



**WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

**JANUARY 2024**

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

**Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd**  
Company No: 9145032 (England)

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Registered Office: 1 -2 Frecheville Court, off Knowsley Street, Bury BL9 0UF  
T: 0161 764 7040 E: [mail@kcp.co.uk](mailto:mail@kcp.co.uk) [www.kkp.co.uk](http://www.kkp.co.uk)



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# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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## Contents

PART 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
PART 2: DEFINING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE .....	2
PART 3: POLICY CONTEXT .....	3
PART 4: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN WYRE .....	6
PART 5: CONSULTATION .....	8
PART 6: AUDIT SUMMARY.....	13
PART 7: PROVISION STANDARDS.....	16
PART 8: WYRE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2023-2028 .....	26
8.1 Introduction .....	26
8.2 Aims, themes and guiding principles .....	27
8.3 Action plan .....	37
PART 9: MONITORING AND REVIEW.....	54
APPENDIX ONE: STAKEHOLDER RESPONDENTS.....	55
APPENDIX TWO: STAKEHOLDER SURVEY.....	56
APPENDIX THREE: PROPOSED PROVISION STANDARDS SHORTFALLS .....	66

# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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## Glossary

DPD	Development Plan Document
FIT	Fields in Trust
FOG	Friends of Group
GI	Green infrastructure
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LAP	Local Area for Play
LEAP	Local Equipped Area for Play
LDF	Local Development Framework
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MUGA	Multi-use Games Area (an enclosed area with a hard surface for variety of informal sport activities)
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
NGBs	National Governing Bodies (sports)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSALG	National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
ONS	Office of National Statistics
OSNA	Open Space Needs Assessment
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PPOSS	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Study
SFS	Sports Facilities Strategy
SOA	Super Output Areas
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
WBC	Wyre Borough Council

## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Wyre Borough Council, as part of a wider refresh of its green infrastructure (GI) evidence base, has commissioned a Green Infrastructure Strategy (GISt) to replace its existing Green Infrastructure Strategy (2015).

The refreshed evidence base will provide a strong basis for corporate policies designed to promote sustainable environments (including biodiversity and climate change adaptation and mitigation) and improve health and well-being across Wyre and be sufficiently robust to support a review of the Wyre Local Plan. This single commission involves three related work streams:

- ◀ Work stream 1 - Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Study (PPOSS)
- ◀ Work stream 2 - Green Infrastructure Audit (GIA)
- ◀ Work stream 3 - Green Infrastructure Strategy (GISt)

The three work streams together form the Wyre Green Infrastructure Study. As well as providing up to date evidence, the work streams will be mutually supportive and complement the new Wyre Moving More Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, Assessing Needs and Opportunities (ANOG) compliant Indoor Facility Needs Assessment Strategy, and the Leisure Facilities Masterplan and Management options appraisal.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy will help the council develop a set of overarching planning policies for the Local Plan to ensure that new built development within Wyre protects and enhances the green infrastructure and contributes to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

The council has initiated a full review of the current Wyre Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted in 2019 and re-adopted in 2023). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises the health and well-being benefits that derive from community access to a network of high quality open spaces for sport and physical activity. It also recognises the eco-system benefits that green infrastructure can provide for nature and climate change.

Developing local plan policies on green infrastructure requires a robust and up-to-date assessment of the need for open space and facilities for sport and recreation. This needs based approach should inform the development and delivery of local plan policies.

There is no doubt that green infrastructure makes a particularly strong contribution to Wyre's quality of place and, by implication, the quality of life of its citizens. The distribution and functions of Green Infrastructure are the major contributing factor to Wyre's 'sense of place' as it defines the landscape, urban and rural characteristics of the borough. Green infrastructure also separates settlements and helps them to retain their individuality.

## **PART 2: DEFINING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

Natural England define green infrastructure as “a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high-quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.

Green infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside”.

This clearly relates to the definition of green infrastructure within the NPPF:

“A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity”.

There is an important separation between urban green infrastructure (e.g. parks, gardens, sports pitches, etc.) and rural green infrastructure. Natural England cites that in rural environments, green infrastructure is often viewed at a larger scale, encompassing large country/regional parks, extensive habitats, major landscape features such as river corridors and flood meadows landscapes, and the identification of wide green corridors and ecological networks. In Wyre, green infrastructure should also be taken to include blue infrastructure (watercourses) and yellow infrastructure (sands and beaches). Green infrastructure at this scale can provide the wider framework and context for planning green infrastructure at a more local level.

## **PART 3: POLICY CONTEXT**

### **3.1 National and local context**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the planning policies for England. It details how these are expected to be applied to the planning system and provides a framework to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It establishes that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

Paragraph 20 states strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale, and design of places to ensure outcomes support beauty and placemaking. Policies should make sufficient provision for conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Under paragraph 102 of the NPPF, it is set out that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficiencies and surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite paragraph 103 of the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation sites, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown the site to be surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

The NPPF also recognises the role green infrastructure plays in climate change (Paragraph 159), conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Paragraph 181) and for air quality (Paragraph 192).

# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

## A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)

Sets out government action to help the natural world regain and retain good health. It aims to deliver cleaner air and water in cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats.

Chapter 3 focuses on connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing. This outlines a vision to 'green our towns and cities by creating green infrastructure and planting one million urban trees'.

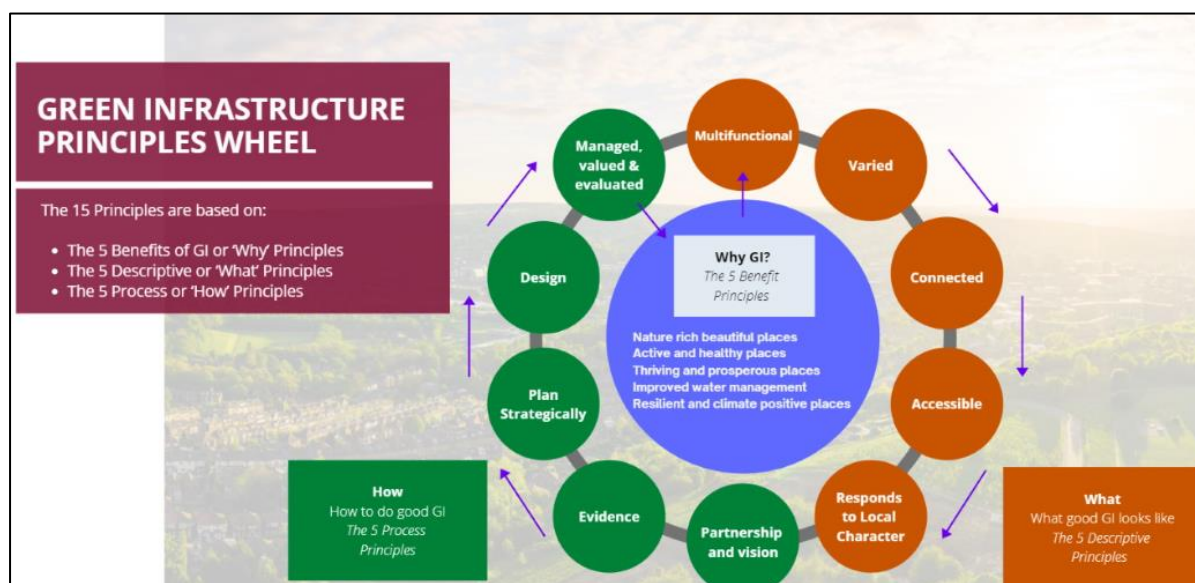
The document supports the promotion of access to the natural environment and extension of wildlife corridors into towns and cities using GI networks, improved provision of GI in new developments, upgrading existing GI and retrofitting new GI into areas of poor provision.

As part of a commitment to refresh the plan every five years, the Environmental Improvement Plan (2023) reinforces the intent of the 2018 plan. It uses the goals originally set out to detail progress to date and the work to continue delivering them.

## Green Infrastructure Framework (2023)

Launched by Natural England, the Green Infrastructure Framework (GIF) provides a structure to analyse where greenspace in urban environments is needed most. It aims to support equitable access to greenspace across the country, with an overarching target for everyone being able to reach good quality greenspace in their local area.

The GIF comprises of principles, standards, mapping tools, planning and design guides



The 15 principles of the GIF are used to inform the principles and strategic priorities set out later in this strategy.



## Wyre Local Plan

The current Wyre Local Plan was originally adopted in 2019 but recently updated and re-adopted in January 2023.

The Local Plan contains two policies directly addressing green infrastructure:

- ◀ Policy CDMP4 Environmental Assets (parts 4-8) establishes the basis for the protection of green infrastructure across the borough, including the designation of green infrastructure on the Policies Map.
- ◀ Policy HP9 Green Infrastructure in New Residential Developments establishes green infrastructure standards to be met as part of residential developments on 11 dwellings or more.

Part 7 sets out the revised approach to the provision standards for residential developments based on the updates to the green infrastructure audit.

## **PART 4: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN WYRE**

Wyre has a distinct and varied geography, with a mix of coast, countryside, towns and villages. The main urban area is located on a peninsula to the west of the River Wyre and an extensive rural area lies to the east. The main urban area is low lying, as is much of the countryside and farmland within the rural area. The topography, however, rises sharply towards the east where the Bowland Fells are situated.

The Wyre borough forms part of the Fylde coast sub-region, which includes Blackpool and Fylde, extending along the coast from Fleetwood to Lytham and the adjoining rural hinterlands. The River Wyre and its tributaries provide an 'ecological thread' which unifies the borough from the east to the west. The river also defines and delineates much of the landscape character of the borough and includes both freshwater and high-value estuarine habitats which in turn provide the focus for high quality recreational and biodiversity assets such as the Wyre Estuary Country Park.

Morecambe Bay is of particular importance to Wyre. It is classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and in addition is a Ramsar site. As a result of the European Habitats Directive, Morecambe Bay is identified as a European marine site in England of European Importance. The mouth of the Wyre Estuary is part of the Wyre-Lune Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).

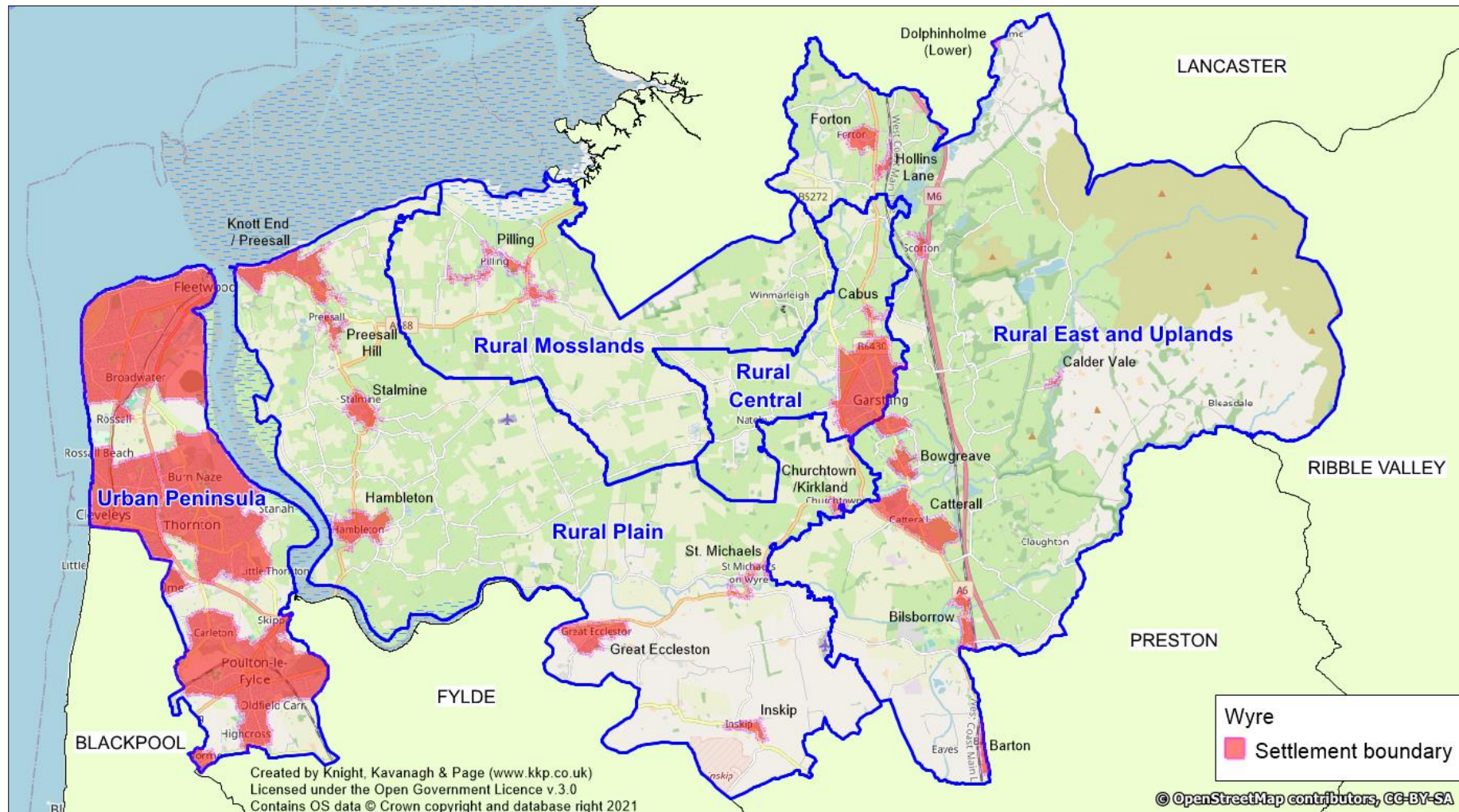
Other internationally or nationally protected sites wholly or partially located within Wyre include:

- Five SSSIs: Rough Hey Wood, Winmarleigh Moss, Bowland Fells, Wyre Estuary, Lune Estuary
- Four Geological Heritage Sites covering 616 hectares
- The Forest of Bowland National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), representing 17.95 per cent of Wyre's land cover, including the Bleasdale Moors
- Irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and saltmarsh.
- In addition, there are 65 Biological Heritage Sites (BHSs) covering 4,323 hectares designated by Lancashire County Council (excluding sites adjacent to the borough boundary but essentially outside of the borough).

The Green Infrastructure Audit and Strategy study area comprises the whole of Wyre. The focus for this study is on provision considered accessible and helping to serve areas of population to help inform the setting of provision standards and future requirements. On this basis, provision within and helping to serve settlements is the main focus. To identify sites outside of a settlement but considered to help serve it, a 400m buffer has been applied around settlements to help identify sites helping to serve such areas. Sites located outside of this buffer are considered as being in the rural areas of the authority.

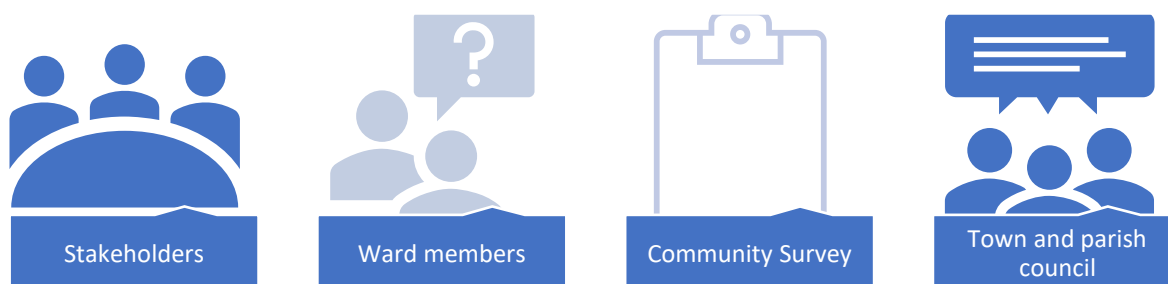
# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Figure 4.1: Map of Wyre with broad analysis areas and settlements



## PART 5: CONSULTATION

As part of developing the Strategic Framework (Part 8) the council undertook targeted consultation with stakeholders who use and manage Wyre's green infrastructure and open spaces (see Appendix One for a list of respondents and copy of the questionnaire).



The council has also undertaken a broad community consultation to identify key issues and as part of the GI Audit a targeted consultation with parish and town councils and Wyre council ward members. These consultations have been a valuable source of opinion and intelligence on green infrastructure in Wyre. Key issues raised through the consultations are set out below.

### Stakeholders

The aim of the stakeholder consultation was to understand the key GI issues faced by those with an active interest in Wyre's natural environment. In particular, as part of the stakeholder consultation a draft action plan was circulated for comment. A total of 21 responses were received from a variety of organisation and volunteers. There was strong support for the draft action plan including the strategic framework and principles. The responses displayed a passionate regard for the natural environment. A wide range of key issues were evident from the responses, with the need for co-operative engagement and working across stakeholders a notable theme.

The following key issues facing green infrastructure in Wyre were highlighted:

- Pressure and threats to existing GI from new house building and consequent increased demand for recreational space and increased risk of flooding.
- Loss of habitat due to development.
- Climate change (including impact on weather patterns - more storms, heavier rain and drought – and water supply).
- Anti-social behaviour and dog fouling/control.
- Recreational disturbance to wildlife in coastal and estuarine areas.
- Away from the coast, lack of land set aside and managed for wildlife.
- Land management including intensive agricultural activity leading to green deserts with very limited biodiversity.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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- Extensive straightening and channelisation of watercourses leading to increase flood risk and reduced biodiversity benefits.
- Lack of maintenance of GI, including a need for a long terms plan for the maintenance of all public rights of way across Wyre and a need to improve shoreline infrastructure such as abandoned jetties and buildings.
- In some cases lack of resources – including volunteers and materials - to maintain safe routes.
- Need for green space to be safe to encourage use.
- General lack of access to GI in areas of social and economic deprivation (at a national level).
- Cynicism as a result of greenwashing by various authorities and businesses.
- Lack of local authority resources and economic pressures on ability to support GI initiatives.
- Need to better communicate climate/nature issues and solutions and improve awareness of the impact of individual actions on the natural environment; and
- Need for better joined up thinking and partnership working including across local authority boundaries.

A number of opportunities arising from the boroughs stock of green infrastructure are also identified through the stakeholder consultation. These include:

- Use GI to connect places.
- Provide green routes and spaces through development.
- Improved access for all to linear routes including people with a disability.
- Develop corridors for wildlife.
- Promote active travel options including safe cycle lanes.
- Promotion of saltmarsh and the coastal/intertidal environment for carbon sequestration, water quality and coastal resilience (nature and people).
- Large land resource and an energetic community through which can be promoted allotments/community food production.
- Link GI protection and enhancement into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Embed GI considerations into climate change mitigation plans.
- Use GI as part of creating active places to support better health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Support local action to reduce recreational disturbance on Morecambe Bay and its environment through the provision of Sustainable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs).
- Support green social prescribing – supporting people in nature-based interventions and activities to improve their mental and physical health whilst delivering nature recovery benefits.
- Protect and maintain existing Wyre GI.
- Develop green energy infrastructure such as solar and on/offshore wind;
- Consider how GI can improve surface water management including the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- Protect Groundwater Source Protection Zones.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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- Engage in initiatives such as the Great North Bog and Thriving Coasts and Estuaries.
- Celebrate opportunities and successes across Wyre and beyond.

Priorities for action were varied and to some extent depended on the particular area of interest. In summary, the following were considered a priority:

- Genuine engagement with stakeholders, including landowners and local people.
- Protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- Restoration of degraded habitats.
- Use of nature based solutions to address wider issues such as water management.
- Improved access to GI and the natural environment for all people regardless of background.
- Improved health and wellbeing through access to GI and the natural environment.

### **Ward members / Parish and town councils**

On quality and accessibility issues, in general the condition of green infrastructure in the local areas of the respondents is rated as “good”. However, a number of issues around quality and access are raised:

- Vandalism, dog fouling and litter. Lack of appropriate bins.
- General maintenance.
- Shortage of play equipment/facilities for children and teenagers.
- Tired play equipment for children.
- Overgrown footpaths.
- Poor access for those with a disability.
- Lack of accessible open space with features such as benches and flowerbeds – over emphasis on grassed areas with no other features.

There was a fairly even split between respondents that feel that there is sufficient open space in the local area and those that do not. Issues raised in terms of green infrastructure that is considered to be lacking includes:

- No open space with features such as benches or places where residents can rest in a quiet area.
- Lack of facilities/play equipment for children and teenagers.
- No public open space in the local area.
- Need for a village green where older residents can sit, picnic, and gather socially (GI in housing development is designed for young children).
- Need for formal sports provision/playing fields (e.g. for cricket/football).
- Lack of facilities to entice families (in Fleetwood).

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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There is almost a universal response that provision for older children and teenagers is lacking in local areas. This is despite in some places provision existing; often in the form of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).

In some cases where there is existing provision, there is a perceived need for a wider variety of facilities – including sports - or improved quality. In situations where there is no provision, there is a need to identify land in the local area suitable for such provision and the funding necessary to enable it. In one case, a respondent linked this need to the increased number of families moving into the area due to new housing development.

### Community Consultation

The questionnaire consisted of a series of multiple choice and open-ended questions asking respondents their thoughts on topics such as types of provision visited, frequency and quality etc. A total of 303 responses were received. Below provides a summary to the community questionnaire:

- Popular provision to visit include parks (84%), promenades (80%), beaches (78%), nature reserves (64%) and country parks (63%).
- Main reasons for visiting are fresh air (94%), to go for a walk (93%), for peace and quiet (75%) and to see nature (69%).
- People generally walk to access parks, amenity, play for children, civic space, cemeteries, and outdoor networks.
- For country parks, allotments, water features, nature reserves, beaches, promenades, and teenage provision respondents tend to travel by car.
- For most forms of provision, people are willing to travel 10-15 minutes. This is particularly noticeable for play provision, parks, allotments, and amenity greenspace.
- There is a willingness to travel further distances (30 minutes or more) for some provision such as country parks, nature reserve, common or woodland and allotments
- The amount and access of open space provision in their local area is positive with 41% stating it as quite satisfactory and 27% very satisfactory.
- Similarly, the amount and access of open space provision across Wyre is positive with 44% stating it as quite satisfactory and 21% very satisfactory.
- Quality of provision in local areas (62%) and for across Wyre (63%) is positive.
- A common theme throughout the comments relate to the issue of dog fouling and lack of enclosed spaces for dogs.
- The strongest recognised benefit of open space is the improvement to people's mental health (73%); followed by improvement to people's physical health (68%).
- Over two thirds (67%) of respondents strongly agree that open space is highly valued and very important to the community.
- Most respondents (77%) strongly agree that visiting open spaces makes them feel better.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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- The most common ways to improve open space include better and wider facilities (47%), more wildlife/habitat promotion (47%), better maintenance (47%) and greater attractiveness (46%).
- The main barriers to the use of footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways is due to poor surfaces (56%) and routes being overgrown (52%). A lack of signage (41%) is also cited.



## **PART 6: AUDIT SUMMARY**

There are 601 sites identified across Wyre, an equivalent to at least 8,503 hectares. The largest contributor to provision is natural greenspace (7,945 hectares). Green corridors are linear forms of provision and therefore do not have a figure for hectares. Of these 601 sites, 206 have been assessed for quality and value (see below).

Table 6.1: Overview of all provision

<b>Type of provision</b>	<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>Total hectares<sup>1</sup></b>
Allotments	10	3
Amenity greenspace	143	65
Blue infrastructure	15	25
Cemeteries/churchyards	47	27
Civic space	18	7
Green corridors and Strategic Linear Routes	56	N/A
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	106	7,945
Outdoor sports facilities (includes 8 facilities disused at the time of the assessment)	75	289
Parks and gardens	15	37
Provision for children and young people including MUGAs	63	5
School grounds	53	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>8,503</b>

Table 6.2: Distribution of provision

<b>Type of provision</b>	<b>Settlement sites</b>	<b>Ha</b>	<b>Rural sites</b>	<b>Ha</b>	<b>Large scale/restricted natural GI and strategic routes</b>	<b>Ha</b>
Allotments	10	3	-	-	-	-
Amenity greenspace	142	64	1	<1	-	-
Blue infrastructure	14	25	1	<1	-	-
Cemeteries/churchyards	38	23	9	3	-	-
Civic space	18	7	-	-	-	-
Green corridors and Strategic Linear Routes	47	n/a	3	n/a	6	n/a
Natural and semi-natural	33	66	3	7	70	7,871
Outdoor sports facilities	69	286	6	3	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Type of provision	Settlement sites	Ha	Rural sites	Ha	Large scale/restricted natural GI and strategic routes	Ha
Parks and gardens	15	37	-	-	-	-
Provision for children and young people	62	5	1	<1	-	-
School grounds	49	99	4	2	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>7,871</b>

All forms of provision have initially been identified. A focus for this study is on provision considered accessible and helping to serve areas of population to help inform the setting of provision standards and future requirements. To identify sites outside of a settlement but considered to help serve it, a 400m buffer has been applied around settlements to help identify sites helping to serve such areas. Sites located outside of this buffer are considered as being in the rural areas of the authority.

For some sites, their inclusion as part of setting provision standards is not appropriate. This may be due to differences in their level of access for recreational purposes or due to their size/role meaning they should not be treated the same as other types of provision.

For example, a large proportion of natural sites are recognised as Biological Heritage Sites (BHS). Of the 106 natural/semi-natural greenspace sites, 64 are identified as BHS which consequently have restricted/limited access (note - the Lancaster Canal which is defined in the Study as a Strategic Linear Route is also a BHS). Other work streams such as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) delivery and Local Nature Recovery Strategies will focus and set out the priorities for such typologies.

In addition, many of these sites are located away from settlements. They are therefore considered to not contribute directly towards the quantity of provision for settlement areas.

A further six natural sites are identified as beaches. These are omitted from the provision standards. The important role of these sites is acknowledged but it is inappropriate to assess such sites against the criteria used within this study for other forms of green space. Furthermore, the large size of these sites also skews the quantity figures and provision levels.

Similarly, blue infrastructure and school grounds are identified but not used in the setting of provision standards. These are initially identified within the audit to be consistent with the previous GI study.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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School grounds are all noted as having restricted use as they are not open access for members of the public. Any form of usage is pre-arranged and often for a fee (i.e. if a grass pitch is used by a sports club, an arrangement between the club and school will exist). Further information about the use of school grounds for sporting activity is set out within the PPOSS.

Blue infrastructure in this report refers to water bodies ranging from more strategic sites (i.e. rivers) to smaller supporting ones (i.e. marinas and slipways). It is not considered necessary or appropriate to set a provision standard on this basis.

Outdoor sports facilities are included and used within the quantity and accessibility standards. Sites are not assessed for quality/value within this study as such sites receive a more specific assessment as part of the PPOSS (utilising Sport England guidance).

Quality of sites assessed as part of the audit is mixed. Just over half (53%) of assessed sites score above their quality thresholds. Most parks (82%) rate higher for quality. For other forms of provision, quality is more variable. Sites rating lower for quality often reflects a lack of ancillary facilities (e.g., seating, signage etc). A few sites are also observed as requiring enhanced maintenance.

Most sites (87%) are assessed as being above the threshold for value, reflecting the role and importance of provision to local communities and environments. The provision to rate below the value thresholds often reflect a general lack of maintenance or use at the site (i.e. overgrown, difficult to access). A high value site is one that is well used by the local community, well maintained, provides a safe environment, and has features of interest, for example, good quality play equipment and landscaping. Sites providing for a cross section of users and have a multi-functional use rate higher for value than those offering limited functions.

## **PART 7: PROVISION STANDARDS**

Provision standards are used to identify areas of shortfalls and help with determining requirements for future developments.

The basic principle is that a development should provide for the recreational needs it generates. All new developments should therefore contribute to provision.

Policy HP9 (Green Infrastructure in New Residential Developments) of the Local Plan establishes green infrastructure standards to be met as part of residential developments on 11 dwellings or more. This is reviewed in the following section.

### **Quantity standards**

The setting and application of quantity standards is necessary to determine shortfalls in provision and to ensure new developments contribute to provision across Wyre.

To set a quantity standard it is useful to compare existing levels of actual provision identified as part of the GI Audit against national benchmarks, existing standards, and neighbouring authorities. The actual provision level is the ratio of current provision to population across the settlement areas.

Guidance on quantity levels is published by Fields In Trust (FIT) in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2020). FIT is the operating name of the National Playing Fields Association. The guidance provides standards for three types of provision: parks and gardens, amenity greenspace and natural and semi-natural greenspace. FIT also suggests guideline quantity standard for play provision including equipped/ designated playing space and other outdoor provision (MUGAs and skateboard parks).

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) offers guidance on allotments (suggesting 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population).

Table 7.1 sets out the quantity figures for current provision levels identified, existing standards, and any relevant national benchmarks. This is presented on a hectares per 1,000 population in order to compare to national benchmarks and other local authorities.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Table 7.1: Comparison of provision levels and standards (hectares per 1,000 population)

	<b>FIT Quantity Guideline Standard 2020</b>	<b>GI Audit (provision, 2023)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Wyre Local Plan Policy HP9 (standard)</b>	<b>Lancaster OS PAN 4 (standard, 2020)</b>	<b>Ribble Valley</b>	<b>Preston SPD (standard, 2014)</b>	<b>Fylde Local Plan (standard, 2021)</b>	<b>Blackpool Greening SPD (standard, 2022)</b>
<b>Parks &amp; gardens</b>	0.80	0.35	0.40	0.39	Not specified	1.81	n/a	4.00
<b>Natural &amp; semi natural</b>	1.80	0.63	1.50	2.52		1.78	n/a	
<b>Amenity greenspace</b>	0.60	0.61	0.40	0.62		0.54	m <sup>2</sup> per bedroom home: 16m <sup>2</sup> per 1 24m <sup>2</sup> per 2 32m <sup>2</sup> per 3 40m <sup>2</sup> per 4 48m <sup>2</sup> per 5	
<b>Play - children</b>	0.25	0.04	0.18	0.04		0.02		
<b>Play - young people</b>	0.30	0.01		0.04				
<b>Allotments</b>	0.25 <sup>3</sup>	0.03	0.25	0.15		0.17	n/a	
<b>Outdoor sports (including playing pitches)</b>	1.60	2.65 <sup>4</sup>	1.20	n/a		1.01	Uses PPS	
<b>TOTAL</b>	5.60	4.32	3.93	3.76		5.33	-	

<sup>2</sup> Using provision located within settlements and settlement-based populations

<sup>3</sup> National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardening (NSALG) recommendation

<sup>4</sup> 2.51 if using all provision (including rural)

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The community survey (GI Audit) shows respondents are relatively content with existing levels of provision in their local area. The availability of provision is generally considered to be very (27%) or quite satisfactory (41%) by respondents to the survey.

Table 7.2: Survey respondent satisfaction to amount of provision in local area

Very satisfactory	Quite satisfactory	Neither satisfactory or unsatisfactory	Quite unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory
27.0%	40.9%	12.8%	9.8%	9.5%

Furthermore, the community survey also shows respondents are relatively content with existing levels of provision across Wyre. The availability of provision is again generally considered to be very (21%) or quite satisfactory (44%) by respondents.

Table 7.3: Survey respondent satisfaction to amount of provision in Wyre

Very satisfactory	Quite satisfactory	Neither satisfactory or unsatisfactory	Quite unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory
20.9%	44.4%	17.2%	11.4%	6.1%

On the face of it, the total GI Audit (2023) actual provision figure of 4.32 hectares per 1,000 population (within settlements figure) is greater than the standards applied by other nearby local authorities such as Lancaster and Blackpool. However, the figure for Lancaster does not incorporate land used for outdoor sports into its total provision standard. If taken out of the calculation, Wyre's total GI per 1,000 population is only 1.67 ha per 1,000 population compared to the Lancaster figure of 3.76 ha per 1,000 population.

The individual standard figures in HP9 are generally greater than the GI Audit figures for actual provision. The exceptions are in amenity greenspace and outdoor sports which are both greater in the GI Audit. Consequently, the total provision figure in the GI Audit (4.32 ha per 1,000 population) is greater than that in HP9 (3.93 ha per 1,000 population), although this is heavily affected by the presence of outdoor sports in the current supply. If this is excluded, the existing combined standard for the other typologies is 2.73 ha per 1,000 population in HP9 compared to actual supply of 1.67ha per 1,000 population. This suggests a strong rationale for maintaining a robust approach towards the setting of future standards.

Both the total figures for the GI Audit (actual provision) and in HP9 are less than the total figure informed by the FIT standards which can be viewed as setting national benchmarks (5.60 hectares per 1,000 population). Again, this suggests a robust approach to the setting of future standards justified by local circumstances.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Retaining the figures of HP9 with amendments to reflect the greater levels of amenity greenspace and outdoor sports in the GI Audit is recommended<sup>5</sup>. This will also bring the provision standards more in line with the national benchmarks whilst remaining realistic compared to existing levels of supply. In saying this, it is noted that the standard of provision for young people is significantly higher than actual provision and will be challenging to meet and should be considered aspirational.

For play provision, HP9 sets a single quantity standard figure. However, there is almost a universal response from public and parish/ward consultations that provision for older children and teenagers is lacking in many local areas. Consequently, it is recommended that a quantity standard specifically for older children/teenagers is also established. Given the significance of the response, as the national benchmark, it is recommended that the FIT standard is adopted.

The following quantity standards are recommended in Wyre to reflect the levels of actual provision demonstrated by the GI Audit and comparison to the FIT standards, benchmarked to provision standards adopted by adjacent local authorities:

Table 7.4: Recommended quantity standards

Type	Wyre Local Plan Policy HP9 (current) (Ha per 1,000 population)	Quantity Standard (recommended) (Ha per 1,000 population):
Parks & gardens	0.40	0.40
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	1.50	1.50
Amenity greenspace	0.40	0.60
Provision for children & young people	Children	0.18
	Young people	n/a
Allotment	0.25	0.25
Sub total	2.73	3.23
Outdoor sports	1.20	2.51
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.93</b>	<b>5.74</b>

The Wyre Local Plan review will consider these findings as part of the policy review process.

These standards should be used to guide the provision of GI as part of residential, and if adopted, non-residential developments. They can also be used to gauge the amount of provision, by type, across the borough and in local areas.

The recommended standards can be used to help identify where areas may have a shortfall. Appendix Two shows the position for each sub-area as to whether it is sufficient or identified as having a shortfall for each relevant provision type.

<sup>5</sup> For outdoor sports, the Wyre-based figure of 2.51 is recommended for use to reflect the role of sports provision.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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A single quantity standard total is shown which combines all the individual typology figures into one single figure. This should provide an easy-to-use initial starting point in calculating future provision requirements. It should also enable some flexibility in determining what provision is to be provided onsite, as each area of Wyre is unique and what may be a priority in one place may not be a priority in another.

It is important to note that any future development must plan in provision from the start so that it is fit for purpose and lies in a safe and accessible location creating a focus for the community whilst optimising social integration and inclusion for all.

For consistency with Policy HP9, a provision standard for outdoor sports is provided in the above table. This is to reflect the role and crossover such provision provides. For example, in some settlements the primary form of provision can often be a sports focused site.

The Wyre PPOSS should be used to help determine the likely impact of a new development on demand and the capacity of existing sites in the area, and whether there is a need for improvements to increase capacity of existing provision or if new provision is required. Where a development is located within access of existing high-quality provision, this does not necessarily mean that there is no need for further provision or improvement to existing provision, as additional demand arising from the development is likely to result in increased usage (which can result in overplay or quality deterioration).

Where it is determined that new or improved sport provision is required because of development, priority should be placed on providing facilities that contribute towards alleviating existing shortfalls within the locality including creating new provision where none currently exists. To determine what supply of provision is provided, it is imperative that the PPOSS findings are taken into consideration and that for particularly large developments consultation takes place with the relevant NGBs and Sport England. This is due to the importance of ensuring that the stock of facilities provided is correct to avoid provision becoming unsustainable and unused. The preference is for multi-pitch and potentially multi-sport sites to be developed, supported by a clubhouse and adequate parking facilities which consider the potential for future AGP development. This is because single-pitch facilities are more likely to become under-used (or unused), unviable and unsustainable.

It is recommended that the council use the review of the Local Plan to consider how playing pitch needs identified in the PPOSS can be addressed. It is also recommended that the council review Policy HP9 in the light of the PPOSS. Sport England will be able to provide the necessary advice in relation to playing pitch provision.



## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator is a tool for helping to determine the additional demand for pitches and to estimate the likely developer contribution required linking to sites within the locality. The calculator uses the current number of teams by sports pitch type contained within the PPOSS and calculates the percentage within each age group that play that sport. That percentage is then applied to the population growth. The additional teams likely to be generated are then converted into match equivalent sessions and associated pitch requirements (both for providing the pitch/facility and for its life cycle).

It is recommended that through the on-going review of the Wyre Local Plan, consideration is given to adopting a policy requiring the use of the Sport England calculator to determine the additional demand for pitches and to estimate the likely developer contribution.

If such a policy is adopted, the council should work with Sport England to develop a process and guidance for obtaining developer contributions. Should the council decide through the Local Plan review to address sporting needs arising from new residential developments outside of Policy HP9, the total GI requirement based on the recommended standards will be 3.23 ha per 1,000 population compared to the figure including playing pitches of 5.74 ha per 1,000 population.

### **Accessibility**

Accessibility catchments are a tool to identify deficiencies of provision in a local area. It is recognised that factors underpinning catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process the concept of 'effective catchments' are used, defined as the distance that most users would travel. The accessibility catchments do not consider if a distance is on an incline or decline. They are therefore intended to act as an initial form of analysis to help identify potential gaps.

Guidance on walking distance and times is offered by Fields In Trust (FIT) in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2020). This includes accessibility distances for children's play provision which vary depending on the age range of the equipment.

FIT do not set accessibility catchments/standards for allotments, churchyards / cemeteries, civic space, or green corridors. Such provision types are more unique in their function; with new provision only occurring in exceptional circumstances based on evidence beyond the scope of this study.

The determination of accessibility catchments (or standards) for Wyre is derived through an assessment of available information including: the Fields In Trust (FIT) guidance, existing Wyre standards and comparing to the accessibility standards set by neighbouring authorities (see table 7.5)

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Table 7.5: Comparison of accessibility catchments and standards

	<b>FIT Quantity Guideline Standard 2020</b>	<b>Wyre Local Plan Policy HP9 (standard)</b>	<b>Lancaster OS PAN 4 (standard, 2020)</b>	<b>Ribble Valley</b>	<b>Preston SPD (standard, 2014)</b>	<b>Fylde Local Plan (Audit 2016)</b>	<b>Blackpool OS Assessment SPD (2019)</b>
<b>Parks &amp; gardens</b>	710m	Urban: 720m Rural: 1,200m	Urban: 1,200m Rural: 15-minute drive	Not specified	1,000m	710m	Local facility: 200m  Neighbourhood facility: 500m  Borough facility: no threshold
<b>Natural &amp; semi natural</b>	720m	2,000m	Urban: 1,200m Rural: 30-minute drive		800m	720m	
<b>Amenity greenspace</b>	480m	720m	1,000m		800m	480m	
<b>Play - children</b>	LAP: 100m LEAP: 400m NEAP: 1,000m	Urban: 480m Rural: 720m	800m		800m	LAP: 100m LEAP: 400m NEAP: 1,000m	
<b>Play - young people (e.g. MUGAs, skate)</b>	700m		1,200m			n/a	
<b>Allotments</b>	n/a	960m	Urban: 1,200m Rural: 15-minute drive		10-minute drive	1,200m	
<b>Outdoor sports (including playing pitches)</b>	1,200m	1,200m	n/a		n/a	n/a	

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The accessibility catchments set out as part of HP9 (2019) are generally greater than the distances suggested by FIT and those used by neighbouring local authorities.

It is also important to recognise the time that respondents to the community survey are willing to travel. For most open space types, a 10 to 15-minute walk time is cited. However, for some typologies a slight variance is seen. For instance, a greater proportion of respondents are willing to travel further to access natural greenspace. In addition, slightly smaller travel times are noted for provision such as play for children and parks.

Table 7.6: Time respondents are willing to travel

Provision type		Up to 5 mins	10 mins	15 mins	30 mins	Over 30 mins
Local park or public garden		18.7%	30.5%	22.8%	18.3%	9.8%
Natural/semi-natural greenspace	Country Park	5.1%	11.8%	22.5%	32.0%	28.7%
	Nature reserve, common, woodland	5.0%	11.6%	26.5%	34.3%	22.7%
Play area for children		19.0%	32.9%	35.4%	8.9%	3.8%
Teenage/Youth provision (e.g. MUGA, skate)		5.6%	44.4%	27.8%	11.1%	11.1%
General amenity greenspace		14.9%	29.7%	29.1%	16.9%	9.5%
Allotments and community schemes		12.5%	37.5%	12.5%	0%	37.5%
Outdoor sports		19.4%	19.4%	27.3%	18.2%	15.8%

For the most common response times, these convert to the equivalent distances in the table below.

Table 7.7: Equivalent distances respondents are willing to travel

Provision type		Time willing to travel	Equivalent distance
Parks & gardens		10-minute	800m
Natural & semi-natural greenspace		30 minutes by vehicle	
Amenity greenspace		10-minute	800m
Provision for children & young people	Play area for children	15-minute	1,200m
	Teenage provision	10-minute	800m
Allotments		10-minute	800m
Outdoor sports		15-minute	1,200m

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

For some forms of provision there is a need to distinguish the different roles and functions of sites. The recommended accessibility catchments for Wyre are a combination of travel times derived from the existing standards, FIT guidance and community survey. These are also intended to be broadly in keeping with the accessibility standards set by neighbouring authorities.

On this basis, the following accessibility standards are recommended.

Table 7.8: Recommended accessibility standards

Type		Wyre Local Plan Policy HP9 (current)	Accessibility standard (Recommended)
Parks & gardens		Urban: 720m Rural: 1,200m	Urban: 720m Rural: 1,200m
Natural & semi-natural greenspace		2,000m	720m
Amenity greenspace		720m	720m
Provision for children & young people	Children	Urban: 480m Rural: 720m	Urban: 100m (LAP) 400m (LEAP) 1,000m (NEAP) Rural: 720m
	Young people		Urban: 700m Rural: 720m
Allotment		960m	960m
Outdoor sports		1,200m	1,200m

Explanation to the reasoning for the accessibility standards for each type of provision is provided in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9: Accessibility catchment explanation

Type	Reasoning
Parks & gardens	The urban and rural catchments set in HP9 remain valid. The catchment for urban parks is in keeping with the FIT guideline. Retaining a longer catchment for rural sites is still relevant and reflects respondents to the survey.
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	Survey respondents signal a willingness to travel further than the FIT guideline or the existing HP9 standard. However for such provision, respondents also cite a willingness to travel by car as opposed to walking. To help promote more local and environmentally friendly access to provision, it is recommended that the more stringent FIT guideline is used. This will bring the catchment more in line with other provision types and neighbouring local authorities.
Amenity greenspace	Retaining the 720m catchment is advisable. This is greater than the FIT guideline but is in keeping with respondents to the survey as well as neighbouring local authorities such as Lancaster and Preston.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Type		Reasoning
Provision for children & young people	Play	<p>Utilising the FIT guidelines is recommended. These are considered to better reflect the difference in the role different types of play provision provide. This is particularly relevant to urban areas where there is a greater variety in the type of sites that exist.</p> <p>It is considered that a separate catchment for rural areas is still valid to reflect the difference in comparison to urban areas. For rural areas, retaining the HP9 distance is recommended as this is broadly in keeping with FIT guidelines and respondents to the survey.</p>
	Young people	<p>Setting a specific catchment for youth provision (i.e. MUGAs, skateparks etc) is recommended. This links to the quantity standard recommended for such form of provision, and reflects the highlighted shortfall identified through consultation.</p> <p>For urban areas, utilising the FIT guideline is recommended as it is the only relevant national guideline.</p> <p>For rural areas, given the dispersed population and to tie in with the catchment suggested for children's play provision, it is recommended that the distance set in HP9 is retained.</p>
Allotment		Retaining the 960m catchment is advisable as this is in keeping with the respondents to the survey.
Outdoor sports		Retaining the 1,200m catchment is advisable as this is in keeping with FIT guidelines and the respondents to the survey.

## **PART 8: WYRE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2023-2028**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The Wyre Green Infrastructure Strategic Framework is designed to establish strategic priorities and local actions for the five-year period December 2023 to December 2028. It will support and complement a series of related initiatives, strategies and action plans including:

- Local Nature Recovery
- Biodiversity Net Gain delivery
- Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
- Wyre Moving More – physical activity and sport strategy
- The Wyre Local Plan

The Strategic Framework comprises four key elements:

- Aim
- Themes
- Principles and strategic priorities
- Action plan

The Strategic Framework is designed to provide clarity to stakeholders and the local population on the priorities of Wyre Borough Council when it comes to the planning, development, and maintenance of green infrastructure. It is the first such document for some ten years. As such it should be taken as a starting point. It will develop over time as knowledge improves and priorities evolve.

In drafting any strategy there needs to be a balance between pragmatism – making sure the strategy is meaningful and deliverable in the real world – and aspiration. This strategy contains aspects of both and in some cases the strategic aspiration comes without any predetermined actions. Turning aspiration into reality, or not as the case may be, is a normal part of the process of strategy review and development. This is why regular review is important. The Strategic Framework is a five-year plan designed to be reviewed annually and refreshed every five years.

The Strategic Framework is based on green infrastructure principles published by [Natural England](#). These principles are considered to provide a nationally significant, robust, and relevant direction of travel for interpretation in local studies. The principles have been adapted to fit into the strategic planning environment in which the Green Infrastructure Study will be used in Wyre.

The Strategic Framework has also been adapted to respond to the issues raised through the various consultations (Part 5). A working draft of this framework was circulated as part of the targeted stakeholder consultation and in a number of places the wording has been amended to reflect matters raised.

At this point it is worth stating that the GI Strategic Framework for Wyre is not intended to be a general environmental or ecological strategy and some of the comments received as part of the stakeholder consultation are more appropriately addressed through the latter. There is, however, a clear and obvious overlap between green infrastructure and wider environmental and social matters including ecology and habitat, nature recovery, health and wellbeing, water management, coastal management and climate change. It is hoped that the strategy that follows does justice to these connections.

The Strategic Framework will evolve over time. Some of the actions in the Action Plan (Part 8.3) are still described at a relatively high level. There is an expectation that this aspect of the Strategic Framework will become more defined over time and that over the next 12-months a project-level action plan will be created as the council and stakeholders work together to put this framework into action.

## 8.2 Aims, themes and guiding principles

### Aim

To create, restore, enhance, maintain, protect, promote, and improve access to green infrastructure<sup>6</sup> networks across Wyre in a way that:

- has a positive and lasting impact on the creation of vibrant and beautiful places
- provides real health and wellbeing, physical activity and biodiversity benefits
- plays a key role in addressing the challenges of climate change resilience, mitigation and adaptation; and
- contributes towards achieving nature recovery

### Themes

This Strategic Framework is based on three core themes:

1. Place
2. A multifunctional green infrastructure network
3. Strategic thinking and delivery in partnership

It also has the overarching theme of “people and communities” as it is through the efforts of our residents, landowners, businesses community, interest groups and the council that we will achieve the strategic priorities and deliver local actions.

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<sup>6</sup> The definition of green infrastructure should be taken to include blue infrastructure (watercourses) and yellow infrastructure (sands and beaches).

## Principles and Strategic Priorities

### Theme 1 – Place

#### Principle 1.1: Nature rich places

Design and maintain green infrastructure to strengthen local community connection with nature, supporting biodiversity and nature recovery.

In developing new green infrastructure and considering existing green infrastructure, take opportunities to create new or enhance and restore existing habitat, including coastal, rural plain and upland habitats, improving habitat connectivity. This will support the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including creating nature rich accessible spaces where people live and work, and play a key role in combatting the climate emergency.

To create and maintain nature rich places, our priorities over the next five years are:

- Promote the use of design to connect people to nature in a sensitive way.
- Conserve and enhance areas of high ecological value including designated sites and geological assets.
- Conserve and enhance ecological corridors, including open watercourses, to allow for the movement and distribution of wildlife.
- Reduce the fragmentation of habitats and increase connectivity.
- Promote the appropriate public enjoyment of the natural environment.
- Deliver Biodiversity Net Gain, with priority given to on-site delivery in Wyre where this is an ecologically appropriate solution
- Maximise the benefits of appropriate woodland and tree planting for habitat delivery and climate change adopting a “right tree, right place” philosophy.
- Protect and manage ancient, veteran and other trees of special interest, and ancient hedgerows, for their ecological and visual amenity benefit and as carbon stores.
- Support appropriate coastal, estuarine and freshwater grassland and wetland creation and management for ecological and climate benefits.
- Help achieve targeted individual species recovery.
- Maintain and enhance geodiversity assets.
- Maximise the potential of council-owned land to contribute to local nature recovery and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Work with stakeholders to promote a holistic approach to GI, including blue and yellow infrastructure, and the multifunctional benefits it can bring.
- Contribute to cross species objectives such as pollinator strategies.
- Reduce soil degradation and loss.
- Work to reduce the recreational disturbance of important habitats and species and increase positive engagement relating to the natural environment.
- Work with farmers, land managers and partners to identify and promote mechanisms for improved natural capital benefits (for example natural flood management, biodiversity enhancements and access to nature) from rural areas for the wider green infrastructure.



### **Principle 1.2: Well-designed and distinctive places**

Design and maintain green infrastructure as an integral element of a place with a focus on the wide range of environmental, social, health (including physical activity) and economic benefits it can provide. Properly integrate green infrastructure into existing and new development based on a good understanding of an area's character. This includes identifying existing green infrastructure and opportunities to create multifunctional and connected networks with the wider area.

Design green infrastructure to enhance and complement an area's character where this is appropriate or, in poor quality environments, to create new high-quality landscapes to which local people feel connected. Green infrastructure (new and existing) should contribute to the conservation, enhancement and/or restoration of urban and rural landscapes.

To create and maintain well-designed and distinctive places, our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Promote an holistic approach to design for good GI, including consideration of the following:
  - Biodiversity/ nature recovery
  - Carbon storage / sequestration
  - Soil protection and enhancement
  - Pollination
  - Aesthetic value / sense of place
  - Interaction with wildlife / access to nature
  - Health
  - Water - flood regulation, supply, and quality
  - Air quality, noise, and temperature regulation
  - Food production - community orchards, allotments, urban food
  - Education
  - Recreation / active travel
- Promote GI in the context of healthy and “climate ready” development, including the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems as GI and habitat and the use of green roofs and walls.
- Through design and layout use GI to reduce the fragmentation of habitats and increase connectivity

### **Principle 1.3: Active and healthy places**

Recognise that green infrastructure creates mental and physical benefits and has an essential role in creating a good quality of life.

Design and maintain green infrastructure to support healthy behaviours and activities, including sport and recreation/physical activity, active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling), and quiet contemplation, across all age groups.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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Use green infrastructure to mitigate health risks such as urban heat stress, noise pollution, flooding, and poor air quality.

To create and maintain active and healthy places, our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Create new accessible greenspaces that are safe by design.
- Work with stakeholders to use GI as a means of delivering the Wyre Moving More physical activity and sport strategy.
- Create high quality and safe green routes that promote active travel and appropriate access to nature.
- Support the active and safe use of bridleways by horse riders.
- Align GI planning with Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP).
- Actively encourage volunteer involvement in GI project delivery and use to grow and develop healthy activities.
- Use GI as a vehicle to promote lifelong environmental learning.
- Deliver actions associated with the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Study.
- Promote local community-based food production.
- Maximise the health benefits from access to water-based sports and activities.
- Design new GI, including children's play, to be inclusive.
- Deliver greater opportunities for female participation in outdoor sports and activities.
- Establish and implement plans to improve playing pitch quality and increase usage.
- Use GI as a tool to adapt to the worst effects of climate change and build resilience in local communities.

### **Principle 1.4: Thriving and prospering places**

Recognise that green infrastructure supports the economic value of an area by contributing to the creation of high-quality environments that are attractive to businesses and investors, support the retail offer and high streets, support the visitor economy, support the "green" economy and drive regeneration and prosperity for Wyre's residents.

Recognise also that green infrastructure has a positive role to play in creating and maintaining a healthy and productive workforce. Reflect this in wider economic and social objectives.

To create and maintain thriving and prospering places our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Recognise the economic value of GI within relevant plans and policies, including the local plan and regeneration frameworks.
- Work with the Wyre business community to design commercial development to deliver biodiversity and climate change objectives.
- Promote the economic value of the eco-system services that GI provides.

- Deliver award winning parks and public spaces that make Wyre a destination of quality.
- Work with the farming community to deliver Environmental Land Management schemes relating to sustainable farming, landscape recovery and local nature recovery.
- Working with stakeholders to deliver jobs and training in land and water-based industries.
- Support small-scale energy production from biomass.

### **Principle 1.5: Climate positive<sup>7</sup> and resilient places**

Design and maintain green infrastructure to contribute to national and local net zero objectives and targets. Recognise that green infrastructure has a significant and multifunctional role in creating climate positive places, i.e. places that contribute to the mitigation of the causes of climate change and are able to adapt to its impacts such as flooding and heat stress.

This includes supporting low carbon travel such as cycling, walking, and wheeling, and supporting improved air quality and water management, including where necessary and appropriate the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems in new development. Recognise that green infrastructure can play a key role in building and maintaining community and individual resilience to climate change impacts.

To create and maintain climate positive and resilient places our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Work in collaboration with key stakeholders to meet national and local climate change objectives.
- Improve the climate resilience of existing GI.
- Design GI to take account of likely long- term climate change impacts, including managing water and heat effects.
- Use GI as a means of embedding climate adaptation and resilience in our communities.
- Consider GI as a contributor to water and transport strategies, policies and plans.
- Work with stakeholders to promote and deliver local food production opportunities including community gardens and allotments.
- Maximise opportunities to work with Wyre's farming community to deliver sustainable food production.
- Review opportunities to deliver energy from waste schemes.

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<sup>7</sup> Places that contribute to the mitigation of climate change and are able to adapt to its predicted consequences can be described as "climate positive" places.

## **Theme 2 - A multi-functional green infrastructure network**

### **Principle 2.1: Multiple services and benefits**

Plan, design and deliver new and existing green infrastructure to provide relevant multiple benefits for people, places, nature, and the wider environment in line with community needs.

Recognise that the benefits of green infrastructure include but are not limited to contributing to net zero and climate change adaptation, habitat creation (recognising the ecosystem benefits that may arise) and nature recovery, water management (especially reducing flood risk), health and wellbeing and supporting regeneration and economic prosperity.

To create and maintain a GI network that delivers multiple services and benefits our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Promote the eco-system service benefits of GI, adopting a whole systems approach.
- Increase GI ecosystem services through the creation, enhancement, and connectivity of new and existing sites.
- Build the multifunctional benefits of GI into relevant strategies and delivery plans.
- Identify and address spatial and community inequalities in GI provision.
- Plan GI as a network of spaces that work together in combination and across areas.
- Promote the co-benefits of GI and local gain support for GI initiatives.

### **Principle 2.2: Sustainable water management**

Use green infrastructure as a positive feature of sustainable water management. Design and maintain green infrastructure to complement natural processes to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and natural filtration, maintain the natural water cycle, and deliver sustainable drainage solutions.

As part of a multifunctional network, green infrastructure can connect local areas to landscape scale blue water features such as larger watercourses and rivers. Opportunities to achieve this should be identified.

Take opportunities to use green infrastructure as a means of implementing relevant strategies, including but not limited to River Basin Management Plans, flood management plans, the Shoreline Management Plan and the Wyre Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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To create and maintain a GI network that delivers sustainable water management our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Consider the role of GI as part of drainage and wastewater management plans.
- Aim to reduce flooding at catchment and local scales, working with natural processes.
- Protect the coast using natural processes.
- Protect groundwater from over exploitation, improve water supply and quality.
- Create new or enhance existing wetland habitats and watercourses, maximising climate change and ecological benefits.
- Minimise water pollution and improve water quality.
- Sustainably manage the coastal environment including beaches.
- Improve climate change resilience of freshwater habitats and species.
- Promote water-based ecological corridors.
- Work with stakeholders to improve habitat value through flood mitigation measures including Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- Recognise waterscapes for their contribution to the variety of green infrastructure in the borough, including working collaboratively to reduce conflicts, promote public safety, reduce anti-social behaviour, address pollution and accidental damage to ecologically important areas such as Morecambe Bay and the Wyre and Lune catchments.

### **Principle 2.3: Variety**

Ensure green infrastructure includes a mix of types and sizes at different spatial scales. Plan green infrastructure at borough and local scales to comprise a variety of types and sizes to meet strategic and local needs. Recognise that variety in the green infrastructure network provides variety in benefits and should be seen as an important strength, providing the ability to address issues in different ways and adapt to changing circumstances, especially as the impact of climate change on the way we live becomes more evident.

To create and maintain a GI network that delivers variety in its offer our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Design GI to accessibility principles to create an inclusive offer.
- Aim to create variation in the types and sizes of spaces to meet strategic needs.
- Strengthen networks and their variety to create more interest for users.
- Maintain and enhance a mix of significant GI assets.
- Reduce the loss and increase the diversity of habitats and species.
- Reduce the loss of and increase the variety of recreational facilities.

### **Principle 2.4: Connectivity**

Green infrastructure should embody the principle of connectivity to create a living network for people and nature.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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Design and maintain green infrastructure as part of a wider network, including green corridors and stepping stones at local, borough and regional spatial scales.

Aim to promote the function of ecological networks, create linkages within and between communities (both new and existing), and support the development of high-quality active travel routes.

To create and maintain a connected GI network our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Improve the delivery of GI ecosystem services through the creation, enhancement, and connectivity of new and existing sites.
- Identify and describe how investment will form an integrated network to provide multiple benefits, including for: active transport; wildlife; flood reduction; urban cooling; carbon storage; pollination and improvements in air and water quality at a strategic scale.
- Use up to date information on the quality and condition of open space and natural capital assets to establish connections across stakeholder interests that will make GI planning more effective and integrated.
- Demonstrate how land allocation and regeneration priorities connect and contribute to the delivery of GI, show how and where the mix of GI functions and services are provided and relate to each other as part of a network.
- Provide strong policy protection for the existing GI network.

### **Principle 2.5: Accessibility**

Create accessible green infrastructure with wide-ranging community benefits.

Aim to create accessible green infrastructure where everyone has the opportunity to take advantage of the benefits conveyed by good quality green and blue spaces, routes and features.

Design and maintain green infrastructure to be inclusive, safe, welcoming and effectively managed and maintained. Ensure we have facilities/infrastructure such as benches and toilets, (if feasible) nearby to encourage usage by the community.

To create and maintain an accessible GI network our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Aim to strengthen access networks and reduce fragmentation of green and blue infrastructure.
- Contribute to access policy such as green transport and active travel strategies.
- Help achieve targeted individual access objectives for different users.
- Maintain and enhance non-motorised routes.
- Provide information which promotes wayfinding to destinations and longer routes.
- Identify communities with poor access to GI and support appropriate solutions.

## **Theme 3 – Strategic thinking and delivery in partnership**

### **Principle 3.1: Partnership working and collaboration**

Support partnership working between Wyre council and stakeholders - residents, communities, businesses, landowners, land managers and stakeholder organisations - as a core element of delivering a high quality multifunctional green infrastructure network.

Work with stakeholders to promote decisions that support the principles of green infrastructure strategy, planning and delivery.

To create and maintain partnership working and collaboration our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Use a partnership approach to establish a long-term vision for how green infrastructure will address core challenges.
- Have an inclusive engagement and consultation strategy based on thorough stakeholder mapping.
- Aim to strengthen communication and engagement networks to build knowledge sharing and joint outcomes, including a consideration of the impact of digital exclusion.
- Celebrate and communicate Wyre's successes in improving our environment. Promote a GI approach to strategic outcomes in the policies of contributing organisations.
- Provide information that promotes sustained involvement of stakeholders.

### **Principle 3.2: Evidence base**

Working with stakeholders, base green infrastructure policies and actions on sound and robust evidence and the application of good practice.

Review on a regular basis key data on environmental, social, environmental, and economic challenges, needs and opportunities in the borough and the continuing role of green infrastructure in addressing key issues.

To develop and maintain a GI evidence base our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Establish a baseline for quantity and quality GI provision.
- Identify the current functions and benefits those assets are delivering.
- Map the GI priorities and needs of communities.
- Develop the evidence to support conservation of assets currently providing important services.
- Enhance those assets that could deliver better services.
- Create new assets in areas of identified deficiency where supported by evidence.

## **Principle 3.3: Key strategic asset**

Recognise green infrastructure as a key strategic asset and consider how it can help to deliver strategic objectives amongst stakeholders and plan accordingly.

Recognise that green infrastructure, at all spatial scales, is a key infrastructure asset that has multifunctional social, environmental, and economic benefits.

Secure green infrastructure as a key asset through policies to create and maintain sustainable places. Integrate and mainstream green infrastructure into environmental, social, health and economic strategies and policies.

Identify and address inequalities in green infrastructure provision and the distribution of its benefits.

In recognition of GI as a key strategic asset our priorities over the next five years are to:

- Identify key strategic partners.
- Promote GI principles and actions internally within WBC and to strategic partners including parish councils.

## **Principle 3.4: Implementation framework**

Establish a robust implementation framework for green infrastructure, including governance, funding, management, monitoring, and evaluation arrangements.

Establish deliverable green infrastructure policies and actions capable of effective monitoring and review. Consider green infrastructure as a key asset from the outset and secure it for the long-term.

Celebrate success and raise awareness of the benefits of green infrastructure and the social, environmental, and economic value it embodies.

To develop and maintain the Green Infrastructure Implementation Framework our priorities over the next five years are to identify key actions central to delivering the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the delivery agency or agencies.



### **8.3 Action plan**

The actions set out below are structured around the Themes and Principles (Part 8.2). These are intended to provide a means of delivering against the Strategic Priorities listed above. They are also concerned with ensuring that the principles are embodied in all decisions taken by WBC relating to green infrastructure and those decisions taken by stakeholders with an interest in green infrastructure.

The local actions are designed to be delivered over the **short term (ST) (1-2 years), medium term (MT) (up to 4 years) and long-term (LT) (5+ years)**.

In some cases, the action implies an **on-going** process. These will develop over time in response to the key principles, strategic priorities, and any external factors such as a change in government policy.

Some of the local actions have a specific project-based aspect; others are more general, suggesting review and consideration of an issue that may lead to more specific project-level actions in later editions. There is overlap between the aims of the various principles and therefore overlaps in terms of actions. Some actions may therefore be repeated under different themes and principles.

Delivering the actions will involve significant input from relevant stakeholders. In some cases the council will not be the agency implementing an action. The need to work in partnership to deliver meaningful green infrastructure outcomes is therefore a central thread of this framework.

There is a close link between green infrastructure and biodiversity. This Strategic Framework and overall Green Infrastructure Strategy should be taken as evidence, in part, of the council's legal duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

### Theme 1 - Place

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
<b>1.1 Nature rich places</b>	Complete the Dynamic Dunescape Project.	WBC, Natural England	ST
	Deliver the Wyre Estuary Bioblitz 2024.	WBC, Wyre Rivers Trust, RSB, LERN	ST
	Deliver the Forest of Bowland Nature Recovery Plan.	WBC, Forest of Bowland National Landscape Partnership, LCC, Rivers Trusts	ST
	Implement the Stanah Saltmarsh project part of the Our Future Coast Programme (development of improved biodiversity on the saltmarsh to improve its resilience to climate and recreational pressures).	WBC, Wyre Rivers Trust, Our Future Coast and Natural England	ST-MT
	Implement the Gateway to the Wyre Estuary project (restoration of the public right of way between Stanah and Skippool).	WBC, Rural UK Shared Prosperity Fund, LCC Public Rights of Way	ST
	Continue to plan for new sites and plant new trees and hedgerows in line with Wyre's Commitment to plant 25,000 trees before 2025.	WBC, Woodland Trust, Wyre River Trust, Forestry Commission	On-going

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Continue to promote Wyre's Green Flag parks and other award winning spaces including Vicarage Park, Hawthorne Park, Wyre Estuary Country Park Memorial Park and The Mount.	WBC (Parks and Open Spaces, Countryside)	On-going
	Continue to monitor and regularly update management plans for Wyre's key parks, open spaces, coastal sites and public realm sites, focusing on site management in terms of site maintenance and improvements including improving biodiversity, adopting sustainable mowing and planting, addressing invasive species, and reducing climate change impacts.	WBC (Parks and Open Spaces, Countryside)	On-going
	Support natural flood management projects in the Wyre Catchment including on council owned land (e.g. King Georges Playing Field – Thornton).	WBC, Wyre Rivers Trust, United Utilities, Environment Agency	On-going
	Continue to be a key stakeholder and support the Wyre CIC Natural Flood Management programme delivered by Wyre Rivers Trust for the whole of the Wyre Catchment– at a strategic and front line practical level.	WBC, Wyre Rivers Trust	MT
	Consider the development of a Wyre Biodiversity Strategy.	WBC and partners	ST
	Produce a Biodiversity Net Gain Guide for Applicants.	WBC (Planning)	ST
	Review the Wyre Local Plan to ensure that its policies are reflective of the latest Wyre GI Strategy.	WBC (Planning)	MT

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Work with the Forest of Bowland National Landscape and local farmers to deliver Farming in Protected Landscape access to nature projects.	WBC, Forest of Bowland National Landscape, farmers	On-going
	Through planning and policy decisions and project management opportunities, connect green and blue spaces and corridors for biodiversity creation, enhancement and conservation.	WBC	On-going
	Through planning and policy decisions and project management opportunities increase tree cover including within settlements and new development, based on the principle of 'right tree, right place'.	WBC	On-going
	Through planning decisions and project management opportunities prioritise native species and ensure biosecurity principles are adhered to avoid spreading non-native invasive species and diseases.	WBC	On-going
	Consider how council owned land and buildings can support nature and improve biodiversity.	WBC (Estates)	LT
	Protect veteran trees, semi-natural woodland and ancient hedgerows, and irreplaceable habitats, and maintain in good condition where the council is a landowner.	WBC, Lancashire County Council	On-going
	Contribute to and support the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a Supporting Authority.	WBC, LCC	LT

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Contribute to and support local nature recovery in the Forest of Bowland.	WBC, Forest of Bowland National Landscape Partnership	LT
	Support the delivery of the Forest of Bowland Management Plan Action Plan 2019-2024.	WBC, Forest of Bowland National Landscape Partnership	MT
	Work with the Wyre Catchment Partnership to achieve landscape and biodiversity improvements.	WBC, Wyre Catchment Partnership	On-going
	Support a partnership project across Morecambe Bay to reduce the impact of recreational disturbance and increase positive engagement with nature around the Bay.	WBC, Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership, Natural England	On-going
	Work with Natural England and other stakeholders to deliver as appropriate species conservation strategies and protected site strategies for Wyre.	WBC, Natural England	LT
<b>1.2 Well designed and distinctive places</b>	Review Wyre Local Plan design policy to create an enhanced focus on GI design principles and expectations.	WBC (Planning)	ST
	Review and update the existing Wyre Local Plan Policy HP9 GI Guidance for Applicants.	WBC (Planning)	ST

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Develop and implement the Cottam Hall Masterplan – a plan to create a well-designed and distinctive place for all site users.	WBC	On-going
	Consider the need for a design guide for trees in development (increasing and managing tree cover).	WBC	MT
	Continue to monitor and regularly update management plans for Wyre’s key parks, open spaces and public realm sites, focusing on site management in terms of site maintenance, improving biodiversity, likely climate change impacts and site improvements	WBC (Parks and Open Spaces, Countryside)	On-going
	Deliver public realm improvements associated with the Wyre Beach Management Scheme, creating opportunities for biodiversity enhancement wherever possible.	WBC, Rossall Residents, the Environment Agency, Natural England and others	MT
	Identify funding opportunities to develop a Fleetwood Linear Park as part of flood defence improvements at Fleetwood Docks.	WBC, Environment Agency	Funding dependent
	Support the development and implementation of GI schemes within Town Centre Frameworks.	WBC and various	ST-LT
	Use S106 monies (developer contributions) to improve existing GI or create new GI.	WBC	On-going

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
<b>1.3 Active and healthy places</b>	Support the creation and continuation of a strategic network of cycling, walking, horse riding and wheeling routes that meet multiple needs, including the Wyre Way, Wyre Estuary Way and King Charles III England Coast Path.	WBC, Lancashire County Council, Natural England	LT
	Consider the development of Wyre Estuary Country Park as an “Environmental Learning Hub”.	WBC, Wyre Rivers Trust, RSB	ST
	Work with appropriate stakeholders to deliver a Bay Cycleway (Glasson to Fleetwood).	WBC, Morecambe Bay Partnership	MT
	Work with appropriate stakeholders to refresh the Wyre Estuary Way and Wyre Way long-distance recreation route.	WBC	MT
	Implement the Active Environment action plan (Wyre Moving More Strategy)	WBC	ST-MT
	Develop and implement the Cottam Hall Masterplan in support of Active and Healthy Places.	WBC	On-going
	Align GI strategy principles with the Fylde Coast Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plan and ensure synergy between relevant actions plans.	WBC	ST
	Deliver towpath improvements (Lancaster Canal)	WBC, Canal and Rivers Trust	ST-LT subject to funding

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Identify spatial and community inequalities in access to GI, including sports provision, and consider how such inequalities can be reduced.	WBC	MT
	Manage council-owned GI to deliver eco-system services that can improve health outcomes such as urban cooling, noise reduction, flood risk management and air quality improvements.	WBC	On-going
	Identify key health and wellbeing outcomes for Wyre where GI can have a positive role to play in improving health in key groups and areas.	WBC	LT
	Implement a playground strategy (for council owned sites) which includes a playground improvement plan.	WBC	ST-LT
	Continue to develop and promote the Wyre Great Outdoors programme for local people and visitors.	WBC and partners	On-going
<b>1.4 Thriving and prospering places</b>	Use council owned GI to uplift the quality and economic value of an area.	WBC	On-going
	Where appropriate, integrate GI into plans and projects and consider the eco-system service and value benefits it can bring including air quality regulation, flood risk management, noise mitigation, recreation, urban cooling, and pollination.	WBC	On-going
	Continue to develop and promote the Wyre Great Outdoors Programme for local people and visitors.	WBC and partners	On-going



## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Continue to promote Wyre's Green Flag parks and other award-winning spaces including Vicarage Park, Hawthorne Park, Wyre Estuary Country Park Memorial Park and The Mount.	WBC	On-going
	Consider establishing a GI standard for new non-residential development.	WBC	ST
	Develop training and learning in GI creation and management with appropriate internal and external stakeholders	WBC	MT
<b>1.5 Climate positive and resilient places</b>	Approve and implement the Wyre Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.	WBC	ST-LT
	Continue to monitor and regularly update management plans for Wyre's key parks, open spaces and public realm sites, focusing on site management in terms of site maintenance, improving biodiversity, likely climate change impacts and site improvements.	WBC	On-going
	Incorporate adaptive management to ensure GI is planned to provide multi-functional benefits and continues to do so as the climate changes.	WBC	On-going
	Raise awareness of the climate change and ecological emergency online and through events and the need for climate adaptation and resilience.	WBC	LT

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Continue to apply for funding for infrastructure and land management projects that will reduce flood risk, including Natural Flood Management.	WBC, Wyre Rivers Trust	On-going

### Theme 2 - A multifunctional green infrastructure

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
<b>2.1 Multiple services and benefits</b>	Approve and implement the Wyre Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.	WBC	ST-LT
	Through planning decisions, policies and project management opportunities create appropriate accessible nature rich spaces close to where people live and work.	WBC (Planning)	On-going
	Develop and apply best practice examples to promote the use of GI as an eco-system service.	WBC	On-going
	Capture the multi-functional benefits of green infrastructure using appropriate qualitative and quantitative assessments or tools.	WBC	LT

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
<b>2.2 Sustainable water environment</b>	Explore opportunities to “daylight” culverts by reverting them back to their natural state as an open watercourse.	WBC, LLFA	LT
	Through planning decisions and project management opportunities connect recreational, natural green and blue spaces.	WBC	On-going
	Undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as part of the Wyre Local Plan evidence base.	WBC (Planning) with Fylde Council and Blackpool Council	ST
	Use water to enhance public open space for a variety of appropriate recreational uses, ensuring potential conflicts, including with ecologically important area such as Morecambe Bay and Wyre Estuary are managed.	WBC, Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership, Wyre Rivers Trust	On-going
	Provide positive water management and appropriate habitat creation through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).	WBC, Lead Local Food Authority	On-going
	Apply the four pillars of SUDS <sup>8</sup> in system design.	WBC, Lead Local Food Authority	On-going
	Support the Our Future Coast project and the development of a sustainable coast in Wyre.	WBC, Environment Agency, Morecambe Bay Partnership, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Wyre Rivers Trust, and others	LT

<sup>8</sup> The four pillar are in summary, water quality, water quantity, amenity and biodiversity.

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Support the current Shoreline Management Plan and any updates.	WBC, NW Coastal Group, NW SMP Co-ordinator	On-going
	Collaborate with the Lune Rivers Trust and other stakeholders to explore the potential for projects in the Pilling and Cocker catchments that can deliver benefits to watercourses and provide benefits to nature and communities.	WBC, Lune Rivers Trust	On-going
	Support natural flood management projects in the Wyre Catchment including on council owned land (e.g. King Georges Playing Field – Thornton and Wyre Estuary Country Park).	WBC, Wyre Rivers Trust	On-going
<b>2.3 Variety</b>	Use GI creation and enhancement to create a variety of habitats.	WBC	On-going
	Encourage the use of the borough’s parks and open spaces by providing a varied offer to meet different recreational needs.	WBC	On-going
	Improve the variety of sporting opportunities including sports provision for female participants and other low participation groups (see the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy).	WBC	LT
	Protect GI from losses in-line with Wyre Local Plan policy.	WBC	On-going
	Create a varied and accessible GI offer within housing developments in-line with Wyre Local Plan policy and guidance.	WBC (Planning)	On-going

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
<b>2.4 Connectivity</b>	Create a GIS-based database of GI assets and use to identify opportunities to create greater connectivity at a local and strategic scale.	WBC (Planning)	ST
	Support the creation and continuation of a strategic network of cycling, walking, horse riding and wheeling routes that meet multiple needs, including the Wyre Way, Wyre Estuary Way and King Charles III England Coast Path.	WBC, Lancashire County Council and Natural England	MT
	Work with appropriate stakeholders to deliver a Bay Cycleway (Glasson to Fleetwood).	WBC and Morecambe Bay Partnership	MT
	Align GI strategy principles with the Fylde Coast Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plan and ensure synergy between relevant actions plans.	WBC	ST
	Contribute to and support the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a Supporting Authority.	WBC, LCC	LT
	Contribute to and support local nature recovery in the Forest of Bowland.	WBC, Forest of Bowland National Landscape Partnership	LT
	Undertake a review of GI policies as part of the new Local Plan and identify and protect key corridors and stepping stones	WBC (Planning)	ST
	Apply Wyre Local Policies designed to protect GI from development.	WBC (Planning)	ST

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
	Ensure the functions and services provided by individual projects meet the needs of users, benefits the wider environment, connects to GI networks within the boundary of the project, links with existing and planned GI in the surrounding area, and contributes to the Biodiversity Duty.	WBC	On-going
<b>2.5 Accessibility</b>	Ensure the functions and services provided by individual projects meet the needs of users.	WBC	On-going
	Design GI to accessibility principles to create an inclusive and varied offer.	WBC	On-going
	Review access links to green spaces such as the Wyre Estuary Country Park and the Garstang Millennium Green.	WBC	ST
	Focus on addressing deficits in local Green Infrastructure supply and quality.	WBC	On-going
	Review the Lancashire Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Cycling and Walking Strategy with regard to improving gaps in network in Wyre.	WBC, Lancashire County Council	ST
	Identify areas with poor access to GI and develop detailed actions to improve the position.	WBC	LT
	Improve the variety of sporting opportunities including sports provision for female participants.	WBC	LT



## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

### Theme 3 - Strategic thinking and delivery in partnership

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
<b>3.1 Partnership working and collaboration</b>	Develop a Wyre GI Network of stakeholder organisations who can play a role in delivering strategic and local outcomes.	WBC and partners	MT
	Work with stakeholder organisations to support bids for GI-related activities and projects.	WBC and partners	On-going
	Continue to support and develop volunteer teams and work with voluntary groups and friends groups to support and enhance the sustainable management of Wyre's green infrastructure.	WBC and partners	On-going
	Promote success in the delivery, management, protection and enhancement of GI.	WBC and partners	On-going
	Through existing structures work with farmers and land managers to deliver environmental benefits for Wyre	WBC and partners	On-going
<b>3.2 Evidence base</b>	Regularly review the GI audit database, including a consideration of relevant climate change and ecological matters.	WBC (Planning)	MT
	Review Wyre Local Plan GI policies and apply new standards if evidenced and required.	WBC (Planning)	ST
	Monitor GI as part of new development against Local Plan Policy HP9 and associated Guidance for Applicants.	WBC (Planning)	On-going



## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Wyre GI Principles	Actions	Delivery	Timescale
<b>3.3 Key strategic asset</b>	Develop a Wyre GI Network of stakeholder organisations who can play a role in delivering strategic and local outcomes.	WBC and partners	ST
	Promote the GI strategy and key findings from the three elements of the GI Study.	WBC	ST
	Address spatial and social inequalities in GI provision including sport and access to nature.	WBC	On-going
	Support the current Shoreline Management Plan and any updates.	WBC, NW Coastal Group, NW SMP Co-ordinator	On-going
<b>3.4 Implementation framework</b>	Develop a project-level GI action plan designed to implement the GI Principles.	WBC	ST
	Review this GI Framework and the project-level action plan on an annual basis with a refresh and update every five years.	WBC	ST-LT
	Apply the findings from the GI Study to the review of the Wyre Local Plan.	WBC (Planning)	ST
	Update the Local Plan Policy HP9 GI Guidance for applicants on an annual basis.	WBC (Planning)	ST

## **PART 9: MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Turning aspiration into reality is a normal part of the process of strategy review and development. This is why regular review is important. The Strategic Framework is a five-year plan designed to be reviewed annually and refreshed every five years.

The implementation of the strategy should be monitored in order to measure its success. There is also a need to review the strategy on a regular basis. This can help to understand to what extent actions are being delivered and to reflect any known changes.

In essence a review should look to:

- Identify any relevant changes in the policy and physical context
- Identify actions/projects completed
- Update any changes to actions and timescales

The action plan (under Theme 3.4) sets this out as an annual refresh and an update every five years.

A consistent method of monitoring delivery and developing a co-ordinated and consistent method of reporting green infrastructure delivery is important. An annual monitoring report could be produced and used to update the action plan

## **APPENDIX ONE: STAKEHOLDER RESPONDENTS**

- British Horse Society
- Canal and Rivers Trust
- Care for Clevelleys
- Countryside Volunteers x 2
- Environment Agency
- Fleetwood Civic Society
- Fylde Bird Club
- Garstang Millennium Green
- Green Lanes Association
- Lancashire County Council Ecology
- Lancashire County Council Nature Recovery
- Lancashire County Council Public Health
- Lancashire Wildlife Trust
- Lead Local Flood Authority
- Lune Rivers Trust
- Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership
- Natural England
- Poulton-le-Fylde Historical and Civic Society
- Rossall Beach Residents and Community Group
- United Utilities
- Wyre Borough Council Head of Engineering

## **APPENDIX TWO: STAKEHOLDER SURVEY**

Copy of questionnaire:

12 July 2023

### **Wyre Green Infrastructure Study 2023 Draft Strategic Framework - Stakeholder Questionnaire**

<b>Name of organisation/group:</b>	
<b>Submitted by:</b>	
<b>Position/role:</b>	
<b>Contact details:</b>	

#### **Data Protection**

Comments submitted for consideration cannot be treated as confidential as they will form part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan and the development and implementation of the council's green infrastructure and environmental policy. The information may also be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (in relation to the emerging Local Plan) and any agency appointed on their behalf. Guidance on how the Planning Inspectorate hold and use your information is available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-privacy-notice>

Your contact details will be held by the council and its agents KKP to progress the emerging Local Plan and green infrastructure and environmental policy. Name(s) and organisation(s) will be publicly available if relevant. Contact details will **not** be made public. Further information about Data Protection and the council's policy can be viewed on the council's website at <https://www.wyre.gov.uk/service-area-privacy-notice/privacy-notice> and at <https://www.wyre.gov.uk/downloads/file/203/privacy-notice-planning-services>

KKPs privacy policy is available at [Privacy Policy - KNIGHT KAVANAGH & PAGE \(kkp.co.uk\)](https://www.kkp.co.uk/privacy-policy)

I agree that Wyre council and its agents can hold my consultation response including contact details and I understand that they will only be used in relation to planning and green infrastructure and environmental matters.

<b>Signed</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Date</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Please note that forms that are not signed and dated will not be accepted.

If you have any concerns regarding the processing of your data, please contact the planning policy team via email: [planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk) or telephone: 01253 891000

#### **Consultation Database**

If you are not on the council's local plan consultation database but you would like to be, please register at <https://www.wyre.gov.uk/planning-policy/consultations>

Everyone who is on the consultation database will be notified at key stages of the emerging Wyre Local Plan process, including notification of further public consultations. However, we cannot contact individuals and organisations not subscribed to the database. If you would like to subscribe to the database but are unable to do so, please contact the planning policy team at [planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk)

# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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12 July 2023

Please read the briefing note and draft Strategic Framework before completing the questionnaire.

Before answering the questions, it would be useful if you can briefly explain how your organisation/group delivers, protects, enhances or manages green infrastructure and why green infrastructure is important to you.

**Q1.** In your opinion, what are the key issues facing green infrastructure in Wyre, both now and in the longer-term (over next 15 years or more)? What are the main pressures and threats to green infrastructure in Wyre? What are the main opportunities?

**Q2.** How should these issues be addressed? What is your organisations role in addressing these issues and making the most of opportunities? What role do you think Wyre council should play in addressing these issues and making the most of opportunities?

**Q3.** Is there scope to improve strategic thinking and work on Wyre's green infrastructure between the council and stakeholders? What should be improved and how?

12 July 2023

**Q4. Do you agree with the strategic aim? Should the aim be amended and if so, how?**

**Q5. Do you agree with the key themes? Should these be amended and if so, how? Should there be different themes?**

**Q6. Do you agree with the implementation framework strategic priorities? Should these be amended and if so, how? Should there be different priorities?**

**Q7. Do you agree with the implementation framework local actions? Should these be amended and if so, how? Should there be different actions? Are there specific actions that your organisation can commit to that you are willing to add to the implementation framework?**

**Q8. Are there opportunities relating to the delivery, protection, enhancement and management of green infrastructure in Wyre that are not currently being taken? How can this be resolved?**

# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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12 July 2023

**Q9.** What should be the three top priorities for green infrastructure in Wyre and why?

**Q10.** Do you have any general observations relating to the delivery, protection, management and enhancement of green infrastructure in Wyre?

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Briefing note:

Draft Strategic Framework - Briefing Note 12.07.23

## **Wyre Green Infrastructure Study 2023 Green Infrastructure Strategy - Strategic Framework Stakeholder Consultation**

This briefing note has been produced by Wyre council to inform targeted stakeholder consultation on its emerging green infrastructure (GI) framework. It explains the work we are undertaking and your role in the process of developing the Wyre GI Strategy.

Queries concerning this consultation and the green infrastructure study should be directed to Wyre council on:

01253 887231 or [planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk)

Please return your response by **5pm Wednesday 2 August 2023** to [carmel.daniel@kkp.co.uk](mailto:carmel.daniel@kkp.co.uk)

Please copy your response to Wyre council at the following e-mail address:

[planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk)

### **Why is a Green Infrastructure Strategy needed?**

Wyre council is in the process of reviewing its local plan. The National Planning Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) is clear that local plans should maintain and enhance GI networks and make sufficient provision for their conservation. The NPPF also states that GI can support climate change adaptation, healthy lifestyles and improve air quality or mitigate impacts.

The Wyre Local Plan review provides an excellent opportunity to review and update the existing GI evidence base by undertaking three related pieces of work as part of a Green Infrastructure Study. These three pieces of work are:

1. Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy
2. Green Infrastructure Audit
3. Green Infrastructure Strategy

These three pieces of work are being led by the council's consultants Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP).



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Appendix 1 provides a definition of green infrastructure and identifies the key typologies.

The Green Infrastructure Study will identify GI assets in Wyre – including blue infrastructure (watercourses) and yellow infrastructure (beaches and sands) - and consider how these can be protected and improved. It will identify where there are local deficiencies in GI in terms of both quantity and quality. It will provide the evidence to support Wyre Local Plan policies designed to require new GI as part of new development. It will also provide the evidence and strategic framework to ensure that new GI provides where possible multiple benefits and improves connectivity for both people and nature. In this sense, green infrastructure should be seen as part of addressing wider concerns with:

- protecting and enhancing biodiversity and delivering nature recovery;
- improving health and wellbeing;
- climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience, particularly relating to heat impacts and flood risk;
- environmental quality;
- boosting active travel; and
- reducing spatial and population-level socio-economic disparities.

## **Consultations undertaken**

The council has undertaken a broad community consultation as part of the process of identifying key GI issues. This work is still being assessed but early indications are that:

- Popular types of green infrastructure to visit in Wyre include parks, promenades, beaches, nature reserves and country parks.
- Main reasons for visiting are fresh air, to go for a walk, for peace and quiet and to see nature.
- People generally walk to access parks, amenity, play for children, civic space, cemeteries, and outdoor networks.
- The amount and access of open space provision in their local area is positive with most respondents stating it as quite satisfactory and very satisfactory.

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- Similarly, the amount and access of open space provision across Wyre is positive.
- Quality of provision in local areas and for across Wyre is positive. However a common theme throughout the comments relate to the issue of dog fouling and lack of enclosed spaces for dogs.
- The strongest recognised benefit of open space is the improvement to people's mental health, followed by improvement to people's physical health. Most respondents strongly agree that visiting open spaces makes them feel better.
- The majority of respondents strongly agree that open space is highly valued and very important to the community.
- The most common ways to improve open space include better and wider facilities, more wildlife/habitat promotion, better maintenance, and greater attractiveness.
- The main barriers to the use of footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways is due to poor surfaces and routes being overgrown. A lack of signage is also cited as an issue to address.

The council is also undertaking on-going consultation with local sporting clubs and national governing bodies as part of developing the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy.

### **This stakeholder consultation**

Whilst work on the GI evidence base continues we are sufficiently advanced to start the process of developing a GI Strategic Framework. This will sit at the heart of an overarching GI strategy providing direction and focus on key issues and how they may be addressed. The Framework will be an expression of the council's green infrastructure priorities and aspirations. For this consultation, we have attached a draft Strategic Framework that consists of:

1. Strategic aim
2. Key themes
  - Theme 1 - Place
  - Theme 2 - A multifunctional green infrastructure network
  - Theme 3 – Strategic thinking and delivery in partnership

# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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3. Guiding principles
4. Implementation framework

The themes and guiding principles are based on green infrastructure principles published by [Natural England](#). These principles are considered to provide a nationally significant, robust and relevant direction of travel for interpretation in local studies. The principles have been adapted to fit into the spatial environment in which the Green Infrastructure Study will be used in Wyre.

You have been contacted as you may have an interest in GI in Wyre. We would like to hear your views on the emerging draft strategic framework in order to develop a more integrated approach to protecting and enhancing green infrastructure. We have created a short questionnaire that will allow you to provide comments in a structured way. The questionnaire is in word format. There is no word limit set for each response.

We are particularly keen to understand whether there are actions and activities being led by partner organisations such as yourselves that could be reflected in the Implementation Framework. This may be subject to further consideration and discussion with the relevant organisation if necessary.

As part of the supporting material, we have made available our current mapping of GI across Wyre. This mapping is being developed as part of the GI Audit and should be regarded as work in progress – it does not reflect the final position. Nevertheless, the mapping provides some basic information on the location and type of GI in Wyre as currently understood and may be assistance to you in reviewing the draft Strategic Framework. The map can be accessed from:

<https://wyre.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=ce1b30f06226453ab89c212faa7d60a8>

Thank very much you for your assistance

Len Harris

Wyre council

## Appendix 1 – Green Infrastructure Typology

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 defines green infrastructure as:

*A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.*

Green infrastructure types as defined for the Wyre Green Infrastructure Study are:

**Green corridors:** Significant linear features that provide for walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, including promenades. May also offer opportunities for wildlife mitigation. Can also include significant watercourses such as canals and rivers (blue infrastructure).

**Amenity greenspace:** Grassed areas providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work.

**Natural/semi-natural greenspace:** Sites for wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. Includes nature reserves as well as more informal provision such as woodlands and grasslands. Also includes beaches (sometimes referred to as yellow infrastructure).

**Children's play:** Areas designed for play and social interaction containing play equipment such as swings and slides. Often intended for supervised play. Includes play facilities aimed at older children often intended for unsupervised play including skateboard areas, multi-use games areas and BMX tracks. Children's play facilities may be located within a school boundary. However, in most cases this is not officially available for general community use.

**Outdoor sports provision:** Pitches (e.g. football, cricket, bowls) or sporting facilities such as golf courses and tennis courts. Includes water-based sporting activities. Applies to publicly available sports provision including membership based clubs such as a football or cricket club. Sports facilities such as playing fields may be located within a school boundary. However, in many cases this is not officially available for general community use.

**Cemeteries and churchyards:** Quiet contemplation areas, which are often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

**Civic spaces:** Market squares, war memorials and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians and which often provide a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.

**Blue infrastructure:** Water-based elements of the landscape particularly in settlements. Includes marinas and related land such as that used for slipways (note that rivers and canals may be identified as green corridors or natural/semi-natural greenspace).

# WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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**Allotments:** Opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

**Parks and gardens:** Often well designed sites of high quality with opportunities for informal recreation and community events.

**APPENDIX THREE: PROPOSED PROVISION STANDARDS SHORTFALLS**

Table A2.1: Comparison of proposed standards against current provision

Area	Parks and gardens		Natural & Semi-natural		Amenity greenspace		Allotments		Outdoor sports	
	0.40		1.50		0.60		0.25		2.51	
	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -
Barton	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	3.28	+2.68	-	-0.25	-	-2.51
Bilsborrow	13.99	+13.59	3.84	+2.34	0.24	-0.36	-	-0.25	45.74	+43.23
Bowgreave	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	5.28	+4.68	-	-0.25	90.54	+88.03
Cabus	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	-	-0.60	-	-0.25	-	-2.51
Calder Vale	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	5.68	+5.08	-	-0.25	-	-2.51
Catterall	0.62	+0.22	-	-1.50	0.57	-0.03	-	-0.25	-	-2.51
Churchtown	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	2.17	+1.57	-	-0.25	-	-2.51
Cleveleys	-	-0.40	0.30	-1.20	0.52	-0.08	-	-0.25	0.06	-2.45
Dolphinholme	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	-	-0.60	0.41	+0.16	-	-2.51
Fleetwood	0.62	+0.22	0.88	-0.62	0.66	+0.06	0.03	-0.22	2.43	-0.08
Forton	-	-0.40	0.34	-1.16	2.46	+1.86	-	-0.25	4.48	+1.97
Garstang	0.20	-0.20	0.67	-0.83	1.02	+0.42	0.01	-0.22	0.79	-1.72
Great Eccleston	-	-0.40	0.64	-0.86	1.23	+0.63	-	-0.25	0.90	-1.61
Hambleton	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	1.16	+0.56	-	-0.25	3.54	+1.03
Hollins Lane	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	1.58	+0.98	-	-0.25	-	-2.51

## WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Area	Parks and gardens		Natural & Semi-natural		Amenity greenspace		Allotments		Outdoor sports	
	(Hectares per 1000 population)									
	0.40		1.50		0.60		0.25		2.51	
	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -
Inskip	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	1.36	+0.76	-	-0.25	0.30	-2.21
Knott End / Preesall	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	0.12	-0.48	-	-0.25	8.44	+5.93
Pilling	0.03	-0.37	-	-1.50	-	-0.60	0.35	+0.10	4.09	+1.58
Poulton-le-Fylde	0.29	-0.11	0.10	-1.40	0.30	-0.30	0.01	-0.24	1.76	-0.75
Preesall Hill	-	-0.40	10.14 <sup>9</sup>	+8.64	-	-0.60	-	-0.25	-	-2.51
Rural	-	-0.40	1.01	-0.49	0.06	-0.54	-	-0.25	0.43	-2.08
Scorton	-	-0.40	29.01	+27.51	1.01	+0.41	-	-0.25	0.56	-1.95
St. Michaels	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	1.94	+1.34	-	-0.25	0.98	-1.53
Stalmine	-	-0.40	-	-1.50	2.02	+1.42	-	-0.25	1.48	-1.03
Thornton	0.05	-0.35	0.75	-0.75	0.44	-0.16	0.05	-0.20	1.68	-0.83

All areas are observed as having shortfalls in some form of provision. Noticeably the areas of greater population density such as Poulton-le-Flyde, Thornton and Cleveleys have shortfalls in all provision types.

<sup>9</sup> Based on inclusion of site which is possibly inaccessible.

Table A2.2: Comparison of proposed standards against current play provision

Area	Children and young people provision <sup>10</sup> (Hectares per 1000 population)	
	Current provision	+ / -
Barton	-	-0.48
Bilsborrow	0.09	-0.39
Bowgreave	-	-0.48
Cabus	-	-0.48
Calder Vale	-	-0.48
Catterall	0.06	-0.42
Churchtown	0.11	-0.37
Cleveleys	0.03	-0.45
Dolphinholme	-	-0.48
Fleetwood	0.05	-0.43
Forton	0.17	-0.31
Garstang	0.05	-0.43
Great Ecclestone	0.02	-0.46
Hambleton	0.07	-0.41
Hollins Lane	0.03	-0.45
Inskip	0.20	-0.28
Knott End / Preesall	0.03	-0.45
Pilling	0.21	-0.27
Poulton-le-Fylde	0.02	-0.46
Preesall Hill	-	-0.48
Rural	0.004	-0.48
Scorton	0.59	+0.11
St. Michaels	0.06	-0.42
Stalmine	0.04	-0.44
Thornton	0.03	-0.45

All areas are observed as having shortfalls in play provision with the exception of Scorton.

<sup>10</sup> The quantity standard for children's play provision (0.18) and young people's play provision (0.30) are combined given the crossover in existing provision