



people spaces places

Sandwell Green Space Strategy

Health & Wellbeing Workshop Report

Issue number: 2

Status: FINAL

Date: 04 April 2019

Prepared by: AS

Authorised by: AS

Sandwell Green Space Strategy

Health & Wellbeing Workshop Report

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Appendix A – Copy of Presentation

1 Introduction

As part of the development of the Sandwell Green Space Strategy a workshop was held with staff and partners with an interest in health, wellbeing, physical activity and play.

Date / time & location	05 March 2019, 10.00 – 12.45 pm Sandwell MBC staff and partners Venue: Sandwell Park Farm, Salters Lane, West Bromwich, B71 4BG
Content	Introductory presentation about works that has been carried out so far and an initial review of green space quantity and quality data linked to deprivation and health data. This presentation was followed by a series of exercises to explore the key issues, potential solutions and approaches that may be adopted through the Green Space Strategy.
Purpose	For attendees to gain an understanding of and inform the GSS.

There were 8 participants in attendance as well as a facilitator from CFP. Participants represented the service areas of Parks Management, Public Health / Health Development, Sports and Leisure, Urban Design, Planning Policy, Sandwell Go Play, Cycling UK and Warley Woods Community Trust.

This report is a record of the workshop event and the discussion and comments made by participants. As such the comments will inform the future strategy, but they do not necessarily reflect Sandwell Council's current and future position.

2 Workshop Exercises and findings

2.1 Mapping Existing Provision and Services

Sandwell Play Service is one of the few remaining local authority-led play services in the country. There is limited capacity and excess demand for services. There are three 3 full-time and 3 part time staff supplemented by sessional workers. The service runs forest schools sessions at Warley Woods and that Sandwell Valley Country Park. There is also holiday and term time provision of outdoor play activities

Hateley Cross Big Local has commissioned play services on local green spaces. This includes den building, sports, arts and crafts activities. All services are free at the point of access but typically grant funded. The play service also provides grant support for other providers.

Lifestyle Services is a public health program. Client groups are typically less active people and those with weight issues. The service has limited capacity and promoting self-help agenda. The reach of current services is typically 1.5% the borough population.

Many health and well-being services within the borough will need to consider how they enable people to look after their own health and well-being. This may include use of digital apps and other resources. The focus is on facilitation rather than direct delivery.

In terms of using green spaces, perceptions of safety is a key issue and potential barrier that will need to be addressed.

The play service is looking at exploring street play and playing out with local communities that are interested in developing such schemes and changes to the physical environment.

Within Sandwell's communities there is a need for capacity building. Management and procedural operation is often reliant on key individuals. Therefore, there is fragility in the current provision. Consideration needs to be given to skills, training and qualifications in order to support organisations and communities develop (and sustain) their own capacity.

Affordability is the key issue – there is a tension between low cost services that are accessible (but difficult to sustain) and those that charge a fee.

Sports and Leisure and Health Development teams have submitted an application to the Healthy Activities Fund. More details are available about this.

In terms of volunteering, consider the role of corporate volunteer activities. Warley Woods works with a range of companies including HSBC.

A specialist audience or market is the home-educators / self-educators. They could be potential interest in training people as Forest Schools leaders which would increase capacity. However, within the segment, trust will need to be established over time and relationships developed. Sometimes there is mistrust of the local authority and their motives.

Generally, in terms of capacity and the voluntary sector there is an ongoing need to train new leaders. Friends groups need support to develop capacity and to achieve their goals.

Forest Schools Leaders take typically 6 to 9 months to train. However, many of the less risky activities can be delivered without formal Forest Schools qualifications.

Healthy Schools Leaders and Public Health Development Officers encourage cross boundary working. There are good examples of joint working between parks, the play service and Public Health.

At some parks such as Victoria Park Smethwick there is a program of sports and leisure activities. However, coverage is patchy.

The sports clubs in many parks generally do a good job of helping to provide a route to leading more active lifestyles.

Many parks have outdoor gyms, equipped play facilities & youth facilities which encourage children and young people to get active. However, it should be noted children and young people will often play in creative ways given the chance. Local access is important.

Sandwell had previously developed a number of strategies around play activity and so on and many of these documents are now out of date. However, there is a view that many of these plans and strategies are still relevant. But are they being worked to?

There is a large event each year in Lightwoods Park for National Play Day which is attended by around 500 people. It provides a great opportunity for promoting the range of services that are available.

A physical activity and sports strategy has been drafted which has a number of principles;

- It is town based
- It seeks to achieve a Commonwealth Games legacy
- Work streams are currently being set up
- Adoption by November 2019 is the target

The Playing Pitch Strategy will be finalised and adopted in summer 2019.

Sustainability of funded activities is often a challenge. During the grant funded period the activities are often subsidised which helps increase the levels of participation. However, once the funding ceases, fees and charges are increased to levels that makes them more self-supporting but this increase in fees is often very significant and leads to a very low take-up. The jump from say £1 per session to £3 per session is perceived negatively even if the increase charges offer good value for money. This scale of fees represents a real economic barrier to some residents.

There are some initiatives in the borough to create more child-friendly neighbourhoods and pilot projects - for example one with Friar Park Community Association has experienced issues with transport and highways not understanding or supporting the proposals. A more consistent approach is needed.

There is a need for much greater marketing and promotion of opportunities around physical activity within parks and green spaces, but also across the board.

In terms of cycling, there are some projects within parks and green spaces however there has been issues with vandalism of the cycle hubs. There are some led rides at Wednesbury Park, Lightwoods Park, Jubilee Park but some of the spaces are really too small to be ideal.

For those new to cycling, sometimes the distances that can be covered is off-putting. However, many people are more comfortable with describing the length of time that the activity takes

rather than the distance that will be covered. To a certain extent this is an education or expectation issue that can be overcome with support and training to build confidence.

The HLF funded Community Engagement Officers such as those at Lightwoods Park and West Smethwick Park provide an additional resource.

Health walks are offered across the six towns and are still successful. This is a program that has successfully recruited, trained and retained volunteer leaders.

Many public health programs in the borough look to train community activators and have people in similar roles. However, many of the programs are time-limited. The council and its partners seek to manage expectations but it can be challenging to ensure the programs leave behind a lasting legacy.

In terms of reaching people, there is a need to refresh the offer – the novelty factor is important and people like to participate in things that are new and on trend.

“Borrow my Doggy” is an innovative scheme that allows people contact with dogs before committing to becoming pet owners. The Cinnamon Trust also has a volunteer dog walker program. Consider options such as this that can provide benefits in terms of increased physical activity and social interaction within parks and green spaces.

There are six public-health development offices (previously called Can-Dos and Weight Management Officers). The team can identify needs and bring together services but the focus is on facilitation rather than direct service delivery. The team look to connect the dots or bring services together in way that has not been tried before. There are four existing routes through GPS / Schools / workplaces and community settings.

Sandwell friends groups are not that well-connected and networked. How do we get them to take a more active role? There is a need for a volunteer management role and Birmingham benefits from the Birmingham Open Spaces Forum which is run by paid staff.

Marketing and promotion within the borough around health and wellbeing services is not coordinated.

There is a Healthy Sandwell website but this could be developed further.

Sandwell Go Play has recognised the need for a role for someone to lead on social media.

The recent digital Sandwell conference identified the need to improve the council's website and web presence. Also digital services need to be improved for example it is not currently possible to pay for car parking fees through an app or online, only to pay car parking fines.

Sandwell Leisure Trust provides a range of routes to access physical activity programs and facilities.

The Family Information Service provides information about activities relevant to children and young people.

Social and lifestyle prescribing is being developed in the borough but at the moment it is early days. Delivery is somewhat piecemeal across the borough and not well-developed and the economic side is not really joined up. At the moment the mechanism is not really there.

Warley Woods promotes itself and the site through posters in GP surgeries. This is effective and low cost.

Sandwell Leisure Trust has been developing some initiatives in this area – there was a pilot project at Portway.

Parkrun at Sandwell Valley Country Park continues to be popular but it is the only parkrun in the borough.

There are various Couch to 5K initiatives and a range of charity runs such as Race for Life and Resolution Runs that also typically take place in the Sandwell Valley.

National governing bodies provide assistance with the promotion of sports – for example there has been a recent initiative around tennis.

The Commonwealth Games should help to significantly raise the profile of sport within the region and it is hoped that this increased awareness only to greater participation and greater membership of existing sports clubs.

Some schools are involved with allotments, community gardening and food production. This has been successful in encouraging participation from young people and also pupils with special needs. There is a need to ensure that schools fully understand the commitment and that this is an all year round activity.

A further comment was made by email after the workshop:

I could just reiterate what I said about access to greenspaces on the basis of the ward level figures . . . presented, ie the figures suggest that people in nearly half of Sandwell's wards are under-provided for in terms of the amount of greenspace available to them. This will of course vary widely across the wards, eg from where I live in Bearwood I can walk to Lightwoods Park and Warley Woods well within 5 minutes, but others a much further away and need to walk up a fairly substantial hill. This might suggest that additional greening of some neighbourhoods is needed, possibly using street trees (especially if linked with air pollution problems). Such an expansion of green infrastructure to support wellbeing might not have been intended as being part of the strategy, but it would be interesting to hear what others think about this.

2.2 Future Opportunities

Create an online portal which provides access to all services relating to physical activity and health and well-being.

Low-tech solutions such as posters can be effective.

There is a need for greater networking and coordination across providers. There is a lack of joined up working and coordination. Consider the best vehicle to achieve this goal.

Increased the level of volunteer participation and the opportunities for this.

Consider how we create child-friendly spaces which includes physical networks and improved navigation and attractiveness.

Consider active travel and traffic free routes - seek to link existing spaces and to create new links.

Look at development as a tool for place making – link in with initiatives such as the Black Country Garden City and the New Build Healthy Homes standards.

Design of the public realm is important in order to create attractive and well used spaces and to remove barriers to access.

Antisocial behaviour and the management of antisocial behaviour is important in terms of reducing barriers to access. However, the definition of antisocial behaviour needs to be reviewed. Children playing out is not necessarily antisocial behaviour and is something we should seek to encourage.

Playable spaces and communities need to be designed in from the outset. There is a movement away from designing residential areas around cul-de-sacs in order to increase permeability. Consideration needs to be given to not generating additional traffic.

There is an issue about who leads on developing or improving physical links between green spaces and creating these walkable routes. Is this solely a planning function or is a wider partnership approach required?

Spatial mapping was carried out in 2009 - this should be reviewed and updated.

An example of an estate with good connectivity is the Friar Park estate in Wednesbury - there are links from Price Road over the River Tame.

Look at developing the cycle networks which also provide traffic free routes for walkers and other users. There is a 43 mile circular route from Forge Mill which only takes in 5 miles on road using cycle paths, canal towpaths and other traffic free routes.

Canal towpaths are important in terms of providing walking and cycling routes and there is already joint working with the Canal and River Trust.

Identify new funding streams to deliver or sustain physical activity programmes and those that contribute to health and well-being. Sport England are due to announce a new funding model shortly.

The Commonwealth Games will provide an opportunity to get people more active and to engage sports clubs in this process.

In terms of creating accessible spaces, consider the needs of disabled visitors in terms of mobility but also in terms of visual and other impairments.

Generally, there is a need for cultural change where everyone needs to make time for health activities as part of their daily routine – important if significant scale change is to be achieved.

There are capacity issues if more children and young people are to be engaged in play services. The play service currently reaches around 12,000 people each year and Go Play partnership reaches a similar number.

Primary schools and the learning community provide a good route into communities.

Youth orientated forms of physical activity and sports such as wheeled sports remain popular. There is a lecturer at Dudley college seeking to explore issues around participation in wheeled sports and the design of such facilities and whether dispersed designs within the wider environment are more effective / attractive.

Sport England programme “This Girl Can” is considered to have been an effective way of encouraging young women to participate in physical activity and sport. It is likely to be refreshed shortly based on the findings from the initial phase.

Buggy walks have been in effective way of engaging young mums and social setting. They have been run at Warley Woods the last six years. Although the leader has now moved on to lead other activities.

Black and minority ethnic groups across the borough have generally being well engaged through the lifestyles programmes. Evaluation of these programs has shown that they generally have an effective reach in terms of participation across Sandwell’s diverse communities. Similarly, disabled people have participated and targets have been exceeded.

Look at whether the ‘borrow a dog’ scheme could be implemented in Sandwell.

Marketing needs to be improved and look at working with existing partners and organisations to develop a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach.

Consider providing mobility scooters in some parks which can be hired or borrowed if there is demand.

Look at providing a greater number of benches and resting points in key spaces if this will reduce barriers for disabled people or those with limited mobility.

Walking trails can be an effective and low-cost way of encouraging greater physical activity and exploration within green spaces. They can be good for getting regular visitors to break out of their usual routine. Also, for younger people it’s a way of getting them to take exercise without this is being the primary purpose, it’s more of a fun activity.

2.3 *Prioritisation*

Participants were asked to consider one or more proposals that could contribute to Sandwell being a healthier and more active environment. These were then prioritised by considering the scale of impact and the ease of implementation.

		IMPLEMENTATION		
IMPACT		Easy	Medium	Hard
	High	<p>A champion for events to facilitate (temporary) road closures and street play</p> <p>For people to be walking as normal daily thing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great in its own right • Needs to other physical activity • Treat yourself as well as a dog! <p>Increase perceptions of 'safety' (this space is for me!!)</p> <p>More walking as the 'default' option</p>	<p>Green space connected by car free travel</p> <p>See more people are engaged in sport and physical activity</p> <p>Gamification of visits to green spaces / to gain rewards points (Need to read barcodes with a phone on routes / different places in parks. May need a sponsor to pay for rewards).</p> <p>Create a knowledge hub / portal (and promote this) for is various park activities - searchable on the basis of:</p>	<p>Develop a Return on Investment model to secure future resources based on prevention and delivering health & well-being benefits</p>

	<p>To see all 'no ball games' signs taken down in Sandwell</p> <p>Good access to green spaces for individuals to enjoy there space in their own way to benefit their health and well-being (promotion)</p> <p>Realise the impact that small areas of green space, street trees, verges and the front garden landscape can have on well-being – these make walking a pleasure, increase property values etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age group • Type of activity • Location and proximity to home • Time of day / week • Male / female 	
Medium			
Low			

Appendix A

Copy of Presentation

(NB the data presented in the presentation is for information purposes only and represents early draft analysis and is subject to review and further change in the final strategy)



Sandwell Green Space Audit & Strategy

Health & Wellbeing Workshop

05 March 2019



Agenda



- Update on work to date
- Existing services and provision
- Future Opportunities
- Prioritisation
- Summary & close



Green Space & Health



people spaces places

- C19th Public Health Acts supported the creation of public parks
- Physical activity & obesity – leading cause of death in developed countries
- Physical activity & access to nature is effective in the treatment of mental illness and contributes to wellbeing
- Children prefer to play outside but are often not given the choice
- Exercise has migrated towards indoor provision reducing the lobby for good quality parks

Returning Urban Parks to their Public Health Roots – Centre for Public Health Liverpool John Moores University

Green Space & Health



people spaces places

- The poorest are most likely to benefit in health terms from access to parks but are typically the lowest users
- There has been a reversal of the decline of urban parks focusing on improving facilities and overall appeal. But at the expense of marketing / programmes / increased usage (?)
- Access to information about local urban parks is poor (ParksHerts - www.parksherts.co.uk)
- Facilitating use for Health Benefits – Urban Park Health Rangers

Returning Urban Parks to their Public Health Roots – Centre for Public Health Liverpool John Moores University



people spaces places

Green Space & Health

- Parks are (incredibly) valued by users and non-users, improving the environment, local neighbourhood, attracting investment, tourism and jobs & increasing land / property values.
- Parks provide a space where parallel communities can mix and are one of the few neutral spaces where multi-cultural events can take place
- Design of parks is important in meeting the needs of different audiences (young, old, disabled)

Returning Urban Parks to their Public Health Roots – Centre for Public Health Liverpool John Moores University





people spaces places

Sandwell Vision 2030

Our vision for Sandwell



**VISION
2030
SANDWELL**












In 2030, Sandwell is a thriving, optimistic and resilient community.

It's where we call home and where we're proud to belong - where we choose to bring up our families, where we feel safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.

Sandwell Vision 2030



Ambition 2

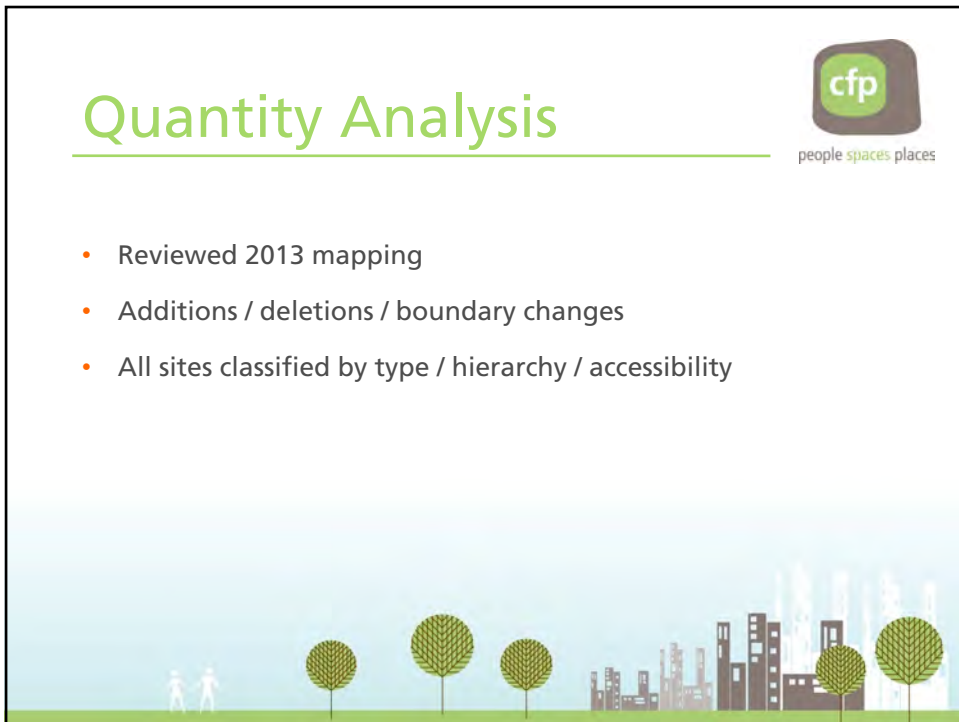
Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer, and where those of us who are vulnerable feel respected and cared for.

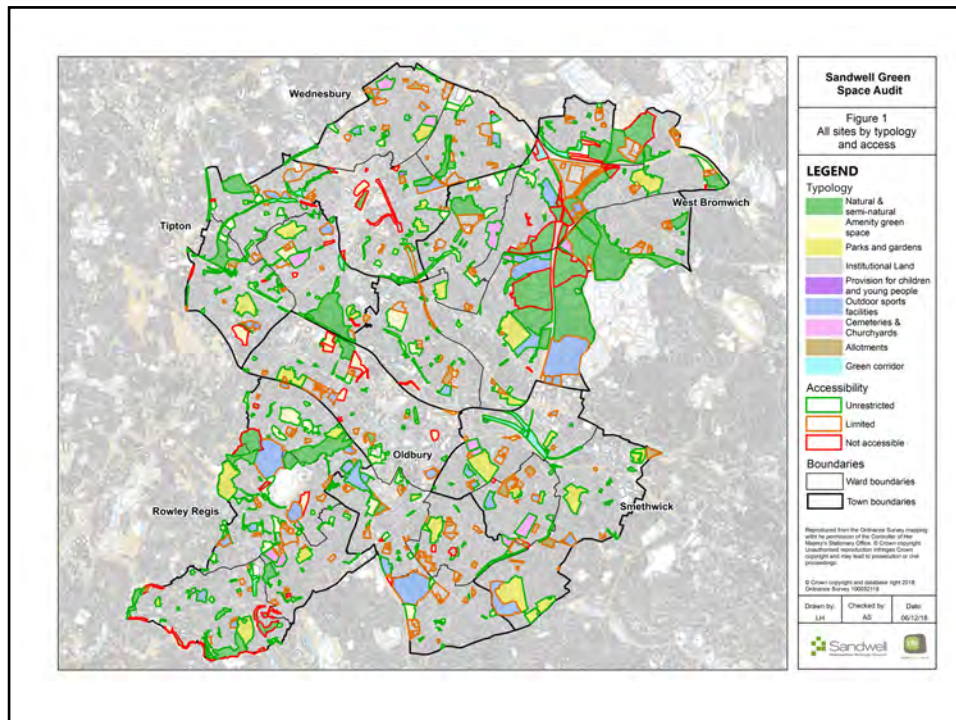


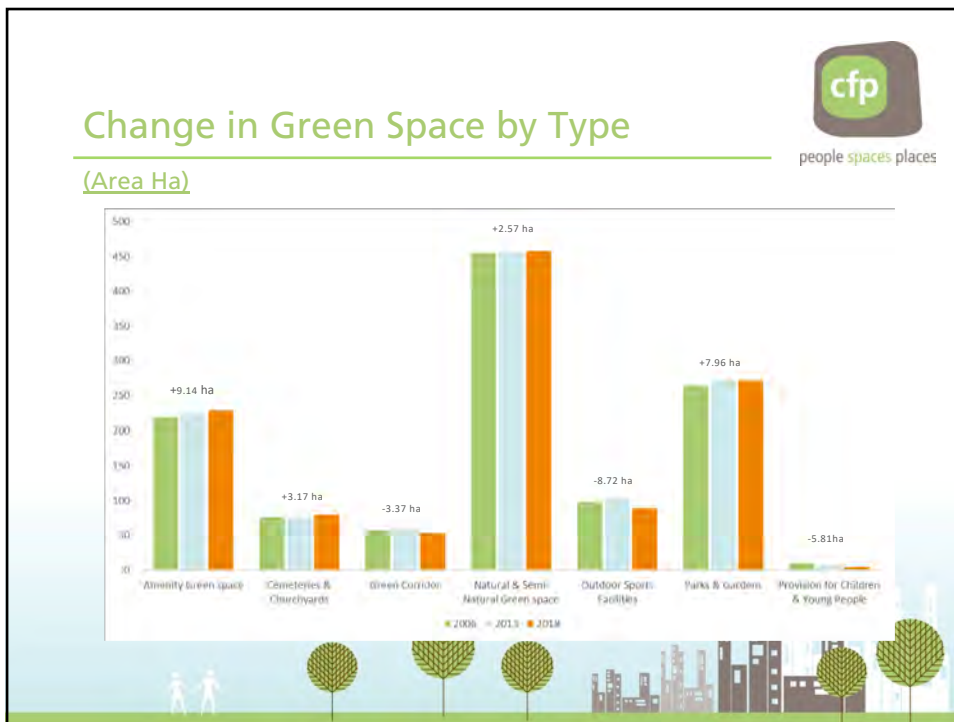
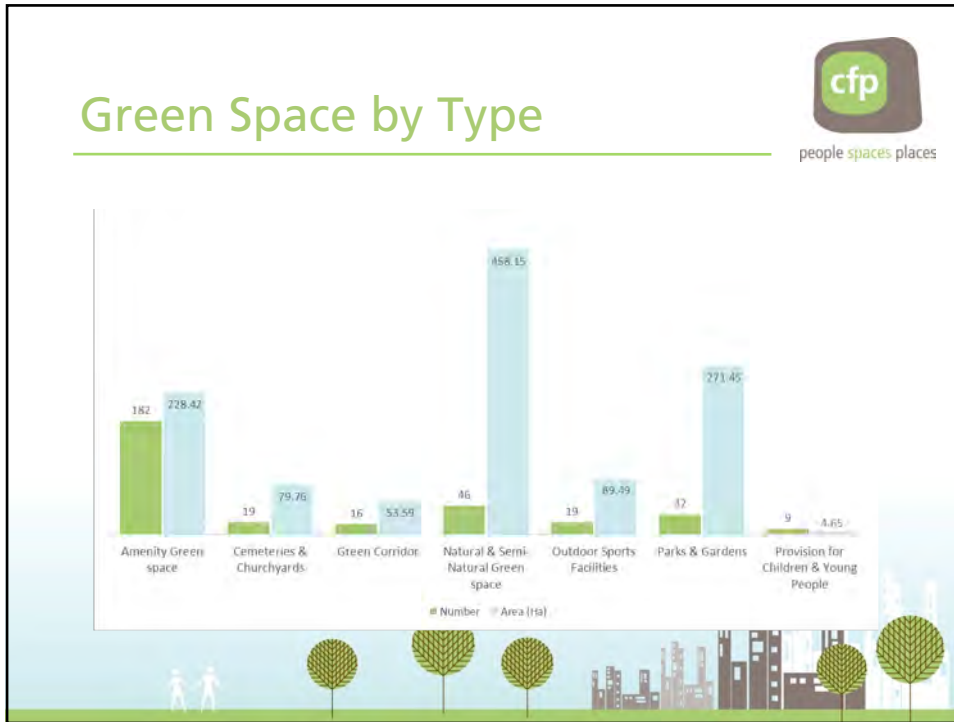
Quantity Analysis

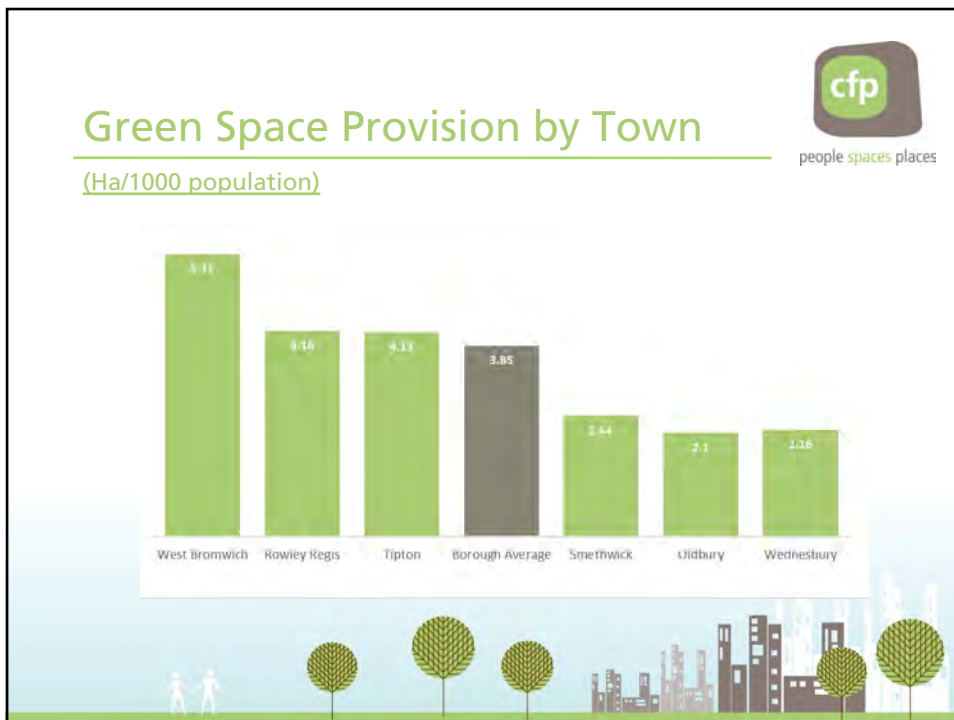
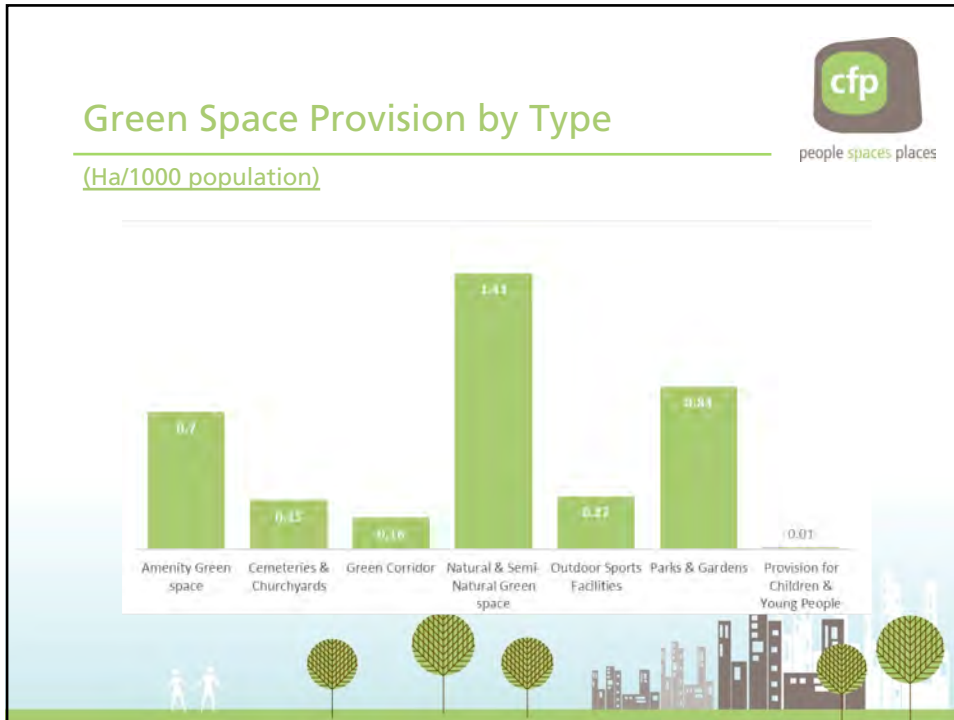


- Reviewed 2013 mapping
- Additions / deletions / boundary changes
- All sites classified by type / hierarchy / accessibility

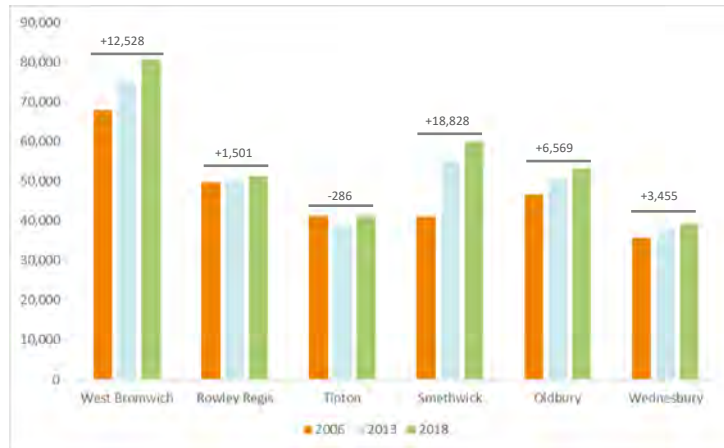






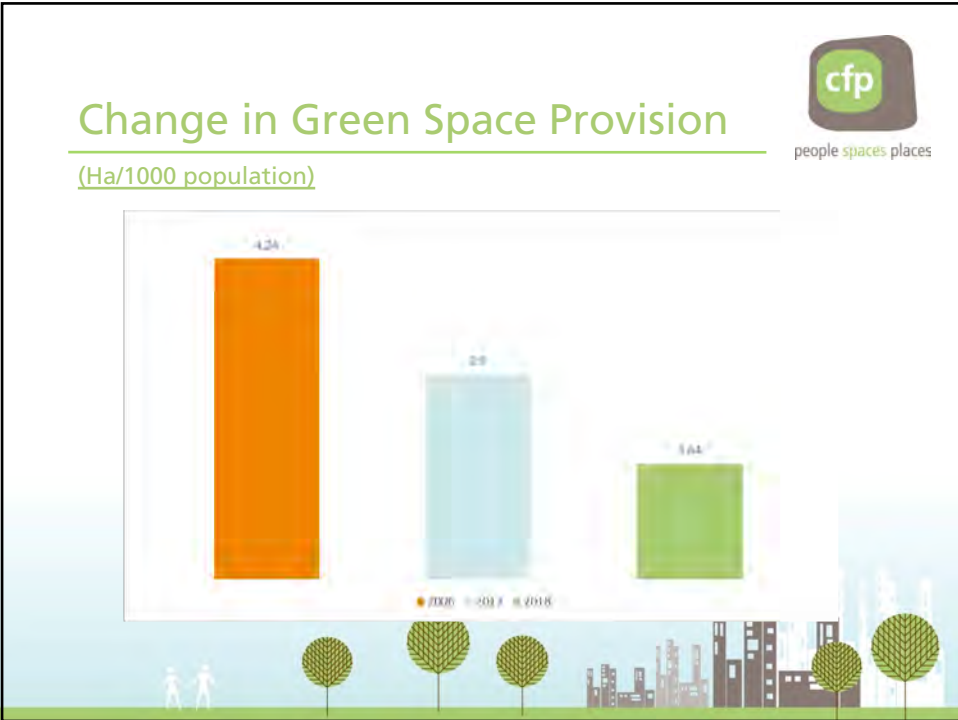


Population Change by Town



Green Space Provision by Ward

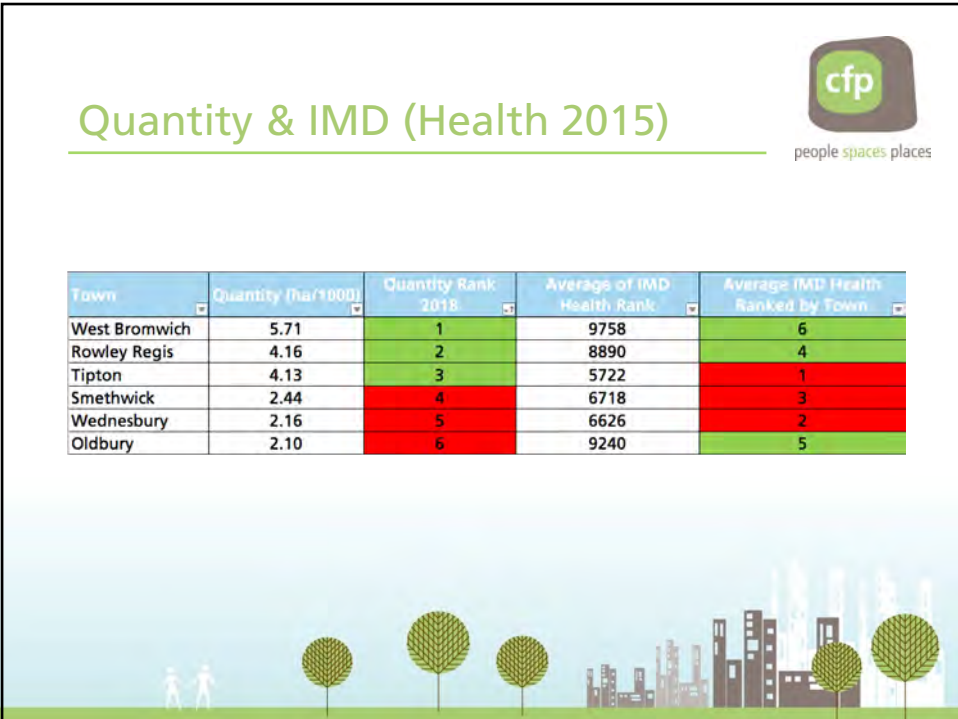
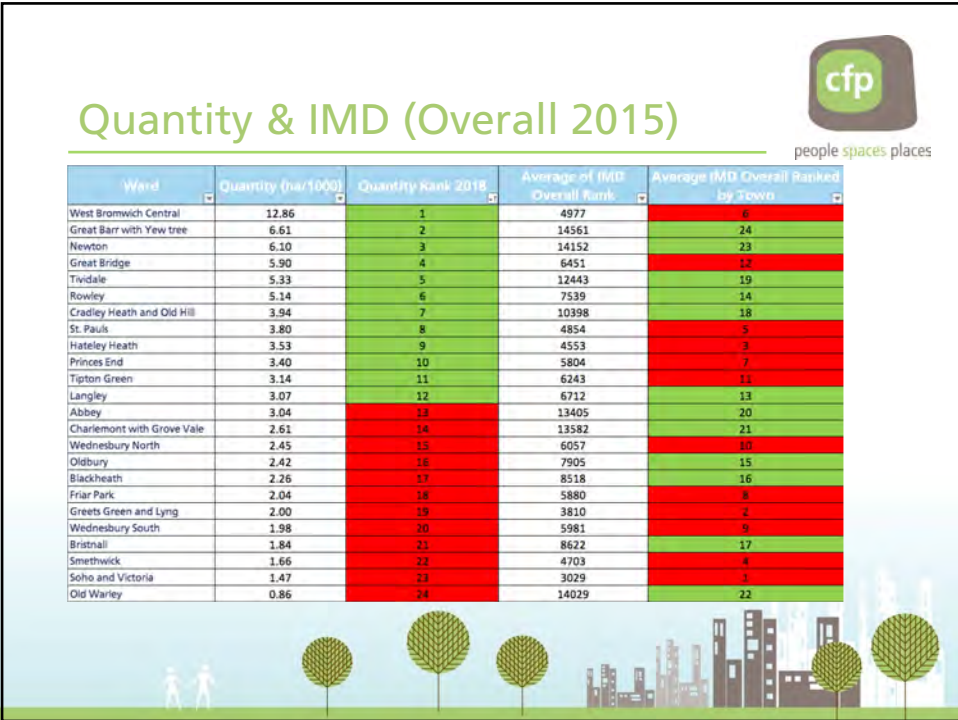


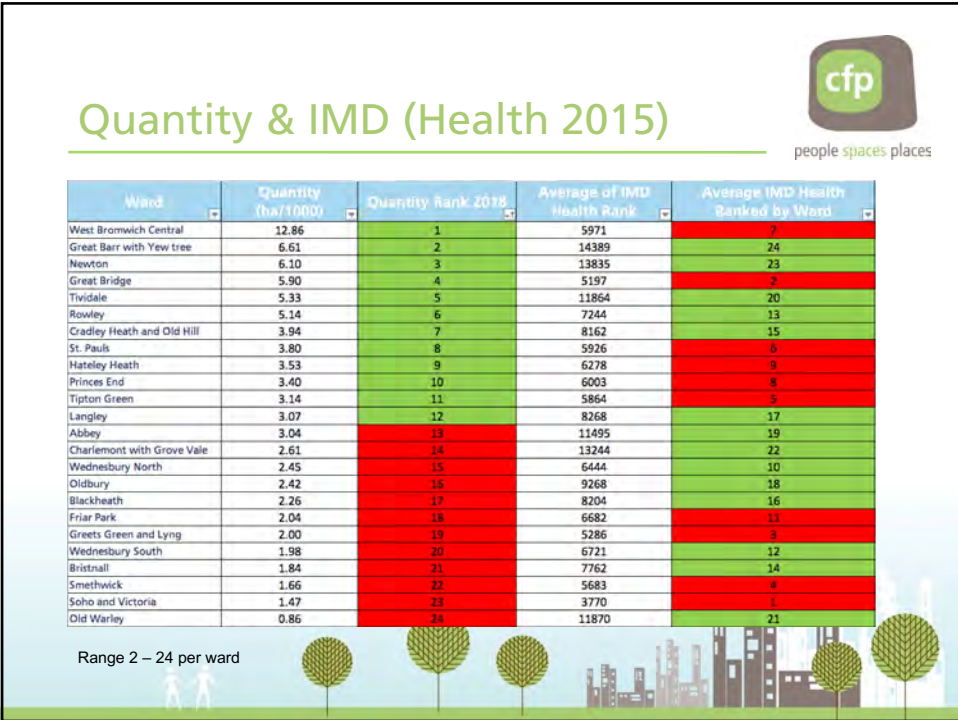


Quantity & IMD (Overall 2015)

cfp people spaces places

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






Quality Assessment

people spaces places

Quality assessment based upon the Green Flag Award criteria

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




Quality Assessment



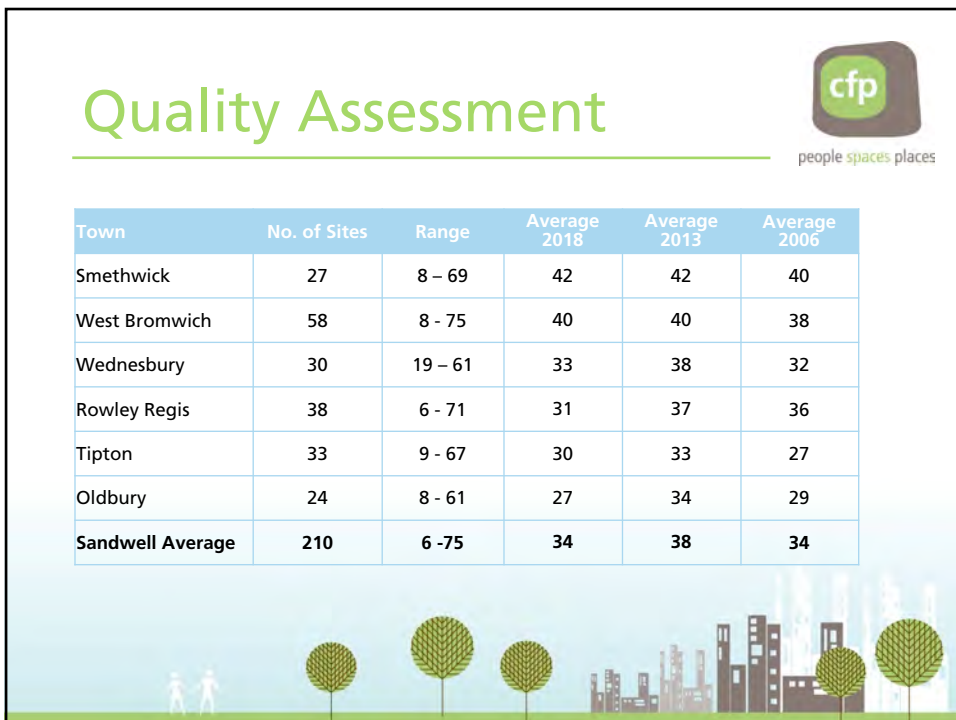
- 220 spaces visited
- 210 spaces assessed – other not accessible

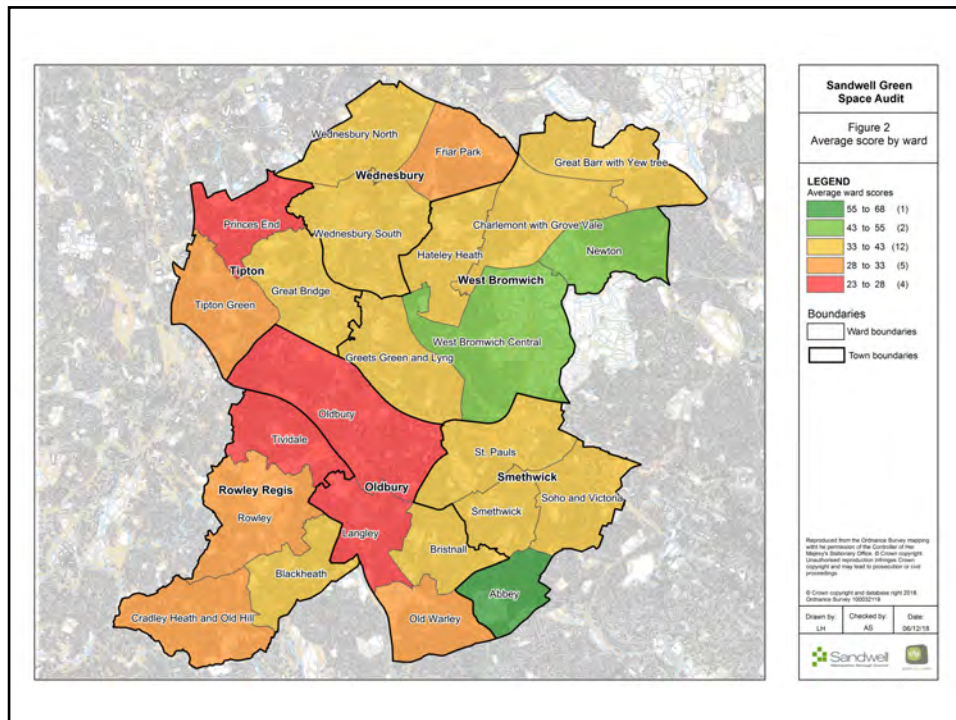


Quality Assessment




Town	No. of Sites	Range	Average 2018	Average 2013	Average 2006
Smethwick	27	8 – 69	42	42	40
West Bromwich	58	8 - 75	40	40	38
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
Sandwell Average	210	6 -75	34	38	34

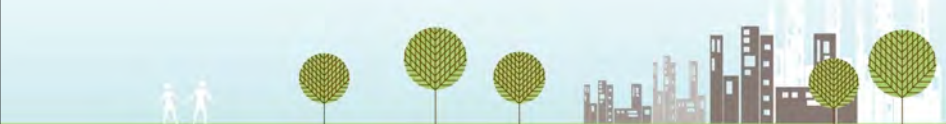




Quality Assessment


 people spaces places

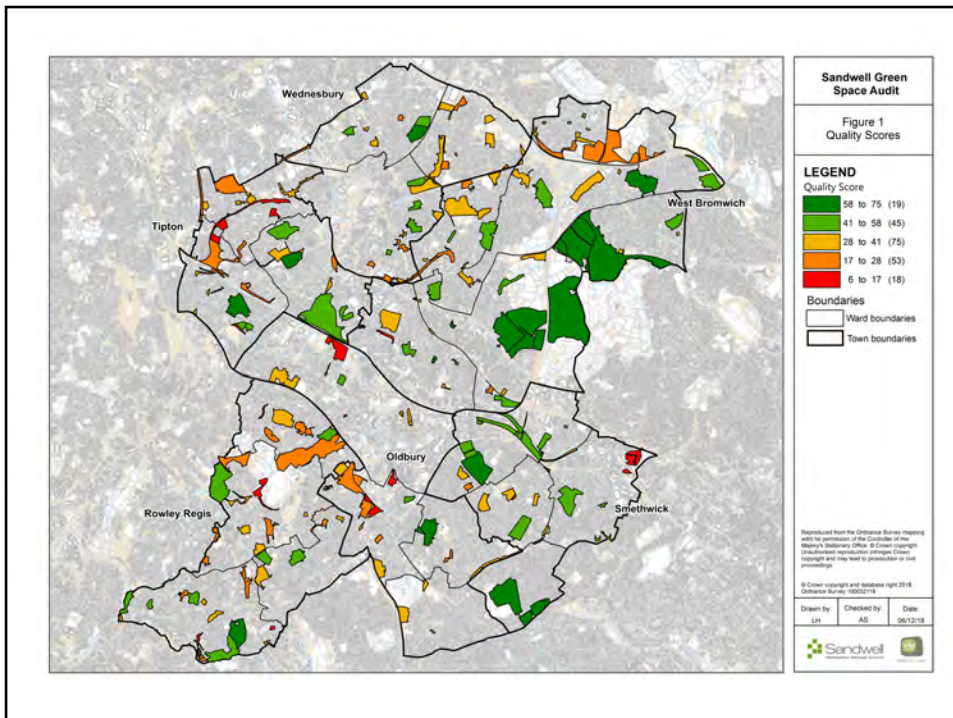
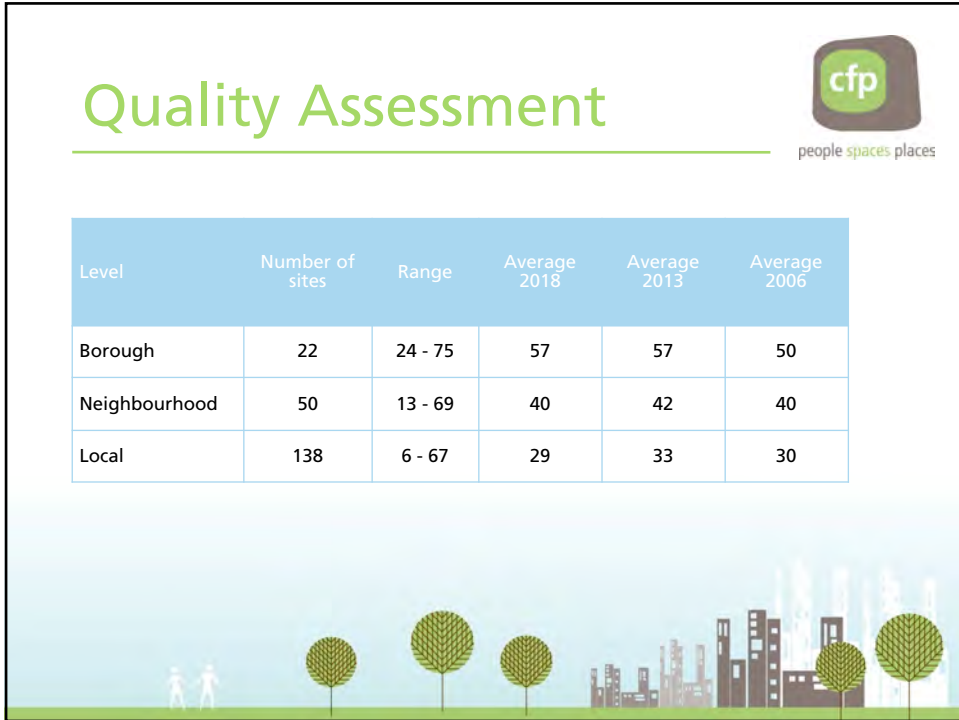
Green Space Type	No of Sites		Average
	2018	2018	2018
Amenity Greenspace	84	6-60	29
Cemeteries & Churchyards	8	25-67	51
Green Corridor	15	13-57	28
Institutional Land	1	23	23
Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace	43	7-71	32
Outdoor Sports Facilities	19	24-60	36
Parks & Gardens	32	13-75	51
Provision for Children & Young People	8	13-51	36
Total	210	6-75	34

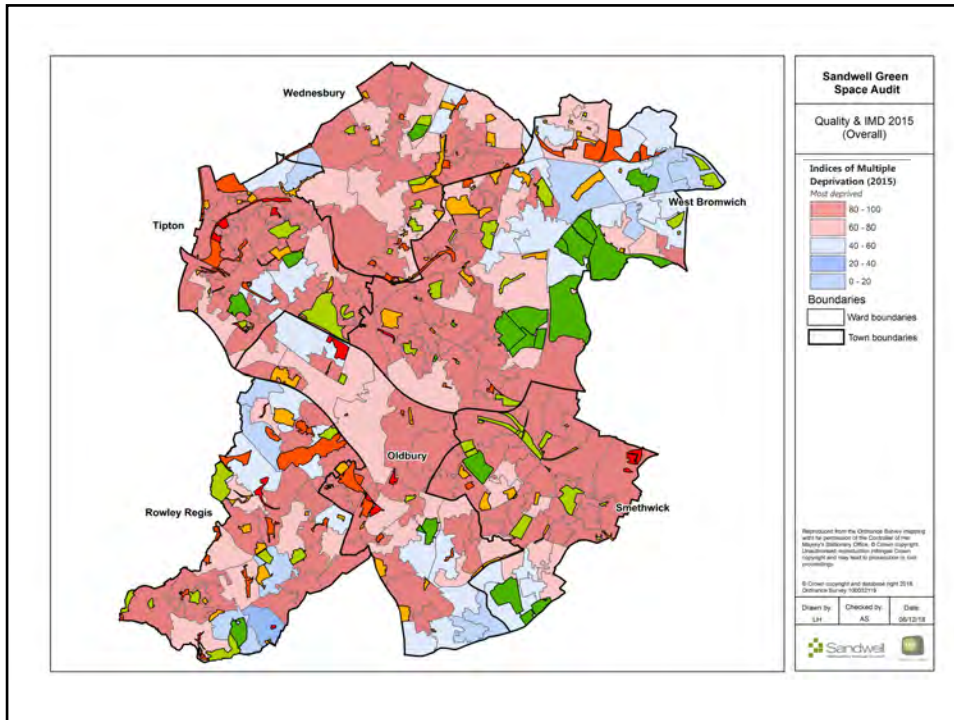


Quality Assessment



Level	Number of sites	Range	Average 2018	Average 2013	Average 2006
Borough	22	24 - 75	57	57	50
Neighbourhood	50	13 - 69	40	42	40
Local	138	6 - 67	29	33	30



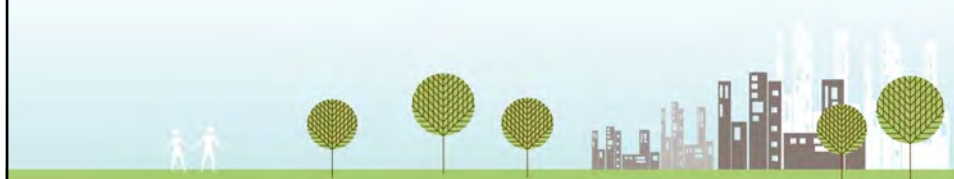


Quality & IMD (Overall)



people spaces places

Town	Average Quality Rank 2018	Average IMD Overall Ranked by Town
Smethwick	1	3
West Bromwich	2	4
Wednesbury	3	1
Rowley Regis	4	6
Tipton	5	2
Oldbury	6	5



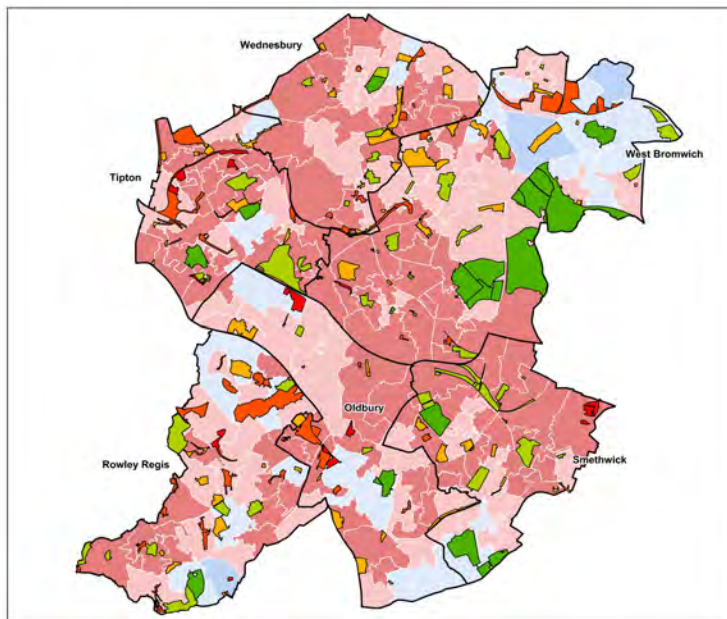
Quality & IMD (Overall)



people spaces places

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	5
Soho and Victoria	34	13	3029	1
Greets Green and Lyng	33	14	3810	7
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

Range 2 – 17 per ward



Sandwell Green Space Audit

Quality & IMD 2015 (Health)

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2015)
Most deprived

- 80 - 100
- 60 - 80
- 40 - 60
- 20 - 40
- 0 - 20

Boundaries

- Ward boundaries
- Town boundaries

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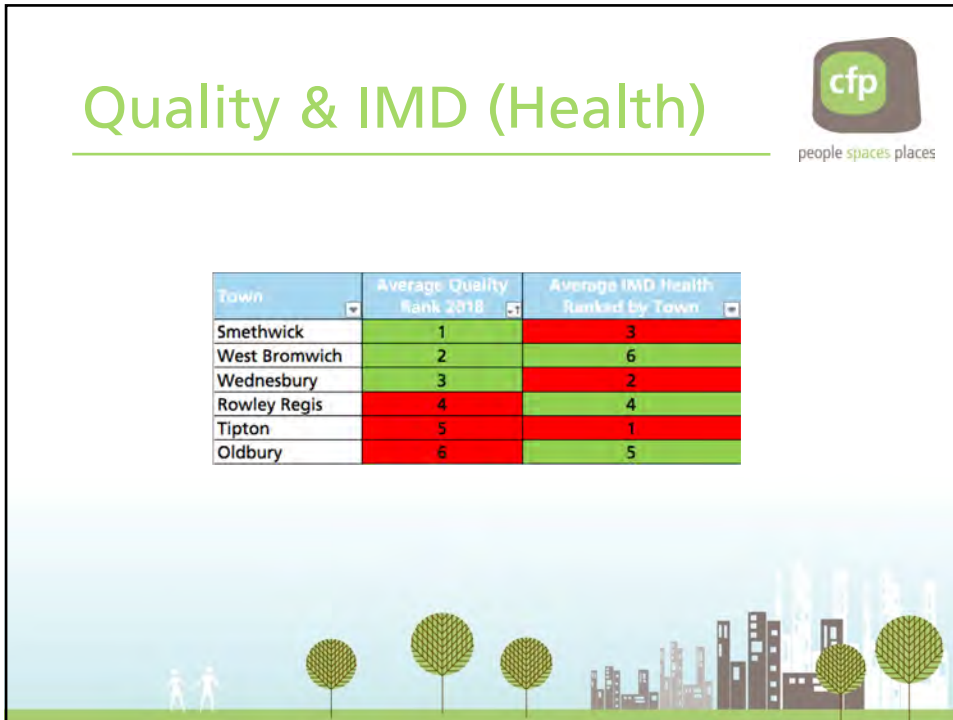
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Quality & IMD (Health)



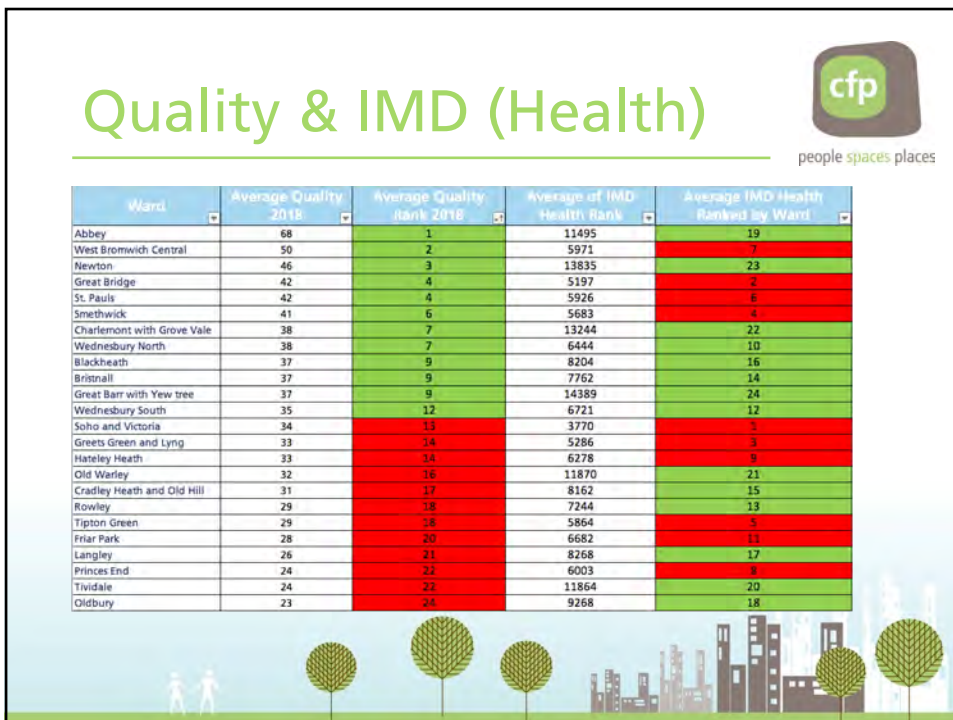
Town	Average Quality Rank 2018	Average IMD Health Ranked by Town
Smethwick	1	3
West Bromwich	2	6
Wednesbury	3	2
Rowley Regis	4	4
Tipton	5	1
Oldbury	6	5



Quality & IMD (Health)



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	5
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

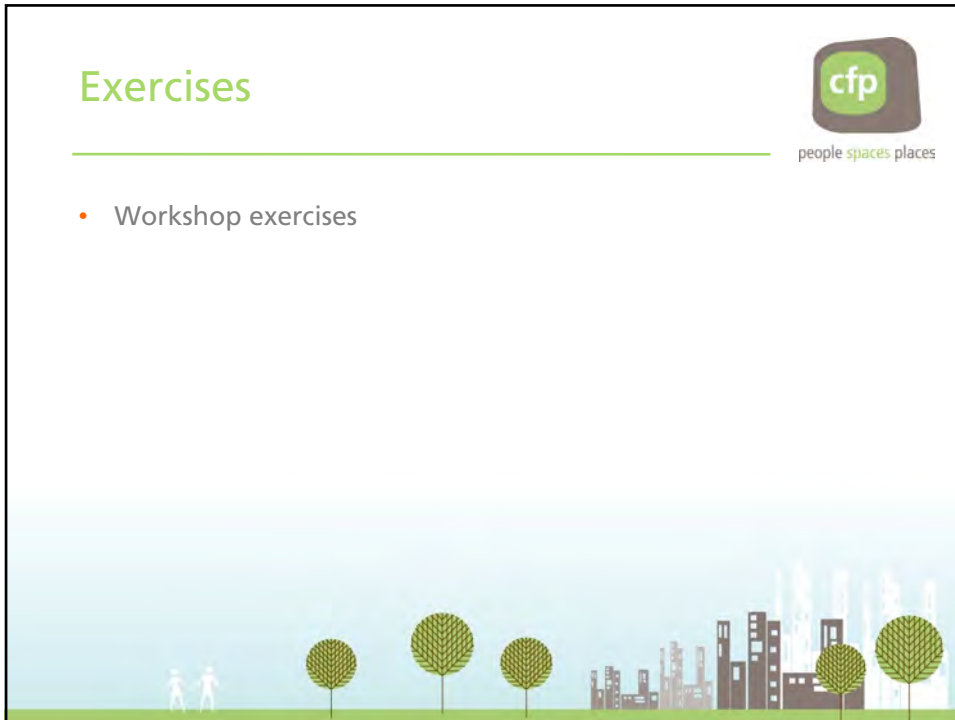


Exercises



people spaces places

- Workshop exercises



Summary



people spaces places

- Summary of work to date
- Inequality in terms of access to green space, quality of green space
- Some areas with highest levels of deprivation have access to less green space of lower quality
- Existing provision
- Future opportunities



Consultation Strategy



- Household Survey - www.sandwell.gov.uk/greenspacesurvey
- Community Group / User Group Survey
- Stakeholder Workshops
- Consultation with CYP
- Consultation on Draft Strategy



Next Steps



- Green Space Audit – May 2019
- Green Space Strategy (draft) - June 2019

