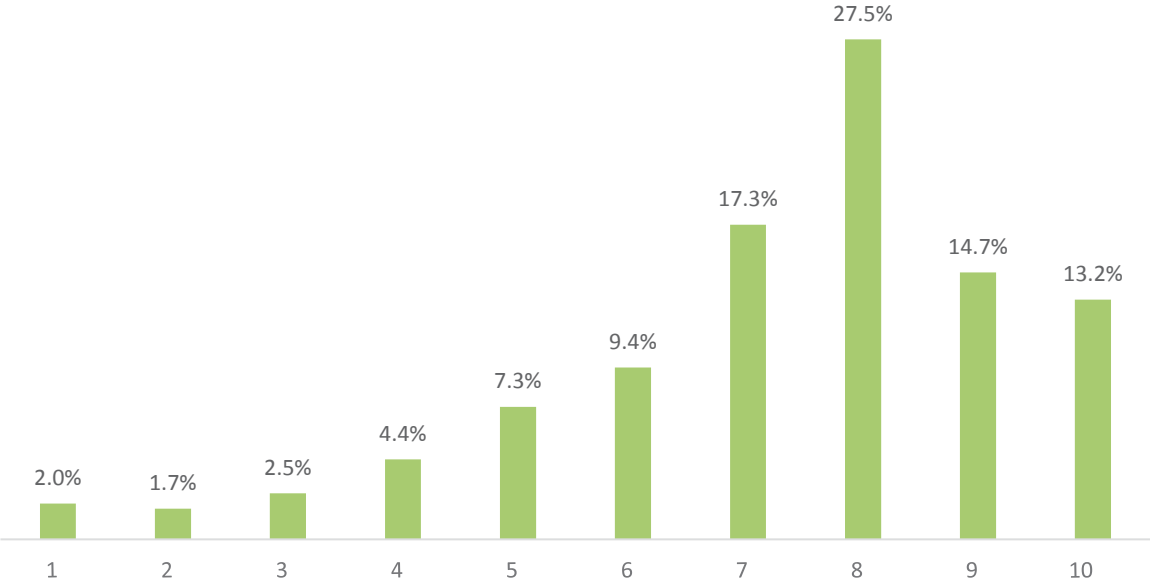


Chart 8 Quality of frequently used / visited space

Table 47 below details the most frequently used/visited green spaces with the top 10 highest average quality ratings, compared with the average quality rating for all most frequently used/visited green spaces. Out of the highest rated green spaces, 4 have improved in quality rating, most notably Victoria Park Smethwick (increasing from 7.0 to 7.5); 5 have declined, most notable Brunswick Park (falling from 7.7 to 7.2); and Waterfall Lane SINC (Powke Lane Open Space) and Warren’s Hall Park entered the top 10. It is worth noting that the sample size (number of respondents) may affect the average score, with smaller sample sizes (Waterfalls Lane SINC and Victoria Park Smethwick) being less representative and accurate.

| Rank | Site name                    | Average overall quality (out of ten) |                | Average overall quality (out of ten) | Usage Frequency Rank (2019) |
|------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|      |                              | 2018                                 | 2019           |                                      |                             |
| 1    | Warley woods                 | 8.8                                  | 8.3 (^)        | 113                                  | 2                           |
| 2    | Sandwell Valley Country Park | 8.3                                  | 8.4 (v)        | 201                                  | 1                           |
| 3    | Lightwoods Park              | 8.0                                  | 7.7 (^)        | 33                                   | 7                           |
| 3    | Waterfall Lane SINC          | 8.0                                  | -              | 10                                   | 19                          |
| 4    | Barnfold Hill Park           | 7.9                                  | 7.9 (-)        | 29                                   | 11                          |
| 5    | Haden Hill                   | 7.8                                  | 8.1 (v)        | 58                                   | 4                           |
| 6    | Dartmouth Park               | 7.7                                  | 8.0 (v)        | 49                                   | 6                           |
| 7    | Victoria Park (Smethwick)    | 7.5                                  | 7.0 (^)        | 16                                   | 18                          |
| 8    | Victoria Park (Tipton)       | 7.4                                  | 7.3 (^)        | 52                                   | 5                           |
|      | <b>Sandwell Average</b>      | <b>7.3</b>                           | <b>7.5 (v)</b> |                                      |                             |
| 9    | Brunswick Park               | 7.2                                  | 7.7 (v)        | 76                                   | 3                           |
| 9    | Red House Park               | 7.2                                  | 7.5 (v)        | 31                                   | 8                           |
| 10   | Warren’s Hall/Bumble Hole    | 7.0                                  | -              | 21                                   | 14                          |

Table 47 Ranked usage frequency perceived overall of the top 10 quality green spaces

**Change in Quality Over Time**

Respondents were also asked whether they perceived that their most frequently visited green space had improved, stayed the same or declined over the past 3 years. Table 48 shows that an even proportion of respondents believed that their most frequently used green space had improved (39.0%) and that it had stayed the same (40.1%), while slightly over a tenth believed that it had declined (15.8%). This profile closely matches that seen in the 2006 household survey. However, since 2013 the proportion of respondents perceiving that their green space has improved has fallen by a third (from 60% to 39%) and the proportion believing it has stayed the same has increased by about a third (from 27% to 40.1%).

| Change          | 2019 Household Survey |      | 2013 Household Survey (%) | 2006 Household Survey (%) |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|                 | n                     | %    |                           |                           |
| Improved        | 418                   | 39.0 | 60.0                      | 30.9                      |
| Stayed the same | 430                   | 40.1 | 27.0                      | 40.0                      |
| Declined        | 169                   | 15.8 | 9.8                       | 21.1                      |
| Don't Know      | 53                    | 4.9  | 3.3                       | -                         |
| Total           | 1071                  | 100  | 100                       | 100                       |

Table 48 Perceived change over time

As Table 49 demonstrates, Lightwoods Park had the greatest proportion of respondents who perceived that it had improved over the previous 3 years. This can be linked to the £5.2 million Heritage Lottery Fund restoration project that concluded in 2017. Change in quality over time is also recorded through the quality assessment, which found that Lightwoods Park, Dartmouth Park and sites comprising Sandwell Valley Country Park had improved in quality, with Warley Woods remaining the same and Barnford Hill Park slightly falling in quality.

Interestingly, Victoria Park (Smethwick), which has received significant investment recently, saw the largest improvement in overall quality rating, yet only 25% of respondents thought the park had improved and the quality assessment recorded that it has fallen in quality.

| Site name                    | n   | %    |
|------------------------------|-----|------|
| Lightwoods Park              | 31  | 74.2 |
| Dartmouth Park               | 48  | 62.5 |
| Sandwell Valley Country Park | 197 | 58.4 |
| Warley Woods                 | 112 | 53.6 |
| Barnford Hill Park           | 28  | 50.0 |

Table 49 Perception of improvement in quality over time by site

On the other hand, Table 50 shows that just over a third of respondents (35.0%) frequently using Hill Top Park believed it had declined in quality and Lion Farm Playing Fields and Britannia Park were the only green spaces to feature in the top 10 most frequently visited green spaces but not have 1 of the top 10 quality ratings. The quality assessment found that Hill Top Park, Warrens Hall Park and Britannia Park had all declined in quality, while Lion Farm Playing Fields remained the same and Sheepwash Urban Park had improved. Just over a quarter (27%) of respondents who reported frequently visiting other green spaces (mentioned by less than 10 respondents) felt they had declined over the last 3 years.

| Site name                | n   | %    |
|--------------------------|-----|------|
| Hill Top Park            | 20  | 35.0 |
| Warrens Hall Park        | 21  | 33.3 |
| Lion Farm Playing Fields | 30  | 30.0 |
| Britannia Park           | 28  | 28.6 |
| Other Green Spaces       | 190 | 27.4 |
| Sheepwash Urban Park     | 20  | 25.0 |

Table 50 Perception of decline in quality over time by site

## Desired Improvements

Respondents were asked to suggest what improvements might make them want to visit the green space they use most frequently or to spend longer visiting. The themes are listed in Table 51 and comments were coded based on the presence of these themes, with a comment potentially including multiple themes (therefore the cumulative percentage of comments exceeds 100). Table 52 shows that the main factors that would encourage respondents to visit green spaces more were the presences of refreshment facilities e.g. a café (13.1%), more safety and security (11.8%) and better facilities, particularly toilets (10.3%). These results somewhat reflect the 2013 household survey, where respondents ranked better quality facilities such as toilets as the most important improvement.

| Theme  | Number of mentions | % of comments | % of total respondents |
|--|--------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| <b>Refreshment facilities</b><br>(e.g. café, tearoom, prices)                    | 100                | 13.1          | 7.6                    |
| <b>Safety and Security</b><br>(e.g. less antisocial behaviour, CCTV, no alcohol) | 90                 | 11.8          | 6.8                    |
| <b>Facilities</b><br>(e.g. toilet, community space)                              | 79                 | 10.3          | 6.0                    |
| <b>Litter</b><br>(e.g. bins, clearance, broken glass)                            | 75                 | 9.8           | 5.7                    |
| <b>Children's Play Area</b><br>(improvements, maintenance)                       | 74                 | 9.7           | 5.6                    |
| <b>General Maintenance</b><br>(e.g. grass cutting, paths)                        | 69                 | 9.0           | 5.2                    |
| <b>Events and Activities</b>   | 63                 | 8.2           | 4.8                    |
| <b>Car Parking/Charges</b>   | 53                 | 6.9           | 4.0                    |
| <b>Seating and shelter</b>   | 53                 | 6.9           | 4.0                    |
| <b>Dog control</b><br>(e.g. fouling, on lead, dog areas)                         | 51                 | 6.7           | 3.9                    |
| <b>Planting and wildlife</b><br>(more flowers, trees and shrub management)       | 47                 | 6.1           | 3.6                    |
| <b>Onsite and security staff</b><br>(e.g. park wardens, patrols)                 | 37                 | 4.8           | 2.8                    |
| <b>Outdoor sports and exercise facilities</b>                                    | 28                 | 3.7           | 2.1                    |
| <b>Lighting</b>  | 11                 | 1.4           | 0.8                    |
| <b>Accessibility</b><br>(e.g. for disabled people)                               | 5                  | 0.7           | 0.4                    |
| <b>Information</b><br>(e.g. signage)   | 3                  | 0.4           | 0.2                    |
| <b>Public transport</b>  | 1                  | 0.1           | 0.1                    |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>765</b>         | <b>-</b>      | <b>-</b>               |

Table 51 Themes regarding desired improvements to green space

**Events**

Sandwell Valley Country Park is the most popular green space event venues in Sandwell (Table 52), attracting 2 in 5 respondents (42.6%) to for events, followed by Dartmouth Park (29.8%) and Lightwoods park (11.8%).

| Site name                    | n          | % of comments |
|------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Sandwell Valley Country Park | 373        | 42.6          |
| Dartmouth Park               | 261        | 29.8          |
| Lightwoods Park              | 103        | 11.8          |
| Warley woods                 | 83         | 9.5           |
| Brunswick Park               | 80         | 9.1           |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>876</b> | <b>-</b>      |

Table 52 Attendance of green spaces for events

Half of respondents (50.4%) that responded to this question had attended the Bonfire Night at Dartmouth Park and just over a third (37.8%) had attended the Sandwell Valley Christmas Event. (Chart 9).

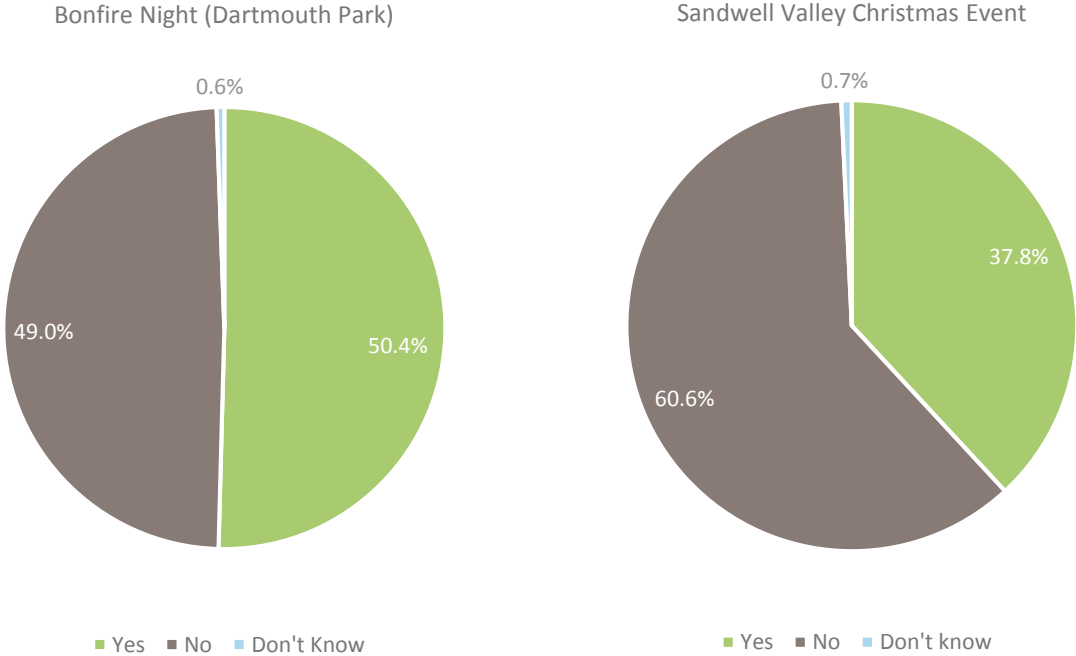


Chart 9 Attendance of (a) Bonfire Night at Dartmouth Park and (b) Sandwell Valley Christmas Event



**Green space outside Sandwell**

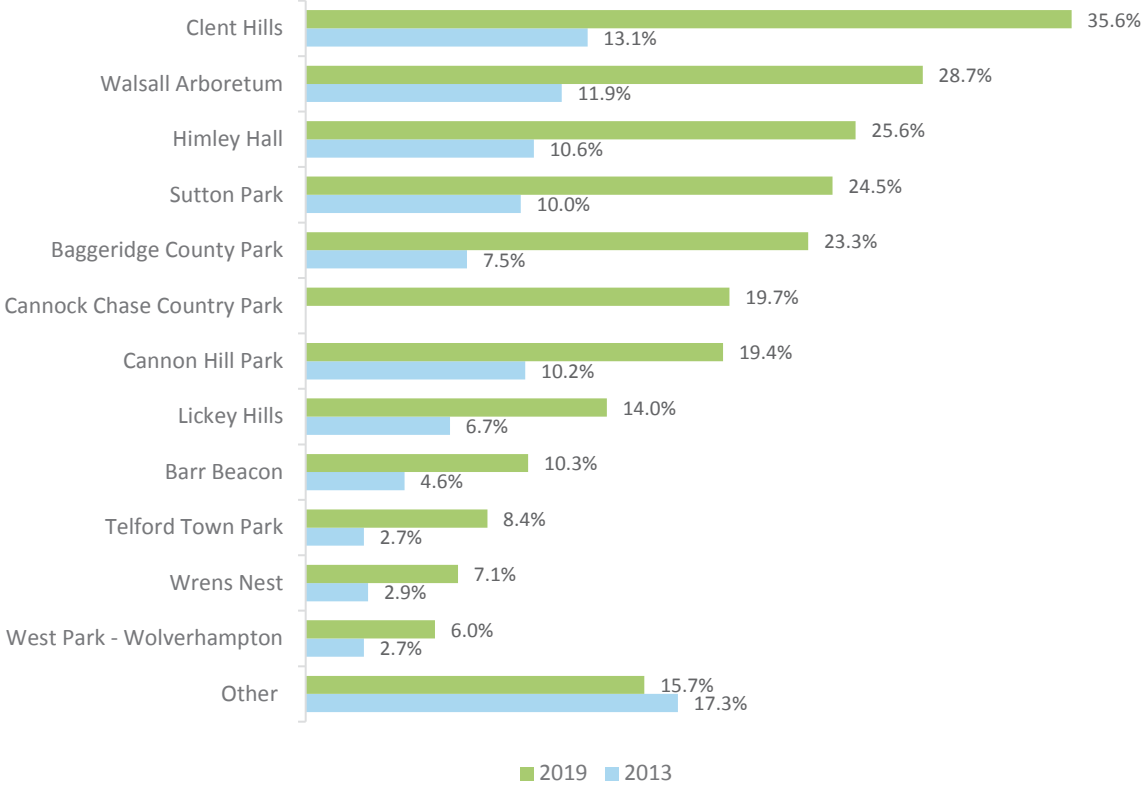


Chart 10 Use of green spaces outside of Sandwell

Chart 10 above shows that Clent Hills was the most popular green space outside of Sandwell, visited by a third of respondents who answered this question (35.6%), followed by Walsall Arboretum (28.7%) and Himley Hall (25.6%). The proportion of respondents visiting all listed green spaces outside of Sandwell has more than doubled and in some cases tripled since 2013, with the only exception being Cannon Hill Park, only increasing from 10.2% to 19.4%.

**Green Space across Sandwell**

**Barriers to Use**

More respondents expressed that there were barriers affecting their use of green space in 2019 than in 2013, with only 15.7% of respondents not answering the question or stating that nothing preventing them from using green spaces compared to 80.5% in 2013.

Table 53 shows that the top 3 main barriers have not changed since 2013, namely antisocial behaviour (27.4%), lack of time (24.5%) and not feeling safe (26.5%), although a larger proportion now view anti-social behaviour as a barrier as opposed to a general feeling of poor safety (rising from 22.5% to 27.4%). Other prevalent issues include car parking charges (25.3%) and dog fouling (23.2%), concerning about a quarter of respondents. 2 new barriers featured prominently in the current survey, namely car parking charges (25.3%) and lack of site-based staff (16.1%). These results compare with both 2013 and 2006 household surveys where a range of antisocial behaviour and general concern for safety are the biggest and most persistent barriers to using green space.

| Barriers                          | n           | 2019 (%) | 2013 (%) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| Antisocial behaviour              | 346         | 27.4     | 22.5     |
| Lack of time                      | 345         | 27.4     | 24.5     |
| Don't feel safe                   | 322         | 25.5     | 26.5     |
| Car parking charges               | 319         | 25.3     | -        |
| Dog fouling                       | 293         | 23.2     | 20.6     |
| Lack of facilities                | 268         | 21.3     | 13.7     |
| Vandalism/graffiti                | 246         | 19.5     | 14.7     |
| Lack of site-based staff          | 203         | 16.1     | -        |
| Poor quality facilities           | 175         | 13.9     | 8.8      |
| Too far away                      | 167         | 13.2     | 11.8     |
| Age/illness/disability            | 164         | 13.0     | 12.7     |
| Nothing prevents me               | 152         | 12.1     | 18.6     |
| Lack of lighting                  | 131         | 10.4     | 21.6     |
| Lack of information               | 113         | 9.0      | 4.9      |
| Use private garden                | 111         | 8.8      | 5.9      |
| No one to go with                 | 90          | 7.1      | 3.9      |
| Lack of transport                 | 71          | 5.6      | 7.8      |
| Lack of outdoor fitness equipment | 38          | 3.0      | -        |
| Too many roads to cross           | 22          | 1.7      | 2.0      |
| Not interested                    | 14          | 1.1      | 1.0      |
| Other                             | 104         | 8.2      | 9.8      |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>1261</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> |

Table 53 Barriers to use for all respondents

Only considering the responses of those who stated that they never visit green spaces (Table 54), nearly half of respondents reported that they do not feel safe (48.9%). Other main barriers were age, illness or disability (44.7%) and anti-social behaviour (31.9%). Combined, these results suggest that safety and antisocial behaviour is a big concern for Sandwell residents using green space. Lack of time remains the second biggest barrier to all green space users but has dramatically fallen as a barrier to non-users of green space from nearly a third in 2013 (28.4%) to only 10.6% in 2019.

| Barriers                          | n         | 2019 (%) | 2013 (%) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Don't feel safe                   | 23        | 48.9%    | 28.4%    |
| Age / illness / disability        | 21        | 44.7%    | 31.5%    |
| Anti-social behaviour             | 15        | 31.9%    | 21.6%    |
| Dog fouling                       | 13        | 27.7%    | 21.6%    |
| Vandalism / graffiti              | 11        | 23.4%    | 8.0%     |
| Lack of facilities                | 10        | 21.3%    | 9.9%     |
| No one to go with                 | 9         | 19.1%    | 11.1%    |
| Lack of site-based staff          | 8         | 17.0%    | 9.3%     |
| Use private garden                | 8         | 17.0%    | 18.5%    |
| Poor quality facilities           | 7         | 14.9%    | 11.1%    |
| Lack of lighting                  | 7         | 14.9%    | 11.7%    |
| Lack of time                      | 5         | 10.6%    | 28.4%    |
| Too far away                      | 5         | 10.6%    | 8.6%     |
| Car parking charges               | 5         | 10.6%    | -        |
| Not interested                    | 5         | 10.6%    | 4.9%     |
| Too many roads to cross           | 4         | 8.5%     | 3.1%     |
| Lack of transport                 | 4         | 8.5%     | 5.6%     |
| Lack of information               | 2         | 4.3%     | 4.9%     |
| Lack of outdoor fitness equipment | 2         | 4.3%     | -        |
| Nothing prevents me               | 1         | 2.1%     | 7.4%     |
| Other                             | 5         | 10.6%    | 2.5%     |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>47</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> |

Table 54 Barriers to use for non-users of green spaces

Access to Green Space

Given the barriers that may exist to using green spaces in Sandwell, respondents were asked whether they could easily access other green spaces that provided the facilities they needed. Chart 11 demonstrates that most respondents agreed that they could, with that a third of respondents (33.1%) tending to agree and just over half of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing (55.6%).

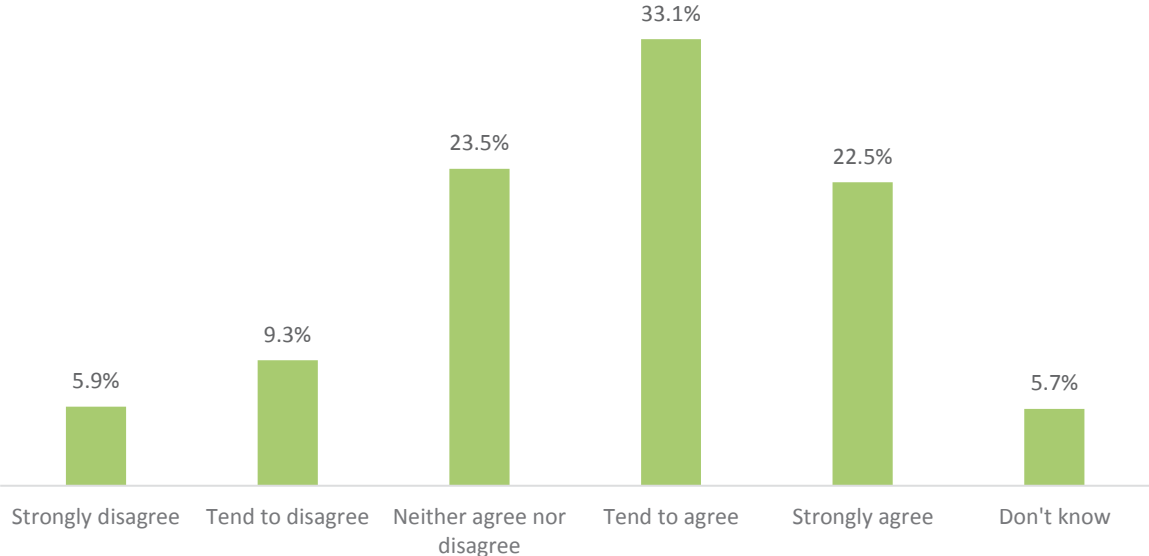


Chart 11 Access to other parks and green spaces

Regarding willingness to travel, the largest proportion of respondents were willing to walk between 11 to 15 minutes to reach all types of green space (Chart 12). Generally, respondents were more willing to walk for longer to reach parks and outdoor sports facilities than to access play provision or allotments/community gardens.

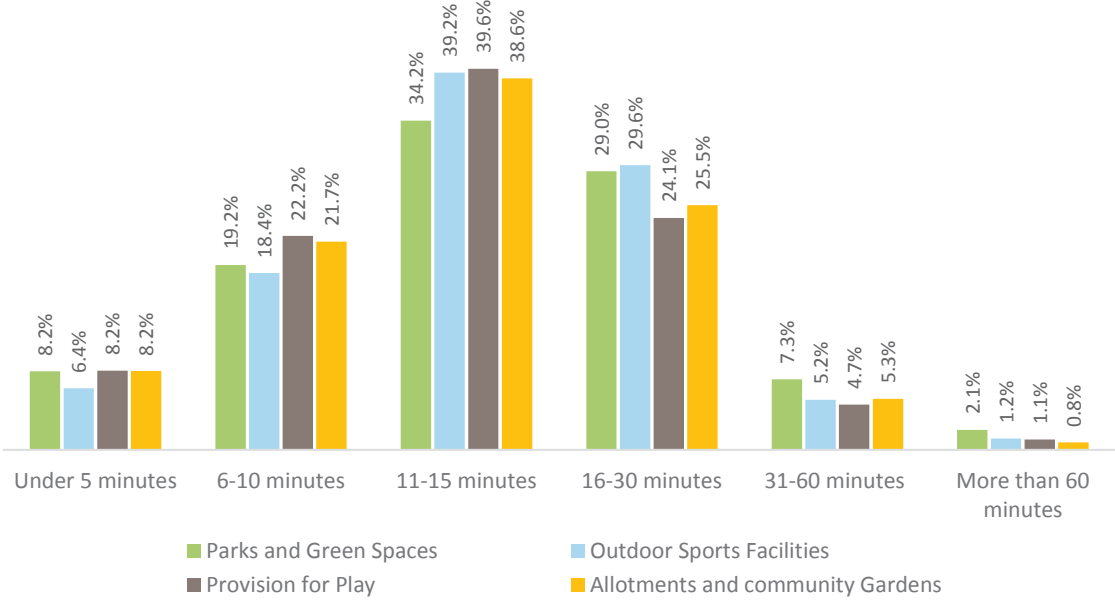


Chart 2 Willingness to walk to reach green space

Quantity of green space

| Category                         | Too Little     | About Right    | Too Much    | Total |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Parks and green spaces           | 436<br>(35.1%) | 798<br>(64.2%) | 9<br>(0.7%) | 1243  |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities        | 499<br>(52.5%) | 444<br>(46.6%) | 7<br>(0.7%) | 950   |
| Provision for Play               | 512<br>(53.1%) | 444<br>(46.1%) | 8<br>(0.8%) | 964   |
| Allotments and Community Gardens | 438<br>(57.5%) | 317<br>(41.6%) | 7<br>(0.9%) | 762   |

Table 55 Rating of green space quantity

Overall, respondents were more satisfied with the quantity of parks and green spaces than with other kinds of green space provision, with just over two thirds of respondents (64.2%) reporting that the quantity of parks and green spaces was about right (Table 55). For all other categories, the greatest proportion of respondents thought that the current quantity was too little, with the greatest demand for more quantity being for allotments and community gardens (57.5% reported too little).

The categories used in the 2019 Household Survey have been simplified and reduced from 3 categories, with 3 categories, namely ‘parks and gardens’, ‘natural green space/nature reserves’ and ‘amenity green space’, being condensed in ‘parks and green spaces’. Calculating the average proportions from these categories shows that there has not been much change in perceptions of park and green space quantity over time, with a slight increase in respondents reported that the quantity was about right from 60.9% in 2013 to 64.2% in 2019. A similar small increase was seen for outdoor sports facilities (from 43.4% to 46.65), provision of play remained the same (from 45.9% to 46.1%) and a small decrease for allotments and community gardens (from 44.1% to 41.6%).

Table 56 shows green space quantity ratings by town. Respondents from Smethwick were most content with the quantity of parks and green spaces, with three quarters (74.8%) saying it was about right. Respondents from Tipton were most content with the quantity of outdoor sport facilities, with just over half (51.4%) reporting it was about right. Respondents from Smethwick were most content with the quantity of play provision (53.4%) and respondents from Wednesbury were most content with the quantity of allotments and community gardens (53.7%). Rowley Regis was the town where respondents most felt there was too little green space, with no respondents reporting there was too much and over 60% of respondents reporting the quantity was too little for all categories except parks and green spaces.

|               | Category                         | Too Little     | About Right    | Too Much    | Total |
|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Oldbury       | Parks and green spaces           | 99<br>(40.6%)  | 144<br>(59.0%) | 1<br>(0.4%) | 244   |
|               | Outdoor sports facilities        | 93<br>(50.5%)  | 91<br>(49.5%)  | -           | 184   |
|               | Provision for play               | 108<br>(54.8%) | 87<br>(44.2%)  | 2<br>(1.0%) | 197   |
|               | Allotments and community gardens | 74<br>(49.0%)  | 76<br>(50.3%)  | 1<br>(0.7%) | 151   |
| Rowley Regis  | Parks and green spaces           | 82<br>(43.6%)  | 106<br>(56.4%) | -           | 188   |
|               | Outdoor sports facilities        | 86<br>(61.9%)  | 53<br>(38.1%)  | -           | 139   |
|               | Provision for play               | 84<br>(60.0%)  | 56<br>(40.0%)  | -           | 140   |
|               | Allotments and community gardens | 79<br>(73.1%)  | 29<br>(26.9%)  | -           | 108   |
| Smethwick     | Parks and green spaces           | 47<br>(23.3%)  | 151<br>(74.8%) | 4<br>(2.0%) | 202   |
|               | Outdoor Sports Facilities        | 77<br>(52.0%)  | 69<br>(46.6%)  | 2<br>(1.4%) | 148   |
|               | Provision for Play               | 66<br>(44.6%)  | 79<br>(53.4%)  | 3<br>(2.0%) | 148   |
|               | Allotments and community gardens | 65<br>(51.6%)  | 59<br>(46.8%)  | 2<br>(1.6%) | 126   |
| Tipton        | Parks and green spaces           | 63<br>(36.6%)  | 108<br>(62.8%) | 1<br>(0.6%) | 172   |
|               | Outdoor sports facilities        | 70<br>(47.3%)  | 76<br>(51.4%)  | 2<br>(1.4%) | 148   |
|               | Provision for play               | 78<br>(56.1%)  | 60<br>(43.2%)  | 1<br>(0.7%) | 139   |
|               | Allotments and community gardens | 64<br>(60.4%)  | 42<br>(39.6%)  | -           | 106   |
| Wednesbury    | Parks and green spaces           | 66<br>(35.3%)  | 117<br>(62.6%) | 4<br>(2.1%) | 187   |
|               | Outdoor sports facilities        | 72<br>(50.7%)  | 70<br>(49.3%)  | -           | 142   |
|               | Provision for play               | 74<br>(49.0%)  | 77<br>(51.0%)  | -           | 151   |
|               | Allotments and community gardens | 57<br>(46.3%)  | 66<br>(53.7%)  | -           | 123   |
| West Bromwich | Parks and green spaces           | 67<br>(29.6%)  | 156<br>(69.0%) | 3<br>(1.3%) | 226   |
|               | Outdoor sports facilities        | 90<br>(53.3%)  | 76<br>(45.0%)  | 3<br>(1.8%) | 169   |
|               | Provision for play               | 91<br>(53.8%)  | 76<br>(45.0%)  | 2<br>(1.2%) | 169   |
|               | Allotments and community gardens | 85<br>(63.4%)  | 45<br>(33.6%)  | 4<br>(3.0%) | 134   |

Table 56 Rating of green space quantity by town

## Overall Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with different types of green space in Sandwell and results are presented in Chart 13. This demonstrates that satisfaction with parks and green spaces is much higher than with other types of green spaces, with over two thirds of respondents being satisfied or very satisfied (68.8%), compared to less than half regarding other types of green space. Satisfaction is lowest regarding allotments and community gardens, with only 37.1% of respondents being satisfied or very satisfied. These results reflect quantity ratings presented in Table 56, indicating that respondents are most satisfied with the quantity and quality of parks and green spaces.

When compared with 2013, it can be seen that satisfaction has changed differently for different types of green space. When the average of the 3 categories from 2013 corresponding to 'parks and green spaces' is calculated, it suggests that satisfaction with parks and green space has increased, with respondents being satisfied/very satisfied increasing from 61.5% to 68.8%. Satisfaction with outdoor facilities has also slightly increased, with the proportion of respondents being satisfied/very satisfied increasing from 39.9% to 44.0%. On the other hand, the proportion of respondents who are satisfied/very satisfied with provision of play has decreased from 46.7% to 44.1%. Satisfaction with allotments and community gardens has stayed largely the same since 2013.



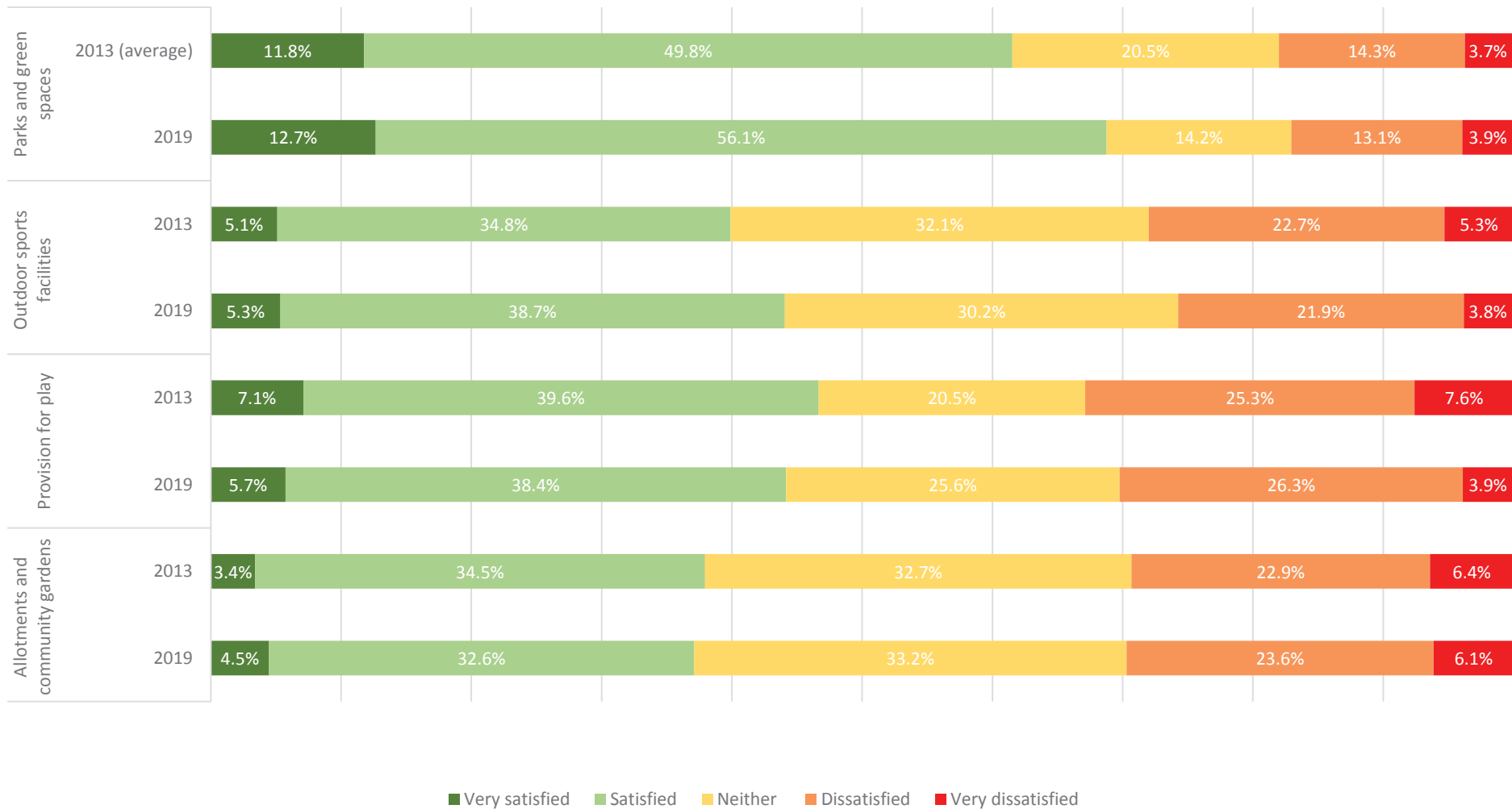


Chart 13 Overall satisfaction with green spaces

## Rating of green space issues

Chart 14 presents respondents' ratings of the importance of green space issues. The issue rated most important was the standard of litter clearance, which was rated important or very important by 98.9% of respondents. Other highly rated issues were feelings of personal safety (97.8%), control of dogs and dog fouling (97%) and the standard of maintenance (96.7%). The issues rated the least important were volunteering opportunities (72.5%) and organised events and activities (78.1%), as these activities only interest a relatively small proportion of visitors to green spaces (Chart 7). Overall, all green space quality criteria are important to users of green space, with only 1 issue having less than three quarters of respondents rate it as important or very important.

Respondents were also asked to rate current performance of Sandwell green spaces regarding different green space issues (Chart 15). Overall, performance ratings were not very positive, with only standard of maintenance and provision of flowerbeds, trees and shrubs being rated as good or excellent by more than half of respondents (57.7% and 55.5% respectively). The issues with the greatest proportion of respondents rating them as poor or very poor were control of dogs and dog fouling (30.5%), feeling of personal safety (26.5%) and standard of litter clearance (25.7%).

By comparing importance and performance ranks according to Charts 14 and 15, Table 57 demonstrates that some issues that are rated as very important are currently being perceived as poorly handled, most notably feeling of personal safety and control of dogs and dog fouling. This reflects findings regarding desired improvements (Table 51) and barriers to use (Tables 53 and 54).

| Green Space Issue                                | Importance rank | Performance rank |
|--|-----------------|------------------|
| Standard of litter clearance                     | 1               | 9                |
| Feeling of personal safety                       | 2               | 12               |
| Control of dogs and dog fouling                  | 3               | 11               |
| Standard of maintenance, including grass cutting | 4               | 1                |
| Maintenance of children's play                   | 5               | 4                |
| Provision of flowerbeds/trees/shrubs             | 6               | 2                |
| Access for disabled people                       | 7               | 3                |
| Provision of information                         | 8               | 7                |
| Maintenance of outdoor pitches and courts        | 9               | 6                |
| Provision of car parking                         | 10              | 10               |
| Access using public transport                    | 11              | 5                |
| Organised events and activities                  | 12              | 8                |
| Volunteer opportunities for local people         | 13              | 13               |

Table 57 Green space issues ranked by importance

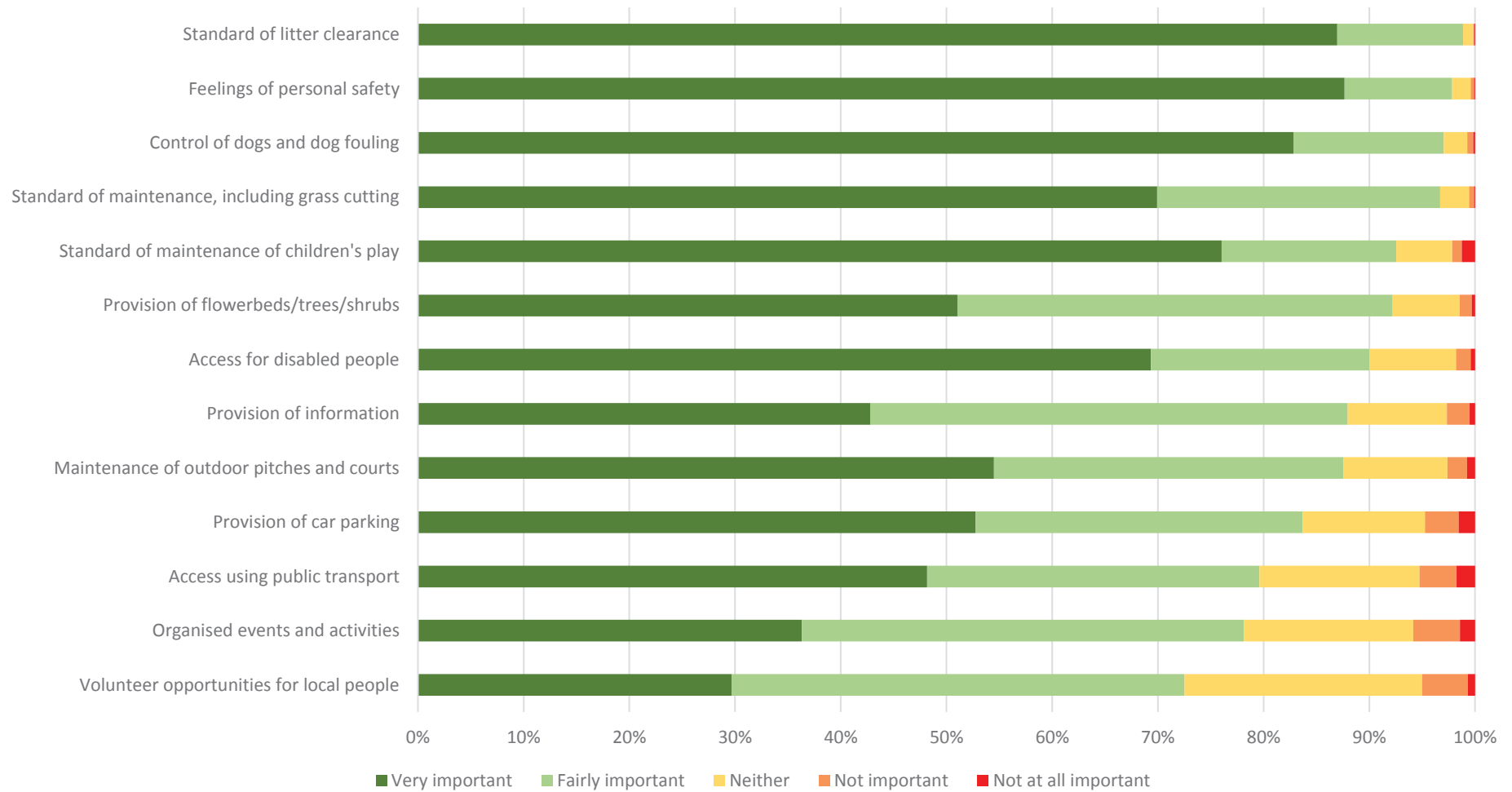


Chart 14 Importance of green space issues

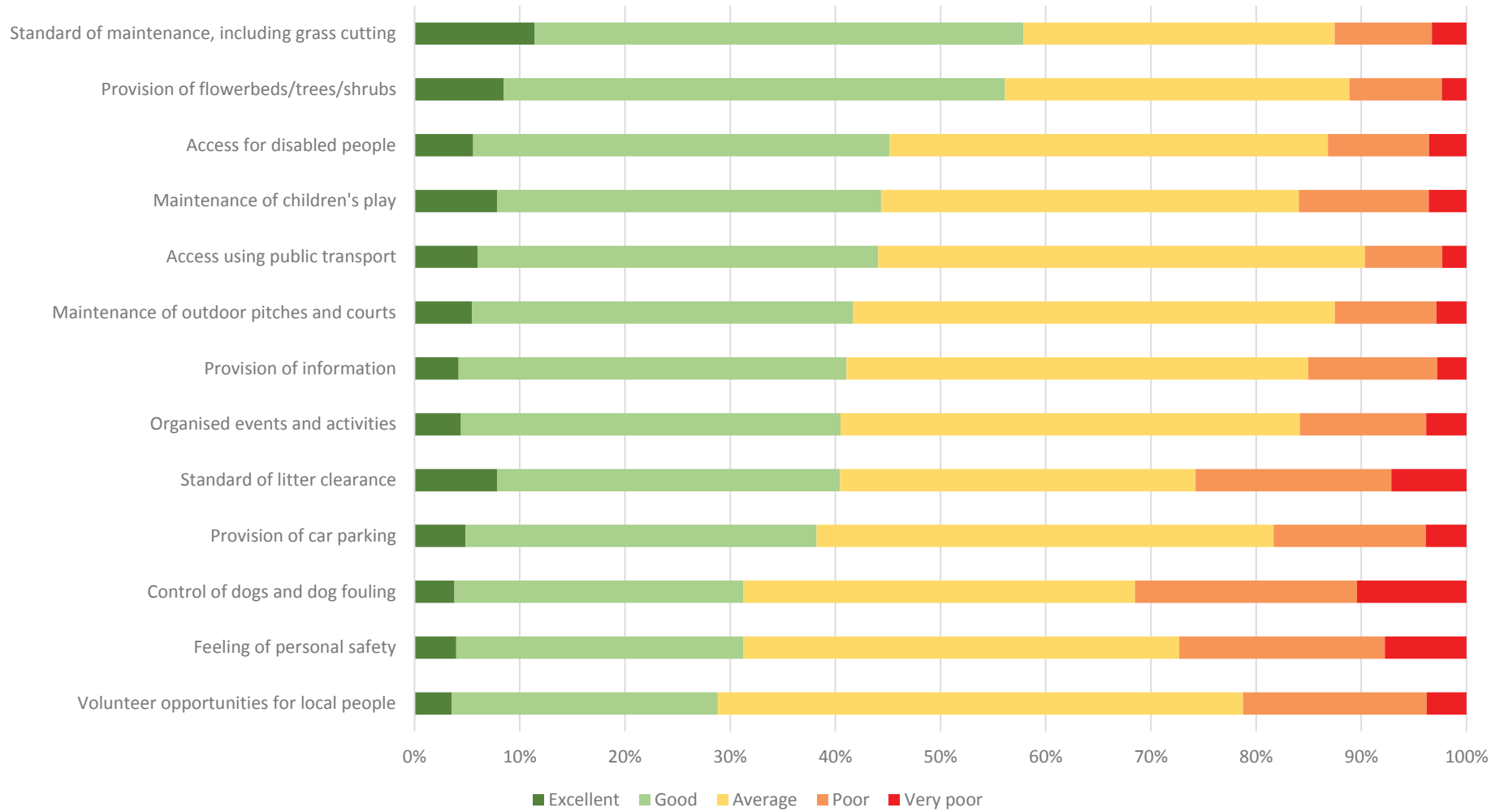


Chart 15 Performance in handling green space issues

Benefits of green space

Over half of respondents (56.9%) felt that parks and green spaces contribute to their health and well-being and only a tenth thought felt that it made not very much or no contribution (10.1%) (Chart 16).

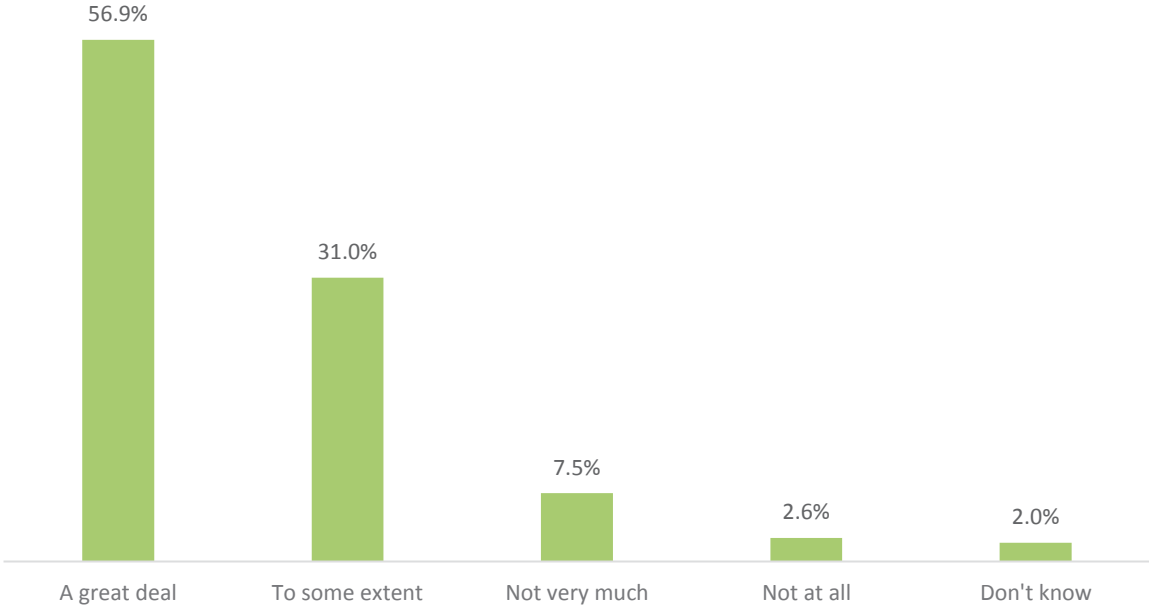


Chart 3 Green space contribution of health and well-being

When asked what specific benefits green spaces offered them, the most commonly reported benefits were providing pleasant places to relax and better mental wellbeing (81.6%), contributing to better local environment and more diverse wildlife (64.9%) and maintaining a higher quality of life (59.0%), as demonstrated by Chart 17 overleaf. The least common benefit was improving property values (24.9%), which still affected a quarter of respondents, showing that green spaces provide a range of benefit to a large proportion of Sandwell residents.



Chart 4 Benefits of green space

## Future Development

### Future Funding

Respondents were asked to rate their support for a range of funding sources that could be used to support green spaces in the future. Chart 18 shows that there is good support for all sources of funding except for increased charges for using park facilities, such as tennis courts or car parks, with over half of respondents (55.6%) either opposing or strongly opposing this option. The most supported source of funding was greater external funding such as National Lottery, with 84.5% of respondents supporting or strongly supporting the option. While there was less strong support for more commercial use of parks and more fundraising by local groups, all options except for increased charges were supported or strongly supported by more than half of respondents.

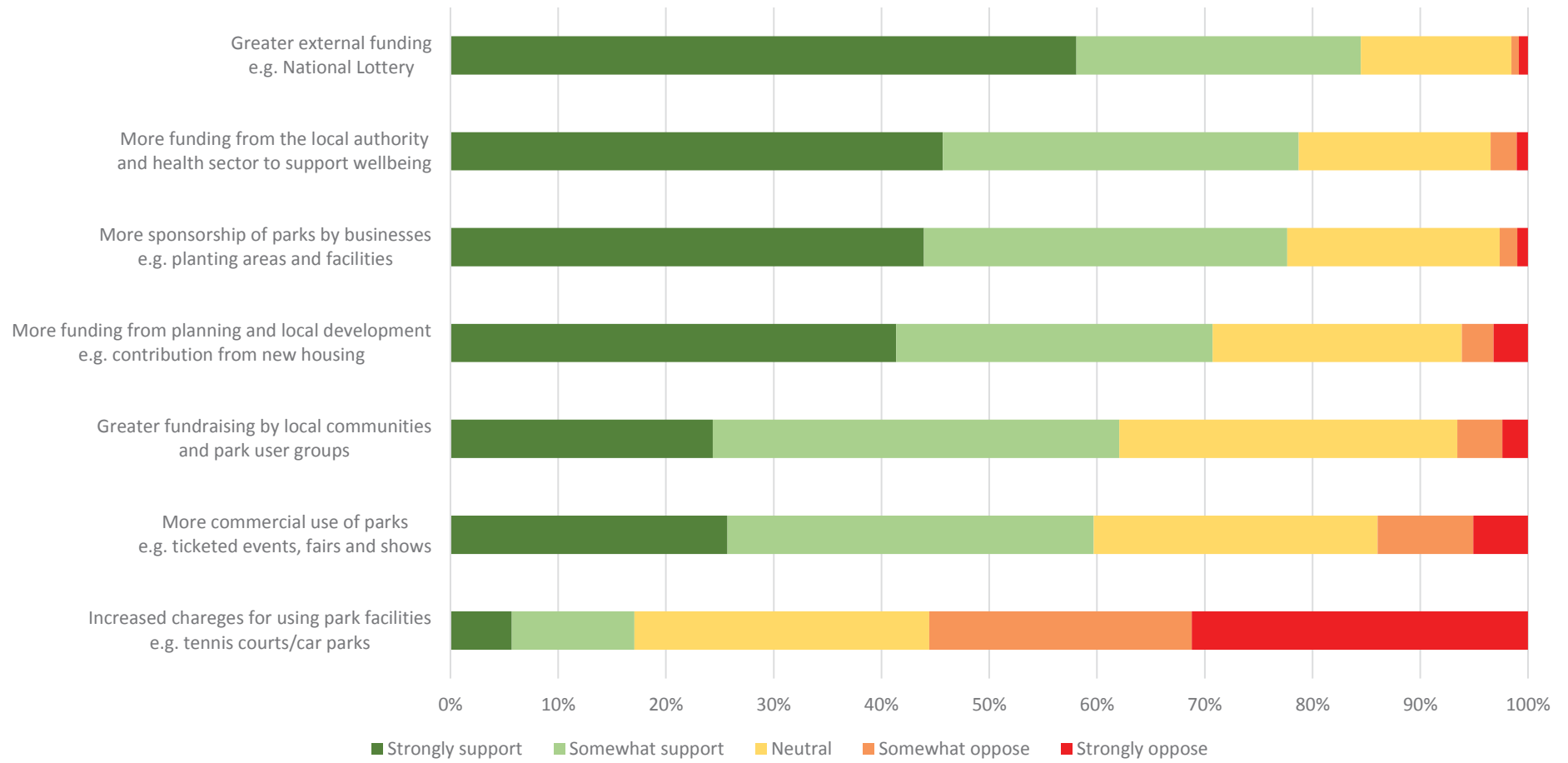


Chart 5 Support for future funding sources



## Future Priorities

Given that resources for green spaces may be limited in the future, respondents were asked to choose whether they would prefer fewer green spaces of higher quality or more green spaces of lower quality (Chart 19). Almost twice as many respondents chose fewer but higher quality green spaces (40.7%) over more, lower quality green spaces (23.0%). However, a large proportion of respondents chose neither option (36.3%). This indicates that while ideally, respondents would like both quality and quantity, quality is the more important factor. These conclusions reflect the results from 2013, where nearly three quarters of respondents preferred fewer, higher-quality green spaces.

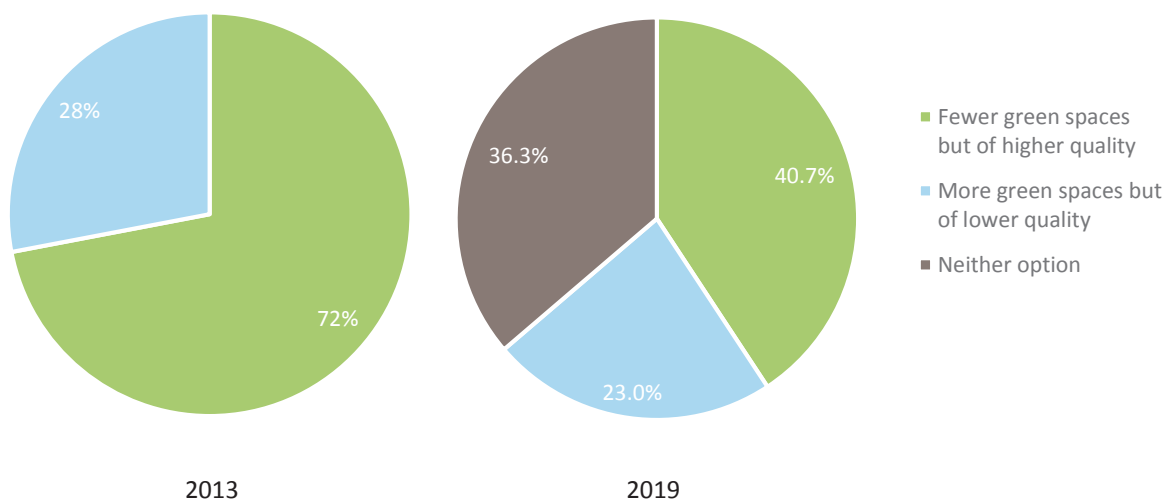


Chart 6 Future priorities

## 5.2 Community Group Survey

### 5.2.1 Introduction & Methodology

In order to gain the views of community based organisations with an interest in parks and green spaces in Sandwell a survey was set up by Community First Partnership and promoted by Sandwell Council. The survey was available online and ran through January to April 2019. Community groups include: friends groups, sports groups, user groups, residents and other community organisations

### 5.2.2 Results

#### Green Spaces and Groups

In total there were 10 responses to the Community Group Survey, these are shown in Table 58 below.

| Name of group                     | Name of park(s) and open space(s)            |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Friends of Sheepwash              | Sheepwash Nature Reserve                     |
| Friends of Kerr Drive Open Space  | Kerr Drive Open Space                        |
| Friends of Brunswick Park         | Brunswick Park                               |
| Friends of Victoria Park          | Victoria Park Tipton                         |
| Friends of Red House Park         | Red House Park                               |
| Friends of Mary Macarthur Gardens | Mary Macarthur Gardens                       |
| Go Play Rowley                    | Britannia Park and Haden Hill Park           |
| Creative Academies Network        | West Bromwich                                |
| Friends of Rowley Hills           | Rowley Hills                                 |
| Alion Foundation (Go Play Team)   | Warley Woods, Lewisham, Victoria, Lightwoods |

Table 58 Participating community groups

When asked how they classified their park or open space, 7 of the 10 respondents said public park and natural and semi-natural green space. This was followed by green corridor (6 respondents), outdoor sports facility (five) and amenity green space (five).

The oldest group were formed in 1994, while the youngest group officially formed on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

Group sizes ranged from 3 members to 80, with 6 out of the 10 groups increasing in member numbers over the last 5 years (2013-2018). Only 1 group had seen a decrease in members.

9 of the 10 groups were formally constituted (with a constitution and committee), while 3 were registered charities and 2 registered companies. None of the groups were lease holders.

7 of the 10 groups were part of, or in contact with a wider network. Of these 5 were authority wide and 1 was a national group. These included: the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust, LitterWatch, Go Play and the Friends Group Forum.

### **Finance**

When asked how much the group had raised for their site over the last 3 years, only 2 gave details; ranging from £1,660 to £10,500. Funding raised was used on a variety of things, including trees, planting, bird and bat boxes, benches, events and promotion, and equipment such as bat detectors and walkie-talkies.

### **Quality of Park or Green Space**

5 of the 10 groups said their site was in a fair condition, with 3 stating the condition was poor. Only 2 groups rated the current condition of their site as good.

As shown in Table 59 below, 4 of the 10 respondents felt that the condition of their site had been declining over the last 5 years (2013-2018). The main reasons stated appear to be lack of maintenance or ranger presence.

| Trend in condition | Reason   |
|--------------------|--|
| Declining          | No ranger presence, anti-social behaviour, no tree or path management      |
| Declining          | The council have stopped having regular meetings with us to discuss issues |
| Declining          | Lack of maintenance from council   |
| Declining          |  |
| Stable             | Money spent in the park but now not maintained                             |
| Stable             | Things like the grass cuttings not picked up after mowing.                 |
| Stable             |  |
| Improving          | Our failed petition for litter bins and monthly litter picks have helped   |
| Improving          | Friends involvement, pushing for more council maintenance.                 |
| Improving          | Well maintained and activities   |

Table 59 What has been the trend in the condition of your park over the last 5 years and why?

The groups were also asked what they felt the trend was likely to be in the park over the next 5 years. Of the 9 respondents who answered the question, 5 said they felt the conditions would improve, while 4 stated it would decline (Table 60).

| Trend in condition | Reason   |
|--------------------|--|
| Declining          | More users and lack of nature conservation policy  |
| Declining          | Same reason ( <i>Lack of maintenance from council</i> )  |
| Declining          | Anti-social behaviour in the skate park, bins and benches in disrepair, bandstand in need of maintenance, kiddie playground in need of maintenance, clock in need of maintenance |
| Declining          |  |
| Improving          | Nature project with BBCWT next month   |
| Improving          | We think they will improve as more people are using green spaces   |
| Improving          | Our aim is to improve the open spaces on Rowley Hills for people and wildlife  |
| Improving          | The Friends are involved with decisions made and will continue to monitor maintenance of the park  |
| Improving          |  |

Table 60 What do you feel is likely to be the trend in the condition of your park over the next 5 years and why?

**Support**

Respondents were asked if they received any support from Council. 7 of the 10 respondents said they received advice from the council, followed by grant funding (five respondents) and staff time / attending meetings (four). 1 group had been provided with a meeting room by the Council while 1 had also received training. 1 other group also stated that they had been included in some of the decision making to help improve their park.

When asked if they would like to receive any other additional support from the Council, only 6 of the groups responded. Table 61 below shows that most groups would like more advice, followed by grant funding and staff time (however, none went onto specify what this was for). Under Other respondents stated that they wanted more rangers present, for a static gardener onsite for the flowerbeds, for more bins and for the site to be more actively managed by the Council.

| Trend in condition  | Responses |
|---|-----------|
| Advice i.e. to apply for funding  | 6         |
| Grant funding   | 4         |
| Staff time  | 3         |
| Other   | 3         |
| Training  | 2         |
| Meeting spaces  | 1         |
| Storage / office space  | 1         |
| Postage and photocopying  | 1         |
| Assistance to take more ownership / responsibility for site specific assets | 1         |

Table 61 Is there any other additional support you would like to receive that you don't already get from the council?

3 of the groups also receive support from a group other than the council. These include from the Wildlife Trust, LitterWatch and volunteers from Tesco.

**The Work of your Group**

5 of the 10 groups are actively managed in the management of their site. This includes promoting and encouraging use of the site (four groups), help with maintenance (three), improvement tasks (three), visitor surveys (two), fundraising (two), community engagement (two), organising events (two) and advocacy lobbying in behalf of green space issues (two).

During 2018, 6 of the groups contributed a total of 614 volunteer days (equivalent to 7.5 hours per day per person).

Over the next 5 years (2019-2023), 5 of the groups see their involvement in their green space as changing through recruiting new members, undertaking more practical activities (such as events) (four), as well as more fundraising (three) and networking with other groups (three). However, a small number of groups also expected to participate less activities, such as networking, sports ground maintenance and community engagement, citing lack of support from the Council and that work depended on the numbers of future members, work required and funding.

When asked if they would consider taking on a more active role in the management of their green space, 4 of the groups said yes. This included 2 who would be interested in taking up an informal annual arrangement with the Council, 1 who would like a short-term agreement (approximately 2-5 years) and 1 who would prefer a long-term lease or full asset transfer.

Those who said they would not take on a more active role in site management gave the following reasons:

- this is council owned site; we fund this through our council tax!
- Just not possible unless we get more volunteers or paid support.
- we are a small group and cannot take on extra commitments to the park
- Unsure of future/funding
- As the Rowley Hills has many open green spaces there is only a limited amount of voluntary work that our group are able to do

### **5.3 Go Play Survey**

A survey of 668 children aged 9-10 years was conducted, including questions about their use of green space, as well as broader questions about leisure and play opportunities. The results indicated that green space in Sandwell was well used by children, with a fifth (21.6%) saying they would go outside to play or hang out with friends most days.

Satisfaction levels among children were high, with 92.0% saying the places they like to play in were great or good. With more than 9 in 10 children also stating they could do all or some of the play activities that they liked, the majority of respondents also seemed content with the levels of play provision. Moreover, nearly two thirds (64.5%) suggested that they could play in some or all of the places that they wanted to.

Nearly nine out of ten (87.5%) children indicated they felt very safe or safe and 59.5% of respondents indicated they were allowed to play out without adults accompanying them. The vast majority of children indicated that adults were generally accepting of them play out, but 1 in 10 (10.3%) indicated that some adults associated children playing out with anti-social behaviour. Other barriers included busy roads and a lack of safe crossing points.

#### **5.4 Stakeholder Consultation**

Stakeholder consultation included a series of 4 stakeholder workshops (based around: staff and partners, biodiversity, income generation and funding opportunities and health and wellbeing), as well as a drop-in consultation session at West Bromwich Town Hall for friends groups, residents associations, sports groups and local residents.

Throughout the workshops, there were calls for improved green space management and an agreed strategic direction. Better facility maintenance, improved security and health and safety were identified as key areas for future management. Raising the quality of green space in Sandwell was also identified as a priority, particularly the removal of graffiti, litter and fly tipping.

Throughout the stakeholder workshops the need to improve connectivity and access to green spaces was identified, as well as making green spaces more inclusive in terms of disabled access. Participants suggested that greater use of green space would have multiple benefits, including more active travel contributing to reducing congestion and pollution, and improving the health and wellbeing of residents through increased physical activity.

Workshop participants suggested that developing community initiatives was a priority and would increase resident's sense of ownership, making them feel safer while visiting Sandwell's green spaces and reducing anti-social behaviour. While this requires building skills, ongoing support and promotion, improving the volunteer base or forming business partnerships through community initiatives were considered to be cost effective and could increase social value.

Improved financial management was also identified as a key theme throughout the workshops with participants called for more stable funding. There was support for greater external funding from sources such as the National Lottery, planning, business sponsorships, commercialisation and increased fees. However, the latter was seen as a last resort.

## 6 Accessibility

In order to build a picture of whether people have sufficient green space within a reasonable walking distance of where they live a model was constructed using the hierarchy as set out in the table below. A walking distance was assigned to each level based research carried out to develop the Sandwell Green Space Audits in 2013 and 2006, informed by national guidance (PPG17 and the Companion Guide and the London Plan).

The accessibility model is shown in Table 62 below;

| Hierarchy Level | Accessibility standard (m) |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Borough         | 1200                       |
| Neighbourhood   | 600                        |
| Local           | 400                        |

Table 62 Hierarchy and Walking Distance

On this basis mapping analysis can be carried out with sites with Borough wide significance having buffers plotted at 1200m from the site boundary, neighbourhood sites at 600m and local sites at 400m.

The section below discusses the accessibility and proximity mapping in more detail with regard to the hierarchy level and the impact of any severance lines.



## **6.1 Accessibility Mapping**

### **6.1.1 Borough Level Green space**

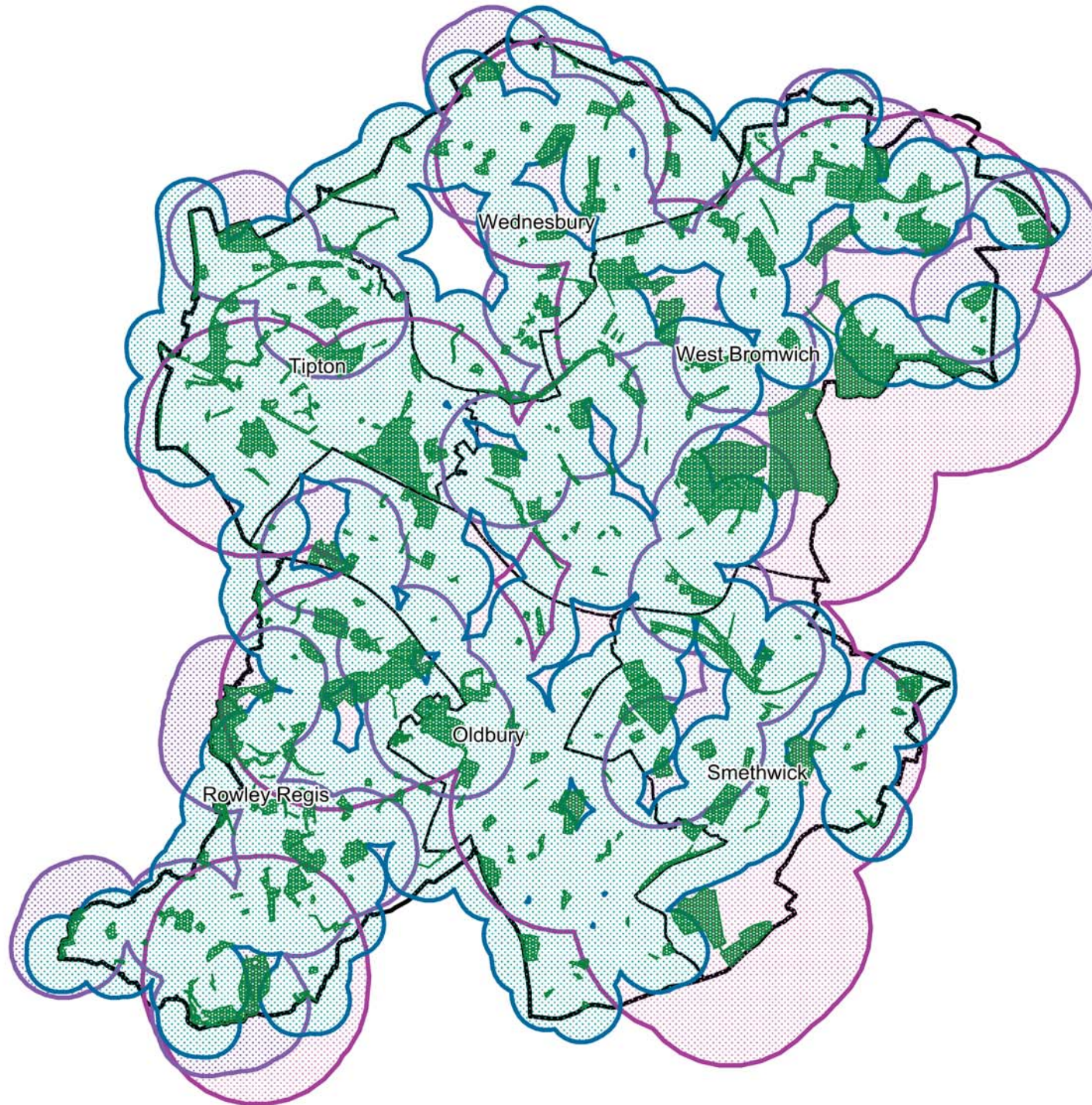
Figure 8 shows all unrestricted green spaces with buffers plotted based on the hierarchy of the site. Borough level sites have buffers plotted at 1200m, neighbourhood level at 600m and local level at 400m.

Some areas of the Borough have access to more than 1 site within the catchment areas. Parts of West Bromwich near Sandwell Valley Country Park have access to multiple sites. Similarly, the southern areas of Rowley Regis and parts of Tipton and Smethwick have access to multiple sites.

Based on this accessibility model there are just a few areas have no access to unrestricted green space. A large area of Wednesbury is without access to unrestricted green space; however, it is apparent that much of the area of deficiency in Wednesbury relates to the commercially developed areas around the A41 Black Country New Road.

## Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 8  
All Unrestricted Green Space Combined  
Accessibility Mapping



### LEGEND

 Unrestricted Green Space

### Buffer

 400m buffer

 600m buffer

 1200m buffer

### Boundary

 Town

 Sandwell

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|                 |                   |                  |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Drawn by:<br>LH | Checked by:<br>AS | Date:<br>12/0919 |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|

Figure 9 below shows unrestricted borough and neighbourhood green spaces buffered at 600m with local sites buffered at 400m. This figure shows accessibility to green spaces at a more local level with the contribution of Borough wide 'destinations' spaces removed.

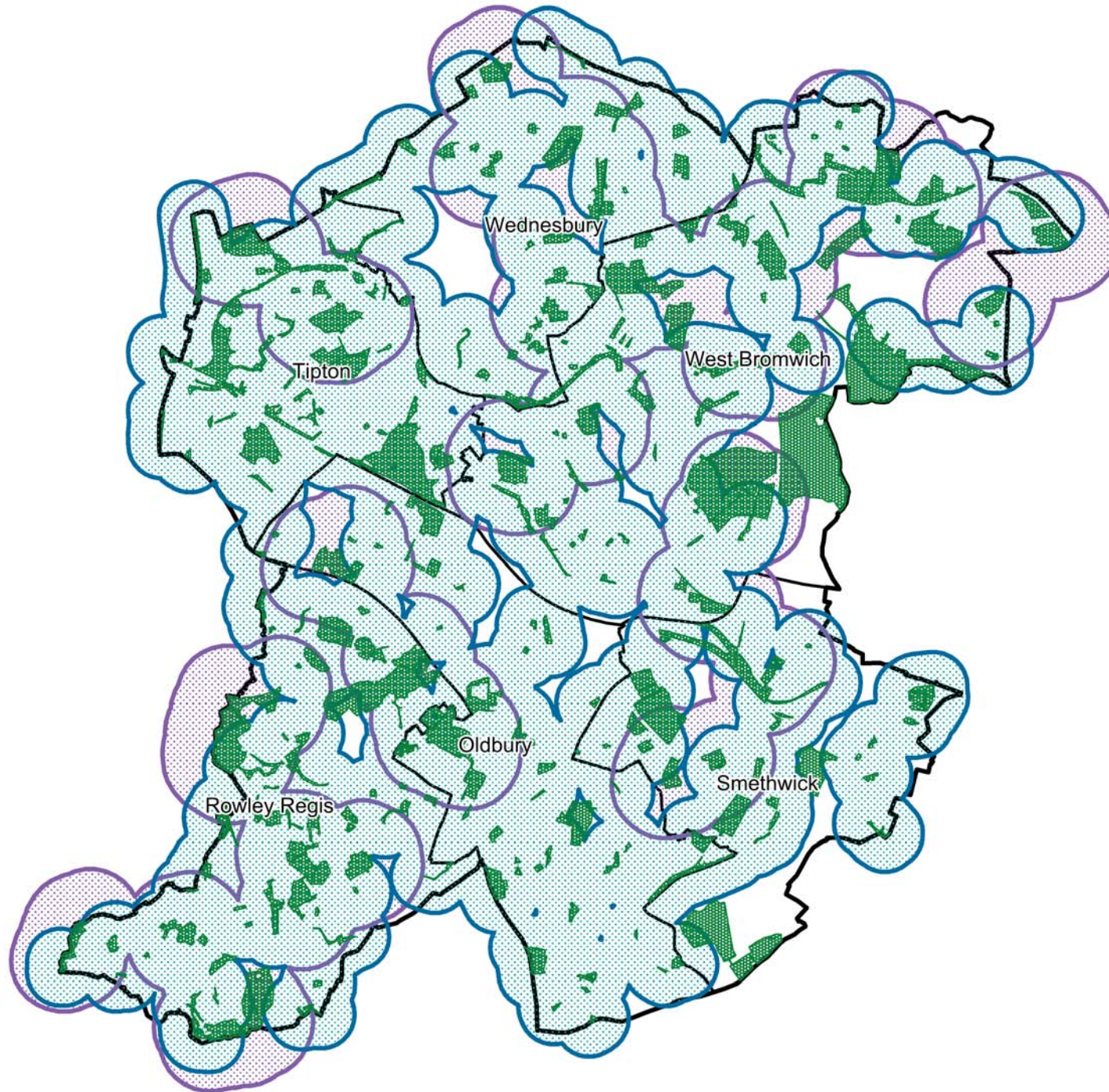
This shows that larger areas of the Borough have no access to unrestricted green space, and so are reliant on having access to Borough spaces with longer journey times. Areas of deficiency are located to the east of Smethwick around Merrivale Road in Bearwood, around Portway in Rowley Regis and around Roway Lane in Oldbury. A significant area of deficiency is located around the Hawthorns Stadium in West Bromwich, which stretches as far as the Newton area, near Forge Mill Lake. Smaller pockets of no access are also located within Rowley Regis, Oldbury Smethwick and West Bromwich. This therefore shows that when the contribution of Borough sites is removed there are only small residential areas with no access to unrestricted green space, alongside many smaller areas which are primarily industrial or commercial in their land use.

#### 6.1.2 Local Level Green space

Figure 10 maps all unrestricted (borough, neighbourhood and local level) green space at 400m. This shows that the majority of the borough has access to some green space nearby. However, there are areas of the Borough, most notably parts of Wednesbury, Oldbury, Smethwick and West Bromwich that have no access to green space. This figure illustrates the significant contribution of local level sites in providing access to green space. Yet, it also identifies the important role that both borough and neighbourhood significant sites play in providing accessible green space to Sandwell's residents. This is especially noted within West Bromwich with the influence of Sandwell Valley Country Park, however areas of West Bromwich such as around in the Newton Ward, south of the Tame Valley Canal from Newton Road / Grove Vale Avenue to Conway Grove and Claverdon Drive still have no access to unrestricted green space. Some areas of the Borough, mainly Tipton and Rowley Regis, have access to multiple local level sites and many of the areas of deficiency are located areas that have limited or no residential development. Such areas around Roway Lane and Blakeley Hall Road in Oldbury.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 9  
Proximity to Unrestricted Green Space



## LEGEND

 Unrestricted Green Space

### Buffer

 400m buffer

 600m buffer

### Boundary

 Town

 Sandwell

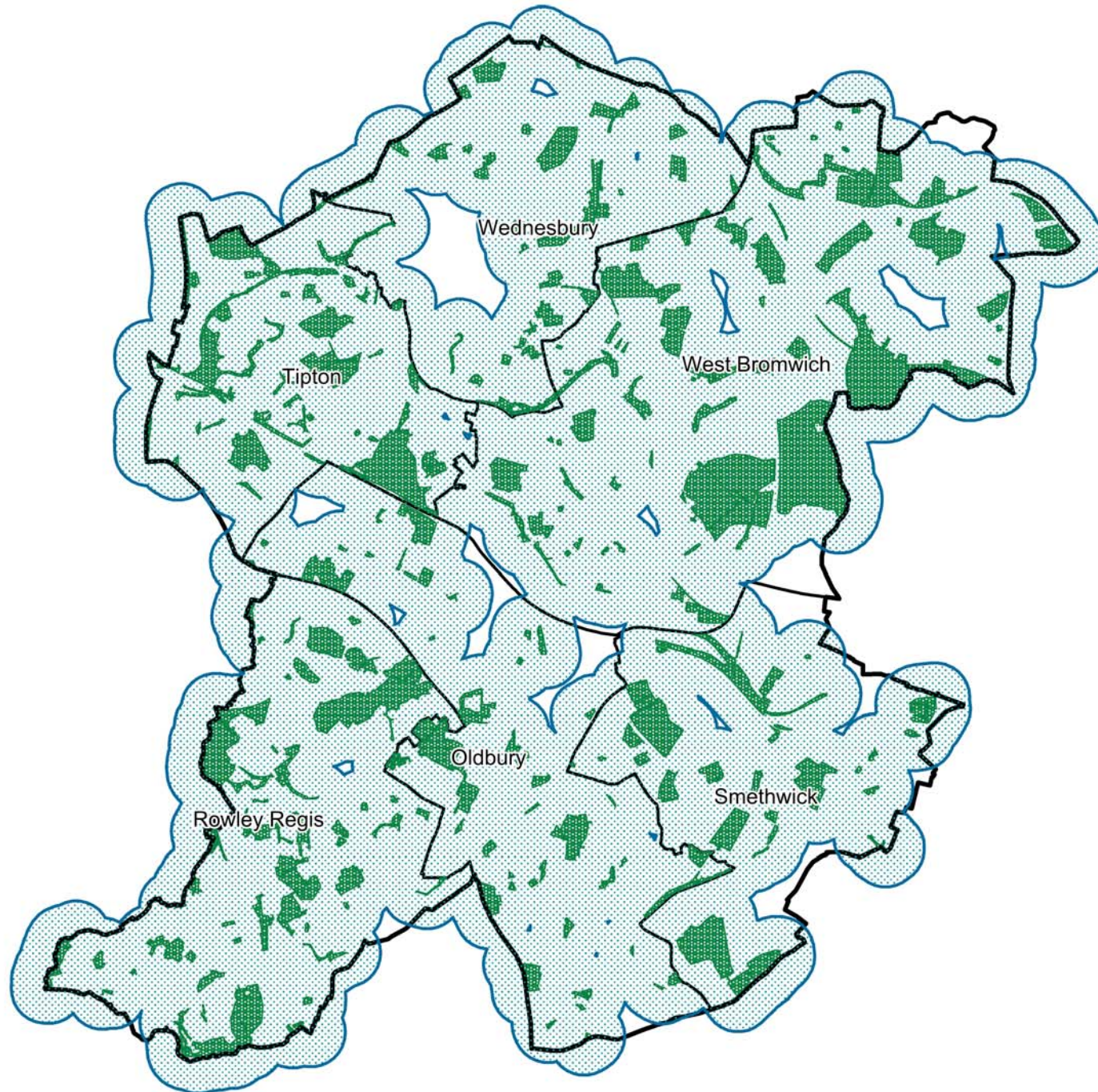
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# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 10  
Proximity to Unrestricted Green Space



## LEGEND

 Unrestricted Green Space

## Buffer

 400m buffer

## Boundary

 Sandwell

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|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|

## 6.2 Accessibility Maps and Severance Lines

Figure 11 shows the severance lines that have been identified for Sandwell Borough. Severance lines which act as barriers to pedestrian routes were identified in the previous Sandwell Green Space Audit and these include main roads, railway lines, canals and rivers. These were reviewed by Sandwell Council's Transport team and were updated on the GIS mapping system and used to modify the catchment of the unrestricted green spaces. Modelling with severance is used to indicate a more realistic interpretation of accessibility taking into account barriers to accessing green space on foot.

### 6.2.1 Severance

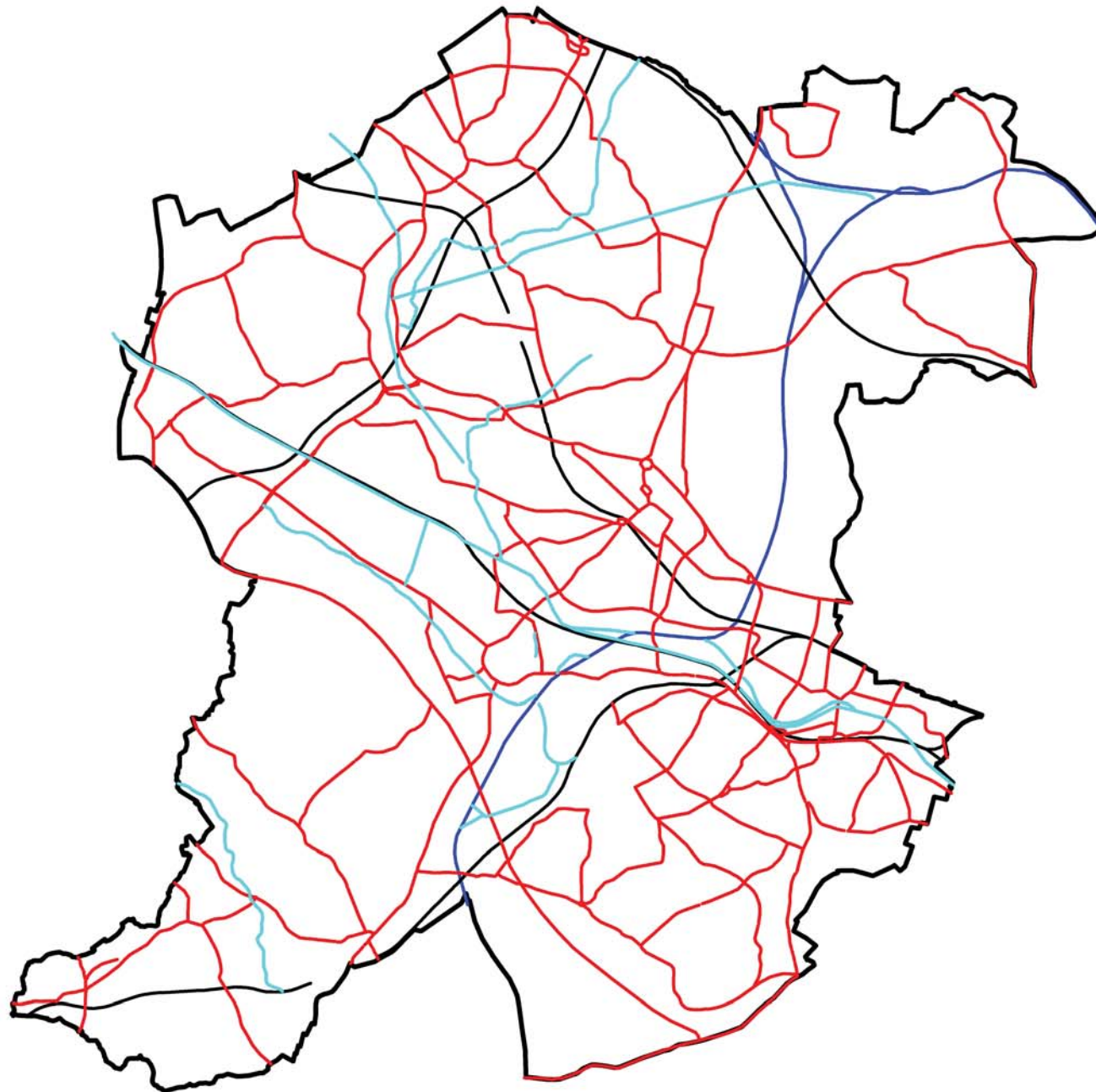
The effect of the severance lines on borough, neighbourhood and local green spaces buffered at 1200m, 600m and 400m respectively were considered. Severance effects were applied to truncate the buffers as shown in Figure 12. The area of the Borough that has access to unrestricted green space is reduced when the severance effects are considered, particularly to the west of Wednesbury, north of Smethwick and Oldbury with the extensive road, canal and rail networks located here.

### 6.2.2 Provision in Neighbouring Boroughs





Figure 13 below shows unrestricted borough, neighbourhood and local sites with severance along with the effect of provision in neighbouring boroughs within 1200 metres. The overall effect of provision in neighbouring boroughs will slightly reduce the area of the Borough without access to unrestricted green space, particularly in areas of deficiency close to the Borough boundary. However, severance effects will have an impact in terms of the accessibility of these sites. As an example, the eastern edge of Smethwick has been addressed by green spaces within Birmingham but the railway line affects this greatly.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 11  
Severance Lines



## LEGEND

-  Waterways
-  Roads
-  Railway
-  Motorway

## Boundary

-  Sandwell

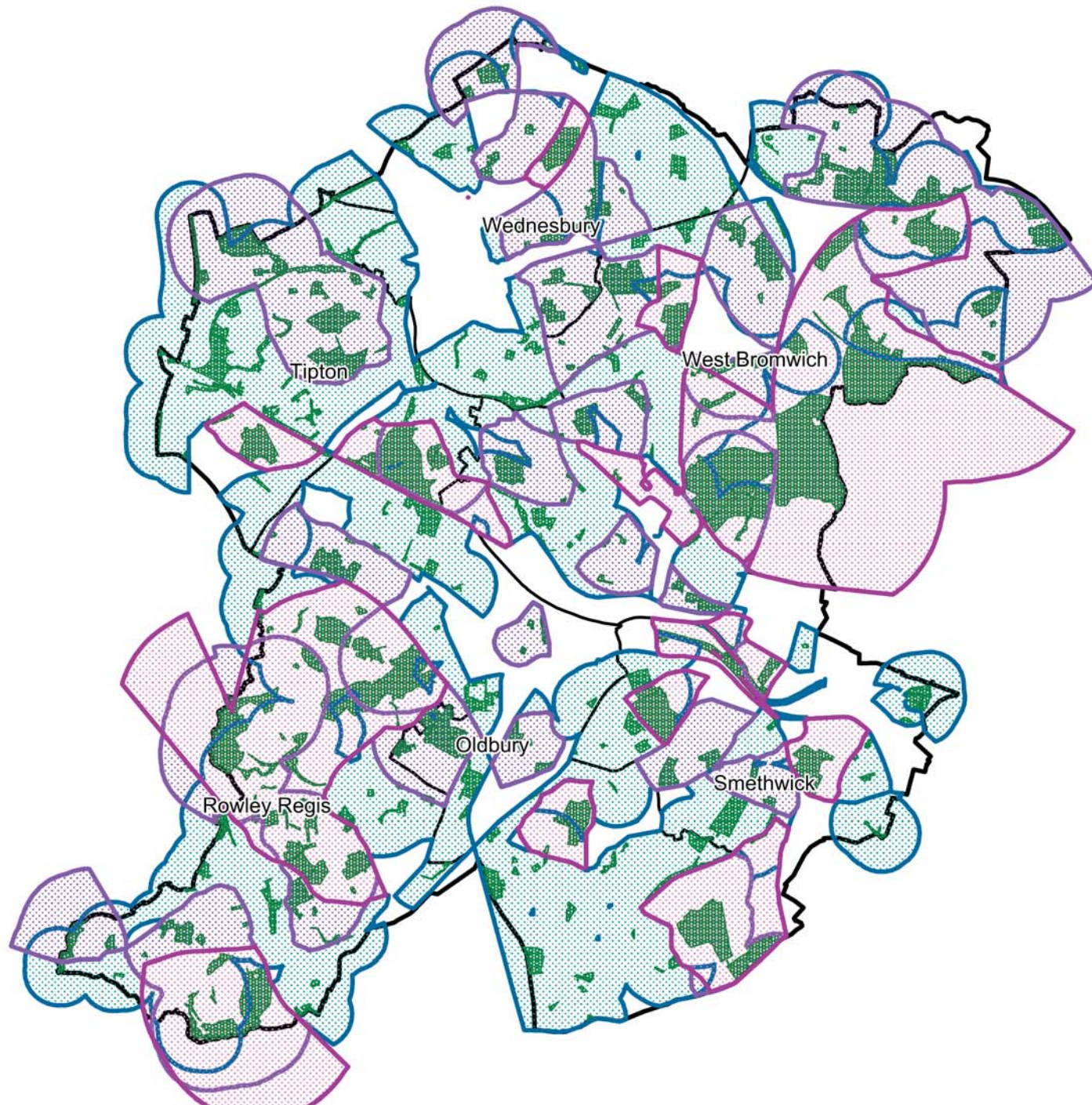
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# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 12  
Proximity to  
Unrestricted Green  
Spaces with Severance



## LEGEND

 Unrestricted Green Space

### Buffer

 400m

 600m

 1200m

### Boundary

 Town

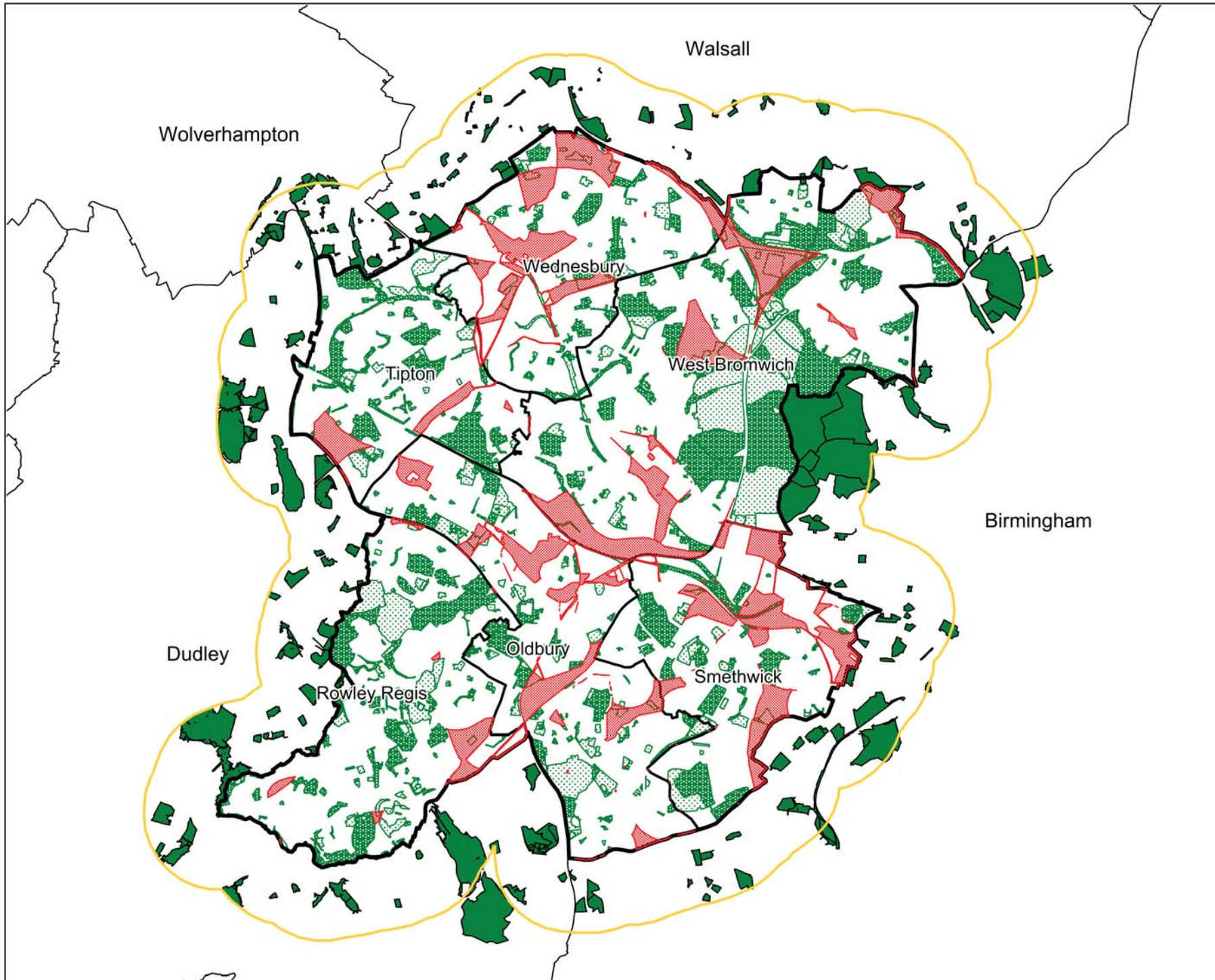
 Sandwell

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## Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 13  
Areas without access to  
Unrestricted Green  
Spaces

### LEGEND

- All Unrestricted Green Space
- Other Green Spaces
- Areas Without Access to Unrestricted Green Space

### Buffer

- 1200m Buffer

### Boundary

- Town
- Sandwell
- West Midland Authority

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## **Green Corridors**

Figure 14 shows the existing provision of green corridors, canals and wildlife corridors throughout Sandwell. Potential new corridors are shown in green as 'Potential Linear Walkways'. Many are adjacent to existing corridors, extending their range, while others are not interconnected to the main network but could offer additional, vital green corridors for the movement of people and wildlife in less well-connected areas.

## **Green Space and New Development**

Figure 15 shows current green space deficiencies with areas without access to unrestricted green space, along with new housing allocations (for residential and mixed use) and employment land allocations which align with some of the red deficiency areas. This plan shows opportunity areas where existing green space deficiency (in terms of accessibility) could be addressed through the development process. Development sites within red areas will not have sufficient access to green space and should therefore be reviewed as priority spaces for potential onsite green space provision. New developments which are not in areas of red will have access to unrestricted green space with at least a local space within at least 400m.

## **6.3 Fields in Trust Green Space Index**

Fields in Trust (FIT) is an independent charity champions and supports our parks and green spaces by protecting them for people to enjoy in perpetuity. The organisation was formerly known as the National Playing Fields Association and had developed the 'Six acre Standard' a quantitative standard for the provision of formal sports pitches and playing spaces. In 2019, the organisation published data using their Green Space Index based on analysis of publicly accessible local park and green space provision within Great Britain.

FIT used a 10 -minute walking distance as a measure of an acceptable distance for a resident to be from their nearest park or green space and are promoting this tool as a useful addition to judging provision levels based on overall quantity alone.

At the time of producing this Green Space Audit published data is only available at a regional level. This shows that:

- The West Midlands has a Green Space Index score (1.05) marginally higher than the minimum standard (1.0)
- Provision per person at 36.49 m<sup>2</sup> per person is marginally above the national average of 25.22 m<sup>2</sup> per person
- 255,128 people living in the region do not have access to green space within a 10 minute walking time.

At the moment the tool is still being developed. When data is available at a local authority and ward level this tool may prove more useful and allow benchmarking with other local authority areas.

**Sandwell Green Space Audit**

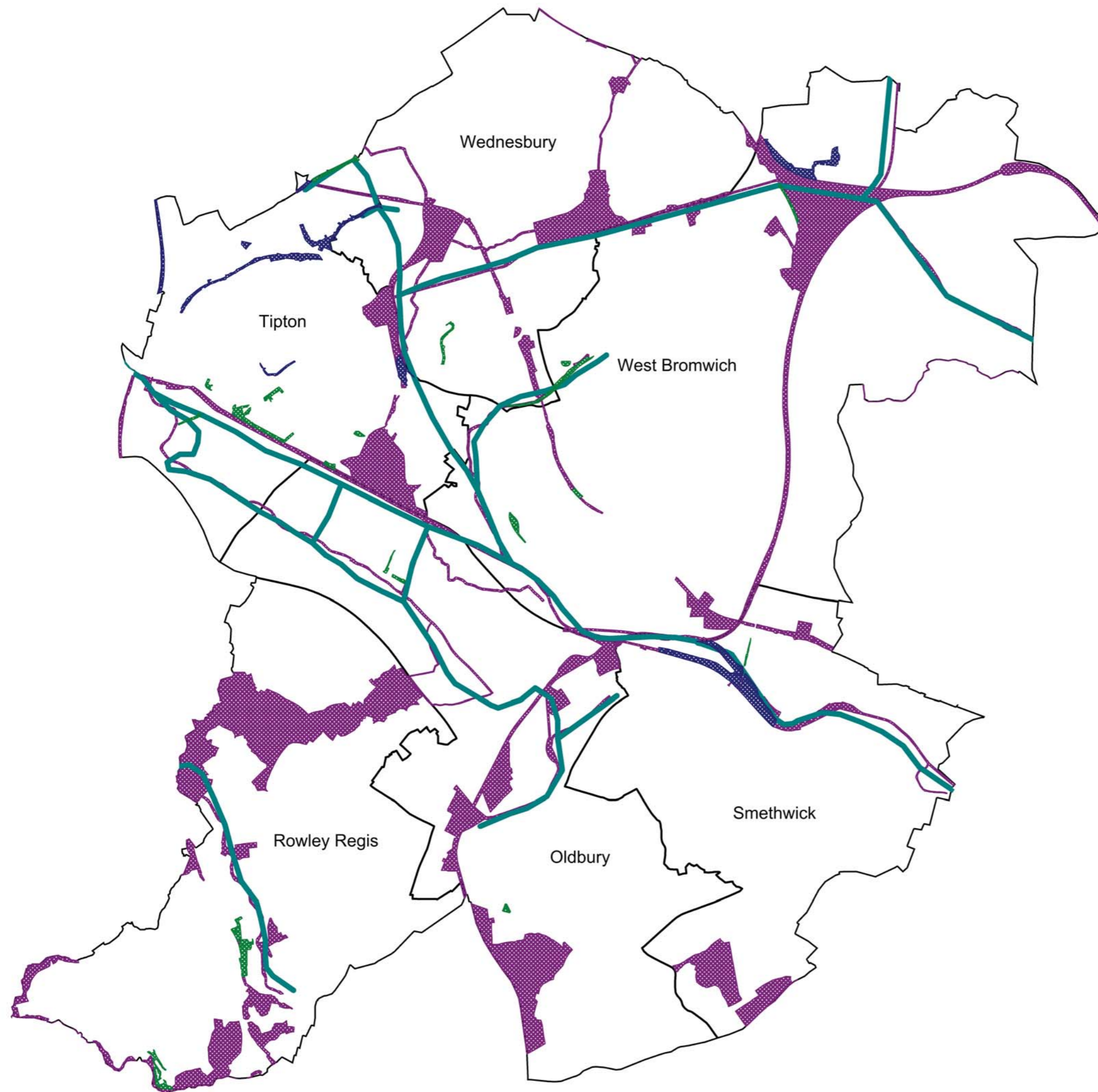
Figure 14  
Existing and Potential Green Corridors

**LEGEND**

-  Potential Linear Walkway
-  Green Corridors
-  Wildlife Corridors
-  Canals

**Boundary**

-  Sandwell
-  Town



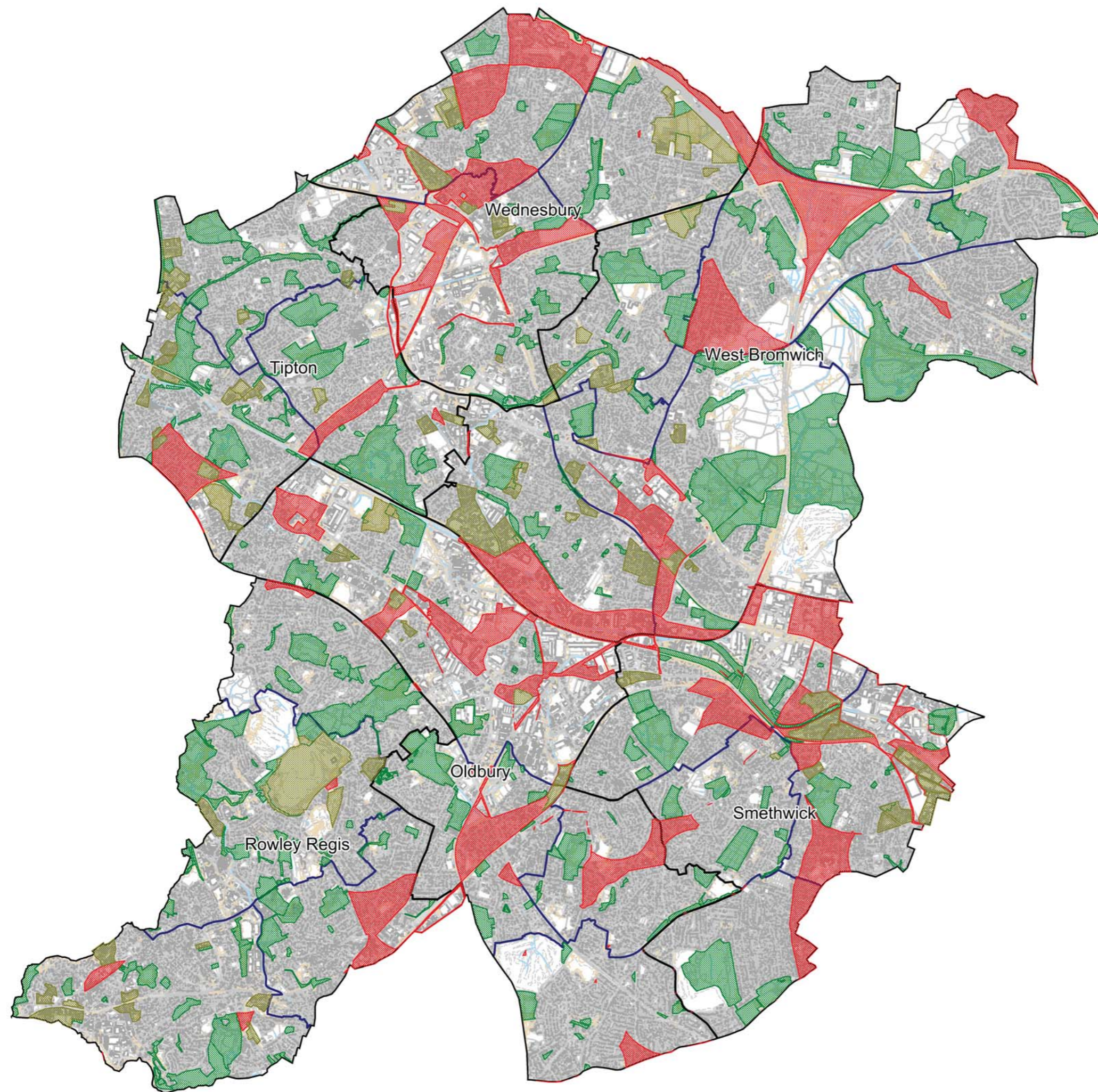
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**Sandwell Green Space Audit**


Figure 15  
Green Space and New Development



**LEGEND**

 Unrestricted Green Space

 Housing

 Areas Without Access to Unrestricted Green Space

**Boundary**

 Sandwell

 Town

 Ward Boundaries

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## 7 Quality

### 7.1 Context & Introduction

This report sets out the results of the quality audit of green space provision in Sandwell. The sample of sites to be assessed was supplied by Sandwell Council and represents a good geographical spread of different types of green space.

Previous audits were carried out in 2006 and 2013 and where appropriate a comparison of the recent findings are compared to this historic data.

The results of this assessment are compared to the community's perceptions gained through the Household Survey later in this report. (to be added once the Household Survey Analysis is available).

### 7.2 Methodology

#### 7.2.1 Criteria used

In total 220 sites were selected to be assessed, against the criteria derived from the national standard for green space quality, the Green Flag Award.

Whilst the Green Flag Award contains both desk and field research, this project was limited to site-based assessments. Thus, the final scores should not be read as the site's score against the Green Flag Award.

The key criteria for the Green Flag Award are shown below;

- A Welcoming Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- Well Maintained and Clean
- Environmental Management
- Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing and Communications
- Management

Under these 8 key criteria are 27 field assessment criteria. Of these, 6 key criteria and 18 field assessment criteria can be judged on site without reference to a Management Plan or other documentation, and are listed below:

### **A Welcoming Park**

- Welcoming
- Good and safe access
- Signage
- Equal access for all

### **Healthy, Safe and Secure**

- Appropriate levels of quality facilities and activities
- Safe equipment and facilities
- Personal security in park
- Dog fouling

### **Clean and Well Maintained**

- Litter and waste management
- Horticultural maintenance
- Arboricultural maintenance
- Buildings and infrastructure maintenance
- Equipment maintenance

### **Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage**

- Management of natural features, wild fauna and flora
- Conservation of landscape features
- Conservation of buildings and structures

### **Community Involvement**

- Appropriate provision for the community  
Provision of appropriate

## **Marketing and Communication**

- Provision of appropriate educational interpretation/information

Those criteria from Green Flag that were not used since they cannot be solely assessed on site are shown below;

## **Environmental Management**

- Managing environmental impact
- Waste minimisation
- Chemical use
- Peat Use
- Climate change adaption strategies

## **Community Involvement**

- Community involvement in management and development including outreach work

## **Marketing**

- Marketing and promotion
- Appropriate information channels

## **Management**

- Implementation of the management plan

In 2017 the Green Flag Award updated and applied minor revisions to the Award criteria. The order of the criteria has changed, the wording of some criteria has been amended and some criteria have been moved to sit under a different heading. The most notable change is that “Appropriate Provision of facilities” and “Quality of equipment, facilities & infrastructure” have been merged into a single criterion. The changes are summarised in Table 63.



| 2013 Criteria   | 2018 Criteria   |
|---|---|
| 1. Welcoming  | 1. Welcoming  |
| 2. Good and safe access   | 2. Good and safe access                                       |
| 3. Signage  | 3. Signage  |
| 4. Equal access for all   | 4. Equal access for all                                       |
| 5. Safe equipment, facilities & infrastructure                      | 6. Safe equipment and facilities                              |
| 6. Personal security in the park                                    | 7. Personal security  |
| 7. Dog fouling  | 8. Control of Dogs/ Fouling                                   |
| 8. Appropriate provision of facilities                              | 5. Appropriate provision of quality facilities and activities |
| 9. Quality of equipment, facilities & infrastructure                |   |
| 10. Litter and waste management                                     | 9. Litter and waste management                                |
| 11. Grounds maintenance and horticulture                            | 10. Horticultural maintenance                                 |
| 12. Buildings, facilities & infrastructure maintenance              | 12. Buildings and infrastructure maintenance                  |
| 13. Equipment maintenance   | 13. Equipment maintenance                                     |
| 18. Arboriculture and woodland management                           | 11. Arboricultural maintenance                                |
| 19. Conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora          | 19. Management of natural features, wild fauna and flora      |
| 20. Conservation of landscape features                              | 20. Conservation of landscape features                        |
| 21. Conservation of buildings and structures                        | 21. Conservation of buildings and structures                  |
| 22. Provision of appropriate information                            | 23. Appropriate provision for community                       |
| 23. Provision of appropriate educational interpretation/information | 26. Appropriate educational interpretation/information        |

Table 63 Scoring criteria changes

The 2017 Green Flag criteria have been used in the 2018 audit in order to allow any future audits, either on a site by site basis, or as part of a repeated assessment to be compared to this 2018 dataset. The changes between 2013 and 2018 are however relatively modest and this has had relatively little impact on the scores.

7.2.2 Scoring of criteria

Each individual criterion was scored out of 10 and a site score derived from the total of all the criteria scores divided by the actual number of criteria scored. Criteria that did not apply to a particular site – e.g. conservation of buildings on a site that had no buildings on it – were scored as not applicable and were therefore not included in the total score or average calculations. The maximum score available was therefore 100 for each site.

Within the Green Flag Award, a scoring line gives an indication of what each score means as follows:

|         |           |   |      |   |   |      |   |      |           |           |             |
|---------|-----------|---|------|---|---|------|---|------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Score   | 0         | 1 | 2    | 3 | 4 | 5    | 6 | 7    | 8         | 9         | 10          |
| Quality | Very Poor |   | Poor |   |   | Fair |   | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Exceptional |

Table 64 Green Flag Scoring Line

Site visits were carried out unaccompanied during weekdays between 9.00 am and 6.00 pm. As a quality control measure the assessments on a sample of sites of different typologies were selected and scored by a second team member.

**7.3 Findings**

This section of the report is divided into the findings for each of the sites and also for the individual criteria.

A total of 220 sites were visited and of these 209 were assessed using the methodology described above. The eleven sites that were not assessed were found to be not accessible. The 2013 and 2006 Green Space Audits assessed a total of 218 and 230 sites respectively, using the same methodology. A total of 182 were assessed in both 2018 and 2013, and a further 28 sites were assessed for the first time during the most recent audit. The 2013 quality assessment sample includes 29 allotment sites that were not included in the 2018 and 2006 quality assessments.

| Town          | Number of Sites Assessed (2018) | Number of Sites Assessed (2013) | Number of Sites Assessed (2006) |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Tipton        | 33                              | 32                              | 38                              |
| Oldbury       | 24                              | 30                              | 35                              |
| West Bromwich | 57                              | 56                              | 52                              |
| Smethwick     | 27                              | 32                              | 30                              |
| Rowley Regis  | 38                              | 37                              | 39                              |
| Wednesbury    | 30                              | 31                              | 36                              |
| Total         | 209                             | 218                             | 230                             |

Table 65 Sites assessed

### 7.3.1 Findings – Quality Scores by Site

Table 66 below shows the quality scores of all the green spaces that were assessed in 2018 with a separate table for each town. A full list of sites and their scores is contained in Appendix A.

Where the site was also assessed in 2013 the score for this assessment is also shown along with the variance in quality scores.

#### Tipton

| SITE ID | SITE NAME                 | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 1037    | Tipton Cemetery           | 67                   | 68                   | -1       |
| 1041    | Victoria Park (Tipton)    | 64                   | 63                   | 1        |
| 1028    | Sheepwash Urban Park      | 55                   | 54                   | 1        |
| 1018    | Jubilee Park              | 46                   | 37                   | 9        |
| 1029    | Farley Park               | 46                   | 51                   | -5       |
| 1042    | Coneygre Youth Centre     | 45                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 1006    | Wednesbury Oak Play Area  | 38                   | 22                   | 16       |
| 1038    | Powis Avenue Open Space   | 37                   | 34                   | 3        |
| 1047    | Coronation Gardens        | 36                   | 41                   | -5       |
| 1044    | Dudley Road Amenity Space | 36                   | 38                   | -2       |
| 1004    | Tipton Linear Park        | 36                   | 34                   | 2        |
| 1064    | Wednesbury Oak Open Space | 35                   | 36                   | -1       |
| 1007    | Laybourne Park            | 33                   | 34                   | -1       |
| 1048    | Union Street Open Space   | 33                   | 34                   | -1       |
| 1027    | Haines Branch Canal       | 30                   | 49                   | -19      |
| 1051    | Beaumont Close Open Space | 30                   | 33                   | -3       |
| 1063    | Kerr Drive Open Space     | 28                   | 37                   | -9       |
| 1049    | Furnace Parade Open Space | 27                   | 24                   | 3        |
| 1026    | Great Western Street      | 26                   | 38                   | -12      |

| SITE ID | SITE NAME                                  | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 1066    | Upper Church Lane/Powis Avenue Walkthrough | 25                   | 19                   | 6        |
| 1014    | Central Avenue/Upper Church Lane           | 21                   | 28                   | -7       |
| 1013    | Bloomfield Road Amenity Space              | 20                   | 17                   | 3        |
| 1050    | Bullers Open Space                         | 20                   | 26                   | -6       |
| 1001    | Brierley Lane Open Space                   | 19                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 1067    | Standbridge Way Amenity Space              | 19                   | 25                   | -6       |
| 1003    | Bilston Road Open Space                    | 18                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 1011    | Tibbington Open Space                      | 17                   | 14                   | 3        |
| 1002    | Weddell Wynd Open Space                    | 17                   | 25                   | -8       |
| 1017    | Hall Lane Open Space                       | 16                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 1010    | Tibbington Playing Fields                  | 15                   | 21                   | -6       |
| 1008    | Princes End Branchline Walkway             | 13                   | 11                   | 2        |
| 1009    | Lichfield Street Open Space                | 11                   | 15                   | -4       |
| 1075    | Coneygre Canal Green Space                 | 9                    | 13                   | -4       |

## Oldbury

| SITE ID | SITE NAME                             | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 2045    | Barnford Hill Park                    | 61                   | 64                   | -3       |
| 2012    | Brades Green Open Space               | 44                   | 35                   | 9        |
| 2028    | Langley Park                          | 43                   | 44                   | -1       |
| 2072    | Queensway Open Space                  | 36                   | 38                   | -2       |
| 2035    | Birchley Sports Ground (Newbury Lane) | 34                   | 30                   | 4        |
| 2068    | Grafton Road Playing Fields           | 34                   | 44                   | -10      |
| 2003    | Tividale Park                         | 34                   | 36                   | -2       |
| 2024    | Broadwell Park                        | 32                   | 44                   | -12      |
| 2042    | York Road Open Space                  | 31                   | 28                   | 3        |
| 2083    | M5/Tame Road Open Space               | 29                   | 38                   | -9       |
| 2052    | Norman Road Walkthrough               | 29                   | 38                   | -9       |
| 2087    | Norfolk Road Open Space               | 29                   | 30                   | -1       |
| 2033    | Birchley Sports Ground                | 27                   | 29                   | -2       |
| 2037    | Hartlebury Road Amenity Space         | 27                   | 36                   | -9       |
| 2034    | Lion Farm Playing Fields              | 26                   | 26                   | 0        |
| 2022    | Canal Side Open Space                 | 21                   | 26                   | -5       |
| 2055    | Hill Top Road Open Space              | 20                   | 28                   | -8       |
| 2040    | Titford Lane Open Space               | 18                   | 31                   | -13      |
| 2066    | Ashes Road Open Space                 | 18                   | 24                   | -6       |
| 2041    | Titford Pools                         | 14                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 2101    | Embassy Road Play Area                | 13                   | 25                   | -12      |

|      |                           |    |     |     |
|------|---------------------------|----|-----|-----|
| 2014 | Dudley Road Walkthrough   | 10 | N/A | N/A |
| 2031 | Old Park Lane Open Space  | 9  | 16  | -7  |
| 2011 | Rattle Chain Urban Forest | 8  | 18  | -10 |

## West Bromwich

| SITE ID | SITE NAME                          | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 3058    | Dartmouth Park                     | 75                   | 73                   | 2        |
| 3051    | Swan Pool/Priory Wood              | 71                   | 63                   | 8        |
| 3055    | Sandwell Park Farm                 | 68                   | 64                   | 4        |
| 3103    | Oak House                          | 67                   | 64                   | 3        |
| 3039    | Forge Mill Lake & Nature Reserve   | 66                   | 62                   | 4        |
| 3027    | Red House Park                     | 66                   | 68                   | -2       |
| 3048    | West Bromwich Crematorium          | 65                   | 66                   | -1       |
| 3106    | Garden of Remembrance              | 61                   | 65                   | -4       |
| 3057    | King George V Playing Fields       | 60                   | 51                   | 9        |
| 3038    | Forge Mill Farm                    | 59                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3110    | Kenrick Park                       | 56                   | 50                   | 6        |
| 3119    | Sots Hole Wood                     | 52                   | 57                   | -5       |
| 3074    | Manor House                        | 49                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3003    | Redwood Road Open Space            | 49                   | 44                   | 5        |
| 3079    | West Bromwich Cemetery             | 48                   | 58                   | -10      |
| 3064    | Charlemont Farm Playing Fields     | 48                   | 45                   | 3        |
| 3100    | Hamblett's Open Space              | 47                   | 51                   | -4       |
| 3090    | Oakwood Park/Jesson Playing Fields | 46                   | 48                   | -2       |
| 3025    | Holly Wood & Pasture               | 44                   | 43                   | 1        |
| 3006    | Firtree Drive Open Space           | 43                   | 36                   | 7        |
| 3047    | Gorse Farm Wood                    | 43                   | 47                   | -4       |
| 3080    | Lindsey Road Open Space            | 43                   | 42                   | 1        |
| 3127    | Lyng Park                          | 42                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3023    | Whitecrest Open Space              | 41                   | 42                   | -1       |
| 3007    | Ladbury Grove Open Space           | 41                   | 36                   | 5        |
| 3017    | The Grove Open Space               | 40                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3068    | Beaconview/Walsall Road Open Space | 39                   | 38                   | 1        |
| 3061    | Newton Road Playing Fields         | 38                   | 35                   | 3        |
| 3030    | Longleat Spinney                   | 38                   | 32                   | 6        |
| 3015    | Brooklands Open Space              | 37                   | 28                   | 9        |

| SITE ID | SITE NAME                                  | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 3078    | Marsh Lane Open Space (Proposed play area) | 37                   | 41                   | -4       |
| 3085    | Denbigh Crescent Open Space                | 36                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3067    | Navigation Lane Amenity Space              | 35                   | 28                   | 7        |
| 3016    | Brackendale Drive Playing Fields           | 35                   | 31                   | 4        |
| 3089    | Okehampton Drive Play Area                 | 34                   | 40                   | -6       |
| 3009    | Poppy Drive Open Space                     | 34                   | 38                   | -4       |
| 3032    | Ray Hall Pastoral Land                     | 31                   | 36                   | -5       |
| 3075    | Menzies Open Space                         | 31                   | 42                   | -11      |
| 3088    | Lily Street Open Space                     | 31                   | 29                   | 2        |
| 3096    | Greets Green Playing Field                 | 31                   | 30                   | 1        |
| 3071    | Stone Cross Open Space                     | 30                   | 24                   | 6        |
| 3120    | Hobhouse Close Play Area                   | 30                   | 37                   | -7       |
| 3136    | West Bromwich Parkway SINC                 | 30                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3040    | Tanhouse Avenue Amenity Space              | 29                   | 28                   | 1        |
| 3093    | Tildasley Street Amenity Space             | 29                   | 31                   | -2       |
| 3049    | Haypitts Woods                             | 28                   | 28                   | 0        |
| 3014    | Biddleston Grove Open Space                | 26                   | 21                   | 5        |
| 3018    | Hill Farm Bridge Fields                    | 26                   | 30                   | -4       |
| 3086    | Sussex Avenue Open Space                   | 24                   | 31                   | -7       |
| 3010    | Tamebridge Walkthrough                     | 23                   | 25                   | -2       |
| 3200    | Maud Road Open Space                       | 23                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3112    | Constance Avenue Open Space                | 21                   | 34                   | -13      |
| 3020    | Wilderness Lane SLINC & SINC               | 18                   | 25                   | -7       |
| 3072    | Hall Green Open Space                      | 18                   | 30                   | -12      |
| 3137    | Ridgeacre Branch Canal SINC                | 17                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 3097    | Delta Gardens                              | 15                   | 28                   | -13      |
| 3094    | Billhay Lane Amenity Space                 | 8                    | 15                   | -7       |

## Smethwick

| SITE ID | SITE NAME                      | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 4050    | Warley Woods                   | 69                   | 69                   | 0        |
| 4051    | Lightwoods Park                | 66                   | 50                   | 16       |
| 4012    | Tollhouse Way Amenity Area     | 60                   | 50                   | 10       |
| 4018    | West Smethwick Park            | 58                   | 57                   | 1        |
| 4036    | Victoria Park (Smethwick)      | 57                   | 63                   | -6       |
| 4005    | Galton Valley Canal            | 57                   | 52                   | 5        |
| 4040    | Uplands Cemetery               | 51                   | 62                   | -11      |
| 4052    | Galton Valley Play Area        | 51                   | 41                   | 10       |
| 4006    | Lewisham Park                  | 49                   | 50                   | -1       |
| 4003    | Smethwick Summit               | 48                   | 38                   | 10       |
| 4004    | Galton Valley Heritage Centre  | 47                   | 42                   | 5        |
| 4038    | Unett Street Open Space        | 47                   | 54                   | -7       |
| 4016    | St Pauls Cemetery              | 45                   | 47                   | -2       |
| 4046    | Montague Road Open Space       | 45                   | 44                   | 1        |
| 4035    | Harry Mitchell Park            | 39                   | 37                   | 2        |
| 4031    | Londonderry Lane Amenity Space | 38                   | 35                   | 3        |
| 4042    | Thimblemill Brook              | 37                   | 35                   | 2        |
| 4030    | Smethwick Hall Park            | 37                   | 42                   | -5       |
| 4022    | St Johns Recreation Ground     | 36                   | 33                   | 3        |
| 4001    | Fowler Close Open Space        | 36                   | 40                   | -4       |
| 4058    | The Maltings Open Space        | 36                   | 13                   | 23       |
| 4008    | Bridge Street Amenity Space    | 32                   | 51                   | -19      |
| 4032    | Londonderry Playing Fields     | 28                   | 34                   | -6       |
| 4025    | Basons Lane Playing Fields     | 27                   | 35                   | -8       |
| 4002    | Roebuck Lane Open Space        | 19                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 4009    | Black Patch Park               | 13                   | 31                   | -18      |
| 4059    | Merry Hill SLINC               | 8                    | N/A                  | N/A      |

## Rowley Regis

| SITE ID | SITE NAME  | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 5087    | Haden Hill Park                                      | 71                   | 73                   | -2       |
| 5044    | Rowley Regis Cemetery                                | 57                   | 59                   | -2       |
| 5071    | Mary MacArthur Gardens                               | 51                   | 55                   | -4       |
| 5016    | Warrens Hall Park SOS                                | 50                   | 61                   | -11      |
| 5046    | Britannia Park                                       | 46                   | 61                   | -15      |
| 5069    | Bearmore Playing Fields                              | 44                   | 47                   | -3       |
| 5009    | Bury Hill Park                                       | 43                   | 51                   | -8       |
| 5085    | Corngreaves Public Open Space                        | 42                   | 48                   | -6       |
| 5072    | Mousesweet Brook LNR                                 | 41                   | 50                   | -9       |
| 5095    | Woburn Road Amenity Greenspace                       | 40                   | 39                   | 1        |
| 5070    | Bearmore Road Open Space                             | 34                   | 40                   | -6       |
| 5029    | Wylde Crescent Open Space                            | 34                   | 34                   | 0        |
| 5038    | Brickhouse Farm Open Space                           | 34                   | 36                   | -2       |
| 5078    | Corngreaves Walk Embankment                          | 33                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 5090    | Codsall Coppice                                      | 33                   | 49                   | -16      |
| 5051    | Waterfall Lane SINC                                  | 32                   | 31                   | 1        |
| 5027    | Angela Avenue Open Space                             | 30                   | 34                   | -4       |
| 5043    | Moor Lane Open Space                                 | 29                   | 34                   | -5       |
| 5018    | Springfield Estate Embankments                       | 28                   | 33                   | -5       |
| 5004    | Darbys Hill Quarry Open Space                        | 28                   | 32                   | -4       |
| 5066    | Ashtree Mound Playing Fields                         | 27                   | 27                   | 0        |
| 5035    | Brickhouse Open Space                                | 26                   | 21                   | 5        |
| 5041    | Warwick Road Open Space                              | 26                   | 25                   | 1        |
| 5068    | St Lukes Church                                      | 25                   | 37                   | -12      |
| 5015    | Warrens Hall Farm SOS                                | 24                   | 34                   | -10      |
| 5011    | Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space - Portway Road SOS | 24                   | 26                   | -2       |
| 5006    | Grace Mary Open Space                                | 23                   | 27                   | -4       |
| 5013    | Darbys Hill Open Space                               | 22                   | 32                   | -10      |
| 5028    | Rowley Hall Open Space                               | 20                   | 25                   | -5       |
| 5079    | Barn Close Open Space                                | 20                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 5080    | Corngreaves Road Open Space                          | 20                   | 24                   | -4       |
| 5075    | Mousesweet Brook/River Stour SLINC                   | 19                   | 29                   | -10      |
| 5059    | Wrights Lane Open Space                              | 19                   | 23                   | -4       |
| 5082    | Timbertree Crescent Open Space                       | 18                   | N/A                  | N/A      |



| SITE ID | SITE NAME                         | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 5093    | Chatsworth Road Open Space        | 16                   | 24                   | -8       |
| 5017    | The Knowle SOS                    | 16                   | 19                   | -3       |
| 5081    | Timbertree Open Space SLINC       | 7                    | 18                   | -11      |
| 5003    | Fairway Avenue Amenity Greenspace | 6                    | N/A                  | N/A      |

### Wednesbury

| SITE ID | SITE NAME                                     | QUALITY SCORE (2018) | QUALITY SCORE (2013) | VARIANCE |
|---------|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 6013    | Brunswick Park                                | 61                   | 68                   | -7       |
| 6012    | Wood Green Cemetery                           | 52                   | 49                   | 3        |
| 6060    | Balls Hill Open Space                         | 46                   | 45                   | 1        |
| 6015    | Norman Deeley Playing Fields                  | 45                   | 56                   | -11      |
| 6055    | Ebenezer Street Open Space                    | 45                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 6039    | Hydes Road Pool                               | 44                   | 41                   | 3        |
| 6059    | Hill Top Park                                 | 44                   | 46                   | -2       |
| 6020    | Church Hill Open Space                        | 39                   | 41                   | -2       |
| 6038    | River Tame Corridor Hydes Road Playing Fields | 38                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 6025    | Friar Park Playing Fields                     | 34                   | 32                   | 2        |
| 6017    | Blakedon Road Open Space                      | 34                   | 34                   | 0        |
| 6058    | Hawkes Lane Open Space                        | 33                   | 34                   | -1       |
| 6003    | Black Horse Open Space                        | 33                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 6021    | Tame Avenue Open Space                        | 31                   | 32                   | -1       |
| 6062    | Wyntor Lane Open Space                        | 31                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 6032    | William Green Road Open Space                 | 31                   | 35                   | -4       |
| 6070    | Kent Road Playing Fields                      | 31                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 6033    | River Tame Corridor North (Wednesbury)        | 30                   | 36                   | -6       |
| 6066    | Ridgeacre Branch Canal Walkthrough            | 29                   | 32                   | -3       |
| 6028    | Sandy Lane Open Space                         | 28                   | 29                   | -1       |
| 6064    | Lakeside Open Space                           | 27                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 6067    | New Gas Street Open Space                     | 27                   | N/A                  | N/A      |
| 6022    | Coronation Road                               | 27                   | 27                   | 0        |
| 6054    | Brickhouse Lane Open Space                    | 26                   | 33                   | -7       |
| 6036    | River Tame Corridor Johnson Road (Wednesbury) | 26                   | 36                   | -10      |
| 6057    | Nobury Road Open Space                        | 24                   | 27                   | -3       |

|      |                           |    |     |     |
|------|---------------------------|----|-----|-----|
| 6035 | Walton Road Amenity Space | 24 | 24  | 0   |
| 6011 | Goldicroft Playing Fields | 24 | 25  | -1  |
| 6068 | Bradley Locks             | 20 | N/A | N/A |
| 6029 | Worleys Wharf Open Space  | 19 | 20  | -1  |

Table 66 Quality Score by Site

Overall, the highest scoring space was Dartmouth Park, with a score of 75 out of a 100. Dartmouth Park was also the highest scoring space in the 2013 audit, scoring 73, along with Haden Hill Park. Swan Pool/Priory Woods saw an increase of 11 points between its 2006 and 2013 scores and a further 8 points in the 2018 audit, mainly due to more inclusive and accessible features and signage. As a result, it has gained the second highest score in the most recent audit, along with Haden Hill Park which retains its 2013 ranking. A proportion of the highest scoring spaces have been subject to large scale investment programmes. For example, Haden Hill Park, Dartmouth Park and Warley Woods have all, since 2006, received funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund. Lightwoods Park has also received HLF investment and its score has increased significantly (+16 points) with the park now ranking as the 10<sup>th</sup> highest scoring site for quality in Sandwell.

Cemeteries and churchyards continue to rank highly, with 6 out of 8 of these spaces ranking within the top 20 scores. Tipton Cemetery maintains both its 2013 position, in 5<sup>th</sup> place, and also its position as highest-ranking cemetery and churchyard. West Bromwich Crematorium’s rank increased from 8<sup>th</sup> in 2013 to 7<sup>th</sup> in 2018.

The scores for just over half (52%) of the highest scoring sites have increased since 2013.

In the 2018 audit we found that 17 sites scored over 60. This is slightly less than the 20 sites in 2013, but it is still a huge improvement since the 2006 audit when only 9 sites achieved a score over 60. In the 2013 audit, almost as many sites experienced an increase in their average score as those that decreased. However, only a third of sites (32.6%) saw an increase in their score in the 2018 audit, while 63% of sites saw a decrease. Sites which did improve increased by an average of +5, whilst those that decreased did so by an average of -6. 8 sites’ scores remained unchanged.

The average quality score in 2018 is 34. This has decreased from the 2013 average score of 38, and is a return to the 2006 average of 34. A total of 100 sites (48%) score equal to or greater than the 2018 average, and 36% of sites remain equal to or above the 2013 average score. This indicates a continuing trend from the previous audit, that there are a smaller number of higher quality sites that have a disproportionately large effect on the average score. This is likely to be attributable to the authority’s approach to investment priorities through external and other funding sources, and external accreditation through award schemes such as Green Flag which have focused on the more significant destination spaces.

The overall increase in sites scoring highly over the past 11 years reflects significant investment programmes in larger spaces such as Victoria Park (Smethwick), which saw its score increase significantly between 2006 and 2013, as well as improvements to Brunswick Park and Red House Park. Lightwoods Park (4051) in Smethwick has benefited from £5.2million investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Sandwell Council, with restoration work beginning in 2015. As a result, the park's score has increased by 16 points since 2013 to 66. The biggest improvement at Lightwoods Park was the criteria score for Buildings and Infrastructure maintenance, which increased by 5 to 8. The renovated Lightwoods House provides a very good, high quality space for businesses, community groups and park users. Although the site was generally free of litter, with new bins in the western half of the park, there was litter near some of the entrances and near the pond, and the bins in the eastern half are rusting and need replacing. The horticultural maintenance of the site is very good however, with areas of grass being reseeded, ornamental beds weed-free and well maintained, and the Shakespeare Garden providing an additional high-quality space in the park.

The Maltings Open Space (4058) in Smethwick had the greatest variance increase of all the sites since 2013, increasing from 13 to 36 in the 2018 audit. This was due to it being of an area that was being redeveloped for housing in 2013. Although it scored slightly above the average score, the space lacked signage and benches, but did serve as a green travel corridor, connecting the new and existing residential areas with good paths and street lighting. However, the new ornamental amenity beds have not been maintained and as a result are dominated by weeds, and dead shrubs have not been replaced. Wednesbury Oak Play Area also had a large increase in its score mainly due to a new play area being fitted since the 2013 audit. The space scored slightly above average (38), but as a whole the site still had some issues such as spoil and rubble near the former play area and litter is a problem.

Lyng Park (3127) in West Bromwich is a new greenspace within a new residential development and has therefore not been assessed in previous audits. The space is a relatively small, neighbourhood park. On entering the park, it appears to have been thoughtfully designed with high quality features such as timber bollards and metal edged resin-bound path, with detailing that presumably refers to the historic land use. Gabions have been used creatively in the landscape design to delineate spaces, and as an alternative to the more utilitarian fencing usually used around play areas. However, as with the newly developed Maltings Open Space, there is no signage, benches or bins. Lyng Park is also lacking horticultural maintenance, with the planting on top of the gabion walls now overgrown with weeds, as are the bases of the trees and some areas of the grass. It should be noted that the developer still has responsibility for this space and not Sandwell Council.

Swan Pool/Priory Wood (3051) in West Bromwich saw its score increase by 8 points, resulting in it ranking as the second highest scoring site, along with Haden Hill Park. The score for signage has increased by 2 points with very good signs and orientation maps across the space. Equality of access has also improved, mainly as a result of a

sensory and accessible trail through part of the woods. As a result, the site's score for provision has also increased slightly. The Conservation of Landscape Features also continues to score highly, with the ponds and the priory remains being maintained and in good condition, and with interpretation panels relating to their history.

Oak House (3103) continues to remain as one of the higher scoring sites. Although access is limited to certain opening times, museum staff were knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the grounds around the house and highlighted efforts to improve the accessibility (an improved path has been laid since the 2013 audit), as well as the effort of volunteers to improve the biodiversity and habitats on the site. The historic relationship between the grounds and the house are also maintained through interpretative features such as the location of a former well, and raised beds containing herbs used in 17<sup>th</sup> century cooking. The staff also mentioned future developments such as hedge-planting and creating an orchard as a reference to a traditional one that had been on the farm that once was surrounded the house. The former bowling green is now used for events and as a small sports pitch for a local primary school. However, it is currently in poor condition and would benefit from some maintenance to further enhance the provision that Oak House provides to the local community.

Warrens Hall Park SOS (5016) in Rowley Regis saw a decrease in its quality score from 2013. Its quality stayed the same or improved by a mark on over half of the criteria. The site is rich in industrial heritage, including the canals, Cobb's Engine House and the Netherton Canal Tunnel. Most of these features look well conserved, but suffer from graffiti and other anti-social behaviour. On the day of the site visit, a group of motorcyclists had congregated on the grass in the south end of the space, and tyre marks were evident around the Engine House. Although there is clear and attractive signage at the main entrances, the Nature Reserve could improve its provision of wayfinding and interpretation information as these are currently lacking. It is understood that signage improvements are planned for the site.

While Warrens Hall Park SOS is generally welcoming and evidence of maintenance is apparent, the neighbouring Warrens Hall Farm SOS (5015) scored considerably lower across most criteria, resulting in a total of 24. The previous audit highlighted that it is an unmanaged, natural landscape with an informal network of grass tracks criss-crossing the grass tussocks and emerging scrubland. However, broken fencing, unchecked growth of hedgerows and brambles, and a lack of wayfinding make this space considerably lower quality than Warrens Hall Park. There is therefore an opportunity to increase the link between the 2 strategic open spaces in terms of access, personal security, wayfinding and interpretation.

Hall Green Open Space (Doorstep Green OS, West Bromwich, site reference 3072) continues to decline in quality and suffer from anti-social behaviour. In the 2006 audit the space had a quality of score of 47 and had benefitted from improvements introduced in 2003, such as surfaced paths linking access points, and an amphitheatre feature in the centre. However, in the 2013 audit the quality score had reduced to 30 with anti-social behaviour

highlighted as a significant problem, as well as entrances locked, and access restricted to an alleyway off Crankhall Lane. In the most recent audit, the score has decreased further still to 18. Large amounts of broken glass are strewn across much of the central area, and there is evidence of arson and vandalism in the space. Personal security is very low, with only one access point and no lighting. At the time of the site visit a local resident who lived near the space and used it for dog walking spoke about the deterioration of the space. They mentioned that when access was locked from Manor House and from the west, when new dwellings were built on Hall Green Wharf, there seemed to be an increase in anti-social behaviour and young people using the space for drinking. However, as the audit score indicates, the resident also felt there was huge potential to improve the access and safety of the space, and create adequate provision for young people, as well as a provide better links to the neighbouring Manor House and allotments.

Timbertree Open Space SLINC (5081) has been one of the lowest scoring spaces in the 2 previous audits and in the 2018 assessment. Although access is unrestricted, entry into the space is not obvious or encouraged with no access from the adjacent residential streets and no safe access up the steep bank on Corngreaves Road. The area functions as a local wildlife site but there is no management or provision for the local community.

Fairway Avenue Amenity Greenspace (5003) was audited for the first time. It had the lowest score out of all 209 sites. This was owing to the fact the majority of it is fenced off, with access through the site from north to south not appearing to be possible. No maintenance was apparent, other than some replacement of the metal fencing in places. There is no significant provision for the local community other than low quality pedestrian routes running east to west across the space to link residential streets. The alleyways lack visibility, dog fouling is present on the paths, and fly tipping was visible in the vegetation behind the fencing.

The quality of Greets Green Playing Fields (3096) has not varied a great deal since the 2013 audit, increasing by 1 point to 31. However, at the time of the audit, new developments have been built along the eastern edge, with landscaping works ongoing. Apart from a five-a-side football pitch that had limited access due to fencing and a locked gate, the former sports pitches appear to be no longer maintained and the site seems to function more broadly as an amenity greenspace. The earthworks to the east, appear to be a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features relating to the neighbouring new developments, with swales and ponds in the process of being developed. Unfortunately, a large proportion of the new tree planting next to the SuDS have either been broken or died, possibly because of the extreme weather conditions in the 2018 summer and a lack of maintenance and watering. The play area offer is currently low quality, but as parts of the space are still undergoing works it is assumed this will form part of the improvements. The vegetation that breaks up the site and once demarcated the sport pitches creates secluded areas. However, along with the development of SuDS, there is an opportunity to increase the management of the natural features of the space, as well as improve personal security. Along

with an improved play area, the site has the potential to provide a varied and valuable offering to the existing and future residents near the site.

Tollhouse Way Amenity Area (4012) stood out as a high-quality space, countering the overall pattern of similar scale amenity greenspaces experiencing a decline in their quality. The space, which is adjacent to a busy A road, was up until recently mostly short cut grass but has been renovated in 2018. Renovation works have included hard landscaping, attractive steel bollards to prevent vehicular access, large stone planters, benches and improvements to the existing infrastructure and circle of trees on the site. A war memorial commemorating those from the Indian subcontinent who have fought for Britain was unveiled at the beginning of November 2018. These improvements demonstrate how even small, local amenity sites can provide high quality public realm spaces with multiple uses.

### 7.3.2 Findings by Criteria

| Criteria   | Average Score (2018) | Variance    | Average Score (2013) | Average Score (2006) |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Personal security in park                              | 4.3                  | -0.5        | 4.8                  | 4.9                  |
| Safe equipment and facilities                          | 4.3                  | -0.6        | 4.9                  | 4.1                  |
| Equipment maintenance                                  | 4.3                  | -0.5        | 4.8                  | 4.4                  |
| Conservation of buildings and structures               | 4.2                  | -1.1        | 5.3                  | 4.5                  |
| Good and safe access                                   | 4.1                  | -0.3        | 4.4                  | 4.1                  |
| Dog fouling  | 3.9                  | -0.9        | 4.8                  | 4.9                  |
| Buildings and infrastructure maintenance               | 3.9                  | +0.3        | 3.6                  | 3.5                  |
| Arboricultural maintenance                             | 3.8                  | -0.2        | 4                    | 3.8                  |
| Appropriate provision for the community                | 3.8                  | -0.5        | 4.3                  | 4.2                  |
| Appropriate levels of quality facilities & activities. | 3.7                  | -0.7        | 4.4                  | 4.1                  |
| Welcoming  | 3.7                  | -0.3        | 4                    | 4.1                  |
| Management of natural features, wild fauna and flora   | 3.6                  | -0.2        | 3.8                  | 3.9                  |
| Conservation of landscape features                     | 3.6                  | -1.5        | 5.1                  | 4.1                  |
| Horticultural maintenance                              | 3.5                  | +0.1        | 3.4                  | 3.3                  |
| Equal access for all                                   | 3.4                  | -0.6        | 4                    | 3.6                  |
| <b>BOROUGH AVERAGE</b>                                 | <b>3.4</b>           | <b>-0.6</b> | <b>4</b>             | <b>3.5</b>           |
| Litter and waste management                            | 2.8                  | -1.2        | 4                    | 2.9                  |
| Signage  | 2.2                  | -0.5        | 2.7                  | 1.8                  |
| Appropriate educational interpretation/info            | 1.2                  | +0.2        | 1                    | 0.5                  |

Table 67 Criteria Scores

Table 67 above shows that overall the average criteria score was 3.4 out of 10 representing a decrease of -0.4 since 2013. 3 criteria fall below this average score with 'Appropriate educational interpretation/information' remaining the lowest scoring criteria for the 2006, 2013 and 2018 audits. 'Personal security', 'Safe equipment and facilities' and 'Equipment maintenance' all had the highest average criteria score of 4.3, although these criteria still saw a decrease in their average since 2013.

The average scores reflect the diversity of sites audited – from canal side woodlands to Victorian urban parks. Looking at some general trends we can pull out some key messages:

**Litter** – while the 2013 audit saw an improvement in the levels of litter and detritus across much of the Borough, the most recent audit saw a return to a lower average score. Borough level Parks & Gardens had the highest average criteria score of 6.6. These spaces tend to have plenty of bins, including recycling bins, as well as being well staffed and well-maintained in general. Borough level sites as a whole had a higher average (5.5), whereas the local level sites that make up two thirds of the sites audited, only had an average score of 2.1 for litter. This would suggest that the Council should consider how to tackle litter in the smaller, local green spaces, continuing its effort to deter fly-tipping, and to look at tackling litter that has blown to the boundaries.

**Conservation of buildings and structures; and Conservation of landscape features** – both these criteria scored significantly lower in comparison to the 2013 audit. The average score for Cemeteries and Churchyards, and Parks and Gardens were above the borough average in these criteria, suggesting the heritage features of these sites are overall being conserved. However, the average score for the Conservation of landscape features in Amenity Greenspaces was only 2.1, and 2 for Green Corridors. Addressing the maintenance of heritage assets and landscape features in these spaces should therefore be considered.

**Interpretation** – the provision of appropriate educational interpretation or information continues to score low. A review of some of the older panels should be conducted to ensure the quality is being maintained and if the information is still relevant. Local level sites scored particularly low, with an average of 0.7. The Council should assess the current interpretation in local sites where it is applicable, and look at ways to improve the provision of interpretation as this is likely to improve people’s sense of place and understanding of their local green spaces.

**Signage** – the majority of sites have some kind of signage. However, half of the sites with signage only scored between 3 or less, indicating that either there is not adequate signage, or that that the signs present lack maintenance. The signs were generally consistent across council-owned sites, with larger borough and neighbourhood spaces often having welcome notice boards. These sometimes lacked maintenance or had graffiti. As the prominent position of signage is a factor in the welcoming nature of the site’s entrance, their on-going maintenance and replacement should be a priority. Clear, up to date maps at the larger spaces would also be an opportunity for improvement.

**Management of natural features, wild fauna and flora**– the council owns or manages some important natural and semi-natural green spaces, such as remnant heathland and semi-ancient woodlands. Natural and semi-natural greenspaces; and green corridors scored slightly above the criteria average, but still did not achieve half of the possible marks. The 2013 audit highlighted that these are at a tipping point with regards to their



biodiversity and their conservation will need to be a priority to ensure their long-term value. The average criteria score reduced by -1.5, with spaces for Children and Young People scoring the lowest average at 2.1. There is a therefore an opportunity to improve the natural features and biodiversity of these spaces, as well as creating greater interest and range of provision for children and young people with regards to the natural world.

**Arboricultural maintenance** - Sandwell Council, along with other Black Country Unitary Authorities, has maximised its use of the major grant schemes such as the Forestry Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme and the Millennium Forestry Programme to create a number of woodlands and plantations on its parks and green spaces. The 2013 audit recommended that many of these are now at a development stage where there needs to be a clear strategy for their future management in order to maximise their potential for conservation, education and recreation. The most recent audit found that many areas of young woodland would benefit from thinning and require a long-term management strategy.

### 7.3.3 Findings by Typology

The table below provides a comparison of the findings by typology to the 2006 scores.

| Type                                  | Number of sites | Range   | Average 2018 | Average 2013 | Average 2006 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 82              | 6 - 60  | 29           | 31           | 28           |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 8               | 25 - 67 | 51           | 56           | 50           |
| Green Corridor                        | 15              | 13 - 57 | 28           | 30           | 25           |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 43              | 7 - 71  | 32           | 37           | 33           |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 22              | 24 - 60 | 36           | 35           | 33           |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 31              | 13 - 75 | 51           | 54           | 47           |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 8               | 13 - 51 | 36           | 37           | 35           |

Table 68 Comparison by Typology

This data can also be represented graphically as shown overleaf (Chart 18)

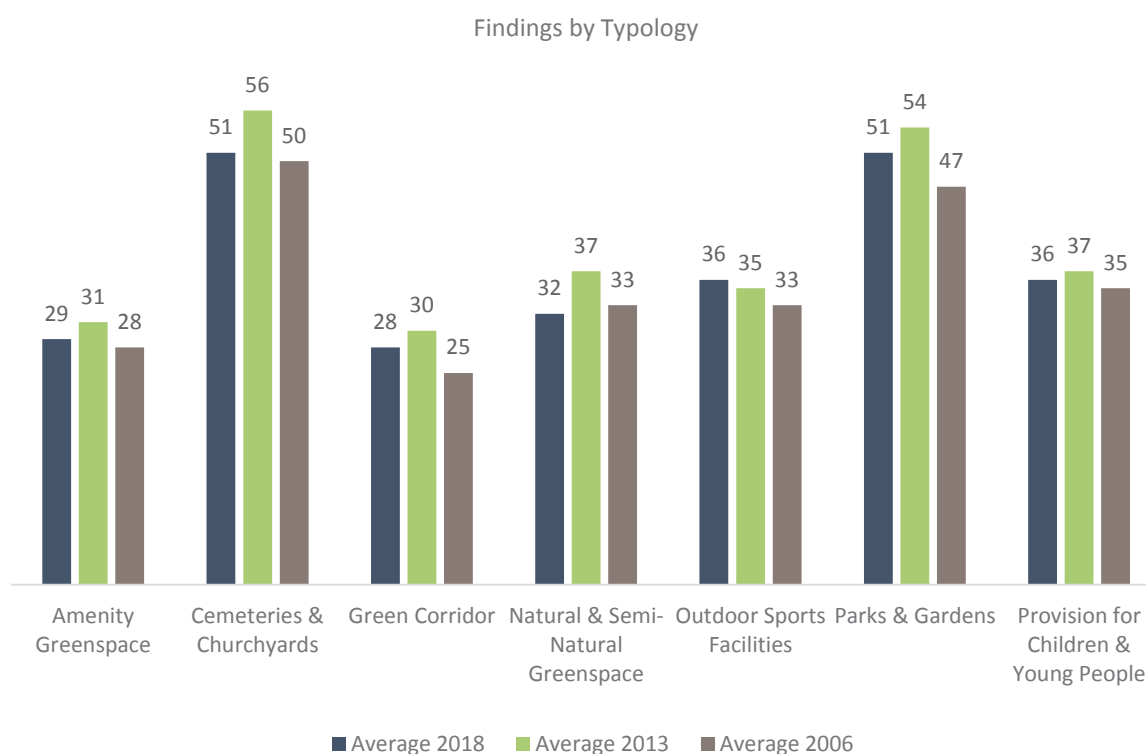


Chart 20 Comparison of findings by typology

Parks and Gardens is the highest scoring typology, with an average score of 51 out of 100, decreasing from 54 in 2013. Cemeteries and Churchyards also achieved a score of 51. However as can be seen in Table 71, only a small sample of 8 sites were assessed. Across all typologies, the graph above demonstrates that quality has generally reduced over the past 5 years.

#### 7.3.4 Findings by Hierarchy

| Level         | Number of sites | Range | Average 2018 | Average 2013 | Average 2006 |
|---------------|-----------------|-------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Borough       | 23              | 24-75 | 59           | 57           | 50           |
| Neighbourhood | 43              | 17-60 | 39           | 42           | 40           |
| Local         | 143             | 6-67  | 29           | 33           | 30           |

Table 69 Comparison by Hierarchy

The average quality of the borough level spaces has remained similar to the 2013 audit, whereas the neighbourhood and local level spaces have seen a decrease in their average score. Table 69 also shows the range in quality of local level sites is extremely variable.

### 7.3.5 Findings by Town

| Town             | No. of Sites | Range   | Average 2018 | Average 2013 | Average 2006 |
|------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Smethwick        | 27           | 8 – 69  | 42           | 42           | 40           |
| West Bromwich    | 57           | 8 - 75  | 40           | 40           | 38           |
| Sandwell Average | 209          | 6 -75   | 34           | 38           | 34           |
| Wednesbury       | 30           | 19 – 61 | 33           | 38           | 32           |
| Rowley Regis     | 38           | 6 - 71  | 31           | 37           | 36           |
| Tipton           | 33           | 9 - 67  | 30           | 33           | 27           |
| Oldbury          | 24           | 8 - 61  | 27           | 34           | 29           |

Table 70 Comparison by Town

Table 70 shows the average quality scores by Town. There is considerable variation from the Borough average when considering the scores at a Town level. Smethwick has the highest average quality score at in all 3 audit years, and is 6 points above the Borough average in the most recent audit. Tipton has had the lowest average in the previous audits. However, in 2018, Oldbury has seen a reduction in its average score by 7 points and now has the lowest score. The data in Table 70 is also shown graphically below in Chart 21.

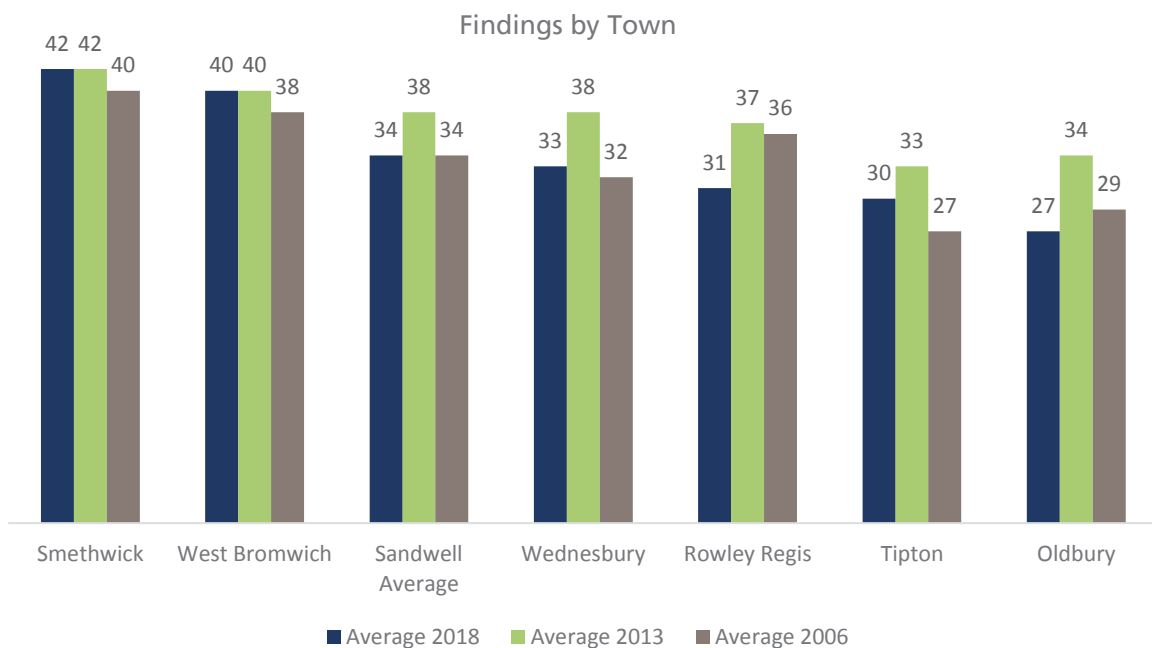


Chart 217 Comparison by Town

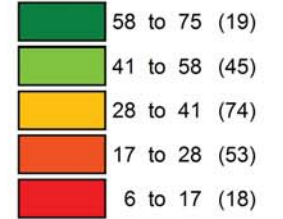
Figure 16 below shows the quality scores and their distribution geographically. The spaces that make up the Sandwell Valley Country Park are generally higher scoring and create a concentration of higher quality spaces in West Bromwich. However, for the remaining sites there is generally an even geographical spread of higher and lower scoring greenspaces.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

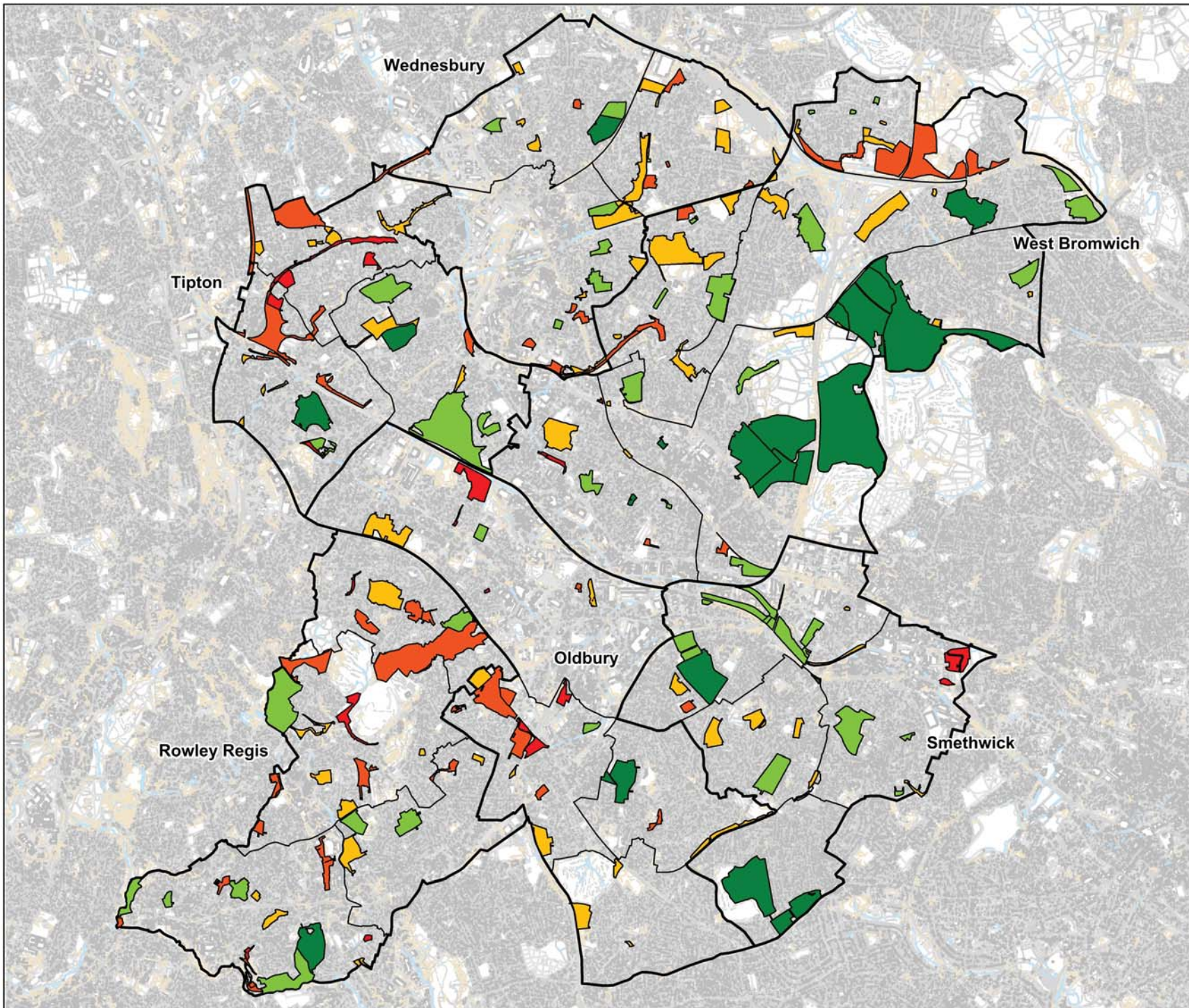
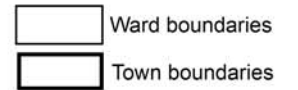
Figure 16  
Quality Scores

## LEGEND

Quality Score



Boundaries



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### 7.3.6 Findings by Ward

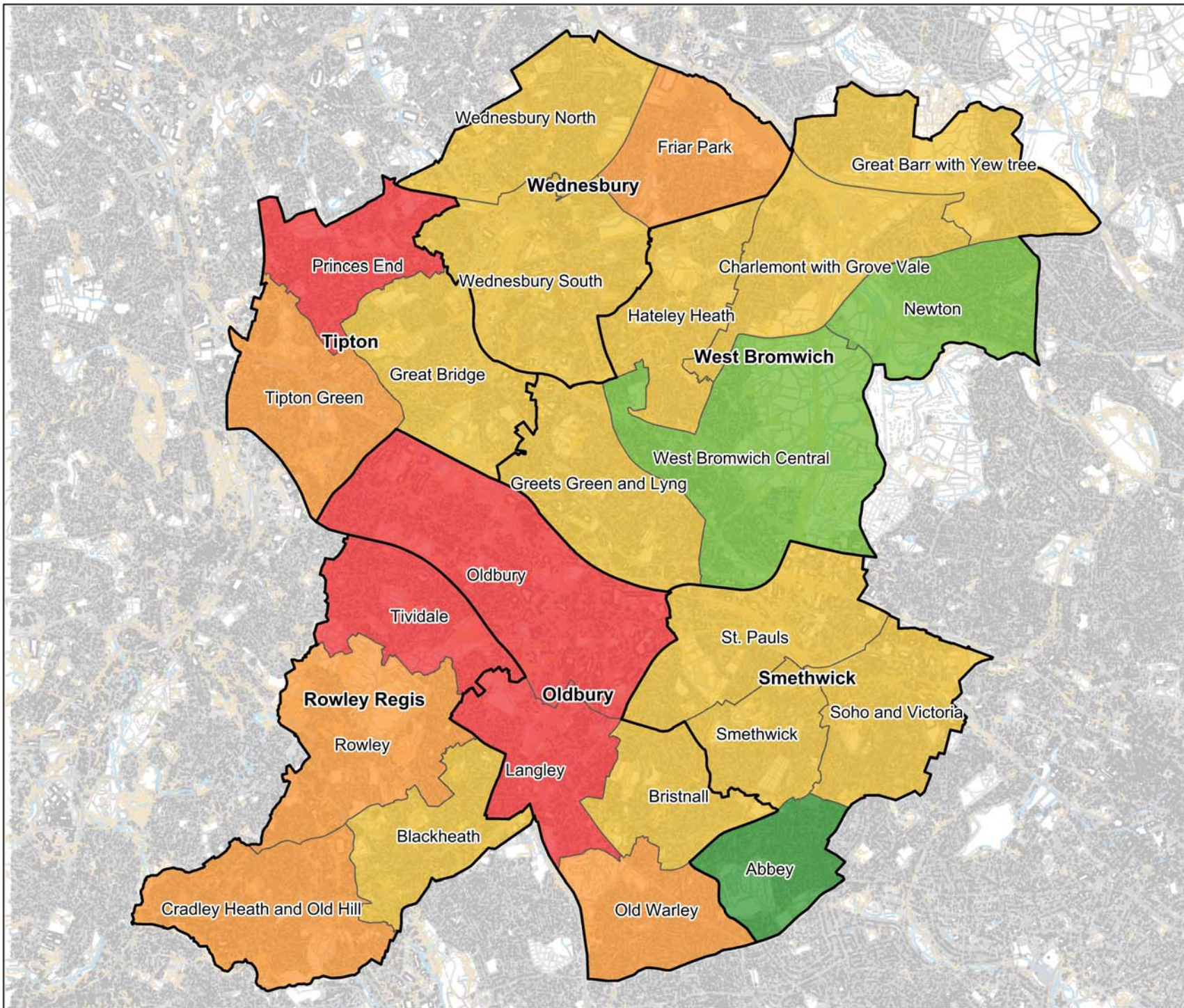
| Ward                       | No. of Sites | Range         | Average 2018 | Average 2013 | Average 2006 |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Abbey                      | 2            | 66 - 69       | 68           | 52           | 51           |
| West Bromwich Central      | 12           | 21 - 75       | 50           | 48           | 37           |
| Newton                     | 7            | 28 - 66       | 46           | 44           | 42           |
| St. Pauls                  | 12           | 19 - 58       | 42           | 42           | 41           |
| Great Bridge               | 8            | 25 - 67       | 42           | 43           | 44           |
| Smethwick                  | 7            | 28 - 60       | 41           | 42           | 33           |
| Wednesbury North           | 8            | 20 - 61       | 38           | 48           | 41           |
| Charlemont with Grove Vale | 5            | 31 - 48       | 38           | 34           | 39           |
| Great Barr with Yew tree   | 14           | 18 - 66       | 37           | 36           | 37           |
| Blackheath                 | 5            | 20 - 57       | 37           | 40           | 39           |
| Bristnall                  | 3            | 20 - 61       | 37           | 46           | 35           |
| Wednesbury South           | 12           | 24 - 46       | 35           | 36           | 34           |
| Soho and Victoria          | 6            | 8 - 57        | 34           | 35           | 29           |
| <b>BOROUGH AVERAGE</b>     | <b>210</b>   | <b>6 – 75</b> | <b>34</b>    | <b>38</b>    | <b>34</b>    |
| Hateley Heath              | 12           | 17 - 49       | 33           | 40           | 35           |
| Greets Green and Lyng      | 7            | 8 - 67        | 33           | 37           | 34           |
| Old Warley                 | 3            | 29 - 36       | 32           | 35           | 36           |
| Cradley Heath and Old Hill | 17           | 7 - 71        | 31           | 40           | 30           |
| Rowley                     | 10           | 16 - 50       | 29           | 32           | 30           |
| Tipton Green               | 13           | 9 - 64        | 29           | 31           | 36           |
| Friar Park                 | 10           | 19 - 34       | 28           | 32           | 31           |
| Langley                    | 11           | 9 - 43        | 26           | 30           | 26           |
| Tividale                   | 6            | 6 - 43        | 24           | 33           | 31           |
| Princes End                | 12           | 11 - 38       | 24           | 27           | 24           |
| Oldbury                    | 7            | 8 - 44        | 23           | 30           | 22           |

Table 71 Quality Comparison by Ward

Table 71 above shows the average quality score by Ward. Abbey Ward continues to have the highest average quality score with Oldbury returning its 2006 position as the lowest scoring ward. This can be shown spatially in Figure 17, which demonstrates wards whose sites assessed were generally above or below the Borough average quality score.

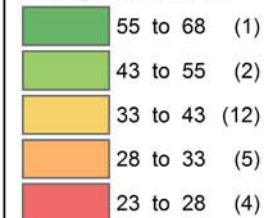
# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 17  
Average score by ward

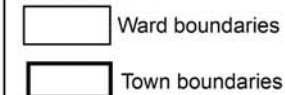


## LEGEND

Average ward scores



## Boundaries



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|-----------|-------------|----------|
| LH        | AS          | 06/12/18 |



Figure 18 below shows spatially the distribution of variance between how a site scored in 2018 and 2013. As with Figure 16, beyond the Sandwell Valley Country Park there is little geographical variation.


# Sandwell Green Space Audit

## Figure 18 Quality Audit Score Variance

### LEGEND

Variance

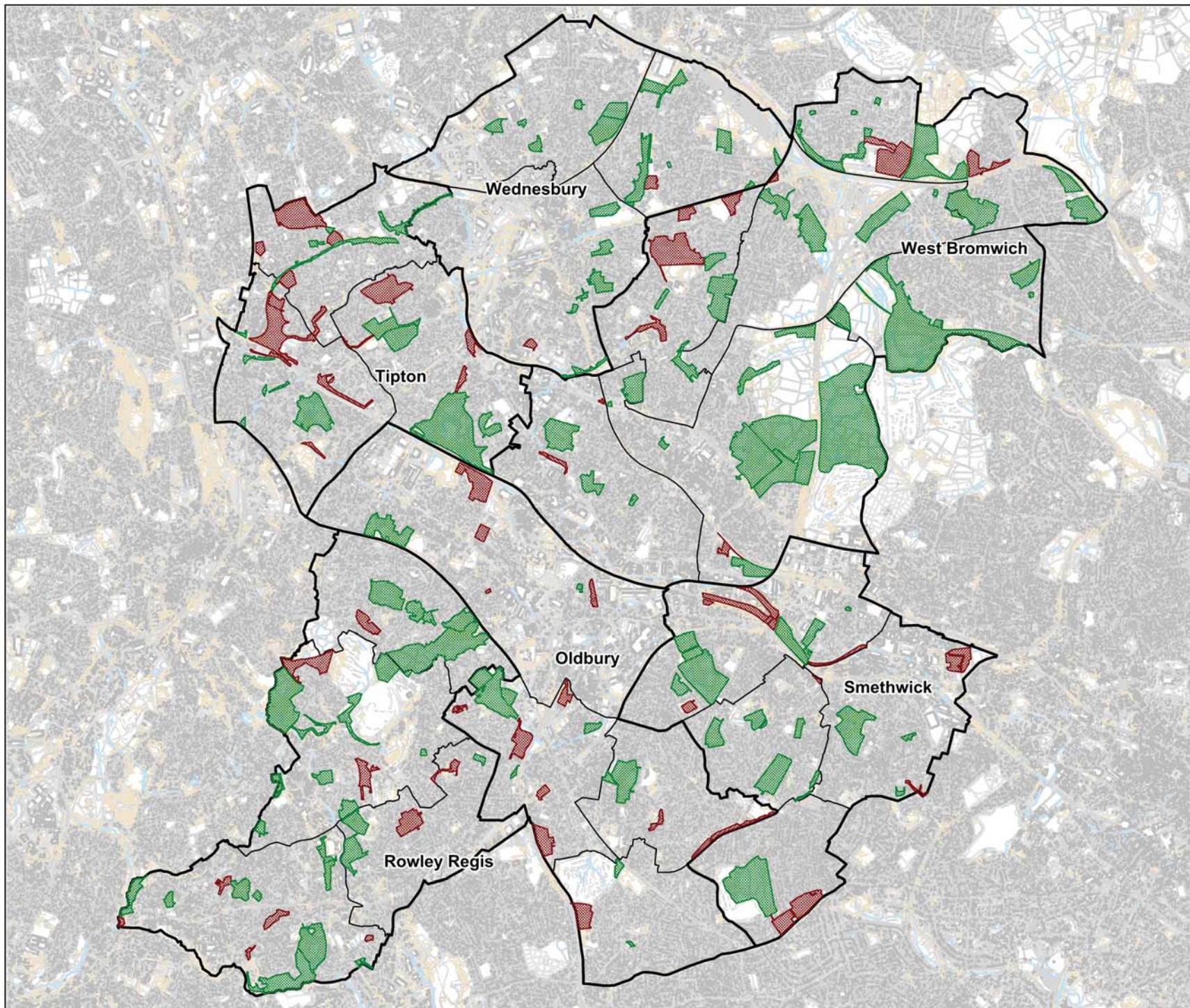
 < 20 percent

 + / - > 20 percent

Boundaries

 Ward boundaries

 Town boundaries



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## 7.4 Detailed results

The following tables provide a further breakdown of the scores obtained by each site in order to see the distribution of low and high quality sites by town, hierarchy and typology. The amount of variance of scores between the 2018 and 2013 audits for each of these categories is also broken down for the 182 sites that were in both audits.

The Green Flag scoring line was used as a basis for categorising the total scores for a site from Very Poor to Exceptional quality.

| Quality     | Very Poor | Poor  | Fair  | Good  | Very Good | Excellent | Exceptional |
|-------------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Total score | 0-10      | 20-40 | 40-60 | 60-70 | 70-80     | 80-90     | 90-100      |

None of the sites obtained an overall score that was Excellent or Exceptional, and these have therefore been removed from the tables below. The quality that had the highest percentage for each sub-category has been highlighted. Tables 72 below provides a summary of the overall quality classification for all site. Table 73 shows the proportion of scores that decreased, stayed the same, or increased for sites that were assessed in both the 2013 and 2018 audits.

| Very poor |    | Poor |     | Fair |     | Good |    | Very Good |    |
|-----------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|----|-----------|----|
| No.       | %  | No.  | %   | No.  | %   | No.  | %  | No.       | %  |
| 7         | 3% | 136  | 65% | 49   | 23% | 14   | 7% | 3         | 1% |

Table 72 Overall quality classification

| Decrease in score |     | No change in score |    | Increase in score |     |
|-------------------|-----|--------------------|----|-------------------|-----|
| No.               | %   | No.                | %  | No.               | %   |
| 114               | 63% | 8                  | 4% | 60                | 33% |

Table 73 Overall quality variance

#### 4.1.4 Quality Classification and Variance by Town

|               | Very poor |    | Poor |     | Fair |     | Good |     | Very Good |    |
|---------------|-----------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----------|----|
|               | No.       | %  | No.  | %   | No.  | %   | No.  | %   | No.       | %  |
| Smethwick     | 1         | 4% | 12   | 44% | 11   | 41% | 3    | 11% | 0         | 0% |
| West Bromwich | 1         | 2% | 30   | 53% | 17   | 20% | 7    | 12% | 2         | 3% |
| Wednesbury    | 0         | 0% | 23   | 77% | 6    | 20% | 1    | 3%  | 0         | 0% |
| Rowley Regis  | 2         | 5% | 26   | 68% | 9    | 24% | 0    | 0%  | 1         | 3% |
| Tipton        | 1         | 3% | 26   | 79% | 4    | 12% | 2    | 6%  | 0         | 0% |
| Oldbury       | 2         | 8% | 8    | 79% | 2    | 8%  | 1    | 4%  | 0         | 0% |

Table 74 Quality classification by town

|               | Decrease in score |     | No change in score |     | Increase in score |     |
|---------------|-------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
|               | No.               | %   | No.                | %   | No.               | %   |
| Smethwick     | 11                | 44% | 1                  | 4%  | 13                | 52% |
| West Bromwich | 24                | 49% | 1                  | 2%  | 24                | 49% |
| Wednesbury    | 15                | 68% | 3                  | 14% | 4                 | 18% |
| Rowley Regis  | 28                | 82% | 2                  | 6%  | 4                 | 12% |
| Tipton        | 18                | 62% | 0                  | 0%  | 11                | 38% |
| Oldbury       | 18                | 82% | 1                  | 5%  | 3                 | 14% |

Table 75 Score variance by town

Table 74 shows that the majority of scores for all towns are mainly classified as poor quality, and Table 75 illustrates that the majority of sites in Rowley Regis and Oldbury saw a decrease in quality from the 2013 audit. However, both tables show that Smethwick's greenspaces have an equal proportion of poor and fair quality spaces and that about half of the towns sites increased in quality.

#### 4.1.5 Quality Classification and Variance by Hierarchy

|               | Very poor |    | Poor |     | Fair |     | Good |     | Very Good |     |
|---------------|-----------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----------|-----|
|               | No.       | %  | No.  | %   | No.  | %   | No.  | %   | No.       | %   |
| Borough       | 0         | 0% | 2    | 9%  | 8    | 36% | 10   | 45% | 3         | 14% |
| Neighbourhood | 0         | 0% | 21   | 42% | 21   | 42% | 1    | 2%  | 0         | 0%  |
| Local         | 7         | 5% | 113  | 82% | 20   | 14% | 3    | 2%  | 0         | 0%  |

Table 76 Quality classification by hierarchy

|               | Decrease in score |     | No change in score |     | Increase in score |     |
|---------------|-------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
|               | No.               | %   | No.                | %   | No.               | %   |
| Borough       | 14                | 67% | 2                  | 10% | 12                | 57% |
| Neighbourhood | 21                | 46% | 0                  | 0%  | 13                | 28% |
| Local         | 79                | 69% | 6                  | 5%  | 33                | 29% |

Table 77 Score variance by hierarchy

Tables 76 reiterates the findings in 2.1.5, that Borough level sites are generally of better quality than the local and some neighbourhood level sites. Table 77 illustrates that just over half of the Borough sites saw an increase in their quality, while a much larger proportion of local level sites decreased in quality since the 2013 audit.

#### 4.1.6 Quality Classification and Variance by Typology

|                                       | Very poor |    | Poor |     | Fair |     | Good |     | Very Good |    |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----------|----|
|                                       | No.       | %  | No.  | %   | No.  | %   | No.  | %   | No.       | %  |
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 3         | 4% | 68   | 83% | 10   | 12% | 1    | 1%  | 0         | 0% |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 0         | 0% | 1    | 13% | 5    | 63% | 2    | 25% | 0         | 0% |
| Green Corridor                        | 0         | 0% | 13   | 87% | 2    | 13% | 0    | 0%  | 0         | 0% |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 4         | 9% | 28   | 65% | 8    | 19% | 2    | 5%  | 1         | 2% |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 0         | 0% | 16   | 73% | 5    | 23% | 1    | 5%  | 0         | 0% |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 0         | 0% | 6    | 19% | 15   | 48% | 8    | 25% | 2         | 6% |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 0         | 0% | 4    | 50% | 4    | 50% | 0    | 0%  | 0         | 0% |

Table 78 Quality classification by typology

|                                       | Decrease |     | No change |     | Increase |     |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----|-----------|-----|----------|-----|
|                                       | No.      | %   | No.       | %   | No.      | %   |
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 46       | 65% | 4         | 6%  | 21       | 30% |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 7        | 88% | 0         | 0%  | 1        | 13% |
| Green Corridor                        | 5        | 50% | 0         | 0%  | 5        | 50% |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 24       | 65% | 1         | 3%  | 12       | 32% |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 9        | 47% | 2         | 11% | 8        | 42% |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 19       | 66% | 1         | 3%  | 9        | 31% |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 4        | 57% | 0         | 0%  | 3        | 43% |

Table 79 Score variance by typology

Tables 78 and 79 show that although Cemeteries and Churchyards generally of higher quality than other sites, 7 of the 8 sites in this typology saw a decrease in their quality since 2013. The majority of green corridor sites are of poor quality, but half of them saw an increase in their score.

## 7.5 Consultation Results

| Town          | Quality Score 2018 | Consultation Score |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Smethwick     | 42                 | 7.7                |
| West Bromwich | 40                 | 7.3                |
| Town average  | 34                 | 7.3                |
| Wednesbury    | 33                 | 7.3                |
| Oldbury       | 27                 | 7.3                |
| Rowley Regis  | 31                 | 7.1                |
| Tipton        | 30                 | 6.9                |

Table 80 Comparison of Quality Scores with Consultation Results

Table 80 shows the average quality score by Town and the findings from the Household Survey, with respondents asked to rate the overall quality of the green space in Sandwell Borough where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent. This shows that respondents living in Smethwick were most likely to rate the overall quality of green spaces the highest, which is unsurprising as the Quality Audit also scored sites in Smethwick the highest.

## 7.6 Quality and Index of Multiple Deprivation

In this section the findings of the quality assessment are reviewed against the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2017).

### 7.6.1 Overall Index of Multiple Deprivation

Table 81 shows the overall IMD rank alongside the quality ranking for each town.

| Town          | Average Quality Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Overall Rank | Average IMD Overall Ranked by Town |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Smethwick     | 1                         | 6498                        | 3                                  |
| West Bromwich | 2                         | 9181                        | 4                                  |
| Wednesbury    | 3                         | 5965                        | 1                                  |
| Rowley Regis  | 4                         | 9764                        | 6                                  |
| Tipton        | 5                         | 6139                        | 2                                  |
| Oldbury       | 6                         | 9247                        | 5                                  |

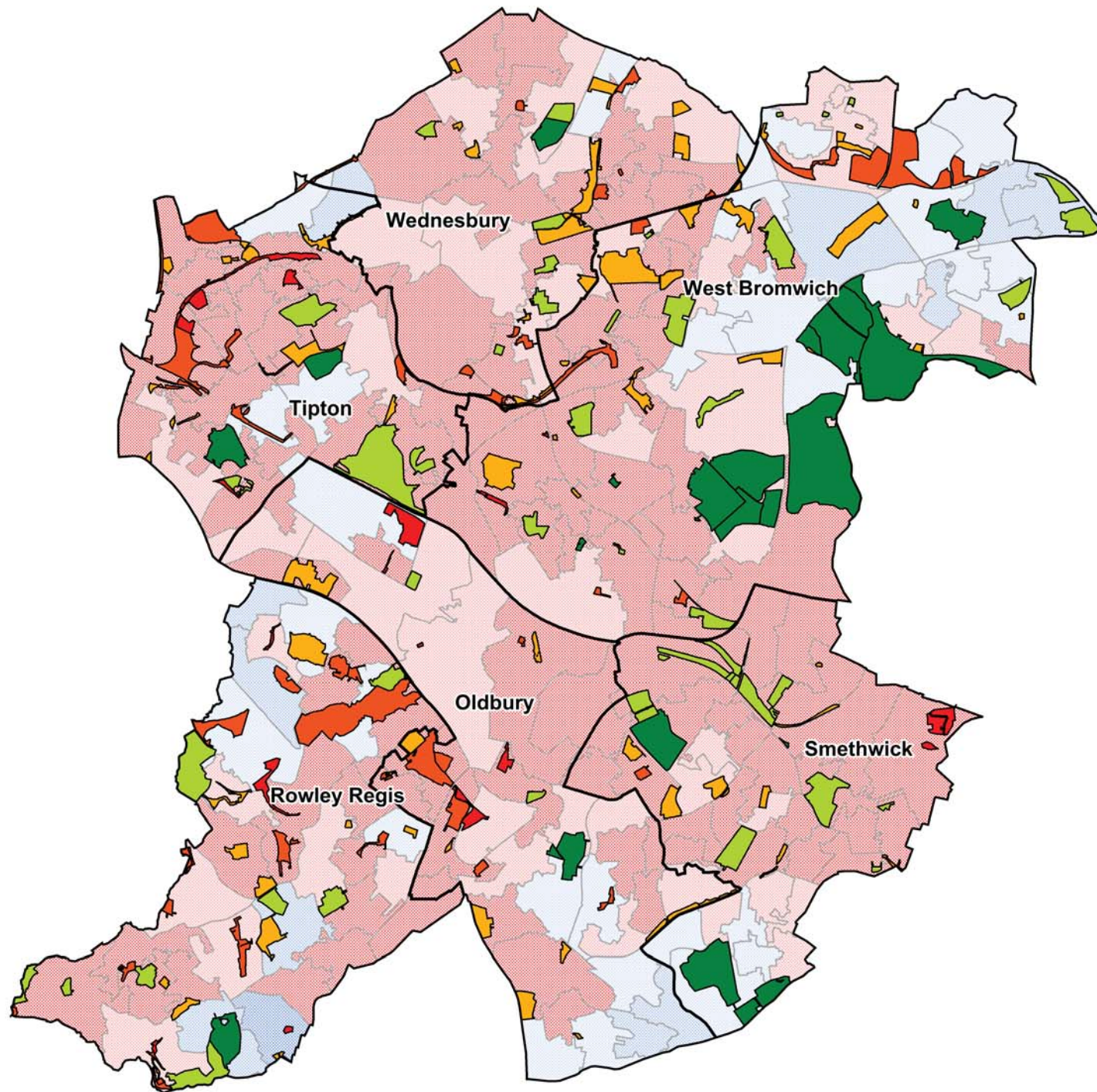
Table 81 Quality and Overall IMD Rank by Town

The 2 towns with the highest levels of overall (average) deprivation, Wednesbury and Smethwick were found to have the highest levels of average green space quality. Tipton was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in terms of average green space quality and is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in terms of overall deprivation.

Figure 19 shows an overlay of green space quality over the Overall Index of Deprivation at LSOA level.

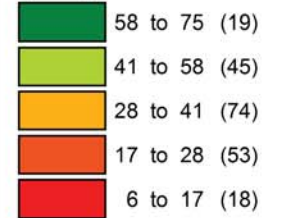
## Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 19  
Quality Scores and  
Indicies of Multiple  
Deprivation (Overall)  
2015



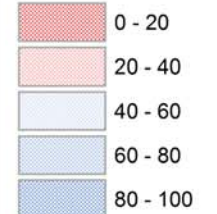
### LEGEND

#### Quality Score

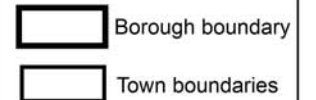


#### IMD (%)

##### Most deprived



##### Least deprived



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Table 82 considers overall deprivation and green space quality at a ward level.

| Ward                       | Average Quality 2018 | Average Quality Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Overall Rank | Average IMD Overall Ranked by Town |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Abbey                      | 68                   | 1                         | 13405                       | 20                                 |
| West Bromwich Central      | 50                   | 2                         | 4977                        | 6                                  |
| Newton                     | 46                   | 3                         | 14152                       | 23                                 |
| Great Bridge               | 42                   | 4                         | 6451                        | 12                                 |
| St. Pauls                  | 42                   | 4                         | 4854                        | 5                                  |
| Smethwick                  | 41                   | 6                         | 4703                        | 4                                  |
| Charlemont with Grove Vale | 38                   | 7                         | 13582                       | 21                                 |
| Wednesbury North           | 38                   | 7                         | 6057                        | 10                                 |
| Blackheath                 | 37                   | 9                         | 8518                        | 16                                 |
| Bristnall                  | 37                   | 9                         | 8622                        | 17                                 |
| Great Barr with Yew tree   | 37                   | 9                         | 14561                       | 24                                 |
| Wednesbury South           | 35                   | 12                        | 5981                        | 9                                  |
| Soho and Victoria          | 34                   | 13                        | 3029                        | 1                                  |
| Greets Green and Lyng      | 33                   | 14                        | 3810                        | 2                                  |
| Hateley Heath              | 33                   | 14                        | 4553                        | 3                                  |
| Old Warley                 | 32                   | 16                        | 14029                       | 22                                 |
| Cradley Heath and Old Hill | 31                   | 17                        | 10398                       | 18                                 |
| Rowley                     | 29                   | 18                        | 7539                        | 14                                 |
| Tipton Green               | 29                   | 18                        | 6243                        | 11                                 |
| Friar Park                 | 28                   | 20                        | 5880                        | 8                                  |
| Langley                    | 26                   | 21                        | 6712                        | 13                                 |
| Princes End                | 24                   | 22                        | 5804                        | 7                                  |
| Tividale                   | 24                   | 22                        | 12443                       | 19                                 |
| Oldbury                    | 23                   | 24                        | 7905                        | 15                                 |

Table 82 Quality and Overall IMD Rank by Town

Overall the picture remains mixed with 5 of the 8 most deprived Wards enjoying the highest levels of green space quality. The 3 most deprived Wards (Soho and Victoria, Greets Green and Lyng and Hateley Heath) are ranked 13<sup>th</sup> and equal 14<sup>th</sup> in terms of average green space quality, sitting only just in the lower half of the table.

### 7.6.2 Health Deprivation and Disability Domain

| Town          | Average Quality 2018 | Average Quality Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Health Rank | Average IMD Health Ranked by Town |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Smethwick     | 42                   | 1                         | 6718                       | 3                                 |
| West Bromwich | 40                   | 2                         | 9758                       | 6                                 |
| Wednesbury    | 33                   | 3                         | 6626                       | 2                                 |
| Rowley Regis  | 31                   | 4                         | 8890                       | 4                                 |
| Tipton        | 30                   | 5                         | 5722                       | 1                                 |
| Oldbury       | 27                   | 6                         | 9240                       | 5                                 |

Table 83 Quality and Health & Disability IMD Rank by Town

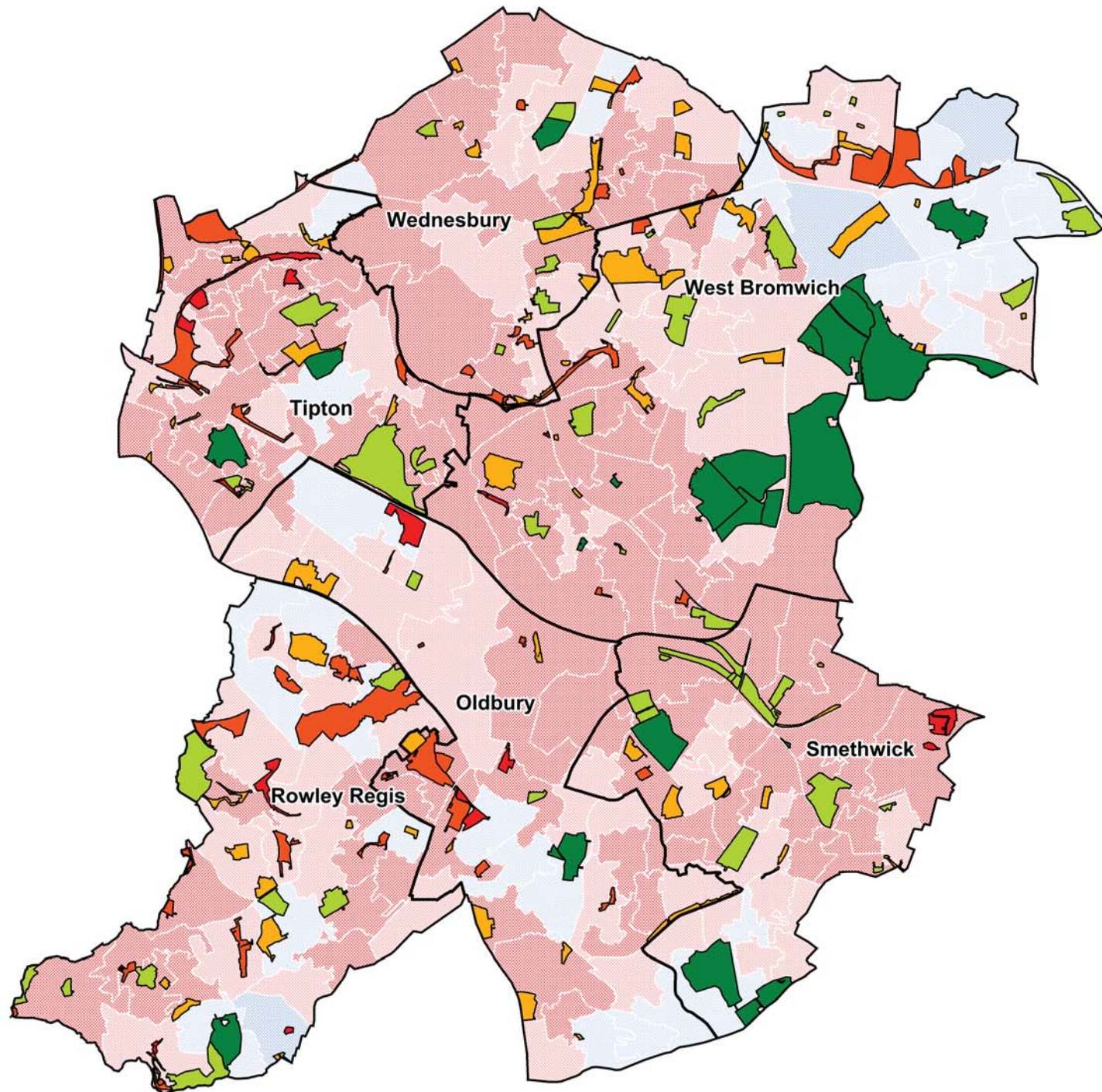
2 of the 3 most deprived wards against the health and disability domain, Wednesbury and Smethwick, enjoy relatively high average green space quality. Tipton which is the most deprived town against the health domain has below average quality green space.

Table 84 considers the health and disability domain data at a ward level. 4 wards with high levels of health deprivation (West Bromwich Central, Great Bridge, St. Pauls and Smethwick) experience relatively high levels of average green space quality. Conversely, there are 6 wards with relatively high levels of health domain that have lower than average green space quality.

Figure 20 shows an overlay of green space quality over the Health and Disability deprivation domain at LSOA level.

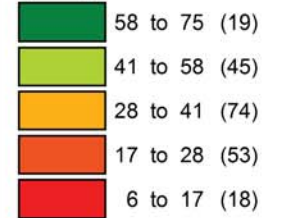
## Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 20  
Quality Scores and  
Indicies of Multiple  
Deprivation (Health and  
Disability) 2015



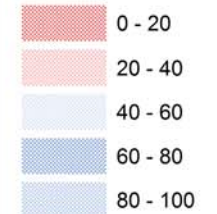
### LEGEND

#### Quality Score



#### IMD (%)

##### Most deprived



##### Least deprived



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| Ward                       | Average Quality 2018 | Average Quality Rank 2018 | Average of IMD Health Rank | Average IMD Health Ranked by Ward |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Abbey                      | 68                   | 1                         | 11495                      | 19                                |
| West Bromwich Central      | 50                   | 2                         | 5971                       | 7                                 |
| Newton                     | 46                   | 3                         | 13835                      | 23                                |
| Great Bridge               | 42                   | 4                         | 5197                       | 2                                 |
| St. Pauls                  | 42                   | 4                         | 5926                       | 6                                 |
| Smethwick                  | 41                   | 6                         | 5683                       | 4                                 |
| Charlemont with Grove Vale | 38                   | 7                         | 13244                      | 22                                |
| Wednesbury North           | 38                   | 7                         | 6444                       | 10                                |
| Blackheath                 | 37                   | 9                         | 8204                       | 16                                |
| Bristnall                  | 37                   | 9                         | 7762                       | 14                                |
| Great Barr with Yew tree   | 37                   | 9                         | 14389                      | 24                                |
| Wednesbury South           | 35                   | 12                        | 6721                       | 12                                |
| Soho and Victoria          | 34                   | 13                        | 3770                       | 1                                 |
| Greets Green and Lyng      | 33                   | 14                        | 5286                       | 3                                 |
| Hateley Heath              | 33                   | 14                        | 6278                       | 9                                 |
| Old Warley                 | 32                   | 16                        | 11870                      | 21                                |
| Cradley Heath and Old Hill | 31                   | 17                        | 8162                       | 15                                |
| Rowley                     | 29                   | 18                        | 7244                       | 13                                |
| Tipton Green               | 29                   | 18                        | 5864                       | 5                                 |
| Friar Park                 | 28                   | 20                        | 6682                       | 11                                |
| Langley                    | 26                   | 21                        | 8268                       | 17                                |
| Princes End                | 24                   | 22                        | 6003                       | 8                                 |
| Tividale                   | 24                   | 22                        | 11864                      | 20                                |
| Oldbury                    | 23                   | 24                        | 9268                       | 18                                |

Table 84 Quality and Health & Disability IMD Rank by Ward

### 7.6.3 Quality Scores and Levels of Physical Activity

Using data provided by Sport England, levels of active residents at Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) level have been calculated. This is shown in Figure 21 overleaf, overlaid with green space quality scores. Levels of physical activity tend to be higher in areas with more green space, with Great Barr with Yew Tree and Newton Wards (the wards with the second and third highest amounts of unrestricted green space per 1000 population, see Table 27) in areas with the highest proportions of active residents (indicated in dark blue). On the other hand, there seems to be little correlation with the quality of green space and levels of physical activity. For example, St Paul's Ward has a number of high-quality green space sites, yet shows low levels of physical active, with less than 47.5% of residents described a physically active. However, Princes End Ward, which has significantly lower quality sites shows much higher levels of physical activity.

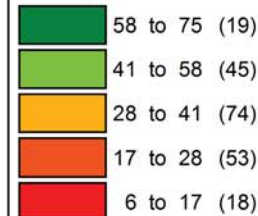
# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 21  
Physical Activity and  
Quality Scores

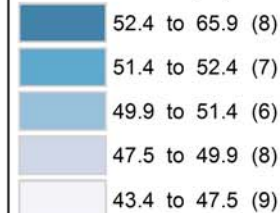
## LEGEND

Ward Boundaries

### Quality Scores



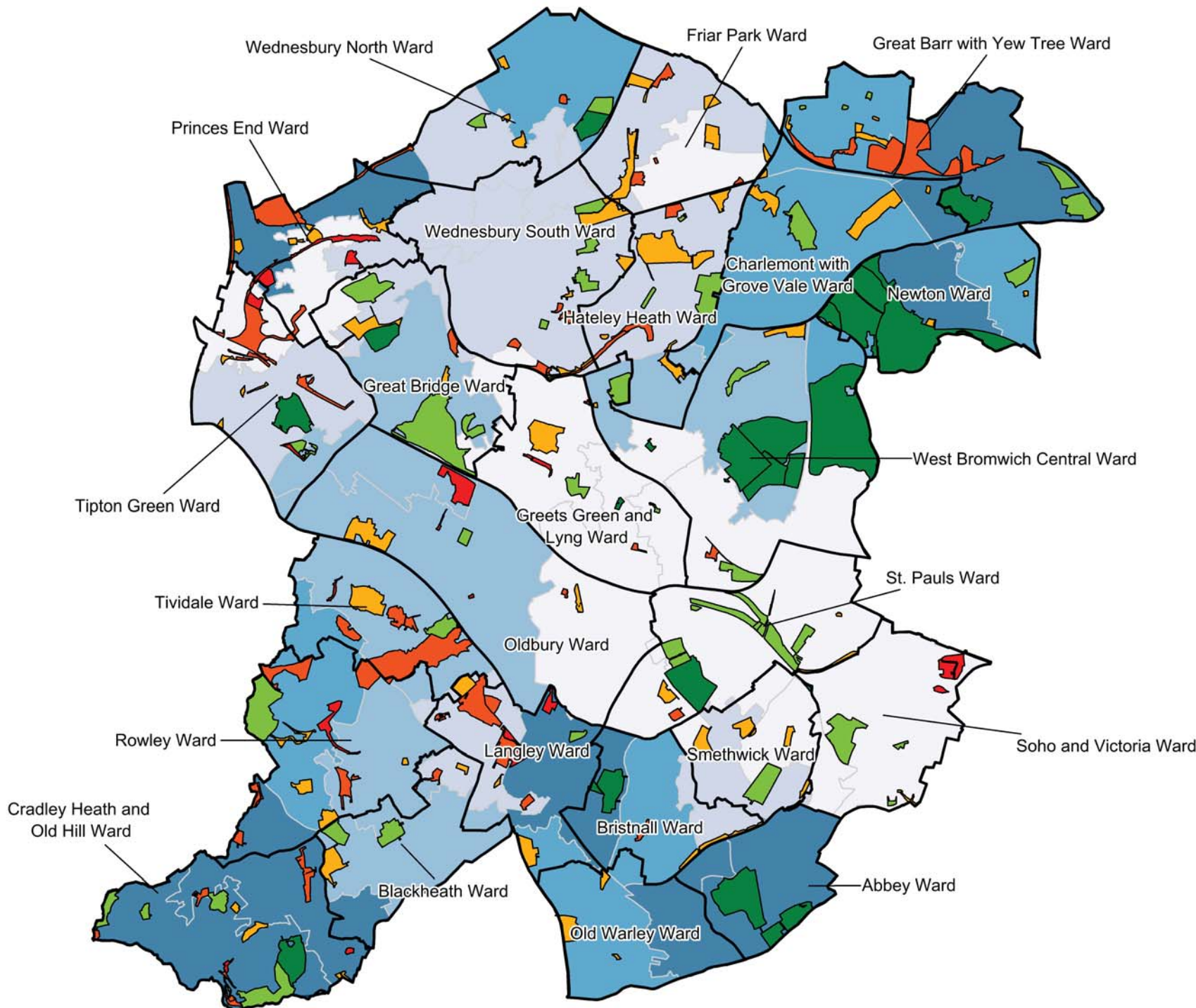
### MSOA by levels of active residents (%)



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## 7.7 Summary

The Audit provides a 'snap shot' of a site's quality, e.g. sites that were covered in litter may well have been scheduled to be cleaned later in the day, although we have sought to establish where possible whether issues with litter are likely to be long standing or a recent occurrence. Also, some play areas that provided poor provision may be subject to funding bids or a replacement programme that is yet to be delivered. However, ideally the quality for visitors to the sites should be the same 365 days of the year.

The methodology, which allows for sites to be consistently assessed, also has its limitations as it is applied to a huge range of different spaces with different functions. Before considering any action relating to the analysis undertaken, it must be factored in that certain types of sites will score low because of their very nature, i.e. amenity green spaces. For this reason, the data in sections 2.1.3 and 2.2.3 above provide a means to place the scores in the context of their greenspace type.

Taking these points into consideration, the main issues arising from the most recent audit are that a considerable number of the assessed sites score below the Borough average which results in an overall poor quality average score. Although there has been investment and large improvements in some spaces, the average quality score for the Borough has dropped by 4 points since the 2013 audit, and the majority of sites have seen a decrease in their overall score. However, a third of sites that were assessed in both the 2013 and 2018 saw their quality increase, and in the most recent audit 17 sites had a score that was good or very good. This would suggest that the authority has worked hard to invest in the more significant / destination spaces and continued to maintain the quality of these spaces and that the effect of budget reductions has been most observed in terms of the quality of the smaller, more local, incidental open spaces.

Criteria where the Borough scored highly were Personal security; Safe equipment and facilities; and Equipment maintenance. Litter continues to be an issue and scores low, along with the provision of signage and educational interpretation/information which have the lowest scoring criteria.

The typologies that have the highest average quality score are Cemeteries and Churchyards, although these are a small number of sites in the audit. Parks & Gardens have the second highest average quality score, while Amenity Greenspaces have the lowest score. Natural and Semi-natural Green Space exhibit the widest variance with the larger, destination spaces performing well and other incidental spaces performing much less well. Borough scale sites have the highest average score, and Local sites the lowest and positively the quality of borough wide and to a lesser extent neighbourhood sites has been maintained since the last audit in 2013.

At a town level Smethwick has the highest average quality score for its sites, with Oldbury scoring the lowest. There does not appear to be a correlation between the amount of green space in each ward and the average quality score. There does not appear to be a correlation between the levels of deprivation (as measured by IMD 2015) and the average quality score. Moreover, the results from the Household Survey indicate that Smethwick has the highest quality green space, however, Tipton scored the lowest for quality based on the Household Survey responses.



## 8 Value

### 8.1 Introduction

A methodology for the value assessment has been developed that draws upon the guidance in “Assessing Needs and Opportunities” (the companion guide to PPG17). This methodology was used in the earlier Green Space Audits carried out in 2013 and 2006 and allows a comparison over time.

### 8.2 Methodology

3 factors suggested in PPG17 were used and the criteria revised for assessing these along with a new scoring system to produce a more even emphasis on each factor. A fourth factor has been added to take into account the role of strategic open space, linear open space and wildlife corridors.

The table below shows the relationship of factors and criteria:

| Reference | Factor                | Reference | Criteria                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| A         | Context               | A1        | Accessibility                  |
|           |                       | A2        | Proximity                      |
|           |                       | A3        | Quantity                       |
| B         | Level and type of use | B1        | Hierarchy                      |
|           |                       | B2        | Level of use                   |
|           |                       | B3        | Community Value                |
| C         | Wider benefits        | C1        | Ecological benefits            |
|           |                       | C2        | Education benefits             |
|           |                       | C3        | Social inclusion               |
|           |                       | C4        | Cultural and heritage benefits |
| D         | Open Space Networks   | D1        | Strategic Open Space           |
|           |                       | D2        | Linear Open Space              |

Table 85 Value assessment criteria

### 8.2.1 Criteria and Scoring System

A Context - A GIS driven approach in that scores for all 3 criteria can be derived either from the meta data associated with each site or from analysis techniques using this data.

A1 Accessibility - The first criteria is accessibility and the table below shows the 3 'measures' that have been agreed for classifying accessibility and the suggested score for each.

| Reference     | Criteria      | Measure      | Score     |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| A1            | Accessibility | Unrestricted | 10        |
|               |               | Limited      | 5         |
|               |               | Restricted   | 0         |
| Maximum score |               |              | <b>10</b> |

Table 86 Accessibility scoring

A2 Proximity – The overlap refers to the number of sites with which the buffer of the site crosses. This is applied to unrestricted access sites only and a standard buffer of 400m is applied to all sites (irrespective of accessibility hierarchy). This distance represents the lower accessibility standard (for Local level green spaces) set out in the separate Accessibility report.

| Reference     | Criteria  | Measure    | Score                             |
|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| A2            | Proximity | No overlap | 10                                |
|               |           | 1 overlap  | 9                                 |
|               |           | 2 overlaps | 8                                 |
|               |           | 3 overlaps | 7                                 |
|               |           | 4 overlaps | 6                                 |
|               |           | 5 overlaps | 5                                 |
|               |           | 6 overlaps | 4                                 |
|               |           | 7 overlaps | 3                                 |
|               |           | 8 overlaps | 2                                 |
|               |           | 9 overlaps | 1                                 |
|               |           |            | Restricted / Limited access sites |
| Maximum score |           |            | <b>10</b>                         |

Table 87 Proximity scoring

A3 Quantity – The measure for this criteria is hectares per 1000 head of population with the analysis carried out at ward level. Where sites cross ward boundaries the ward within which the majority of the site falls is used as the basis for the calculation. A maximum score of 10 can be achieved with the scoring system as set out below.

| Reference     | Criteria | Measure       | Score     |
|---------------|----------|---------------|-----------|
| A3            | Quantity | <1 ha / 1000  | 10        |
|               |          | 1-2 ha / 1000 | 9         |
|               |          | 2-3 ha / 1000 | 8         |
|               |          | 3-4 ha / 1000 | 7         |
|               |          | 4-5 ha / 1000 | 6         |
|               |          | 5-6 ha / 1000 | 5         |
|               |          | 6-7 ha / 1000 | 4         |
|               |          | 7-8 ha / 1000 | 3         |
|               |          | 8-9 ha / 1000 | 2         |
|               |          | > 9 ha / 1000 | 1         |
| Maximum score |          |               | <b>10</b> |

Table 88 Quantity scoring

**B Level and type of use** – This factor requires both GIS data and consultation results.

**B1 Hierarchy** – the hierarchy which will be devised for the green space strategy indicates the significance (or value) of sites. The hierarchy will be related to range of facilities and experiences and size and was devised before the quality audit was carried out. The scores used can be seen in the below table.

| Reference     | Criteria  | Measure       | Score     |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| B1            | Hierarchy | Borough       | 10        |
|               |           | Neighbourhood | 7         |
|               |           | Local         | 4         |
| Maximum score |           |               | <b>10</b> |

Table 89 Hierarchy scoring

**B2 Level of use** – this criteria will be based on the number of people stating that they used a particular site derived from the household survey data. The maximum score is 10 and the measure (number of users) can be seen in the scoring system in the table below.

| Reference     | Criteria     | Measure | Score     |
|---------------|--------------|---------|-----------|
| B2            | Level of use | >91     | 10        |
|               |              | 81 - 90 | 9         |
|               |              | 71 - 80 | 8         |
|               |              | 61 - 70 | 7         |
|               |              | 51 - 60 | 6         |
|               |              | 41 - 50 | 5         |
|               |              | 31 - 40 | 4         |
|               |              | 21 - 30 | 3         |
|               |              | 11 - 20 | 2         |
|               |              | 1 - 10  | 1         |
|               |              | 0       | 0         |
| Maximum score |              |         | <b>10</b> |

Table 90 Level of Use scoring

**C Wider benefits** – this factor uses 3 criteria with detailed measures and scoring systems.

**C1 Ecological benefits** – This criteria assesses the value of sites according to their ecological significance. Sites are scored according the different measures as set out in the table below.

| Reference     | Criteria            | Measure                   | Score     |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| C1            | Ecological benefits | SSSI (none in study area) | 10        |
|               |                     | SINC (33 in study area)   | 5         |
|               |                     | SLINC (70 in study area)  | 2         |
| Maximum score |                     |                           | <b>10</b> |

Table 91 Ecological benefits scoring

**C2 Education benefits** – here 2 criteria are used for measuring the educational value of sites;

The first measure is the score from the quality audit for the criteria “provision of educational / interpretational information” – here the criteria is scored out of 10 so this score is divided by 2 and rounded up to a whole score to give a score out of 5.

The second is to use a GIS driven measure based on the proximity of local schools (either primary or secondary). The number of schools within a 400m radius of the boundary of the site was measured. The range of the results is grouped and scored on a scale of 0 to 5.

| Reference     | Criteria           | Measure                          | Score     |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| C2            | Education benefits | Quality audit score divided by 2 | Maximum 5 |
|               |                    | No. schools in 400m              | Maximum 5 |
| Maximum score |                    |                                  | <b>10</b> |

Table 92 Education benefits scoring

**C3 Social inclusion** – as above 2 measures are used for this criteria.

The first measure used is the existence of a friends group / community based organisation involved in the management or development of the site along with the presence of events and activities on the site. Secondly for health an IMD driven scoring system is used with 20% bands within ward level ranking - i.e. all ward level health data is ranked and the wards split into 5 groups – the poorest health scoring group scoring 5 and the best health group scoring 1.

| Reference     | Criteria         | Measure                               | Score     |
|---------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| C3            | Social inclusion | Community based organisation involved | 3         |
|               |                  | Events and activities                 | 2         |
|               |                  | IMD health rank by ward               | Maximum 5 |
| Maximum score |                  |                                       | <b>10</b> |

Table 93 Social inclusion scoring

**C4 – Cultural and Heritage benefits** – for cultural benefits social inclusion measures are used. For heritage benefits a combination of statutory designations and scores derived from the quality audit are used.

For statutory designations the inclusion of a site on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens confers national significance and thus scored 7. Below this local historic designations derived from a site being in or adjacent to a conservation area (32 in study area) is used.

In the quality audit 2 criteria are used in the assessment relating to heritage – “conservation of landscape features” and “conservation of buildings and structures”. Each criteria is scored out of 10 but very few sites are likely to receive a score in the audit. Thus if a site received a score on either criteria it received a score of 1 – i.e. a maximum score of 2.

A site could therefore receive a combined score – i.e. a listed site could receive a score for its listing plus a score for the conservation of its heritage asset.

| Reference     | Criteria          | Measure                                  | Score     |
|---------------|-------------------|--|-----------|
| C4            | Heritage benefits | English Heritage listed site / structure | 7         |
|               |                   | Local historic significance.             | 1         |
|               |                   | Quality score                            | Maximum 2 |
| Maximum score |                   |  | <b>10</b> |

Table 94 Cultural and Heritage Benefits scoring

## D Open Space Networks

This factor takes into account the linkages between the green spaces and their role within either green space network. Where criteria A2 Proximity reduces the value score where there are many other green spaces in close proximity this measure seeks to increase the value score where sites are linked together or form part of a network of green space.

### D1 – Strategic Open Space

This criteria draws upon and extends Sandwell's definition of Strategic Open Space which was defined in the Local Plan as:

“Large areas of open space. Includes: formal parks and private open space; land of rural character; and land of nature conservation value. Should include a strategic area for play. Adequate car parking and cycle parking.”

In addition to this, is the objective of the Black Country Core Strategy Open Space, Sport and Recreation Policy which states that there should be "a high quality, multifunctional green space network".

Rowley Hills is defined as a Strategic Open Space and for the purposes of the value assessment, the component sites of that Sandwell Valley are also included as Strategic Open Spaces.

### D2 – Linear Open Space

The Black Country Core Strategy references the importance of Linear Open Spaces and Greenways. It states that such features "act as wildlife corridors and provide attractive and safe off-road links for pedestrians and cyclists". Therefore, linear open spaces have been used as a measure of value where sites are either within or form part of a wildlife corridor or are adjacent to the canal network.

| Reference     | Criteria             | Measure  | Score     |
|---------------|----------------------|--|-----------|
| D1            | Strategic Open Space | Part of Rowley Hills SOS or part of Sandwell Valley  | 10        |
| D2            | Linear Open Space    | Within or forms part of a wildlife corridor or adjacent to the canal network or River Tame | 5         |
| Maximum score |                      |  | <b>10</b> |

Table 95 Linear Open Space scoring

### Scoring system

The table below shows how the scores relate to the factors and criteria

| Reference | Factor                | Reference | Criteria              | Maximum score |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|---------------|
| A         | Context               | A1        | Accessibility         | 10            |
|           |                       | A2        | Proximity             | 10            |
|           |                       | A3        | Quantity              | 10            |
|           |                       |           | Maximum score         | 30            |
| B         | Level and type of use | B1        | Hierarchy             | 10            |
|           |                       | B2        | Level of use          | 10            |
|           |                       |           |                       |               |
| C         | Wider benefits        | C1        | Ecological benefits   | 10            |
|           |                       | C2        | Education benefits    | 10            |
|           |                       | C3        | Social inclusion      | 10            |
|           |                       | C4        | Cultural and heritage | 10            |
|           |                       |           | Maximum score         | 40            |
| D         | Open Space Networks   | D1        | Strategic Open Space  | 10            |
|           |                       | D2        | Linear Open Space     | 5             |
|           |                       |           |                       |               |

Table 96 Linear Open Space scoring

Thus each factor has different maximum scores that need to be weighted equally if it is accepted that each factor has an equal contribution to be made to value.

Since B Level and Type of Use and D Open Space Networks each have 2 criteria performance against these measures has a significant impact on the overall quality scores.



| Factor                | Maximum score | Calculation       | Final weight |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Context               | 30            | (Score / 3) x 2.5 | 25.0%        |
| Level and type of use | 20            | (Score / 2) x 2.5 | 25.0%        |
| Wider benefits        | 40            | (Score / 4) x 2.5 | 25.0%        |
| Open Space Network    | 10            | (Score / 1) x 2.5 | 25.0%        |
| <b>Totals</b>         | <b>100</b>    |                   | <b>100%</b>  |

Table 97 Calculation and Weighting

The value assessment methodology would thus give a score out of 100 for use in the quality value matrix. The quality score is also out of 100 so this gives a useful relationship of scales.

### 8.3 Value Scores

The sections below set out the findings of the value assessment.

#### 8.3.1 Findings

The sections below set out the findings of the value assessment. Figure 22 is a thematic map showing the value scores presented as 5 score ranges.

A total of 209 sites were assessed, corresponding to the sample of sites that were selected for the quality assessment. The average value score is 38.3 (out of 100) with 98 sites (46.9%) scoring above this figure.

The average value score is lower than that recorded in 2013 which was 37.0 (based on 218 sites). The average value score in 2006 was 33.2 (based on 230 sites).

The table below sets out the value scores for the 209 sites that have been assessed as part of this Green Space Audit and this has then been mapped thematically in Figure 22.

| Site ID | Site Name                        | 2019 Value Score | 2013 Value Score | Variance |
|---------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|
| 3039    | Forge Mill Lake & Nature Reserve | 78.4             | 61.3             | 17.2     |
| 3051    | Swan Pool/Priory Wood            | 75.3             | 58.1             | 17.2     |
| 4050    | Warley Woods                     | 74.6             | 73.3             | -2.5     |
| 3058    | Dartmouth Park                   | 74.1             | 73.1             | 0.9      |
| 3055    | Sandwell Park Farm               | 72.5             | 47.5             | 25.0     |
| 3038    | Forge Mill Farm                  | 66.5             | #N/A             | #N/A     |

| Site ID | Site Name  | 2019 Value Score | 2013 Value Score | Variance |
|---------|--|------------------|------------------|----------|
| 5011    | Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space - Portway Road SOS | 65.4             | 64.8             | 0.6      |
| 5087    | Haden Hill Park                                      | 64.8             | 68.5             | -3.8     |
| 5016    | Warrens Hall Park SOS                                | 63.5             | 41.9             | 25.4     |
| 1041    | Victoria Park (Tipton)                               | 63.2             | 51.7             | 11.6     |
| 5009    | Bury Hill Park                                       | 61.5             | 59.0             | 2.5      |
| 4051    | Lightwoods Park                                      | 60.5             | 54.0             | 2.8      |
| 3048    | West Bromwich Crematorium                            | 59.9             | 58.3             | 1.6      |
| 5015    | Warrens Hall Farm SOS                                | 58.5             | 63.1             | -4.6     |
| 6013    | Brunswick Park                                       | 57.6             | 55.6             | 2.0      |
| 3057    | King George V Playing Fields                         | 57.3             | 54.2             | 3.1      |
| 1028    | Sheepwash Urban Park                                 | 54.6             | 54.0             | 0.6      |
| 4005    | Galton Valley Canal                                  | 53.9             | 52.1             | 1.8      |
| 4003    | Smethwick Summit                                     | 53.3             | 51.3             | 2.1      |
| 5017    | The Knowle SOS                                       | 53.1             | 53.3             | -0.2     |
| 5072    | Mousesweet Brook LNR                                 | 53.0             | 49.6             | 3.4      |
| 4004    | Galton Valley Heritage Centre                        | 52.9             | 52.1             | 0.8      |
| 6039    | Hydes Road Pool                                      | 50.8             | 50.8             | 0.0      |
| 3027    | Red House Park                                       | 50.0             | 48.1             | -1.9     |
| 4006    | Lewisham Park  | 50.0             | 47.9             | 2.1      |
| 3025    | Holly Wood & Pasture                                 | 49.6             | 44.6             | 5.0      |
| 3032    | Ray Hall Pastoral Land                               | 49.5             | 47.1             | 2.4      |
| 5051    | Waterfall Lane SINC                                  | 49.4             | 49.6             | -0.2     |
| 4036    | Victoria Park (Smethwick)                            | 49.0             | 49.6             | -0.6     |
| 5085    | Corngreaves Public Open Space                        | 48.5             | 46.0             | 2.5      |
| 6036    | River Tame Corridor Johnson Road (Wednesbury)        | 47.5             | 46.3             | 1.3      |
| 2045    | Barnford Hill Park                                   | 47.3             | 40.4             | 3.1      |
| 6033    | River Tame Corridor North (Wednesbury)               | 46.9             | 46.3             | 0.6      |
| 6066    | Ridgeacre Branch Canal Walkthrough                   | 46.9             | 35.0             | 11.9     |
| 3064    | Charlemont Farm Playing Fields                       | 46.3             | 46.0             | 0.2      |
| 5075    | Mousesweet Brook/River Stour SLINC                   | 45.8             | 46.5             | -0.6     |
| 3110    | Kenrick Park   | 45.5             | 41.5             | 0.3      |
| 2028    | Langley Park   | 45.4             | 51.7             | -2.5     |
| 4018    | West Smethwick Park                                  | 45.4             | 43.3             | 2.1      |
| 3068    | Beaconview/Walsall Road Open Space                   | 45.1             | 47.1             | -2.0     |
| 3086    | Sussex Avenue Open Space                             | 45.1             | 41.7             | 3.4      |
| 5044    | Rowley Regis Cemetery                                | 44.8             | 48.1             | -3.3     |

| Site ID | Site Name                                     | 2019 Value Score | 2013 Value Score | Variance |
|---------|---|------------------|------------------|----------|
| 3097    | Delta Gardens                                 | 44.0             | 42.7             | 1.3      |
| 4008    | Bridge Street Amenity Space                   | 43.9             | 43.3             | 0.5      |
| 1011    | Tibbington Open Space                         | 43.8             | 41.9             | 1.9      |
| 1026    | Great Western Street                          | 43.1             | 42.5             | 0.6      |
| 2012    | Brades Green Open Space                       | 43.1             | 40.0             | 3.1      |
| 6028    | Sandy Lane Open Space                         | 43.1             | 44.4             | -1.3     |
| 3018    | Hill Farm Bridge Fields                       | 42.7             | 42.1             | 0.6      |
| 5043    | Moor Lane Open Space                          | 42.7             | 42.9             | -0.2     |
| 6021    | Tame Avenue Open Space                        | 42.7             | 44.0             | -1.3     |
| 2072    | Queensway Open Space                          | 42.5             | 40.6             | 1.9      |
| 6032    | William Green Road Open Space                 | 42.5             | 43.1             | -0.6     |
| 6022    | Coronation Road                               | 42.3             | 44.8             | -2.5     |
| 6029    | Worleys Wharf Open Space                      | 42.3             | 44.2             | -1.9     |
| 2003    | Tividale Park                                 | 42.1             | 37.7             | 4.4      |
| 3067    | Navigation Lane Amenity Space                 | 42.1             | 41.9             | 0.2      |
| 3094    | Billhay Lane Amenity Space                    | 42.1             | 42.7             | -0.6     |
| 5041    | Warwick Road Open Space                       | 42.1             | 41.0             | 1.0      |
| 1063    | Kerr Drive Open Space                         | 41.9             | 29.0             | 12.9     |
| 3071    | Stone Cross Open Space                        | 41.5             | 43.3             | -1.9     |
| 1002    | Weddell Wynd Open Space                       | 41.3             | 42.1             | -0.8     |
| 2011    | Rattle Chain Urban Forest                     | 41.3             | 43.1             | -1.9     |
| 2083    | M5/Tame Road Open Space                       | 41.3             | 41.3             | 0.0      |
| 5080    | Corngreaves Road Open Space                   | 41.3             | 40.0             | 1.3      |
| 6038    | River Tame Corridor Hydes Road Playing Fields | 41.3             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 2040    | Titford Lane Open Space                       | 40.8             | 40.2             | 0.6      |
| 1008    | Princes End Branchline Walkway                | 40.6             | 40.2             | 0.4      |
| 2101    | Embassy Road Play Area                        | 40.6             | 41.9             | -1.3     |
| 3020    | Wilderness Lane SLINC & SINC                  | 40.6             | 42.5             | -1.9     |
| 3072    | Hall Green Open Space                         | 40.6             | 41.9             | -1.3     |
| 3023    | Whitecrest Open Space                         | 40.4             | 41.7             | -1.3     |
| 5059    | Wrights Lane Open Space                       | 40.4             | 42.9             | -2.5     |
| 1075    | Coneygre Canal Green Space                    | 40.2             | 43.3             | -3.1     |
| 5046    | Britannia Park                                | 40.2             | 44.8             | -0.8     |
| 5081    | Timbertree Open Space SLINC                   | 40.2             | 39.6             | 0.6      |
| 5095    | Woburn Road Amenity Greenspace                | 40.0             | 41.9             | -1.9     |
| 6057    | Nobury Road Open Space                        | 40.0             | 41.9             | -1.9     |
| 6064    | Lakeside Open Space                           | 39.8             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 1047    | Coronation Gardens                            | 39.7             | 40.0             | -0.3     |
| 1004    | Tipton Linear Park                            | 39.6             | 39.2             | 0.4      |

| Site ID | Site Name                        | 2019 Value Score | 2013 Value Score | Variance |
|---------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|
| 4052    | Galton Valley Play Area          | 39.6             | 25.6             | 1.5      |
| 1003    | Bilston Road Open Space          | 39.4             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 1006    | Wednesbury Oak Play Area         | 39.4             | 39.0             | 0.4      |
| 1009    | Lichfield Street Open Space      | 39.4             | 44.6             | -5.2     |
| 1010    | Tibbington Playing Fields        | 39.4             | 44.4             | -5.0     |
| 1027    | Haines Branch Canal              | 39.4             | 41.3             | -1.9     |
| 3014    | Biddleston Grove Open Space      | 39.4             | 27.5             | 11.9     |
| 2031    | Old Park Lane Open Space         | 39.0             | 39.6             | -0.6     |
| 6068    | Bradley Locks                    | 39.0             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 1048    | Union Street Open Space          | 38.8             | 38.8             | 0.0      |
| 3136    | West Bromwich Parkway SINC       | 38.8             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 5018    | Springfield Estate Embankments   | 38.8             | 40.8             | -2.1     |
| 5093    | Chatsworth Road Open Space       | 38.8             | 38.8             | 0.0      |
| 6059    | Hill Top Park                    | 38.5             | 39.2             | -0.6     |
| 1014    | Central Avenue/Upper Church Lane | 38.3             | 40.4             | -2.1     |
| 2042    | York Road Open Space             | 38.3             | 40.2             | -1.9     |
| 1050    | Bullers Open Space               | 38.1             | 39.4             | -1.3     |
| 1051    | Beaumont Close Open Space        | 38.1             | 40.6             | -2.5     |
| 3103    | Oak House                        | 38.0             | 38.8             | -3.2     |
| 5035    | Brickhouse Open Space            | 37.9             | 43.1             | -5.2     |
| 6067    | New Gas Street Open Space        | 37.9             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 1013    | Bloomfield Road Amenity Space    | 37.7             | 26.5             | -1.3     |
| 1067    | Standbridge Way Amenity Space    | 37.7             | 40.2             | -2.5     |
| 3047    | Gorse Farm Wood                  | 37.6             | 32.9             | 4.7      |
| 1001    | Brierley Lane Open Space         | 37.5             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3075    | Menzies Open Space               | 37.5             | 35.6             | 1.9      |
| 3079    | West Bromwich Cemetery           | 37.5             | 38.8             | -1.3     |
| 3106    | Garden of Remembrance            | 37.3             | 35.4             | 1.9      |
| 5038    | Brickhouse Farm Open Space       | 37.3             | 39.4             | -2.1     |
| 5090    | Codsall Coppice                  | 37.2             | 36.9             | 0.3      |
| 4009    | Black Patch Park                 | 37.1             | 37.7             | 3.1      |
| 1049    | Furnace Parade Open Space        | 36.9             | 38.1             | -1.3     |
| 1042    | Coneygre Youth Centre            | 36.5             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 2034    | Lion Farm Playing Fields         | 36.5             | 33.3             | 3.1      |
| 6012    | Wood Green Cemetery              | 36.5             | 35.4             | 1.0      |
| 3112    | Constance Avenue Open Space      | 36.3             | 37.5             | -1.3     |
| 4002    | Roebuck Lane Open Space          | 36.3             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3009    | Poppy Drive Open Space           | 36.0             | 37.9             | -1.9     |
| 3096    | Greets Green Playing Field       | 36.0             | 34.8             | 1.3      |
| 4032    | Londonderry Playing Fields       | 36.0             | 35.2             | 0.8      |

| Site ID | Site Name                                  | 2019 Value Score | 2013 Value Score | Variance |
|---------|--|------------------|------------------|----------|
| 3010    | Tamebridge Walkthrough                     | 35.8             | 37.1             | -1.3     |
| 6020    | Church Hill Open Space                     | 35.7             | 36.9             | -1.1     |
| 2068    | Grafton Road Playing Fields                | 35.6             | 38.1             | -2.5     |
| 4042    | Thimblemill Brook                          | 35.4             | 30.8             | 4.6      |
| 2052    | Norman Road Walkthrough                    | 35.0             | 30.0             | 5.0      |
| 2041    | Titford Pools                              | 34.6             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 4030    | Smethwick Hall Park                        | 34.4             | 35.4             | -1.0     |
| 4038    | Unett Street Open Space                    | 34.4             | 33.8             | 0.6      |
| 1018    | Jubilee Park                               | 34.2             | 36.7             | -2.5     |
| 5069    | Bearmore Playing Fields                    | 34.0             | 35.8             | -1.9     |
| 5071    | Mary MacArthur Gardens                     | 33.1             | 30.6             | 2.5      |
| 6011    | Goldcroft Playing Fields                   | 32.9             | 32.5             | 0.4      |
| 2024    | Broadwell Park                             | 32.8             | 36.3             | 0.3      |
| 6025    | Friar Park Playing Fields                  | 32.7             | 33.3             | -0.6     |
| 4035    | Harry Mitchell Park                        | 32.3             | 34.0             | 2.1      |
| 4046    | Montague Road Open Space                   | 32.3             | 31.0             | 1.3      |
| 6060    | Balls Hill Open Space                      | 32.3             | 31.7             | 0.6      |
| 6015    | Norman Deeley Playing Fields               | 32.0             | 34.4             | -2.4     |
| 2087    | Norfolk Road Open Space                    | 31.9             | 28.8             | 3.1      |
| 3078    | Marsh Lane Open Space (Proposed play area) | 31.9             | 33.8             | -1.9     |
| 6054    | Brickhouse Lane Open Space                 | 31.9             | 32.5             | -0.6     |
| 4001    | Fowler Close Open Space                    | 31.7             | 30.8             | 0.8      |
| 4016    | St Pauls Cemetery                          | 31.3             | 31.7             | -0.4     |
| 3090    | Oakwood Park/Jesson Playing Fields         | 31.1             | 32.1             | -0.9     |
| 4040    | Uplands Cemetery                           | 31.0             | 32.7             | -1.7     |
| 4058    | The Maltings Open Space                    | 31.0             | 31.7             | -0.6     |
| 4012    | Tollhouse Way Amenity Area                 | 30.8             | 30.6             | 0.2      |
| 5068    | St Lukes Church                            | 30.8             | 30.8             | 0.0      |
| 5070    | Bearmore Road Open Space                   | 30.8             | 30.8             | 0.0      |
| 3100    | Hamblett's Open Space                      | 30.6             | 31.3             | -0.6     |
| 4031    | Londonderry Lane Amenity Space             | 30.6             | 28.5             | 2.1      |
| 1029    | Farley Park                                | 30.2             | 35.8             | -1.9     |
| 2035    | Birchley Sports Ground (Newbury Lane)      | 30.2             | 31.5             | -1.3     |
| 6017    | Blakedon Road Open Space                   | 30.2             | 31.7             | -1.5     |
| 2055    | Hill Top Road Open Space                   | 29.8             | 30.4             | -0.6     |
| 2033    | Birchley Sports Ground                     | 29.6             | 31.5             | -1.9     |
| 4059    | Merry Hill SLINC                           | 29.6             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 5004    | Darbys Hill Quarry Open Space              | 29.6             | 29.0             | 0.6      |
| 4022    | St Johns Recreation Ground                 | 29.5             | 28.3             | 1.1      |

| Site ID | Site Name                                  | 2019 Value Score | 2013 Value Score | Variance |
|---------|--|------------------|------------------|----------|
| 2022    | Canal Side Open Space                      | 29.4             | 31.3             | -1.9     |
| 3003    | Redwood Road Open Space                    | 29.2             | 29.8             | -0.6     |
| 3040    | Tanhouse Avenue Amenity Space              | 29.2             | 26.7             | 2.5      |
| 5027    | Angela Avenue Open Space                   | 29.2             | 31.9             | -2.7     |
| 5028    | Rowley Hall Open Space                     | 29.0             | 31.0             | -2.1     |
| 5013    | Darbys Hill Open Space                     | 28.8             | 28.1             | 0.6      |
| 3119    | Sots Hole Wood                             | 28.6             | 46.9             | -18.2    |
| 3080    | Lindsey Road Open Space                    | 28.5             | 29.8             | -1.3     |
| 5066    | Ashtree Mound Playing Fields               | 28.5             | 29.4             | -0.8     |
| 3061    | Newton Road Playing Fields                 | 28.3             | 26.5             | 1.9      |
| 3120    | Hobhouse Close Play Area                   | 28.3             | 27.7             | 0.6      |
| 6058    | Hawkes Lane Open Space                     | 28.3             | 30.2             | -1.9     |
| 3088    | Lily Street Open Space                     | 28.1             | 29.4             | -1.3     |
| 3089    | Okehampton Drive Play Area                 | 28.1             | 30.0             | -1.9     |
| 1044    | Dudley Road Amenity Space                  | 27.9             | 32.9             | -5.0     |
| 5006    | Grace Mary Open Space                      | 27.7             | 29.0             | -1.3     |
| 6035    | Walton Road Amenity Space                  | 27.5             | 30.6             | -3.1     |
| 3030    | Longleat Spinney                           | 27.3             | 27.1             | 0.2      |
| 4025    | Basons Lane Playing Fields                 | 27.3             | 27.7             | -0.4     |
| 6003    | Black Horse Open Space                     | 27.1             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 1037    | Tipton Cemetery                            | 26.7             | 27.3             | -0.6     |
| 1038    | Powis Avenue Open Space                    | 26.7             | 29.2             | -2.5     |
| 2037    | Hartlebury Road Amenity Space              | 26.5             | 29.0             | -2.5     |
| 1007    | Laybourne Park                             | 26.3             | 28.3             | -2.1     |
| 5079    | Barn Close Open Space                      | 26.3             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 6055    | Ebenezer Street Open Space                 | 26.0             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 5029    | Wylde Crescent Open Space                  | 25.6             | 27.7             | -2.1     |
| 6062    | Wyntor Lane Open Space                     | 25.4             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 2066    | Ashes Road Open Space                      | 25.2             | 25.8             | -0.6     |
| 1064    | Wednesbury Oak Open Space                  | 25.0             | 29.0             | -4.0     |
| 3093    | Tildasley Street Amenity Space             | 25.0             | 24.4             | 0.6      |
| 3127    | Lyng Park                                  | 24.6             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3200    | Maud Road OS                               | 24.6             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 6070    | Kent Road Playing Fields                   | 24.6             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 1017    | Hall Lane Open Space                       | 24.4             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3085    | Denbigh Crescent Open Space                | 24.4             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 5082    | Timbertree Crescent Open Space             | 24.4             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 1066    | Upper Church Lane/Powis Avenue Walkthrough | 24.2             | 29.2             | -5.0     |
| 2014    | Dudley Road Walkthrough                    | 24.0             | #N/A             | #N/A     |

| Site ID | Site Name                         | 2019 Value Score | 2013 Value Score | Variance |
|---------|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|
| 3017    | The Grove Open Space              | 23.8             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3006    | Firtree Drive Open Space          | 23.5             | 25.4             | -1.9     |
| 3007    | Ladbury Grove Open Space          | 23.5             | 25.4             | -1.9     |
| 5078    | Corngreaves Walk Embankment       | 23.1             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3049    | Haypitts Woods                    | 22.7             | 24.6             | -1.9     |
| 3015    | Brooklands Open Space             | 21.9             | 23.8             | -1.9     |
| 3016    | Brackendale Drive Playing Fields  | 21.9             | 24.4             | -2.5     |
| 5003    | Fairway Avenue Amenity Greenspace | 21.5             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3074    | Manor House                       | 20.5             | #N/A             | #N/A     |
| 3137    | Ridgeacre Branch Canal SINC       | 20.4             | #N/A             | #N/A     |

Table 98 Value score by site 2019 and 2013

The mean value score for sites assessed in 2019 has increased from 37.0 to 38.3 and sites making up the wider Sandwell Valley remain the highest value green space in the Borough. Variation in absolute value scores may be influenced from the level of usage reported by respondents to the household survey or changes to the quantity and accessibility of green space within a site's vicinity.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

## Figure 22 Thematic Map of Value Scores

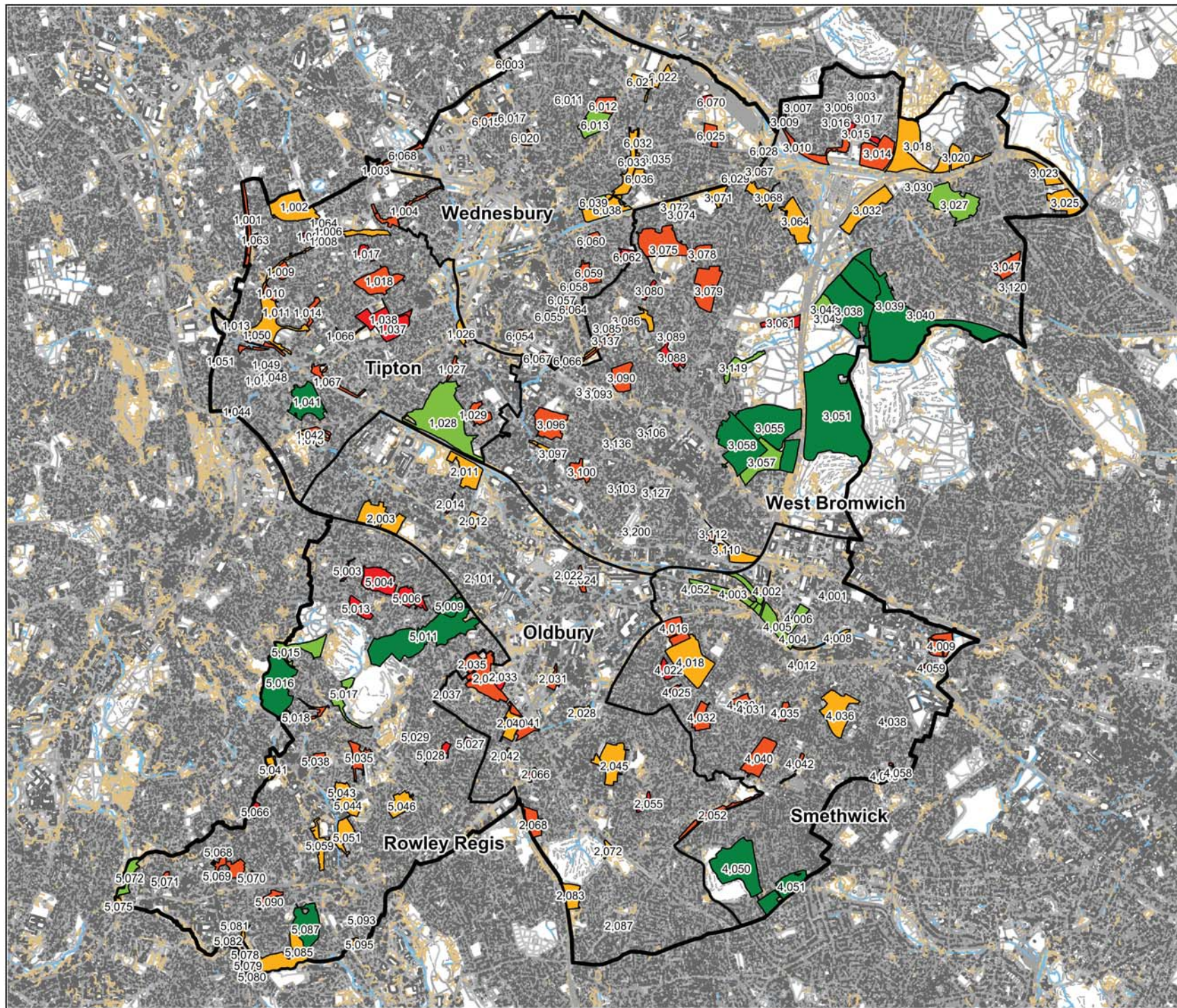
### LEGEND

Value Score 2019

- 60 to 78
- 50 to 60
- 40 to 50
- 30 to 40
- 20 to 30

Town Boundary

Borough Boundary



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| Drawn by:<br>LH | Checked by:<br>AS | Date:<br>20/09/19 |
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## 8.4 Value by Green Space Type

The table below demonstrates the average value score by typology and shows that the highest value sites tend to be those classified as natural and semi-natural greenspace (44.4) and parks and gardens (44.2) with Amenity Green Space, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Provision for Children & Young People achieving average value scores below the mean value score.

Whilst there has been some variance in the absolute value of the average value scores the ranking by green space type remains unchanged between 2006, 2013 and the present day, with the exception of natural and semi-natural greenspace overtaking parks and gardens as the highest valued type of site.

| Typology                              | Average Value Score (2019) | Average Value Score (2013) | Average Value Score (2006) |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 44.4                       | 42                         | 38                         |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 44.2                       | 43                         | 40                         |
| Green Corridor                        | 38.9                       | 41                         | 35                         |
| <b>Sandwell Average</b>               | <b>38.3</b>                | <b>37</b>                  | <b>33</b>                  |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 37.3                       | 38                         | 30                         |
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 34.5                       | 36                         | 31                         |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 34.3                       | 34                         | 30                         |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 32.4                       | 33                         | 29                         |

Table 99 Average value score by green space type

## 8.5 Value by Town

| Town                    | Average Value Score (2019) | Average Value Score (2013) | Average Value Score (2006) |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Smethwick               | 39.8                       | 35                         | 35                         |
| Rowley Regis            | 39.7                       | 40                         | 36                         |
| West Bromwich           | 38.8                       | 37                         | 34                         |
| <b>Sandwell Average</b> | <b>38.3</b>                | <b>37</b>                  | <b>33</b>                  |
| Wednesbury              | 37.4                       | 35                         | 33                         |
| Tipton                  | 37.3                       | 37                         | 31                         |
| Oldbury                 | 35.9                       | 34                         | 30                         |

Table 100 Average value score by town

Smethwick is the town with the highest average value score and Rowley Regis and West Bromwich also have an above average value score. All three towns have extensive areas of green networks and green infrastructure

which contribute to these higher average scores (in West Bromwich this is mitigated by there being a large sample of 57 sites compared to 38 in Rowley Regis). Oldbury has both the lowest average quality and value scores.

**8.6 Value by Hierarchy**

The table below shows that Borough spaces tend to have higher value scores than other spaces, with those sites classified as local level spaces, which are most likely to have the lowest value scores. Neighbourhood level sites meanwhile, continue to perform above the borough average.

| Hierarchy               | Average Value Score (2019) | Average Value Score (2013) | Average Value Score (2006) |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Borough                 | 58.4                       | 51                         | 49                         |
| Neighbourhood           | 41.2                       | 40                         | 37                         |
| <b>Sandwell Average</b> | <b>38.3</b>                | <b>37</b>                  | <b>33</b>                  |
| Local                   | 34.2                       | 34                         | 30                         |

Table 101 Average value by hierarchy

## 9 Quality & Value

The companion guide to PPG17, “Assessing Needs & Opportunities” sets out a method for combining the quality assessment scores and value scores to allow local authorities to objectively identify actions for the future of their green spaces. The matrix provides a method for determining the most appropriate action for each individual green space.

| High Quality / Low Value   | High Quality / High Value   |
|--|---|
| <p>Site Options - Maintain the quality. Undertake further assessment on the value with the aim of enhancing its present primary purpose.</p> <p>Consider if it would be of high value if converted to other primary purpose. Change of use is only acceptable if the options above are not achievable.</p> | <p>Site Options - Maintain the quality. Protect the site through planning process.</p>                                    |
| Low Quality / Low Value  | Low Quality / High Value  |
| <p>Site Options – Enhance the quality as long as it is also possible to enhance the value. Assess primary purpose as the site could be surplus to requirements in terms of its present primary purpose.</p>  | <p>Site Options - Raise the site quality to meet the required standard. Protect the site through the planning process</p> |

Table 102 Value Options

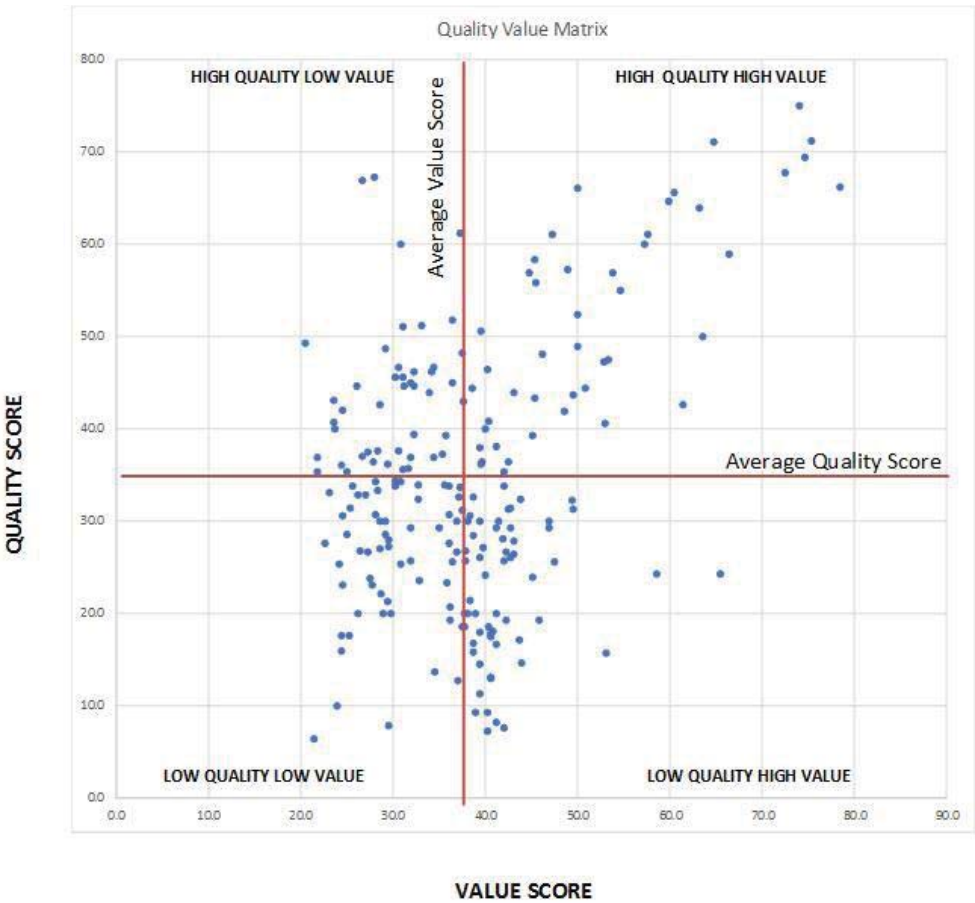
**9.1 Matrix of Quality and Value**

Table 106 shows a summary of the classification of the 209 assessed green spaces with respect to quality and value. The average quality and value scores have been used to determine whether a site is rated high or low quality and value. On this basis sites scoring above the average quality score of 38.3 have been classified as high quality and sites scoring above the average value score of 38.3 have been classified as high value.

|                                 |       |                                  |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|
| <b>High Quality / Low Value</b> |       | <b>High Quality / High Value</b> |       |
| 45 No.                          | 21.5% | 45 No.                           | 21.5% |
| <b>Low Quality / Low Value</b>  |       | <b>Low Quality / High Value</b>  |       |
| 66 No.                          | 31.6% | 53 No.                           | 25.4% |

Table 103 Summary of Quality and Value Classification

The figure below shows a visual representation of the distribution of quality and value scores.



| High Quality / Low Value  | High Quality / High Value  |
|---|--|
| <p>Balls Hill Open Space 6060<br/>           Bearmore Playing Fields 5069<br/>           Brackendale Drive Playing Fields 3016<br/>           Brooklands Open Space 3015<br/>           Church Hill Open Space 6020<br/>           Coneygre Youth Centre 1042<br/>           Denbigh Crescent Open Space 3085<br/>           Dudley Road Amenity Space 1044<br/>           Ebenezer Street Open Space 6055<br/>           Farley Park 1029<br/>           Firtree Drive Open Space 3006<br/>           Fowler Close Open Space 4001<br/>           Garden of Remembrance 3106<br/>           Gorse Farm Wood 3047<br/>           Hamblett's Open Space 3100<br/>           Harry Mitchell Park 4035<br/>           Jubilee Park 1018<br/>           Ladbury Grove Open Space 3007<br/>           Lindsey Road Open Space 3080<br/>           Londonderry Lane Amenity Space 4031<br/>           Longleat Spinney 3030<br/>           Lyng Park 3127<br/>           Manor House 3074<br/>           Marsh Lane Open Space 3078<br/>           Mary MacArthur Gardens 5071<br/>           Montague Road Open Space 4046<br/>           Newton Road Playing Fields 3061<br/>           Norman Deeley Playing Fields 6015<br/>           Oak House 3103<br/>           Oakwood Park/Jesson Playing Fields 3090<br/>           Powis Avenue Open Space 1038<br/>           Redwood Road Open Space 3003<br/>           Smethwick Hall Park 4030<br/>           St Johns Recreation Ground 4022<br/>           St Pauls Cemetery 4016<br/>           The Grove Open Space 3017<br/>           The Maltings Open Space 4058<br/>           Thimblemill Brook 4042<br/>           Tipton Cemetery 1037<br/>           Tollhouse Way Amenity Area 4012<br/>           Unett Street Open Space 4038<br/>           Uplands Cemetery 4040<br/>           Wednesbury Oak Open Space 1064<br/>           West Bromwich Cemetery 3079<br/>           Wood Green Cemetery 6012</p> | <p>Barnford Hill Park 2045<br/>           Beaconview/Walsall Road Open Space 3068<br/>           Brades Green Open Space 2012<br/>           Britannia Park 5046<br/>           Brunswick Park 6013<br/>           Bury Hill Park 5009<br/>           Charlemont Farm Playing Fields 3064<br/>           Corngreaves Public Open Space 5085<br/>           Coronation Gardens 1047<br/>           Dartmouth Park 3058<br/>           Forge Mill Farm 3038<br/>           Forge Mill Lake &amp; Nature Reserve 3039<br/>           Galton Valley Canal 4005<br/>           Galton Valley Heritage Centre 4004<br/>           Haden Hill Park 5087<br/>           Hill Top Park 6059<br/>           Holly Wood &amp; Pasture 3025<br/>           Hydes Road Pool 6039<br/>           Kenrick Park 3110<br/>           King George V Playing Fields 3057<br/>           Langley Park 2028<br/>           Lewisham Park 4006<br/>           Lightwoods Park 4051<br/>           Mousesweet Brook LNR 5072<br/>           Navigation Lane Amenity Space 3067<br/>           Queensway Open Space 2072<br/>           Red House Park 3027<br/>           River Tame Corridor Hydes Road Playing Fields 6038<br/>           Rowley Regis Cemetery 5044<br/>           Sandwell Park Farm 3055<br/>           Sheepwash Urban Park 1028<br/>           Smethwick Summit 4003<br/>           Sots Hole Wood 3119<br/>           Swan Pool/Priory Wood 3051<br/>           Tipton Linear Park 1004<br/>           Victoria Park (Smethwick) 4036<br/>           Victoria Park (Tipton) 1041<br/>           Warley Woods 4050<br/>           Warrens Hall Park SOS 5016<br/>           Wednesbury Oak Play Area 1006<br/>           West Bromwich Crematorium 3048<br/>           West Smethwick Park 4018<br/>           Whitecrest Open Space 3023<br/>           Woburn Road Amenity Greenspace 5095<br/>           Galton Valley Play Area 4052</p> |

| Low Quality / Low Value  | Low Quality / High Value   |
|--|--|
| <p>Angela Avenue Open Space 5027<br/> Ashes Road Open Space 2066<br/> Ashtree Mound Playing Fields 5066<br/> Barn Close Open Space 5079<br/> Basons Lane Playing Fields 4025<br/> Bearnmore Road Open Space 5070<br/> Beaumont Close Open Space 1051<br/> Birchley Sports Ground (Newbury Lane) 2035<br/> Birchley Sports Ground 2033<br/> Black Horse Open Space 6003<br/> Blakedon Road Open Space 6017<br/> Bloomfield Road Amenity Space 1013<br/> Brickhouse Farm Open Space 5038<br/> Brickhouse Lane Open Space 6054<br/> Brickhouse Open Space 5035<br/> Brierley Lane Open Space 1001<br/> Broadwell Park 2024<br/> Bullers Open Space 1050<br/> Canal Side Open Space 2022<br/> Codsall Coppice 5090<br/> Constance Avenue Open Space 3112<br/> Corngreaves Walk Embankment 5078<br/> Darbys Hill Open Space 5013<br/> Darbys Hill Quarry Open Space 5004<br/> Dudley Road Walkthrough 2014<br/> Fairway Avenue Amenity Greenspace 5003<br/> Friar Park Playing Fields 6025<br/> Furnace Parade Open Space 1049<br/> Goldicroft Playing Fields 6011<br/> Grace Mary Open Space 5006<br/> Grafton Road Playing Fields 2068<br/> Greets Green Playing Field 3096<br/> Hall Lane Open Space 1017<br/> Hartlebury Road Amenity Space 2037<br/> Hawkes Lane Open Space 6058<br/> Haypitts Woods 3049<br/> Hill Top Road Open Space 2055<br/> Hobhouse Close Play Area 3120<br/> Kent Road Playing Fields 6070<br/> Laybourne Park 1007<br/> Lily Street Open Space 3088<br/> Lion Farm Playing Fields 2034<br/> Londonderry Playing Fields 4032<br/> Maud Road Open Space 3200<br/> Menzies Open Space 3075<br/> Merry Hill SLINC 4059<br/> New Gas Street Open Space 6067<br/> Norfolk Road Open Space 2087<br/> Norman Road Walkthrough 2052<br/> Okehampton Drive Play Area 3089<br/> Poppy Drive Open Space 3009<br/> Roebuck Lane Open Space 4002<br/> Rowley Hall Open Space 5028<br/> St Lukes Church 5068<br/> Standbridge Way Amenity Space 1067<br/> Tamebridge Walkthrough 3010<br/> Tanhouse Avenue Amenity Space 3040<br/> Tildasley Street Amenity Space 3093<br/> Timbertree Crescent Open Space 5082<br/> Titford Pools 2041<br/> Upper Church Lane/Powis Avenue Walkthrough 1066<br/> Walton Road Amenity Space 6035</p> | <p>Biddleston Grove Open Space 3014<br/> Billhay Lane Amenity Space 3094<br/> Bilston Road Open Space 1003<br/> Bradley Locks 6068<br/> Bridge Street Amenity Space 4008<br/> Central Avenue/Upper Church Lane 1014<br/> Chatsworth Road Open Space 5093<br/> Coneygre Canal Green Space 1075<br/> Corngreaves Road Open Space 5080<br/> Coronation Road 6022<br/> Delta Gardens 3097<br/> Embassy Road Play Area 2101<br/> Great Western Street 1026<br/> Haines Branch Canal 1027<br/> Hall Green Open Space 3072<br/> Hill Farm Bridge Fields 3018<br/> Kerr Drive Open Space 1063<br/> Lakeside Open Space 6064<br/> Lichfield Street Open Space 1009<br/> M5/Tame Road Open Space 2083<br/> Moor Lane Open Space 5043<br/> Mousesweet Brook/River Stour SLINC 5075<br/> Nobury Road Open Space 6057<br/> Old Park Lane Open Space 2031<br/> Princes End Branchline Walkway 1008<br/> Rattle Chain Urban Forest 2011<br/> Ray Hall Pastoral Land 3032<br/> Ridgeacre Branch Canal SINC 3137<br/> Ridgeacre Branch Canal Walkthrough 6066<br/> River Tame Corridor Johnson Road (Wednesbury) 6036<br/> River Tame Corridor North (Wednesbury) 6033<br/> Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space - Portway Road SOS 5011<br/> Sandy Lane Open Space 6028<br/> Springfield Estate Embankments 5018<br/> Stone Cross Open Space 3071<br/> Sussex Avenue Open Space 3086<br/> Tame Avenue Open Space 6021<br/> The Knowle SOS 5017<br/> Tibbington Open Space 1011<br/> Tibbington Playing Fields 1010<br/> Timbertree Open Space SLINC 5081<br/> Titford Lane Open Space 2040<br/> Tividale Park 2003<br/> Union Street Open Space 1048<br/> Warrens Hall Farm SOS 5015<br/> Warwick Road Open Space 5041<br/> Waterfall Lane SINC 5051<br/> Weddell Wynd Open Space 1002<br/> Wilderness Lane SLINC &amp; SINC 3020<br/> William Green Road Open Space 6032<br/> Worleys Wharf Open Space 6029<br/> Wrights Lane Open Space 5059<br/> York Road Open Space 2042</p> |

| Low Quality / Low Value   | Low Quality / High Value |
|---|--------------------------|
| West Bromwich Parkway SINC 3136<br>Wylde Crescent Open Space 5029<br>Wyntor Lane Open Space 6062<br>Black Patch Park 4009 |                          |

Table 104 Quality Value Matrix by Green Space

Table 104 lists each assessed green space by quality value classification.

## 9.2 Quality & Value by Typology

Table 108 sets out the Quality Value rating by Green space type. The highest number of Low Quality Low Value (LQLV) sites are Amenity Green Space (33 no.). There are also 11 LQLV Outdoor Sports Facilities and 10 Natural and Semi-natural Green Spaces that are rated as LQLV.

| Greenspace Type                       | Number of Sites         |                        |                        |                       | Total      |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
|                                       | High Quality High Value | High Quality Low Value | Low Quality High Value | Low Quality Low Value |            |
| Amenity Greenspace                    | 9                       | 15                     | 26                     | 33                    | 83         |
| Cemeteries & Churchyards              | 2                       | 5                      | 0                      | 1                     | 8          |
| Green Corridor                        | 3                       | 1                      | 6                      | 5                     | 15         |
| Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace     | 10                      | 4                      | 19                     | 10                    | 43         |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities             | 3                       | 6                      | 0                      | 11                    | 20         |
| Parks & Gardens                       | 17                      | 11                     | 1                      | 3                     | 32         |
| Provision for Children & Young People | 1                       | 3                      | 1                      | 3                     | 8          |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>45</b>               | <b>45</b>              | <b>53</b>              | <b>66</b>             | <b>209</b> |

Table 105 Quality Value rating by Green Space Type



### 9.3 Quality & Value by Town

Table 109 shows the Quality Value rating classifications by town.

| Town               | Number of Sites |              |             |             | Total      |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
|                    | High Quality    | High Quality | Low Quality | Low Quality |            |
|                    | High            | Low          | High        | Low         |            |
|                    | Value           | Value        | Value       | Value       |            |
| Oldbury            | 4               | 0            | 7           | 13          | 24         |
| Rowley Regis       | 8               | 2            | 12          | 16          | 38         |
| Smethwick          | 9               | 12           | 1           | 5           | 27         |
| Tipton             | 5               | 7            | 12          | 9           | 33         |
| Wednesbury         | 4               | 5            | 11          | 10          | 30         |
| West Bromwich      | 15              | 19           | 10          | 13          | 57         |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>45</b>       | <b>45</b>    | <b>53</b>   | <b>66</b>   | <b>209</b> |

Table 106 Quality Value Rating by Town

Rowley Regis has the highest number of LQLV sites at 16, followed by Oldbury and West Bromwich with 13 each.

### 9.4 Quality & Value Mapping

Figure 23 provides an overview regarding the distribution of sites across the borough that are of high quality, high value (HQHV) and low quality, low value. All site assessed are mapped, with those that are high quality, high value or low quality, low value highlighted.

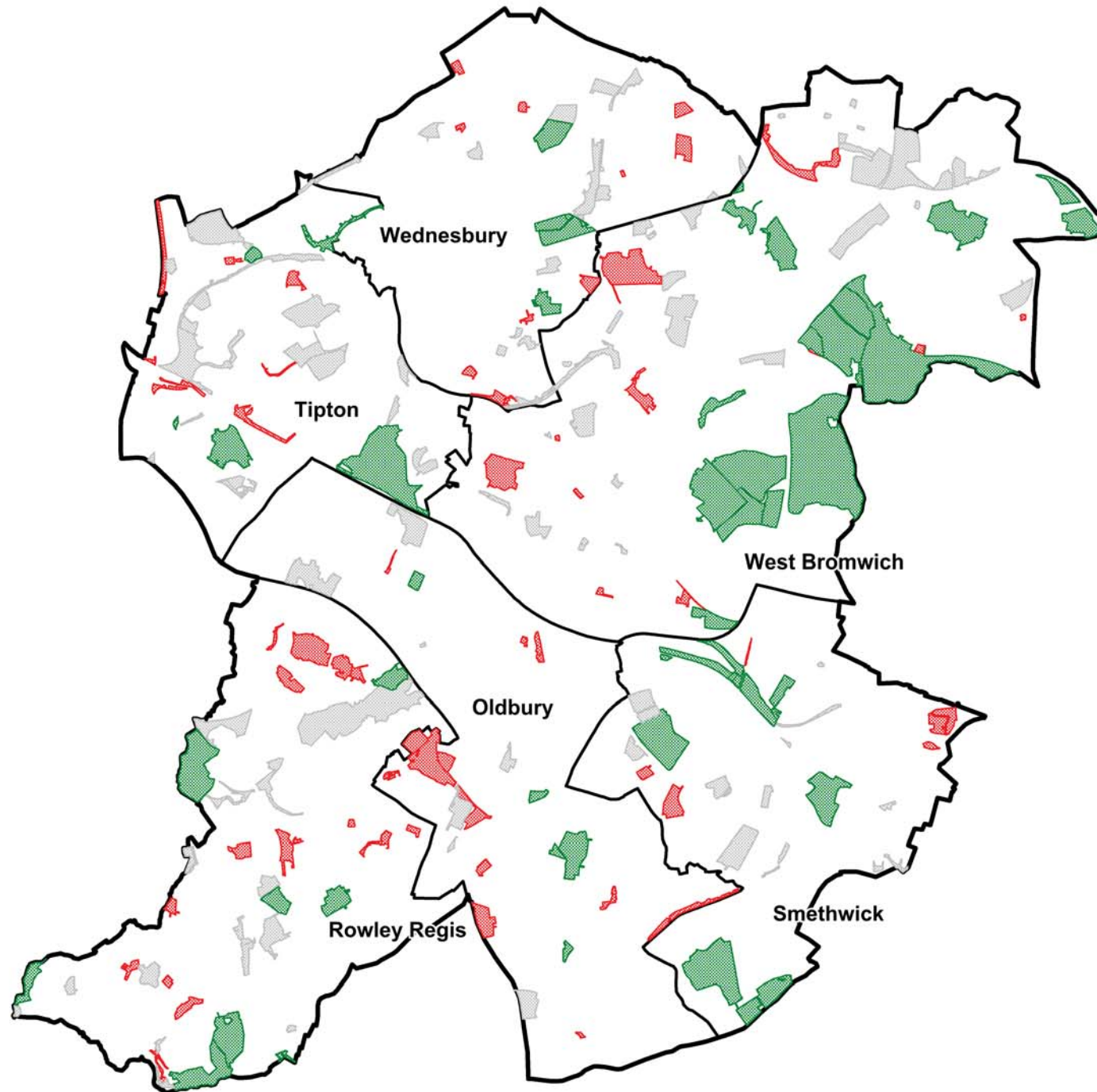
It is possible to see that high quality, high value green spaces tend to be larger sites and conversely, low quality, low value green spaces tend to be smaller sites. However, there are exceptions to this observation. There are also a number of green spaces that are potentially of value as linear and green corridors that have lower than average value scores.

# Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 23  
Thematic Map of Value Scores

## LEGEND

- HQHV
- LQLV
- Other Sites
- Town Boundary
- Borough Boundary



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|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Drawn by:<br>LH | Checked by:<br>AS | Date:<br>18/09/9 |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|

## 10 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 10.1 Introduction

This section of the report sets out some key conclusions and recommendations based up on the earlier sections of the report, specifically those relating to the quantity, quality, value and accessibility. The findings of the household and community group surveys are also drawn upon in order to inform these conclusions.

### 10.2 Quantity

#### 10.2.1 Overview of the Supply of Green Space

The Green Space Audit has found that Sandwell has a total of 543 green space sites, covering a total of 2018.2 hectares, equivalent to 23.7% of the total area of the Borough. Of these spaces 59.5% (323 sites) had unrestricted access, 30.6% (166 sites) had limited access and 9.9% (54 sites) had no public access.

Since the 2013 Green Space Audit there has been relatively little change in the supply of green space in Sandwell. A total of 6 sites (9.1 hectares) have been lost entirely, due to development, with the addition of 1 site, Merry Hill SLINC (0.9 hectares). Changes to site boundaries, has resulted in a further 17.18 hectares being lost to development. Overall, there has been a net reduction of 25.8 hectares in the supply of green space.

Within Sandwell Borough there are 323 spaces with unrestricted access, covering a total of 1182.5 hectares. Overall, an additional 2.5 hectares of accessible green space has been identified since the 2013 Green Space Audit. Natural and Semi-natural Green Space makes up over a third of the total supply (38.7%) by area, followed by Parks & Gardens (22.3%) and Amenity Green Space (18.1%). With a total of 181 sites, Amenity green space accounts for more green space than all the other types of unrestricted green space combined. However, these sites are typically small hence only contribute to 18.1% of the overall supply by area.

#### 10.2.2 Quantity Per 1000 Population

A standard measure for comparing the quantity of unrestricted green space across different geographical areas and between managing organisations is based on the area per 1,000 population. Against this measure, Sandwell Borough has 3.63 hectares per 1,000 population. This figure is lower than in 2013, when it was 3.90, and a considerable decrease compared with 2006, when it was 4.24 hectares per 1000. This equates to an overall decrease of 0.61 hectares per 1000 population. While there has been an overall increase in the quantity of unrestricted green space since 2006, there has also been a significant increase in the Borough's population. The 2011 Census of Population recorded 308,063 residents within Sandwell Borough an increase of 8.9% over the

2001 population total. Whilst the population of the Black Country as a whole is increasing: Walsall recorded a 6.2% increase; Wolverhampton 5.4%; and Dudley a 2.5% increase, the increase in Sandwell has exceeded that of the other Black Country Boroughs. This increase in the Borough population explains the decrease in the amount of unrestricted green space per 1000 population and demonstrates the increased pressure that existing green space in the borough faces.

In all towns, the percentage of unrestricted green space sites is between 53-67%. However, West Bromwich has almost two fifths (38.7%) of the total amount of unrestricted green space in the Borough and, while it also has the largest population of the 6 town, it also has the greatest amount of unrestricted green space per 1,000 population, with 5.67 hectares per 1,000. Rowley Regis and Tipton also have above average levels of unrestricted green space per 1,000 population with 4.16 hectares and 4.13 hectares respectively. Smethwick has 2.44 hectares per 1000 population, Wednesbury 2.18 hectares and Oldbury 2.10 hectares. Previously, Wednesbury was significant in having both the lowest population (with 39,160 people) and the lowest amount of unrestricted green space, however, in 2018 Oldbury replaced Wednesbury as the town with the lowest amount of unrestricted green space. Whilst there is significant variation at the town level, the scale of the variation at Ward level is even more significant. West Bromwich Central Ward has 12.86 hectares per 1000 population while Old Warley has just 0.86 hectares per 1,000 population. This equates to a variation between the highest and lowest levels of supply by a factor of nearly 15 times. This level of variation at Ward and Town level, taken with a reduction in the amount of unrestricted green space over time due to a rising population makes setting meaningful quantity standards at a Borough-wide level problematic and further population rises will put increasing pressure on existing green spaces.

### **10.3 Quality**

The average quality score has decreased from 38 to 34 (out of 100) representing an overall decrease of 11%, and a return to the 2006 average score. This is based on a significant sample size of 209 sites assessed in 2018, of which 182 were also assessed in both 2013 and 2006, providing a sound base for comparison over time.

While the average quality score has decreased, the number of sites performing very well has been maintained, with 17 sites scoring over 60, only a slight decrease compared with 2013 (when 20 sites scored over 20) and a significant improvement compared with 2006, when only 9 sites scored as high. External accreditation against the national Green Flag Award shows that 11 sites formally achieved the Award in 2018, a significant increase over the 2006 figure and similar to that in 2013 (when 12 sites achieved the award). Whilst the overall quality score has reduced from 2013, the average quality of the more significant spaces (Borough wide and Neighbourhood level spaces as identified in the hierarchy) has remained stable.

The highest quality spaces in Sandwell Borough are Cemeteries and Churchyards (average quality score 51); Parks and Gardens (average 51); and Outdoor Sport Facilities (average 36). Average quality scores have decreased across all types of green space between 2013 and 2018, with the exception of Outdoor Sports Facilities, which have increased from an average score of 35 to 36. Cemeteries and Churchyards have remained the highest scoring spaces, along with Parks and Gardens. The highest scoring spaces are: Dartmouth Park (75); Swan Pool / Priory Wood (71); Haden Hill Park (71); Warley Woods (69); Sandwell Park Farm (68); Oak House (67) and Tipton Cemetery (67). The spaces that are performing the best are those that have been subject to large scale investment programmes, including Haden Hill Park, Dartmouth Park and Warley Woods, which have all received funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund since 2006. Many have also benefitted from a comprehensive approach to approach to improving overall site quality, such as through Friends groups or community-based organisations, such as the Warley Woods Community Trust.

#### **10.4 Accessibility**

The accessibility of green spaces has been considered using an approximation of walking distances to different levels of green space based on the green space hierarchy. Borough level green spaces have been assigned a distance threshold of 1200m, Neighbourhood level spaces 600m and Local level spaces 400m. Significant barriers to access such as motorways, main roads, canals and railway lines have been considered as have crossing and access points across these lines of severance. The supply of green spaces in neighbouring Boroughs, within 1200m of the Borough boundary have also been taken into account.

Using this model, overall most areas of the Borough have access to unrestricted green spaces of some type within reasonable travel distances. There are some areas of deficiency which includes residential areas in West Bromwich, the northern part of Oldbury, parts of Smethwick and larger areas within Wednesbury. Future residential development may offer opportunities to address these deficiencies in green space provision and accessibility.

#### **10.5 Green space provision that should be protected**

The Household Survey highlighted that 38.9% of respondents considered there is too little provision for children and young people and too few outdoor sports facilities (37.9%). Similarly, around a third of respondents considered that the number of parks and gardens (33.2%) and allotments and community gardens (33.3%) are too low. The increased population growth of the Borough has also reduced the quantity of green space when against the measure of hectares per 1,000 population.

Satisfaction levels (as recorded through the Household Survey) also show the highest levels of dissatisfaction with allotments and community gardens (29.6%) and provision for play (30.2%). The survey response from young people was however, very low and the majority of those responding to the current provision for teenagers and children's play provision were adults. Findings from the separate consultation process with children and young people being conducted by Sandwell Play Service will be reviewed as part of the Green Space Strategy development (findings due in May 2019).

The value assessment considered 209 (out of a total of 323 unrestricted) green spaces and found that a total 98 sites (46.9%) are considered to be high value when assessed against the key criteria of context, level and type of use, wider benefits and relationship to the open space network. The highest value sites tended to be parks and gardens; natural and semi-natural green spaces; green corridors; and cemeteries and churchyards. Provision for children and young people tended to be below the borough average value score, despite the importance locally to residents. At a town level, green spaces in Rowley Regis, Tipton and West Bromwich tended to be higher value spaces than those in Wednesbury, Smethwick and Oldbury. However, the overall variance from the mean is just +/- 2 points from the average of 38.3.

Factoring in the quality data, a total of 45 green spaces (21.5%) can be considered to be both high quality and high value. Government guidance published in PPG17 Guidance suggests that these sites should be protected and conserved through the planning process. A list of the 45 high quality high value green spaces is included in chapter 9 of this report.

## **10.6 Green space provision that should be enhanced**

Responses to the Household Survey suggest that Sandwell residents are willing to travel further in order to visit parks and green spaces than other green spaces (with 9.4% willing to travel more than 31 minutes). However, local provision is important since over two thirds (67.6%) of respondents travel for less than 10 minutes to visit a green space (86.5% less than 15 minutes). Play provision was seen as being the type of provision that respondents would travel the least distance to which may reflect the limited ability of children and young people to travel.

Overall, respondents to the Household Survey were least satisfied with allotments and community gardens (37.1% satisfaction rate) provision for play (44.1%) and outdoor sports facilities (44.0%).

There was a preference from respondents to the household survey for fewer green spaces of a higher quality (40.7%), rather than greater provision that is of a lower quality (23.0%). The quality audit considered 209 green spaces and assessed these using the Green Flag Award criteria. The average quality score was 34 out of 100, a

slight decrease compared to 38 in 2013 but a return to the average score of 34 recorded in 2006. Cemeteries & churchyards and parks & gardens were typically the highest quality types of green space in Sandwell. Smethwick and West Bromwich had the highest average quality scores of all the towns.

The quality audit found that 101 green spaces were above average in terms of quality score. The remaining 109 were below average and will require investment and improved management and maintenance to improve their quality score. Of these 109 sites that are below average, 54 can be considered to be high value but low quality. These sites should be a priority for future investment. These sites are typically smaller, local level sites that have not recently received any capital investment (just 3.7% are Borough significance and 18.4% neighbourhood). There are no outdoor sports facilities classified as high value low quality and only 2 parks and gardens. The largest proportion of sites under this classification are amenity green space (48.1%) and over a third (35.2%) of sites are natural and semi-natural green spaces. Just 1 is provision for children and young people. A full list of high value low quality spaces can be found in chapter 9.

## **10.7 Potential areas for new green space provision**

There is a significant variation in the quantity of green space provision across Sandwell Borough with West Bromwich, Rowley Regis and Tipton having above average levels of provision of accessible green space per 1,000 population. West Bromwich in particular has 56.2% more provision than the Borough average due to much of Sandwell Valley (and associated green spaces) lying within the town boundary. However, Smethwick, Wednesbury and Oldbury all have significantly less provision of unrestricted green space than the Borough average. This Sandwell Green Space Audit town level data however masks the variation at Ward (and more local) level.

The accessibility mapping has found that that the majority of the borough has access to some green space at all hierarchy levels (borough, neighbourhood and local). However, there are areas of the Borough, most notably parts of Wednesbury, that have no access to green space within 400m.

Taking into account larger catchments (600m / 1200m) for neighbourhood and borough level sites there are still areas of deficiency including: Wednesbury, although some deficiency areas relate to commercial development around the A41 Black Country New Road, a small area in Oldbury around Woodgreen Croft, Ventnor Close and Stanley Road and a small area of West Bromwich, off the A34 Birmingham Road bounded by Merrion's Close, Coronation Road and Chapel Lane. Some areas of the Borough, mainly Tipton and Rowley Regis, have access to multiple local level sites. Meanwhile, many of the areas of deficiency are located in areas that have limited or no residential development. Consideration should be given to addressing these deficiencies by increasing the accessibility of existing green spaces that currently have limited accessibility or creating new green space as part

of upcoming housing developments throughout Smethwick and Wednesbury, as well as small areas of Tipton, West Bromwich and Oldbury.

A separate report considers the development and application of local standards for green space provision with respect to quantity, quality and accessibility.



**Appendices**  
**See Separate Volume**