Action and Implementation Plans

6.1 Introduction
The Action Plans in Section 6.3 set out what is required to achieve the Vision and Outcomes of the MOSS. There are 6 key action types:

1. Policy and Guidelines;
2. Community Engagement;
3. Partnerships;
4. Parks Improvements;
5. Playing Pitches;
6. Research and Monitoring.

The Action Plans have been integrated into a logical sequence for implementation in Section 6.3. This implementation plan is also presented schematically, showing relationships between projects, in Appendix 6.

6.2 Implementing the MOSS Action Plans
Successful implementation of the MOSS is dependent both on adherence to the framework provided in the MOSS document and on the establishment of a dedicated team to administer the action plans. It is envisaged that the implementation team would have two levels.

First, a Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) should be established. The CEG will be led by a political champion from the Environment and Regeneration portfolios and will include in its membership senior management of Planning and Cultural Services. A time and resource commitment from partnership agencies would be desirable. It is expected that this group would meet quarterly.

Reporting to the CEG would be the Open Space Steering Group. This group would be staffed by officers responsible for the implementation and administration of the MOSS. This group would build upon established links between the Planning and Cultural Services and provide a forum for project planning, implementation and review. Where necessary, staff from other departments and agencies may be invited to join or report to this group. It is expected that this group would meet monthly.

It is intended that the Merton Open Space Strategy will remain the central document for advancing Merton’s Open Space Vision. Completed action plan projects will, where appropriate, become supplementary documents to the Strategy. Upon review of the document in 5 years time the objectives, outcomes and action plans will reflect implementation progress and evolving pressures on open spaces.

Section 6.7 presents a number of funding options available for open space protection and provision and acquisition of new facilities.

The final section of Part Five sets out how the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) proposes to monitor progress on the Implementation Plan.
6.3 Action Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Establish the Community Forum</th>
<th>Community Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Community, Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Description</strong></td>
<td>Establish a community forum to raise awareness of the issues facing Merton’s open spaces and to encourage community involvement in addressing open space issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With the number of representative groups in the MOSS, an annual forum would be a valuable tool for getting diverse groups together to network and discuss the issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Forum will be administered by Leisure Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The meetings will be held Quarterly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Priorities**

We are establishing the Community Forum to ensure our open spaces reflect the community’s diverse needs and provide them with an opportunity to play a greater role in the ongoing planning design and management. The following are some of the groups we intend to engage through the Friends Forum and other specific projects.

**Friends groups**

Work will continue on encouraging the establishment of new Friends groups and the agreement of expectations between the Cultural Services team and individual Friends groups.

The Friends groups are acknowledged as a vital resource connecting the Council with the Community. However, in order to be effective and contribute constructively to the quality of the park experience for all Merton residents, there must be an understanding of the needs of particular parks. Capital projects and fundraising must be assessed alongside the funding and resources required to ensure maintained community investment.

**Ethnic Communities**

We will work with ethnic communities and Joint Consultative Council (JCC) to ensure all Merton residents have equitable access to open space and sporting facilities that meet their expectations.

**Local Residents**

We will ensure open space reflects the community's diverse needs and provides them with an opportunity to play a greater role in the ongoing planning and management of open space.

**Engaging young people in Planning, design and management of parks.**

Engaging youth is key to the future of Merton’s parks. If young people are aware of the importance of this vital public asset and have an active part in the decision making process they will take care of parks now and in the future. The community forum will integrate with youth projects in LB Merton or other agencies to engage young people in the planning, design and management of parks to better provide for their needs.

**Integration**

Connects Partnership and Community Engagement Actions and will provide a consultative forum for implementing action plan projects.
### 6.3.1 Monitoring Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.</th>
<th>Review Playing Pitch and Pavilion Quality Audit Annually</th>
<th>Playing Pitches Research and Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Description</strong></td>
<td>Review of the playing pitch and pavilion quality assessments will provide a useful benchmark for measuring progress toward the development of this strategy. This needs to be completed to update the MOSS evaluation matrix and to monitor specific improvements in parks and sports facilities. Review of the Playing Pitch Assessment will acknowledge the variation in sports team numbers and evolving trends of popularity amongst the different sports.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priorities</strong></td>
<td>Playing Pitch and Pavilion assessments to be undertaken at the discretion of the Parks Manager.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Ensure data is entered into the Quality Spread Sheets. Refer to Quality Assessment instructions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.</th>
<th>Evaluation, Standards, Prioritisation and Monitoring Matrix</th>
<th>Research and Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes:</strong></td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Leisure and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Description</strong></td>
<td>Improve the functionality, application and review of the Open Space Evaluation, Standards, Prioritisation and Monitoring Matrix. The evaluation matrix amalgamates information from a variety open space information sources. Parks and wards are scored against a variety of criteria including amenity, range of facilities, population pressure on the open space accessibility etc. The matrix is an effective tool for examining options for investment or maintenance within parks or wards and for evaluating planning proposals against the outcomes of the MOSS. The project would focus on making the Evaluation matrix easy to use for all planning and leisure staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priorities</strong></td>
<td>Establish the link with the spatial information contained in the GIS database from the Merton Open Spaces Study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Atkins MOSS database GIS database Use to plan funding for Parks Improvement Actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Develop the existing Open Space GIS database to improve implementation and monitoring of the strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research and Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Outcomes: ALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High</th>
<th>Planning and Leisure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Project Description

This project will integrate the existing MOSS database (developed by WS Atkins) with the Evaluation Matrix to improve place based open space queries and to monitor the supply of open space and provision of facilities.

Again, the front end functionality of the system is key to its widespread use by staff in both the Planning and Cultural Services. A user interface should be developed with input from all potential users and data vendors.

Priorities

Proposed system architecture is included as Appendix 5.

Integration

- Evaluation, Standards and Prioritisation Matrix
- MOSS Study
- Pitch and Pavilion Assessments
- GLA – new LDD monitoring system has come into place this includes monitoring of open space information.
- GLA – developing a London GIS database of open space.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research and monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Outcomes: ALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High</th>
<th>Leisure and Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Project Description

Performance indicators are an excellent tool for evaluating the Council’s progress toward implementing the vision and outcomes of the strategy.

Performance indicators should be easily measurable and any improvements or reductions in performance should be easily communicated.

Priorities

In the Evaluation Matrix the following quality indicators could be further developed to provide more accurate quality monitoring:

- Community
- Amenity
- Overall Quality
- Pitch
- Pavilion
- Range of Facilities
- Safety and Security
- Vandalism

Integration

A lot of this work has been completed as part of the development of the Evaluation Matrix. At the project manager’s discretion, certain elements of the Evaluation Matrix may be used in their current state or developed to increase their effectiveness in monitoring progress toward the vision of the MOSS.
6. **Set Provision Standards for inclusion in Parks Management Plans.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Policy and Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Planning and Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

To ensure that open space needs are met there is a need to develop local open space standards, for accessibility, quantity and quality. Merton already has some open space provision standards (see appendix 4) including those for accessibility, however there is a need to set the following open space standards:

1. Set quality standard for each type of park within the new Merton Open Space Typology (see appendix 4)
2. Playing pitch standards – quantity, quality and accessibility. Appendix 1 paragraph 3.9 sets out some recommended standards
4. Cemeteries (quantity standard) following completion of research Action 21.
5. Play facilities standards based on LEAP and NEAP criteria.

Standards should be set out in the LDF, and they would be adopted through the LDF process.

**Integration opportunities**

Should be integrated into the prioritisation and monitoring functions of the GIS / Prioritisation.


Performance Indicators.

---

7. **Develop individual management plans for parks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Parks Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

It is envisaged that the integration of the results of actions above will be merged into practical management plans based on individual park functions and community aspirations.

**Priorities**

The following park groups are priorities for management plan development.

1. Flagship Parks
2. Elite Sports Grounds
3. Amenity Parks

**Integration**

This project will integrate the experiences of Leisure Management parks improvement over the first 3 years of implementing the Merton Open Space Strategy.
### 6.3.2 Funding Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Review funding policies, sources and priorities for park maintenance</th>
<th>Parks Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Equity, Accessibility, Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Development of Revenue and funding strategy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Development of Local Development Framework.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**
Existing funding policies will be reviewed to determine:

- Sources of funding (including s106);
- Collection of revenue and its associated costs;
- Destination of parks revenue reinvestment;
- Capital funding sources.

**Priorities**
Maximise opportunities for non council tax funding for capital and revenue expenditure. A number of potential partnership organisations to be targeted to provide additional funding for sports, heritage and nature conservation facilities and initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Revenue and Funding Strategy</th>
<th>Playing Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Access, Equity, Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Review the charging policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Develop service level agreements with clubs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Set standards for playing pitches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>Review of funding policies and sources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6.3.3 Parks Improvements

#### 10. Increase frontline staffing in parks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Leisure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Project Description**

Staffing levels in the parks have fallen consistently over time. This has led to decreased quality of parks grounds and amenity features, poorly managed facilities, and a declining standard of playing pitch surfaces. Low staffing levels removes the “public face” of the council and reduces the public perception of safety and security in the parks.

The lack of human resources to maintain the parks to high quality standard has reduced staff morale significantly.

Investment in human resources is fundamental to the implementation of the MOSS. Options for increasing the staffing levels will need to be investigated thoroughly against the objectives and outcomes of the MOSS.

**Priorities**

- Provide a “public face” of Merton Council through our parks.

**Integration**

- Related to all parks improvement projects


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Community, Education, Healthy Lifestyle, Access.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

The Open Space Study and Playing Pitch Assessment provide substantial detail on specific facilities needing improvement.

The upgrading of facilities should be prioritised using the Parks Evaluation Matrix and the Ward Assessments. This will ensure that works programmes can implement the desired outcomes of the MOSS equitably across the borough.

Develop Memoranda of Understanding between Merton and sports clubs who are keen to get involved in the management of their pavilion and open space.

- Encourage a sense of ownership
- Establish better relationship between the Council and sports teams
- Create stakeholders with an interest in the ground and Merton’s policies to improve it

Set clear expectations of conduct from the Council and teams.
Priorities
This action will initially aim to increase the quality scores of all Sports Pitches and Pavilions to “Good” over the 5 years.

The detailed prioritisation of these projects is at the discretion of the Parks Manager.

1. Upgrade these pitches to “Good” quality:
(see Appendix 1 of the Strategy detail on pitch quality criteria).

2. Drainage Improvement Projects:
Abbey Recreation Ground, Colliers Wood, Dundonald Recreation Ground, Morden Park
(priorities derived from Playing Pitch Assessment Summary – Cancellation Score)

3. Upgrade these pavilions to excellent overall quality:
Abbey Recreation Ground; Colliers Wood; Cottenham Park; Drax Playing Fields; Dundonald Recreation Ground; Haydons Road Recreation Ground; John Innes; Joseph Hood; Morden Recreation Ground.
(see Appendix 1 of the Strategy for detail on pavilion quality criteria).

4. Upgrade these court facilities:
Drax Playing Fields, John Innes Recreation Ground, Joseph Hood, Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields, King Georges Field.

Integration
Related to overall park grounds and facilities improvements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Upgrade Parks Facilities</th>
<th>Parks Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes Equity, Healthy Lifestyle, Accessibility</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The Open Space Study and Playing Pitch Assessment provide significant detail on specific facilities that need improvement.

The upgrading of facilities should be prioritised using the Parks Evaluation Matrix and the Ward Assessments. This will ensure that works programmes can implement the desired outcomes of the MOSS equitably across the borough.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
These parks have been identified as needing specific facilities upgraded.

See Appendix 1, Evaluation Matrix and the MOSS database for detail on specific facilities improvement needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Playing pitch and pavilion facilities upgrades.
6.3.4 *Other Improvements*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. Historic Landscape Restoration Projects</th>
<th>Parks Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>ALL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

There are currently four Historic Parks Restoration Plans. These are produced with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

**Priorities**

**John Innes Park**

The John Innes Society has recently been awarded £18,000 from the Living Spaces fund to carry out some replanting in

**Morden Park**

Improvements to the "mound" in Morden Park. A £20,000 grant from English Heritage through the National Monuments Scheme.

Other Historic Parks Restoration Projects are planned for Ravensbury Park and Wimbledon Park.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14. Vandalism and Security</th>
<th>Parks Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Community, Healthy Lifestyle, Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

The problem of graffiti and vandalism is complex. It is related to a number of social, economic and environmental factors that each need to be tackled in concert to reduce its occurrence. While enforcement is absolutely essential to deter the perpetrators, improvements in park design etc may be effective.

- Develop service level agreements for responding to vandalism and security concerns.
- Vandalism to park facilities must be followed up quickly to prevent a slip into disrepair.
- Service level agreements should detail the expected procedure and response time for repairing damaged facilities.

**Priorities**

Vandalism and Safety and Security improvements aim to improve all open spaces to an evaluation score of at least 3 (good) in the Evaluation Matrix by 2010.

*Priority Parks and Open Spaces* (scoring less than 3 in the Evaluation Matrix) for addressing Vandalism include:


*Pavilion Vandalism* is a serious problem at:

- Haydons Road Recreation Ground, John Innes Rec, Morden Playing Fields, Morden Rec, Raynes Park, Wimbledon Park (see Playing Pitch Quality Assessments, Vandalism score) for more information.

*Priority Parks* for improving Safety and Security (scoring less than 3 in the Evaluation Matrix include:

- Wandle Meadow, Moreton Green, Drax Playing Fields, Mitcham Sports, Long Bolsted Rec, Tamworth Farm, Lynmouth Gardens.
### Vandalism and Security continued

**Integration**
Integrate with Parks Improvements Projects. Ensure vandalism prevention and security enhancement measures are included in project design and

Work with Police, Merton Partnership Against Crime (MPAC), and other enforcement agencies to target graffiti and vandalism in parks.

### Habitat Creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes: Environment</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Leisure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**
Investigate with the Environment Agency the potential for habitat creation along river corridors, and potential for river restoration.

Rivers provide a valuable nature conservation and leisure resource. However in many urban areas they have been neglected or artificially channelled, which has led to increased risk of flooding.

**Priorities**
Identify key partners and the variety of information, skills, funding opportunities and management techniques.

Strengthen relationship with the GLA.

**Integration**
The Environment Agency has identified areas of ‘Immediate Opportunity for River Restoration’, within Merton. The Council and other partners will work with the Environment Agency to investigate and prioritise potential projects, to improve habitat or restore river environments to a more natural state.

Mayor’s 100 spaces programme.
### 16. Unofficial Use, Revenue Collection and Enforcement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Playing Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity, Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Ongoing Leisure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

Investigate measures to deter unofficial use of playing pitches.

Unofficial use is a significant problem in both Merton’s parks and private facilities. This contributes to pitch surface damage, abuse of facilities and undermining of the pitch charging structure.

A staff presence in parks to deter unofficial use and to enforce the booking and payment for playing pitches may deter unofficial use. However, other measures such as education and greater cooperation with sports clubs could provide some benefit.

**Improve revenue collection and enforcement**

To maintain the integrity of the charging policies for Merton’s playing pitches and court facilities etc, it is essential that revenue collection is strictly enforced.

This will require staff to monitor playing pitches to ensure staff presence and cooperation with teams and individuals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link to unofficial score on pitch quality assessment summary spreadsheet. Unofficial use is currently identified as a problem at Abbey Recreation Ground, Beverley Meads, Drax Playing Fields, Haydon’s Road Recreation Ground, Dundonald Recreation Ground, King Georges Field, Morden Park, Raynes Park and Three Kings Piece. • Procedural • Staff Training • Systems in place in enforce bylaws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Integration**

Sports team partnerships through action

### 17. Improve Accessibility of Sports Grounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Playing Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access and Equity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Planning and Leisure with Transport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

- Dialogue with public transport operators in needed to determine flexibility of routes for matches and practice.
- Improvements to entrances, signposting and pedestrian access
- Provision of cycling facilities (racks, ramps, etc)
- Identity grounds for improvement through the evaluation matrix.

**Priorities**

Bus routes liaise with transport.
### 6.3.5 Planning, Research and Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Development Component</th>
<th>Policy and Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Develop Open Spaces Component of the Merton Local Development Framework.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcomes**  
ALL

**Project Description**  
The Local Development Framework is Merton’s new land use planning tool. Incorporating policies to protect and improve open spaces.

**Review UDP policies**  
Land use planning is crucial for the implementation of the Strategy. Open space policies in the UDP will be reviewed as the council moves toward producing an LDF to ensure that they reflect the MOSS vision, objectives and principles.

The review of UDP policies will also investigate how our planning policies can **secure the public use of Private Sports Pitches for the future.**

**Provision in New Developments**  
New development places additional pressure on existing open space. The aim of seeking open space or contributions towards open space provision or enhancement is to ensure that there is sufficient open space to meet needs within a defined area.

The policy will define:

1. Open space provision standards and distance thresholds;
2. Circumstances for providing open space ‘on site’ as part of new development;
3. Calculations for developer contributions;
4. Minimum acceptable size of provision.

The outcome of this project will be greater certainty to developers and the council on expectations for the provision of new open spaces or the improvement of existing spaces.

**Design Guidelines for Open Spaces**  
Well designed open spaces can improve the quality of urban environments. LB Merton has produced design guidelines that will assist developers in understanding the Council’s aims in terms of design quality of open spaces and creating a sense of place. The documents include:

1. Design SPG (September 2004)

**Integration**  
Engage property developers in the development of Provision Standards and Design Guidelines.

Planning and Leisure to collaborate on the Development of Park Management Plans.
19. **Green Corridors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

Investigate the potential to create a green corridor in the east of the borough including sites at:
- Streatham Park Cemetery;
- Long Bolstead Rec;
- Rowan Road Rec;
- Westminster School;
- Rowan and Brenley Playing Fields.

**Priorities**

Link to Westminster Sports Ground / Rowan and Brenley

**Integration**

Related to Habitat Creation (16).

---

20. **Research the value of cemeteries and the need for future cemetery provision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

Cemeteries are part of the open space resource of the Borough and therefore the MOSS vision is applicable to them.

Cemeteries have a fundamental societal role providing burial space. They also have significant amenity, nature conservation, recreation and cultural heritage values.

Assessment whether there are sufficient cemeteries to meet demand, the value of cemeteries, and the role they play in the open space network is required to innovatively plan for future facilities in the borough. It is envisaged that a revised version of the MOSS will include cemetery provision and management.

**Priorities**

Capacity calculation, landscaping, maintenance and quality.

**Integration**

Local Development Framework development.

---

20b. **Research existing provision of allotment space and assess local need**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**

Allotments are part of the open space resource of the Borough, and as such the MOSS vision is applicable to them. However, it is recognised that information on the quality, accessibility and value of allotments are limited. There is also a lack of information about the demand / need for allotments. It is envisaged that a revised version of the MOSS will include allotments.

**Integration**

Local Development Framework
### 6.3.6 Marketing and Partnerships

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Develop Relationships and Monitor open space provision and planning in adjacent boroughs.</td>
<td>Research and Monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Outcomes Equity

| Medium | Planning and Leisure |

#### Project Description

Open space provision and policies in neighbouring boroughs have a significant impact on Merton’s parks and open spaces. If adjacent boroughs are reducing the amount of open space or specific facilities within their borough, residents will travel to other areas to continue with their activities.

Further engagement with adjacent boroughs at officer level to encourage cross boundary partnerships and strategic planning.

This project is closely related to the collection of information regarding cross boundary pressure on Merton’s open space resource. By building on existing working relationships with adjacent boroughs the flow of information and ideas will encourage goodwill and a shared vision with other boroughs. There may also be potential for joint projects.

Take account of supply and demand issues in adjacent boroughs and participate in their consultation processes. Also form partnerships with adjacent boroughs to plan effectively for new and improved facilities.

#### Priorities

- Identify open space planners in other boroughs
- Provide feedback to adjacent borough consultation exercises.

#### Integration

- Local development framework planning
- Sports Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Schools programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Outcomes Environment

| Medium | Leisure |

#### Project Description

Develop a partnership programme for schools to encourage appreciation of the value of open space.

Schools represent a significant asset for protecting parks, their facilities and features. By encouraging children to appreciate nature through tree planting programmes and other similar schemes, a generation of children will have a special connection and appreciation of their local parks and their flora and fauna.

#### Priorities

- To be defined

#### Integration

- To be defined
### 23. Local Business Partnership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community and Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium 2-3</td>
<td>Leisure and Planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**
Develop partnerships with local businesses
Merton’s first community plan outlines actions to support local business including:
- Reducing traffic congestion and improving public transport
- Regenerating Merton’s town centres
- Encouraging job creation
- Encouraging new companies to come to Merton
- Improving the skills of local people to take opportunities for better jobs.

Developing partnerships with local businesses would encourage businesses to value the importance of open spaces to the Merton Economy.

**Priorities**
To be defined

**Integration**
To be defined

### 24. Work with Private Sports Facilities Owners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Partnerships and Playing Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access, Community, Healthy Lifestyle, Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Planning and Leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**
Work with open space landowners to achieve quality improvements to open space and meet the open space needs of the community.
Ensure that pitches currently ‘secured for public use’ but privately owned are secured for community use for the foreseeable future.

Table 2.1 in Appendix 1 sets out pitches in secured public use (unrestricted public access). Many are in private ownership. If current access arrangements change this could lead to a shortfall in pitch supply. It is therefore crucial to seek ways of securing public access through legal arrangements / partnership arrangements. This issue will be explored through the development of the Merton Local Development Framework.

There are some open spaces within the Borough that are currently either not used for their existing purpose or have come under pressure for redevelopment. The Council will seek to establish partnerships with owners to plan how the future use of the open space can best meet the needs of the community and the aims of the MOSS.

**Priorities**
The sites that are a high priority with regards this action include:
- LESSA Playing Field
- Merton College Playing Field
- Sun Alliance Sports Ground

And following the approach outlined in EMOSS, the following sites:
- Rowan High School (Council Owned – need to work with future owner)
- Bushey Playing Field (Council Owned – need to work with future owner)
- Westminster School Sports Ground

**Integration**
Increasing participation in Pitch Sports
Vandalism and security
## 25. SPORTS DEVELOPMENT
### Increasing Participation in Pitch Sports

**Outcomes**: Healthy Lifestyle, Access, Equity

**Timeframe**: Leisure

**Project Description**
Investigate and integrate other agencies to increase participation in pitch sports in the Borough amongst all groups.

Increase participation in under represented groups through:

- Sports development initiatives to increase participation. Set out in a Sports Development Plan. Sports development initiatives to provide centres of excellence in preparation for the 2012 Olympics.
- Continue to develop and promote junior coaching
- Support the development of female participation
- Remark some adult pitches for junior football and cricket.
- Develop a marketing strategy for playing pitches

The declining popularity of pitch sports is due to a number of factors. Effective marketing of the playing pitch resource could be a useful tool for enhancing public awareness of Merton’s facilities. The purpose of this project is engage the wider community informing them of the availability of playing pitches and how to go about utilising them.

- Implement internet enabled pitch booking service.

**Priorities**
To be defined

**Integration**
Pitch Marketing, Open Space Marketing, Internet Resource Development.

## 26. Merton Open Spaces Marketing

**Outcomes**: Healthy Lifestyle, Community, Education.

**Medium**: Leisure Services

**Project Description**
Using existing experience, develop marketing strategies and community initiatives to promote awareness, benefits and use of open spaces in Merton.

This project will raise the profile of open space and the MOSS and assist in mobilising community participation in open space management. Specialised communication campaigns could be designed to promote spaces, visitor attractions and heritage areas and trails.

**Priorities**
Integrate with existing press office marketing programme

**Integration**
Internet Resources Development
Pitch Marketing Strategy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>27.</th>
<th><strong>Merton Open Spaces Internet Resource</strong></th>
<th>Community Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Healthy Lifestyle, Access, Community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Leisure Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Description**
Develop an Open Space web resource on the Merton Internet site to facilitate community engagement and to provide interactive booking and cancellation announcements for Merton’s sports pitches and park facilities.

- A dedicated open space web page will act as a clearinghouse for important information regarding the MOSS. Also can be used for consultation on relevant MOSS projects and proposals.
- Ensure consistency with the requirements of national E Government initiatives for online services.
- This should be done early on to engage the community in the development of the action plans.

**Priorities**
Allow query of Sports Pitches and Facilities, Sports Bookings

**Integration**
Open Spaces Marketing.
6.4 Mechanisms to Implement the Strategy

Planning

Unitary Development Plan – Adopted in October 2003, the UDP is the statutory plan for the Borough. As the Council moves towards developing a Local Development Framework, the MOSS will provide a mechanism for reviewing the UDP policies related to open space. LDF policies will in turn assist in delivering MOSS outcomes.

In assessing and making decisions on planning applications, Merton Council makes its decisions in line with the policies set out within the UDP, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The MOSS will be a material consideration for various applications.

The following are examples of development proposals where MOSS would be a material consideration, and how Development Control can be guided by MOSS tools to achieve the MOSS outcomes:

1. Development proposed on Open Space – assess if the open space is required for its existing use – Depending on the type of open space different MOSS tools can be used. For Applications to develop sports pitches the PPM (see Appendix 1) provides useful information, for other types of open space the ward and park matrix can be used to assess the needs in the particular area.

In this case where park is shown to be required through the MOSS tools the application should be refused. There could be circumstances where MOSS outcomes could be achieved through partial development, with S106 Agreement enabling the needs of the community to be met.

2. Development proposed that is likely to lead to additional pressure on open space in an area – Certain types of development could lead to additional pressure for open space, for example a new housing development in an area where open space provision standards are not being met (either existing standards or those developed through Action Plan 5). The parks and ward matrix can assist in prioritising improvements to open space. In this case MOSS tools can be used to secure S106 funding for park improvements.

3. Development adjacent to an open space – Assess the value of the open space using the park evaluation tool. Assess whether the development would enhance these values.

Community and Cultural Services Implementation Mechanisms

The Community Cultural Services Division encompasses:

- Community Education;
- Library and Heritage Services;
- The Youth Service;
- Leisure Development; and
- Arts Development.

Each of these Cultural Service functions has an important role in the co-ordinated implementation of the MOSS. Where necessary, cultural service functions and individual projects will be aligned to achieve the MOSS objectives. The following key functions of the various Cultural Services teams are considered key to the implementation of the MOSS.
Economic regeneration and community development are key platforms for action by the **Library and Heritage Services** team. One valuable contribution to Merton residents’ quality of life is through developing an awareness of Merton’s rich past and present through the Merton Heritage Centre and Local Studies resources.

The **Youth Service** works with a variety of partners to contribute toward the goal of lifelong learning for all through social education. Through its work combating social exclusion and ensuring the provision of youth facilities and services, the Youth Service is a vital partner in achieving open spaces that are attractive and relevant to young people’s distinct requirements. Existing and potential relationships between external youth agencies will be a vital resource for communicating the MOSS objectives and encouraging inclusive working relationships between partners.

**Leisure Development** has direct responsibility for the implementation of the MOSS Action Plans. The department is primarily responsible for:

- Managing and developing the Council’s programmes in sport and children’s play;
- Project management of Leisure Developments including major externally funded projects;
- Negotiating and management of leases, licences etc;
- Managing events;
- Administration of commercial lettings including filming in parks;
- Managing Wimbledon Park Sailing Base, Athletics, Sports and Play development;
- Planning, staging and managing holiday programmes, play schemes and sports development programmes;
- Facilitate representative sports teams for inter-borough competitions;
- Organise Council events such as the Horticultural Show, Fireworks Displays, Merton in Bloom, London in Bloom, Allotment Competitions etc;
- Liaison and partnerships with voluntary organisations, statutory bodies, external agencies and the public from within and outside of the Borough in order to progress leisure developments.
- Service the sports consultative forum
- Develop policy and review publications
- Seek and advise on external funding for Leisure projects
- Work in partnership with indoor centres and others to provide a coordinated approach to leisure

The Leisure Services Open Spaces Management Framework is presented in Section 2.3. This describes the key responsibilities for park staffing, management and maintenance.
6.5 Strategy Process

To ensure the effective implementation of the MOSS, achieving high quality results in Merton’s open spaces, there are a number of priority actions that need to be completed first. A detailed Implementation Plan is illustrated below. The full size version is appended to the MOSS as Appendix 6. The Implementation plan highlights the linkages and sequence of strategy projects over the first 3 years of Strategy Implementation. The Implementation plan also highlights non-MOSS projects that are integrated with the MOSS work programme.

Figure 6.1 Implementation Plan

See Appendix 6 for full size version.
6.6 Funding Options for Open Space Provision and Enhancement

This section provides an overview of some of the funding options currently available for the provision, protection and acquisition of open space. It is intended that a more comprehensive investigation of funding options, as well as alternative methods of providing and protecting open space will be undertaken as part of review of funding options (see Action Plan 3 Community Engagement, Action 4).

Funding streams sought should be led by the needs of the projects and actions the Strategy is aiming to achieve, and should not be driven by funding criteria. Therefore the possible funding sources will not be relevant to all the projects that the Council is aiming to achieve.

It will be crucial to work in partnership with other organisations, and community groups to tap into their expertise, information, and experience to secure funding.

There are two types of funding - Capital and Revenue. Capital funding tends to be for set projects over a short term for the development of new facilities or restoration of existing facilities. Revenue funding is required longer term, and can be used to fund training, administration costs, and salaries for employees. Often funding schemes provide capital funding only, so it is important to ensure that sources of funding that are sought for a particular project will provide the correct type of funding, and for those projects that require capital funding, sufficient resources must be available for the ongoing revenue costs.

External Funding Sources

The following are some of the possible funding sources that can be secured for improving open space and sport and recreation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Lottery Fund</td>
<td>Lottery Distributor grants funds for heritage projects anywhere in the United Kingdom. The aim is to conserve and enhance natural and cultural heritage and ensure that people can learn about and have access to heritage sites. Grants can be made for historic parks, gardens and other urban green spaces to restore, regenerate and improve access to these historic sites. The HLF is particularly interested in awarding grants to parks that contribute significantly to urban regeneration projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Opportunities Fund</td>
<td>(NOF) is a Lottery Distributor created in 1998 to award grants to education, health and environment projects throughout the UK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities</td>
<td>This programme supports disadvantaged urban and rural communities throughout the UK understand, improve or care for their natural environment, focusing on disadvantage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Spaces</td>
<td>Grant programmes run by Office of the Deputy Prime minister, Groundwork and the Urban Parks Forum. It provides grants to any existing neighbourhood groups helping to improve open space in their neighbourhood and create valuable community spaces. Living Spaces aims to create a variety of space including: play areas; community gardens; local parks; village greens; nature areas; kick about areas; ponds; courts; squares; city farms. The only requirements are that the space is open to the public, within 2 mile of a residential area and not a formal sports pitch. Grants range from £1000 - £100,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport England</td>
<td>Sport England’s new vision is “Making England and Active and Successful Sporting Nation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The body is funded from National Lottery proceeds. Funding grants are now organised into two streams – Community and National.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community projects aim to increase and widen participation in sport achieving sustainable benefits in health, education, community cohesion and social inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport England is leading the development of a new framework for sport, with a clear set of priorities for action, supported in each region by a regional plan for sport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football Association (FA)</td>
<td>The FA invests in facility improvement through the Football Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grants include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grass roots</strong> – aims to provide opportunities for anyone of any age background or ability to participate. Primarily for building, developing or refurbishing facilities in order to sustain or increase participation (temporary suspension of some grass roots funding at time of writing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Community and Education</strong> – which aims increase participation amongst certain sections of the community (people with disabilities, black and ethnic communities, people of low incomes, and women and girls) create inclusive communities and promote healthy lifestyles. The grant has funded community coaching and social inclusion projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Schools</strong> – Funding support schools who wish to build, develop or modernise / upgrade facilities in order to sustain and / or increase participation. Funding is targeted towards schools in deprived wards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rugby Football Union</td>
<td>The RFU, through the Rugby Football Foundation runs the Community Rugby Capital Fund Scheme. The scheme allows community Rugby teams to apply for grants of £1,500 to £5,000 which clubs have to match 50:50. They are also interest free loans of up to £100,000 available. The aim of the scheme is to finance capital projects to improve facilities that contribute to the recruitment and retention of players. Projects that have been funded include pitch improvements, clubhouse facilities (e.g. showers and changing rooms) and equipment used for playing and coaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developers Contributions</td>
<td>The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) enable Planning Obligations (often known Section 106 obligations) to be entered into between a developer and a local planning authority. Planning obligations, if properly used, can enhance the quality of a development and enable proposals to go ahead that might otherwise be refused. They should however be relevant to planning and directly related to the proposed development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Section 106 obligations can be used to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Restrict development or use of land;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Require specific operations to be carried out in, on, under or over land;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Agency Description

- Require land to be used in a specified way;
- Require payments to be made to the local Authority either in a single sum or periodically.

The Council, in carrying out its land use planning duties, may secure developer contributions to open space, sport and recreation facilities. However, to ensure accountability, planning obligations should be:

- Necessary – without it the proposal would be unacceptable in land use planning terms;
- Relevant to planning – they shouldn’t require actions outside of the planning system;
- Directly related to proposed developments – there should be a link between the obligation and the planning permission;
- Fairly and Reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development – obligations should not be used as a means of extracting excessive sums from developers;
- Reasonable in all other respects.

Where the assessments have identified a need for open space or better quality open space and adopted provision standards are not being met developer contributions (in terms of on site open space, or sums for off site improvements), will be sought, and are seen as a valuable resource for implementing MOSS.

### 6.7 Monitoring Programme

This section sets out how the CEG proposes to monitor progress on the Implementation Plan.

The monitoring programme is issue based and has been adapted from the “Pressure State Response” indicator framework. The programme is linked back to the key outcomes of the strategy. The three categories of indicators are:

1. Pressure (Issues)
2. State (Condition)
3. Response (Actions to address the issues)

The Outcomes Sought for the Merton Open Space Network (refer section 5.3) are central to the monitoring programme. The monitoring indicators identified will be used as a gauge for assessing whether the outcomes are being achieved.

It is recognised that the list of indicators within each category is representative rather than comprehensive. It is also recognised that much of the work completed as part of the MOSS Action Plans will assist with the monitoring programme.
## Monitoring Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Outcome</th>
<th>Pressure</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Access             | 1. Uneven distribution of certain types of open spaces across the borough forcing more car journeys.  
  2. Increasing demand for car parking facilities  
  3. Safety issues with cycling and walking networks  
  4. More park visitors new to parks need to access facilities  
  5. Safety and security concerns restricting access and enjoyment of some residents | Ward Accessibility score  
  Nature conservation access score  
  Poor signage  
  Lack of facilities for cyclists and or poor quality pedestrian links  
  Uneven distribution of facilities across the borough.  
  Car parking facilities inadequate  
  Complaints about safety | Upgrade Existing Facilities  
  Review of funding policies and priorities for park maintenance  
  Life cycle maintenance and management planning.  
  Working with open space landowners to achieve quality improvements.  
  Partnerships with Sports Clubs.  
  Funding opportunities for parks  
  Increasing participation in pitch sports.  
  Secure pitches for public uses  
  Upgrade facilities and access for all groups.  
  Revenue and funding strategy for management of playing pitches and pavilions  
  Improve accessibility to sports grounds.  
  Research ethnic community needs.  
  Provision of allotment space  
  Produce SPD to ensure planning decisions enable provision of sufficient facilities/open space as part of new developments  
  Adopt open space provision standards, and apply them. |
| Community           | Demographic changes which result in changes to the communities recreational and open space needs. | Open spaces that are over or under utilised.  
  Facilities that are irrelevant to communities they are located in.  
  Specific groups (ethnicity, age sex) underrepresented  
  Community potential score (number of friends groups established.) | Improve revenue collection processes and development  
  Service level agreements for responding to vandalism and security concerns  
  Develop role of Friends Groups in parks management  
  Increase frontline staffing  
  Work with police and other enforcement agencies to target graffiti and vandalism in parks.  
  Partnerships with Sports Clubs  
  Marketing strategies  
  Open space web page  
  Involve local communities  
  Community forum  
  Integration with youth projects  
  Engage ethnic communities. |
### Monitoring Programme continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Outcome</th>
<th>Pressure</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Provide opportunities for learning about the natural environment and the value of recreation</td>
<td>1. Informal use by schools 2. Loss of school grounds to development</td>
<td>• Number of formal use agreements  • Level of graffiti in adjacent open spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td>Protection and restoration of significant and representative natural habitats and ecosystems</td>
<td>1. Loss of natural habitats due to cumulative effects of use and development.</td>
<td>• Percentage area of land in nature conservation areas  • Number of groups working on projects and initiatives to conserve nature conservation areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td>Fair distribution of open space funding across the borough relevant to the needs and aspirations of the community.</td>
<td>1. Funding cuts causing centralisation of open space investment in facilities and maintenance. 2. Disparity of provision of certain facilities in certain areas of the borough.</td>
<td>Analysis of the ward evaluation matrix will provide details on  • Range of facilities  • Population per hectare of open space  • Deprivation  • Accessibility  • Ethnicity  • Etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Monitoring Programme continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Outcome</th>
<th>Pressure</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Healthy Lifestyle  | 1. Changing recreation needs in the community  
2. Conflict between recreational activities that co-exist in relatively constrained open space areas. E.g. Fishing and boating at Wimbledon Park.  
3. Pressure to provide open spaces and facilities for new emerging recreation and sport activities. | Open space areas that are over or under – utilised  
Number of complaints on the amount and quality of open space provision for specific recreational and leisure activities (through surveys and general complaints) | Upgrade existing facilities  
Integrate lifecycle management for facilities  
Service level agreements for vandalism response.  
Work with private open space providers to achieve quality improvements  
Develop partnerships with Sports Clubs  
Marketing strategies for open spaces  
Open space web page.  
Integrate with other organisations to increase sports participation.  
Upgrade facilities  
Adopt open space provision standards, and apply them |
| Heritage and Culture | 1. Forestry Stewardship Council Certification of Woodland  
2. Number of listed heritage features | Number of permits granted for cultural events on open space and feedback from the cultural event organisers.  
Number of cultural heritage sites damaged through recreational or visitor activities  
Heritage and Uniqueness score in Evaluation Matrix | Develop partnerships with key Environmental, Heritage and Open Space Agencies.  
Strategic partnerships with relevant recreational, educational, environmental organisations etc.  
Provide adequate protection for heritage and culture in UDP  
Ensure planning decisions protect and enhance heritage and culture. |
| Regeneration        | 1. Community expectations for improved quality of public open space.  
2. Loss of open space through unimaginative development | Low quality design of open space (i.e. lack of park furniture, inadequate shelter, or inappropriate planting)  
Poor connectivity between open space areas and living and working environments.  
Number of open space areas either over or under utilised  
Number of open space areas that are not well maintained. | Review funding policies and priorities for park maintenance.  
Work with developers to incorporate innovative open space provision into development projects.  
Work with open space landowners to achieve quality improvements to open space and meet the open space needs of the community.  
Involve local communities in the planning and design and management of open spaces. |

### 6.8 Review of MOSS

The MOSS will be reviewed every 5 years.

The first review should be completed by March 2010.