

Parks for Health Audit: Appraisal Report

Whittington Park Islington, London

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CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	The Results
2.1	Current Health Status
2.2	Elements in Need of Improvement
2.3	Potential Health Status
2.4	New Opportunities
2.5	Social Prescribing
3.0	Recommendations
4.0	Conclusion



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report represents the Parks for Health Audit: Appraisal Report for Whittington Park in Islington, London. It is based upon a survey undertaken on 29th October 2019 by Islington Council.

THE CONTEXT

Parks, Green Spaces and the wider Natural Environment can be places for fun and getting together, for being active or quiet reflection. They provide great benefits for health and wellbeing as well as potential cost savings across a range of health care provision. Research has demonstrated that health benefits include reductions in avoidable non-communicative diseases, obesity and mental ill-health. As such Parks can make a significant contribution to the prevention and treatment of such conditions within the context of Primary Prevention. To address this, Tisdall Associates have developed The Parks for Health Toolkit. This is an integrated approach which embraces Parks, Public Health and Social Prescribing.

A Park represents a “Place” with elements to encourage physical activity and promote social interaction and mental wellbeing. Health Promotion initiatives within a Park can include social media and communication, empowerment, education and learning. Social Prescribing represents activities which can be prescribed by local GPs to promote physical health and mental wellbeing.

THE ANALYSIS

The Parks for Health Toolkit has been developed from a review of scientific research. This review has identified key components and characteristics of Parks, Green Spaces and the Natural Environment which have a positive effect upon health. These have been categorized within 5 Primary Criteria (Community Initiatives, Accessibility, Mental Wellbeing, Physical Activity and Environment (including Biodiversity)), 17 Secondary Health Criteria and circa 80 individual elements. The Toolkit has integrated these components within a single assessment model. It identifies the current health status of the Park and makes practical recommendations for action within the following:

1. Practical Improvements and New Opportunities within each of the Primary Health Criteria
2. Improvements and interventions related to the prevention and treatment of Obesity Non-communicative Diseases and Mental Ill-health
3. Opportunities to integrate Parks within Social Prescribing
4. Opportunities to reduce environmental impacts i.e. Pollution, UV radiation, Urban temperature extremes
5. Opportunities to enhance biodiversity and increase habitats



Based upon this analysis, it is possible to develop evidence-based Parks Health Strategies, both for individual Parks, and for Parks across a wider area (Ward or Borough). Working with Public Health and Clinical Commissioning Groups (Social Prescribers), to deliver an integrated approach within Primary Prevention, the Toolkit can help deliver savings in the following areas:

1. For the NHS through reduced GP visits and medical interventions
2. For Local Authorities in Adult and Social Care and Mental Health Services
3. For Park maintenance, with reduced costs through increased biodiversity

In addition the Toolkit provides a basis for integrated funding opportunities to target avoidable ill-health in the community.



2.0 The Results

In order to provide a Park which promotes health and wellbeing it is suggested that as high a standard as possible should be delivered across each of the Health Criteria if this is achievable given the scale and character of the Park.

DETAILS OF THE PARK

In considering the local context the following information has been provided:

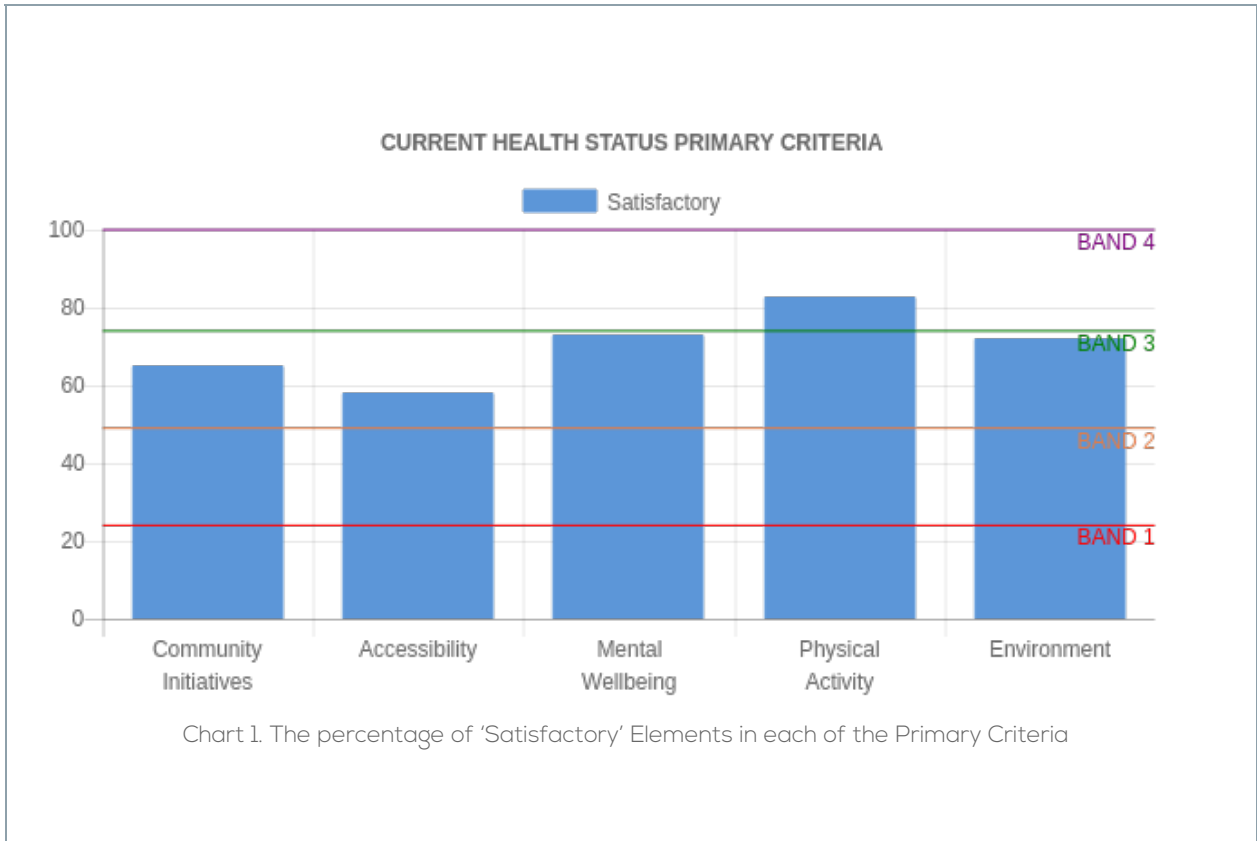
Health Parks ID Code:	10023-1572351412
Group or Organisation doing the Appraisal:	Islington Council
What is the official name of the Park?	Whittington Park
What is the name of the City, Town or Village?	Islington, London
What is the name of the Ward?	Junction
What is the Postal Code of the Park?	N19 4RS
What is the name of your Local Authority or equivalent?	London Borough of Islington
What is the scale and type of the Park?	Local Parks & Open Spaces 2-20 Ha (5-50 Acres)
What country is the Park located in?	United Kingdom



2.1 CURRENT HEALTH STATUS

A Primary Criteria

The Current Health Status comprises of elements which were found to be 'Satisfactory'. The analysis of the survey has identified the level and standard of 'Satisfactory' elements within each of the Primary and Secondary Criteria. These are indicated in the following charts and tables.



The analysis of these figures indicates the level of provision in each of the Primary Criteria as follows:



PRIMARY CRITERIA

CRITERIA	LEVEL	STANDARD
Community Initiatives	65	BAND 3
Accessibility	58	BAND 3
Mental Wellbeing	73	BAND 3
Physical Activity	83	BAND 4
Environment	72	BAND 3

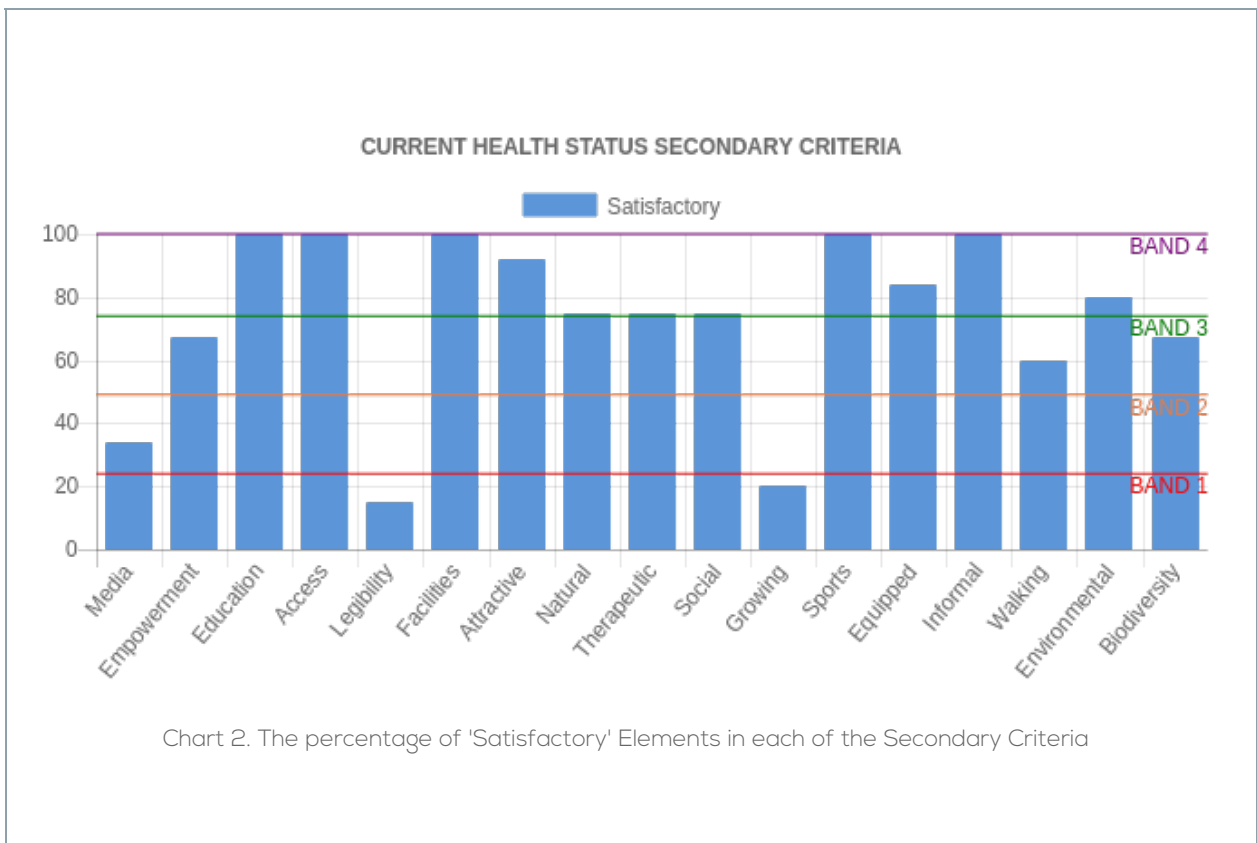
Table 1. The Level and Standard of Provision in each of the Primary Criteria

From Table 1 it is possible to identify which band each of the Primary Criteria are in.



B Secondary Criteria

The level of 'Satisfactory' elements identified by Secondary Criteria are identified in Chart 2.



The level of provision and standard in each of the Secondary Criteria is shown in Table 2:

SECONDARY CRITERIA		
CRITERIA	LEVEL	STANDARD
Community Initiatives		
Media	34	BAND 2
Empowerment	67	BAND 3
Education	100	BAND 4
Accessibility		
Access	100	BAND 4
Legibility	15	BAND 1
Facilities	100	BAND 4
Mental Wellbeing		
Attractive	92	BAND 4



SECONDARY CRITERIA

CRITERIA	LEVEL	STANDARD
Natural	75	BAND 4
Therapeutic	75	BAND 4
Social	75	BAND 4
Growing	20	BAND 1
Physical Activity		
Sports	100	BAND 4
Equipped	84	BAND 4
Informal	100	BAND 4
Walking	60	BAND 3
Environment		
Environmental	80	BAND 4
Biodiversity	67	BAND 3

Table 2. The Level and Standard of Provision of 'Satisfactory' Elements in each of the Secondary Criteria

From Table 2 it is possible to identify the level and standard of the Secondary Criteria.

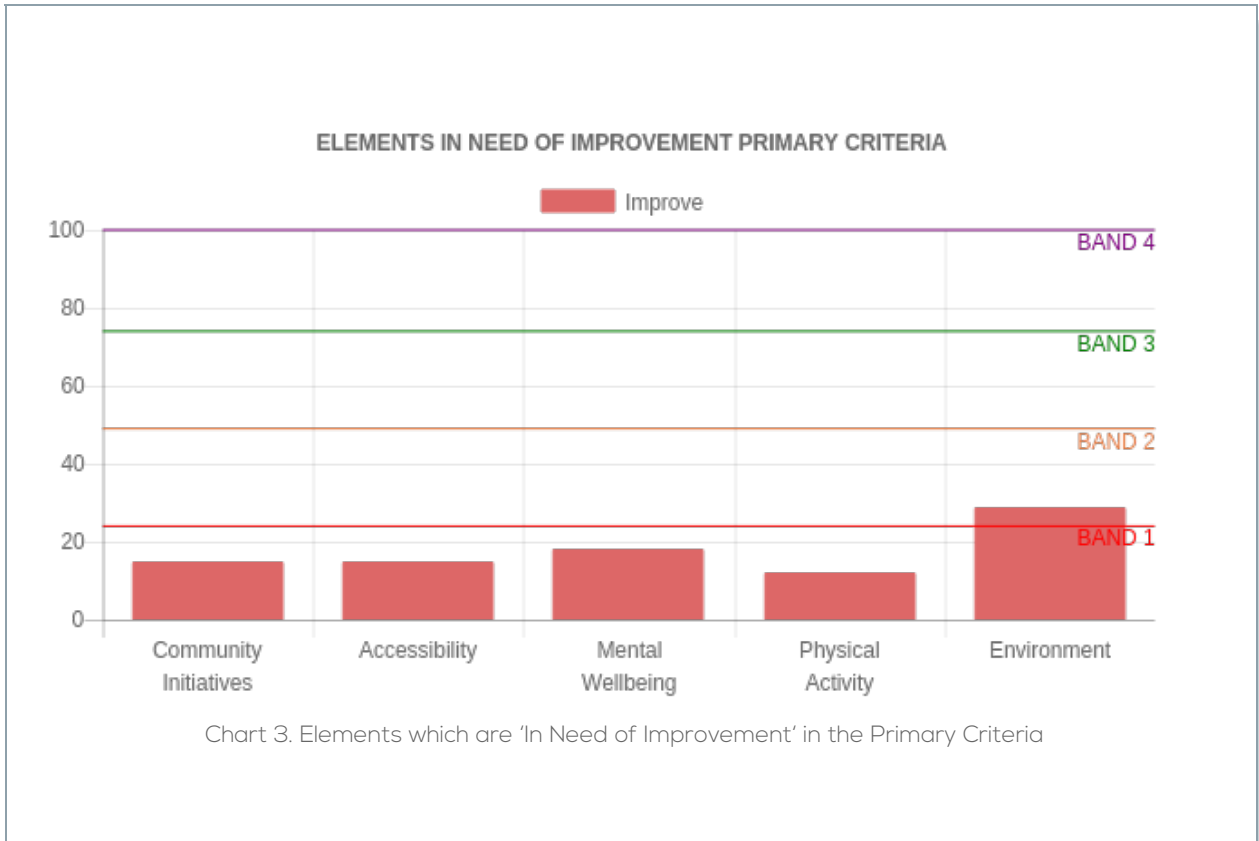
In developing your Park for Health, the objective is to achieve as high a standard as possible across each of the Primary and Secondary Criteria. The following sections of this report identify how this can be achieved through improvements and new opportunities.



2.2 ELEMENTS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

In each of the Primary and Secondary Criteria the analysis has identified the proportion of elements that were judged to be 'In Need of Improvement'. Those in the Primary Criteria are indicated in Chart 3.

A Primary Criteria



The analysis of these figures indicates the level of provision of elements needing improvement in each of the Primary Criteria as shown in Table 3:



PRIMARY CRITERIA

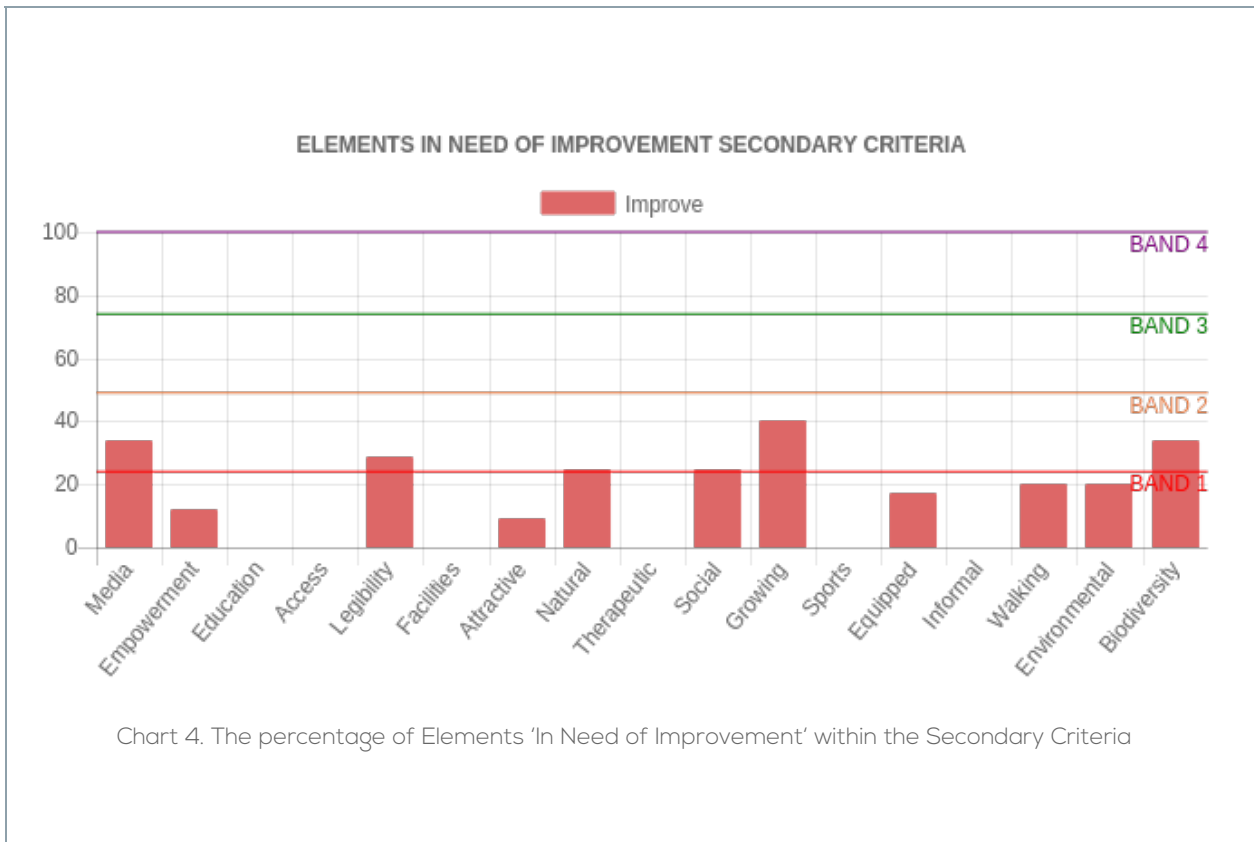
CRITERIA	LEVEL	STANDARD
Community Initiatives	15	BAND 1
Accessibility	15	BAND 1
Mental Wellbeing	18	BAND 1
Physical Activity	12	BAND 1
Environment	29	BAND 2

Table 3. The percentage of Elements 'In Need of Improvement' in each of the Primary Criteria



B Secondary Criteria

The percentage of elements 'In Need of Improvement' within each of the Secondary Criteria are identified in Chart 4.



The analysis of these figures indicates the level of provision of elements needing improvement in each of the Secondary Criteria as shown in Table 4:

SECONDARY CRITERIA		
CRITERIA	LEVEL	STANDARD
Community Initiatives		
Media	34	BAND 2
Empowerment	12	BAND 1
Education	0	BAND 1
Accessibility		
Access	0	BAND 1
Legibility	29	BAND 2
Facilities	0	BAND 1
Mental Wellbeing		
Attractive	9	BAND 1



SECONDARY CRITERIA

CRITERIA	LEVEL	STANDARD
Natural	25	BAND 2
Therapeutic	0	BAND 1
Social	25	BAND 2
Growing	40	BAND 2
Physical Activity		
Sports	0	BAND 1
Equipped	17	BAND 1
Informal	0	BAND 1
Walking	20	BAND 1
Environment		
Environmental	20	BAND 1
Biodiversity	34	BAND 2

Table 4. The percentage of Elements 'In Need of Improvement' in each of the Secondary Criteria

C Lists of Elements 'In Need of Improvement'

In the following section a list of elements which are needing improvement are identified within each of the Primary Criteria. These are then categorised against individual groups of medical conditions. From these lists it is possible to identify elements which can be improved to increase the health status of the existing Park.

The following Elements were considered 'In Need of Improvement' to optimise their contribution to health within each of the health criteria.

CRITERIA	ELEMENTS
Community Initiatives	
	Information on the websites, or other social media, identifying the health benefits from using the Park
	A Health & Wellbeing page on the Council's Parks & Open Spaces website
	Information on websites about a community group being responsible for the Park
Accessibility	
	Clear signage at main entrances to provide a sense of arrival and welcome



CRITERIA	ELEMENTS
	Provision of multi-sensory signage for all abilities i.e. legibility - fonts, text size, colour, symbols and placement
Mental Wellbeing	
	Condition and repair of seating
	Dedicated picnic and/or BBQ areas with benches and tables
	Community space for growing fruit and vegetables
	Wild areas and/or hedgerows for picking fruit and nuts? (e.g. Blackberries, Damsons, Quince, Hazel)
	Bird boxes
Physical Activity	
	'Water play'
	Segregated footpath and cycle routes through the Park
Environment	
	Extent of ponds and lakes optimised to reduce temperature extremes
	Provide areas of ornamental shrub planting
	Native Broadleaved Woodland (e.g. Oak, Ash)
	Pond or Lake waterside vegetation/habitats where appropriate

List 1. List of Elements 'In Need of Improvement'

D Elements 'In Need of Improvement', related to identified Health Conditions

Based upon an interpretation of the guidelines from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) into the treatment of avoidable ill-health, it has been possible to identify interventions which could assist in the prevention and treatment of a number of conditions such as:

- Obesity with comorbidities
- Non-Communicative Diseases: Diabetes, CHD, Hypertension, Cancers, Strokes
- Mild Mental Ill-health; Stress, Anxiety, Clinical Depression, Dementia, ADHD



In utilising Parks and Open Spaces within Primary Prevention, reference has been made to the advice of the NHS which sets out recommendations for the prevention and treatment of each condition. It is however understood that whilst each is an identifiable condition, there are associations (comorbidities) between mental and physical conditions, and that they are 'inextricably linked'. In interpreting this Appraisal, it is therefore important to appreciate the interrelated nature of the identified conditions, rather than see each in isolation. If Parks are to be used within Primary Prevention, it is important to include elements which establish an attractive welcoming context for the Park, give a sense of order and safety, as well as providing a range of facilities. A Park which feels unsafe, is poorly maintained, and is difficult to access, is unlikely to attract use for physical activity to reduce obesity or to promote social interaction and mental wellbeing. Based upon this approach, the tables below set out the elements for improvement and their association with each of the identified medical conditions. Each is identified as being useful for the prevention and treatment of Obesity, Non-Communicative Diseases and Mental Ill-health.

ELEMENTS PRESENT BUT IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

OBESITY

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Community Initiatives	
	Information on the websites, or other social media, identifying the health benefits from using the Park
	A Health & Wellbeing page on the Council's Parks & Open Spaces website
	Information on websites about a community group being responsible for the Park
Accessibility	
	Clear signage at main entrances to provide a sense of arrival and welcome
	Provision of multi-sensory signage for all abilities i.e. legibility - fonts, text size, colour, symbols and placement
Mental Wellbeing	
	Condition and repair of seating
	Community space for growing fruit and vegetables
	Wild areas and/or hedgerows for picking fruit and nuts? (e.g. Blackberries, Damsons, Quince, Hazel)
Physical Activity	
	'Water play'
	Segregated footpath and cycle routes through the Park
Environment	



ELEMENTS PRESENT BUT IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

OBESITY

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
	No element recorded

List 2. List of Elements 'In Need of Improvement' linked to the prevention and treatment of Obesity

ELEMENTS PRESENT BUT IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

NON-COMMUNICATIVE DISEASES

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Community Initiatives	
	Information on the websites, or other social media, identifying the health benefits from using the Park
	A Health & Wellbeing page on the Council's Parks & Open Spaces website
	Information on websites about a community group being responsible for the Park
Accessibility	
	Clear signage at main entrances to provide a sense of arrival and welcome
	Provision of multi-sensory signage for all abilities i.e. legibility - fonts, text size, colour, symbols and placement
Mental Wellbeing	
	Condition and repair of seating
Physical Activity	
	'Water play'
	Segregated footpath and cycle routes through the Park
Environment	
	No element recorded

List 3. List of Elements 'In Need of Improvement' linked to the prevention and treatment of NCD's



ELEMENTS PRESENT BUT IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT
MENTAL ILL-HEALTH (STRESS, ANXIETY & DEPRESSION)

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Community Initiatives	
	Information on the websites, or other social media, identifying the health benefits from using the Park
	A Health & Wellbeing page on the Council's Parks & Open Spaces website
	Information on websites about a community group being responsible for the Park
Accessibility	
	Clear signage at main entrances to provide a sense of arrival and welcome
	Provision of multi-sensory signage for all abilities i.e. legibility - fonts, text size, colour, symbols and placement
Mental Wellbeing	
	Condition and repair of seating
	Dedicated picnic and/or BBQ areas with benches and tables
	Community space for growing fruit and vegetables
	Wild areas and/or hedgerows for picking fruit and nuts? (e.g. Blackberries, Damsons, Quince, Hazel)
	Bird boxes
Physical Activity	
	'Water play'
	Segregated footpath and cycle routes through the Park
Environment	
	Provide areas of ornamental shrub planting
	Native Broadleaved Woodland (e.g. Oak, Ash)
	Pond or Lake waterside vegetation/habitats where appropriate

List 4. List of Elements 'In Need of Improvement' linked to the prevention and treatment of Mental Ill-health



2.3 POTENTIAL HEALTH STATUS WITH IMPROVEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

By combining the elements which are at 'Satisfactory' with those 'In Need of Improvement' and 'New Opportunities', it is possible to identify the potential health status of the Park if all these were implemented. Chart 5 identifies the Potential Health Status across the five Primary Criteria.

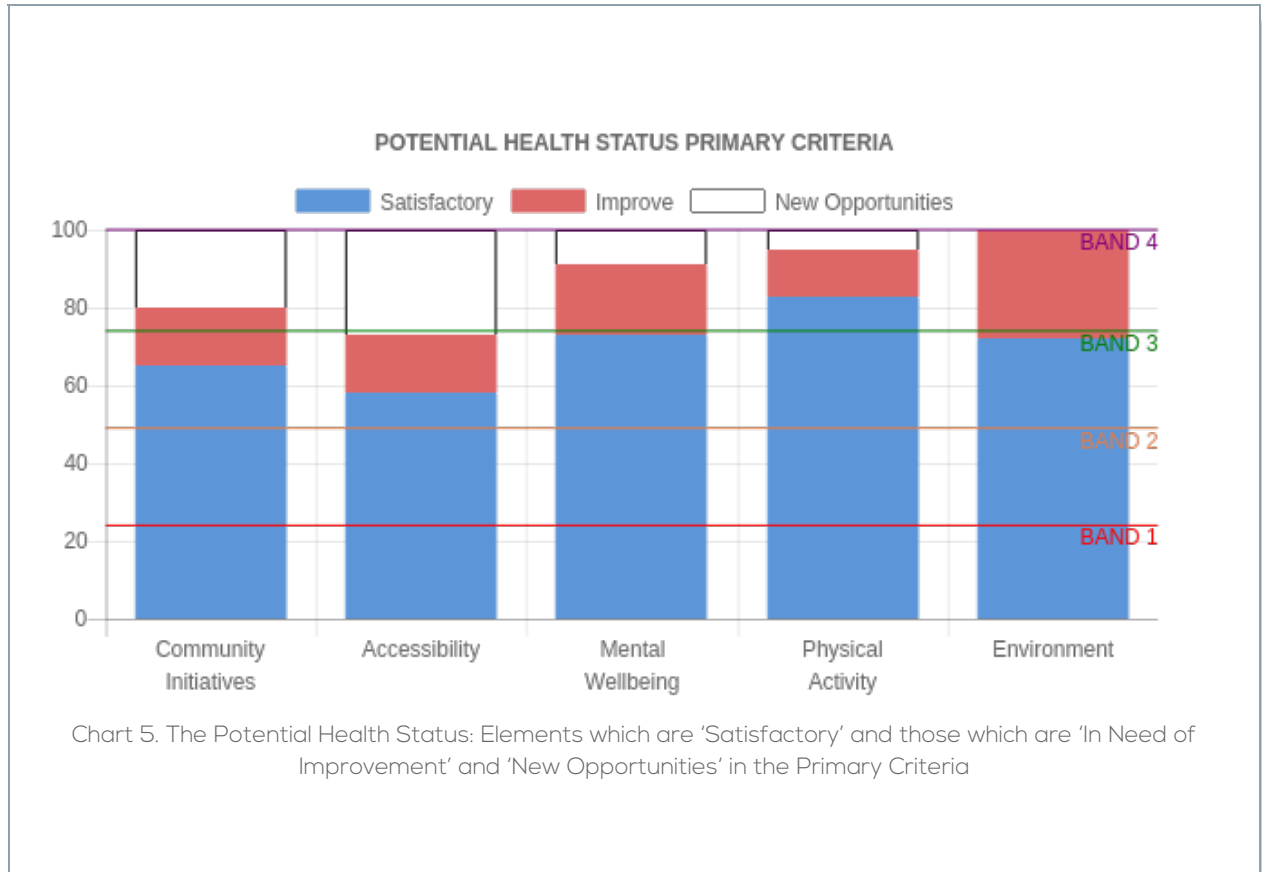


Table 5 below identifies the potential increase (Satisfactory and Improve) in the standard of each of the Primary Criteria through the introduction of elements needing improvement.

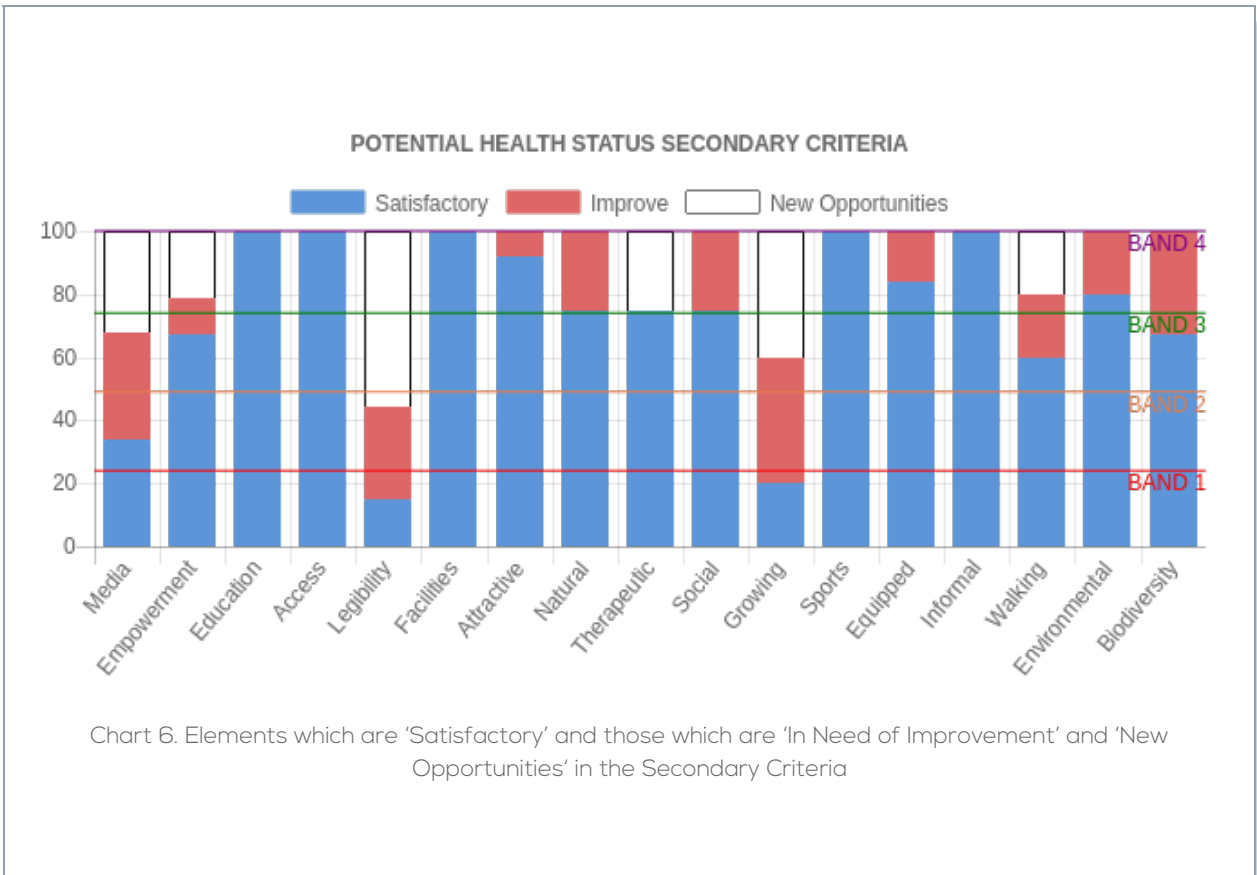
**POTENTIAL HEALTH STATUS EXCLUDING NEW OPPORTUNITIES
PRIMARY CRITERIA**

CRITERIA	SATISFACTORY	IMPROVE	POTENTIAL	POTENTIAL STANDARD
Community Initiatives	65	15	80	BAND 4
Accessibility	58	15	73	BAND 3
Mental Wellbeing	73	18	91	BAND 4
Physical Activity	83	12	95	BAND 4
Environment	72	29	101	BAND 4

Table 5. The Increase in the level of each of the Primary Health Criteria, combining 'Satisfactory' Elements with those 'In Need of Improvement'



Chart 6 below indicates the Potential Health Status across each of the Secondary Criteria combining 'Satisfactory' elements, with elements 'In Need of Improvement', and 'New Opportunities'.



Based upon this analysis the Standard of Provision for each of the Secondary Criteria changes as follows:

POTENTIAL HEALTH STATUS EXCLUDING NEW OPPORTUNITIES SECONDARY CRITERIA				
CRITERIA	SATISFACTORY	IMPROVE	POTENTIAL	POTENTIAL STANDARD
Community Initiatives				
Media	34	34	68	BAND 3
Empowerment	67	12	79	BAND 4
Education	100	0	100	BAND 4
Accessibility				
Access	100	0	100	BAND 4
Legibility	15	29	44	BAND 2
Facilities	100	0	100	BAND 4
Mental Wellbeing				
Attractive	92	9	101	BAND 4
Natural	75	25	100	BAND 4
Therapeutic	75	0	75	BAND 4
Social	75	25	100	BAND 4
Growing	20	40	60	BAND 3
Physical Activity				
Sports	100	0	100	BAND 4
Equipped	84	17	101	BAND 4
Informal	100	0	100	BAND 4
Walking	60	20	80	BAND 4
Environment				
Environmental	80	20	100	BAND 4
Biodiversity	67	34	101	BAND 4

Table 6. The Increase in the level of each of the Secondary Health Criteria, combining 'Satisfactory' elements with those 'In Need of Improvement'

From Table 6 it is possible to identify the potential Standard of provision within each of the Secondary Criteria.



SECONDARY CRITERIA	CURRENT STANDARD	POTENTIAL STANDARD
	(SATISFACTORY)	(SATISFACTORY & IMPROVE)
Community Initiatives		
Media	BAND 2	BAND 3
Empowerment	BAND 3	BAND 4
Education	BAND 4	BAND 4
Accessibility		
Access	BAND 4	BAND 4
Legibility	BAND 1	BAND 2
Facilities	BAND 4	BAND 4
Mental Wellbeing		
Attractive	BAND 4	BAND 4
Natural	BAND 4	BAND 4
Therapeutic	BAND 4	BAND 4
Social	BAND 4	BAND 4
Growing	BAND 1	BAND 3
Physical Activity		
Sports	BAND 4	BAND 4
Equipped	BAND 4	BAND 4
Informal	BAND 4	BAND 4
Walking	BAND 3	BAND 4
Environment		
Environmental	BAND 4	BAND 4
Biodiversity	BAND 3	BAND 4

Table 7. A Table showing the change in the Standard of Health Provision between the Current Health Status, and with all Improvements being implemented

From this table it is possible to see the health benefits associated with introducing all the identified improvements.

Notwithstanding the introduction of these improvements the full potential of the Health Status of the Park can be achieved through the introduction of 'New Opportunities'. These have been identified below.



2.4 NEW OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to identifying elements 'In Need of Improvement', this analysis has also identified areas where 'New Opportunities' could be introduced. Table 12 shows these opportunities within each of the five Primary Criteria.

A Lists of 'New Opportunities' by Criteria

In order to bring all the Primary and Secondary Criteria up to as high a standard as possible it may be necessary to introduce 'New Opportunities'. The following table identifies these opportunities within each of the Primary Criteria. A selection may be made from these based upon local priorities and aspirations.

THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS WERE IDENTIFIED AS NEW OPPORTUNITIES

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Community Initiatives	
	Park based Health Maps, on websites, identifying places for physical activity, Mental Wellbeing and social interaction etc.
	Information on websites about 'Smart Apps' which promote recreation, cultural interest and/or education in the Park
	A Landscape Health Masterplan on Parks' websites
	Liaise with local GP surgeries with regard to Social Prescribing
Accessibility	
	Provision of a Health Interpretation Board identifying health promoting locations and facilities in the Park e.g. 'A Park Health Map'
	Provision of maps identifying measured walking routes within the Park
	Provision of Waymarking Posts or Signs identifying walking routes within the Park
	Maps in the Park identifying walking routes between the Park, other Parks and social hubs for circular walks
Mental Wellbeing	
	Sensory Garden(s) with plants and elements selected for colour, fragrance, sound and touch
	Plant fruit trees around the Park
	Community Orchard
Physical Activity	
	Variety of measures walking routes indicated in and around the Park



THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS WERE IDENTIFIED AS NEW OPPORTUNITIES

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Environment	
	No element recorded

List 5. Potential 'New Opportunities'

B 'New Opportunities' addressing Health Conditions

Based upon an interpretation of the guidelines from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) into the treatment of avoidable ill-health, it has been possible to identify interventions which could assist in the prevention and treatment of a number of conditions such as:

- Obesity with comorbidities
- Non-Communicative Diseases: Diabetes, CHD, Hypertension, Cancers, Strokes
- Mild Mental Ill-health; Stress, Anxiety, Clinical Depression, Dementia, ADHD

The following tables indicate 'New Opportunities' that can be introduced to strengthen the health benefit of the Park to address particular conditions. These are identified as being linked to the prevention and treatment of: Obesity, Non-Communicative Diseases and Mental Ill-health.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

OBESITY

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Community Initiatives	
	Park based Health Maps, on websites, identifying places for physical activity, Mental Wellbeing and social interaction etc.
	Information on websites about 'Smart Apps' which promote recreation, cultural interest and/or education in the Park
	A Landscape Health Masterplan on Parks' websites
	Liaise with local GP surgeries with regard to Social Prescribing
Accessibility	
	Provision of a Health Interpretation Board identifying health promoting locations and facilities in the Park e.g. 'A Park Health Map'
	Provision of maps identifying measured walking routes within the Park
	Provision of Waymarking Posts or Signs identifying walking routes within the Park
	Maps in the Park identifying walking routes between the Park, other Parks and social hubs for circular walks



NEW OPPORTUNITIES

OBESITY

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Mental Wellbeing	
	Plant fruit trees around the Park
	Community Orchard
Physical Activity	
	Variety of measures walking routes indicated in and around the Park
Environment	
	No element recorded

List 6. 'New Opportunities' for Obesity

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

NON-COMMUNICATIVE DISEASES

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Community Initiatives	
	Park based Health Maps, on websites, identifying places for physical activity, Mental Wellbeing and social interaction etc.
	Information on websites about 'Smart Apps' which promote recreation, cultural interest and/or education in the Park
	A Landscape Health Masterplan on Parks' websites
	Liaise with local GP surgeries with regard to Social Prescribing
Accessibility	
	Provision of a Health Interpretation Board identifying health promoting locations and facilities in the Park e.g. 'A Park Health Map'
	Provision of maps identifying measured walking routes within the Park
	Provision of Waymarking Posts or Signs identifying walking routes within the Park
	Maps in the Park identifying walking routes between the Park, other Parks and social hubs for circular walks
Mental Wellbeing	
	No element recorded



**NEW OPPORTUNITIES
NON-COMMUNICATIVE DISEASES**

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Physical Activity	
	Variety of measures walking routes indicated in and around the Park
Environment	
	No element recorded

List 7. 'New Opportunities' for Non-Communicative Diseases

**NEW OPPORTUNITIES
MENTAL WELLBEING**

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Community Initiatives	
	Park based Health Maps, on websites, identifying places for physical activity, Mental Wellbeing and social interaction etc.
	Information on websites about 'Smart Apps' which promote recreation, cultural interest and/or education in the Park
	A Landscape Health Masterplan on Parks' websites
	Liaise with local GP surgeries with regard to Social Prescribing
Accessibility	
	Provision of a Health Interpretation Board identifying health promoting locations and facilities in the Park e.g. 'A Park Health Map'
	Provision of maps identifying measured walking routes within the Park
	Provision of Waymarking Posts or Signs identifying walking routes within the Park
	Maps in the Park identifying walking routes between the Park, other Parks and social hubs for circular walks
Mental Wellbeing	
	Sensory Garden(s) with plants and elements selected for colour, fragrance, sound and touch
	Plant fruit trees around the Park
	Community Orchard



NEW OPPORTUNITIES

MENTAL WELLBEING

CRITERIA	ELEMENT
Physical Activity	
	Variety of measures walking routes indicated in and around the Park
Environment	
	No element recorded

List 8. 'New Opportunities' for Mental Wellbeing

Together these tables identify the specific 'New Opportunities' which can be implemented to address particular medical conditions in the local population. The priority granted to each will be guided by the prevalence of those individual conditions and the guidance of Public Health.



2.5 SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

The Kings Fund have defined Social Prescribing as follows: "Social prescribing, sometimes referred to as community referral, is a means of enabling GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services". (The Kings Fund, 2017) NHS England define it as "...a way for local agencies to refer people to a link worker. Link workers give people time, focusing on 'what matters to me' and taking a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing. They connect people to community groups and statutory services for practical and emotional support. (NHS England, 2019)

There is a growing awareness of the significance of Social Prescribing within Primary Prevention. As noted, the importance of Parks and Green Spaces for Health is well documented. The Parks for Health Initiative follows the principles of Public Health. It draws together Parks, Public Health and Social Prescribing and identifies within a practical framework, opportunities to utilize Parks within the context of Primary Prevention. These are related to activities which can be prescribed for health (e.g. social interaction, physical activity or mental wellbeing) and facilities which are or could be used to provide social prescribing services.

Based upon the survey of the Park, elements related to Social Prescribing are identified as being:

- Present & Satisfactory
- Present: but in Need of Improvement
- Not Present: but Potential Opportunity

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING		
PRESENT	IMPROVEMENT	NEW OPPORTUNITY
76%	8%	16%

Table 8. The percentage of Elements 'Present', 'In Need of Improvement' and of 'New Opportunity' with Social Prescribing



SOCIAL PRESCRIBING PRESENT

Opportunities for volunteering in group activities on websites
Provide information on websites about outdoor group activities e.g. Shelter Building, Woodland Arts and crafts, Bush Craft Skills, Bird Watching
Information on websites about the use of the Park by groups for gardening
Information on websites that the Park is used for growing fruit and vegetables
Information on websites that the Park is used for Nature Conservation and Wildlife projects
Information on websites that the Park is used for group hobbies and interests e.g. Art in the Park
Provision of toilets in the Park
Provision of café (mobile or permanent) in the Park
Drinking fountains
Areas of woodlands, copses and meadows
Community Garden where the public can participate in gardening projects
Groups of seats for social interaction, appropriate to Park size
Seating in and around play areas for social interaction
Raised planters suitable for wheelchair access
Formal sports facilities
External adult fitness equipment (Outdoor Gym)
A 'Low Impact Exercise Route' around the Park using existing features such as steps, seats, slopes etc.
Natural areas (habitats) for Nature Conservation Projects in the Park
Regular seating to encourage walking by the less mobile

List 9. The Elements within Social Prescribing which are 'Present and Satisfactory'

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING IMPROVE

Dedicated picnic and/or BBQ areas with benches and tables
Community space for growing fruit and vegetables

List 10. The Elements within Social Prescribing which are 'In Need of Improvement'



SOCIAL PRESCRIBING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Liaise with local GP surgeries with regard to Social Prescribing
Sensory Garden(s) with plants and elements selected for colour, fragrance, sound and touch
Community Orchard
Variety of measures walking routes indicated in and around the Park

List 11. The Elements within Social Prescribing which represent 'New Opportunities'

NHS England. 2019. Social Prescribing, [Online]. Available:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing>

THE KINGS FUND. 2017. What is Social Prescribing? [Online]. Available:
<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/social-prescribing>



3.0 Recommendations

Given the benefit Parks can bring to the health and wellbeing of local communities, the aim of the Parks for Health Initiative is to achieve a high standard of provision in every Park. Based upon this Appraisal the following actions are available.

1. **The Parks and Green Space Health Framework and Parks Health Strategies.** The Park and Green Space Health Framework provides a holistic approach to the use of Parks and Green Spaces for Health and Wellbeing within the context of the 'Primary Prevention'. It provides a framework to integrate the participation of Local Government Departments (e.g. Parks, Planning, Environment), Public Health, Clinicians (Social or Green Prescribing) and local community groups. It reviews Health Policy and the Health Profile of the local population. It includes an Appraisal of each Park, and sets out recommendation for Practical Improvements, Health Promotion, and Social Prescribing. There are two Strategies available. These are:
 - i. The Single Park Strategy.
 - ii. The Multiple Park Strategy.

The Multiple Parks Strategy differs from the Single Park Strategy by including an assessment of the health status of Parks across an area (e.g. City, Town, Ward or Community). It analyses the results of the Appraisals of the Parks included in the project, indicating the range in the health status of the Parks for each health Criterion, Size of Park, and Ward. From this it will be possible to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision in certain communities, to address shortfalls, and to target medical conditions prevalent in the local population.

2. **Economic and Social Evaluation:** By undertaking a programme of quantitative and qualitative research, and social and economic assessment, it is possible to evaluate social and financial benefits associated with the increased use of Parks and Green Spaces, and the health of the local population.



4.0 Conclusion

The seriousness of avoidable physical and mental ill-health, increasingly prevalent in many populations, justifies the use of green space alongside other initiatives within Primary Prevention.

Potential cost savings can be delivered through a higher quality of health promoting Parks and Green Spaces, and associated increased levels of physical activity and mental wellbeing.

Opportunities to deliver such benefits can be identified within the following areas:

- **Savings to Health Budgets:** The use of Parks to develop healthy communities will have a direct impact upon health budgets. This can include:
 - Savings to the cost of avoidable ill-health in the NHS
 - Reduction in the costs of Adult and Social Care
 - Reduction in the cost of Mental Health Services
- **Reduction in Park Maintenance Costs:** An increase in biodiversity can bring with it opportunities to reduce annual maintenance costs. It also contributes to the health of the local community and reduces the impact of environmental risk factors, e.g. pollution and temperature extremes.
- **Practical Improvements:** Enhancements to the fabric of Parks themselves, and the introduction of improvements and new interventions linked with health and wellbeing.
- **Improvements to the Environment:** A reduction in environmental impacts and increases in habitats and biodiversity.
- **Primary Prevention: Community Engagement and Health Promotion:** To build on current Health Promotion Initiatives, identifying where the increased use of the Park can create programmes to involve the local community, and develop a sense of ownership of the Park. This may include initiatives related to physical activity, recreation and education or to address loneliness, depression and dementia.
- **Social (Green) Prescribing:** Alongside clinical interventions, to work with the local Clinicians, Public Health, local groups and charities, to use the Park as a context to prescribe physical activity and promote mental wellbeing through social interaction and engagement with the natural environment,
- **Encouraging a Healthy Workforce:** Losses to the UK economy of some £64 billion p.a. result from stress, anxiety and depression in the workplace. Identifying the health benefits of using Parks for physical activity, emotional restoration and quiet reflection could do much to improve the health and wellbeing of people at work.
- **Funding:** To support funding bids for new capital, and to justify the use of cross-cutting interdepartmental budgets to promote healthy communities through the improvement of Parks and Green Spaces.

For further information on the above, please contact us by email at: info@tisdallassociates.co.uk

