



people spaces places

Sandwell Green Space Strategy

Income Generation & Funding Workshop

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Sandwell Green Space Strategy

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Appendix A – Copy of Presentation

1 Introduction

As part of the development of the development of the Sandwell Green Space Strategy a workshop was held with staff and partners with a focus on funding, income generation and business opportunities.

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.

Date / time & location	11 February 2019 4.00 – 7.00 pm Sandwell MBC staff and partners Venue: Wednesbury Town Hall
Content	Introductory presentation about works that has been carried out so far and then a series of exercises to explore the key issues relating to funding, income generation, business opportunities asset transfers, and resourcing the new green space strategy.
Purpose	For attendees to gain an understanding of and inform the GSS, particularly funding, income generation and business opportunities.

2 Workshop Structure

There were 9 participants in attendance including officers from Sandwell Council (parks and green spaces, public health, Lightwoods Park, Property Services, Sandwell Valley) and representatives from Dartmouth Golf Course, SCIPS and Sandwell Valley Riding Centre.

The agenda for the session was as below.

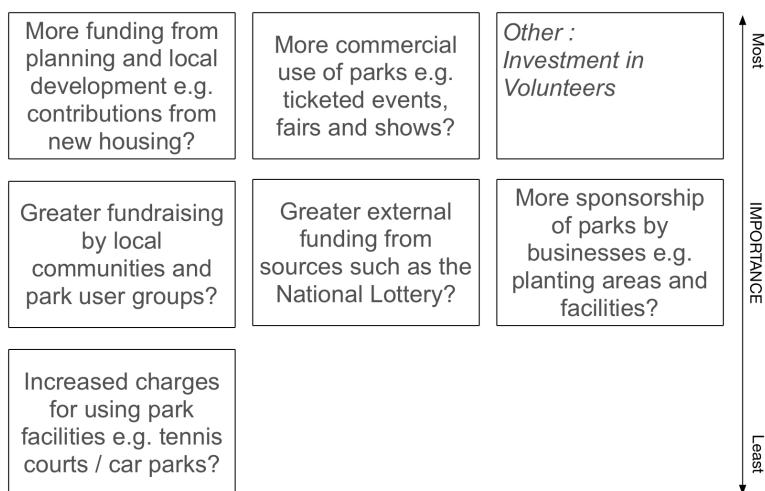
Title	Description
Registration and coffee	Oriente participants
Introduction	Welcome and Introduction
Audit / Strategy Update	Presentation covering: Purpose of the Green Space Audit and Strategy Overview of findings to date Setting the scene with respect to funding for parks and green spaces, nationally and within Sandwell.
<u>Exercise 1</u>	Resourcing the Strategy – considering different options for additional funding
<u>Exercise 2</u>	Current situation – assessing the current situation with respect to income generation and business opportunities. What works well? What are the barriers and potential solutions
<u>Exercise 3</u>	Commercial Activity – discussion around Sandwell market conditions and future opportunities.
<u>Exercise 4</u>	Community Asset Transfer – what has been done to date? Opportunities for the future? Role of the community and voluntary sector.
Round up and Q&A	Summary Next steps and timescales Future consultation opportunities

2.1 Exercise 1

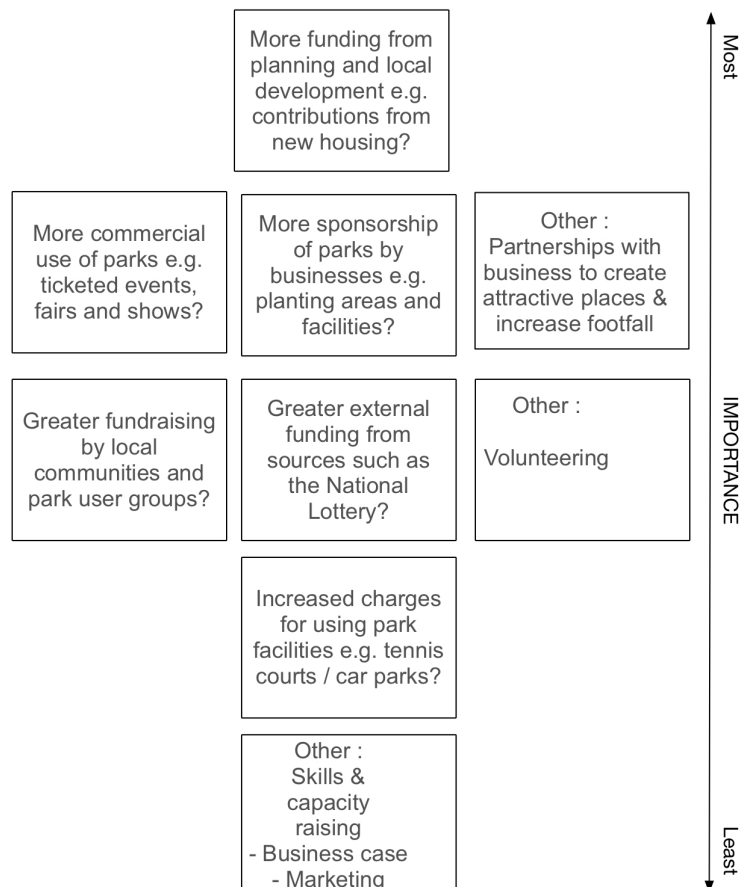
In two groups participants were asked to consider the relative importance of a range of funding opportunities. The list of options included those used in the Public Survey as part of the HLF State of UK Parks Research Project in 2016. This exercise was also carried out at the staff and partners workshop. Additional options were written on blank cards by the participants.

The graphics below show the order in which each group ranked the options.

Group 1:



Group 2 :



Both groups highlighted the importance of the value of volunteers and volunteer participation with respects to green spaces and community life. It was strongly felt that volunteer participation had a monetary value in addition to the range of social and other values derived by the participants, neighbourhoods and communities.

There was discussion about the need to have a more structured approach to supporting community based organisations contributing to parks and green spaces. Some groups received support and officer time to develop their skills and capacity others were less fortunate and were reliant on finding their own way. If volunteering is to be further developed in the borough it was argues that there needs to be more resources for developing capacity, building skills and supporting community groups over the medium to long term.

2.2 Exercise 2

Exercise 2 sought to explore the current issues relating to income generation, funding and business opportunities in the Borough. The following comments were recorded:

- There are a range of existing partners at Sandwell Valley. There is considerable scope for better joint working and increased marketing. SVCP has the potential to offer a whole day out but this needs to be better marketed and communicated.
- There are a number of SME businesses that operate in SVCP and these add considerable value to the visitor offer (Sandwell Valley Riding Centre and Dartmouth Golf Course were represented at the workshop).
- Dartmouth Golf Course CIC is a new start up and is excited by the opportunities to engage young people and families in sport.
- The development of new budget hotel accommodation in West Bromwich offers opportunities for marketing to tourists / overnight visitors.
- There are barriers to accessing SVCP and other green spaces. Sandwell is not an affluent borough and travel costs will deter some potential visitors.
- Car parking charges at SVCP have not been popular but the charges offer good value for money (£2 per day). Additional entry fee for the farm.
- Gym equipment has been provided in parks and green spaces using public health funding and this provides a free alternative to paid use of indoor gym equipment.
- Public Health Development Officers also run taster sessions and longer courses to encourage greater physical activity in parks and green spaces.

- Better information about fees and charges (for example running events in parks) should be made available on the Council website.
- There is currently a limited education offer at SVCP and this could be developed further. Forest schools are popular. New central government funding for outdoor learning has been announced (£10m commitment).
- There is no overall plan for developing commercial activity in parks and green spaces across the Borough and the current approach is piecemeal and ad hoc.
- A Business Development Plan should be produced and reviewed annually.
- Council run programmes such as the Summer Festivals and Winter Wonderland do not cover their costs.
- Many green spaces lack adequate infrastructure for anything other than small events. For example the 'showground' at Sandwell Valley has no drainage or other infrastructure. Large events in bad weather can cause significant damage for more than one season (i.e. Birmingham Rocks).
- At Lightwoods Park the commercial events have tended to be limited to funfairs and circuses. Lightwoods House (and the small events lawn) has been successful with weddings and private hire.
- Grass roots support for friends group is needed if the groups are to grow and go onto to do more.
- Small scale community litter picks can be a popular environmental and social event and offer financial savings.

Podsmead Big Local (Gloucester) project developed a community hub and some social enterprises have been started up operating out of this. One local young man set up a ground care SE and is now maintaining local community green spaces in the neighbourhood.

2.3 Exercise 3

Local market conditions in Sandwell are challenging:

- Sandwell is the 13th most deprived local authority area in the country
- Deprivations includes low incomes, poor health, poor education attainment and low quality environment.
- However population expected to grow by 30,000 over the next 11 years to 2030 (Sandwell Vision period).

- As discussed earlier increases in fees and charges are not popular, do not necessarily bring in significant amounts of income and can suppress use.
- Residents in Sandwell are perceived to be very price conscious. Need to ensure affordability and value for money.
- Transport costs create barriers to accessing services including green spaces.
- Opportunities to attract visitors from outside the borough and visitors staying overnight.
- Opportunity to offer additional services / facilities which are fee charging alongside free entry.
- Local authority budget for Sandwell's green spaces has been cut significantly (by over half in the last 8 years) as discussed in the presentation.
- There is the need to consider alternative ways of bringing in sustainable income streams. Revenue funding is the key in order to sustain services and quality. Capital investment in the borough has been significant but how can quality be sustained over the medium to long term?
- Public health funding in the borough is also under pressure, funding has been provided for outdoor gyms (capital) and Public Health Development Officers (revenue).
- Active Parks Programme in Birmingham is successful but very little funding available to maintain green space infrastructure which is under greater pressure due to increased use.
- Discussion is needed with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

2.4 Exercise 4

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) and the greater involvement of the community and voluntary sectors:

- There are relatively few examples of Community Asset Transfer in Sandwell Borough.
- Warley Woods Community Trust is the only third sector organisation managing a significant green space in the Borough. The organisation is successful but WWCT receives ongoing revenue support from Sandwell Council in order to be sustainable.
- 2 pavilions have been transferred to community based organisations (including Victoria Park Smethwick under a Service Level Agreement)
- Brasshouse Community Centre is community run.

- Sons of Rest Buildings are all council run / supported.
- Alternative models – Sandwell is not especially good at hybrid models and partnership working. There tends to be a very binary approach where something is either Council-led or it is delivered entirely by the voluntary or community sector. Genuine partnerships in the borough are perceived to be rare.
- Sandwell is an organisation with strong political leadership and this is both a strength and weakness. Ideally there would be more sharing of roles, responsibilities and risks through new partnerships.
- If CAT is to be developed there needs to be better information available to the community about the process, who to contact and how to get to the right officers / Councillors.
- The Council Vision promotes the concept of greater partnership working but more needs to be done around the mechanics of this.
- Dartmouth Golf Course may be interested in developing further sports facilities (including a 4G pitch) with Phoenix School.

3 Next Steps

Large scale consultation to inform the development of the Green Space Strategy is planned and will commence shortly:

- Household Survey – random sample of 15,000 households across the borough and also offered online
- Friends and User Group Survey – to all known community based organisations and user group involved in parks as well by other groups with a vested interest in parks and green spaces. It is also offered online.

The links to the online surveys will be made available shortly. Help promoting these surveys was requested.

Friends Forum and Community Group Drop-in Session – Thursday 28 February 2019 4.00 pm – 7.00 pm at West Bromwich Town Hall.

Appendix A

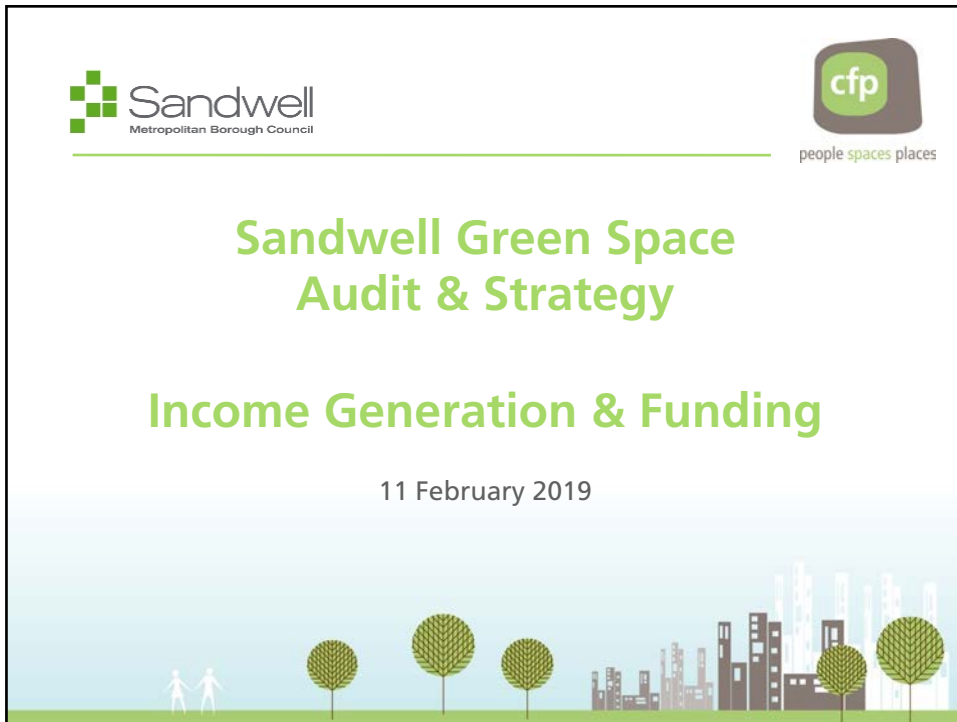
Copy of Presentation

(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

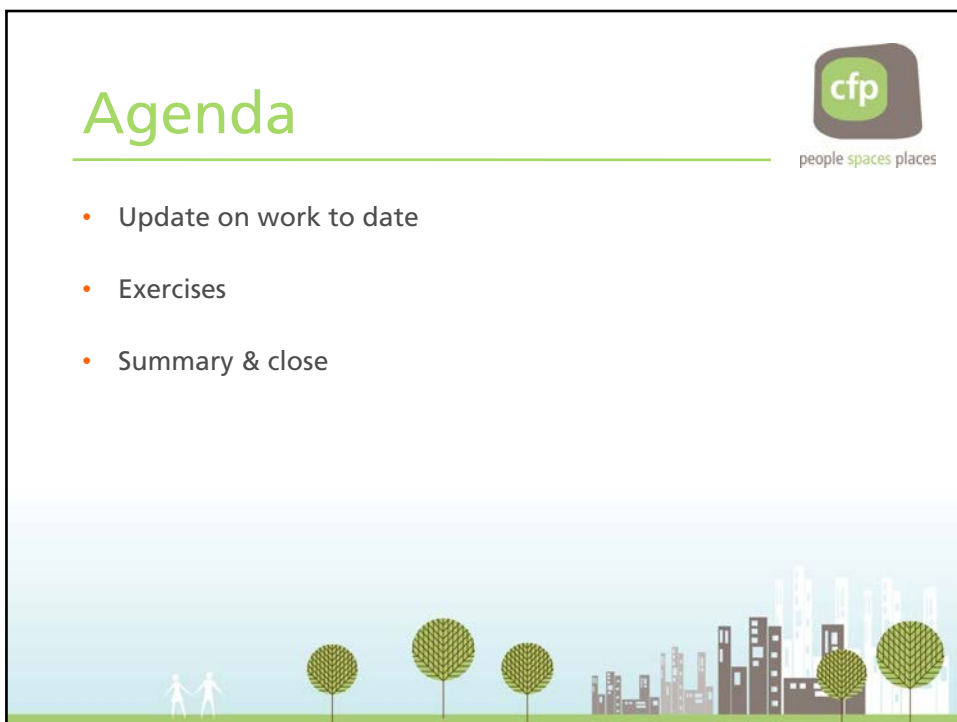
Income Generation & Funding

11 February 2019



Agenda

- Update on work to date
- Exercises
- Summary & close



Context State of UK Parks



people spaces places

- Useful to understand wider trends in the sector
- Follow on to the original State of UK Parks in 2014
- 3 main strands of primary research
 - ↳ Public Opinion Poll (Britain Thinks)
 - ↳ Park Managers Survey (CFP)
 - ↳ Friends Group Survey (CFP)



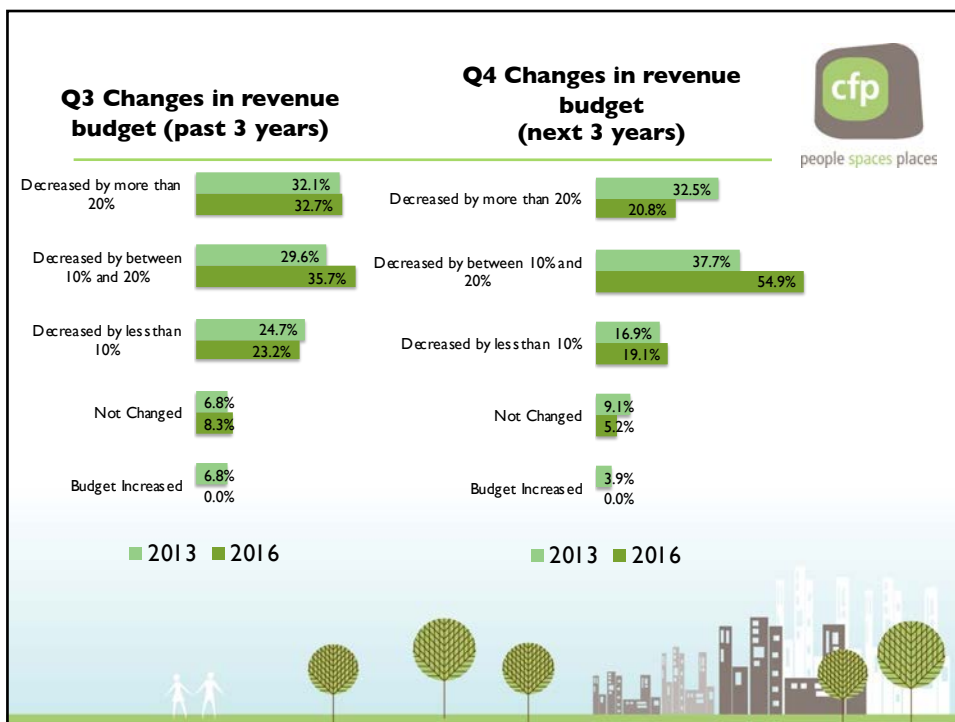
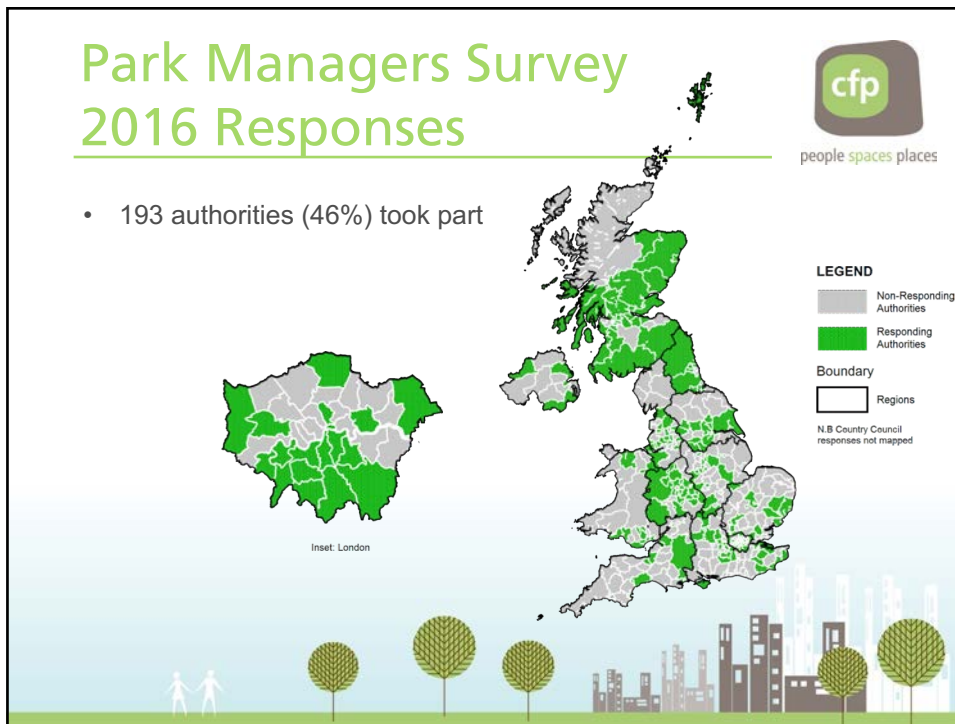
Public Opinion Poll



people spaces places

- Market research survey of 2130 adults across UK
- 85% of people use parks (35% weekly)
- 49% think local park is in good condition
- Majority concerned about cuts affecting parks





Visitors



people spaces places

- 50.8% report increasing satisfaction over last 3 years
only 5% decreasing
- 70.7% report increasing visitor numbers over last year



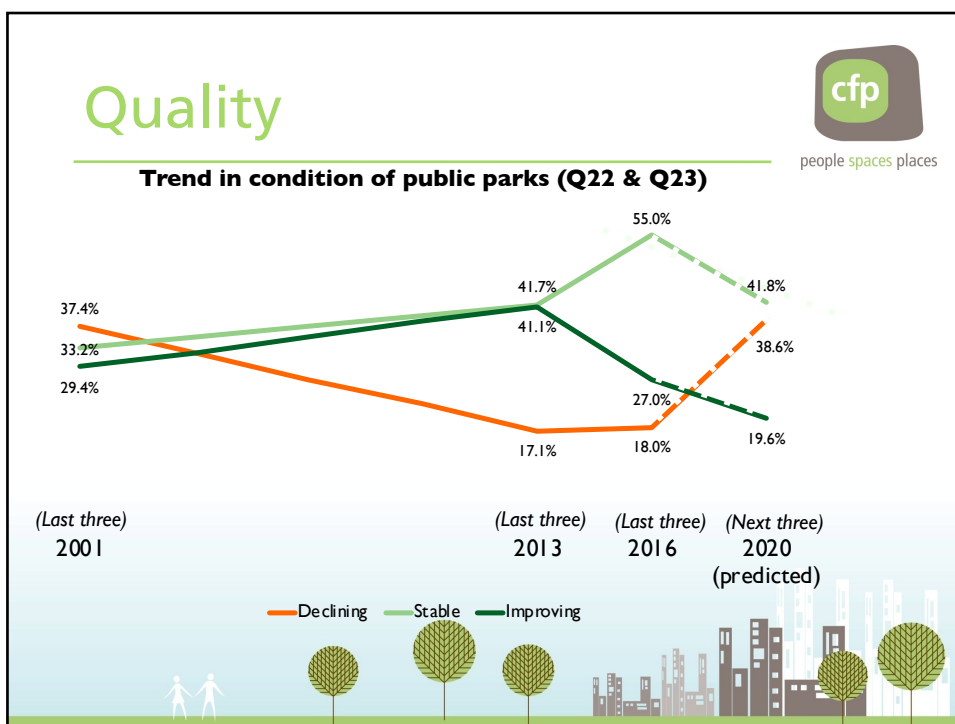
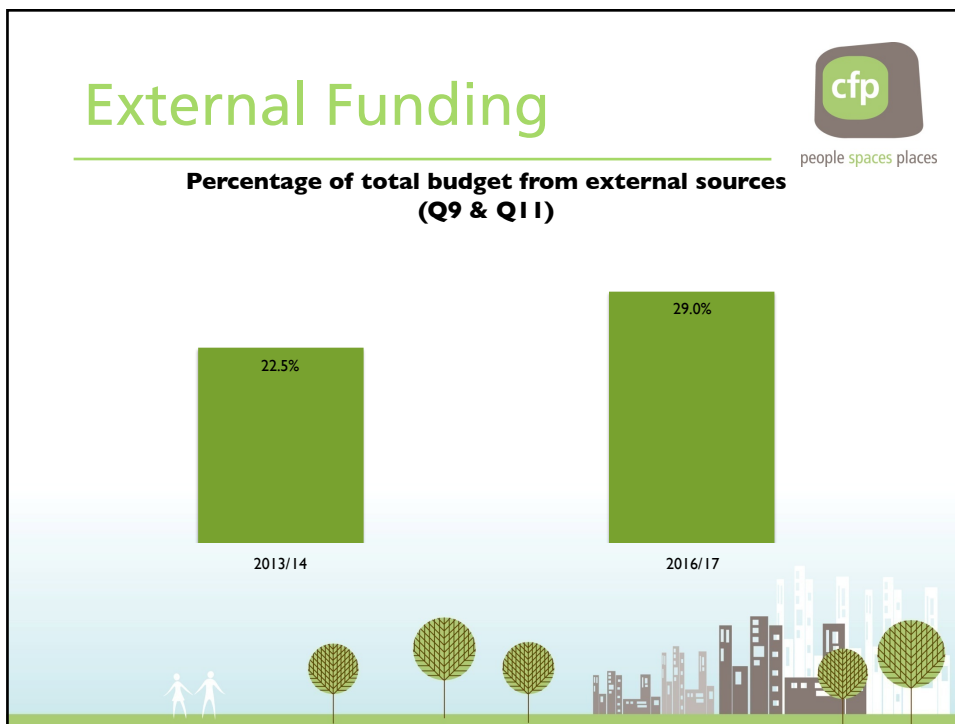
Volunteering

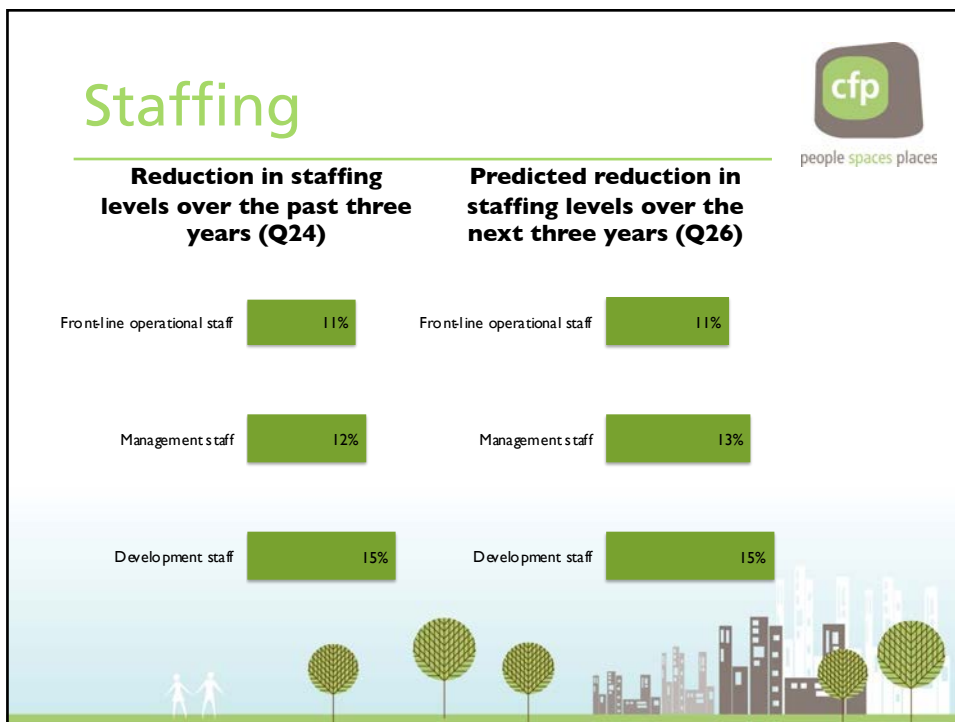


people spaces places

- 53.4% see number of friends groups increasing
over next 3 years
- Groups report membership increasing
- Estimated contribution £29m - £45m per annum



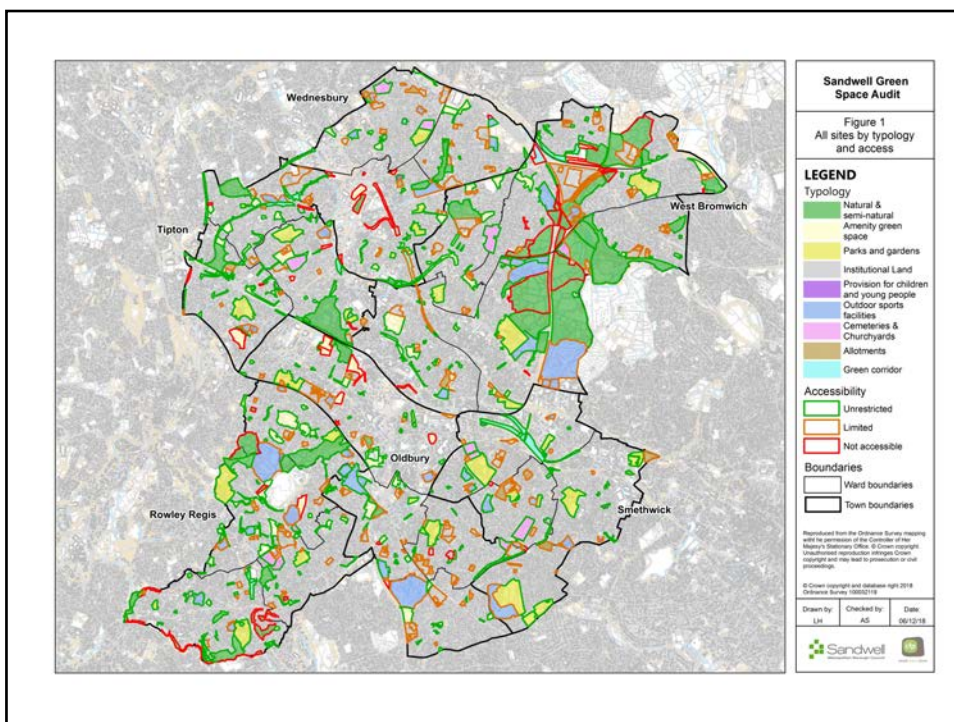
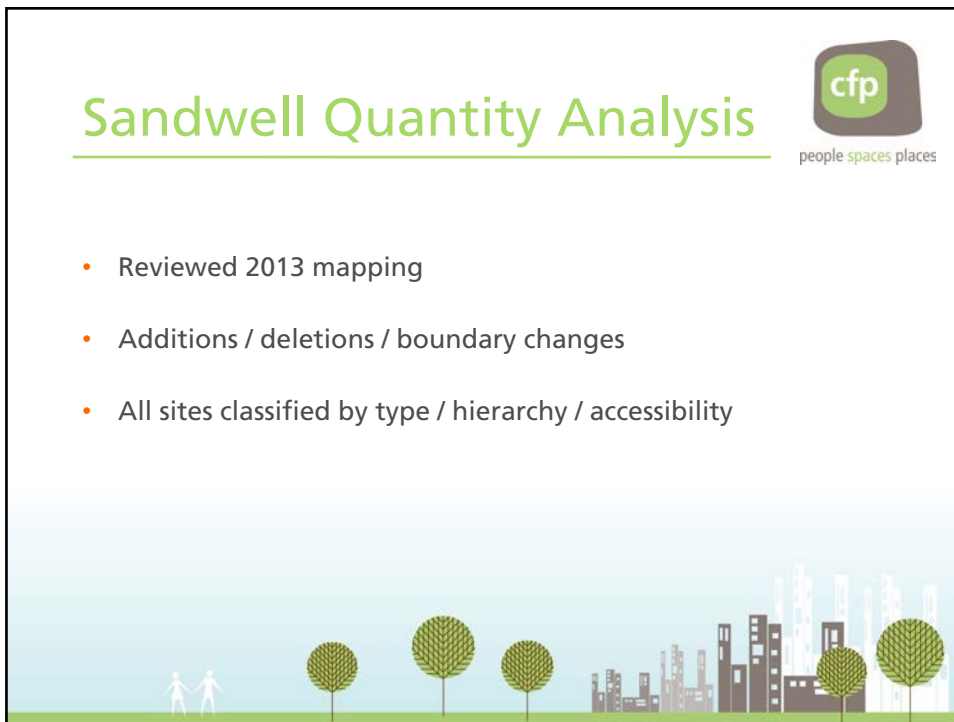


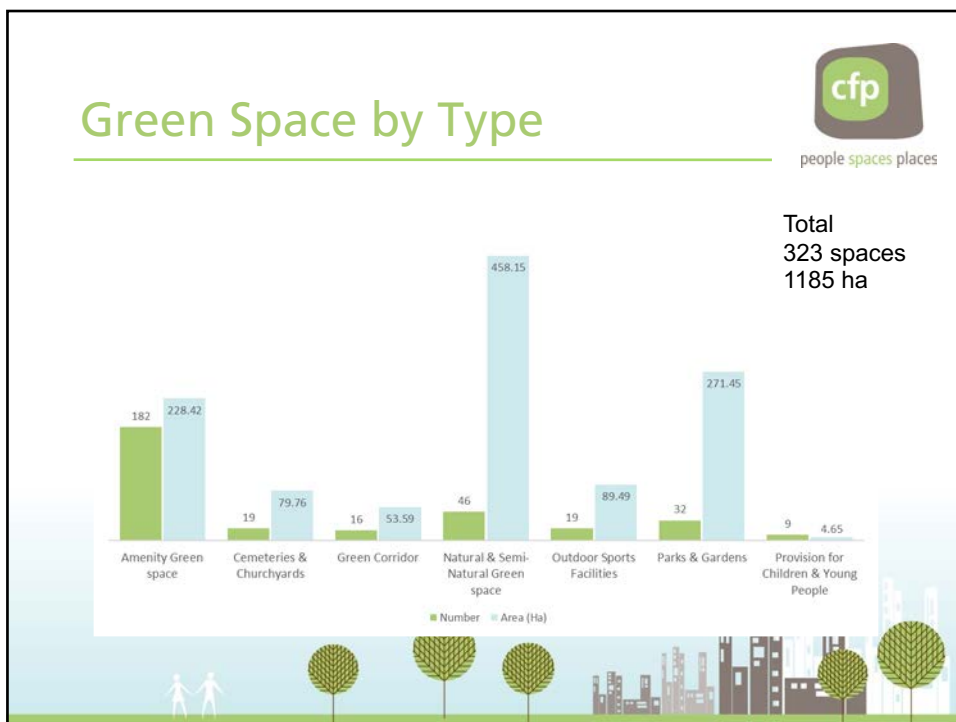
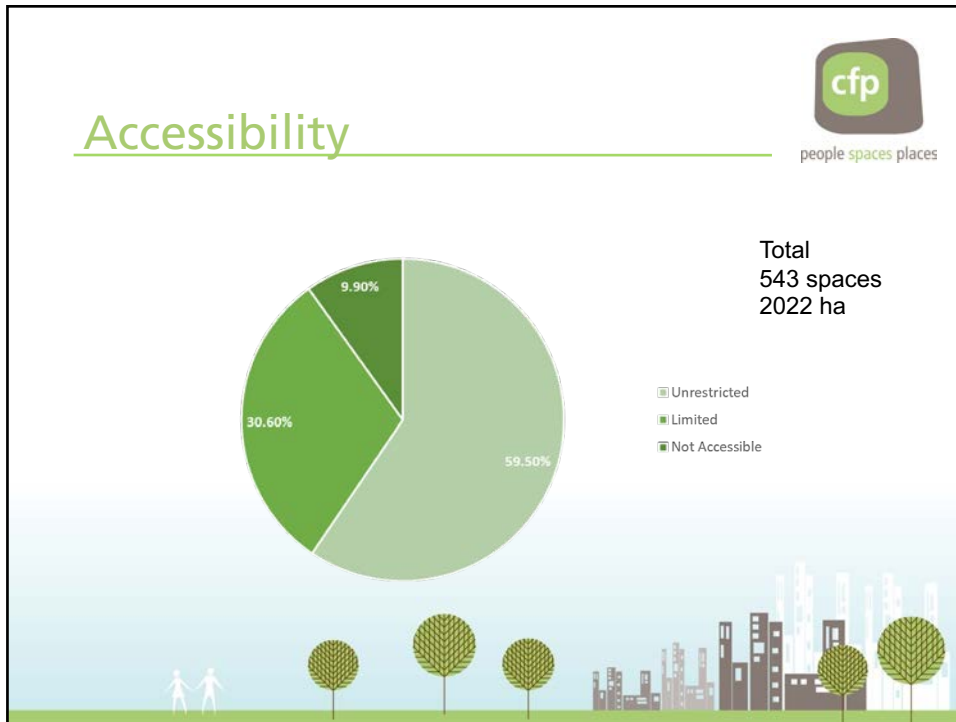


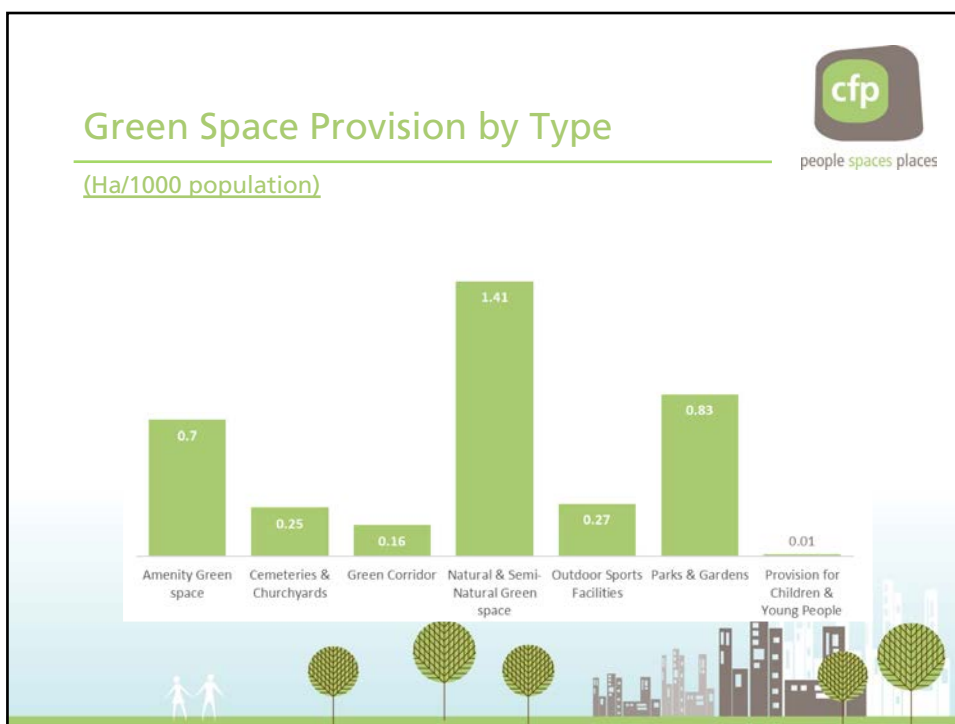
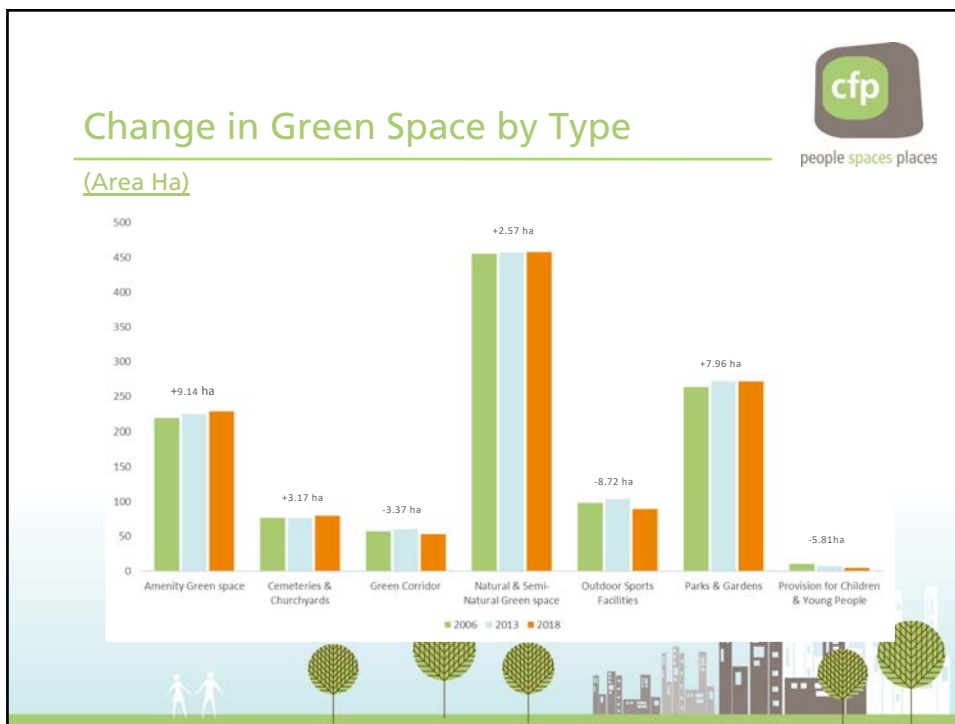
Sandwell Quantity Analysis

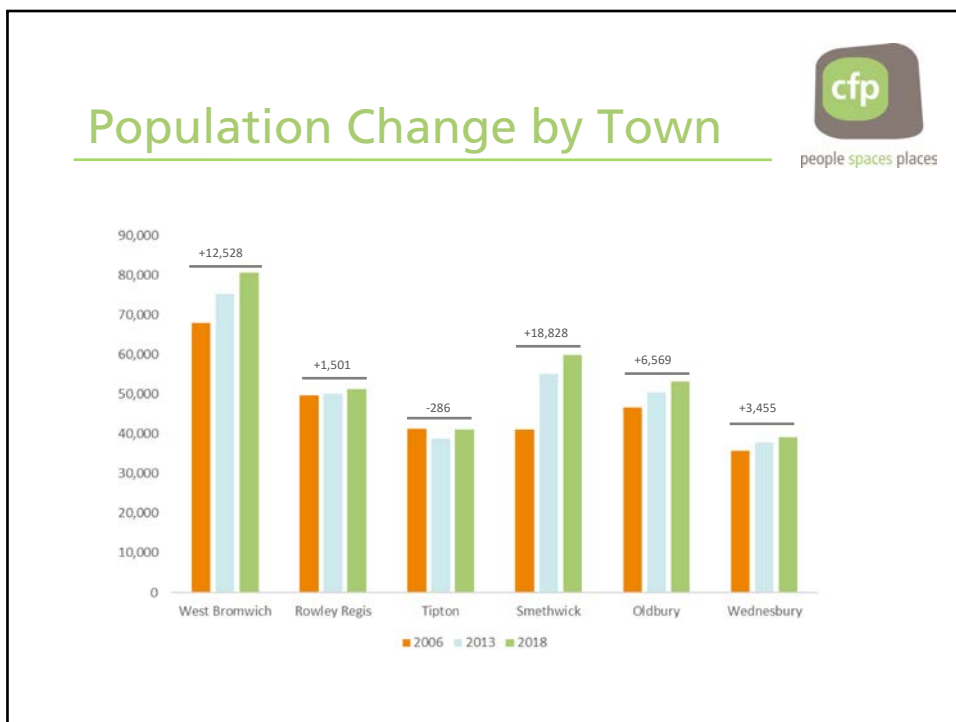
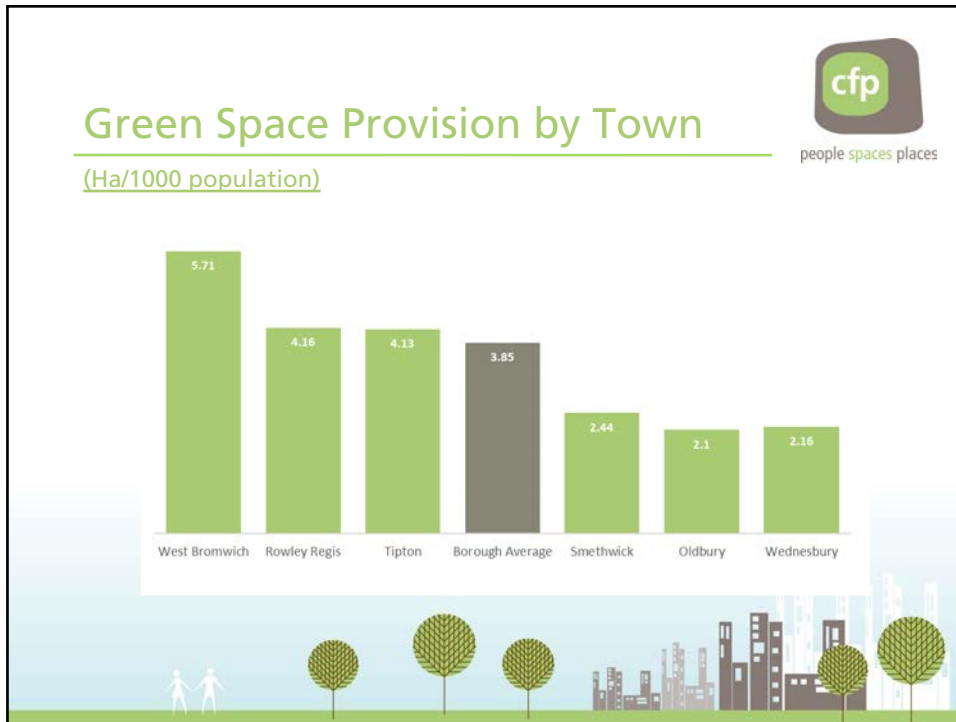


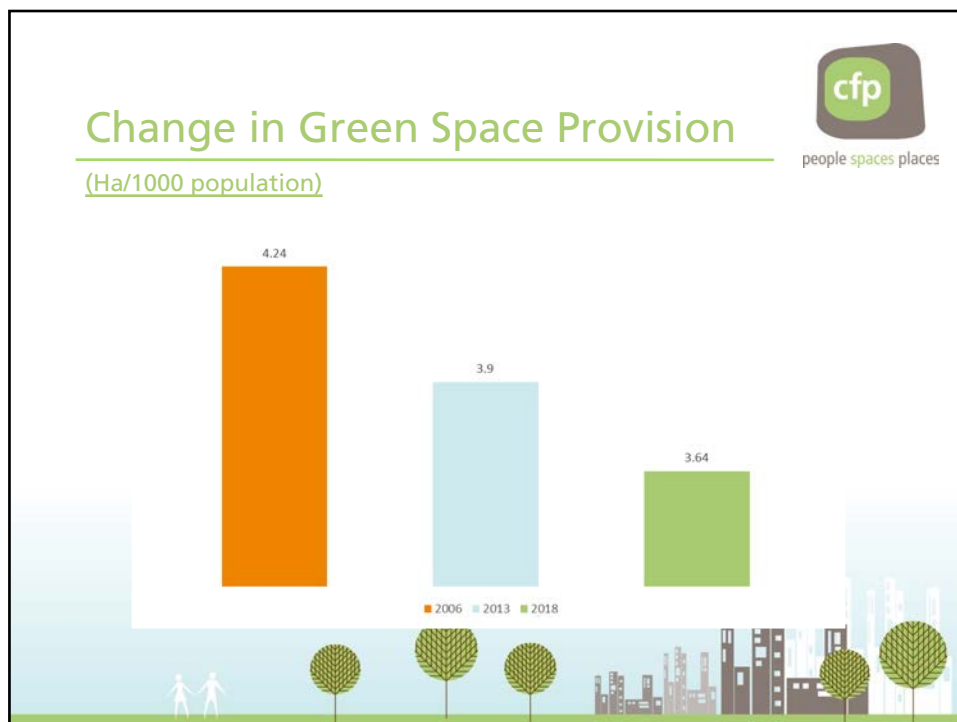
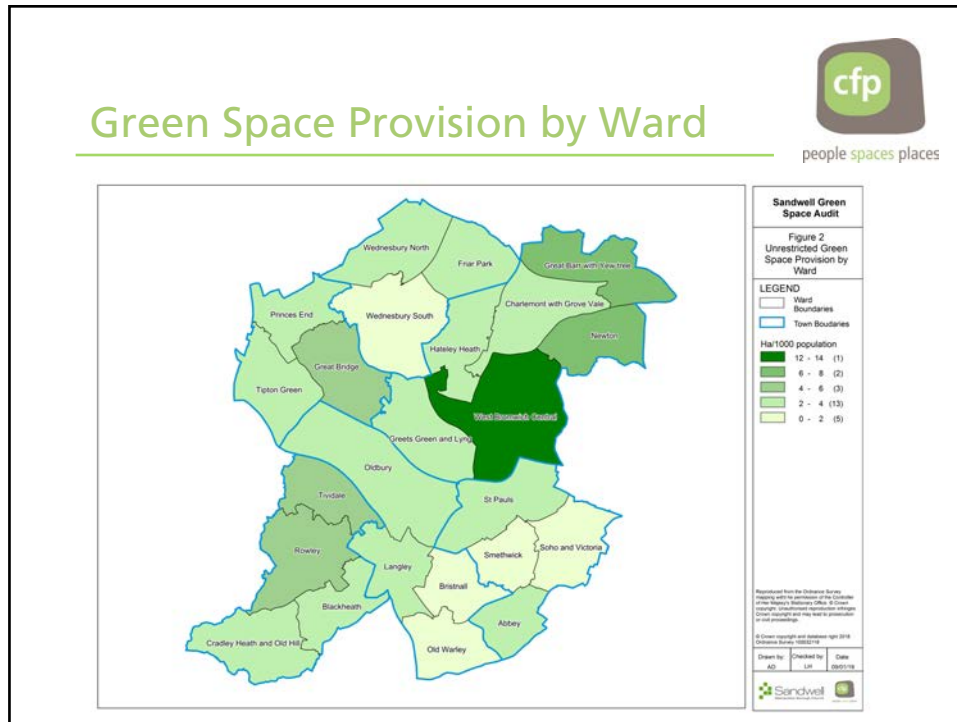
- Reviewed 2013 mapping
- Additions / deletions / boundary changes
- All sites classified by type / hierarchy / accessibility











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



people spaces places

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

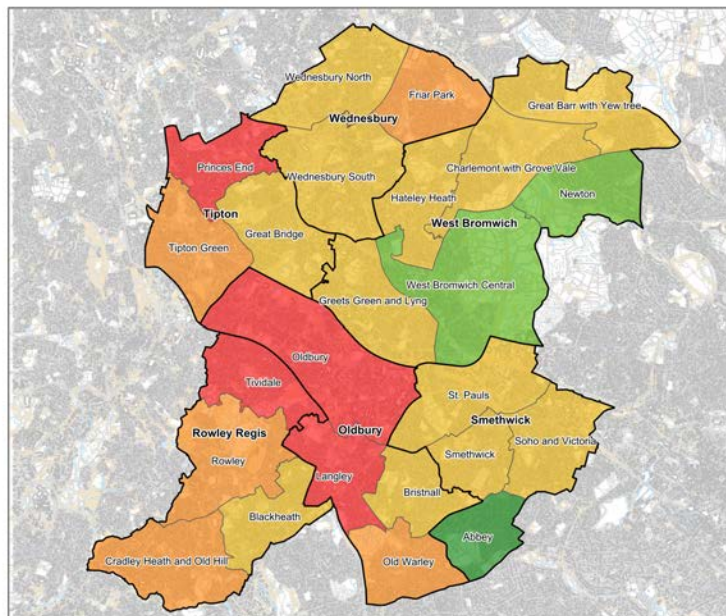


Quality Assessment



people spaces places

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



Sandwell Green Space Audit

Figure 2
Average score by ward

LEGEND
Average ward scores

- 55 to 68 (1)
- 43 to 55 (2)
- 33 to 43 (12)
- 28 to 33 (5)
- 23 to 28 (4)

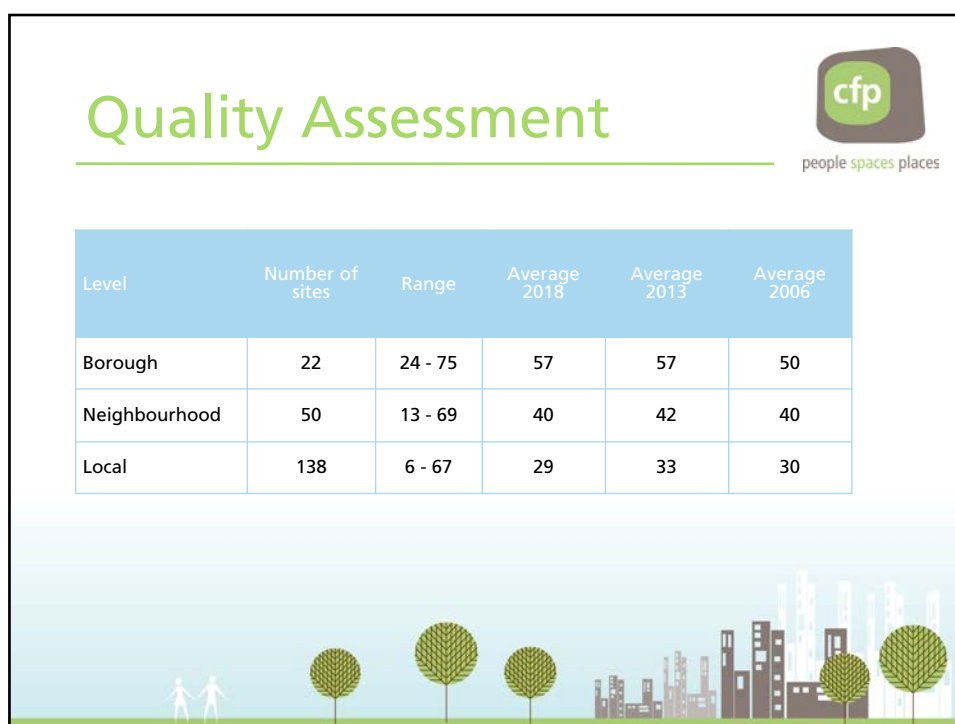
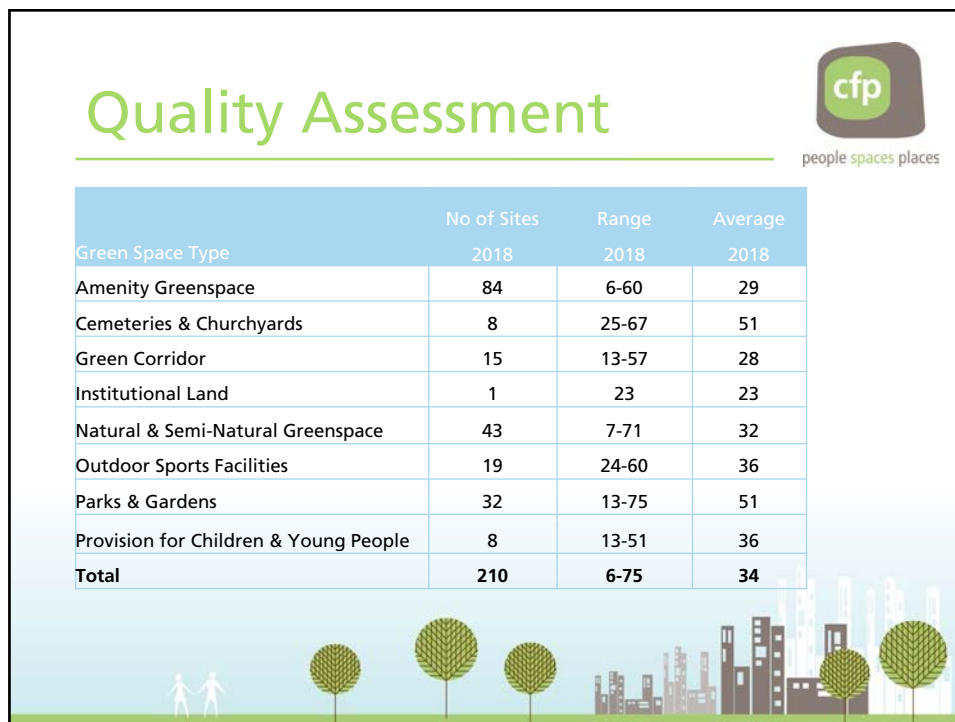
Boundaries

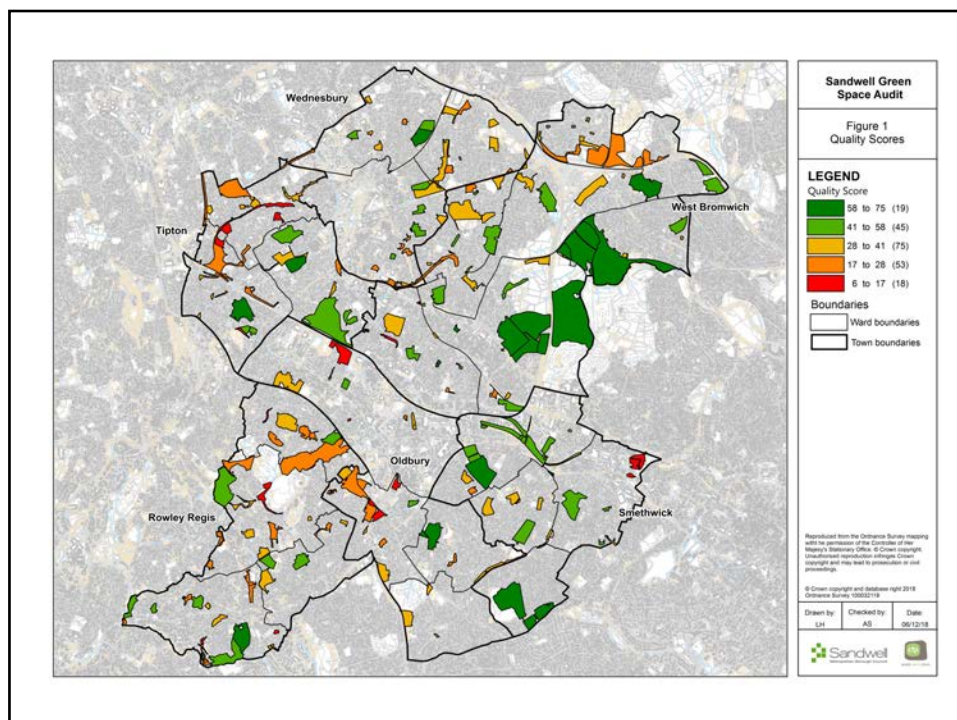
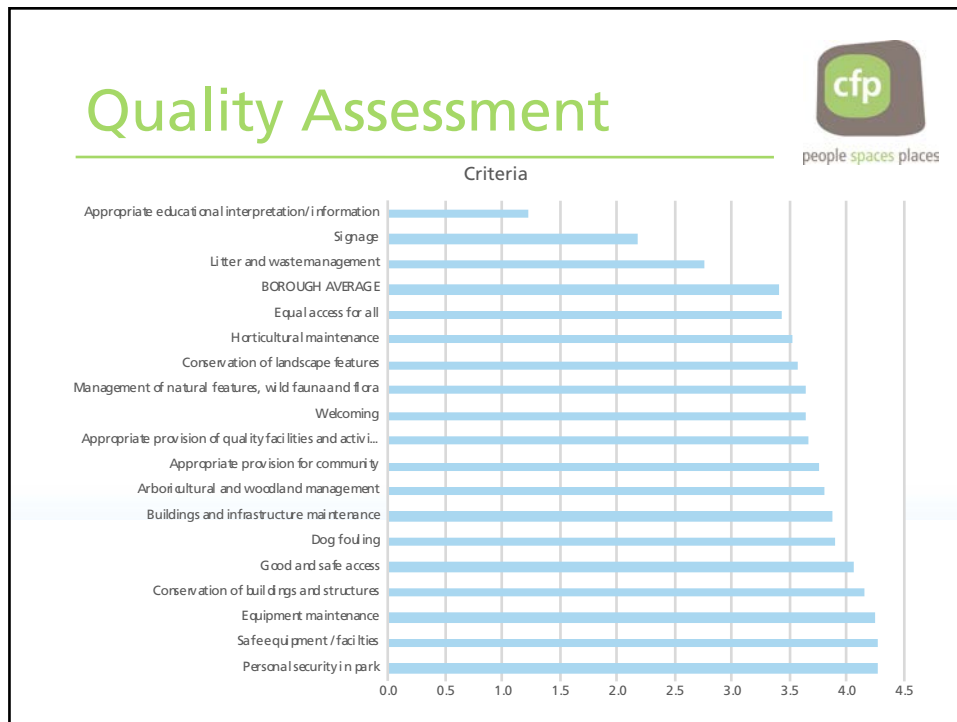
- Ward boundaries
- Town boundaries

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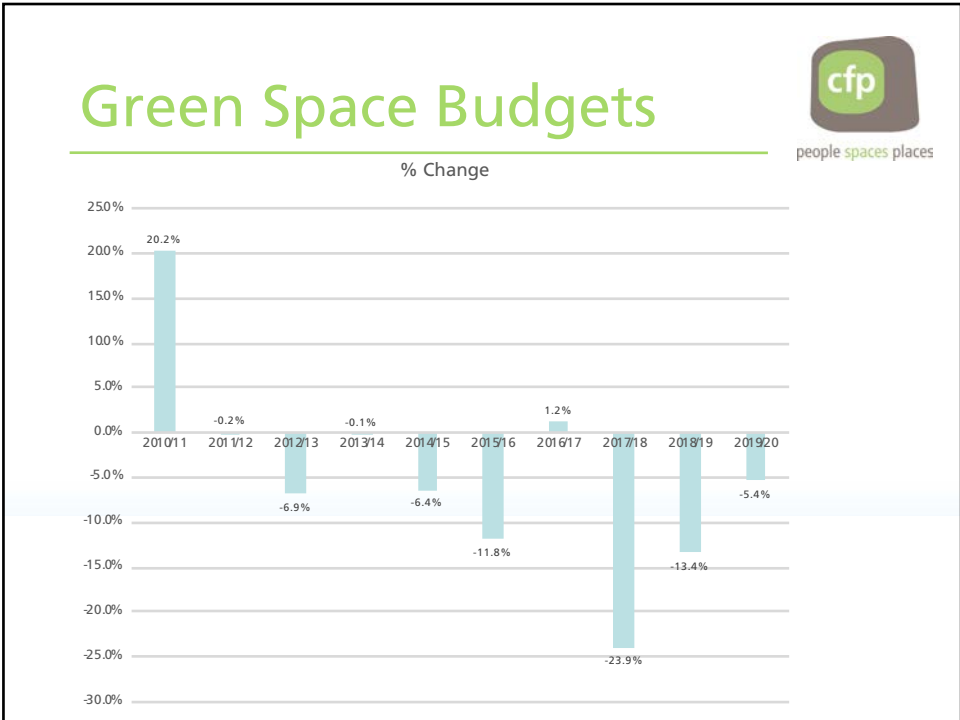




Green Space Budgets



- 2003 - 2009 £15 million capital investment
- 2008 Playbuilder £2.7m
- Dartmouth Park – £6.4m
- Lightwoods Park & House £5.2m
- West Smethwick Park £5.2m (now in delivery)
- Total £31.8m



Green Space Budgets



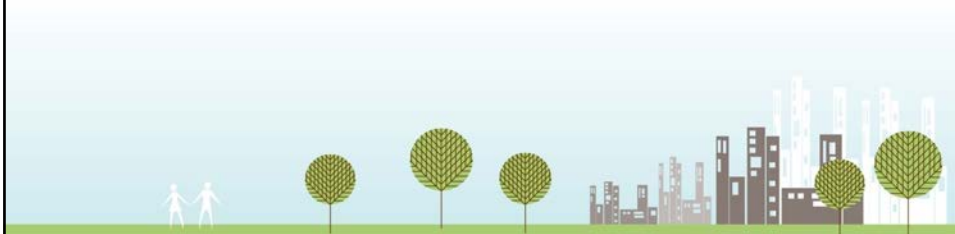
- Budgets are 48.4% of 2010/11
- Equivalent to £3.3 million
- Reductions in staffing levels, loss of warden service & other
- Future years – minor reductions



Workshop Sessions



- Exercises



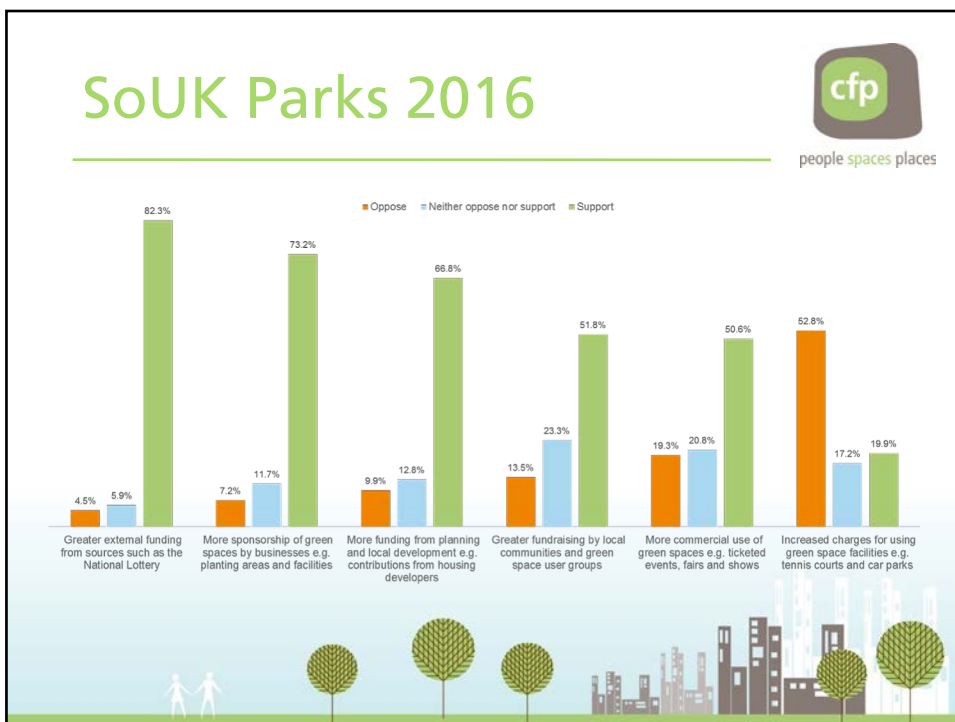
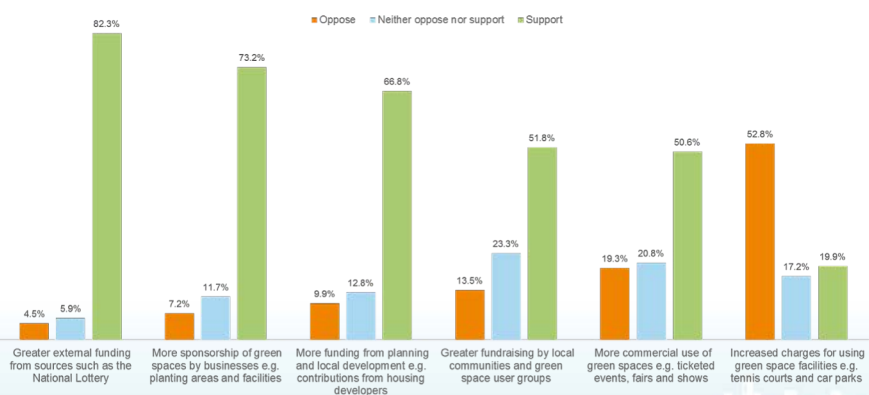
Ex 1 : Additional Funding



- In your group(s) discuss the options listed on the cards
- Arrange these in order
- Most important to least important
- Add any other suggestions on the 'blank' cards



SoUK Parks 2016



Summary



- Summary of work to date
- Additional Funding



Next Steps



- Further workshops
- Community Drop-in session – 28/02/19
- Green Space Audit – April 2019
- Green Space Strategy (draft) - May 2019

