

# **IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE PARK**

## **Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace**



July 2008

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Access to greenspace and similar resources has the potential to encourage physical activity, increase social contact and promote health and well-being. Glasgow, while displaying significant inequalities in health, is well resourced in terms of such resources. This study explored the quality and accessibility of greenspaces and community resources such as halls and leisure centres across two socially contrasting areas of the city.

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Ruth Kendall, Senior Health Promotion Officer, Research and Evaluation, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

### Key Findings

- The more affluent North West Locality was relatively socially advantaged in terms of the built environment, local amenities and population characteristics compared to the South West Locality.
- There was considerable variation in the quality of facilities in both areas. There was often a difference in quality if comparing the inside and outside of leisure facilities and community halls.
- Overall, respondents in the more affluent area report better health and more frequent physical activity than those in the more deprived area. Respondents in the more deprived locality perceive their local neighbourhood to be more unattractive and to lack amenities which might relate to their propensity to undertake physical activity.
- Access is about much more than the physical qualities of the facilities. The presence and physical quality of amenities is a necessary though not sufficient factor in encouraging access to facilities.
- The presence and quality of a resource does not guarantee access and usage; an individual's lifestyle, their stage in the life-course and associated preferences and values were also found to be important. What is more, an individual's level of integration may also influence their perception of whether a park is an accessible, safe and available option for them and/or their family.
- A heightened sense of individual risk and danger in using public space has become a major barrier to usage of facilities.

### *Introduction*

Public health workers in the nineteenth century were well aware of the link between the residential environment and health, and action to remedy poor physical surroundings resulted in better health overall. Until relatively recently, the context in which people lived and the ways in which places might be health damaging or health promoting has tended not to be researched. Within the public health field, the emphasis has largely focussed on the behaviour or characteristics of individuals as shaping health outcomes. Where disparities in health between different areas have been found, these were largely attributed to the characteristics of the local population such as age, employment status and levels of income.

Recent research has tended to show that although individual characteristics i.e. "who you are" explains a lot the variation in health from place to place, there is also an effect of "where you live" (Pickett and Pearl, 2001). A relationship has been found for a range of health measures and where people live including mortality (Davey Smith et al, 1998), cardiovascular diseases (Diez-Roux et al, 1997), cancers, obesity (Ellaway et al, 1997; Kahn et al, 1998), and mental well-being (Fone and Dunstan, 2006; Ross, 2000), in addition to health behaviours such as smoking (Duncan et al, 1999), physical activity and diet (Ellaway and Macintyre, 1996). Studies have also shown that the quality of certain physical characteristics of the local neighbourhood, e.g. housing, playgrounds, parks, transport, etc., has an impact on both the physical and mental health of residents (Cummins, et al., 2005; Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Stafford, et al., 2005). Others have focussed on perceptions of the local environment and have also found associations with both physical and mental health (Ellaway, et al., 2001; Sooman and Macintyre, 1995).

Although there is now widespread acceptance (see for example, Acheson, 1998) that where people live affects their health, understanding the mechanisms which influence this in today's world are only beginning to be understood. One potential mechanism through which the neighbourhood impacts on both physical and mental health could be the environmental influences on physical activity. Evidence shows that physical activity can promote positive mental health and reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, type II diabetes, as well as certain cancers (CDC, 1996; Scottish Executive, 2003; Sothorn, et al., 1999).

There is evidence that suggests that residents in more "walkable" neighbourhoods undertake more physical activity (Handy, 2005; Saelens et al, 2003; Frank et al, 2005; Frank et al, 2006; Pikora et al, 2005). Although definitions of "walkability" vary between studies, researchers generally focus on how different features of a neighbourhood combine together to provide an environment in which people feel comfortable, safe and predisposed to walk.

- Many walking trips are for functional purposes (Saelens et al, 2003; Pikora et al 2005).
- People are more likely to be physically active if there are direct pathways to shops and other facilities (Frank et al, 2005).
- People are more likely to be physically active if there are facilities, shops and services nearby (Duncan et al, 2005; Humpel et al, 2002; Pikora et al, 2005).
- Accessible, attractive and safe greenspace has a positive influence on health and offers opportunities for exercise, engagement with and observation of nature, and for social interaction (Giles-Corti, 2005; Gill and Simeoni 1995; Krenichyn 2004; Orsega-Smith et al, 2004; Takano et al, 2002).

### *Aims and Purpose*

While there has been research exploring the connection between physical attributes of the local area and health, most have been conducted using a single method protocol: usually either GIS mapping or surveys. The FAB Greenspace study is a mixed-methods study conducted in two socially contrasting areas of Glasgow which investigates the facilitators and barriers to the use of local amenities. The study was a partnership effort undertaken by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Glasgow City Council and the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan Team. The use of mixed methods has enabled the provision of complementary findings, and while each method provided certain unique information, taken together the findings become richer. As such, the findings go beyond the descriptive and allow issues to emerge that provide further insights to the existing body of knowledge.

The overall aim of this study was to explore the facilitators and barriers to the active use of greenspace, leisure and recreational facilities among residents in two neighbourhoods (one relatively affluent and one relatively deprived) in Glasgow. The purpose of the study was to explore the facilitators and barriers to the active use of local facilities, including greenspace, leisure facilities and community halls in order to add to the current body of knowledge and to provide information for local planning purposes.

### *Approach and Methods*

The study utilised a variety of methods, including GIS mapping, an audit of the facilities in the two areas, the development and use of a tool to assess the quality of the amenities, photography assessing the quality of the two areas, secondary analysis of the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences 20-07 survey data, discussion groups using participatory appraisal techniques and in-depth interviews. The full report first describes the areas in terms of population characteristics and the presence of amenities (including retail, greenspace, leisure facilities and community halls). Next, the quality of amenities is assessed and then a description of health and health related behaviours of the residents and their perceptions of their local area is discussed. Following is an exploration of the individual motivations that lead to the use of the local amenities.

### *Summary of Findings*

The more affluent North West Locality was relatively socially advantaged in terms of the built environment, local amenities and population characteristics compared to the South West Locality. Overall, respondents in the more affluent area report better health and more frequent physical activity than those in the more deprived area. Respondents in the more deprived locality perceive their local neighbourhood to be more unattractive and to lack amenities that might relate to their propensity to undertake physical activity.

There was considerable variation in the quality of facilities in both areas. Most facilities would benefit from outdoor lighting and increased maintenance. There was often a difference in quality if comparing the inside and outside of leisure facilities and community halls. Many did

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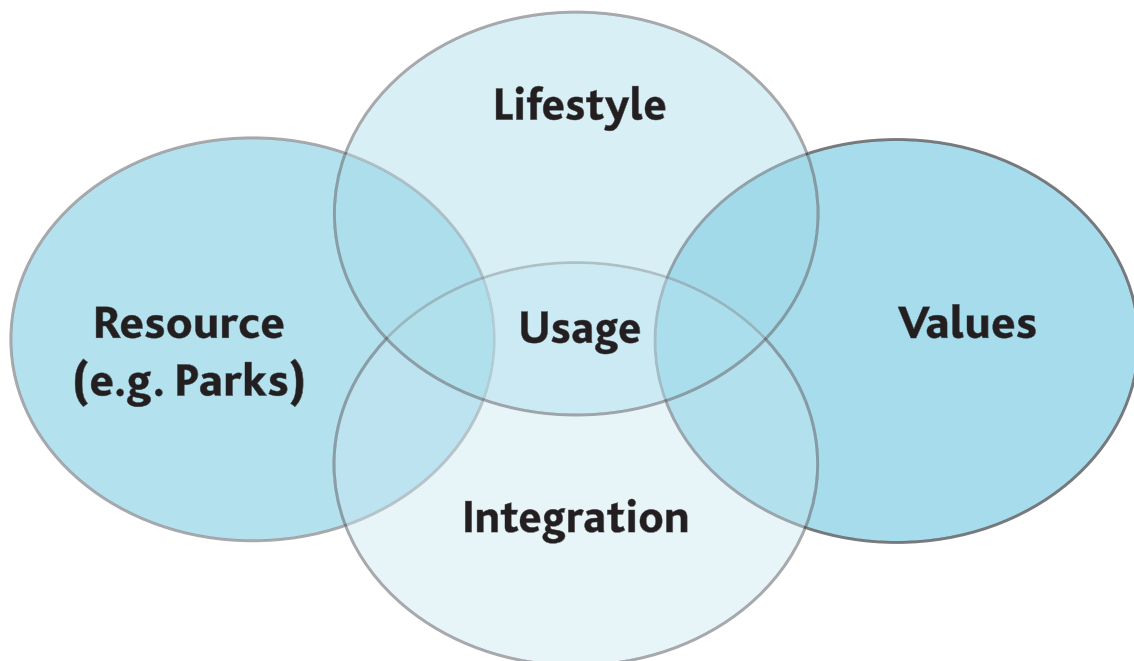
### *Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace*

not appear welcoming, friendly or sociable on the outside, but were on the inside. For example, some community halls were barely recognisable as such and had no signage on the outside that would indicate what was on offer.

Access is about much more than the physical qualities of the facilities. The presence and physical quality of amenities is a necessary though not sufficient factor in encouraging access to facilities. Issues of connectivity in both a spatial and social sense are also key factors. Connectivity in a spatial sense refers to how easily access to facilities can be incorporated into people's routines and established patterns of movement. The social aspects of connectivity encompass there being opportunities for access that reflect a diversity of needs and preferences for which one size will not fit all. A more complex element is in encouraging access through ameliorating the societal problems of risk, safety and levels of felt integration.

The following figure (Figure 1) provides a simple illustration of the main spheres of influence that shaped usage. Despite the quality and availability of the park or similar resource being important, factors located with the individual, their stage in the life-course and associated preferences and values, can also exert an important influence. What is more, an individual's level of integration can also influence their perception of whether a park is an accessible, safe and available option for them and/or their family.

*Figure 1. Factors Influencing Amenity Usage*





### *Recommendations*

Several recommendations can be made to help to increase usage of local facilities (e.g. greenspace, leisure centres and community halls). This is not to undermine or fail to recognise the steps that are currently taken, but could hopefully add to and reinforce efforts to improve the experience for people, particularly in areas that may present a degree of challenge to authorities whose traditional remit has been the physical management of space.

While considerable thinking and action has already happened in relation to better linkages through improved footpaths, signage, cycle-paths, public transport and parking provision, physical access continues to be an issue. In some areas there is considerable variation in the number and quality of facilities and their access routes. While community halls and leisure facilities offer a variety of activities, it is often difficult to obtain information about these, particularly if someone is new to an area. In addition, particularly for community halls, signage needs to be improved and efforts made to increase the welcoming feel of the buildings.

There are also efforts underway to make facilities more diverse by offering a wide range of attractions. In some of Glasgow's parks, activities as broad as concerts, markets, mass participation sporting events, art galleries, cafes, children's play areas and interesting destinations exist in greenspaces. However, these events are not distributed across all local areas, nor do the large events encourage sustainable use of the parks. Perhaps a more focussed, smaller scale encouragement is warranted. "Get to know your local parks" events could encourage new users through introducing existing sources of participation in the community; clubs, groups or customers, to parks and other local greenspace resources fostering a sense of inclusion but also creating community engagement by introducing potential users to those who steward local greenspaces.

A sense of individual safety has become a major barrier to use of facilities. That perception of risk often lies within individual frames of experience that are wider and far more complex than the spatial and physical elements of the facilities themselves, thus it may appear to be outside the remit of facility managers to tackle such issues. Indeed, we would state clearly that issues of inequality and integration are problems that require wider societal solutions from all public agencies, however one that the issue of facility access can make a constructive contribution toward.

An additional element that would increase a feeling of safety would be to reinstate park rangers. Underlying this request was often a sense that using parks and greenspaces had become risky because of a sense of unaccountability in the actions of others and the potential for parks to be intimidating spaces. Many people we spoke to displayed high levels of community mindedness and would feel safer simply being able to report graffiti, vandalism or anti-social behaviour when they witnessed it. Although there are often officers at work in parks, those we spoke to did not feel there was a clear line of communicating, complaining or reporting when something presented a problem. The personal touch is important to this sense of safety. Knowing there is an individual whose role is to care about the user's experience is important and a telephone number to report complaints is a poor substitute.



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While young people can be an important resource to their local communities, the ones we spoke to felt they were often seen as a problem, particularly when in public space. The older people we spoke to bore this perception out, with gangs of young people seen as adding to the fear and intimidation that was a major barrier to park usage. Again these problems can be exacerbated by inaction as "a lack of things to do" which is commonly cited by young people as a reason for joining street gangs. In the absence of alternative activities that may bring disparate groups of young people together, trust and friendship is unlikely to emerge across or between neighbourhoods that lie in parks' catchments. Encouraging young people (in particular teenagers) to use parks through the provision of activities or spaces (such as youth centres) that allow the mixing of young people would not only increase feelings of safety for young people themselves but also, by reducing gang conflict, for adults for whom gangs of young people have become a proxy for danger.

Additional recommendations can be made regarding the use of mixed methods. The use of mixed methods has enabled the provision of complementary findings, and while each method provided certain unique information, taken together, the findings become richer. We encourage researchers to utilise mixed-methods studies in social science whenever budget and time allow, as each method provides important information, but also has certain limitations which can, in part, be overcome by incorporating more than one method into the study design.

## CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

This report discusses the findings of the FAB Greenspace study, a mixed-methods study conducted in two areas of Glasgow that explores the facilitators and barriers to the active use of local facilities, including greenspace, leisure facilities and community halls. The study was a partnership effort undertaken by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Glasgow City Council and the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan Team. While there has been research exploring the connection between physical attributes of the local area and health, most have been conducted using a single method protocol: usually either GIS mapping or surveys. This study enhances existing knowledge by providing insights resulting from combining methods. Chapter 1 first discusses what is currently known from existing studies and then describes the aims and objectives of this study.

Public health workers in the nineteenth century were well aware of the link between the residential environment and health, and action to remedy poor physical surroundings resulted in better health overall. Until relatively recently, the context in which people lived and the ways in which places might be health damaging or health promoting has tended not to be researched. Within the public health field, the emphasis has largely focussed on the behaviour or characteristics of individuals which shape health outcomes. Where disparities in health between different areas have been found, these were largely attributed to characteristics of the local population such as age, employment status and levels of income.

However, recent research has tended to show that although individual characteristics i.e. "who you are" explains a lot of the variation in health from place to place, there is also an effect of "where you live" (Pickett and Pearl, 2001). This has been found for a range of health measures including mortality (Davey Smith et al, 1998), cardiovascular diseases (Diez-Roux et al, 1997), cancers, obesity (Ellaway et al, 1997; Kahn et al, 1998), and mental well-being (Fone and Dunstan, 2006; Ross, 2000), in addition to health behaviours such as smoking (Duncan et al, 1999), physical activity and diet (Ellaway and Macintyre, 1996).

Several studies have shown that the quality of certain physical characteristics of the local neighbourhood, e.g. housing, playgrounds, parks, transport, etc., has an impact on both the physical and mental health of residents (Cummins, et al., 2005; Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Stafford, et al., 2005). Other research has focussed on perceptions of the local environment and has found associations with both physical and mental health (Ellaway, et al., 2001; Sooman and Macintyre, 1995).

Although there is now widespread acceptance that where people live affects their health, (see for example, Acheson, 1998) understanding the mechanisms which influence this are only beginning to be understood. The West of Scotland 20-07 study has been exploring some of these issues in two socially contrasting neighbourhoods in Glasgow. One, in the North West of the City, has better than average health and is relatively socially advantaged; the other, in the South West of the City, has worse than average health and is relatively socially disadvantaged.

One potential mechanism through which the neighbourhood impacts on both physical and mental health could be the environmental influences on physical activity. Evidence shows that physical activity can promote positive mental health and reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, type II diabetes, as well as certain cancers (CDC, 1996; Scottish Executive, 2003; Sothorn, et al., 1999).

There is evidence that suggests that residents in more “walkable” neighbourhoods undertake more physical activity (Handy, 2005; Saelens et al, 2003; Frank et al, 2005; Frank et al, 2006; Pikora et al, 2005). Although definitions of “walkability” vary between studies, researchers generally focus on how different features of a neighbourhood combine together to provide an environment in which people feel comfortable, safe, and predisposed to walk. Neighbourhoods defined as “highly walkable” are characterised by:

- high population density;
- a good mixture of land use (e.g. a variety of retail, residential, commercial usage in a single area);
- high connectivity (e.g. direct or easy travel routes between destinations as a result of street layout);
- good pedestrian and cycling facilities (e.g. presence of pavements, cycle routes, traffic calming measures and so forth);
- good accessibility (e.g. a variety of destinations or facilities, such as shops, greenspace, transport links).

Studies have also found that many walking trips were most likely to be for functional purposes such as walking to work or to shops (Saelens et al, 2003; Pikora et al 2005). In addition, Frank et al (2005) found that people are more likely to be physically active if they live in neighbourhoods with many nearby destinations such as shops and other facilities, and with direct pathways to these destinations.

Functionality is another composite concept similar to walkability that accounts for a variety of variables (e.g. density, land use mix, accessibility), but also looks at some more detailed elements of design such as walking surfaces and street width. Like walkability, neighbourhoods that are perceived to have high levels of functionality are associated with more walking for a number of different purposes, including walking to work, walking for recreation, and task-related walking (McCormack et al, 2004).

Studies also demonstrate that people who report physical activity facilities nearby are more likely to be physically active (see for example, Duncan et al, 2005). Access to facilities such as cycle paths, local parks and other green spaces, beaches, or recreation centres is strongly and positively associated with physical exercise (Humpel et al, 2002). The absence of or barriers to these facilities (such as steep hills, busy roads to cross) or the perception that such facilities are inadequate all have negative associations with physical activity. Similarly, people reporting the presence of shops and services within their neighbourhood are more likely to be physically active (Duncan et al, 2005; Pikora et al, 2005). Such services provide destinations and present opportunities for walking for errands, shopping or work.

Evidence also suggests that accessible and safe greenspace has a positive influence on health. In addition, urban greenspace does more than offer opportunities to exercise, it offers opportunities for engagement with and observation of nature, as well as opportunities for social interaction, thus enhancing individuals' sense of well-being. Open spaces with a range of attractive attributes (such as trees, lakes, landscaped features) encourage higher levels of walking (Giles-Corti, 2005), and walking in such spaces may be associated with the restorative qualities of nature, and more than simple exercise. In Japan a study by Takano et al (2002) demonstrated that living in areas with walkable green spaces positively influenced the longevity of older people in urban areas, independent of age, sex, marital status, baseline function and socio-economic status. Using different methods, Orsega-Smith et al (2004) also demonstrated that the stress levels of older people could be positively affected by the use of urban parks. Krenichyn (2004) showed how the presence of others in green spaces promoted feelings of safety and enjoyment for women undertaking physical activity in an urban park, as well as providing opportunities for social interaction and support for undertaking physical activity. Gill and Simeoni (1995) used qualitative methods to explore the impact of enhancing a community park in a run down urban area and reported improved opportunities for physical activity, aesthetic and environmental benefits, and a greater sense of community "congeniality" with the park acting as a source of pride for local residents.

These studies, several other primary studies and four reviews endorse the value of green space and biodiversity in promoting physical activity and well-being. Evidence indicates that greenspace is most valuable as a resource for physical activity when used by high volumes of people, therefore spaces need to be accessible, of sufficient size, and connected to residential areas. Greenspace needs to be diverse, as evidence suggests that single use greenspace (such as sports fields) deter undedicated use (see Bird, 2004; CJC Consulting, 2005; De Vries et al, 2002; Giles-Corti et al, 2005; Land Use Consultants, 2004; Kuo, 2001; Morris, 2003; Orsega-Smith et al ,2004; Krenichyn, 2004; Swanwick et al , 2003; Takano et al, 2002).

Perceived aesthetic quality of neighbourhoods is positively correlated with physical activity, particularly walking (Humpel et al, 2002). As Handy (2005) notes, if most walking takes place in the vicinity of home, then the quality of the walking environment in the home neighbourhood will be influential. Studies using "objective" measures of aesthetics show few associations with walking behaviours; however, those that use perceptions of the environments consistently shown the aesthetic quality of neighbourhoods to be positively associated with walking (McComack et al, Pikora et al, 2005).

Certain physical aspects of neighbourhoods related to safety (e.g. the absence of pavements for pedestrians, traffic control measures, cycle lanes, and street lighting) are associated with physical activity. Studies have shown that walkways, safe footpaths and measures to control traffic are also associated with increased levels of physical activity, notably walking (see Loukaitou-Sideris, A. 2006). In a meta-analysis of 16 studies, Duncan, et al (2005) demonstrated where heavy traffic was not perceived to be a problem, people were more likely to engage in physical activity. Where differences between gender and age have been explored, women and older people tend to be more likely to be concerned about personal safety, although this is usually related to fear of crime (see Loukaitou-Sideris, A. 2006).

Several authors have noted that differences in neighbourhood environments appear to account for only some of the variation in levels of physical activity and some recent studies have attempted to measure not just perceptions of neighbourhood, but also people's levels of confidence, self-efficacy, and motivation (De Bourdeauhuji et al, 2004; Bengoechea et al, 2005; Duncan and Mummery, 2004; Boslaugh et al, 2004; Richter et al, 2002). Those studies that have considered self-efficacy and self-motivation show that attitudes and beliefs about exercise may have more important associations with levels of physical activity than the physical environment (see Handy, 2005). For example, the study by Duncan and Mummery (2005) showed that people reporting high levels of self-efficacy or high levels of social support were more likely to be physically active than those reporting low levels. This is also illustrated in the work of De Bourdeauhuij et al (2004). They investigated the differences in self-reported levels of physical activity and perceived environmental and psychosocial correlates of physical activity between city dwelling Portuguese and Belgian adults. In both Belgian and Portuguese adults, more physical activity in leisure time was mainly associated with the perception of a stronger social norm toward participating in physical activity, as well as more support from friends, more pleasure related to physical activity and higher self-efficacy. In this study, recreational activity was determined primarily by social support, self-efficacy and perceived benefits and barriers to such activity.

There are several personal and social factors that are consistently reported to hinder physical activity (Lee and Vernez Moudon, 2004; Richter et al, 2005). Lack of time is the leading factor. Other barriers included poor health, child care responsibilities, lack of energy, and concerns for personal safety. Common social barriers reported include not having company, and not seeing other people exercising. The impact of these personal and social barriers to exercise appears to be mediated by age, gender, and ethnicity.

Although there are inconsistencies in the findings of some studies, taken overall the evidence indicates that there is an association between aspects of the local neighbourhood, levels of physical activity and health. However, evidence regarding particular characteristics of the built environment that might be most strongly associated with physical activity is less robust, and it would be difficult to make a list of key design features that have been shown to enhance levels of physical activity. It is to be noted that environmental features explain some, but certainly not all the differences in levels of physical activity. It would appear that self-efficacy and social support might explain more variance in levels of activity than do features of the built environment. This highlights the need for a greater understanding of the relationship between individual and environmental variables. The evidence is also limited with regard to other factors that might interact with or moderate environmental variables to facilitate physical activity, for example, gender, age, social class, and ethnicity.

Although there is evidence of association between the physical attributes of a neighbourhood and physical activity, study designs adopted thus far (i.e. cross sectional studies) do not allow the assumption of a causal effect. There are other methodological and theoretical questions about the overall literature as well. While the literature on general health and the built environment has a strong UK base, studies considering physical activity are predominately from North America and to a lesser extent Australia. It might be questioned whether the findings of these studies can be meaningfully generalised to other geographical and cultural contexts.

The majority of studies employ either Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping or a cross sectional survey design with sophisticated statistical analyses to unpick the association between the physical environment and levels of activity. There are only a small number of qualitative studies. Given the various interpretations of the physical environment, neighbourhood, and the relative lack of understanding regarding how individual factors such as age, gender and ethnicity influence the relationship, it would seem that there is some room for more qualitative investigation. This study will add to the current body of knowledge by combining qualitative methods with both survey data and GIS mapping. The rationale behind combining methods is to enhance the data, provide complementary insights and to explore whether there are contradictions in the findings from each method.

### *Aims and Objectives*

The overall aim of this study is to explore the facilitators and barriers to the active use of greenspace, leisure facilities and recreational facilities among residents in two neighbourhoods (one relatively affluent and one relatively deprived) in Glasgow. Specific objectives are as follows:

- 1) To map and compare accessible greenspace, leisure facilities and recreational facilities in the two neighbourhoods.
- 2) To develop an audit tool to assess the quality of these facilities.
- 3) To independently assess and compare the quality of the facilities in the two neighbourhoods.
- 4) To compare aspects of the neighbourhoods, perceived incivilities and level of activity using data from the West of Scotland 20-07 study.
- 5) To use qualitative techniques to explore how physical, individual and social variables interact to facilitate or impede the use of these facilities within different contexts.

### *Methods*

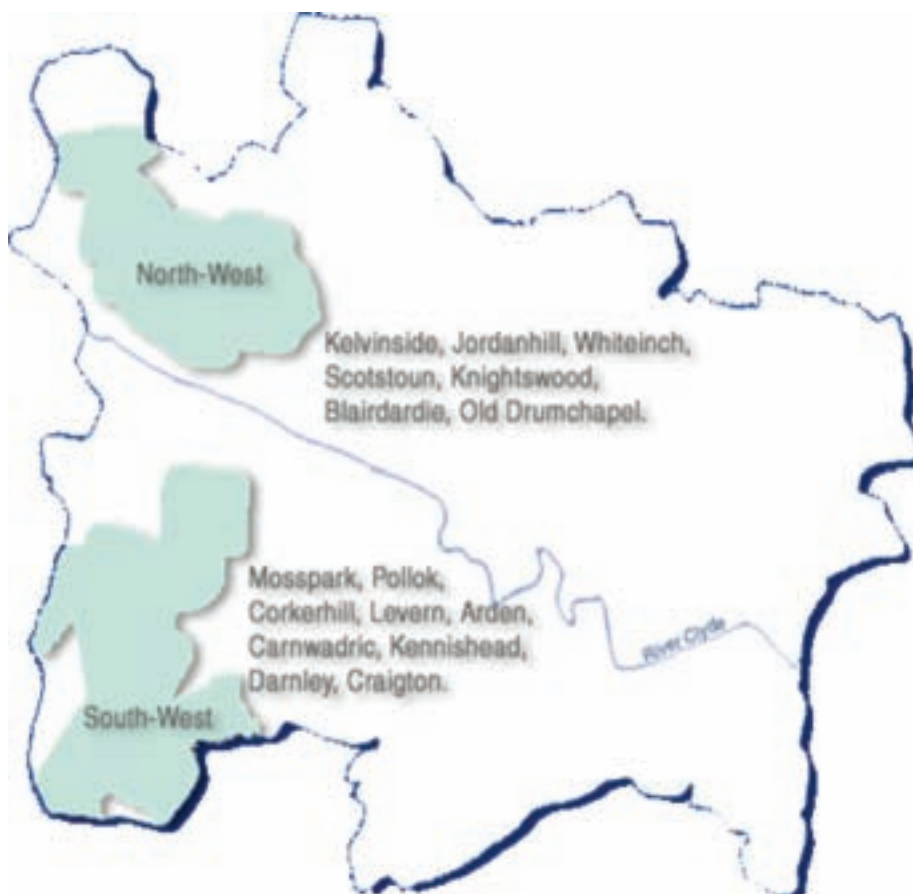
This study uses a variety of methods to explore the facilitators and barriers to the use of greenspace, leisure facilities and community halls. The rationale behind combining methods is to enhance the data, provide complementary insights and to explore whether there are contradictions in the findings from each method. Methods used include GIS mapping, audit of the facilities in the two areas, the development and use of a tool to assess the quality of the amenities, photography assessing the quality of the two areas, secondary analysis of survey data, discussion groups using participatory appraisal techniques and in-depth interviews. These methods will be discussed in more detail in further sections of the report.



## CHAPTER 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO STUDY AREAS: THE MRC 20-07 STUDY LOCALITIES IN GLASGOW

This chapter provides an overview of the two study areas including aspects of the local social and physical environment, which were chosen to coincide with the Medical Research Council 20-07 Study Localities. The West of Scotland Twenty-07 Study: Health in the Community is a longitudinal study of three age cohorts (aged 15, 35, and 55 at first contact in 1987/8) (Macintyre, Annandale, Ecob, Ford, Hunt, Jamieson et al., 1989) and involves residents (n=1500 at the start of the study) of two socially contrasting Localities in Glasgow City (see Figure 2.1 for a map of study locations within Glasgow as at 1987). The first locality is situated in the north west of the city of Glasgow and comprises the neighbourhoods of Anniesland, Dowanhill, Hyndland, Knightswood, Blairdardie and Jordanhill. The second locality is situated in the south west of the city and contains the neighbourhoods of Craigton, Mosspark, Pollok, Lovern, Darnley, South Nitshill, Carnwadric and Arden. When the study commenced in 1987, the boundaries of each locality were determined by community council wards (Maclver & Macintyre, 1987). The North West has better than average health and is relatively socially advantaged in terms of the built environment, local amenities and population characteristics; the South West has worse than average health and is relatively socially disadvantaged.

Figure 2.1 Map of 20-07 Localities





Within these localities, face-to-face interviews (on three occasions to date: 1987, 1992, 2001 with a further planned for 2007) and a postal questionnaire (in 1997) have been conducted, as well as data collection via direct observation by independent researchers and data obtained from local service providers and planners. Table 2.1 provides a description of the population in the two areas based on the 2001 Census.

*Table 2.1 Population profile of the two 20-07 Localities (2001 Census)*

	NORTH WEST		SOUTH WEST	
	Number	% of total population	Number	% of total population
Total Population	56809	100.0	42672	100.0
Males	26532	46.7	19731	46.2
Females	30277	53.3	22941	53.8
Aged 0-4	2788	4.9	2690	6.3
Aged 5-15	6136	10.8	6828	16.0
Aged 16-24	6979	12.3	4670	10.9
Aged 25-64	29940	52.7	21778	51.0
Aged 65 and over	10966	19.3	6706	15.7
Unemployed*	2521	6.0	3444	11.3
Total households	27101	100.0	18388	100.0
No car/van	11151	41.1	10113	55.0
Social Renter**	6198.05	22.9	8265.02	44.9

\* Based on working age pop (16-74) and NS-SEC classification (Long-term unemployed and never worked)

\*\* Renting from Council or Housing Association

A higher proportion of residents in the South West are children compared to the North West. Unemployment is higher in the South West (11.3%) compared to the North West (6%), whereas residents in the North West are more likely to own a car and to own their home.

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### *Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace*

As was the case when the study began (Macintyre, McIver, & Sooman, 1993), the North West is more advantaged in terms of the provision of recreation facilities (Table 2.2).

*Table 2.2 Recreation Facilities (2006)*

	NORTH WEST	SOUTH WEST
Public Swimming pools	2 (1)	2
Private Swimming pools	2 (1)	0 (1)
Sports centres	1 (3)	1
Recreation centres	3 (1)	2
Private Health Clubs	3 (1)	0
Golf Courses	1	0 (3)
Tennis	9	0
Bowling	7 (3)	5 (2)
Football/pitches	3 (2)	2 (1)
Total	31(12)	12(7)

\*In brackets - facilities out-with but near to border.

### *The retail environment in the two Localities*



In the late 1980s a survey was carried out to determine shopping provision in the two localities such as the number and type of shops. There were many more shops in the more affluent North West locality compared to the more deprived South West area. There were 1.45 supermarket/grocery stores per 1000 population in the North West and peripheral area compared to 0.72 per 1000 population in the South West and peripheral area (MacIver & Macintyre, 1987). In addition, there were 0.55 fruit and vegetables shops per 1000 population in the North West and peripheral area, but none at all in the South West and peripheral area at that time.

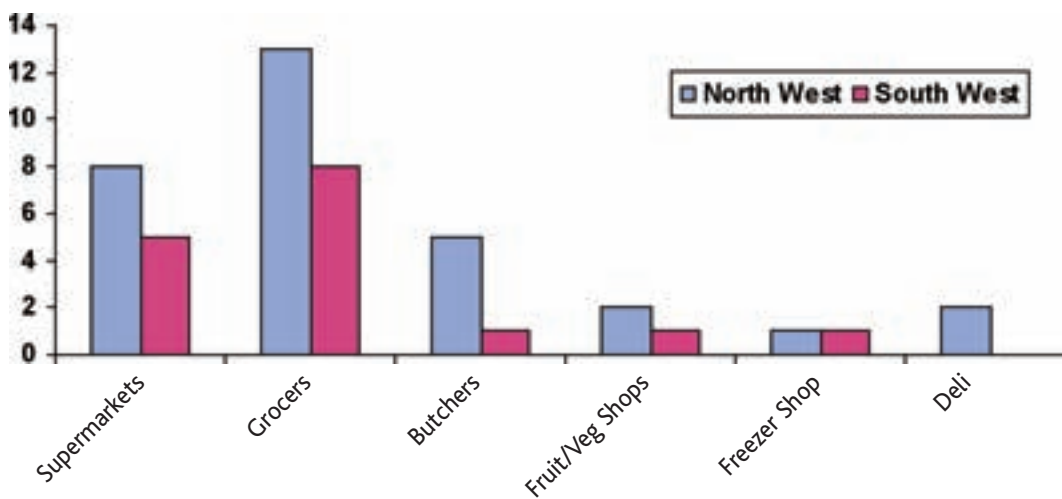
## IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE PARK

### Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace

More recent investigation (examined in October 2005) suggests that retail provision has improved in the South West, although it is still not as well-served as the more affluent locality (Figure 2.2). There are 0.51 food shops per 1000 population within the North West locality<sup>1</sup> compared to 0.36 per 1000 population within the South West locality (Yell.co.uk, 2005). With regard to other food related outlets, such as restaurants, cafes and takeaways, there are more of these outlets per head of the population (Yell.co.uk, 2005) in the more affluent North West locality compared to the more deprived South West locality (Figure 2.3).

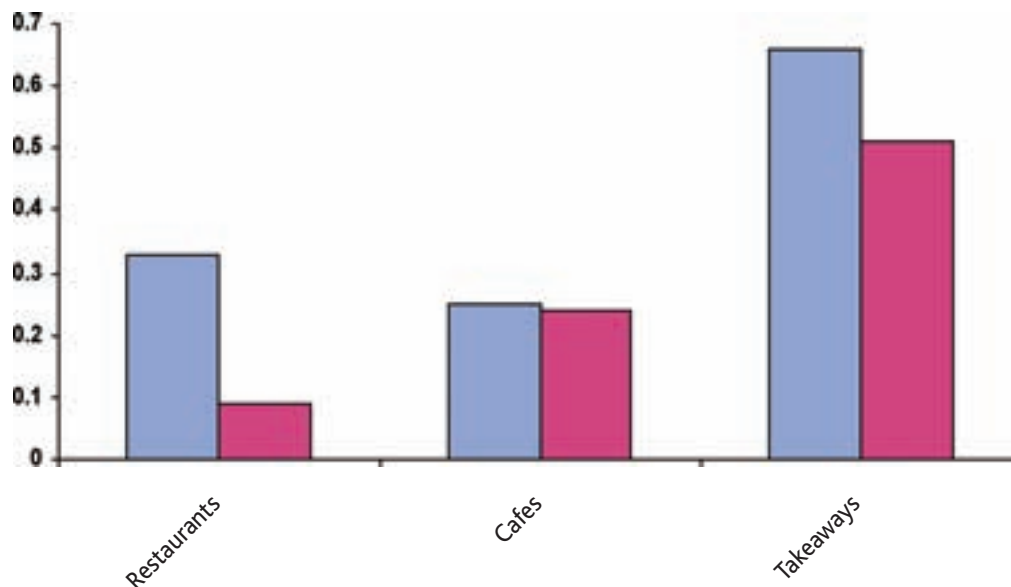


Figure 2.2 Number of food outlets in Localities in 2005



<sup>1</sup> The methodology used in October 2005 was different to that employed in the 1989 retail survey. In the 1989 survey, data was obtained from Glasgow District Council and all venues visited. Due to time constraints, data for the October 2005 survey was obtained from the Yellow Pages online and hence may not provide complete coverage of all retail premises, although the data on eating outlets was confirmed from a list obtained from the City Council.

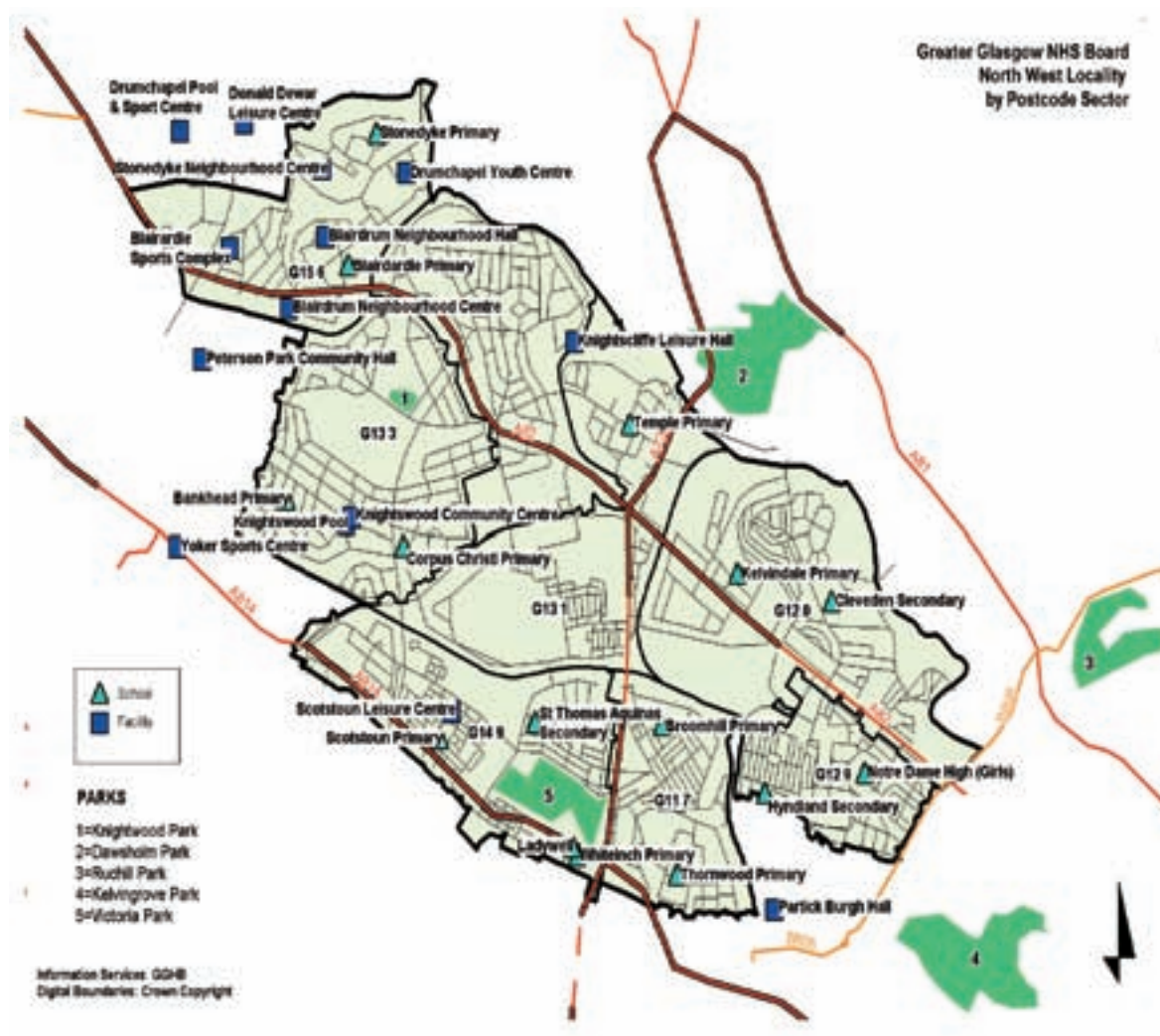
Figure 2.3 Mean number of eating outlets per 1000 population in 2005



There has been increased health-related activity in the voluntary sector in the South West locality since our study began, examples include Fruit Barras, Get Cooking classes, information and advice services and awareness raising through Health Days. There is much less voluntary activity around food issues in the North West although there is the Hillhead Children's Garden whose activities include working with local families to grow fruit and vegetables within Glasgow Botanical Gardens.

To provide further visual representation of the facilities in the two areas, information on the parks, school grounds, leisure facilities and community halls within the two localities that were either managed by the council or voluntary services was obtained from Glasgow City Council Culture and Leisure Services. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde then mapped the facilities using GIS for both the North West (Figure 2.4) and the South West (Figure 2.5) locality.

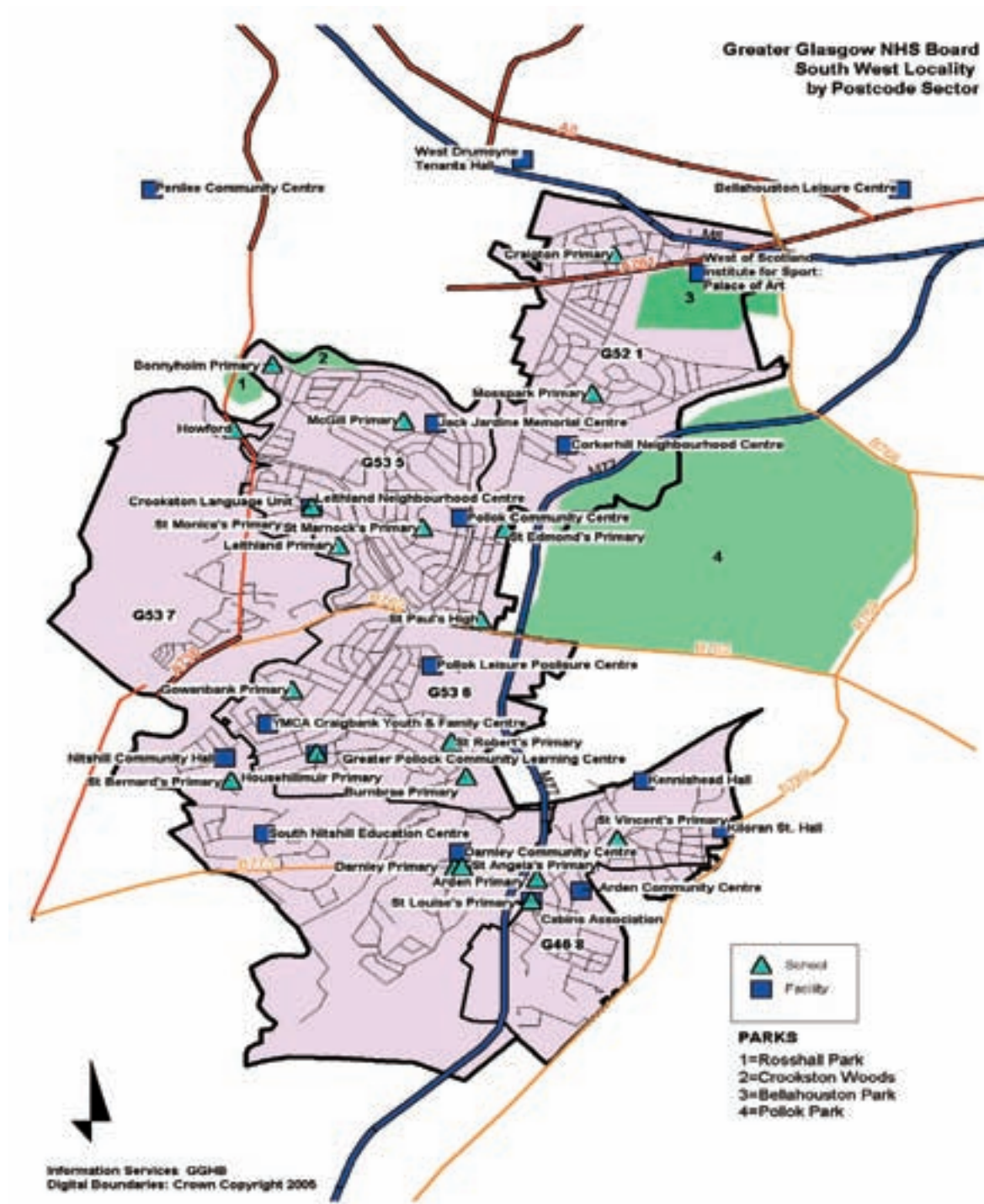
Figure 2.4 Map of the North West Locality's Facilities



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Figure 2.5 Map of the South West Locality's Facilities



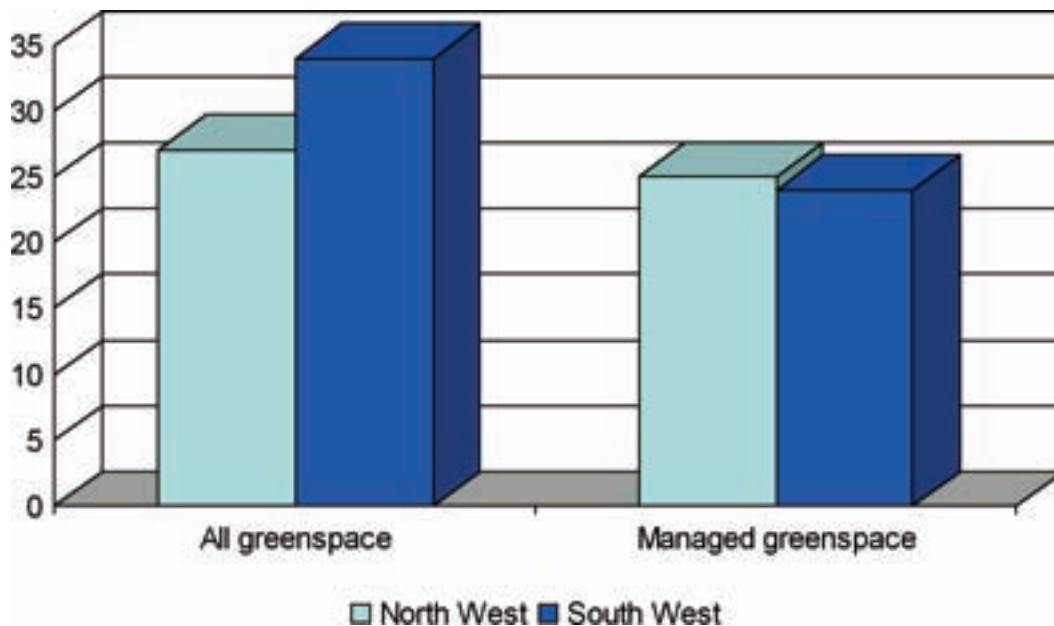
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## IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE PARK

### *Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace*

Based on the maps, it would appear that both localities are well served in terms of Council run facilities for recreational activities. However, it should be noted that access to school grounds after hours is not available to the general public, with the exception of organised sports which must be pre-booked with Glasgow City Council. To explore the potential of mapping further, we used the database developed by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan Team that identifies all greenspace within Glasgow and the Clyde Valley and classifies it using the Scottish Executive Planning Advice Notes 65. We explored access issues to greenspace by first analysing the percentage of residents in each locality that lived within 300 metres to greenspace greater than 2 hectares in size. From this analysis it would appear that the South West locality is better served in terms of large greenspace, in that 34% of the residents in the South West locality as compared to 27% of the residents in the North West locality live within 300 metres of greenspace greater than 2 hectares. However, when further analysis was conducted to limit the large greenspace to that which is managed, the difference virtually disappears between the two areas. There is little change in the North West living with 300 metres of managed greenspace greater than 2 hectares (25%); the shift is more dramatic in the South West, (24%). Thus most of the large greenspace in the more affluent North West area is managed (see Figure 2.6).

*Figure 2.6 Access to Greenspace (300 metres from greenspace > 2 hectares)*



When further analysis was conducted exploring access to greenspace less than 2 hectares in each area, no differences were found between the two localities.

While mapping can provide useful illustrations and mapping databases allow for analysis of the presence of facilities and access in terms of distance, the information is limited. Based on these maps and the mapping database as it currently exists, there is nothing that can be said per se about quality or other potential access issues, such as cost, territoriality and a feeling of being welcome.



## CHAPTER 3: ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF SPACES

In order to determine the quality of spaces in the two areas, two methods were employed: an independent assessment using an audit tool and photographs of the two areas taken by both assessors and local residents. The audit tool was based on the work of Project for Public Spaces, a non-profit organisation based in New York City that has been working to transform public spaces since 1975. Greenspace Scotland has recently commissioned Project for Public Spaces to train and develop capacity in the transformation of place in Scotland. Thus the decision was made to adapt their participatory assessment tool for the purposes of this exercise. The tool assesses spaces based on a human perspective.

The audit tool is comprised of four general categories to rate the quality of the space: use/activities, access/linkages, sociability, and comfort/image (see Appendix 1). Within each category, there were several items that were scored on a five-point scale, with 1 meaning poor and 5 meaning very good. A score of 9 was given when the item did not apply to the space being assessed. Definitions of all the items and how to score them can be found in Appendix 2. Information was obtained from Glasgow City Council regarding public facilities that were either managed by the Council or by volunteer organisations. Generally speaking the North West locality was better served by these facilities, as there were more greenspaces and leisure facilities there, but the South West locality had more community halls. Fourteen public greenspaces (nine in the North West, five in the South West), fourteen leisure facilities (nine in the North West, five in the South West) and thirteen community halls (5 in the North West, 8 in the South West) were assessed using the audit tool. Two researchers were trained in the use of the tool and conducted the assessment together, discussing aspects of each site before coming to an agreement on the scoring. While this procedure allows for comparison between areas, the scoring is not absolute due to the subjective nature of the audit tool.

Results are broken down by type of facility in the following tables and compare the findings between the two localities. Since there are relatively few facilities assessed, statistical comparisons are not possible. Thus the mean and standard deviation are presented for each item, and then for a summed score of items within a category. Any item with a score of 9 was set as missing prior to calculating the mean and standard deviation.

Table 3.1 Assessment of Greenspace

	NORTH WEST (n=9)	SOUTH WEST (n=5)
	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)
<b>USE/ACTIVITIES</b>		
• Fun	2.89 (1.45)	3.40 (1.52)
• Active	2.89 (1.45)	2.80 (1.64)
• Facilities	2.50 (1.69)	3.60 (1.14)
• Affordable	5.00 (0.00)	4.60 (0.89)
• Refreshments	1.22 (0.67)	1.00 (0.00)
<b>ACCESS/LINKAGES</b>		
• Walkable	5.00 (0.00)	5.00 (0.00)
• Connected	5.00 (0.00)	5.00 (0.00)
• Convenient	5.00 (0.00)	5.00 (0.00)
• Accessible by public transport*	4.22 (1.39)	5.00 (0.00)
• Accessible entrances	4.78 (0.67)	5.00 (0.45)
<b>SOCIABILITY</b>		
• Welcoming	2.89 (2.02)	2.80 (1.79)
• Friendly	2.78 (1.92)	3.20 (2.05)
• Diverse	3.11 (1.90)	2.40 (1.95)
<b>COMFORT/IMAGE</b>		
• Clean	3.11 (1.54)	3.00 (1.23)
• Seating	4.14 (0.90)	2.25 (1.50)
• Attractive	3.11 (1.90)	3.17 (1.84)
• Safe	3.22 (1.79)	3.20 (0.84)
• Toilets	3.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)
• Lighting	3.00 (0.00)	1.80 (1.10)
• Graffiti	3.78 (1.20)	1.40 (0.89)
• Maintenance	3.33 (1.58)	3.00 (1.41)

\* Assessors used cars for travel, but determined the closest bus stop or train station.

Table 3.1 presents the results of the assessment for the greenspace in the two areas. There was considerable variation within each area along several of the measures as demonstrated by the standard deviations. Results were fairly similar across the two areas. Exceptions within the Use/Activities category were that the greenspace in the South West scored considerably higher on average for fun and facilities. The South West also demonstrated a higher average score in terms of friendliness, but lower on diversity of people using the greenspace. The South West also had a considerably lower score on the availability of seating, toilets and lighting and was rated much worse in terms of graffiti.

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Table 3.2 displays the results of the assessment for leisure facilities. In general, there was less variation between facilities within an area than there was with greenspace.

Table 3.2 Assessment of Leisure Facilities

	NORTH WEST (n=8)	SOUTH WEST (n=5)
	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)
<b>USE/ACTIVITIES</b>		
• Fun	4.63 (0.52)	4.60 (0.89)
• Active	4.63 (0.74)	4.40 (1.34)
• Facilities	4.25 (0.89)	5.00 (0.00)
• Affordable	4.25 (0.89)	4.20 (1.10)
• Refreshments	3.75 (1.28)	3.40 (1.67)
<b>ACCESS/LINKAGES</b>		
• Walkable	4.56 (1.33)	4.40 (0.89)
• Connected	4.56 (1.33)	4.40 (0.89)
• Convenient	4.44 (1.13)	4.40 (0.89)
• Accessible by public transport*	4.22 (1.57)	4.80 (0.45)
• Accessible entrances	4.67 (0.70)	4.80 (0.45)
<b>SOCIABILITY</b>		
• Welcoming	4.13 (1.36)	4.60 (0.55)
• Friendly	4.75 (0.71)	3.80 (1.34)
• Diverse	4.50 (0.76)	4.20 (0.84)
<b>COMFORT/IMAGE</b>		
• Clean	4.25 (0.89)	4.60 (0.89)
• Seating	4.00 (0.00)	5.00 (0.00)
• Attractive	3.88 (1.46)	5.00 (0.00)
• Safe	4.38 (0.74)	5.00 (0.00)
• Toilets	4.38 (0.74)	4.60 (0.55)
• Lighting	4.25 (0.89)	4.80 (0.45)
• Graffiti	4.00 (1.53)	5.00 (0.00)
• Maintenance	4.00 (1.41)	5.00 (0.00)

\* Assessors used cars for travel, but determined the closest bus stop or train station.

The leisure facilities in the South West scored higher on average in terms of facilities available, and had a higher score on a welcoming appearance, but were rated as less friendly. The facilities in the South West scored higher on average on all measures of Comfort/Image.

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Table 3.3 shows the results of the assessment for community halls. There was less variation of the measures within each area than there was for greenspace, but more than that for leisure facilities.

**Table 3.3 Assessment of Community Halls**

	NORTH WEST (n=8)	SOUTH WEST (n=5)
<b>USE/ACTIVITIES</b>		
• Fun	4.40 (0.55)	4.63 (1.06)
• Active	4.60 (0.55)	4.75 (0.71)
• Facilities	3.40 (1.14)	4.13 (1.25)
• Affordable	4.60 (0.89)	4.50 (0.77)
• Refreshments	3.80 (1.79)	4.13 (1.46)
<b>ACCESS/LINKAGES</b>		
• Walkable	5.00 (0.00)	4.88 (0.35)
• Connected	5.00 (0.00)	4.50 (1.07)
• Convenient	5.00 (0.00)	4.63 (0.74)
• Accessible by public transport*	3.00 (2.00)	3.63 (1.30)
• Accessible entrances	4.40 (1.34)	4.50 (1.07)
<b>SOCIABILITY</b>		
• Welcoming	4.80 (0.45)	4.75 (0.46)
• Friendly	4.80 (0.45)	4.75 (0.46)
• Diverse	3.40 (1.82)	4.75 (0.46)
<b>COMFORT/IMAGE</b>		
• Clean	3.40 (1.82)	4.38 (0.92)
• Seating	5.00 (0.00)	5.00 (0.00)
• Attractive	3.60 (1.14)	4.00 (1.20)
• Safe	4.40 (0.55)	4.38 (0.92)
• Toilets	4.20 (0.84)	4.25 (1.17)
• Lighting	4.00 (1.00)	3.88 (0.84)
• Graffiti	3.60 (1.67)	4.57 (0.79)
• Maintenance	3.00 (1.58)	4.00 (1.07)

\* Assessors used cars for travel, but determined the closest bus stop or train station.

On average, the community halls in the South West scored higher when it came to facilities and refreshments, although there was some variation on this measure in both areas. Community halls in the South West tended to be more diverse (in terms of sex, age and race of people using the facilities) and had higher average scores on measures of cleanliness, graffiti and maintenance; however, there were considerable variations on these measures in both areas.

Generally speaking, there was considerable variation in the quality of facilities in both areas as measured by this assessment scale. Most facilities would benefit from outdoor lighting and increased maintenance. Due to the relatively small number of facilities that were assessed, the tool was not particularly sensitive. Nevertheless, it did allow for some general conclusions to be drawn both within and across areas.

It was noted by the assessors that there was often a difference in quality if comparing the inside and outside of leisure facilities and community halls. Many did not appear welcoming, friendly or sociable on the outside, but were on the inside. Means presented in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 reflect scorings on the inside of these facilities, but according to assessors notes, several of these same facilities would have scored very poorly if assessing them based on their exterior. For example, some community halls were barely recognisable as such and had no signage on the outside that would indicate what was on offer.

It is also of interest that all of the measures of Access/Linkages scored highly in both areas and with little variation within areas for all three types of facility. While this scoring reflects the assessors' views of the tool's access/linkages measures, analysis of the qualitative data (Chapter 5) indicates that access is about much more than the physical qualities of the facilities.

### *Using Photography for Quality Assessment*

The original aim of using photography was to ask respondents to take photographs of their communities as an avenue into discussion about their local areas and facilitators and barriers to greenspace access. The photography also served as an additional source of data to assess the quality of local areas from the resident's perspective. Respondents were given disposable cameras and the cost of developing was paid for. Only a few participants were able to take and develop their photographs prior to interview. In the cases where they were unable to take photographs in time, the researchers improvised and asked what participants intended to photograph. Many took photographs at a later date and sent them back to the research team. The simple act of asking people to focus on photographing their local communities (even if they had not yet done it by interview) was useful in helping people develop a reflective perspective on their neighbourhoods and surroundings in a manner that aided the qualitative interviews. Participants returned over 100 photographs to the study co-ordinators. A minority of participants returned a note alongside the photographs that indicated where the photographs had been taken and in some cases what the picture meant to the photographer.

### *Analysis*

All the photographs were grouped into themes by the research team. This involved sorting through the photographs and identifying characteristics of each photograph and putting similarly themed photographs together. The process took place after the analysis of qualitative interviews. This knowledge, combined with the written descriptions provided by a minority of participants and the knowledge gained by the interviewers (both in familiarising themselves with the communities and prominent concerns and their contact and discussion with the photographers themselves) ensured that participants' views influenced the interpretation of images.

The research team identified the following seven key themes of image recorded:

- Scenic places
- Community resources
- Uninviting places
- Connectivity
- Roads
- Buildings
- Housing

### Scenic places

This was the largest grouping of photographs we identified. These included images of open views, landscapes, well-maintained flowerbeds and paths, and pleasant, inviting places. This underlined the fact that greenspaces, for those who had taken photos, were cherished, appreciated places and respondents were keen to record them fondly. We also considered the possibility that asking people to take photographs may encourage the recording of positive images, given that most amateur photographers use the medium for recording positive life-events.



South West



North West

However, the reiteration of positive views in relation to greenspaces in the other qualitative data collected and that fact that individuals also took negative images alongside them suggests these were the result of reflective and balanced attempts to capture personal orientations to greenspace.

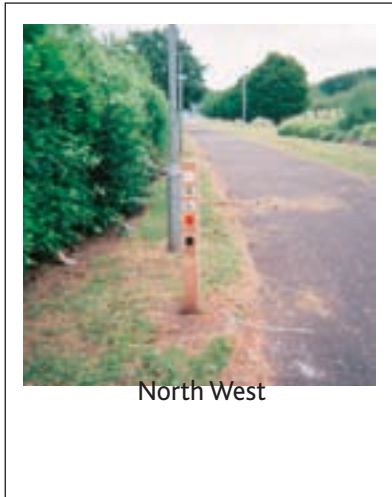


North West



### *Community Resources*

The next largest group of photographs was community resources. These illustrated a variety of destinations and leisure activities including sports pitches, sports centres, museums, allotments, shopping centres, garden centres, play areas and recreational water sports. Other amenities were also photographed including picnic tables, cycle paths, footpaths, car parks and parking bays.



There was variation in the external quality of the resources photographed. Some displayed amenities that look tired, dilapidated or vandalised and some had been photographed in a manner that brought to the fore their physical shortcomings.



Consequently, some photographs of community resources could also be assigned to the next category, uninviting. However, it was difficult to interpret conclusively what the meaning of a photograph was given that active engagement with a resource may frame more positive views of it.



### *Uninviting*

The third largest category was photographs of uninviting aspects of the areas. These pictures illustrated several environmental incivilities such as fly tipping; street litter; public urination; dog fouling; graffiti; misshapen hedges following scuffles amongst local school children (gathered from interviews). Other photographs illustrated neglected areas such as dark uninviting streets and pathways. From the written descriptions or reports of the interviewees, we learned that some participants were dissatisfied with a perceived "lack of respect" from other street users acted in their local community. For example, a chip shop was criticised for opening late and attracting groups of young people and some participants complained about smokers taking up room on pavements. However, while many respondents identified graffiti as an eyesore, one participant viewed 'street art' as a positive contribution to the environment and instead found the proliferation of commercial signage aesthetically offensive. This illustrates how the same public space may be viewed in contrasting ways amongst community members.



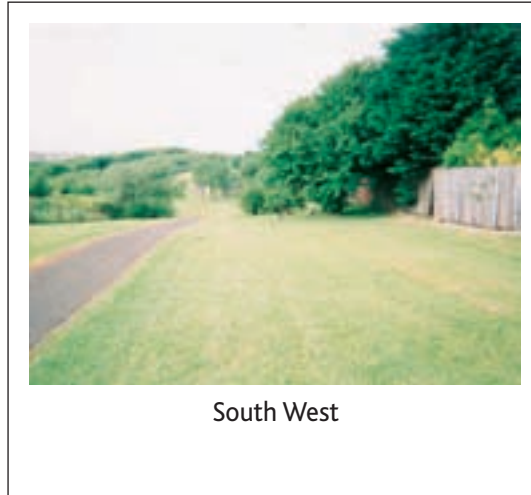
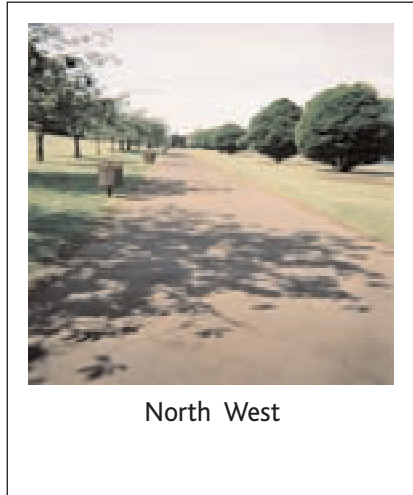
South West



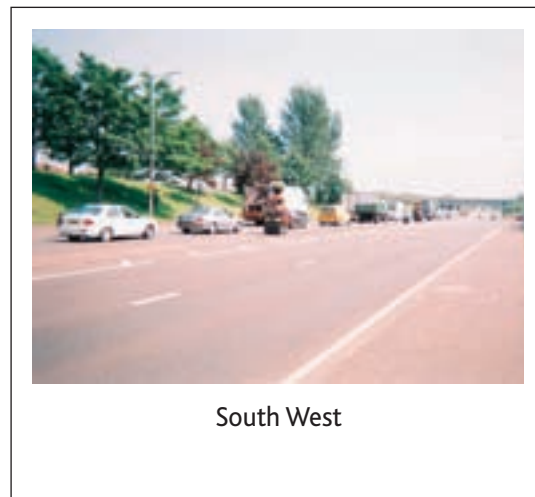
South West

### Connectivity

Many participants took photographs which illustrated connectivity, for example public transport connections, cycle paths and footpaths. Some images were positive, such as tree-lined areas, whereas others had negative connotations such as vandalised bus shelters and overflowing litter bins.



Several participants took photographs of roads. These pictures included images of congested streets and roads lined with parked cars. While it is not possible to understand the intentions of the including these photos, the impression was that busy roads were a barrier to safety and ease of access to facilities such as leisure centres. A plethora of street furniture such as pedestrian barriers, road signage and surface paint appeared unattractive when compared with other connectivity resources such as paths within parks.



In some images it was clear pedestrian or cycle access took second place to motorised traffic, often in the heart of people's communities. Cycle paths of variable quality were also photographed. Other photographs illustrated positive aspects of the streetscapes such as "Twenty's Plenty" signs, tree-lined avenues, green verges and a City Council street cleaner.

## **Buildings**

A variety of images included buildings.



South West



North West



South West



North West

Various housing types were featured in the photographs, such as Victorian tenements and 1960's local authority housing. Buildings under construction were included such as the new shopping area in Pollok. We knew from other qualitative data that the issue of privatised building developments on greenspace was an issue for some residents. However, the general improvements and rebuilding of housing stock photographed in the deprived areas could be seen as signs of hopeful progress.

### *Other themes- Private Space*

Only a minority of participants photographed private space such as gardens. This illustrated the general 'leafiness' of the area and, in the words of one respondent, "it makes me feel good to look out



on". The same photographer also recorded the attractive and well-kept lanes in her area. These lanes had been adopted by the council, but residents continued to take responsibility and care to keep them free of litter. These also offered a safe play space for local children.

### *Advantages and limitations of using photography*

The principle advantage of the photographic method used in this project was in that it allowed participants time to think about the resources in their communities prior to the interviews. Those who had taken photographs were additionally able to use them as an aide-memoire, and as a basis for focusing and articulating their views. Even if some had not taken photographs by the time of interview, many had begun to think about what they intended to photograph. It was clear to the interviewers that both the photographs and even the potential photographs further acted as an effective 'ice-breaker'. It could also be argued that the use of photography encouraged a more active engagement by, and greater empowerment of, the respondents. By being encouraged to bring their own data to the research encounter, participants were not merely responding to the interviewers' prompts but actively initiating their own prompts within the dialogue.

An obvious limitation was the time needed to take the photographs and have them developed. This further increased administration and organisational needs as some effort was required to ensure that cameras could be despatched, used, and photographs returned and developed in time to be of use. Digital technology may provide a means of getting round this in future studies.

While both the photographs and the assessment tool provided valuable insights into the quality of certain amenities within the local neighbourhoods, there are limitations to both. The assessment tool provides an "outsiders" snapshot perspective, where the judgment is made based on a single visit. While the assessment tool did provide some insight into the relative quality of spaces and how people used it, the tool cannot provide information on how people incorporate the facilities into their daily lives, nor the variation in how different people view the facilities and whether this affects their use. The same problem exists with the photographs, although the photos begin to hint at how people interact with their local neighbourhoods.

## CHAPTER 4: HEALTH, HEALTH BEHAVIOURS AND THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH PERCEPTION OF THE LOCAL AREA

Thus far, the methods employed in this study have described the existence and quality of certain facilities located in the two neighbourhoods. This chapter provides an overview of how respondents in the two study areas compare across a range of health and health behaviour measures relevant to the project, how respondents view their own areas in terms of the local social and physical environment and how these views are associated with health and health behaviours.

As stated in Chapter 2, The West of Scotland 20-07 Study: Health in the Community is a longitudinal study of three age cohorts (aged 15, 35, and 55 at first contact in 1987/8) <sup>1</sup> and involves residents (n=1500 at the start of the study) of two socially contrasting localities in Glasgow City. The localities component involves both face-to-face interviews (on three occasions to date: 1987, 1992, 2001 with a further planned for 2007) and a postal questionnaire (in 1997) as well as data collection via direct observation by independent researchers and data obtained from local service providers and planners. A wide range of data has been collected from respondents about their day to day lives, including a range of structured questions on how people perceive their housing and local environment, as well as an extensive suite of self reported and directly measured health and well being indicators. As with all longitudinal studies, the number of respondents who continue to participate in the study has reduced. At the last sweep of the study in 2001, the total number who took part was 827 (55% of the original sample of 1500). Of these, 702 respondents (372 in the North West, 300 in the South West) were still resident within the locality boundaries. The data presented in this chapter on health, health behaviours and perceptions of the local social and physical environment is based on that group. Due to the fact that this is a relatively small number in each area, particularly when making comparisons for age and gender, the purpose of the tables in this section is to illustrate general patterns of health and health behaviours, rather than an in-depth statistical comparison of differences between the two areas.



## HEALTH AND HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

### Self assessed general health

Respondents in the survey were asked to rate their health over the last 12 months, choosing one of four possible responses: 'excellent', 'good', 'fair' or 'poor'. Table 4.1 shows, separately by age group and gender, the percentage of respondents in each area who rated their health favourably ('excellent' and 'good' categories combined).

Overall, a higher percentage of respondents in the more affluent North West rated their health as 'excellent'/'good' compared to respondents in the South West. This pattern was observed across all age groups with the exception of the youngest cohort of males where a slightly higher percentage of those in the South West rated their health more favourably than males of a similar age group in the more affluent North West.

Table 4.1 Self assessed general health

	NORTH WEST %	SOUTH WEST %
<b>Health 'excellent'/'good' over the last 12 months</b>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	52.2	61.0
50 year olds	76.9	60.5
70 year olds	66.1	44.1
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	62.9	58.5
50 year olds	68.3	55.1
70 year olds	65.5	56.9
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>66.3</b>	<b>55.5</b>

### Selected health behaviours

Generally speaking, a higher percentage of respondents in the more affluent North West area reported healthier behaviours than respondents in the South West. For example, less than a quarter of the respondents in the North West currently smoked (24% overall; 25% of males and 23% of females), as compared to over a third of the respondents in the South West (40% overall; 46% of males and 35% of females). Table 4.2 shows that respondents in the North West were more likely to engage in all types of physical activity. Although not a traditional health behaviour measure, data is also shown regarding the extent to which respondents in each area report their reluctance to walk around their local area after dark (either never do it or avoid it). Although the difference is smallest among the 30 year old age cohort, there is a consistent pattern for men in that those in the South West are more likely to report either never walking or at least avoiding walking around the local area after dark. The pattern is the same for women in the 50 and 70 year old cohorts; however, it is reversed for women in the 30 year old cohort, with the percentage slightly higher in the North West.

*Table 4.2 Physical Activity*

	NORTH WEST %	SOUTH WEST %
<i>Does any sport, games or exercise</i>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	78.3	75.6
50 year olds	76.6	46.5
70 year olds	57.1	50.8
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	62.9	57.7
50 year olds	60.7	37.7
70 year olds	55.2	32.3
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>64.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>
<i>Done any cycling during the last year</i>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	28.3	29.3
50 year olds	34.4	16.3
70 year olds	8.9	5.1
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	25.7	7.5
50 year olds	19.0	2.9
70 year olds	4.6	3.1
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>9.1</b>
<i>Any walks of 2 miles or more during the last year</i>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	95.7	85.4
50 year olds	93.8	73.8
70 year olds	73.2	50.0
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	85.7	56.6
50 year olds	76.2	59.4
70 year olds	61.2	43.8
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>59.3</b>

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Table 4.2 continued (Physical Activity)

	NORTH WEST %	SOUTH WEST %
<b>Any episodes per average week does at least 20 minutes of vigorous physical exercise (gets sweaty or out of breath)</b>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	71.7	63.4
50 year olds	53.1	20.9
70 year olds	21.4	6.9
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	48.6	34.0
50 year olds	36.9	15.9
70 year olds	25.3	6.2
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>40.1</b>	<b>21.9</b>
<b>Report never/avoid walking around their local area after dark</b>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	2.2	4.9
50 year olds	1.6	16.3
70 year olds	14.3	22.4
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	28.6	26.4
50 year olds	16.7	38.2
70 year olds	41.2	66.2
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>32.0</b>

### Body size

Concerns over rising levels of obesity have been increasing, and in this section we explore patterns of body size as measured by BMI. Body weight (clothed) was measured to the nearest 0.5kg by portable electronic scales calibrated at the local trading standards office. Height was measured to the nearest centimetre using Leicester stadiometers, respondents standing without shoes, heels against the wall and head in the Frankfort plane. BMI was calculated as: weight [kgs]/height[metres]<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) was originally developed for use in general hospital settings and assesses anxiety and depression using two sub-scales 5. Zigmond A, Snaith R. The Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale. Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica 1983;67:361-37. each containing 7 items. The instrument has been validated in other non-hospital settings and in a range of studies 6. Janssens A, Doorn PA, Boer JB, Meche FGA, Passchier J, Hintzen RQ. Impact of recently diagnosed multiple sclerosis on quality of life, anxiety, depression and distress of patients

## IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE PARK

### Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace

Overall, 24.5% of the study respondents could be classified as 'obese' (BMI > 30), with the average BMI being slightly higher among residents in the more deprived South West compared to those in the more affluent North West (Table 4.3). However, prevalence of obesity in the two areas varies by gender and age cohort, the highest rates of obesity are seen for middle aged women (38.2%) in the more deprived area, whereas the lowest is observed for elderly men (11%) in the same area – a much lower proportion compared to elderly men in the more affluent area where 25% are classified as obese.

*Table 4.3 Percentage of respondents classified as 'obese (BMI>30)*

	NORTH WEST % 'OBESE' BMI > 30	SOUTH WEST 'OBESE' BMI > 30%
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	11.9	14.6
50 year olds	27.4	20.0
70 year olds	25.5	10.9
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	20.6	34.0
50 year olds	26.6	38.2
70 year olds	22.6	30.2
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>25.9</b>

*Mental health and well-being*

A range of measures of mental health and well-being were collected as part of the study, including the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) , and other items designed

*Table 4.4 Mean scores on HADS anxiety and depression subscales*

		NORTH WEST MEAN	SOUTH WEST MEAN
<i>HADS anxiety</i>			
	<b>MEN</b>		
	30 year olds	6.2	7.4
	50 year olds	5.6	6.5
	70 year olds	5.6	5.4
	<b>WOMEN</b>		
	30 year olds	7.3	8.4
	50 year olds	7.5	7.6
	70 year olds	5.9	7.2
	<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	6.3	7.1
<i>HADS depression</i>			
	<b>MEN</b>		
	30 year olds	3.0	3.5
	50 year olds	3.5	4.8
	70 year olds	4.0	4.3
	<b>WOMEN</b>		
	30 year olds	2.8	5.2
	50 year olds	4.0	4.5
	70 year olds	3.5	4.6
	<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	3.6	4.5

to capture feelings of anxiety and depression. For example, respondents were asked if 'During the past twelve months, how often if at all have you been bothered by feeling sad or depressed?' and 'During the past twelve months, how often if at all have you been bothered by feelings of anxiety?'. For both these questions, respondents were asked to choose from five possible options: 'very often', 'fairly often', 'sometimes', 'almost never', and 'never' with an additional option of 'can't choose'.

On both the anxiety and depression subscales of the HADS (see Table 4.4), respondents in the more deprived South West had a higher score overall compared to respondents in the North West. This was observed across both gender and age groups (with the exception of 70 year olds where the mean HADS anxiety score was slightly higher for men in the North West compared to those in the South West).

Table 4.5 shows that a slightly higher proportion of respondents in the South West (around 1 in 5) those in the North West (around 1 in 6) reported feeling sad or depressed very or fairly often over the last year. There was a similar excess among South West respondents (17.3 %) reporting frequent feelings of anxiety overall compared to those in the North West (13.7%). However, rather different patterns are observed when these percentages are explored separately by gender and age. For example, twice the percentage of young men in the South West report feeling sad or depressed frequently over the last year compared to young men in the North West. However, this pattern is reversed with regard to anxiety; twice the percentage of young men in the North West (17.4%) report frequent feelings of anxiety compared to young men in the South West (7.4%).

*Table 4.5 Percentage of respondents reporting frequent feelings of sadness/depression or anxiety during the previous 12 months.*

	NORTH WEST %	SOUTH WEST %
<i>Percentage feeling sad or depressed 'very' or 'fairly often'</i>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	8.7	17.1
50 year olds	9.2	16.3
70 year olds	8.9	10.2
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	17.1	39.6
50 year olds	24.4	18.8
70 year olds	18.4	18.5
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>20.0</b>
<i>Percentage feeling anxious 'very' or 'fairly often'</i>		
<b>MEN</b>		
30 year olds	17.4	7.3
50 year olds	9.2	16.3
70 year olds	7.1	6.8
<b>WOMEN</b>		
30 year olds	20.0	32.1
50 year olds	20.7	20.3
70 year olds	10.3	18.5
<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>17.3</b>

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## PERCEPTIONS OF THE LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ASSOCIATIONS WITH HEALTH

### *Residents' perceptions of their local neighbourhood*

To measure respondents' perceptions of local problems, they were asked about sixteen types of socio-environmental problems in their neighbourhood. Respondents were invited to reply using a three point scale ('not a problem' score 1, 'minor problem' score 2, 'serious problem' score 3). Responses to each of these items are shown in Table 4.6.

*Table 4.6 Percentage of respondents reporting a 'serious' problem in their area*

% REPORTING A 'SERIOUS' PROBLEM WITH	NORTH WEST	SOUTH WEST
Lack of recreation facilities	15.1	36.4
Lack of safe places for children to play	13.5	31.2
Litter and rubbish	12.4	21.5
Vandalism	6.7	19.1
Disturbance by children or youngsters	5.4	14.2
Speeding traffic	17.3	14.2
Burglaries	9.7	13.3
Assaults or muggings	3.5	10.6
Reputation of the neighbourhood	0.8	10.6
Nuisance from dogs	8.9	9.4
Derelict or waste ground	1.6	8.2
Uneven or dangerous pavements	10.0	6.4
The people round here	1.6	3.0
Smells and fumes	4.0	3.0
Discarded needles or syringes	1.9	2.4
Getting services (e.g. taxis, police or ambulances) to come to peoples homes	0.3	2.1

Except for three items (speeding traffic, uneven or dangerous pavements, smells and fumes), respondents in the South West were more likely to report a problem as serious.

To find out if there were underlying factors which can be grouped together, factor analysis was used and three domains emerged from the sixteen problem items: 'incivilities' (litter, vandalism, burglaries, disturbance by children or youths, nuisance from dogs, assaults, discarded needles/syringes, people, reputation of the neighbourhood), 'absence of goods' (lack of safe play areas for children, lack of recreation facilities, obtaining services), 'physical environmental problems' (speeding traffic, derelict/waste ground, uneven/dangerous pavements, smells & fumes). For each of these three domains, a score was constructed by summing responses to each item comprising the domains. These scores were subsequently divided into four groups, with those in the lowest group having fewer concerns and those in the highest group having higher concerns about their local neighbourhood.

Table 4.7 shows that a higher percentage of respondents in the South West compared to the North West were in the group with the highest level of perceived problems with 'incivilities' and 'absence of goods' with particularly marked difference for 'absence of goods' (where almost 42% of those in the South West compared to 17% of those in the North West perceived this aspect of their neighbourhood as highly problematic). There was much less of a marked difference between the two localities in perceptions of the physical environment.

*Table 4.7 Percentage of respondents within each of the four groups of perceived neighbourhood environment*

		(%)	(%)
<i>'Incivilities'</i>	1 'less concerned'	30.2	21.5
	2	29.1	30.9
	3	23.5	20.6
	4 'most concerned'	17.3	27.0
<i>'Absence of goods'</i>	1 'less concerned'	40.3	24.6
	2	27.6	15.3
	3	15.1	18.5
	4 'most concerned'	17.0	41.5
<i>'Physical environment'</i>	1 'less concerned'	29.5	33.0
	2	25.1	23.5
	3	19.7	18.3
	4 'most concerned'	25.7	25.1

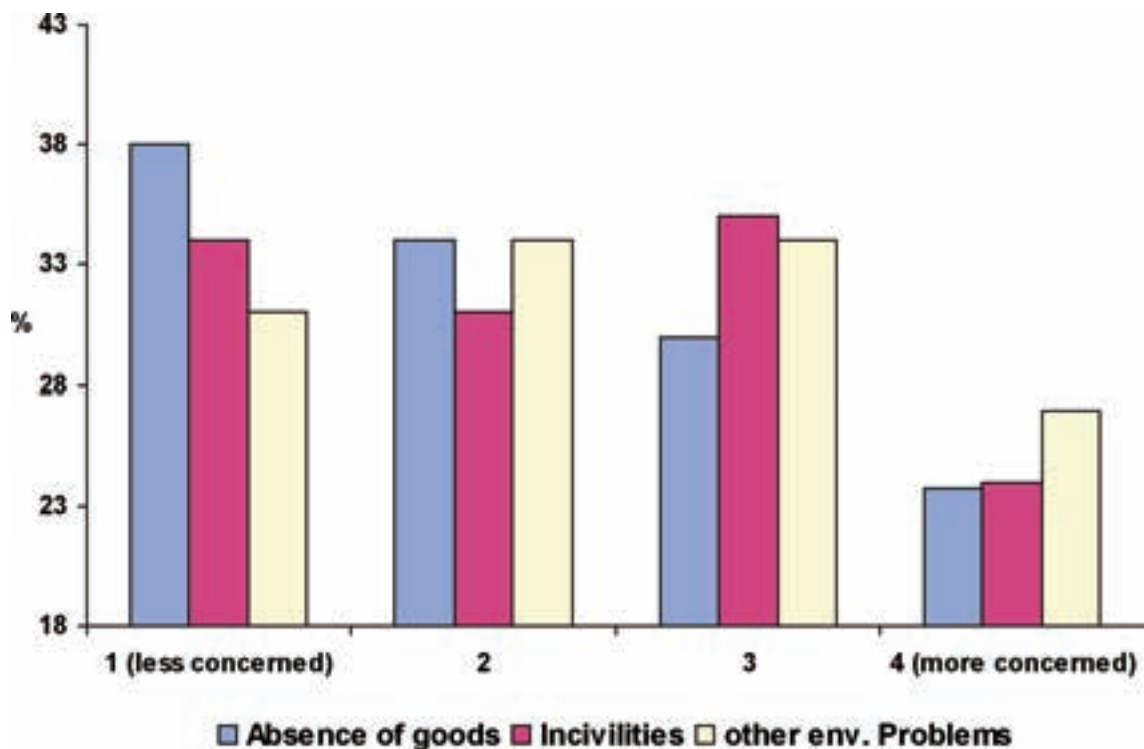
*Associations between perceptions of the local environment and health*

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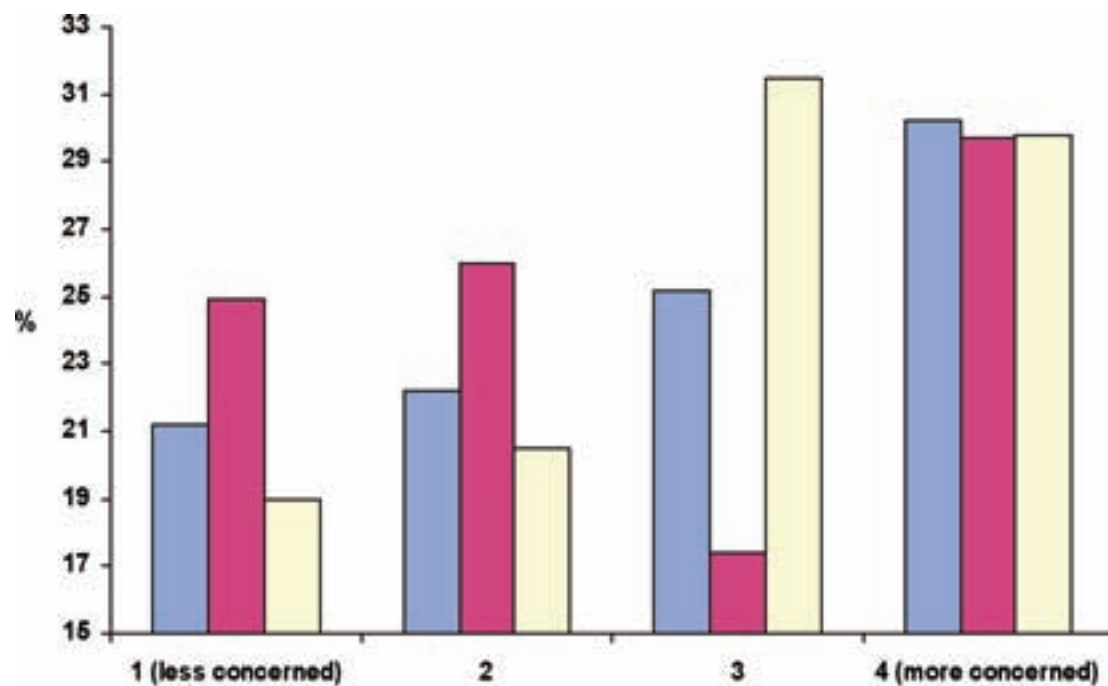
For each of the three domains regarding local environmental perceptions, we examined whether there was an association with being overweight/obese or health related behaviours such as undertaking vigorous exercise on at least one occasion per week, or taking a walk of 2 miles or more in the previous year or degree of comfort with walking around the local area after dark. Figure 4.1 shows, for each of the three domains of perceived local environment, the proportion of respondents reporting that they currently undertake some vigorous physical exercise (on one or more days per week as opposed to none at all). Figure 4.2 shows the proportion of respondents in each domain who are obese (BMI > 30). Figure 4.3 shows the proportion of respondents in each domain who report that they never/avoid walking around their local area after dark.

*Figure 4.1 Percentage of respondents reporting that they currently undertake some vigorous physical exercise by domains of perceived environmental problems*



In Figure 4.1, it can be seen that the group with fewest concerns regarding an 'absence of goods' have the highest levels of undertaking vigorous physical activity on one or more days per week and reported physical activity decreases as concerns about this domain increase. Although a lower proportion of those who are most concerned about 'incivilities' or 'other environmental problems' report undertaking vigorous physical activity compared to the rest, there is less of a clear trend as seen with 'absence of goods'.

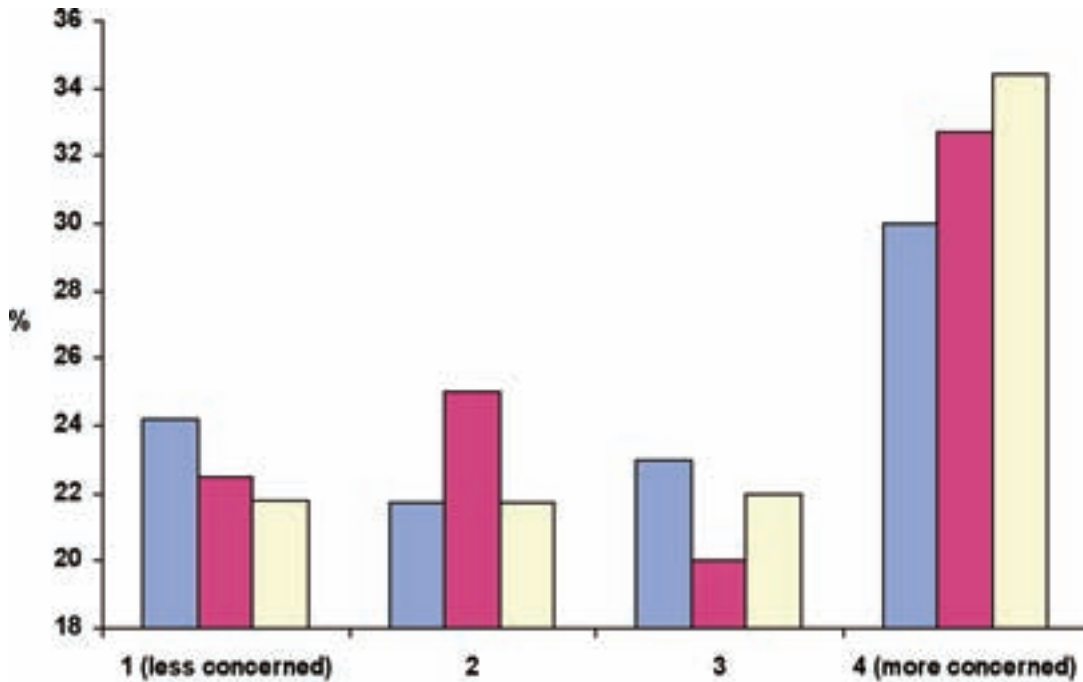
Figure 4.2 Percentage of respondents who are obese (BMI > 30) by domains of perceived environmental problems.



As can be seen from Figure 4.2, being obese is less prevalent among those groups who perceive fewer concerns with an 'absence of goods', or 'incivilities' compared to those who are most concerned about these aspects of their local neighbourhood. There was a more mixed picture for perceived 'incivilities', although a higher percentage of those in the group who were 'most concerned' were obese compared to the other three groups.

Figure 4.3 shows a rather striking picture of the large volume of respondents (around a third) in the group most concerned about all three domains of perceived environmental quality who report that they never/ avoid walking around their local area after dark.

*Figure 4.3 Percentage of respondents who report that they never/avoid walking around their local area after dark by domains of perceived environmental problems.*



### Summary

This chapter has described how the respondents within the two socially contrasting study areas compare in aspects of their health and health behaviours and their perceptions of their local neighbourhood. Overall, respondents in the more affluent area report better health and more frequent physical activity than those in the more deprived area. Respondents in the more deprived locality perceive their local neighbourhood to be more unattractive and to lack amenities which might relate to their propensity to undertake physical activity. In addition, these environmental perceptions are associated with certain health characteristics and behaviours. While these findings are telling, it is important to explore the processes that may underlie these associations through qualitative methods.

## CHAPTER 5: WHY IT ISN'T JUST ABOUT THE PARK: EXPLORING THE PROCESSES THAT LEAD TO GREENSPACE USAGE

The findings presented in this chapter are based on the analysis of a variety of qualitative techniques, including 6 focus groups using participatory appraisal methods and 24 depth interviews.

### *Participatory Groups*

Prior to conducting the interviews, pilot work with community groups was undertaken to help define the parameters and scope of the data collection in a manner that allowed local people an input. This endeavour was guided by the principles of participatory appraisal (PA), a process that allows people to locally determine agendas in consultation. PA is characterised by its approach rather than being defined by a rigorous set of methods (Hilton, 2005), which enables people to share their ideas and knowledge about local conditions. The tools used were community mapping, H diagrams and pair ranking. Six participatory groups were conducted, three in each area. They were made up of pre-existing groups including a pensioners group, a tenants' association and an environmental group (North West), an asylum seeker mothers group, an asylum seeker fathers group and a youth group (South West).

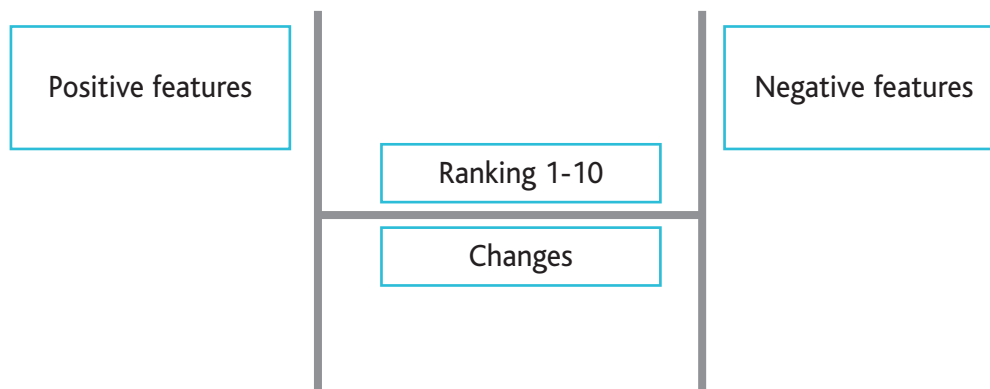
### *Community Mapping*

We asked participants, in groups of 3 to 6 people to visually map their area focussing on the distribution of parks, green space and community facilities. The subjective nature of the maps offered an important counterpoint to existing data on the areas such as GIS as it better shows how individuals relate to and experience space in their communities; what they identified as available resources and issues of access that are likely to be grounded in social factors and not solely issues of physical availability and attractiveness that can be more objectively rated.

## H Diagrams

The second activity encouraged the groups to go into more depth through the use of H diagrams (see Figure 5.1). This activity asks people to list both the positive and negative aspects of their communities as relating to the use of greenspace, park and community facilities. It begins by asking people to rate their local community in terms of the relevant question on a scale of 1 to 10. This is not intended to be an objective rating but to help focus attention on the issue and to stimulate discussion. After listing the positive and negative features participants were asked to think about changes that are possible to improve the experience and increase accessibility and usage.

Figure 5.1 An H- Diagram



### Pair Ranking Exercise

Pair Ranking was conducted with the groups after they completed the H diagram. Pair ranking is an often used PA tool to help forge a consensus within a group as to which of the changes they suggested would be most useful, achievable or sustainable. Pair ranking works by comparing a pair of suggestions and deciding through discussion which is most likely to succeed. This process continues until there is a clear winner.

### Depth interviews

Participants were selected for the depth interviews from the sample of 1954 respondents to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's 2005 Health and Well Being Study who stated they were willing to be contacted for future research. There were 138 respondents who lived within the postcode boundaries of the 2 study areas (76 in the North West and 62 in the South West). A letter was posted inviting them to participate in the FAB Greenspace study and requesting them to contact Glasgow Centre for Population Health. Interviewers telephoned those who replied to arrange a convenient time for an interview in the participants' homes. A total of 24 interviews (12 in the North West and 12 in the South West) were conducted.

Disposable cameras were given to all those who took part in the individual interviews (N= 24) of which 15 returned photographs. If the photographs had been taken and processed by the time of an interview then they would be used to lead discussion in the interview itself. Many however returned the camera during or after the interview. In such cases, participants were asked either about the photographs they had taken but had not yet been developed or what they might take a photograph of. When talking about the quality of local facilities, people would choose their own entry point into the discussion, often aided by the photographs they had taken. When they had not taken pictures of their local parks, but other aspects of their

community, the themes represented in the photographs would frame their discussion of greenspaces, access and decisions around their use of them.

The interviewers also asked about (see Appendix 3):

- The local area, both good and bad points.
- Availability of areas for walking, playing and generally being active, and how often they use them.
- How well they integrate use of local amenities into their daily lives and routines.
- Their level of fitness and whether this could be improved.

### *Analysing the interview data*

All interview transcripts were listened to and notes taken by one research analyst. Verbatim transcripts of the first 16 interviews were made and also analysed. Interview transcripts and tapes were analysed horizontally for cross cutting themes and also vertically as case studies to understand how facilitators and barriers come to be understood as in embedded within the lifestyles choices of participants.

### *Cross cutting themes*

The following themes were identified in the interview data as factors that structure usage of public greenspace and community spaces or their private alternatives (such as bowling clubs, gyms etc). The emergent themes could be understood as pertaining to different aspects of experience, some related to wider social conditions (S), others to personal circumstances and values (P) and some to elements relating to the resources and neighbourhoods (R).

- Condition of facilities (R)
- Confidence/worldliness of respondent (P)
- Social cohesion (S)
- Marketing (R)
- Safety (S, R)
- Convenience (P)
- Available time (P)
- Family (P)
- Employment (P)
- Age and stage (P)
- Things to do at the facility (R)
- Integration (S)

### *Within case analysis*

Analysing the interviews as case studies provided an opportunity to see how these factors interact and to explore the degree of perceived choice or barriers to choice that participants felt they had in using greenspace. In cases where people did not use greenspace or parks, it was just as important to understand whether people felt they were making a positive choice not to use it and what factors informed this choice.

In reporting the data an attempt is made to illustrate how factors influencing greenspace and other resource usage are grounded within the lived experience of users. Displaying them as aspects of grounded case studies achieves this most faithfully.



### Findings

Although the interviews were with different individuals than the participatory focus groups, many of the same themes arose, which provided an opportunity to explore the individual experience of these themes in more depth. The findings can be summarised with the phrase "it's not just about the park" to illustrate how parks and similar facilities can not be designed in isolation from individual preferences, circumstances and understanding of wider processes. The accessibility of a resource or amenity is a characteristic of individual perceptions and values as much as the quality or availability of the greenspace itself. This aspect of accessibility cannot be addressed through the use of an independent assessment tool such as the one described in Chapter 3. Access and usage issues stem from how social and cultural factors are experienced at the personal level, shaping subsequent orientations towards public space. Consequently, it is not necessarily through tinkering with greenspace per se that we optimise access. This is not to say that parks do not have an important role to play in optimising access and ameliorating the real problems of exclusion, inequality and risk in urban areas. Recommendations that can be made from the data point not only to improving physical facilities, but also to helping people overcome fears about safety without further excluding others. Just as crucially, parks need to connect meaningfully with the variety of values and preferences people hold, many of which do not currently result in park usage.

How parks situate themselves in people's consciousness is illustrative of how individual meanings and frames of interpretation, not just the physical qualities of the parks themselves, can determine accessibility. For some people, good parks should be urban oases, like the countryside in the city, whilst others prefer parks to be constitutive of the city itself, offering in pleasant surroundings the types of facilities one would expect to find in urban areas. This difference points to a limitation of designing one space for all in any but the largest of spaces, given the myriad potential preferences. Offering a variety of facilities and greenspace in urban areas, well-connected to each other and well-integrated into the urban fabric through transport, cycling or walkable links is possibly the most effective way to broaden access for all.

Figure 5.2 Influential factors in determining amenity usage

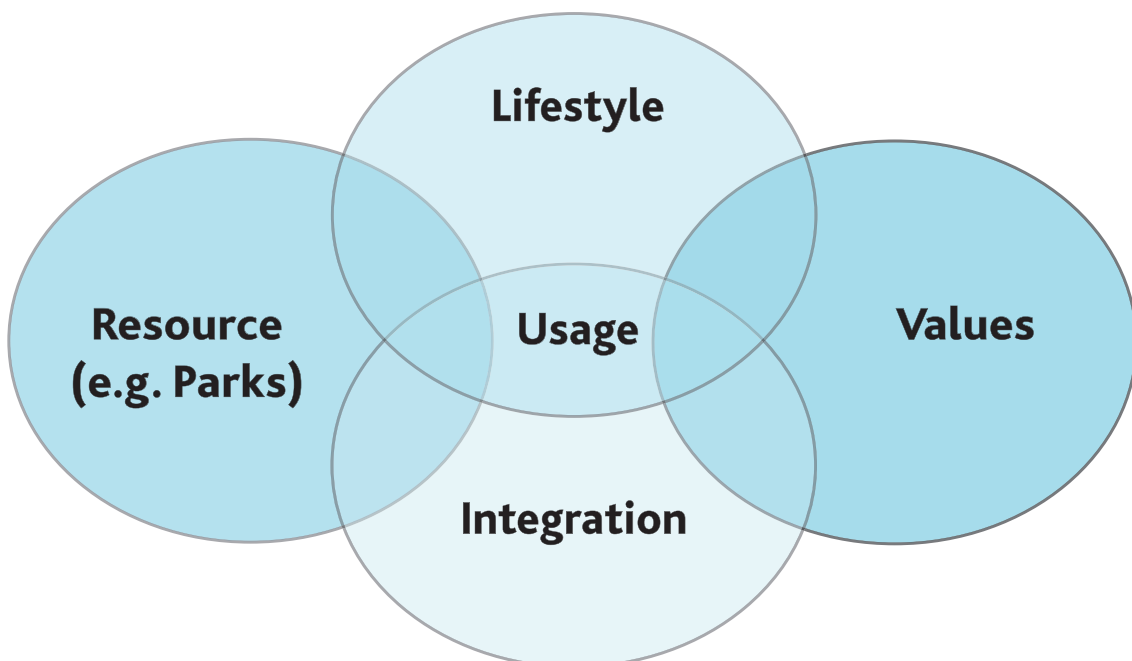


Figure 5.2 provides a simple illustration of the main spheres of influence that shaped park and other amenity usage, which is grounded in the qualitative data collected through both participatory focus groups and interviews. Despite the quality and availability of the park or similar resource being important, factors located with the individual, their stage in the life-course and associated preferences and values, can also exert an important influence. What is more, the qualitative data presented here also suggests that an individual's level of integration can also influence their perception of whether a park is an accessible, safe and available option for them and/or their family.

The themes that emerged proved to be interconnected and overlapping and the decision to use each facility was nestled amongst a complex web of factors and decisions. For some people a park fitted their preferences perfectly or imperfectly, for others parks did not enter their perception of available leisure options at all. Figure 5.3 illustrates the alternatives to parks that were mentioned in the interviews. The findings here are insightful for explaining both positions; whether the opportunities intersect with personal circumstances and values to produce park usage or whether they generate a visit to an alternative such as a leisure centre, shopping mall, a 'private public space' or the countryside.

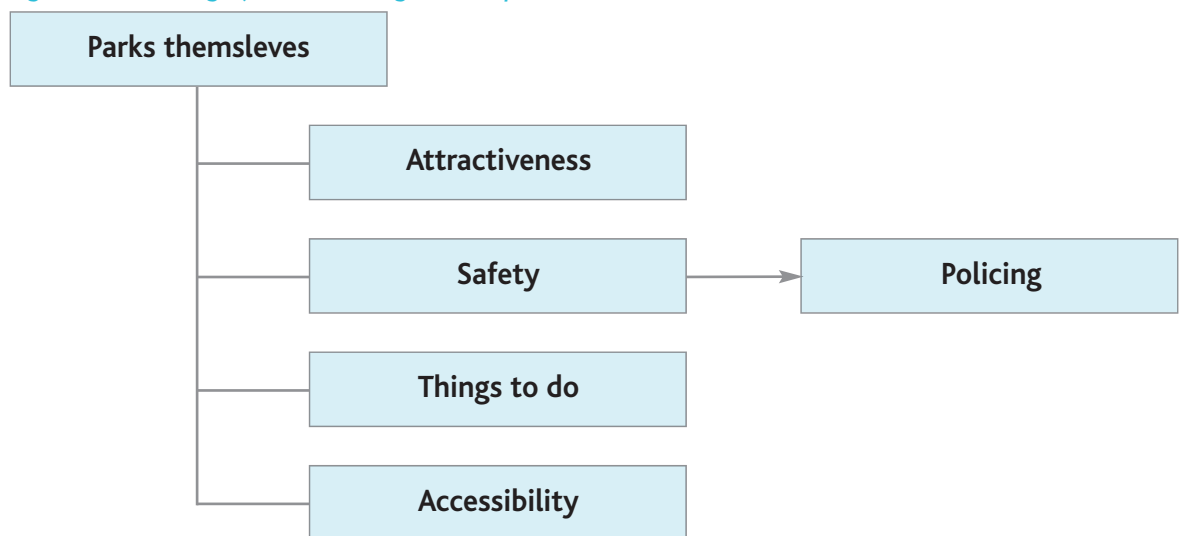
*Table 5.1 Alternatives to parks cited in interviews*

- Community facilities such as community cafes and internet access points
- Private facilities such as bowling clubs and social clubs
- Libraries
- Commercial leisure such as ten-pin bowling
- Leisure centres
- Private membership gyms
- Urban Public space (shopping centres)
- Classes such as yoga, dancing and pilates
- Open spaces such as canals towpaths

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARKS THEMSELVES

The coding frame in Figure 5.3 illustrates the aspects respondents reported in relation to the physical nature of parks and their characteristics that influence their usage. Despite the fact that the main thrust of this analysis points to issues of perception and values shaping park access, this does not preclude park centred factors completely. Beginning with the perceived characteristics of the parks themselves illustrates how interrelated these perceptions are to individual preferences. Across the qualitative data people would refer to factors such as the attractiveness of parks, their perceived safety, the availability of things to do and how accessible they were. These qualities can be as much about perception as they are characteristics of the parks, but nonetheless respondents spoke of them as being about the parks.

Figure 5.4 Coding of data looking at "the parks themselves"



Attractiveness

The attractiveness of a park refers to the absence of graffiti and litter and a high standard of cleanliness and maintenance being upheld. In the extract below, a male in the North West Locality tells how he considers and rates the attractiveness of his local park, showing where he would like to see improvement. The second quote is illustrative of how efforts made by the council to improve the physical attractiveness of facilities were appreciated.

*"Well graffiti, it's not too bad there is evidence of it. Litter is another thing although I've noticed the council making more of an effort perhaps even the local residents, who helped clean up last year. That would be my main issue especially down the river walkways if you had seen it before the trees grew up there was just plastic bags all down the river. That's probably been the main thing. I think there is a lack of imagination on the greenspaces, I mean they're small areas around here that tends just to be grassed over and that's it."*

Rab, 44, North West

*"they've done quite a lot over the last few years to improve that because I guess it had become a bit sort of smelly and horrible so they dredged the pond and built some grass mounds and things in the middle for swans and so it's a bit nicer looking than it used to be."*

Ailsa, North West

### Safety and policing

Issues such as attractiveness also merged with perceptions of safety. Appearance, particularly relating to graffiti and vandalism, could for some people become an indicator of safety. People would often connect features such as litter, graffiti and the broken bottles present after group drinking sessions with gang activity and the risk of danger. It could mark out areas as being for certain groups and out of bounds for the rest of the community. In the extract below, an older male from the South West Locality cites anti-social behaviour as a barrier to access and suggests increased policing as key to allowing people like him, who are intimidated by the potential of such trouble, access to the park.

*"They could make it a bit more accessible, not eh I don't mean getting there, but I mean it's inhabited by the youngsters now and they're not very friendly youngsters, you know, it can be quite intimidating at times, you know. I think perhaps if they put more effort into maybe policing that park then you'd probably get people having a walk round it. I would rather travel anyway, you know, for a walk I would rather travel somewhere else, you know.*

*Archie, North West*

### Things to do

References to increasing policing and similar responses such as re-introducing park wardens, providing additional CCTV and improving lighting were mentioned in both the interview data and participatory groups. In addition, the availability of things to do at a park emerged in both groups and interviews as aspects which could increase the likelihood of park usage. These characteristics were not solely features of a particular resource or park, but could be determined by the interaction between the availability of options within a park and wider factors at the area level and individual lifestyle level. To take the differences between the North West and South West areas, again group discussions and exercises suggested there was more to do in the North West Locality. However, subsequent interview data would suggest that the perception there was less to do in the South West Locality is a reflection of the relative inequality experienced by the respondents in this group, rather than the quality of parks and greenspace resources themselves (which is also borne out by other data collected through other methods). Lifestyle factors can also influence the perception of how much there is to do at a local park. For example, those who have children or need to spend some of their time looking after children often reported that parks offered opportunities for this age-group in particular.

### Accessibility

Again accessibility was more a feature of interaction with parks rather than the park itself. Perceptions of anti-social behaviour linked to an individual's sense of integration, (discussed in more depth below) could also determine perceptions of accessibility (refer to Archie quote above). People would also mention private resources such as gardens, bowling clubs and gyms, which on the main were seen as less accessible (although many did use cheaper alternatives such as dance classes for young people). Information about available resources could also hinder accessibility, especially amongst the asylum seeker refugee community.

### LIFESTYLE FACTORS, AGE AND STAGE

During the coding process, the term 'lifestyle' was used to describe factors centred around the individual that were a combination of conscious choices and constraints. A more fine-grained unpacking of these factors led to further refining 'lifestyle' into 'age and stage', 'employment', 'family', 'time', 'convenience', 'opportunity' and 'cost'. Lifestyle factors would arise more or less unprompted in the interviews. For example, in the cases of Barbara and Ailsa below, activities for young people are mentioned, which suggests who they believe parks are for and what kind of lifestyle parks serve. The important issue is that in giving a description of their parks they have made reference to a factor beyond the greenspace itself: having children.

*"There are lots of places for children to play. Victoria Park is fantastic and even on a busy day like Sunday afternoon when it's very sunny you can still, there are places that you can be that are relatively quiet, you know, that is beautiful there."*

*Barbara, North West*

*"I think it's very well kept and it's always busy and it's used by a lot of families and a lot of children who go to play there, but it doesn't tend to be badly kept from my point of view with litter, I guess, you know, probably because it's a lot of younger children than school children who are there and they hold events and things like that."*

*Ailsa, North West*

### Age and Stage

Parks play different roles in people's daily lives at different points in the life-course. An individual's age and whether or not respondents had children, or were required to look after children, were mentioned regularly as facilitators of park usage. For young families, parks offer a space to supervise play and get out of the house. For older children and teenagers, they offer freedom to roam and to explore away from adults. For grandparents, parks offer a place to take grandchildren or somewhere grandchildren can go unsupervised when they visit a grandparents' home.

During midlife, park use becomes structured less by children's usage for those who have only used parks in a manner related to their children. Although they could continue to go on their own, working hours may prevent casual usage so that use of a park or other facilities has to be planned and satisfy a definite need such as going for a jog, cycling or walking through on the way to work. However, as is revealed in the words of Derek, below, even if a respondent does not currently use a park, previous usage at a different age and stage, or usage by other family members makes the park available as a potential place to go. Underlying this however is a sense of who these spaces are for and in the quote below, there is the suggestion that parks are for "kids":

*"Well my kids, my kids and that they all go down the park, they like the park. I played down there when I was younger, when I was a kid I played down there all my life and now it's ma weans that's going playing football and all that. It's a good bit, a brilliant bit."*

*Derek, South West*

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Similarly, the coming of grand-children can be an opportunity to incorporate park usage as can retirement.

*Not so much now no I don't (use the local park). I probably will because I'm going to have a grand-child soon*

*Dolan, North West*

Some retired respondents thus spoke of rediscovering their local parks and greenspaces after having spent the previous years too busy with working lives to make use of them. Johnny, a retiree, spoke about how he intended to use his local parks as part of the management of his weight and diabetes during his retirement. However the conversation went on to reveal not only an opportunity but also an obstacle for older people that they may have the time but not necessarily the fitness to take full advantage of parks and local facilities.

*I think real retirement plus more leisure time will help us get out and about more perhaps. I haven't really had time to explore this area very much, too busy working.*

*Johnny, South West*



### FAMILY, TIME AND OPPORTUNITY VERSUS EMPLOYMENT, TIME AND CONVENIENCE

As an analytical code, employment represents a subsection of 'age and stage' in that, similar to 'family' it structures opportunity for park usage. The family factors discussed were of interest because at certain stages in family life-courses they provided opportunities for people to use parks. Whether it was through adults accompanying young people or young people using the parks alone, the parks provided entertainment close to family or grandparents' homes and therefore served as an extension of family space.

For 'employment' the situation is different in that employment creates more barriers to park use than opportunities. As a code, 'time' is experienced and described differently as a result of people's relationship to paid work. For a pensioner living in the South West, retirement gave him an opportunity to rediscover his local parks, thus 'time' was experienced as an available resource in the absence of paid employment. For families, 'time' also provided opportunities for being together, thus facilitating the spending of 'family time'. For those in paid work, 'time' takes on the character of a limited resource and bringing to the fore issues of 'convenience' and efficient use of time. When people spoke of things being convenient, they referred not only to it being handy and local but also open at times when needed and offering variety. Variety can relate to convenience in examples such as a parent being able to do a different activity from their child on the same visit.

*"Well just that you do have access to other areas, not just specifically going to a leisure centre, but there are other classes on elsewhere in Partick like Partick Burgh Halls or the Annexe or the Sandy Road Clinic which is all facilitating the people of Partick, of every age group...the classes are really regular, there are lots of classes. Likes of the Annexe there's maybe 3 yoga classes on, there's salsa, I think that's twice a week, the palates is three times a week"*

*Rosie, North West*

### PERSONAL VALUES AND THE EXPRESSION OF IDENTITY

Individual values which influenced what people chose to do within the constraints of lifestyle and available time was another significant aspect that influenced park usage. Whether values are a consequence of certain lifestyle restrictions (such as having children or a low income) and opportunities (again such as having children but perhaps also having a higher income) or the cause of them is a complex matter. Perhaps the most useful answer is to observe that they certainly overlay one another. In the data, people would not only refer to how their park usage was restricted by barriers or facilitated by opportunities, they would also account for these as if they were choices made personally. Where park usage was restricted, people would, for example, make a positive statement about another preference they had. Where park usage was a part of their life, people would affirm this in positive terms by talking about why they personally liked it and what opportunities it provided to express their lifestyle preferences, in addition to making reference to the physical existence and quality of the park itself. By making the subtle shift between seeing individuals as consumers of parks, rather than merely as users, activities become not just responses to facilitators and barriers but as embedded within individual identity.

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Theorists of a consumer society such as Featherstone (1990) have argued that material goods are consumed to communicate meaning and identity, as signifiers of taste and lifestyle. Bourdieu (1987) has demonstrated empirically how consumer activities (not just the purchase of material goods) similarly mark us out as belonging to a certain group. This is done in such a manner that the restrictions and opportunities of our socio-economic context are personally experienced as having being reduced and the personal engagement and self-affirming qualities brought to the fore. For example, people culturally and economically excluded from enjoying opera, will not necessarily experience this as exclusion by having an alternative activity for it, perhaps in rock music or musical shows. Thus understood, the park user completes their self-identity through their activity; it is not action without meaning, a response to facilitators and barriers, nor just satisfying a felt need to exercise or take fresh air.

Examples of this cultural and value-based layer of park usage were evident in the example of a 45 year old woman who chose to use her local country park over the town parks that are actually closer to where she lived. As a space for the enactment of her identity and related preferences the country park was more appropriate. For her, the town parks were too urban, not just in their physical appearance (obvious buildings, tarmac paths, litter, play parks and traffic management schemes) but also in the activities they facilitate and encourage; activities she felt are properly situated in urban spaces;- concerts, festivals and mass participation sporting events. She described the development of such facilities as "bad neighbour developments" and she wished to distinguish herself from the crowds that are attracted to such events. This produced the positive choice of the country parks and their "squirrels and deer" that not only completes her understanding of how a park should be, but also of the kind of space she wished to spend her leisure time. This value-base was in direct contrast to a male of similar age living in the North West. He defined himself as community-minded and enjoyed the diversity and activity of living in a city area. Rather than separating urban space and his local parks and greenspaces, he spoke of them as one, blended entity. Like the previous woman in the South West, he had issues with certain elements of modern urban life, such as the rise of consumerism as embodied for him in supermarkets and large shopping malls. However he also saw the answer to these problems as already within the existing urban fabric. The following quote reveals a personal manifesto grounded in the values that led him to value his local parks and greenspaces.

*Well I'd subsidise anything that I could get my hands on that I thought was a positive step, you know, such as cycling and good food and local amenities and cafes, (there are) many fewer cafes then there was in my day and just less for kids, you know, a lot less for kids (who) are being directed towards shopping as an activity which I think is foul and more and more shops going up, that directs people towards shopping as well. There is a whole new centre being built down there.*

*Kevin, North West*

Interestingly he also avoided crowded spaces like the woman from the South West. In particular he cited the local swimming pool as somewhere he viewed as too crowded for his taste. However, his response to the presence of graffiti in parks revealed how values can influence how we perceive our urban environments and greenspaces.

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*I don't actually see graffiti as an anti-social thing. Well I see it as a kind of manifestation of people who feel that they have no way of expressing themselves...It doesn't bother me as much as the adverts that I see in bus hoardings and everywhere I look urging me to buy and sell, you know, I mean I think they're horrible, I really hate adverts.*

*Kevin, North West*

This respondent welcomed parks characterised by diversity, access and choice- even if he was not to benefit from all of the options himself. A prime example of this was his welcoming of a skate park that he had no intention of using but enjoyed both the spectacle of a busy skate park and the knowledge that his local park was used actively. His own park usage was facilitated by his identity as a cyclist; he was a user of the local cycle-path network for both fitness, leisure and commuting.

Values also intersect with the age and stage related factors cited earlier. Simply having or not having children is not sufficient as a life-course related explanation of park usage. Parents have different ideas of what constitutes parenting and what their related duties are in encouraging certain beneficial activities. Some parents spoke of the need to encourage physical activity and play in the fresh air which shaped choices about park usage. It was also an identity choice and one informed by values, grounded in the moral aspiration to be a good parent.

*We wouldn't let them sit and watch TV to, we controlled it at lot too, you know. We wouldn't let them have the TV as the focal point all the time you don't want that, you know. A lot of kids, maybe that's all for them nowadays too, maybe they're just couch potatoes, you know. It makes them lazy too, and it's an unhealthy lifestyle really isn't it for when they are older.*

*Dolan, South West*

Similarly valuing choice and a wider selection of options and activities can also frame preferences parents have for their children. One mother in the South West complained of a lack of arts and craft activities run by her local council for children. This led her to seek out activities farther a field and to introduce her children to activities such as privately run dance classes.

### THE LIMITS OF CHOICE: THE EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL IN/EXCLUSION AS SHAPER OF VALUES

Explaining park usage and their alternatives as corollaries of values can overlay the influence of personal autonomy. If values and lifestyle choices are seen as interwoven and overlaid then we also need to explore the factors that frame the limits of lifestyle choices (and to which our values may adapt). The concept of social exclusion (e.g. Lister 2004) is instructive here, rather than absolute measures of material living standards: barriers to access were often explained as a consequence of differing levels of integration, rather than financial barriers in and of themselves. The issue that could expose the influence of levels of integration was people's perceptions of anti-social behaviour. This is an important finding as on the surface anti-social behaviour can be seen as a barrier to park usage that can be tackled directly. Indeed respondents often listed it as one of the things they would like to see tackled to increase their usage of amenities. However deeper investigation of people's responses reveal that the degree to which indicators of anti-social behaviour, such as graffiti, litter and vandalism, represent a perceptual barrier to use of public space is connected to an individual's perceived control over the environment.

Rather than simply list anti-social behaviour as a barrier, the coding reflected the dichotomous nature of perceptions of anti-social behaviour, showing that people either held a stoical or fearful response to it. There was also a code revealing the important role played by trust and access to social capital in helping ameliorate the felt risk in communities. An example of a stoical response is found in the following quote.

*A couple of things, we've had a bit of a spate of vandalism and I know it's fairly low level vandalism it's not as if they are drawing all over our walls or something like that, but there's been some tagging with, I believe that's what they call it, tagging. I hear that's the common vernacular, I think that's what it is where they've scribbled all over the post box and any traffic signs that at a height such that they can put spray paint on them have been spray painted. ...And that's recently, yes. It wasn't like that when we moved here it was just a month or so after. I hasten to add it wasn't us. So that's a bit disappointing and also about a month ago somebody broke into my dad's car when it was parked outside the house and it happened in the middle of the day so it was just not anything that I'm going to get particularly upset about I think it's an annoyance it's not something I get really, really bogged down and, I was very annoyed obviously about my dad's car getting broken into, but in terms of things like the litter and the vandalism I think it's something that happens when you live in a city.*

*Moira, North West*

In the above extract, Moira, a woman in her forties, displayed a characteristically stoical response to perceived risks in her community. She described the risk she experiences as low level, displaying a willingness to differentiate and appraise the level of threat. There is also a suggestion that she actually underplayed her level of perceived threat regarding the break-in of

her dad's car, saying that she felt it was a bit disappointing, but later saying she was very annoyed obviously. However her statement that I think it is something that happens when you live in the city was most revealing of her stoical attitude and the underlying frame of choice that it was set against. Such a statement alludes to her ability to choose where she lives. She was able to set her own experience against a hypothetical one, living in the countryside or the suburbs. As someone with choices, the risk posed by anti-social behaviour becomes part of the city experience. Another aspect of the stoical response was in those who sought to understand the causes of anti-social behaviour. This reveals a value-based response that is grounded in liberalism and a desire to express a cosmopolitan attitude.

*Yeah, maybe, but I'd like to think it's more that I can understand why these things happen, things like vandalism happens why do we drop litter and hang about streets and stuff like that cause they've probably just not got anything else to do and they're bored and fed up and that's just how you find a lot of areas like Glasgow and I think you just accept that that could have been me if maybe I hadn't had the same advantages and I don't like to judge people. Yes I would be annoyed if somebody sprayed painted my windows or something like that, but I'd like to think that once I'd calmed down I could say well there might be a reason why that happened and it's maybe not through fault that individual or it's just a collection of circumstances have led to that and we've all got a part to play really in trying to make sure these things don't happen and people don't really need to do that.*

Moira North West

The risk is perceived through a lens that recognises difference, her relative privilege and is consciously non-judgemental. The extract shows that her values framed her perception of the activity; however, her statement of the relative advantages she has had in life are integral to it. A similar set of values informs Kevin's view, whose quote we have seen previously, who said he saw graffiti as a consequence of young people being denied a voice in other arenas of life. His values were revealed more obliquely as he spoke of his engagement with his local community. He praised his local area for its numerous cafes he liked to frequent and his ability to cycle safely around the available cycling infrastructure. He wanted see improvement in the number of independent shops selling a variety of products and he was against mass market developments such as supermarkets. Kevin is clearly someone who rejoices in the gentrification of inner city areas (with the cafes, specialist shops and pleasant environs). Whilst gentrification undeniably improves the feel of previously run-down areas, the benefits are not universally experienced or perceived. May (1996) has written of the different takes on gentrification that create categories of winners and losers, included and excluded. The 'winners' for May are the middle class professionals described as the 'new cultural class' who occupy and feel included in the gentrified spaces. Diversity is often seen as an attraction for the new cultural class who are able to flit safely between worlds available in gentrified neighbourhoods, protected by their own financial security and the cultural capital that ensures success within a restructured economy.

Kevin enjoys this mobility, physically by virtue of his bicycle and socially by virtue of his cultural capital. He does not experience the stasis of the excluded. Instead, he has more choice as to



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which experiences he is exposed. He engaged only fleetingly and aesthetically with the spectacle of youth culture he enjoyed in the skate park (noted above). His social distance with those involved in anti-social behaviour brought a moral detachment that not only explains the behaviour satisfactorily, re-creating order, but reinforced his own cultural class credentials, as being open-minded and non-provincial.

The experience of anti-social behaviour by those with less choice and less mobility in social and spatial terms was revealed by Jack, a fifty-seven year-old. Jack was a carer for his wife and lived in council accommodation in the North West Locality. His comments also revealed the process of value formation that led to his retreat from public spaces, including parks, to private spaces such as his local British Legion and his bowling club. Jack had lived in his area for thirty years and felt unable to use the local public greenspaces due to fears about "drug users, neds and jobs". When Jack wanted to walk in greenspaces, he would take the train to Balloch or Helensburgh outside the city boundary. He wanted to see more police on the beat and thought "prison's too good" for those who engage in crime and anti-social behaviour. Jack shared his community with asylum seekers but felt they are not part of the problem; "I've never seen them being violent, they just keep themselves to themselves, it these young neds." After Jack's home was burgled, he installed CCTV and lost faith in the wider community and societal responses to crime.

*It's out of control. Law and order has broken down. All they do is put a veneer on it. They use all these initiatives, it's all whitewash, the criminal justice system has broken down.*

*Jack, North West*

He also conflated low-level crime and anti-social behaviour with higher level crime, such as his burglary. Gangs of young people hanging around and graffiti were signifiers of his second-hand knowledge of drug problems and gang violence in the community. Given this fear of the behaviour of people in his community, which was reinforced by his own experience of having been burgled, it is easier to understand his preference for organised, private leisure opportunities. His British Legion issues members with an electronic fob and he described his bowling club being 'a place with like-minded members'. Similarly the level of discipline and surveillance at the British legion is welcome.

*It's a private member's club so you don't get..., it run by ex army and there is a duty officer on and he's responsible for discipline, anybody steps out of line, raising their voice, swearing, anything like that, you're on a charge and they're stricter than the courts. I mean some of them have been sin binned, six months suspension.*

*Jack, North West*

The leisure opportunities Jack pursued helped in creating bonding social capital he felt is missing in the wider community. This bonding capital helped him to cope with a world he saw as lawless, which had become the prime motivation for the amenities he chose to use. Asked what he would change about his local community, he said he would like to see more active groups in his community led by the council. His leisure choices were ameliorated his perceptions of the chaotic nature of the community outside. The CCTV and sensors he saw as



crucial to safe-guarding his home were supplemented by controlled access to his leisure choices (through memberships) and a clear set of guidelines and expectations. For Jack, the issue of values takes on another dimension; value cohesion is seen as vital to creating community in contrast to the appreciation of competing values in the individualised and differentiated world-view of Kevin.

Individualisation not only brings variety in the activities people pursue, but can also be experienced as moral individualisation as we have less contact with people either similar or different from us. As illustrated in the reported decline in social capital in contemporary society, we recreate the problem of other minds; 'how do I know others think the same as I do, how can I judge their expectations and what can I expect from them?' Fear and reduced access to social capital can become a self-reinforcing feedback process, adequately summarised in the actions of Naomi, a mother of two children aged 7 and 9, who also felt threatened by the community where she lived.

*Your feert (scared) to let your kids out on the streets you know the way we used to go out and play, that doesnae happen here. ...Just because of everything, because of people hanging about and the threat of somebody maybe taking them away or all the fighting and things like that, that go on. ...Well, as I say I just take them out myself, if they go out on their bikes we go out with them as well.*

*Naomi, South West*

Her attitude was in stark contrast to that of Kevin: she was fearful of difference and not once did she attempt to explain the violence and mistrust she perceived around her. For her, it was a given, a fact of where she lived and her job as a parent is to insulate her children from it. Based on a housing estate in the South West, Naomi's siege mentality lifestyle, her constant use of a car and closeting of her children was a far cry from the gentrified city experienced by Kevin in the North West. Kevin's 'difference' was one experienced on the terms set by of his own cultural class, whilst Naomi was the outsider on her peripheral housing scheme and she saw her values as at odds with the prevailing norms around her, as she was relatively affluent but excluded at the local level. She could exercise choice by accessing safe amenities elsewhere, but this was at the expense of not being known in her own neighbourhood. Difference was a challenge for Naomi. She desired an adventure playground where they listen to 'their needs' (her children's and not everybody else's). This desire was made in reference to her belief that the council provided facilities for all groups except young children who keep out of trouble.

A final example of how level of felt integration can influence the lens through which the risks in public spaces are experienced comes from Nyela, a female asylum seeker in her twenties with three young children. The data collected from her was derived from a discussion group using participatory methods (community mapping and ranking exercises) to aid a group exploration of the facilitators and barriers to accessing green spaces and other local facilities. Nyela and the group of other migrant women drew community maps that revealed the perceived paucity of greenspace available locally. In objective terms, the area they lived in was well-provided for in terms of facilities, in fact a large, well-maintained country park is located within her area. However the greenspace maps depicted only football pitches and the high-rise flats in the neighbourhood that are flanked with low quality green space (open plains of grass). Tellingly,

they also revealed a number of obstacles to greenspace usage such as broken lifts, racist graffiti, gangs of young people "shouting things" and flooding. The experience of Nyela and her fellow asylum seekers offered an important counterpoint to the findings about age and stage and family-based structuring of park usage. These women had young children so one might expect them to take advantage of free amenities such as local parks. However, barriers existed to using such facilities such as lack of knowledge and fear of the surrounding community. What they enjoyed most was the local community café established as a local community health project where they felt safe, welcomed and included. Again, as with the experience of Jack, level of integration was the lens through which anti-social behaviour was experienced and preferences centred around accessing bonding capital that could be used to help cope with the threats they experienced around them.

### THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people's accounts of parks and other facilities are additionally instructive as it is more often young people who are affected, involved or implicated in vandalism, gang violence and graffiti. However, young people as a group include individuals who do not behave anti-socially as well as those who do. Moreover, anti-social behaviour, despite current legislation aimed at 'problem' families and individuals, can be something individuals slip in and back out of according to a range of factors including age and stage, the availability of alternatives and peer group affiliations. As has already been illustrated in the adult data, the affects of anti-social behaviour can also be a matter of perception and location. Whereas the physical effects of behaviour such as vandalism are unambiguously anti-social, aspects such as young people hanging around and socialising can be defined anti-social according to context and adult responses to it.

The effects and prevalence of anti-social behaviour by young people were highlighted as factors having a detrimental effect on the experience of using parks and similar resources. When describing their local parks, young people cited litter, vandalised park equipment, gang-fighting, broken glass and the presence of drug-users as problems in their local parks. This reflected a belief that overall, the quality of parks and greenspaces were low coupled with a paucity of places young people over the age of 14 could go.

There was no evidence of direct involvement in anti-social behaviour by the young people, but suggestions of how such activity is interwoven into the experience of being a young person in such areas as the South West. One female aged 16 told of how she had friends in gangs who damaged park equipment and how they chose this through a perceived lack of options and boredom (the perception being important because this young person actually felt there were a lot of options for people her age in the area). Another young male aged 14, told of how he used parks for 'pretend' fighting with his friends and whereas there was no question of the good natured character of such contests, the ambiguity of this to the passer-by might make for a different interpretation. He also complained of older adults assuming underage drinking if he and a number of friends attended parks together, when in fact they were not drinking (See Seaman et al 2006 for similar examples of perceptions of young people and anti-social behaviour). Additionally, the 16 year old girl spoke of how gangs in a more affluent adjacent area did not fight "because the area was not so run-down and boring". This underlines the fact that in the minds of young people, gangs and violence are not synonymous, as has become popular in the minds of adults; gangs can simply be affiliations of young people.

### *What young people want*

Young people's wishes followed on consistently from such positions. Central to their requests were facilities aimed specifically at the adolescent age group. There had been a local youth club but it had since burnt down and not been replaced. They wanted to see a resource replacing it that they could feel a sense of ownership over. Contrary to prevailing adult opinions, the young people believed they did not need much at their age, just a place where they felt a sense of ownership towards and where they could sit and chat out of the rain; "if it was ours, nobody would wreck it". This idea that ownership would prevent damage may be naïve given the state of local park facilities and that the previous youth club was destroyed. Also, that young people need simply a place "to sit and chill-out" may be understated given that many complained current facilities were boring.

However, the idea that they need age specific resources and facilities is supported by the mistrust the age group is held in by adults and the fact that younger children clearly have different interests. The 16 year old female spoke of a recently redeveloped park that was "amazing" and stood-out as a quality facility in the area. However, she noted that she only used it with her younger brothers. Being able to take much younger children gave her the excuse to use such a resource that she would not wish to use with her peers. Instead of using parks, her mother had influenced her to join a karate club, which she continued to attend because she got an adrenalin buzz from the classes. This again questions whether young people just need a space, or need an activity in the space, or whether the provision of a dedicated space is the first step to allowing young people to decide on what activities they would like to see there. An area of similarity with adults is that young people wanted to see measures to address to anti-social behaviour, particularly lighting and cameras in parks and quicker responses to repairing damage committed.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has employed a variety of methods to explore the facilitators and barriers to the use of greenspace, leisure facilities and community halls in two socially contrasting areas in Glasgow. The use of mixed methods has enabled the provision of complementary findings, and while each method provided certain unique information, taken together, the findings become richer. As such, the findings go beyond the descriptive and allow issues to emerge that provide further insights to the existing body of knowledge and illustrate the advantages of incorporating a variety of methods into a research design. We encourage researchers to utilise mixed-methods studies in social science whenever budget and time allow, as each method provides important information, but also has certain limitations which can, in part, be overcome by incorporating more than one method into the study design.

In this study, describing the local areas provided useful information in terms of their characteristics, particularly in regard to the presence of facilities and access to them in terms of distance. In general, the more affluent North West Locality was relatively socially advantaged in terms of the built environment, local amenities and population characteristics compared to the South West Locality. GIS tools are useful for both illustration and analysis of this type of information. However, relying entirely on this methodology is limiting, as little can be determined about quality or other potential access issues, such as cost, territoriality and a feeling of being welcome.

Using additional methods to assess the quality of these facilities was important, as quality can affect usage. Generally speaking, there was considerable variation in the quality of facilities in both areas as measured by the assessment scale; however, due to the relatively small number of facilities assessed, the tool was not particularly sensitive. The photographs may not be a completely accurate representation either, given that most amateur photographers use the medium for recording positive life-events. However, there did appear to be a balance between positive and negative photographs. Despite their limitations, both the assessment tool and photographs used in this study provided valuable insights into the quality of facilities. Neither the assessment tool nor the photographs provided information on how people incorporate the facilities into their daily lives, nor the variation on how different people view the facilities and whether this affects their use.

Analysis of the 20-07 survey was also useful in making comparisons between respondents in the two areas regarding aspects of their health and health behaviours and their perceptions of their local neighbourhood. Respondents in the more deprived area perceived their local neighbourhood to be more unattractive and to lack amenities, which might help to explain why those in the more affluent area reported better health and more frequent physical activity. However, due to the nature of the data, one can only make associations and it is important to explore the processes that may underlie this.

Qualitative analysis can help to unpick the processes underlying the associations found when analysing the survey and add further richness to the other methods as well. In this study, the qualitative data indicated that the physical quality of parks is a necessary though not sufficient factor in encouraging access to facilities. Issues of connectivity in both a spatial and social sense are also key factors. Connectivity in a spatial sense refers to how easily access to

facilities can be incorporated into people's routines and established patterns of movement. The social aspects of connectivity encompass opportunities for access that reflect a diversity of needs and preferences for which one size will not fit all. A more complex element is in encouraging access through ameliorating the societal problems of risk, safety and levels of felt integration. While the qualitative analysis is also limited in that it is generally restricted to a relatively small number of people, it can help to answer the questions raised by other methods.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, there are several recommendations that can be made to help to increase usage of local facilities (e.g. greenspace, leisure centres and community halls). This is not to undermine or fail to recognise the steps that are currently taken, but could hopefully add to and reinforce efforts to improve the experience for people, particularly in areas that may present a degree of challenge to authorities whose traditional remit has been the physical management of space.

### **ALL FACILITIES**

There has been considerable thinking and action along the lines of spatial connectivity has already happened in relation to better linkages through improved footpaths, signage, cycle-paths, public transport and even parking provision. However, physical access continues to be an issue and in some areas there is considerable variation in the number and quality of facilities and their access routes. In addition, particularly for community halls, signage needs to be improved and efforts made to increase the welcoming feel of the buildings. However, improving physical access is necessary though not sufficient to increase usage, as this study illustrates the need to connect meaningfully as well as physically with potential users.

There are also efforts underway to make facilities more diverse by offering a wide range of attractions. In Glasgow, activities as broad as mass participation sporting events, art galleries, cafes, children's play areas and interesting destinations such as fossil grove exist in greenspaces. The city can also currently boast some well-connected parks and greenspaces that provide through-routes and walkable or cyclable transport corridors, for example along the banks of the Clyde to Glasgow Green, the Forth and Clyde canal and the Kelvin walkway. Community halls and leisure facilities also offer a variety of activities; however, it is often difficult to obtain information about these, particularly if someone is new to an area. However, a sense of individual safety has become a major barrier to usage of facilities. That perception of risk often lies within individual frames of experience that are wider and far more complex than the spatial and physical elements of the facilities themselves, thus it may appear to be outside the remit of facility managers to tackle such issues. Indeed, we would state clearly that issues of inequality and integration are problems that require wider societal solutions from all public agencies, however one that the issue of facility access can make a constructive contribution toward.

### PARKS AND GREENSPACES

#### *Having an identifiable avenue of communication in parks*

Many of those we spoke to wanted to see the return of park rangers. Underlying this request was often a sense that using parks and greenspaces had become risky because of a sense of unaccountability in the actions of others and the potential for parks to be intimidating spaces. Many people we spoke to displayed high levels of community mindedness and would feel safer simply being able to report graffiti, vandalism or anti-social behaviour when they witnessed it. Many park users offer a network of informal stewardship and a potential line of communication that if were opened could increase feelings of safety. Although there are often officers at work in parks, those we spoke to did not feel there was a clear line of communicating, complaining or reporting when something presented a problem. The personal touch is important to this sense of safety. Knowing there is an individual whose role is to care about the user's experience is important and a telephone number to report complaints is a poor substitute.

#### *Creative ways to include those currently not using parks*

In a similar manner to the way in which health promotion campaigns benefit those who already take steps to maintain a healthy lifestyle and miss those who do not, improving the physical infrastructure of parks can increase and improve the usage of those who already have a disposition to use parks, but not those for whom parks are outside of their frame of leisure options. For those who choose to spend their leisure time in private spaces (such as private bowling clubs or commercial leisure destinations) special effort may be needed to get these people back into parks. In recent years events such as regular farmers' markets or the Great Glasgow Run have opened up the possibility of park usage to participants and spectators alike, and these have added to the diversity of options currently available. What we found in this study was that those who currently do not use parks or have park experiences that are sub-optimal do other things as an alternative. Often these activities are with other people and can be seen as forms of participation valuable to the sustainability of communities. The mass-participation and diversification of uses so far initiated have failed to capture the sustained usage of such individuals and perhaps a more focussed, smaller scale encouragement is warranted. "Get to know your local parks" events could encourage new users through introducing existing sources of participation in the community; clubs, groups or customers, to parks and other local greenspace resources fostering a sense of inclusion but also creating community engagement by introducing potential users to those who steward local greenspaces. Dialogue at such events would give park officers direct feedback about people's concerns and barriers to usage. It would be important that there was creativity in identifying what represented a existing body of participants to introduce to parks as many people participate in a manner they themselves may not recognise as voluntary participation, through attending mothers and toddlers groups or informal, semi-public forms of joining in perhaps taking place in a network of homes.



### *Making the experience better for younger people*

Young people are perhaps the most consistent and regular users of public space. The young people we spoke to were an important resource to their local communities but they felt they were often seen as a problem, particularly when in public space. The older people we spoke to bore this perception out, with gangs of young people seen as adding to the fear and intimidation that was a major barrier to park usage. Often perceptions can exacerbate such problems and as the social distance between young people and adults widens, the potential for anti-social behaviour, perceived as well as real, also increases. It was felt by the young people in the South West that there was little for teenagers to do in parks. They also cited gang activity and territoriality as problems that prevented them using contested space. Again these problems can be exacerbated by inaction as “a lack of things to do” and is commonly cited by young people as a reason for joining street gangs. In the absence of alternative activities that may bring disparate groups of young people together, trust and friendship is unlikely to emerge across or between neighbourhoods that lie in parks’ catchments. Encouraging young people (in particular teenagers) to use parks through the provision of activities or spaces (such as youth centres) that allow the mixing of young people would not only increase feelings of safety for young people themselves but also, by reducing gang conflict, for adults for whom gangs of young people have become a proxy for danger. This would also allow the opportunity for on-going engagement with young people whose exclusion from decision making and commercial private space can be seen as bound up in the current concern and demonisation of young people in relation to anti-social behaviour.

### *Provision of indoor space and lighting*

Currently parks remain unused on poor weather days and, to a large extent, after dark. Some parks in Glasgow have good indoor facilities adjacent or within their grounds such as Pollok park. This means an alternative activity can easily be found when the weather turns bad and the threat of bad weather may not deter people from using parks. For dark evenings, parks could be sensitively integrated into Glasgow’s lighting strategy to provide a focal point drawing people into parks after dark. This has the potential to upset the balance of wild-life and so could be done in limited manner, in less eco-sensitive areas of parks. Extending the available hours in which parks could be used as a resource decreases the potential for working hours to impinge on park usage and combining indoor spaces with night time lighting even more so.

## NEXT STEPS

Table 6.1 provides a matrix of some of the issues surrounding the use of greenspace and other facilities that have arisen from this research. The list is not exhaustive, but instead identifies certain issues that a variety of agencies could potentially help to alleviate, either by working alone or in partnership. Issues are listed in the left hand column and agencies are listed across the top. Further engagement with agencies to explore these issues and potential steps that could be taken to address them is planned as part of the dissemination strategy through stakeholder workshops.

Table 6.1 Issues and Relevant Agencies to Help Address Them

	Local residents/ groups	Land Services	Planning	Culture and Sport	Education	Education	NHS	Voluntary Sector	GCV Green Network	Greenspace Scotland	Forestry Commission	Paths to Health	Scottish Government
<b>Access and Quality</b>													
Transport			X			X						X	X
Charges				X									X
Perceived Safety	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Existence/distribution of Facilities		X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X
Incivilities (Litter, Graffiti)	X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activities		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maintenance		X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X
Diversity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Culture</b>													
Attitude to Outdoors	X				X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Attitude to Weather	X				X			X				X	X
<b>Context</b>													
Lifestyle	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Social cohesion	X				X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Indeed, the nature of some of the facilitators and barriers identified in this report and on the matrix may not be remedied by the actions of specific agencies or collections of agencies alone as their origins lie in the wider culture, such as in attitudes to weather or the outdoors, thus requiring change over longer time frames and at a broader population level. Other issues, such as alleviation of the sense of risk in using public space through increasing feelings of social cohesion, are also connected to broader societal influences, the solutions for which currently elude policy makers at all levels. However, it is hoped that by stimulating discussion with the use of the matrix, shared and particular points of intervention can be identified and the more complex issues at least explored and recognised.

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## IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE PARK

### *Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace*

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## APPENDIX 1. AUDIT TOOL FOR ASSESSING QUALITY OF SPACE

### Neighbourhood

1. North
2. South

### Type of Space

1. park/greenspace (public – open to everybody)
2. school playing fields
3. leisure facility
4. community hall
5. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### Weather

1. Sunny
2. Cloudy
3. Rainy

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being very good, please rate each of the following attributes of the space by circling the appropriate number.

	Poor		Very good			Doesn't apply
<b>Use/Activities</b>						
Fun	1	2	3	4	5	9
Active	1	2	3	4	5	9
Facilities	1	2	3	4	5	9
Affordable	1	2	3	4	5	9
Refreshments	1	2	3	4	5	9
<b>Access/Linkages</b>						
Walkable	1	2	3	4	5	9
Connected	1	2	3	4	5	9
Convenient	1	2	3	4	5	9
Accessible by public transport	1	2	3	4	5	9
Accessible entrances	1	2	3	4	5	9

	Poor		Very good			Doesn't apply
<b>Sociability</b>						
Welcoming	1	2	3	4	5	9
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	9
Diversity	1	2	3	4	5	9
<b>Comfort/Image</b>						
Clean (dog's dirt, litter)	1	2	3	4	5	9
Seating	1	2	3	4	5	9
Attractive	1	2	3	4	5	9
Safe	1	2	3	4	5	9
Toilets	1	2	3	4	5	9 (None)
Lighting	1	2	3	4	5	9
Graffiti	1	2	3	4	5	9
Maintenance	1	2	3	4	5	9

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## APPENDIX 2. INSTRUCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS FOR THE AUDIT TOOL FOR ASSESSING QUALITY OF SPACE

Circle the appropriate response for each space. For each of the attributes there is a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being very good. Circle the 9 if it doesn't apply (for example, if there are no refreshments available, circle 9). Listed below are definitions for each of the attributes.

### *Use/Activities*

fun: something that amuses

active: involving physical effort and action

facilities: something designed, built, or installed, etc., to serve a specific function (e.g. offers the opportunity for being active)

affordable: available within limited financial means

refreshments: availability of food or drink

### *Access/Linkages*

walkable: capable of being traveled by walking: suited to or adapted for walking

connected: united, joined, or linked with wider community, offering ease of access within existing urban fabric

convenient: easily accessible, not constrained by prohibitive opening hours

accessible by public transport: easy to reach by public transport

accessible entrances: easy to enter, wheelchair/pram friendly

### *Sociability*

welcoming: agreeable

friendly: not hostile or threatening

diversity: variety (in terms of people using it)

Comfort/image

clean: free from litter and dog's dirt; unsoiled; unstained

## IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE PARK

### *Facilitators and Barriers to the Use of Urban Greenspace*

seating: availability of places to sit (e.g. benches, chairs)

attractive: providing pleasure in appearance

safe: secure from liability to harm, injury, danger, or risk

toilets: A place for defecation and urination

lighting: an illuminating agent such as lamps

graffiti: markings, as initials, slogans, or drawings, written, spray-painted, or sketched on a sidewalk, wall of a building, public restroom, etc.

maintenance: care or upkeep

## APPENDIX 3. TOPIC QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Did you manage to take any photos of your local area?

If yes, what did you take pictures of? What was good and bad about the area?

If no, what do you think is good and bad about your local area?

How do you know what's good and bad? Where do you get your information about the area?

What are the local places for walking, playing and generally being active?

What do you like/dislike about these places?

What changes would you make to improve these places?

What else is needed?

How often do you use these places for walking, playing and generally being active?

If not used, why not?

If used, when do you use it? Why do you like doing this? Is it part of your everyday life?

When were you last there? What makes (would make) it a fun place?

How often do the people you know in this area use these places for walking, playing and generally being active?

How happy are you with your fitness? (Please explain)

Have your fitness levels changed recently?

Have your fitness levels changed over the past 5 years? Over the past 10 years?

Do you think that living in this area has had an effect on your fitness?

How long have you lived here? Has the area improved or gotten worse?

What do you think would help you to get outside and be more active