APPENDIX 2

WEST LOTHIAN'S OPEN SPACES

An Area Wide Assessment

WEST LOTHIAN'S OPEN SPACES - An Area Wide Assessment

1.0 Open Space Resource

West Lothian Council area has a wide range of open space in terms of size, function and use and which include all areas of the typology noted above. The audit identifies the significant areas of publicly accessible open space and has (within the limits and criteria established for mapping) identified a total of **3,425.25 hectares (8464 acres) of open space** in the West Lothian Council area. This total relates solely to the 1800 sites in the complete database.

The School Site Audit information has been included in the database (79) and forms part of the total open space. No detailed analysis of the inter-relationship between School Sites and Open Space has been undertaken as this was specifically not part of the commissioned workscope. The Study Steering Group will need to address this relationship on a site by site basis linking both Open Space and School Site to the planning and review of open space resources.

2.0 Open Space Audit Findings

The key findings of the Audit can be summarised as follows:

- The overall condition and quality of open space varies throughout the Council area
- Vandalism and graffiti is a widespread problem
- There is an excess of underused grassed open space in the larger settlements
- Livingston is well provided for in terms of open space
- However, the smaller settlements are less well provided for
- The greatest proportion of space is semi-natural greenspace
- Path links between open spaces are in place, but could be extended to increase passive and active recreational opportunities
- A greater diversity of all-aged play provision is required
- The overall quality of signage and interpretation is poor

There are many examples of interesting, diverse and safe spaces, however, many are under-used due to poor accessibility, functionality and visual experience. There is significant potential for improvement of open spaces in most settlements.

The audit highlights two important issues relative to the allocation of open space within the typology namely:

i) the high proportion of Natural & Semi-Natural greenspace. A detailed check of open space held within this category should be undertaken
ii) the relatively low level of allocation to Local Park designations relative to Neighbourhood Parks and Amenity greenspace. A review of the allocation of spaces within the varied categories should be made.

3.0 Composition of West Lothian's Open Spaces – Accessibility Assessment

Accessibility is a critical component in the functionality and usability of the open space resource. West Lothian generally offers good access to countryside resource but critically the ability to access Local Parks, Neighbourhood Parks, District Parks and Country Park with their provision for formal and informal recreation and play is a key part of a customer focussed Open Space Strategy.

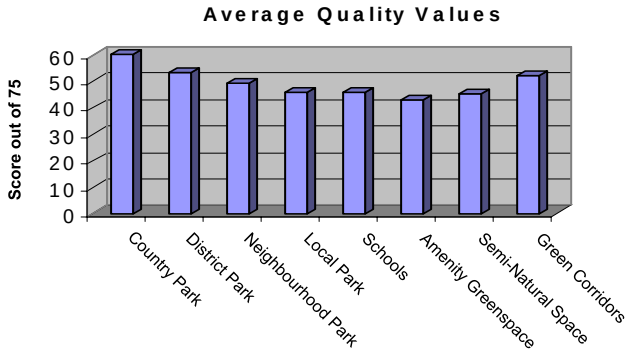
The assessment of West Lothian based on the Open Space Database and draft Open Space Standards suggests that:

- Country Parks are well provided for and all residents have ready access to a Country Park facility within 10km of settlements.
- District Parks are generally well provided but the SE Quadrant (Whitburn/ Stoneyburn/ Fauldhouse and smaller settlements) have no access to District Park within 4km.
- It is understood that Almondvale District Park may be lost to built development and replacement provision in the NW quadrant of Livingston (potentially Eliburn Park) would be required.
- Neighbourhood Parks are generally well provided for with future provision required in Livingston, West Linlithgow and East Broxburn.
- Local Parks provide important facilities within 500m of residential property with notable 'gaps' in provision in Bathgate, industrial areas of Livingston and Broxburn.

4.0 Composition of West Lothian's Open Spaces – Qualitative Assessment

The qualitative assessment for the open space resource was limited to the 750 sites included Series 1 sites included in the Audit. The Open Space Audit included an assessment of the overall quality of each site, within the 36 settlements to assist the Council in its core task of providing "best value" and value management. This will provide an asset management tool for the quantitative and qualitative assessment and record of assets and value.

The chart below sets out the average quality value for the different types of open space in the West Lothian area.

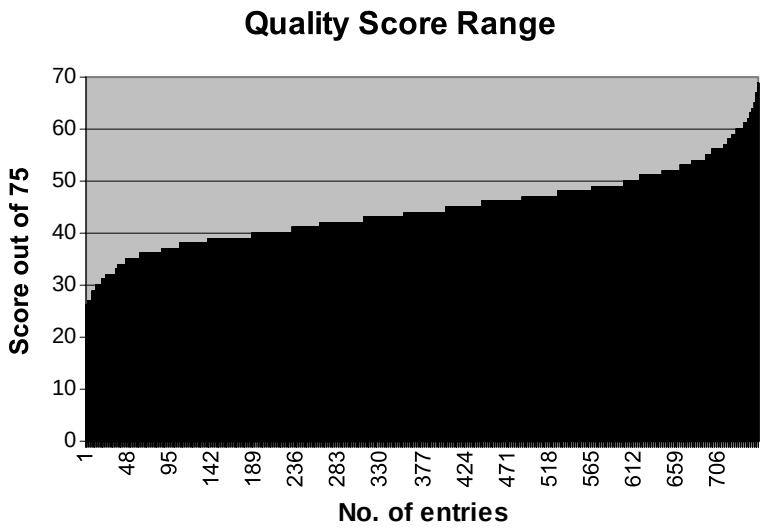


(* includes only 1 site assessment)

As mentioned previously, there are no absolute standards published for the assessment of 'value' and 'quality' as it is subjective and relative, changing from place to place and from time to time. However, it is possible to build up a picture of elements of open space which tend to have a high value to the community and things which are poorly valued by the community.

The overall value of open spaces in the whole of the West Lothian area averaged at 44 out of a total score of 75, which would indicate that there is significant room for improvement in terms of the quality of the open space resource across the council area. Kirknewton had the highest score of 49 and Loganlea had the lowest

score with 33. The following tables set out the settlement analysis of the 36 settlements in West Lothian. These figures, together with the mapped information will provide an indication of the quality, quantity and accessibility of open spaces throughout the Council area.



5.0 Composition of West Lothian's Open Spaces – Quantitative Assessment

The Open Space Strategy should seek to secure a balanced hierarchy of open space provision reflecting certainly local provision but also reflecting local need and accessibility. District and Neighbourhood Parks will also serve Local Park needs for local residents and we would anticipate that much of the Amenity Space, Green Corridors and Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace will also contribute in part to meeting Local Park functions. This should be assessed and acknowledged within the strategy.

The table below summarises the general open space composition of all the open space included in the West Lothian area, excluding War Memorials, formal gardens and development sites. This includes the sites from the Series 1, 2 and 3 categories.

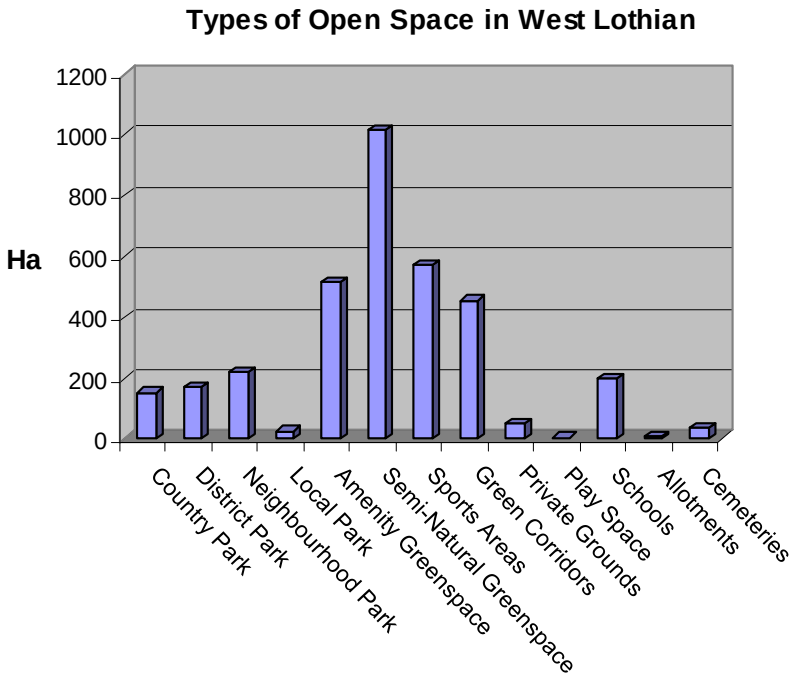
Pan 65 Typology	Local Sub-categories	Audit Area Totals in West Lothian Area (ha)
Public Parks & Gardens	**Country Park**	153.02ha (378 acres)*
	District Park	169.51ha (417 acres)
	Neighbourhood Park	220.59ha (545 acres)
	Local Park	26.74ha (66 acres)
Amenity Greenspace		515.08ha (1272 acres)
Sports Areas		569.69ha (1407 acres)
Green Corridors		455.16ha (1124 acres)
Natural / Semi-Natural Greenspace		1,016.22ha (2511 acres)
Private Grounds and Gardens		48.77ha (120 acres)
Equipped Play Space		5.64ha (14 acres)

Other Functional Greenspace	**Schools** **Allotments** **Cemeteries**	201.25ha (497 acres) 5.96ha (15 acres) 37.62ha (93 acres)
TOTAL		**3,425.25ha (8464 acres)**

Note: *Area data for the Country Parks in incomplete in the WLC database.

Table 7: Types of Open Space

The chart below demonstrates that in terms of hectares of open spaces, the largest category of open space within the West Lothian Council area is natural / semi-natural space.



There is a total of 220.59 hectares of neighbourhood park space and only 26.74 hectares of local park space.

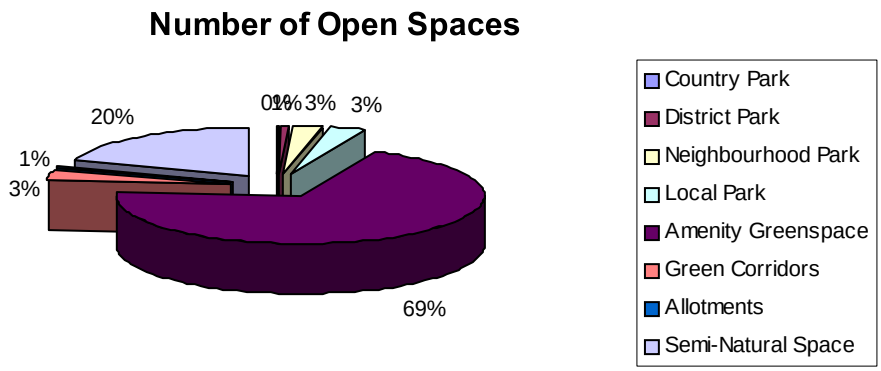
The table below demonstrates that in terms of numbers of open spaces, the largest category of open space within the West Lothian Council area is amenity greenspace. There are only 9 allotments, 8 district parks, 40 neighbourhood parks and a surprising lack of local parks. Figures 2 – 4 illustrate the distribution of the different types of open space within the Council area.

Type	Total in the Council Area
Country Park	**3**
District Park	**6**
Neighbourhood Park	**40**
Local Park	**41**
Amenity Greenspace	**987**
Sports Areas	**93**
Green Corridors	**49**
Natural / Semi-Natural Greenspace	**278**
Private Grounds and Gardens	**27**

Play Space	**57**
Schools	**79**
Allotments	**9**
Cemeteries	**26**
TOTAL	**1,697 No.**

Table 8: Number of the Selected Types of Open Space

The pie chart below illustrates that the majority of the open space in the West Lothian area is amenity greenspace, with a high number of semi-natural greenspaces and only small numbers of the other types of open space.



The National Playing Field 6 Acre Standard (NPFA) was applied to limited elements of the open space typology and gives a useful indication of the quality of playing space in each of the West Lothian Settlements. It should be noted that the 6 Acre Standard has been applied to the following types of open space recorded in the West Lothian database:

- District Parks
- Neighbourhood Parks
- Local Parks
- Sports Areas
- Play Spaces

The table below summarises the settlement population statistics, the area of playing space and indicates if the current provision meets the six acre standard.

Settlement	Population*	Area m²	Area Acres	Acres / 1000 population	Meets 6 acre standard?
Addiewell + Loganlea	1,400	41,584	10.28	7.3	**Y**
Armadale	9,603	233,704	57.7	6.0	**Y**
Bathgate	15,547	737,512	182.2	11.7	**Y**
Blackburn	5,512	113,482	28.0	5.1	**N**
Blackridge	1,647	53,875	13.3	8.1	**Y**
Breich	351	28,498	7.0	20.0	**Y**
Bridgend	820	24,660	6.1	7.4	**Y**
Broxburn	8,985	237,164	58.6	6.5	**Y**
Dechmont	1,016	10,239	2.5	2.5	**N**
East Calder	5,013	116,156	28.7	5.7	**N**
East Whitburn	1,092	15,760	3.9	3.6	**N**

Settlement	Population*	Area m²	Area Acres	Acres / 1000 population	Meets 6 acre standard?
Ecclesmachan	189	622	0.2	0.8	**N**
Fauldhouse	5,118	124,214	30.7	6.0	**Y**
Greenrigg	902	49,103	12.1	13.4	**Y**
Kirknewton	1,566	32,196	8.0	5.1	**Y**
Linlithgow	13,494	949,291	234.6	17.4	**Y**
Livingston	48,423	1,434,112	354.4	7.3	**Y**
Longridge	722	10,314	2.5	3.5	**N**
Mid Calder	3,448	49,956	12.3	3.6	**N**
Newton	131	No Data	-	No Data	-
Philpstoun	388	14,366	3.5	9.1	**Y**
Polbeth	2,692	92,176	22.8	8.5	**Y**
Pumpherston	1,337	9,137	2.3	1.7	**N**
Seafield	1,176	24,007	5.9	5.0	**N**
Stoneyburn	2,171	50,992	12.6	5.8	**N**
Torphichen	817	23,985	5.9	7.3	**Y**
Uphall	4,726	44,518	11.0	2.3	**Y**
Uphall Station	1,028	46,113	11.4	11.1	**Y**
West Calder	2,814	112,173	27.7	9.9	**Y**
Westfield	463	545	0.1	0.3	**N**
Whitburn	11,173	365,004	90.2	8.1	**Y**
Wilkieston	250	2,201	0.5	2.2	**N**
Winchburgh	2,581	42,918	10.6	4.1	**Y**

Note: * Population statistics were sourced from the GRO mid year estimate at June 2003

Table 9: Quantitative Assessment of Playing Space Provision

As mentioned previously, we would recommend that West Lothian utilise this as a guideline rather than a specific standard and review settlements in terms of how closely current open space provision within this limited typology is achieved within any given settlement.

Table 10 below, demonstrates the requirement for every type of open space in each of the West Lothian settlements, linked to population size.

Settlement	Population*	Requirement for Particular Types of Open Space
Addiewell	1,400	Local Park
Armadale	9,603	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Bathgate	15,547	District Park, Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Blackburn	5,512	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Blackridge	1,647	Local Park
Breich	351	Local Park
Bridgend	820	Local Park
Broxburn	8,985	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Dechmont	1,016	Local Park
East Calder	5,013	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
East Whitburn	1,092	Local Park

Settlement	Population*	Requirement for Particular Types of Open Space
Ecclesmachan	189	Amenity open spaces
Fauldhouse	5,118	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Greenrigg	902	Local Park
Kirknewton	1,566	Local Park
Linlithgow	13,494	District Park, Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Livingston	48,423	District Park, Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Longridge	722	Local Park
Mid Calder	3,448	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Newton	131	Amenity open spaces
Philpstoun	388	Local Park
Polbeth	2,692	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Pumpherston	1,337	Local Park
Seafield	1,176	Local Park
Stoneyburn	2,171	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Torphichen	817	Local Park
Uphall	4,726	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Uphall Station	1,028	Local Park
West Calder	2,814	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Westfield	463	Local Park
Whitburn	11,173	District Park, Neighbourhood Park, Local Park
Wilkieston	250	Local Park
Winchburgh	2,581	Neighbourhood Park, Local Park

Note: * Population statistics were sourced from the GRO mid year estimate at June 2003

Table 10: Requirement for Particular Types of Open Space in Settlements

6.0 Summary of Findings

The 36 settlements in the West Lothian area are well provided for in terms of country parks, district parks and neighbourhood parks. However, there is a significant shortage of local parks in a number of settlements. For example, some parts of Deans in Livingston are not within 500m straight line distance from a local park, which indicates a significant gap in provision. These areas are within acceptable distance thresholds from neighbourhood parks, but by their very nature, local parks provide a level of facility for the local community. When these findings are linked to the overall quality of the open spaces, conclusions can be drawn as to the deficiencies and surplus of open space provision in individual settlements.

The map database and settlement plan information detail the current provision and review in map format the level of compliance with the draft Open Space Standards (see plan information).