



**Glasgow City Council**

**Economy, Housing, Transport and  
Regeneration City Policy Committee**

**Item 4**

**3rd June 2025**

**Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of  
Neighbourhoods and Regeneration Service**

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## **OPEN SPACE STRATEGY ACTION PROGRAMME UPDATE**

### **Purpose of Report:**

To provide an update on the action programme to support the delivery of the Open Space Strategy and an update on "Barrowlands Park".

### **Recommendations:**

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of this report
- Note the aim to review the Open Space map as part of City Development Plan 2.
- Note the continued gathering of spatial data to support data driven decision making, impact assessment and monitoring relating to open space.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

### **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

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## 1 Background

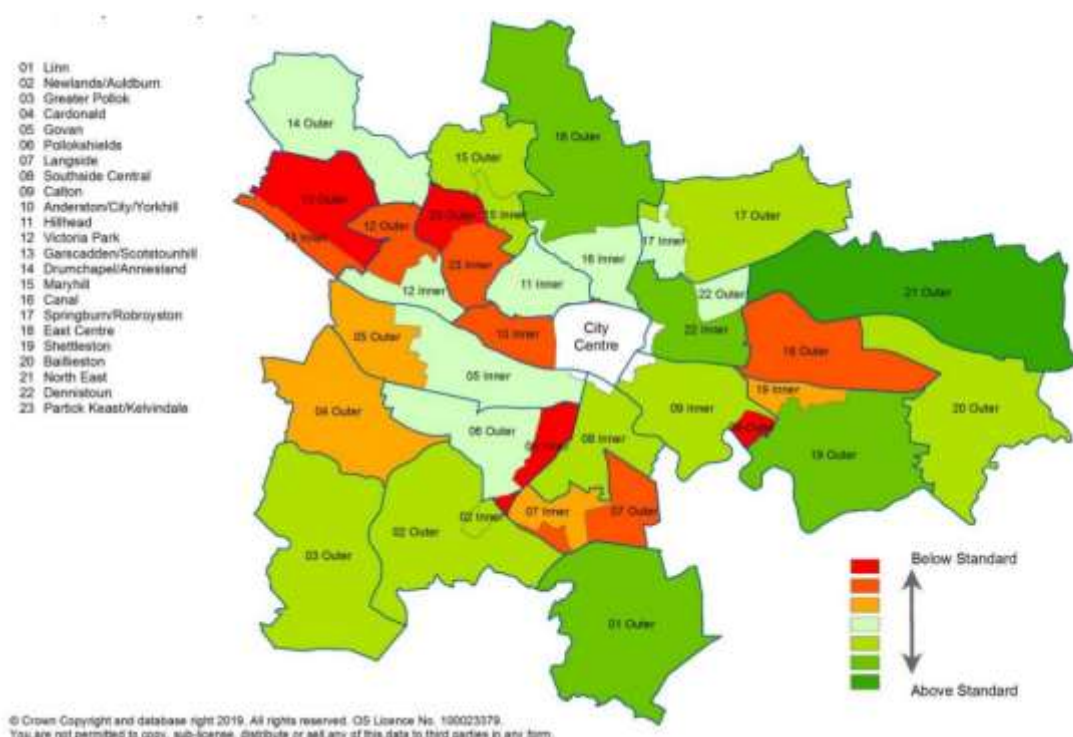
- 1.1 The [Open Space Strategy \(OSS\)](#) is a corporate document approved by City Administration committee on [6<sup>th</sup> February 2020](#) that coordinates the policies of various Council services responsible for open space. It aligns with other strategies and plans such as the [City Development Plan](#), [Climate adaptation and mitigation plans](#), [Forest and Woodland Strategy](#), [Council Strategic Plan](#), and [Local Biodiversity Action Plan](#). The OSS aims to deliver good quality, accessible open spaces to meet increasing demands for passive recreation, formal sport, biodiversity, and urban drainage initiatives.
- 1.2 The strategy is supported by an Environmental Digital Twin, which provides spatial data and mapping to aid in evidence-based decision-making and the creation of climate-resilient communities.
- 1.3 Nature-based solutions are integral to the OSS, offering multiple benefits such as ecosystem management, flood protection, air quality improvement, social cohesion, and local business opportunities.
- 1.4 Glasgow's strategy for scaling up nature-based solutions is underpinned by the OSS, Forest and Woodland Strategy, [Play Sufficiency Assessment](#), and key strategic documents like the Development Plan and Climate Plan. These strategies aim to ensure well-managed, well-located, and well-connected ecosystems within a wider green network. The OSS promotes awareness of the value of open spaces, provides a strategic rationale for their use and management, and fosters partnerships with organizations like the NHS to support health improvements. It also facilitates cross-departmental engagement, coordinates spending plans, and secures additional funding to maximize the benefits of open spaces.
- 1.5 This report provides an update on progress made against the 32 actions identified within the Open Space Strategy. The updates on the 32 actions are grouped under key deliverables and more detail is provided in paragraphs 2 to 12 below. Appendix one provides a summary of the progress on delivery. It should be noted that progress to deliver on the Open Space Strategy requires partnership working cross-council and with other stakeholders, including Glasgow Life.

## 2 Key Deliverable Updates - Community Spaces Audit (Actions 3,4 & 5)

- 2.1 The [Open Space Map](#) is the Council's audit of open spaces, identifying those protected by City Development Plan (CDP) Policy 6.
- 2.2 The Council's recently adopted [Supplementary Guidance SG6](#) (September 2024) notes that the Scottish Government requires councils to audit all open spaces of 0.2 hectares or greater, and any smaller spaces deemed appropriate. CDP 2 open space mapping will have regard to current national requirements, as previously reported.

### 3 Key delivery Updates – Community Spaces Quality and accessibility (Action 3 - 9)

- 3.1 The OSS sets out quality and accessibility standards to ensure access to good quality open space. Spaces meeting the Accessibility Standard are referred to as "Community Spaces." The Quality Standard, used with a Quality Assessment Matrix (see Annex 2 of SG6), ensures these spaces meet minimum requirements for size, accessibility, maintenance, and provisions for informal sport/recreation, children's play, relaxation, and biodiversity.
- 3.2 The OSS Quantity Standard is applied in each city ward or part of a ward to understand the distribution of all publicly usable open space (excluding demand-led spaces such as sports pitches or allotments) throughout the City. It specifies the required amount of "publicly usable" open space in the inner and outer urban areas, as shown on a map that also indicates the quality score for each Community Space. The map below shows the indicative quantity standards by ward. The quantity standard, set out in the Open Space Strategy, relates to the amount of "publicly useable" open space there should be across the city. There are different quantity standards for the inner and outer suburbs. The results of the quantity analysis are shown in the map below:



- 3.3 Of the areas identified as having a deficit only Cardonald is not covered by a Strategic or Local Development Framework (section 5 provides more details). Cardonald is covered by a [£1.2m City deal project](#) designed to improve greenspace and reduce surface water flooding. It has also benefited from a nature restoration grant from NatureScot.

#### **4.0 Environmental Digital Twin and Living Well Locally (Actions 1,2,8,9,19-21)**

- 4.1 This spatial data mapping tool includes layers covering various areas such as air quality and noise, water, boundaries, telecoms infrastructure, energy infrastructure, trees and woodland, environmental designations, SIMD, land supplies, planning applications, food growing, local heat and energy, historic environment, town centres and community facilities, habitats and species, wildflower planting, green belt, visitor attractions, hazards/constraints, urban fringe users, flooding, transport infrastructure, open space and parks, and schools. The Environmental Digital twin will be a freely available, allowing communities and applicants to access environmental and planning data in one place. They will be able to focus in on a park, a site or a community to better understand how that area has possibility to change. This allows both internal and external communities to “Ask the map” creating dashboards showing opportunities for change.
- 4.2 Ongoing work includes developing a dashboard for the [Food Growing Strategy](#). Additionally, we are collaborating with various partners to capture baseline data on the quantity, quality, and accessibility of new and existing open spaces from the planning application system and onsite work led by different City Council services.

#### **5.0 Public Realm and masterplanning (Actions 10, 22)**

- 5.1 Since 2020 the following Strategic Development Frameworks (SDFs) have been adopted: [River Clyde Strategic development Corridor](#) , [City Centre](#), [North Glasgow](#), [Govan / Partick](#) , [Inner East](#) and [Greater Easterhouse](#) . A further three Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) have also been adopted [South Central Local Development Framework](#) , [Drumchapel Local Development Framework](#) and [Greater Pollok Local Development Framework](#) These all include delivery plans and more detailed proposals for developing local green networks, open spaces, nature-based solutions and public realm.

#### **6.0 Natural Environment and Biodiversity ( Actions 23 – 26)**

- 6.1 Delivering a [Nature Network](#) for the city remains a key action for the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) implementation. This initiative supports the new [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy](#) at a local level.

**Achievements and Actions include - as covered by a [recent report](#):**

- Declaration of 5 new Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and some extensions of existing [Local Nature Reserves](#) (LNRs) resulting in a total of 22 LNRs
- Planting of nearly 16,500 trees city-wide in 2023/24
- Addition of 111,400 records to the [biological audit database](#)
- Management of 15 meadow sites and creation/enhancement of six [Green Connector sites](#)
- Planting of over [34,000 wildflower plugs and nearly 800,000 bulbs](#)

- Transformation of Baldragon Road, an extension to the Bishop's Loch LNR and development of [Hamiltonhill Claypits Local Nature Reserve](#)
- Implementation of the [Glasgow Tree Plan](#) and various biodiversity projects like [RSPB North Glasgow Greener Futures](#) (HLF funding approved December 2024)

## **7.0 Key delivery Updates – Sequestration and funding our multifunctional open spaces ( Actions 26 – 32)**

- 7.1 The Forest and Woodland Strategy, approved in May 2024, highlights the vital roles trees and woodlands play in urban settings. They provide habitats for wildlife, recreational spaces for people, and offer numerous environmental benefits such as flood management, carbon emission management, water flow and air quality control, temperature and energy usage regulation, job creation, and health benefits. NRS regularly updates on activities via the Tree Plan, with the most recent update in [November 2024](#) reporting over 24,000 trees planted on Council land in 2023/2024. It was also noted that for every tree removed, three are planted.
- 7.2 Both the Forest and Woodland Strategy and the Tree Plan will report updates to the Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee in November 2025.

## **8.0 Young People and Open Space (Actions 11 – 14)**

- 8.1 Children's play is crucial to Scotland's wellbeing: socially, economically, and environmentally. Early life experiences and environments shape children's developing brain architecture and strongly affect their future development and productivity (Harvard University, 2007). Recognizing this, the Scottish Government introduced the need for children and young people to be actively involved in the Development Plan process as part of the National Planning Framework 4 (2023). Play Sufficiency Assessments have become mandatory for all local authorities, and Glasgow has carried out its Play Sufficiency Assessment, as reported on 23rd April 2024 which will inform CDP2.
- 8.2 The Council currently has 287 equipped play areas. provided, inspected and maintained by GCC. The design and provision of new and refurbished play areas will also be informed by the outcomes of the Play Sufficiency Assessment. Funding has been received from the Scottish Government Play Area Renewal Fund, and also from eligible developer contributions funds.
- 8.3 Additionally, the Council supports street play initiatives, with NRS and Glasgow Life collaborating to designate two weekends for street play during the May and September bank holidays. More details can be found in the report to the committee on [3rd October 2023](#).

## 9.0 Formal Sport ( Action 15)

9.1 Glasgow Life reported to the City Administration Committee on [27th February 2025](#) about the development of Glasgow's Physical Activity and Sports Strategy 2025-2035. The strategy is based on the Public Health Scotland (PHS) framework, "A systems-based approach to physical activity in Scotland," which aims to improve physical activity levels at both national and local levels. This evidence-based framework, adopted by the Scottish Government and several local authorities, identifies eight key priorities essential for enhancing physical activity and sports participation. These priorities are reflected in the draft strategy.

9.2 All eight priorities are directly linked to the Open Space Strategy delivery plan, with particular emphasis on collaborative work for the following priorities:

- **Communities, Places and Spaces:** Ensuring places and spaces are designed, created, and maintained to provide high-quality, accessible, and sustainable active locations.
- **Travel:** Creating an environment that supports and enables citizens to incorporate active travel into their daily lives.
- **Sport and Recreation for All:** Providing equitable and high-quality access to inclusive sport and active recreation for everyone.
- **Places of Learning:** Implementing a 'nursery to tertiary' approach to physical activity and sport in all places of learning.

## 10.0 Stalled Spaces (Action 17)

10.1 As noted in previous reports the small grant fund for Stalled spaces closed in 2022. A number of the original stalled spaces continue to be in community use. In addition, teams across the council have supported individual community interventions to create temporary uses on vacant and derelict land utilising funding streams such as NIIF, area partnership funds and VDL funding.

## 11.0 Barrowland Park

11.1 Barrowland Park and its public art, the Album Path, was developed by the Council as a stalled space in the run up for the Commonwealth Games in 2014. It is located in the Calton Ward 200 metres north west of Glasgow Green and immediately east of Glasgow Cross. Although this part of the city is not suffering from deficit in access to green space (ref Sct 3.2) this temporary space has proved popular with the local community and others.

11.2 The site has a mix of ownership so leases were entered into between the Council and the two private sector parties on a recurring month-to-month basis with a rental charge of £1 per month, if asked. In this context discussions are ongoing to ensure a sustainable solution which meets both agreement of private owners as well as protecting key elements and safeguarding public access to the site where possible. Any agreement as reached will be reported to committee accordingly.



## **12.0 Food growing and security (Actions 16, 18)**

- 12.1 The Council's actions around food growing and food security are guided by two strategies: the [Food Growing Strategy](#), managed by the food growing team within parks operations, and the Food Strategy, overseen by Corporate Policy. The Food Growing Strategy includes 16 actions, which can be summarized as:
- Increasing growing spaces
  - Improving sources of information
  - Supporting greater networking and information sharing
  - Enhancing policy and process improvements
- 12.2 The most recent update on these actions was reported to the Environment and Liveable Neighbourhoods committee on [11th June 2024](#). Currently, the demand for food growing spaces exceeds availability. NRS is exploring opportunities such as repurpose parts of parks or other open spaces, identify vacant and derelict land suitable for food growing, and ensure new developments include opportunities for food growing.
- 12.3 The [Glasgow City Food Plan](#), developed by a multi-agency team including the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership, Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, and Glasgow Community Food Network, addresses the complex food landscape in Glasgow.

## **13.0 Next Steps**

- 13.1 NRS will continue to collect spatial data to allow impact assessment and monitoring. This includes collecting data from :
- The family of strategies and plans that align with the Open Space strategy;
  - Committee reports and Planning Applications; and
  - Open source data from local and national government, key agencies, Public Sector and Academic partners
- 13.2 The Community Spaces spatial data will be updated and presented to committee as part of the proposed plan process for City Development 2 in accordance with the [Council's Development Plan Scheme](#).
- 13.3 The co-design work with young people (with a particular focus on girls) for design guidance for play areas will be progressed over the summer, with a view to having draft guidance ready to being piloted both through the Council's tender process and with development applications in the autumn of 2025. This supports the Feminist Urbanism work led by Glasgow City Council.
- 13.4 Progress on the Forest and Woodland strategy will be reported to committee in November 2025.

- 13.5 Work will be progressed on developing the [Nature Network](#) within Glasgow jointly with the City Region Place team, with the aim to have identified key areas to target for interventions by the end of the year.

## 14 Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Delivery will be met through existing budgets available where possible with external funding opportunities explored and partnership working encouraged.
<i>Legal:</i>	The production of the various strategies and plans listed in this report meet the Statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland ) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019
<i>Personnel:</i>	There will be personnel implications in delivering the OSS
<i>Procurement:</i>	Not at present.

<b>Council Strategic Plan:</b>	Grand Challenge 2 Mission 2: Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy Grand Challenge 3 Mission 2: Become a net zero city by 2030 Grand Challenge 4 Mission 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods..
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### Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i>	High quality natural environments can support outcome 6 (tackling social isolation and loneliness) and access to greenspace can improve learning attainment and achievement outcomes (Outcome 14)
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	Potential positive impact as high quality natural environments can provide opportunities for community stewardship, learning and positive mental wellbeing.
<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-</i>	Delivery of the OSS will improve accessibility to good quality open space for our citizens,



*economic disadvantage.*

improving health and wellbeing and improve biodiversity.

### **Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:*

Open Space Strategy Delivery Plan supports Action 36 (green / blue networks), Action 37 (rewilding VDL), Action 38 (Nature Networks) and contributes to Action 51 (Liveable neighbourhoods and active Travel).

*What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?*

Potential positive impacts by supporting a transition towards a circular economy

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?*

Yes as above.

### **Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report  
No

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

## **15 Recommendations**

15.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of this report
- Note the aim to review the Open Space map as part of City Development Plan 2.
- Note the continued gathering of spatial data to support data driven decision making, impact assessment and monitoring relating to open space.