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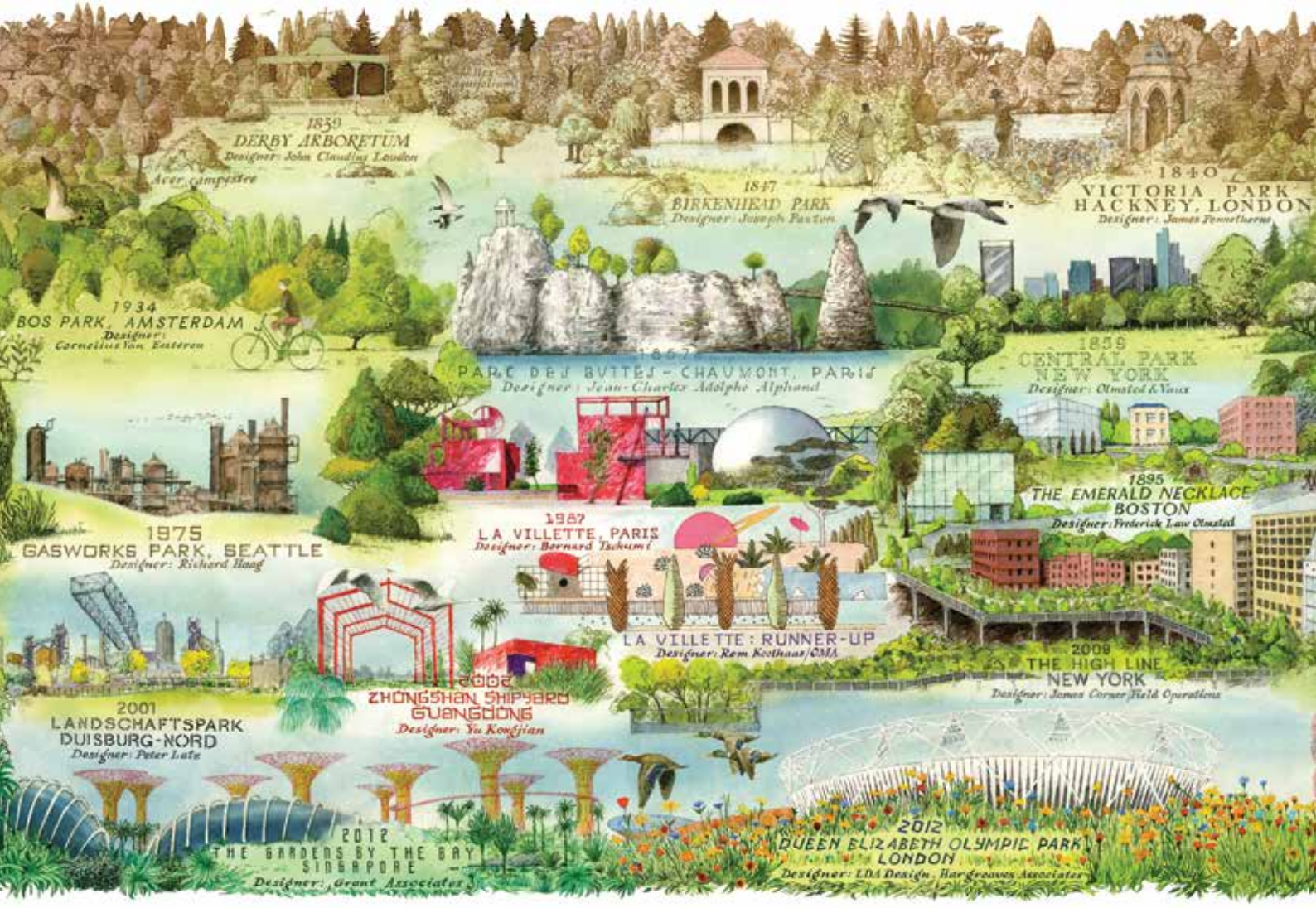
NATIONAL REVIEW OF RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR URBAN PARKS, DESIGNED LANDSCAPES, AND OPEN SPACES
FINAL REPORT

Katy Layton-Jones



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FOREWORD

Enormous benefits are to be gained from well-designed and managed parks. They are a vital recreational resource and we know they can help address issues such as better health, social cohesion, and environmental quality. In the last 20 years we have witnessed the restoration of many parks and green spaces.

Decades of neglect left the legacy of parks close to ruin. The crisis triggered the 1999 Parliamentary Town and Country Parks Select Committee and in turn a step change in English Heritage's own approach to recording, designating and protecting public parks.

Evidence presented to the Committee estimated that there were in the order of 30,000 parks in the UK and as many as 5,000 were of national or local heritage merit. Twenty five per cent of parks were in poor condition and many park buildings were derelict. There was an obvious need to quantify the extent of urban parks and green spaces and facilities, and to develop a better understanding of their heritage significance to ensure better protection and conservation. MPs were very clear about the importance of retaining the historic integrity and character of municipal parks and called for urgent action to find ways of stopping the loss and neglect of park ornaments and buildings.

English Heritage embarked on a major review of its *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* to include many more urban parks and cemeteries. Over the next ten years English Heritage worked closely with the Heritage Lottery Fund and its Parks for People Programme, the newly formed government funded lead agency CABESpace, other government agencies, GreenSpace and the Green Flag Scheme to champion our public parks heritage (see examples at Appendix 2).

CABESpace had been set up in 2003 as part of the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment (CABE) to promote public space management and maintenance and to develop the evidence base for public policy and delivery. As a result of the £83bn spending cuts in the 2010 Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, CABE and CABESpace were closed. GreenSpace, the charity representing parks staff, parks and friends groups and promoting the revitalisation and resurgence of parks and green spaces since 2000 eventually caved in to funding pressures and was forced to wind up in April 2013. The loss of these two organisations has left a vacuum. As Dr Alan Barber (a CABESpace commissioner, a member of the Government's Urban Green Spaces Taskforce, and a founding member of GreenSpace) used to point out, with no government champion parks 'quickly slide down the political agenda' and a lack of awareness of the need to continue to invest and maintain them.

The loss of CABESpace and GreenSpace inevitably impacted on English Heritage's own role in championing historic public parks. English Heritage's own National Heritage Protection Plan 2011-15 for prioritising action, and its focus on understanding the significance of historic towns and suburbs, provided an opportunity for English Heritage to review research priorities for public parks. Dr Katy Layton-Jones, in partnership with Professor Robert Lee and Park Roots, was commissioned to undertake the review project.

Katy Layton-Jones' report is published by English Heritage as a contribution to the discussion on public parks. It is not a statement of English Heritage policy or position.

Layton-Jones provides insights from the perspective of a cultural historian, lecturer and a consultant who has worked with local parks groups, and as a park user. Her brief was to look at research priorities to further our understanding of significance of our public park heritage rather than parks maintenance and upkeep. Layton-Jones inevitably does have to address the broader agenda as significance and upkeep are inextricably linked. She has high ambitions for English Heritage as the government's historic advisor and these sometimes stretch beyond our remit and resources. Layton-Jones' recommendations will nevertheless be considered in shaping the new Historic England's own plans. Layton-Jones also poses challenges for the public parks sector. Her findings will be of interest to other government agencies, organisations and individuals and there is scope to collaborate to protect and conserve our urban parks heritage.

Layton-Jones wrote up her report winter 2012 and the project was formally completed summer 2013 but the debate about the protection, conservation and funding of our public parks continues.

The Heritage Lottery Fund will publish its State of UK's Public Parks research in June 2014. This report looks at the current condition of public parks and future trends. It builds on the work of an earlier scoping study completed in April 2013, and also Layton-Jones' research.

The Policy Exchange is also studying public parks as part of its public services programme. The think tank sees urban green spaces as being under increasing pressure. *Park Land*, the first of two reports looking how public parks can be improved echoes Layton-Jones and the 1999 Select Committee's calls for urban green space mapping and a typology. Natural England, Ordnance Survey and others are investigating the opportunity to develop maps to show the extent and type of greenspace in all urban settlements across England. The Government's Planning Policy 17 companion guidance had included a useful green space typology and such a typology is still much needed.

The RIBA's 2014 'City Health Check' restates the importance of protecting and upgrading our greenspaces. The Victorians understood this. The early public parks were established under Health Acts.

A cross-sector group of 40 senior executives, the Park Alliance has been set up with the mission 'to provide campaigning leadership and put public parks at the heart of the drive for healthy, resilient and sustainable communities'' to be achieved through ''a broad range of leadership programmes, actions and plans''.

As Layton-Jones points out, the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has also been an important development. The Framework requires great weight is given to designated assets like registered parks when considering the impact of proposed developments and there are a host of new park facilities and developments such as children's play, sports, income generating ventures, sustainable drainage systems, and park and ride schemes which potentially could impact on the historic significance of

these very special landscapes. Even if not designated, many public parks are of historic interest and the NPPF requires that due regard is given to such assets.

English Heritage has been able to take action on some of Layton-Jones' findings as they emerged from the review work. One example has been a National Heritage Protection Plan project to review the designation grades of the registered public parks (see Appendix 3). Thirty parks were upgraded. The new grades reflect the Heritage Lottery Fund's Parks for People investment in restoring many parks. English Heritage has also published *Register of Parks and Gardens Selection Guide: Urban Landscapes* (2013) to support better understanding of the criteria for designation urban parks and other landscapes; and since March 2011, the Register of Parks and Gardens and Listings for public parks are available online at part of the National Heritage List for England. Period postcards of the registered public parks have been added to Historypin www.historypin.com (see the English Heritage Archive channel) as part of a longer term strategy to raise local awareness of the history and significance of public parks.

Tackling the challenge to unlock the research value of public park conservation management plans, the Garden History Society and Parks and Gardens UK, with funding from English Heritage, has embarked on compiling a reference list of plans and adding information to the national online database www.parksandgardens.org. There are over 500 entries for public parks and scope to add more or indeed enhance records. Many of the entries are contributed by county gardens trusts and in 2014 these trusts hope to add more war memorial gardens and landscapes as their contribution to the national 1914-1918 centenary commemoration.

English Heritage's Heritage at Risk programme now offers an approach to tracking changes and identifying risks and the current Heritage at Risk Register already includes many public park buildings and structures. English Heritage continues to tackle the conservation skills crisis. The Green Heritage Site Accreditation has been sponsored by English Heritage since 2002 as part of the national Green Flag benchmarking award scheme to promote the value of, and best practice in, the care and upkeep of parks and greenspaces of local or national historic interest. The highly successful Heritage Lottery Fund supported Historic and Botanic Garden Bursary Scheme has provided professional horticultural heritage training placements. Growing out of this bursary scheme, English Heritage, with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, is setting up a new training scheme based at its Wrest Park. The scheme will offer a one year practical training placements or a two year certificated course delivered by the two leading horticulture and landscaping centres – Capel Manor College and the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. Such schemes, and other like Association of Gardens Trusts and Garden History Society study days, deliver Layton-Jones' skills recommendations. There is undoubtedly more conservation training needs and the new garden history courses are a welcome development.

As Alan Barber said back in 2000 we also need to 're-learn(ing) the lessons of the past'. One of the first projects English Heritage will be commissioning, as recommended by Layton-Jones, is a study on the history of public park funding to inform debates about new funding models.

Jenifer White, English Heritage, June 2014

CONTRIBUTORS

The review was carried out by Dr Katy Layton-Jones in partnership with Professor Robert Lee and Park Roots Community Interest Company, the trading arm of the Friends of Birkenhead Park.

Katy Layton-Jones is a cultural historian and consultant, and holds a research post at the University of Leicester's Centre for Urban History. She has published widely for academic, public and professional readerships and she is an Associate Editor for Urban History and Visual Methodologies journals. Layton-Jones lectures for the Open University, Colgate University, Oberlin College and University of Maryland.

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PART FOUR – PRIORITIES

NATIONAL REVIEW SUMMARY

In the fields of urban planning and landscape design, there are few areas in which Britain has made so significant an international contribution than urban parks and public open spaces. As the world's first industrialised nation, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Britain, and England in particular, experienced rapid urbanisation and its attendant consequences of air pollution, public health crises and psychological detachment from the natural world. As urbanisation redefined the economic, social and environmental character of industrial Britain, the design and designation of public urban greenspace emerged as important reparation for the privatisation of the landscape and the concretion of townscapes. As access to common land decreased and agricultural hinterlands eroded further from town centres, urban parks and gardens became nature's urban representative. Today, 80 per cent of Britons live in urban areas and across the country public parks provide an essential and truly inclusive resource, available to all regardless of their economic status, ethnicity, age or gender. With almost 90 per cent of the population using and valuing parks and greenspace, their influence upon our quality of life is incontrovertible (CABESpace, 2010f, 4). In addition, since the triumphs of the public parks movement of the mid-nineteenth century, the recognised function of such landscapes has broadened from the provision of recreation, clean air, and diversion for local residents to incorporate larger national and international environmental agendas. As governments seek affordable and sustainable means to counteract the effects of climate change, public parks have been identified as a means of moderating the artificially high temperatures created by urban heat islands and as 'sinks' for significant levels of carbon dioxide. (United States Environmental Protection Agency, Reducing Urban Heat Islands: compendium of strategies (2008). Environment Agency, *Using Science to Create a Better Place: the social impact of heat waves* (2007) esp. table 6.1: Association between urban planning/management policy and urban climate, 28). Yet, even as the social and environmental significance of greenspace is more widely recognised, so the quality and quantity available is under threat.

With decades of underfunding of parks by local and national government and little or no ring-fencing of funds which were intended for parks, structures, amenities and spaces of great value to local communities, are effectively abandoned to the consequences of fleeting schemes and politicised initiatives. The legacy of this policy can be seen in a national canon of urban greenspace that is at high risk of immediate degradation and loss even with the huge investment by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Compounding the challenge posed by the deteriorating physical condition of these historical assets, are prevalent misconceptions regarding the fitness for purpose of their historical design and an under-appreciation of the public's awareness of, and admiration for, their historical character. Perhaps understandably, the fragile and declining condition of so many historical landscapes has given rise to the common argument that historical parks can no longer meet the needs of modern communities. The failings of successive low-budget management strategies have been mistaken for the failings of the historic landscapes themselves. In some instances this view has been born of a sincere desire to enhance existing parks, but in other cases it has been embraced as a means of justifying and expediting the re-designation, commercialisation, and diminution of historical

designed landscapes. The myth that historical parks are failing our communities has become so endemic that rather than focusing on the protection and celebration of historically-significant landscapes, local authorities often presume that the only viable strategy to ensure the future of parks is to compromise their historical integrity. Yet, as Peter Neal has observed, the principle of parks as 'surrogate countryside for urban communities' is as valid today as at the time of their creation (Neal, 2012, 1).

In such a politicised arena, defined by significant misconceptions, English Heritage is the only organisation with the expertise, remit, and public trust to champion and protect the nation's canon of historical greenspace. While it would be unrealistic to expect English Heritage to steer the entire greenspace agenda, it should work to ensure that historical significance is properly factored into changes in the sector and individual sites. English Heritage's National Heritage Protection Plan and its urban activity opens up a much needed and time sensitive structured research programme on historic public parks and urban greenspaces.

The Report

This report represents over nine months of discrete research in addition to the author's existing expertise and experience in the sector. It provides a précis of recent research in the field of urban parks, designed landscapes and open spaces. Rather than attempting to evaluate the myriad management strategies employed in parks over the past two centuries, it focuses on research into the history and historical context of these sites. This approach was adopted advisedly. Communities and park managers have endured decades of uncertainty regarding their local parks and many have lost battles to protect historic green spaces from development, vandalism and decline; suspicion and scepticism are common sentiments among communities, local authorities, and even professional bodies. While the historical significance of these landscapes is being challenged, the need for English Heritage to research the history and reassert the historical and contemporary significance of urban parks and designed landscapes is pressing. By returning to the history of urban parks and open spaces can English Heritage work with others to influence and shape their protection. To this end, the report is organised in four main parts.

Part One

In Part One, the report examines the urgent need for a review of research priorities for urban parks, designed landscapes and open spaces. It makes the special case for urban greenspace and the present threat posed by underfunding and lack of leadership, and highlights the need for ambitious research projects. Part One also outlines the rationale underpinning the review. It outlines the scope and limitations of the report, the methodology applied, and the aims and objectives. It contains a list of interviewees and consultees and a brief summary of the key findings of the user survey.

Part Two

The first half of Part Two provides a detailed analysis of the historiography, and main research agendas, approaches, and themes. It reveals the interdisciplinarity of the sector today and the myriad research approaches currently employed within academia, the greenspace sector, agencies and communities. A range of case studies suggest potential future research strands, sources of funding, host organisations, and prestige indicators.

The second half of Part Two examines the complex and contradictory nature of typologies of greenspace. Addressing traditional typologies, as well as those informed heavily by planning and recent conceptual frameworks, such as 'green infrastructure', it reveals the complexity and inconsistency with which typologies are applied. It summarises the potential dangers of this inconsistency and its impact upon landscape designation, management, and protection.

Part Three

Part Three addresses the many and varied policy conflicts and contradictions that have affected the condition and management of public parks and greenspace since the 1970s. It reveals the particular vulnerability of green spaces to decline and the impact upon neighbourhoods and public attitudes when such decline is permitted to continue. While case studies provide examples of best practice are provided, the challenge of replicating these success stories in such a divided sector is admitted and explored.

Part Four

Part Four summarises the research environment as its stands at present and the opportunities and challenges it presents for the immediate future. Covering academia, archiving, and the dissemination of research through both traditional and innovative publishing formats, it provides insight into a lively arena in which there is the potential for methodological experiment, but also the need for significant investment. In the final section it provides a summary of priorities for research, protection and management, and dissemination of research and guidance.

Research

The recommendations for future research are diverse but targeted to effect a rise in the understanding, profile and financial sustainability of parks and designed landscapes. They include methodological surveys and the creation of new archives, datasets, theoretic frameworks, local case studies, and international comparative studies. In terms of project design, they include work that might be conducted either internally or externally, and collaborative work with academic institutions, charitable originations and other professional agencies, such as Natural England, is strongly encouraged. Engagement with existing and developing mapping projects is identified as a priority.

Protection and management

The recommendations regarding improving the protection and management of urban parks, open spaces and designed landscapes include a call upon English Heritage and to encourage collaboration and the pooling of intellectual property. An objective study of funding and management regimes is advocated. In a competitive and under-resourced sector, English Heritage needs to be more pro-active and vocal in making the case for the significance of sites' historical character and champion their protection.

In terms of the practical conservation of historic green spaces, English Heritage has been active in addressing the skills gaps and could also encourage volunteering and other professional skills through schemes like Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. English Heritage could forge such partnerships in suitable institutions and with local authorities and contractors.

The further development of the *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* is strongly recommended. Geographical and chronological coverage should be extended and criteria for designation reviewed.

Dissemination of research and guidance

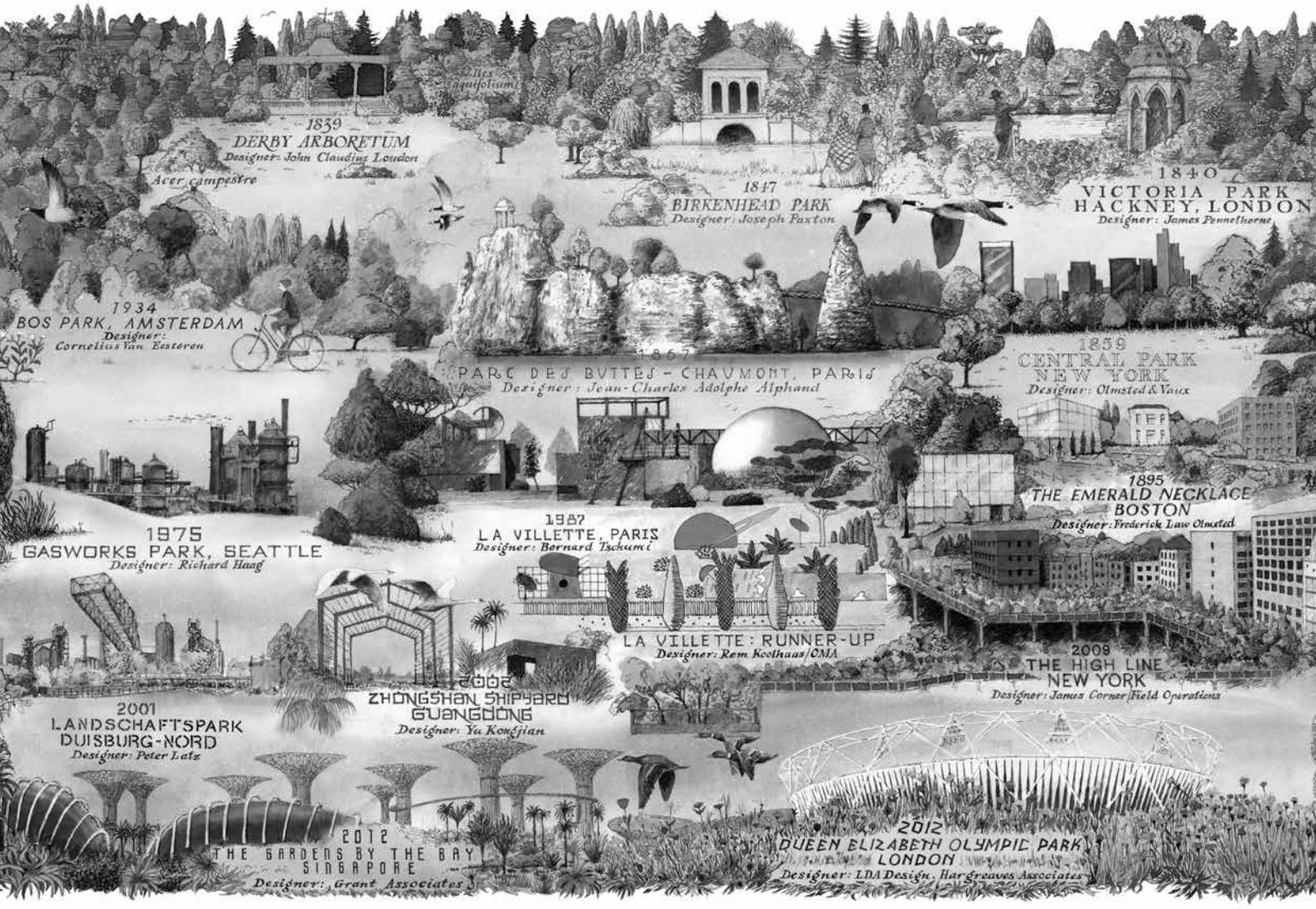
Ensuring that the valuable outcomes of English Heritage's research, policy development, and protection guidance reach the widest audience is crucial to the survival of the nation's canon historical greenspace. Publication of findings and guidance in various digital forms and platforms as well as traditional academic, trade and popular publications is strongly recommended. Dissemination opportunities, such as the *Informed Conservation* series, should be exploited to their full potential, as well as one-off leaflets and broadcasts. Efforts should be made to complete projects that have stagnated and to update and promote hitherto unpublished research findings. The potential to inform the sector at both a professional and a public level is restricted only by English Heritage's available resources.

References

Although selective, the list of references and further reading is extensive. It is organised into seven sections: Reports, pamphlets and guidance documents; Journal articles and book chapters; Journal issues dedicated to public parks, designed landscapes and open spaces; Books; Unpublished research, Registers and lists; and Websites and collections.

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION



MOTIVATIONS AND RATIONALE

1 Why study urban parks, designed landscapes and open spaces?

Throughout the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century, a lengthy period of decline for Britain's parks was finally in remission. New funding streams such as the Heritage Lottery Fund's Urban Parks Programme and its successor, the 'Parks for People' scheme, provided essential investment in some of the country's most historically significant green spaces, while government agencies such as CabeSpace and English Heritage undertook important preliminary research into the history, funding and management of urban greenspace. The consequence was significant progress into improving the quality of urban green spaces and the strategies employed to ensure their sustainability. However, today these valuable landscapes face an uncertain future in terms not only of funding and maintenance, but also of ownership and, in some cases, existence.

The economic crisis of 2007 marked a change in mood and expectation among many greenspace professionals. Although the impact was not felt on the ground immediately, in the 2010-11 financial year, local authorities were forced to implement significant savings. Local authority budget cuts (average of 28 per cent over a period of three-year period), brought an abrupt halt to many ambitions for significant capital investment in public greenspace across the country (Timmins, 2012). Although Heritage Lottery Fund has sought to maintain momentum in the greenspace 'renaissance', announcing in October 2012 a new parks fund totalling £100,000,000, the requirement to demonstrate financially sustainability still places considerable economic pressure on local authorities. As park provision is not a statutory obligation, many local authorities are forced to cut investment in parks and public greenspace in order to subsidise other compulsory expenditure. As local authorities and schools sell off assets to keep afloat, parks and recreation grounds are under increasing threat of development or meaningful changes to their accessibility. The immediate risk was exemplified by Wandsworth Council which, in 2011 initiated a scheme to charge £2.50 per child for access to the Battersea park adventure playground. At a national level, the withdrawal of government funding for CABE and the CABESpace programme in March 2011 has meant the loss of loss of a significant skills base and a source of funding for cutting-edge research. Indeed, there is currently a skills crisis in parks and the crisis has been deepened by the move towards sub-contracted management and Ranger services and the transient labour market it encourages.

The rise of the Localism agenda as laid down in Localism Act of November 2011 has raised some hope that the progress made over the past fifteen years will not now be lost. However, along with enabling increased local and community engagement with urban greenspace, the Localism Act creates the potential for a fundamental restructuring of the parks sector and permanent changes to their public status, rights of access and preservation. Whether the outcomes are positive or not, there is no doubt that there is an urgent need for research into these valuable environments, their history, preservation, use and future.

2 'Third Nature': the distinctive character of urban parks and open spaces

> From the very beginning, the park has been part of our creative voice…Put simply, the park is our invention. (Jones and Willis, 2005, 1).

From Cicero's first recognition of a 'second nature' in *De Natura Deorum* (Cicero, 45 BC) there have been numerous attempts to define that which sets the man-made environment apart from the natural world. With a few notable exceptions, nature has been consistently posited as the superior of the two, the original paradise that has suffered corruption by virtue of human intervention. Throughout the twentieth century, the extent to which any environment on earth can be deemed 'natural' came into question as climate change was increasingly recognised as man-made and capable of impacting even the most remote and undeveloped landscapes. However, while debates about the protection of the natural world have proliferated, landscapes that unite nature and design have often fallen foul of their incompatibility with this environmental dichotomy. As man-made, constructed environments they have failed to attract the attention of traditional environmental conservationists, while their relative protection from development saw them ignored by many city planners and early urban regeneration schemes. Over the past twenty years, the ambiguous status of designed greenspace has undergone a degree of clarification due, in part, to the gradual historicisation of many public parks and gardens.

In Britain, the most significant contribution to the canon of urban greenspace was made in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Open Spaces Act of 1877 enabled a rapid expansion in the number and range of public green spaces in our towns and cities. Consequently, the largest proportion of urban parks is Victorian, a period that was dismissed by the heritage community for much of the twentieth century. Indeed, the criteria for designation on English Heritage's own *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens*, privilege sites laid out before 1840 (seven years before the first public park was opened). It was not until the later decades of the twentieth century that a consensus emerged regarding their status as heritage landscapes and their subsequent significance to a shared national experience. One consequence of this historicisation was an increase in interest from the academy and a more rigorous attention to the classification of these landscapes. Of particular importance has been the growing acknowledgement of the unique status of man-made greenspace, not merely as a poor substitute for nature, but as a discrete and important category in its own right. Developing Cicero's original principle of two natures, John Dixon Hunt has proposed that we consider gardens in their various forms as an entirely new type, a 'third nature' in which nature and culture are intentionally mixed (Dixon Hunt, 2000, 32-5).

As cultural as well as physical constructions, consciously designed for specific, if evolving, uses by a diverse range of visitors, urban greenspaces have arguably more in common with museums, galleries, and high streets, than with ancient woodlands. Indeed, it has been correctly asserted that the Victorian park was 'an exhibition of nature that enlarged the urban experience, it did not challenge it' (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 26). Therefore, although often designed to replicate the qualities of nature and to contrast against the townscapes that surrounds them, parks are not, and were never, 'voids' or interruptions to the city, but rather an integral part of the urban fabric.

3 The special case of urban greenspace

> By 2030, 6 out of every 10 people will live in a city, and by 2050, this proportion will increase to 7 out of 10 people. Currently, around half of all urban dwellers live in cities with between 100,000 – 500,000 people (Global Health Observatory).

After the de-industrialisation and consequent de-population of many of Britain's large industrial cities towards the close of the twentieth century, the trend is now again towards re-urbanisation, albeit it a more spatially dispersed model. With the percentage of people living in urban settlements now above 50 per cent globally and predicted to rise further over the coming decades, the demands made upon the urban landscape are intensifying daily (Ward Taylor, 2002, 60). Although the motor vehicle currently makes the countryside within reach for many, the rising cost of both private and public transportation raises questions about the reliability of both as means of accessing greenspace in the future. In such an urban world, public parks and gardens will provide the most frequent opportunities for human interaction with open greenspace, clean air and the natural world. It is difficult to overestimate the significance of these landscapes. Yet, despite a wide and vocal acknowledgement of their ecological, social, medical and economic benefits, the protection, conservation and even existence of urban parks, gardens, public recreation fields, and peripheral greenspace is by no means assured. One of the greatest threats to existing urban greenspace is, ironically, the force that ensures their value: population density.

As nineteenth-century witnesses observed, urbanisation creates two significant problems in relation to greenspace:

- Rapid and significant growth in the number of potential users of greenspace
- A marked decrease in the range of accessible greenspace due to the 'retreat' of the hinterland and the development of urban land parcels

During periods of urbanisation, the combination of these two factors has made urban greenspace vulnerable. In nineteenth-century Britain and America, this challenge was met by meaningful recognition of, commitment to, and investment in, parks as a resource for the public good. Local authorities created a number of sites, while others were created by private individuals and taken into public ownership at a later date. Today many of these sites face an uncertain future as under-investment, lack of statutory protection, vandalism, conflicting political agendas, planning pressures and changing demographics have coalesced to compromise the form, function and ownership of public urban green spaces. It is essential that English Heritage is able to make the case for a more pro-active approach to park preservation in the new National Heritage Protection Plan, due in 2015. After numerous failed initiatives and abandoned schemes, historic parks and gardens are running out of chances; they cannot afford to wait for another policy cycle to ensure their protection.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF REVIEW

1 Background

Over recent years, research into urban parks and open spaces has experienced an uneven level of research attention from academics, heritage professionals and politicians. Despite a number of significant studies and publications, including *Public Parks Assessment* (2001); *The Park Keeper* (2003); *Places of Health and Amusement* (2008); *An Archaeology of Urban Commons* (2009); and the English Heritage *Register of Parks and Gardens*, there remains an urgent need for more research and research-informed policy making in relation in park and open green-spaces. The continuing demand for such research is demonstrated by the recent commissioning of reports on UK parks by both the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Policy Exchange. The National Review of Research Priorities for Urban Parks, Designed Landscapes, and Open Spaces identifies the research needs of those engaged in the conservation, management, and protection of such sites. This report analysed and summarises existing approaches to greenspace and designed landscapes, and identifies examples of best practice in both research and its application.

2 Scope and limitations

The project's purpose is to inform the National Heritage Protection Plan and the role of English Heritage in public parks and greenspace conservation. The report considers both ornamental and recreational historic greenspace, including: designated and undesignated designed landscapes, municipal parks and recreation grounds (but not privately-owned sports facilities), community owned or managed green spaces, landscapes on the *Register of Parks and Gardens*, and maintained peripheral green spaces, such as street trees and linear parks. There are many other important historic green spaces which could not be cannot be captured within the resource constraints of this project. These include: churchyards, cemeteries, woodlands, allotments, heaths or commons. However, the project implicitly acknowledges their importance.

The focus of the report is historical and it seeks to identify research priorities rather than recommend specific management strategies. This distinction is intentional and crucial to ensuring public faith in English Heritage policies. It is recommended that for this form of heritage asset even more so than for others, efforts should be made to demonstrate that policy has been informed by historical research rather than political and/or private interests. This is essential in order to restore public trust in organisations engaged in the protection and conservation of urban parks and open spaces. In the future, the principle that 'decisions about change should be reasonable, transparent and consistent' must be asserted more forcefully than it has hitherto been in regard to historical green spaces (English Heritage, 2008, 23).

This report is envisaged as an 'enabling' piece of work, intended to identify priorities within the field and to facilitate decision making on the best and most effective use of English Heritage resources and the resources of other agencies. It is an important scene-setting statement that sets out a targeted programme of further research. The report is an exploratory document and does not make any claim to comprehensive coverage. In a rapidly-evolving sector, it delivers a road map for future research and demonstrates the urgency with which such work must be executed.

3 Aims and objectives

The project had three main aims:

- Provide an assessment of the state of knowledge relating to the understanding of historic parks and open spaces and related built and archaeological interests.
- Consider the implications of recent government policies.
- Identify the need for further research to inform understanding, conservation, management and protection.

The project had eight main objectives:

- Assess recent academic approaches to historic parks and open spaces, including those of architectural historians, urban historians, landscape historians and planning and conservation historians.
- Briefly summarise the pressures and the origins of those pressures (government policies, demography, etc.) faced by parks and open spaces today.
- Briefly summarise the present and potential roles of national, regional, local, professional and voluntary agencies in furthering the understanding and protection of parks and open spaces.
- Identify the research needs of the historic environment sector and public greenspace managers in relation to the conservation, management and protection of historic parks and open spaces.
- Illustrate and explain examples of best practice in research of historic parks and open spaces and use of research findings.
- Assess the relationship between academic research and the needs of the historic environment sector and public greenspace sector.
- Indicate the principal gaps in knowledge where further research would assist in understanding, management and protection (of all types of assets especially urban archaeology where parks and open spaces represent 'reservoirs' of archaeological interest).
- Provide an overview of the range of heritage values ascribed to parks and open spaces by different constituencies, including local communities, and of how these values are expressed.

4 Methodology

The following research methods were employed:

- The assessment of published literature and unpublished research on the history and conservation of urban parks and open spaces to identify the state of knowledge and current research directions.
- The examination, mainly through electronic searches but also through interviews, of the roles, responsibilities, and policies of the agencies involved in the conservation and management of urban parks and open space.

- Interviews with key people to identify priority research needs relating to effective protection of urban parks and open spaces and to highlight examples of best practice.
- A seminar, bringing together representatives from a variety of professional organisations and stake holders to enable a frank discussion about specific experiences, priorities for research, and potential for future collaboration.
- An online public survey to identify current levels of knowledge about the history of parks and gardens and the various forms in which park users might wish to receive information about their local parks and park history in general.
- Critical analysis of the evidence to produce a written report.

5 Research team

The research has been conducted and managed by researchers employed by Park Roots, a CiC company for the Friends of Birkenhead Park. The Project Manager and Researcher is Dr. Katy Layton-Jones. Having worked on the successful Liverpool Parks and Open Spaces Project 2006-8, Dr. Layton-Jones then joined the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, where she has become an authority on the historical and contemporary significance of parks and open spaces. Her research outputs include books, journal articles, international conference papers and guest lectures, as well as articles in popular magazines and policy documents. The Project Executive is Prof. Robert Lee, currently Professor of History at the University of Liverpool. Professor Lee has published widely on the history of parks and public greenspace. Outside academia, Professor Lee has been actively involved in heritage protection, serving as Chairman and a member of the board of a number of organizations including: Birkenhead Park Management Committee, Wirral Parks Steering Committee, and Wirral History and Heritage Association. He is particularly well renowned for his work on the Liverpool Parks and Open Spaces Project (2006-7) and the regeneration of Birkenhead Park.

6 Interviewees and project consultees

A number of professionals from the heritage, academic, and greenspace sectors provided interviews and consultation throughout the project. Those consulted include:

- Drew Bennellick, Head of Landscape and Natural Heritage UK, Heritage Lottery Fund
- Paul Bramhill, Chief Executive, GreenSpace
- Paul Elliott, Reader, University of Derby
- Colum Giles, (formerly Head of Urban Research Policy, English Heritage)
- Linden Groves, Conservation Casework Manager, Garden History Society
- Steve Hardiman, Place Shaping Team Manager, Bristol City Council
- Tony Leach, Director, London Parks & Green Spaces Forum
- Robert Lee, Director, Park Roots, and Professor of Economic and Social History, University of Liverpool

- Rebecca Madgin, Lecturer, Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester
- Mervyn Miller, Chartered Architect, Town Planner and author of English Garden Cities: an introduction (2010).
- Carole O'Reilly, Lecturer, University of Salford
- Rachel Penny, Senior Specialist, Health and Accessible Natural Environment, Natural England
- Julie Proctor, Chief Executive, Green Space Scotland
- John Sales, Vice-President of the Royal Horticultural Society and the Garden History Society.
- Joan Sewell, Designations Officer, Historic Scotland Historic Scotland
- Nigel Sharp, Parks Development Officer, Liverpool City Council
- Sarah Spooner, Lecturer and member of the Landscape Group, University of East Anglia
- Hilary Taylor, Director, Hilary Taylor Landscape Associates Ltd.
- Jenifer White, Senior Landscape Advisor, English Heritage
- Philip White, Chief Executive, Hestercombe Gardens Trust
- Ken Worpole, Senior Professor, The Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University

7 Survey

Between 17 July and 17 September 2012, the project researchers hosted an online survey targeting park users in England. The aim of the survey was to gain a general impression of the extent of existing public awareness of, and knowledge about, the history of parks in general and the respondents' local park in particular. Although it was not possible to assess the actual level of knowledge, the findings do indicate the level to which park users consider themselves informed about the history of urban parks and designed landscapes. In total there were 304 respondents from across the England and the findings indicate a wide range in the level of understanding about, engagement with, and appetite for more information about, public urban greenspace. A number of key findings warrant particular attention.

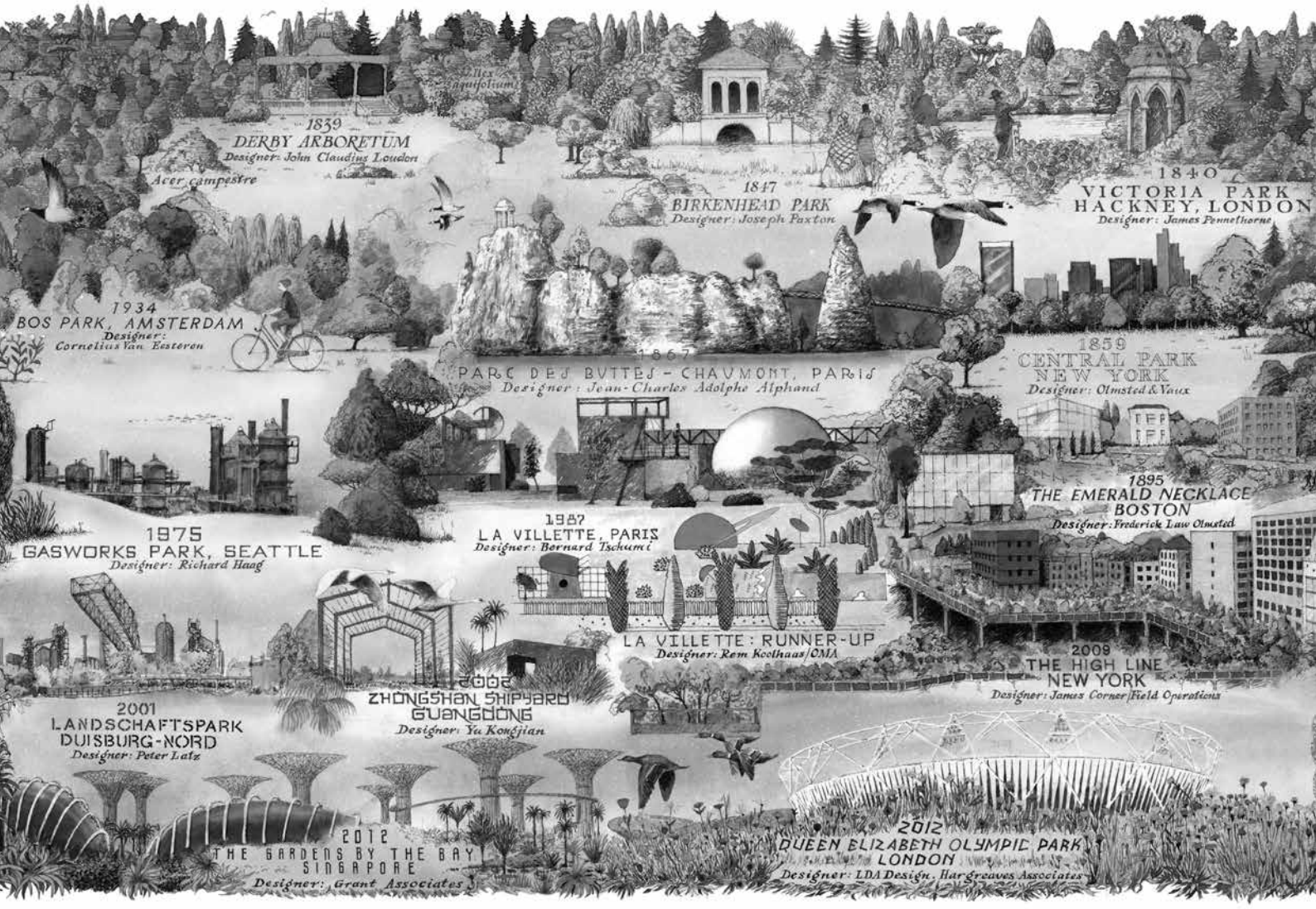
Firstly, over 80 per cent of respondents use public parks on a daily basis. This may indicate a self-selecting group of respondents, particularly as the survey was publicised by Civic Voice, GreenSpace and heritage professionals via Twitter and email. However, it also suggests that the responses represent the views of an informed and engaged group. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents consider themselves to know only 'a little' about park history in general and even fewer considered themselves well informed about the history of their own local park. Many doubted that their local park was of any historical significance at all. This raises important questions about the public perception of 'historical significance'. It may be that park users are undervaluing the historical significance of their parks due to loss of historical features or simply poor dissemination of information about the origins of the site.

The majority of respondents (over 80 per cent) were residents of urban or suburban locations, with 89 per cent living within walking distance of a public park. This is a promising statistic. In the absence of a greenspace map for England, the survey findings indicate that it is not a lack of greenspace, but rather the quality of that provided which presents the greatest challenge. This view is supported by Greenspace Scotland which, upon completion of the first greenspace map, discovered that Scottish towns and cities were blighted by a large quantity of poor quality greenspace.

In terms of social value, more respondents felt that their local park was beneficial to the community as a whole than felt it was directly beneficial to themselves. This indicates a public recognition of the social benefit of parks, even when they are not personally using them on a day-to-day basis. By a significant percentage, the greatest advantage provided by local parks was deemed to be that 'The park improves our experience of the neighbourhood by providing a 'breathing space' between buildings'. This indicates some consensus regarding the importance of maintaining space within parks, as much as facilities. This may indicate a high level of public suspicion regarding the protection of greenspace and the risk of redevelopment. Overall, the survey revealed considerable public enthusiasm for parks and green spaces but a lack of even the most basic knowledge regarding their origin, history and management.

PART TWO

HISTORIOGRAPHY, RESEARCH, DEFINITIONS AND TYPOLOGIES



HISTORIOGRAPHY

1 Introduction

For much of the twentieth century, the history of parks and gardens failed to attract the attention of either academics or funding bodies. Despite the appreciation and progressive legitimisation of social history from the 1960s onwards and the enthusiastic pursuit of previously-neglected research areas, such as domestic housing, public health, and prostitution, the study of green spaces continued to be dismissed as the province of the garden historian, whose interests tended to be confined to horticulture and private gardens. Public parks and urban green spaces were perceived to lie beyond the traditional parameters of both garden history and social history, and both sub-disciplines appeared reluctant to admit them as a valid subject for historical exploration. When urban public parks were the subject of research, it was most frequently executed by local amateurs and enthusiasts. As a result, the consequent publications, although often detailed and serviceable, are local in focus and place significance on the particularity of specific sites rather than contributing to broader social, geographical or cultural narratives.

Since the 1980s, the status of parks as a subject of historical enquiry has been progressively elevated. As urban history in the wider sense has evolved as a sub-discipline across Europe, Australia and the United States, the history of urban parks and greenspace has emerged as a discrete subject area within academic research agendas and institutions. The bulk of scholarship has been produced in the United States, where the prevalence of Urban Studies departments in state and liberal arts colleges has enabled collaboration between civic designers, planners, historians and geographers. The output of these academic departments has been bolstered further by specialist centres in landscape research, such as the Dumbarton Oaks research library and collection at Harvard University. The success of high-profile conservation projects, such as those undertaken by Central Park Conservancy in New York (founded 1980), have further advanced both the profile and perceived value of historic parks across the United States (Cedar Miller, 2003). A comparable research centre for Britain would be desirable, but in its absence it may prove fruitful to develop stronger research links with Dumbarton Oaks. The potential for comparative and collaborative projects is considerable.

2 Overview

No single methodological or historiographical shift is responsible for the gradual emergence and recognition of historical green spaces as a valid subject of academic enquiry. Rather, a confluence of funding streams, research priorities and new methodologies has brought the study of urban greenspace to its current prominent position within the academy.

2a Academic legitimacy

The first of these was arguably the erosion of the hierarchy of historical enquiry, which resulted from the growth in popularity of social history in the latter half of the twentieth century. Designed explicitly for the benefit of those denied access to private gardens and expensive leisure facilities, public parks sit comfortably within histories of the working

classes or 'bottom up' history and, more broadly, the constitution of the British tripartite class system. However, the impact of social history upon the academy alone did not prompt the immediate recognition of urban parks as a significant and pressing area of research. Rather, it was the 'cultural turn' of the 1970s and the focus on systems of representation that elevated landscape history in general and the study of urban greenspace in particular, to a position of influence within the academy. The premise that 'it is through culture that everyday life is given meaning and significance', has led to a radical reassessment of the manner in which parks, gardens and designed landscapes are researched and discussed, both within academia and the wider public sphere (Chaney, 1994). Landscapes ceased to be appreciated simply in terms of their design, cost, and function, and were increasingly researched as evidence bases for interpreting complex social and cultural processes such as identity formation. In addition, the same process led to the recognition that plural and contested values are projected onto landscapes, and that multiple perspectives need to be explored if the value of parks is to be appreciated fully.

Since the 1970s, a number of historians and historical geographers have embraced a pluralistic interpretation of the urban landscape. The result has been the evolution of a number of discrete research strands, some of which are inter-related, while others have been developed in relative intellectual isolation. One of the most influential and relevant research strands to emerge over the past thirty years is the history of leisure. From the early 1980s onwards, scholars such as Peter Bailey, Peter Borsay, John Walton, and James Walvin worked to elevate the status of the history of leisure to the point that it is now an intrinsic element of our understanding of the urban realm (Bailey, 1978, Borsay, 1991, and 2006, Walton and Walvin, 1983, Walton, 2000). One of the consequences has been the widening of interest in public parks and greenspace and focus upon their function as well as their form. As a result, connections have been made between municipal parks and gardens and more commercial sites, such as theme parks, seaside resorts and fairgrounds (Lukas, 2008, Young and Riley, 2002, Jones and Wills, 2005). Such studies have embraced the experiential element of parks and gardens and tended to privilege the spectacular and singular over the conventional and familiar.

In recent years this process of pluralisation has continued, leading to a number of specialised sub-strands in the history of leisure and its relationship to urban space. The resultant research focuses on subjects as diverse as pageantry, international events, water, and sport. The emergence of the sub-discipline of the History of Sport testifies to both academic and popular interest in the subject. The International Centre for Sports History and Culture at De Montford University (est. 1996), the British Society of Sports History (BSSH), and the Journal of Sport History in the United States ensure that the history of sport retains a high profile within the academy. At the same time, publications such as those in English Heritage's own 'Played in Britain' series contribute to a wider understanding and appreciation of historical sports venues (for examples see Pearson, 2010 and Polley, 2011).

Unfortunately, the interdisciplinary nature of cultural and social history has not resulted in a cross-disciplinary consensus about research priorities, but rather a range of specialised, sometimes conflicting, approaches. Some research projects and centres have focused attention upon specific historical periods and themes. This has contributed to a periodization of the history of parks and designed landscapes, which has not always been

helpful in terms of both protection and regeneration. The two periods and urban types that have come to dominate studies of historical urban greenspace are 'The Georgian Town' and 'The Victorian City'. Consequently, recognition of the significance of historic public greenspace tends to be confined to pleasure gardens and municipal parks.

The study of parks and gardens benefitted greatly during the 1990s from what has been dubbed 'the luxury debate'. The increasing emphasis on 'history from below', combined with the cultural turn of the 1970s-1990s drew attention to a wealth of material culture and numerous under-utilised evidence bases of ephemeral material including advertisements, guidebooks, and trade cards. The wealth of sources available prompted growing interest in the cultural life of what has come to be known as the 'long eighteenth-century'. In a number of universities in both Britain and the United States, research focused increasingly on the role of pleasure and luxury within the urban realm. Projects, such as the 'Luxury Project' at the University of Warwick (1997-2000), prompted other scholars to re-examine the eighteenth-century or 'Georgian' town from the perspective of consumption and pleasure. One research strand to be 'fed' by the luxury debate was the urban pleasure garden. From a relatively limited understanding and fairly thin primary research, this line of enquiry has resulted in a distinct and widely-recognised subject area, attended by its own substantial historiography. Early, relatively general accounts (Curl, 1979) have been joined by focused micro-histories of specific locations. Sue Berry's study of Brighton pleasure gardens and Conlin's work on the more famous Vauxhall Garden are typical of this type and suggest useful techniques for researching parks and gardens that are no longer in existence (Berry, 2000, Conlin, 2006 and 2008, Corfield, 2008). In addition, broader studies have been produced, which contextualise the private pleasure garden alongside consumer democracies, the professionalization of the leisure industry, and urban planning (for a representative example see Sweet, 1999, 242-3). In 2008, the Paul Mellon Centre and Tate Britain hosted an international conference *Vauxhall Revisited*, which brought together historians and art historians who had worked on the subject of pleasure gardens across the world. For some, it marked the 'coming of age' of garden history and the demonstration of the potential success of truly cross-disciplinary approaches to historic landscapes that incorporates the histories of food, music, and architecture (Felus, 2005). Since the Tate conference, historians have continued to develop the historiography and the publication of David E. Coke and Alan Borg's lavish *Vauxhall Gardens: a history* in 2011, as well as Sarah Jane Downing's modest *The English Pleasure Garden 1660-1860*, published in the Shire Library series in 2009, testify to a public interest in early urban gardens.

The second period that has become the focus of extensive historical enquiry in terms of urban parks and designed landscapes is the long nineteenth-century and, specifically, the 'Victorian City'. The Victorian city has long attracted the attention of academics and popular historians alike. The publication of Asa Briggs' *Victorian Cities* in 1963 signalled a significant shift away from often-scathing attacks on the nineteenth-century urbanism to a relatively celebratory approach to both the Metropolis and manufacturing towns as 'theatres' of human experience. Yet, notwithstanding the flurry of studies that followed, public parks received relatively little scholarly attention. Housing, manufacturing, urban politics and public health dominated historical research, but the role of public parks in shaping or responding to each of these elements was largely overlooked. A notable

exception is George F. Chadwick, *The Park and the Town* (1966). It was not until the early 1990s that the public parks movement became the subject of focused and sustained historical enquiry in the form of Hazel Conway's monograph, *People's Parks: the design and development of Victorian parks in Britain* (1991). Published by Cambridge University Press, *People's Parks* went some way to elevating the perceived status of park history to a subject worthy of academic attention. This was achieved in part, by focusing on the period of the greatest change and progress in park provision and by adopting a celebratory approach to the nineteenth-century parks movement.

Contextualising the study of greenspace within these two popular periods of British history has assured recognition of the legitimacy of research into urban greenspace. A wealth of research into over two hundred years of urbanisation, has given rise to a broad academic appreciation of the implications of urbanisation and its effect upon human engagement with both natural and man-made green spaces (Borsay, 2006, 177-191 and Williams, 1973). However, it has also resulted in a number of false divisions, both in terms of chronology and perceived value. Consequently, twentieth-century parks or additions have been demonised and still lack recognition as subjects of positive academic enquiry. This is changing, but academic legitimacy tends to follow rather than lead research.

A pro-active effort on the part of English Heritage to encourage academic research projects focusing on later periods would help to enrich the academic debate, as well as provide new evidence to support the expansion of the Register. This encouragement might take the form of funding specific research projects, CDAs, or conferences. It might also comprise financial support for the publication of research findings, particularly under the new 'open access' regime. Where Research Council funding is lacking, collaborations with other organisations, such as the Twentieth-Century Society, should be pursued.

2b Academic engagement

From the 1990s onwards, public parks and urban green spaces began to attract the sustained interest of academics working across a number of disciplines. Although research themes often overlapped, the organisation of universities and the allocation of funding within the Higher Education sector means that a range of research strands evolved, each with its own evidence base, scope, and focus.

- **History and historical geography**

Although not the first academic group to engage with the urban greenspace as a subject of academic enquiry, in recent decades urban and local historians and historical geographers have contributed much to the awareness and interpretation of parks and designed landscapes. In the case of urban history, this began in a piecemeal fashion, as studies of urban greenspace initially fed into existing approaches to the field such as 'urban biography'. Numerous and varied in both depth and accuracy, in the absence of more focused studies and scarce primary material urban biographies often provide the starting point for historians seeking to develop more critical, detailed, or comparative studies of urban greenspace. The interdisciplinary nature of greenspace research means that research projects have often brought together academics and professionals from

a range of faculties, schools, and departments; most commonly historical studies, geography, and the social sciences.

During the past decade, historians and geographers have responded to the need for more specialised and focused studies of public greenspace, urban parks, and public gardens with an array of projects and publications. (Green, 2010, Hardy, 2002, Layton-Jones, 2013a and 2013b, Miskel, 2009, O'Reilly, 2011 and 2012, Shaw, 2011, Low Taplin, and Scheld, 2006). Neither the focus of, nor the location of this research, is exclusively English, nor indeed British. Indeed, some of the most substantial research projects and the majority of 'urban studies' centres are currently in the United States. Furthermore, academic attention has recently shifted considerably towards post-colonial cities in China, India, Africa and South America (Visser, 2010, and Legg and McFarlane, 2008). This has helped to create a truly global approach to the study of urban green spaces.

In 1993, the creation of the H-NET (Humanities and Social Sciences OnLine) sub-group H-urban.org reflected the growing number of scholars across the world working in fields relating to urban studies, a significant proportion of who are engaged in work pertaining to open space and parks. Many of the findings from academic research projects into historical urban green spaces can be found in the peer-review journals: Urban History, Urban Studies, and Urban History Review, Journal of Historical Geography.

ARBORETUMS PROJECT

School of Geography: University of Nottingham, 2003-7

Funding: AHRC.

Researchers: Dr. Paul Elliott, Prof. Charles Watkins, Prof. Stephen Daniels.

Focusing primarily on arboretums in the British Isles, the Arboretums project explored the philosophical, aesthetic, horticultural and educational theories underlying the planning, layout, organization, and management of arboretums. The project addressed the various links with botanic gardens and scientific developments in the study of forestry and horticulture. The role of arboretums as recreational spaces was also addressed, making this project particularly relevant to current interpretations of the evolution of both the form and function of public greenspace.

Outputs:

Garden History, 2007 Cultural Geographies of the Arboretum, special supplement 2.

Elliott, Watkins and Daniels, 2008 'The Nottingham Arboretum: natural history, education and leisure in a Victorian regional centre', Urban History 35, 48-71.

Elliott, Watkins and Daniels, 2011 *The British Arboretum: trees, science and culture in the nineteenth-century* (London).

Elliott, *Trees in Towns: the history of urban arboriculture* (forthcoming).

LIVERPOOL PARKS AND OPEN SPACES PROJECT

School of History, University of Liverpool, 2006-8

Funding: ESRC and English Heritage

Researchers: Dr. Katy Layton-Jones, Prof. Robert Lee.

'The project's agenda was structured by two sets of research questions. First, the possibility of identifying specific development periods in terms of park design, the location of open spaces, the relationship with the built environment, popular use, management regimes, and urban development in general. Secondly, the extent to which the overall level and character of open space provision in Liverpool has changed over time in terms of the needs of different user groups and the condition and management of parks and open spaces… By providing a forum for effective collaboration between academic researchers, senior staff from Liverpool City Council's Parks and Environment Directorate, and representatives from national agencies (English Heritage, CABESpace), the project established a model for longer-term cooperation which will maximise the impact and dissemination of research findings and lead to the establishment of a parks and open spaces research hub at the University of Liverpool.' (Lee, 2007).

Outputs:

Layton-Jones and Lee, 2008 Katy Layton-Jones and Robert Lee, *Places of Health and Amusement: Liverpool's historic parks and gardens* (Swindon).

Layton-Jones and Lee for Liverpool City Council, 2008 *The Historical and Contemporary Significance of Liverpool's Parks and Open Spaces.*

Layton-Jones, 2008 'Love behind the bushes: anti-social behaviour in nineteenth-century parks', Who Do You Think You Are?, BBC publications.

Layton-Jones, 2013 'Public parks and legacies of leisure' in Itzen and Müller (eds.), Industry and Industrial Heritage in the Twentieth Century (Augsburg) 132-152.

Layton-Jones, 2013 'A commanding view: public parks and the Liverpool prospect, 1722-1870', Cultural and Social History 10:1 (March 2013) 47-67.

Public History leaflet series, 'St. John's Gardens' (2008), 'Newsham Park' (2008), 'Wavertree Botanic Gardens' (2008), 'Princes Park' (2012).

- **Planning and civic design**

Alongside historians and geographers, academics and practitioners in the fields of civic design and planning have contributed much to both historical and contemporary debates surrounding urban greenspace. A growing academic and popular interest in twentieth-century urban planning, and its manifestation in the form of garden cities and post-war new towns, has spawned a wealth of new research. Some have approached the sites from the perspective of heritage conservation (Miller, 2010), while others have analysed the governmental and civic consequences of these experiments in urban community-building (Gillette, 2010, 5-22).

The findings of much of the research in this field can be found in the peer-review journals: Environment and Planning A-D,Planning Perspectives, Journal of Urban Design, Political Geography, Town Planning Review, and Journal of Urban Design and Planning.

PUBLIC SPACE FOR A SHARED BELFAST

School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering, Queen's University Belfast, 2007-8

Funding: Belfast City Council under the EU Programme for Peace & Reconciliation in Northern Ireland 2000-2006.

Researchers: Frank Gaffikin, Malachy McEldowney, Gavan Rafferty, Ken Sterrett.

The project has three primary aims in relation to the city of Belfast: to explore understanding about, and values of, public space; to investigate the perceptions about, access to, and use of, shared public space; and to examine the role of key statutory agencies in the promotion of sharing and interaction in the city's public spaces. This was accomplished by reviewing the research literature on public space as well as urban planning and policy documents. The project researchers interviewed senior personnel from the community, statutory and private sectors, and held a series of five focus groups.

Outputs:

Gaffikin et al, 2008 *Public Space for a Shared Belfast: a research report for Belfast City Council.*

Gaffikin, Mceldowney, and Sterrett, 2010 'Creating shared public space in the contested city: the role of urban design', Journal of Urban Design, 15 (4), 493-513.

- Landscape history and garden history

Arguably, the fields that has contributed the most to research methodologies for historical parks and designed landscapes are those of Landscape History and Garden History, incorporating 'garden theory'. Although unfairly dismissed by many British scholars throughout the twentieth-century as the domain of the amateur historian or enthusiast (see section 2a. Academic legitimacy), the significance of gardens and green landscapes was recognised by the American academy. This was in part due to the identification of the sub-discipline of 'garden theory', which situated gardens within the more fashionable context of spatial and architectural theory. In 1969 the Garden and Landscape Studies programme at Dumbarton Oaks was established to 'support advanced scholarship in garden history, landscape architecture, and the study of other culturally and artistically-significant landscapes around the world from ancient times to the present'; a function that it continues to fulfil (www.doaks.org last accessed 1/10/2012). Although many of the research outputs from Dumbarton Oaks have traditionally focused on private gardens and estate parks, the research centre has raised the profile of landscape studies globally. In 2000, the former Director of Landscape Studies at Dumbarton Oaks and one of the most influential contributors to the field of garden studies, John Dixon Hunt, highlighted the potential parallelism of public parks and gardens in relation to place-making. In Greater Perfection: the practice of garden theory Dixon-Hunt asserts that 'Gardens focus the art of place-making or landscape architecture in the way that poetry can focus the art of writing' (Dixon Hunt, 2000, 11). The expressive function of gardens and landscape architecture identified by Dixon Hunt remains an under-developed area of research in terms of the green urban landscape.

Today, the British academy's former reluctance to pursue garden history has transformed into a conspicuous enthusiasm to incorporate landscape history and theory (including garden history) into research projects across a wide range of disciplines. Research groups, projects and even enterprise initiatives, such as the Landscape Group at the University of East Anglia, have been created to advance landscape research in both the academy and commercial environments. The result is the dispersal of research outputs pertaining to public parks and gardens across an array of publications. Some of the most significant research can be found in the Journal of the Landscape Institute and Garden History, both of which have produced special issues dedicated to public parks and urban greenspace (2011 and 2007 respectively). The international quarterly Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes presents a combination of research focusing on historical sites and more theoretical analyses relating to contemporary landscapes, their design and use. The Garden History Society's Register of Research also provides information on recent academic and non-academic research in this field. Although much pertains to private gardens and landscapes, sections 1, 2, and 4 relating to 'Garden types, stylistic and thematic studies', 'International/national garden studies', and 'Local gardens and public parks and gardens' respectively, outline research of particular relevance to this report.

MEDIEVAL DEER PARKS IN NORFOLK

Landscape Group, University of East Anglia, 2009-10

Funding: Norfolk County Council

Researchers: Dr. Robert Liddiard

The project reviewed all the available landscape and archival evidence for medieval deer parks in Norfolk, and uncovered a larger number of medieval parks than previously thought. The final report was submitted as a gazetteer and GIS data.

Output:

Liddiard, 2010 *Medieval Deer Parks in Norfolk*.

- **Ecology and environmental studies**

Often overlooked by the more traditional design-focused studies of public parks, the ecology of park landscapes is a fundamental element of their character and value. Although the life-span of individual plants is limited, and urban pollution led to a high turn-over in urban planting schemes before the clean air act of 1956, understanding the role of specific species in defining the aesthetic, ecological and cultural character of parks and gardens remains central to successful interpretation and preservation. Research in this field has been undertaken by landscape professionals, horticulturalists and ecologists and has identified innovative approaches to existing greenspaces as well as principles for the creation of new sites. One example is this ecological approach is the identification of 'pictorial meadows', a concept devised by Dr. Nigel Dunnett of the University of Sheffield to describe a mix of species developed to create cost-effective plantings with a very long season of display and requiring minimal maintenance intervention (www.pictorialmeadows.co.uk, last accessed 26/09/2012). Used in the planting scheme of the newest urban park in Britain, the Olympic Park site in Stratford (2012), such developments have clear relevance to those managing and conserving urban green spaces.

Academic interest in the relationship between ecology and the urban realm has been bolstered to some extent by the growing interest in the economic as well as environmental implications of urban sustainability. One of the largest projects to emerge in this field was the ECOCIT network based at Imperial College, London. Bringing together ecologists, economists and designers from across the world, the project highlighted the potential of working with nations undergoing significant levels of urban growth to develop effective strategies for ecologically-sustainable cities. Incorporating the case study of Dongtan eco-city in China, the ECOCITnetwork suggests ways in which contemporary greenspace design might help to reinvigorate the heritage landscape debate.

ECOCIT

Business School, Imperial College with project partners: Arup, University College London, and University of Southampton

Funding: EPSRC.

Researchers: Dr Andrew Davies, Dr Lars Frederiksen, Nick Leon, Prof. David Gann, Prof. Chen Yi

Ecocit was a 'global network of academic, industry and public sector partners engaged in research whose goal is to make our cities not only sustainable ecologically, but economically'. The network addressed: the design, building and operation of eco-cities; the economic and ecological sustainability of such cities; and the development of environmental technology, and engineering for sustainability.

Outputs and Outcomes:

Collaborations and strong links between academic institutions, industry and policy-makers in China and the UK

Follow-up research projects including:

Learning from the Dongtan Ecocity Project, Dr A. Davies and Dr L. Frederiksen (EPSRC) 2008-2010

Sustainable Economic and Ecological Models, Imperial College Business School, Imperial College London, 2007-2010

GREEN ROOF SYSTEMS

Department of Landscape, University of Sheffield in association with ZinCo GmbH, Germany, 2009-13

Funding: EU Marie-Curie Industry Academia.

Principle Investigator: Dr Nigel Dunnett

Other researchers: 3 Ph.D. students, 3 early career researchers, and 2 additional researchers

The project examines the green roof planting in terms of vegetation and ecology 'with the aim of widening the range of planting possibilities in the UK'. The findings may have implications for planting schemes in established as well as new green landscapes.

Outputs:

3 Ph.D. dissertations (forthcoming).

Dunnett, Gedge, and Sondgrass, 2011 *Small Green Roofs: Domestic, Residential and Community Applications* (Portland, Oregon).

- Social sciences

The final approach to have developed within the academy, engages with the civic and community function and perception of public greenspace. Research undertaken from this perspective may be conducted by scholars working in any of the disciplines already mentioned. However, due in part to the specialised skills and methodologies required to create new datasets, the social sciences have become critical to this approach. Anthropologists, sociologists and researchers working in the fields of cultural studies, human geography, and development studies have all contributed to the development of research strategies in a field which suffers from fragmentary archival evidence and, until recently, patchy secondary literature.

The importance of engaging with local communities, both as a source of oral history and to establish a better understanding of contemporary needs and aspirations regarding urban green spaces, is recognised by the academic, heritage, and park management professions alike. Over the past decade, research councils and funding bodies have responded to this need with a number of schemes that have targeted community engagement directly.

In 2012, the AHRC Connected Communities Programme funded a number of projects which, although not directly related to heritage parks, provide some insights into the connection between communities, social cohesion and public space.

SOCIAL PARKS (SPARKS): URBAN GREEN-SPACE AS A FOCUS FOR CONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND RESEARCH

University of Albertay, Dundee, 2012

Funding: AHRC Connected Communities Programme

Researchers: Dr. Rebecca Wade, Dr. Kate Pahl, Mr. Andy Milligan, Dr. Ian Smith, Dr. Lian Lundy, Dr. Jo Vergunst

'The SPARKS project aims to integrate physical, social science and design through research on parks and other urban 'social' green spaces – Social Parks. The project brings together researchers who are collectively interested in these social spaces, thereby stimulating cross-disciplinary interaction and analysis. A full appreciation or 'valuation' of the role of these urban spaces in contributing to a 'big society' requires cross-disciplinary input, engagement with, and for, communities, and analysis at differing spatial and temporal scales'.
(www.dundee.ac.uk/djcad/research/researchprojectscentresandgroups/sparks, last accessed 10/09/2012)

Outputs:

Special issue of journal (forthcoming)

Non-academic summary report for Department for Communities and Local Government

A community event and exhibition to be held in Victoria Park, Rawmarsh (forthcoming).

3 Community and public engagement

Beyond the academy and the profession, there have been a number of projects based within communities themselves. Engaging with the priorities and problems identified by such schemes is a crucial means of understanding and capturing the changing perception of urban greenspace and its function at a local and regional level.

Organisations such as GreenSpace (formerly Urban Parks Forum) and The Conservation Volunteers, (formerly BTCV), have provided a conduit or much community-based research and projects. The Conservation Volunteers's newly-formed 'Green Hubs' in Leeds, Cornwall, London and Ashford are intended to provide 'a focal point for care of local green places' (www.tcv.org.uk/greenhubs last accessed 12/10/2012). These and similarly community-based centres may well prove even more crucial to the collection and dissemination of research findings in coming years. In contrast to academic departments, which for funding and administrative reasons often find it difficult to function in a fully cross-disciplinary manner, community groups and charities can unite ecological, economic, social, historical and cultural research strands within one project or publication. The environmental charity Groundwork provides a good example of such an aggregated approach in the recent report *Grey Places Need Green Spaces* (2012). Here, the economic, health and social benefits of greenspace are combined to create a set of 13 recommendations for every level of governance from voluntary groups to central government. However, even in such an apparently inclusive report, terminology continues to present a potential obstacle. The report's subtitle, 'The case for investing in our nation's natural assets' potentially perpetuates an on-going divide between elements of greenspace deemed to be 'natural' and those considered 'sterile' or manmade, such as recreation fields and playgrounds.

Playgrounds and green landscapes designed explicitly for active recreation have received comparatively little attention from historians of landscape. While sociologists and health professionals have sought to understand the needs of contemporary park users and particularly 'active' demographic groups, such as children, the form and function of historical playgrounds remains an under-researched area of historical enquiry (rare exceptions include: CABESpace, 2010a, Dunnett and Swanwick et al., 2002, Garden History Society, 2010, Conekin, 2001, Layton-Jones, 2013a, and Young and Riley, 2002).

Research into the history and social significance of playgrounds, children's dells, and similarly child-focused landscapes could potentially fit well alongside other English Heritage research on provision for children, such as studies of twentieth-century school architecture and sports facilities. Websites such as Linden Groves' www.outdoorchildren.co.uk provide valuable new approaches to such sites, while the Garden History Society's *Beyond the Playground* project (2010) (based on an English Heritage project) demonstrates the potentially wide appetite for such studies and publications (Groves for GHS, 2010).

GREEN ESTATE

Partnership between the Manor and Castle Development Trust (MCDT), Sheffield Wildlife Trust (SWT), Sheffield City Council (SCC).

Funding: Environment and Heritage Programme, Manor and Castle Single Regeneration Project programme (1998-2003)

'The aims of the 5 year SRB Project were to: address the universal poor quality public open space; use the programme to address exclusion and to build social capital; [and] ensure a lasting legacy after grant funding. A strategy of interrelated initiatives that could create sustainable change was developed. This included regeneration plans for all local green spaces – from parks woodlands, school grounds, historic monuments and allotments to housing areas, demolition sites, local shopping centres and road side verges. Interconnecting projects were also progressed to start to address some of the root causes of poor quality. Pilot approaches to more coordinated greenspace management tackled local issues about leadership, standards, monitoring and communication. In addition some of the big issues around sustainability and functional greenspace were explored. We established pilot approaches to use urban greenspace for energy, waste, local food, art, training, health and employment' (www.greenestate.org.uk last accessed 25/08/2012).

Outcome:

Green Estate Ltd. – A social enterprise that combines competitive commercial services with landscape, cultural and social initiatives.

4 English Heritage

In a divided and often combative sector, English Heritage has made some of the most important contributions to improving the knowledge, appreciation, conservation and use of historic public greenspace across England. Responding directly to research needs, publications such as *Change and Creation* (2005), *The Park Keeper* (2005), *The Management and Maintenance of Historic Parks, Gardens and Landscapes: the English Heritage Handbook* (2007) and *Golf in Historic Parks and Landscapes* (2007) and work on careers and skills needs in the botanic and historic gardens sector have filled previous black holes in the literature and advice available.

- **Research projects**

In addition to their own publications, English Heritage has contributed both expertise and resources to specific research projects, such as the Liverpool Parks and Open Space Project, which have resulted in contributions to the *Informed Conservation* series (Layton-Jones and Lee, 2008), peer-review journal articles (Layton-Jones, 2013a and 2013b) and public information leaflets and booklets (Lambert, 2012 and Layton-Jones, 2008).

In a wider sense, English Heritage's support of, and contribution to, research relating the wider urban environment has resulted in general guidance of relevance to public parks and greenspace such as *Understanding Place* (2012). The result has been a marked rise in the profile of many urban parks and open spaces. Yet, despite these successes, the focus of scope of English Heritage's engagement with public green spaces has tended to be less ambitious than that with other types of heritage asset, such as the British seaside or industrial heritage. Thus far, studies have tended to be local rather than national or comparative in scale and the popular perception of the relative importance of parks' historical character has suffered as a result. The ecological agenda now dominates professional discourse about urban greenspace. If the historical element of these landscapes is to be fully valued and protected in the future, then English Heritage must adopt a far more assertive and approach to their interpretation and promotion. A number of studies following the model of the Liverpool project would provide new peer-reviewed research, as well as appraisals of the existing evidence base and its gaps.

- 'Heritage at Risk' and the National Planning Policy Framework

English Heritage's Heritage at Risk programme, launched in 2008, is of particular relevance to historical parks and designed landscapes. The programme identifies sites most at risk of 'neglect, decay or inappropriate development' (www.english-heritage.org.uk). As many urban green spaces are now at significant risk from each of these factors, HAR has the potential to play a significant role in the battle to protect them for future generations. English Heritage has already identified 'proposals for development' as a particular risk to registered parks and gardens. However, there is some positive news. The additional statutory controls provided by the National Planning Policy Framework promise a means of improving the protected afforded to designed landscapes. Under the new NPPF, registered parks and gardens are accompanied by the same level of protection as listed buildings, meaning that 'substantial harm or loss can only be justified in exceptional cases' (www.english-heritage.org.uk). This is promising news, but only if the Register itself is fit for purpose. Essential work needs to be done to ensure that this is the case.

- National Heritage Protection Plan

Alongside the Heritage at Risk programme, the National Heritage Protection Plan aims to 'identify those parts of England's heritage that matter to people most and are at greatest risk – and then to concentrate efforts on saving them' (English Heritage, 2012c, 1). This review was commissioned with a view to informing the new National Heritage Protection Plan in regard to parks and designed landscapes. In addition to the information presented here, other projects and activities under the National Heritage Protection Plan programme may also provide insights and research findings relevant to historical green spaces. English Heritage's National Survey of Suburbs (project 5924) has already identified the need for a better understanding of the permeable boundary between the park periphery and the streets that intersect with it. At present, the relationship between urban green spaces and the developments that surround them is currently approached almost exclusively from the position of the residential architecture and planning. Similarly, as a result of the large number of substantial detached villas located on the periphery of registered parks and their integral role in the design and social and economic history of parks, the survey of Detached Suburban Housing (project 6314, completion date:

December 2015) may well confront issues of significance to the protection of urban parks.

It is clear that further investigation of the subject from the perspective of green spaces is needed. Such research might focus on the relationship between residential architecture and park architecture, the relationship between housing markets and park development and condition, and the impact of the suburban private garden on the provision, design and use of public parks.

- **Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England**

The most immediate route through which the heritage agenda could be advanced in regards to parks is through the development of the *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England*. The Register remains the most powerful tool in terms of protecting designed landscapes. There are currently approximately 220 public parks on the Register. Yet, as long ago as 2001, the *Public Parks Assessment* identified that there were ten times as many parks of historical interest as were listed on the Register (GreenSpace, 2001). This discrepancy is likely to have increased in the last twelve years.

At present, the coverage of the Register is too limited in terms of both geographical and chronological coverage. Currently, the English Heritage Register is dominated by private gardens, estate parks and pre-twentieth century landscapes. Post-war designed landscapes and public parks are comparatively poorly represented. Due to a lack of research, as well as pressure to regenerate post-war social housing developments, late twentieth-century landscapes are being lost to development or remodelling, leaving a poor legacy for future generations. Urgent action is needed if any significant late twentieth-century landscapes are to survive. English Heritage should take a pro-active position in this regard and seek out sites that should be considered for the Register. This might take the form of a designation review to address any obvious gaps in the Register, for example memorial parks and gardens. Similarly, a more pro-active approach is required towards sites currently listed on the Register and entries for listed parks and gardens should be updated as a matter of priority. Many landscapes currently listed as Grade II have been the subject of substantial conservation over the past decade and should now be considered for upgrading to Grade II* or Grade I status. Conversely, it may be necessary to downgrade some compromised sites, or remove them from the Register altogether.

New changes to the designation process introduced in November 2012 also pose a potential threat to the ongoing development of the Register, particularly regarding relatively modern park landscapes. These changes include a requirement that prior to consideration for designation, a site must '[possess] evident significance, and is obviously worthy of inclusion on the National Heritage List for England' (www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/online-application-form last accessed 01/11/2012). As the history of the majority of public parks is currently poorly understood, their significance is not always 'evident' or 'obvious'. English Heritage may then need to consider funding a large number of preliminary studies in order to ensure that we do not overlook significant but under-researched locations and in so doing, lose important heritage assets.

Similarly challenging in the present economic climate, is the question of direct public engagement. In recent years, English Heritage's involvement in highly controversial decisions regarding developments on parks, such as that of Liverpool Football Club, may have damaged the trust which some communities place in the organisation to protect their historical environment. While the decision itself may have been correct, it is clear that if the ownership and management of historical parks is to be increasingly devolved to local communities, English Heritage will need to develop its own effective system for engaging directly with parks groups rather than at local authority level.

- **The skills crisis**
- In 2012, English Heritage published a report produced by Lantra (the Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land based industries). This report, titled *Cultivating Skills in Historic and Botanic Gardens: careers, occupations, and skills* required for the management and maintenance of historic and botanic gardens, contained three significant findings:
- Many large and medium gardens that are open to the public are now significant tourist attractions. In order to meet the demands of visitors and increased wear and tear along with the evolving impact of climate change requires staff to have new skills to care for these important historic sites. There is an increasing need for staff to be multi skilled and also for head gardeners and garden managers to not only have technical skills but to have a higher level of business management to assist in running and developing a garden or park.
- There is a general uplift in salaries at the lower end of the salary scale when compared with the 2005 survey. 43 per cent of individuals in this bracket are now earning £15,000 to £20,000 compared with 24 per cent in 2005. Salaries throughout the industry can range now from £14,000 to £73,000, this is competitive with many other industries.
- Volunteers are playing an increasingly important role in parks and gardens which often is seen as a route into employment as well as important social role within local communities.

(Lantra for English Heritage, 2012)

By both funding and publishing research into new skills gaps, such as leadership, marketing and business planning, English Heritage is one of the few organisations to take action against the current skills crisis. However, the findings of such research have not translated into meaningful change, either in terms of management strategies or on-the-ground maintenance. The active application of research findings must be encouraged more forcefully among park owners, managers and training colleges.

5 CABESpace: achievements and missed opportunities

During its eight-year lifespan, CABESpace made significant contributions to the evidence base for parks and urban green space. From preliminary reports outlining potential lessons to be learnt from international comparisons (CABESpace, 2003 and CABESpace, 2004a) to more forthright documents demanding a transformation in the manner in which parks are valued financially AND socially (CABESpace, 2009c, CABESpace, 2009e, CABESpace, 2010c, CABESpace, 2010f), CABESpace represented the best opportunity in a generation to unify the sector and transform parks policy at a national level. However, despite the progress made, when CABESpace was terminated in 2011, England still had no national database of greenspace, nor was there any consensus as to how best to categorise and evaluate the sites those sites that have been identified. CABESpace perhaps came too late to these questions. The publication in 2009 of *The Green Information Gap: mapping the nation's green spaces* identified the need for just such advancements in the sector, but having no GIS capability itself, CABESpace could not move the agenda forward. Consequently, when it closed in 2011, it left a patchy and uneven legacy for the sector; a legacy inherited primarily by charities, under-funded professional and charitable organisations, and community groups.

RESEARCH THEMES

1 The park as idyll

For decades, the urban park had languished as an under-research element of social and environmental democracy. Rejected by many academics as 'local history', the specificity of which was likely to restrict the impact of any research project, it was not merely the physical landscape of parks that was neglected, but their historical narrative also. This detachment of park history from the more prestigious fields of 'urban history' or even 'landscape history' led to it acquiring a relatively low-status position in the academic hierarchy. For the situation to change, park history needed champions; scholars, architects and heritage professionals who would present parks not merely as valuable landscapes, but also as meaningful allegory of social, political and cultural progress. The first study to deliver this narrative to an academic audience was Hazel Conway's *People's Parks: the design and development of Victorian parks in Britain* (1991). Conway laid down a formula for approaching the study of parks that continues to shape the field. In its essentials, this formula dissects the historical context into distinct sub-narratives, which when combined present an image of civic improvement and progress. These sub-narratives include: political and economic context; designers and architects; use and management; horticulture; values and meanings; and features such as bandstands and rockworks. The instigators of schemes are presented as 'pioneers' and the parks themselves as expressions of 'local pride and patriotism' (Conway, 1991, 39-55 and 141-163). This celebratory portrayal of the parks movement complements analyses of nineteenth-century civic governance, and its associated principles of liberalism, freedom and improvement (Hardy, 2006). In addition to raising awareness of the subject and providing various perspectives from which to approach further research, Conway constructed a chronology of the main municipal and public park developments between 1800 and 1885 that reiterated the national distribution of parks and the potential for extensive further studies (Conway, 1991, 228-234).

A narrative approach is also clear in two others studies dating from the early 1990s, each of which extends the relatively limited timeframe of Conway's initial study. Sarah Lasdun's *The English Park: royal, private and public* situates the evolution of public parks firmly within established narratives of garden history and the conceptual framework of rus in urbe (Lasdun, 1991). Examining their ancient origins in medieval parks and common land, Lasdun presents municipal parks as 'arcadias for all', again emphasizing the 'pioneering' nature of municipal park provision (Lasdun, 1991, 158). The other study is Harriet Jordan's *Public parks 1885-1914* (Jordan, 1994). Picking up where Conway's narrative concludes[1], Jordan's account covers arguably the most important period in the provision of public parks, during which more public parks were opened in Britain than either before or since. The timeframe covered by Jordan widened the historiographical scope in more ways that a mere chronological extension. By moving into the twentieth century, Jordan challenged received wisdom that confined the 'golden age' of parks to the nineteenth century and took the narrative up to the foundation of the Royal Town Planning Institute in 1914. In terms of designers and formalistic elements, Jordan introduced figures such as Mawson and Pulham (already familiar to planners and landscape professionals) to a wider range of urban and social historians, and in so doing qualified the dominance of Paxton and

Kemp in the 'approved' narrative of park provision. This is an important development as it indicates the fluidity of perceived historical 'significance' and the implications for official recognition and protection.

Although Lasdun and Jordan generally reflect the categories established by Conway, they contribute an additional analytical criterion that is worthy of note. Both authors acknowledge an important distinction between London and other British conurbations in terms of park provision. This metropolitan/provincial divide is not uncommon in urban histories. However, in this instance, it is indicative of a qualitative distinction in both the form and function of greenspace that necessarily affects the interpretation of individual sites and of park history as a whole.

In terms of an evidence base, all three accounts tend to focus on traditional sources in the form of periodicals such as The Builder (1843-Pres.), Gardeners' Chronicle (1842-Pres.), parliamentary papers and original plans. This adherence to academic orthodoxy assisted in the effort to realise academic legitimacy for the subject. Over the past two decades, and partly as a consequence of digitisation, the potential of other previously-neglected evidence bases has gained recognition within the academy and ephemera, as well as oral histories, have enriched the research landscape.

Together, Conway, Lasdun and Jordan contributed to a positive change in the academic status of park history and cemented a general framework for on-going historical enquiry. However, although each of these studies acknowledged the role of speculative builders, vested interests, and urbanisation in the emergence of the parks movement, they also reiterated an established dichotomy that posited the park against the surrounding city and its perceived evils. In this sense, they ignored what was arguably the more progressive approach adopted by George Chadwick nearly thirty years earlier (Chadwick, 1966). Although Chadwick's account is unapologetically celebratory and extends beyond Britain to take in Continental Europe and the American Parks Movement, it expounds an interpretation of parks as integrated components of the wider town. In recent years this approach has again found favour and there has emerged a more nuanced critique of the public park as a site intrinsically connected to, and indicative, of the urban realm.

Most recently, Jones and Wills have highlighted the problem that such a simplistic and idealised interpretation of the park as an idyll of utopia poses for historians. Citing Lewis Mumford's assertion that 'Almost every utopia is an implicit criticism of the civilization that served as its background', they go on to observe that 'the park landscape has commonly functioned as a paradigm of reaction against contemporary social problems, promising a green tonic, a natural remedy, to civic alienation' (Jones and Wills, 2005, 173-4). Thus, historians face a stubborn obstacle; they must reconcile the cultural persistence of this paradigm with the historical reality without undermining recognition for, and appreciation of, parks as sites of historical and contemporary significance.

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1 Conway has since extended this chronology further, with 'Everyday landscapes', an account of public parks from 1930 to 2000 (Conway, 2000).

2 Parks, transgression, and progress

> Upwards of fifteen foolish Bucks, who had amused themselves by breaking the lamps at Vauxhall, were put into the cage there by the proprietors, to answer for damage done (Wroth and Wroth, 1896, 306).

Space in which to make one's own entertainment is another under-rated amenity of the park; perhaps the most important it can offer us today. It is hard of think of anywhere that contains such variety, in planner's terms, of "informal" and "unstructured" behaviour (Lasdun, 1991, 193)

A recurrent concern within the contemporary parks debate is that of social transgression within public greenspace. Popularly understood to be a relatively recent phenomenon and one at odds with rather than intrinsic to, the nature of public greenspace, this view has often led to a nostalgic yearning for tighter social controls within public green spaces. However, although the physical decline of many urban parks has certainly been exacerbated by criminal damage in the form of arson or metal theft, research indicates a need to distinguish clearly between benign 'transgressions' as opposed to 'criminal activity' within public parks, as well as acknowledging evidence of both throughout the duration of their existence.

By their very nature, parks are radical environments, created by individuals and official bodies who sought to redefine the physical and psychological experience of both nature and the man-made environment. By virtue of their planting and naturalistic form, parks contrast against the hard, defined lines of the streetscape, while their organised and cultivated horticulture sets them apart from the forest or meadow. They are at once an affirmation of, and a transgression against, both town and country; a landscape defined by liminality and the liberties that status affords. Although park champions are keen to highlight the long-term social benefits of the physical freedom enabled by urban greenspace, the prerequisite to present public parks in a wholly positive light has inhibited local authorities and campaigners from engaging with the more challenging narratives of social transgression for fear they may undermine contemporary arguments for protection and investment. Consequently, such research has, in the main, been restricted to the academy. Even a cursory review of the resulting research reveals that parks and urban greenspace have always served as relatively permissive terrains within which social, cultural and even political norms were challenged.

In 1997 Nan H. Dreher's examined the role of 'specific park behaviours' which were considered to be transgressive at the turn of the twentieth century, specifically: public displays of affection by courting couple, and the presence of vagrants (Dreher, 1997, 247). David Lambert has identified similar 'rituals of transgression' taking place in British public parks from 1846 to the present day. (Lambert, 2007). Dreher's account reveals that despite the introduction of strict laws and sanctions, these 'problems' were never solved. Instead, by bringing the entire spectrum of society together within parks, the popular perception of 'decent behaviour' was itself challenged and modified.

> The increased use of public parks in turn-of-the-century London changed the nature of public life. Increased interaction between citizens of diverse backgrounds helped lessen the potency of class barriers (Dreher, 1997, 267).

Similarly, a proliferation of histories of eighteenth and nineteenth-century pleasure gardens and parks have demonstrated that far from being 'polite' facilities, these urban resorts often combined all the attractions of the wider city or town, in terms of prostitution, drinking and gambling (Conlin, 2006, Corfield, 2008, Coke and Borg, 2011, Layton-Jones, 2008, and Green, 2010). Indeed, far from identifying the Victorian park as a revolutionary step towards a liberal landscape, Conlin identifies the decline of the eighteenth-century pleasure garden as a symptom of the triumph of 'Victorian prurience versus Georgian ebullience' (Conlin, 2006, 719). Contrary to accounts that suggest social transgressions as anomalous events in public parks and gardens, these studies indicate that parks and public gardens performed a crucial function in the realignment of the social hierarchy in terms of gender, age, social status, and more recently, race.

The global context reiterates this interpretation. The symbolic role performed by public parks during a variety of public demonstrations, ranging from the civil rights demonstrations in Kelly Ingram Park, Alabama, to the contemporary Occupy movement, reveals notions of social control, 'appropriate behaviour' and 'transgression' to be fluid and changeable with regards to urban public space (Cook and Whowell, 2011).

Evolving alongside this historiography of transgression and crime is a parallel research strand attending to the theme of governance and management. Fuelled by contemporary calls for improved park security, a number of researchers have examined the historical precedent for more assertive forms of park management and policing. English Heritage's own publication, *The Park Keeper* (Lambert, 2005) is representative of the issues considered, including the origins of park security, the historical challenges of policing ostensibly 'public' sites, and the consequences of the loss of both park keepers and on-site maintenance teams upon the perceived safety of public parks. Again, historical enquiry has revealed a far-from rosy image of park security over the decades. The question of park security was always contentious. As David Lambert notes, 'the park keeper had two simultaneous roles to fill, being responsible both for care of the park's physical fabric and for its protection and security' (Lambert, 2005, 5). Protecting parks both from and for the public has clearly been a challenge since their creation. However, some historians have interpreted the parks themselves as indicative of a wider programme of social control.

In her 2007 article on public parks in Keighley, West Yorkshire, Lynn MacGill, asserts that the nineteenth-century public park served as a means of 'controlling and regulating the behaviour' of urban residents (MacGill, 2007, 147). This notion of public parks as a bridle though which the ruling class could encourage compliance from the working classes has been explored by historians working on other elements of civic culture, such as mechanics institutes, hospitals and libraries. However, whether this was a motivation behind the creation of parks or not, there is little evidence to suggest it was successful. Within both historical and contemporary contexts, parks and public greenspace are contested realms. Rather than ensuring conformity to an unwritten social contract, parks have repeatedly provided a domain in which dissent can be both expressed and negotiated. This binary role has proved to be a consistent and intrinsic function of urban greenspace.

Civic Associations and Urban Communities: Local history, place making and activism in twentieth-century Britain

University of Glasgow and Newcastle University, 2012

Funding: AHRC Connected Communities Programme

Researchers: Dr. Lucy E. Hewitt and Prof. John Pendlebury

'This research project seeks to situate questions of place identity at the core of an historical investigation into community activism. It sets out to explore the connections between local history, place and a sense of community in the context of towns and cities throughout the twentieth century'.

Outputs:

Hewitt and Pendlebury 2012, *Amenity, Community, Archives: conducting historical research into local activism* (pending)

Hewitt and Pendlebury 2012, *Association, Participation and Place: the local civic movement in Britain* (forthcoming)

Hewitt and Pendlebury 2012, Project Report.

3 Park as prospect

> If classical pastoral landscape is a liminal zone outside the city, where villas and pleasure gardens open onto meadows and woodland groves, it is not surprising that suburbs have proved key sites of English pastoral. From the 18th century, consciously aesthetic residential and industrial developments have conserved old parkland trees and country lanes and parcelled former pasture for new garden plots (Daniels, 2006, 30).

Arguably the longest traditions of studying designed landscapes, both urban and rural, are defined by visual analysis. The emphasis that the designers and users of parks have placed upon aesthetic qualities has ensured an abundant literature on the subject covering sites ranging from commons and the earliest landscape gardens to contemporary landscape design.

This approach is typified in the work of Stephen Daniels, who has applied visual analysis to subjects ranging from eighteenth-century picturesque estate parks (Daniels, 1994) to the twentieth-century 'suburban pastoral' (Daniels, 2006). Daniels' approach is deeply embedded in art-historical analysis, as indicated by his involvement with various projects at Tate Britain, the most recent of which was funded by the AHRC Landscape and Environment programme (Art of the Garden exhibition, Tate Britain 2004, Arts and the Sublime exhibition, Tate Britain 2010). Within this analytical context, parks landscapes are understood primarily in terms of a visual composition and/or adherence to the principles of picturesque, pastoral, Romantic, Modernist or Post-Modern. The park landscape may then be interpreted as an aggregation of visual vignettes that collectively reflect

something about the societies that produced them. A similar approach is evident in the work of Dana Arnold whose analysis of the image of the city incorporates significant work on urban open spaces and gardens and has improved our understanding of popular attitudes to urban public spaces throughout the nineteenth century (Arnold, 2005 and 2010) Ironically however, these celebrations of the historic townscape have perhaps contributed to a more problematic objectification of urban greenspaces. Although not the intention of those who employ visual analysis, in the case of heritage landscapes, images are susceptible to misreading by campaigners and stake holders who may interpret them as evidence of a 'definitive' layout and an argument in support of re-instating or confining a park's development to a particular historical moment. This notion of an 'original' or 'authentic' landscape may or may not be legitimate, but there is no doubt that further research and analysis of pictorial archives is required to ensure a pluralistic interpretation of visual sources

4 Park as playground and spectacle

Drawing analogies between theme parks, dramatic natural landscapes, museums, and the more fantastic elements of public parks and pleasure grounds, this relatively new field of research has challenged the more prevalent reading of historic parks as landscapes that were appreciated primarily as passive aesthetic arrangements (Young and Riley, 2002). Studies of sites ranging from Crystal Palace Park (LDA 2005 and 2007 and Layton-Jones, 2013a) to the Festival of Britain (Conekin, 2001), reveal the historical function of parks as locations for psychological and physical immersion in fantasy. Traditional narratives of park evolution have always hinted at this connection by recognising the public park as the precursor of the twentieth-century theme park. However, the decline and subsequent historicisation of many iconic theme parks such as Coney Island, has led to a more rigorous engagement with the subject. From fairgrounds to circuses, Imperial exhibitions, and pirate ships, the significance of features and events dismissed previously as trivial or transient is gaining recognition among historians. As Claire Shaw's work on Gorky Park in the former Soviet Union and James D. Herbert's account of the Trocadero in Paris demonstrate how propaganda, spectacle, and dynamism have proved to be important attractions for park users across the world, albeit exploited to different ends (Shaw, 2011 and Herbert, 1998).

In addition, a number of international comparative studies have been conducted that reveal public parks to be locations of historic drama and spectacle. One of the most recent and wide-ranging works to be produced is Heath Massey Schenker's *Melodramatic Landscapes* (2009), which brings together analyses of nineteenth-century Parisian parks, Chapultec Park in Mexico and Central Park, New York. Taking these three geographically disparate and politically dissimilar locations, Schenker attempts, and largely succeeds, in identifying common ideological values underpinning their use and interpretation. The central theme of Schenker's thesis is the analogy he identifies between the emotive, sensational and sentimental qualities of nineteenth-century melodrama and the similarly affecting visions and arrangements created in public parks. This interpretation is comparable to John Dixon Hunt's emphasis upon the expressive nature of green open space and suggests an area worthy of further research (see section 'Landscape History and Garden History' above).

The role of parks as 'theatres' within which civic pageantry, scientific theories, and personal fantasies could be performed and negotiated is an important element in the evolution of urban parks and gardens and one which demands greater attention, particularly in relation to the potentially sensitive subject of heritage landscapes (Lambert, 2012 and Conway, 2002). Reiterating this interpretation of parks as sites of excitement and experience as opposed to mere recreations of passive, bucolic tableaux, is crucial to establishing a more balanced and optimistic narrative of park protection and use. To this end, English Heritage should seek involvement in research projects addressing areas of shared interest, such as The Redress of the Past: Historical Pageants 1905-2016 project at Kings College London and the University of Glasgow. In addition, a comparative study of playgrounds and children's gardens across England would provide a much-needed evidence base. A chronological focus of 1914 – 1960 is recommended and AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards may provide a means of funding such research programmes.

5 Economy and ecology

One of the most rapidly-developing approaches to urban greenspace is that which interprets and evaluates urban greenspace as ecological service, mitigating the impact of climate change, natural disasters, and pollution in both the immediate environment and at a global level. Across Europe, America, and increasingly China India, and Africa, researchers are investigating the various ways in which existing greenspace within towns or on their immediate periphery have a positive ecological impact (see Coles, 2005). Research undertaken in this field generally engages with questions of ecological sustainability rather than heritage protection (Counsell and Haughton, 2006). Nevertheless, ecology has provided a number of opportunities to develop networks and community-engagement programmes that bring together individuals and stakeholder organizations who have an interest in greenspace. Projects such as the Ecosystems Knowledge Network, a partnership project between the NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, the Natural Capital Initiative, Fabis Consulting, and the Centre for Rural Policy Research at the University of Exeter provide a model for managing and developing professional research networks for specific greenspace issues, albeit in this instance with a rural rather than urban focus.

Although it may be possible to reconcile heritage landscapes with the contemporary sustainability agenda, this is currently an under-explored perspective. While historians and heritage professionals are keen to embrace the ecology agenda as a means of ensuring the protection of green spaces from redevelopment, there is little recognition of the importance of a site's historical character in studies relating to sustainability. The reconciliation of these two agendas is essential if historical landscapes are to comprise part of the new canon of sustainable urban greenspace.

Today, arguably the most popular research theme among local authorities, national government, national agencies, and even local friends groups, is that of parks as economic generators. Although the creation of many urban parks was predicated upon economic growth and the sale of residential housing developments (Crompton, 2007), over the twentieth century, park provision was recognised by the public, if not

Westminster, as being too important to be made vulnerable to the instabilities of the marketplace. However, the long-term decline in government funding means that the role of parks as catalysts for either economic decline or recovery has become the focus of a number of studies (for a typical example see Varma, 2003 and CABESpace, 2005d). Perhaps the most valuable publication relating to this question dates from a period of relative prosperity. Clare Askwith's scoping article, 'The economic contribution of historic parks, gardens and designed landscapes: a review of existing data and research recommendations for future research' (1999), outlines the case for evaluating the economic benefits of greenspace as well as the need for more research on the subject. Unlike more recent analyses, which tend to ally economic benefits almost exclusively with the ecological or recreational functions of greenspace, Askwith identifies the particular economic potential of heritage landscapes. Although Askwith's account focuses on sites that command an entrance fee, it does highlight the value placed upon historical landscapes by the public. The public appetite for and appreciation of historic landscapes is clearly recognised in terms of the estate parks, parterres and even walled vegetable gardens of the National Trust or English Heritage, as exemplified by the popularity of Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire and Wrest Park, Bedfordshire. However, further research is required to demonstrate the same appeal of more accessible, public landscapes.

CITY FORM: Sustainable Urban Form Consortium (SUFC)

Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development, Oxford Brookes University, 2007

Funding: EPSRC

Researchers: Prof Mike Jenks, Dr Nicola Dempsey, Dr Shibu Raman

CityForm was a research consortium led by the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development. The project examined 'claims that high-density, mixed-use urban areas are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially beneficial'. The project examined the ways in which 'urban form – the size, shape, density, land uses and layouts of a city – can influence its social, economic and environmental sustainability and transport use'.

Published outputs:

Jenks and Jones (eds.) 2009, *Dimensions of the Sustainable City* (London).

Jenks and Dempsey 2007, 'Defining the neighbourhood: challenges for empirical research', Town Planning Review 78 (2), 153-177.

Dempsey 2008, 'Quality of the built environment in urban neighbourhoods', Planning Practice and Research, 23 (2), 247-262.

Dempsey 2008, 'Does quality of the built environment affect social cohesion?', Urban Design and Planning, 161 (3), 105-114.

Bramley, Dempsey, Power, Brown, and Watkins 2009, 'Social sustainability and urban form: evidence from five British cities', Environment and Planning A, 41 (9), 2125 – 2142.

Perhaps the best evidence of the impact of economic conditions upon research priorities for the greenspace sector is the shift from a relatively diverse and inclusive research environment, into one dominated by the language of economics and services. The extent of this change is exemplified by the London Olympics of 2012, the theme of which shifted from 'One Planet' and the 'Green Games', predicated on 'delivering a sustainable Games and developing sustainable communities' (Mayor of London, 2007) to 'Exploiting to the full the opportunities for economic growth offered by hosting the Games' and 'Ensuring that the Olympic Park can be developed after the Games as one of the principal drivers of regeneration in East London' (DCMS, 2010, 1). In fact, a vast portion of the much-heralded Olympic Park in Stratford is to be given over to residential development in the coming decade (Brown, 2012, 15). This shift is representative of the direction of greenspace provision policy as a whole and is one of the reasons why many Friends groups and campaigners remain sceptical about any scheme that positions greenspace at the centre of a regeneration programme. If the trust of such groups is to be gained and retained, it is essential that any future research undertaken in this theme is both consistent and transparent in its motivations and intentions.

6 Parks and public health

The relationship between clean air and improvement to public health are now well-rehearsed and familiar. Thus, the role of greenspace, first in the form of commons and the rural hinterland, and later formal gardens and urban parks has become an established element of the urban narrative. Consequently, research and accounts of this connection can be found in student textbooks and scholarship in the fields of history, urban planning, medicine and public health and the history of medicine (for examples see Luckin, 2000, 207-228 and Meller, 1997, 26-7).

More recently, research relating to public health and public greenspace has shifted to focus on the manner in which public greenspace (including historical landscapes) might best serve contemporary health agendas (CABESpace, 2010a and Shackell and Walter, 2012). Perhaps unsurprisingly, this approach attracts the attention of politicians at both a national and a local level. A brief but functional introduction to this research agenda and its historical precedents can be found in Catherine Ward Thompson's 'Linking landscape with health: the recurring theme', published in Landscape and Urban Planning in 2011. A more comprehensive list of publications in the field can be found in Green Space Scotland's report The Links between Greenspace and Health: a critical literature review (2007). The research published in these various reports ranges in demographic and geographical focus, but consistently reiterates the health benefits of access to public greenspace. While many have seized upon the health agenda as a means of attracting funding and protecting urban parks from redevelopment, this strategy has sometimes led to relegation of a site's historical character to a position of secondary importance.

7 Capturing extent and characterisation: GIS, mapping and quantification

> Despite a renewed interest in greenspace, there is very little accurate information about how many parks and green spaces there are in urban England, where they are, who owns them, what condition they are in, or how many people are employed in looking after them (CABESpace, 2010f, 4).

After the question of typologies, the greatest obstacle facing those seeking to develop research into public greenspace is the identification of sites, both at a local and a national level. Notwithstanding the various registers and lists of sites already identified as being of historic interest, no comprehensive list of all public green spaces currently exists for England. Between 2009 and 2011, CABESpace published a number of reports that demonstrate the desperate need for such a comprehensive 'go to' resource, arguing that 'the information gap makes it extremely difficult to maintain a strategic view, co-ordinate provision, respond to changing social needs, or plan for a changing climate' (CABESpace, 2009e, 2). While a range of sources of data pertaining to greenspace in England exist (see list provided in CABESpace, 2010f, 6), hitherto the only attempt to quantify urban greenspace across England was the Public Parks Assessment in 2001 and even the PPA achieved only an estimate (Green Space, 2001). Prior to the termination of its funding in 2011, CABESpace was developing an inventory of nearly 17,000 individual urban green spaces. This project remains incomplete. However, even had the project been realised, it would have required regular updating in terms of both entries and general scope in order to retain legitimacy. It is clear that a wide range of sites must be 'captured' and at least a baseline level of information collated if we are to acquire a more subtle and progressive understanding of the historical and contemporary value of public parks and gardens. One model that might underpin such a process can be found in the Forestry Commission's Public Benefit Recording System (PBRS), which is a GIS-based tool (www.pbrs.org.uk last accessed 1/10/2012) which:

> assists cross-sectoral working and understanding amongst representatives of the different sectors – and as such functions as a tool for holistic partnership development and intervention. It is also built on the premise that the key to increasing the social, economic and environmental values of an area, and thus exploiting its leverage potential, lies in the three criteria of Quality, Entrepreneurship and Location (www.pbrs.org.uk/approach last accessed 1/20/2012).

However, by being so outcome-focused, an inventory based upon PBRS criteria may find itself obsolete within years of its creation as a consequence of changing public needs and the 'roll forward' of that which is deemed to be 'historical'. A more directly applicable and politically neutral model developed specifically to capture, characterise and evaluate the extent and condition of public green is the Scotland's Green Space Map, an ambitious project developed and pushed forward by Green Space Scotland (See Green Space Scotland, 2007a, Green Space Scotland, 2007b, Green Space Scotland, 2007c, Green Space Scotland, 2012c). The map is GIS (Geographical Information System) based and provides information, not only on the location of green spaces, but also their extent and type. The sites captured are specifically urban (i.e. situated in towns and cities with a population of 3,000 or more residents) and all 32 Scottish Councils are represented.

The potential of such a resource extends beyond the academy and heritage or greenspace professions as the data can be viewed on an interactive map (conditional upon an Ordnance Survey license). Although not perfect in terms of public access, it represents a significant step towards a systematic approach to the quantification and evaluation of urban greenspace. Furthermore, the process of cataloguing greenspace provides a structure within which broader questions about typologies and 'value' must be resolved, leading to fundamental discussions about methodologies and information management systems. As a result, the potential benefits for the field as a whole are considerable and potentially radical.

At the point of writing, Ordnance Survey and Natural England are evaluating the potential costs and benefits of a similar process in England. Support for such a project is unanimous across the panel of professionals consulted for this report. If this project is finally realised, English Heritage should use its position to ensure that the map is used effectively at every level of park protection and management, from friends groups to conservation management planning. It is crucial that such a substantial piece of work should not disperse further the slim resources available to most greenspace organisations, but rather should produce substantive datasets that are accessible to those who need them.

In terms of English Heritage's contribution to the form and use of a greenspace map for England, there is considerable potential to contribute to the map using data collated as part of English Heritage's work in the field of historic landscapes charaterization (HLC). Since the early 1990s, English Heritage's HLC and urban survey programmes have been producing detailed GIS mapping and databases of urban areas throughout England (with a particular focus on major conurbations). Each project also results in a report, or a series of reports, on the historic character and development of the area concerned. All this information is held in local authority Historic Environment Records (HERs). The project reports are generally available online, and in some the raw GIS data can be downloaded from the internet. Finding a means to exchange information between greenspace mapping projects and English Heritage's HLC and urban characterization programmes would raise awareness of this data, perhaps prompt new projects and data updates, and increase the impact of over two decades of research.

In addition to the formal characteristics of extent and location, there a number of 'softer', less tangible components of historic landscapes, which are equally important to improving public knowledge and appreciation of urban greenspace. A number of groups across the country are using mapping software to amass and collate such evidence. Historypin provides a promising but under-exploited platform for uploading historical imagery, while Groundwork's My Urban Oasis Map demonstrates the potential for building an entirely new evidence base from scratch.

MY URBAN OASIS MAP

Partnership between Groundwork (leading partner), the RHS and Chris Beardshaw.

Funding: Groundwork and Marks & Spencer

In 2012, the environmental charity Groundwork joined the RHS in an effort to mobilise people from all walks of life to get involved in making their streets, parks and neighbourhoods greener places to live. The two organisations devised a series of show gardens which were exhibited at each RHS flower show that year. The gardens were designed by landscape designer and broadcaster Chris Beardshaw. They were themed under the title 'Urban Oasis' and showcased some of the most challenging urban environments where gardening, community work and good quality landscape design have brought people together and yielded powerful social benefits.

Outputs:

A crowd-sourced online map annotated with statements from the general public about their 'urban oasis'. The map is available via www.groundwork.org.uk and the 'Do Some Good' application for smartphones.

Show gardens at RHS flower shows in 2012.

See also: *Grey Places need Green Spaces – the case for investment for our nation's natural assets* (2012).

DEFINITIONS AND TYPOLOGIES: CONFLICTS OF MEANING

> Cultural critic Raymond Williams once deemed 'nature' to be 'perhaps the most complex word in the [English] language'. 'Park' comes a close second (Jones and Wills, 2005, 2).

1 The challenge of typologies

> 'Park: An enclosed piece of land, generally large in area' (Symes, 2006).
>
> 'PARK, a space of ground used for public or private recreation, differing from a garden in its spaciousness and the broad, simple, and natural character of its scenery' (Frederick Law Olmstead, 1875).

One of the prevailing myths that has coloured approaches to public parks and designed landscapes is that they display only a limited degree of variation in their character; that they are reconfigurations of the same formula in different locations. This is perhaps a consequence of the myopic focus placed upon parks created during the peak of the parks movement, and compounded by the emphasis placed upon features common across the canon, such as bandstands, lakes and statuary. Albeit understandable, what has emerged is an uncritical conceptual caricature of public parks, which has led even leading scholars to assert wrongly that the Victorians created 'only one model for the urban park' (Greenhalgh and Worpole 1995, 77). Thus, an immediate challenge facing all who work in the greenspace sector is the development and adoption of appropriate definitions and terminology. For a sector with such a diverse and evolving range of sites, the definitions and typologies applied to urban greenspace remain stubbornly generic. Terms such as 'park' and 'garden' indicate only the broadest of qualitative distinctions. For Frederick Law Olmstead, the status of 'park' was to be conferred only on those sites that met specific physical and aesthetic criteria, while for many modern commentators, the term connotes a broad concept rather than a reality:

> The park idea is a fluid and adaptable concept…There is clearly more than one type of park, and more than one purpose to parks (Jones and Wills, 2005, 4).

When it comes to scale, there are few effective means of categorization. Qualifications such as 'municipal park' or even 'Victorian park' have fallen into common use as a means to connote large public parks constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century. However, the use of such general terms presumes incorrectly a commonality in the origins, design, user demographics and management of such sites. Even parks laid out in the same decade can vary significantly in terms of the design of both their park structure and individual decorative features. As John Pendlebury acknowledged back in 1997,

> it is quite clear that the nature of structure and decoration is highly variable between different types of site and that the development of a satisfactory generalised model of structure and decoration which could be applied across all sites included on the English Heritage register is not possible (Pendlebury, 255).

Compounding the challenge of categorization is the highly subjective manner in which the public perceive and use designed landscapes. While some may have a deep and

comprehensive understanding of the history of urban green spaces, others may have no such knowledge and/or consider historical typologies to be of secondary importance. In certain circumstances the importance of a typology has been overshadowed by a preference for categorizing landscapes by physical form. This certainly promises a simpler system and its appeal is unsurprising considering the diverse functions that urban green spaces now perform. Whereas strict bylaws previously prohibited certain sports and activities in certain sites, today the wide range of activities permitted in most urban parks means that they are no longer distinguishable by virtue of prescribed function or user behaviour. Furthermore, contemporary park usage often ignores or overrides historical typologies, creating an additional layer of information to be either incorporated or ignored during the process of classification. The result can be a confusing and incompatible array of typologies that make regional comparisons impossible. As Clare Askwith has observed,

> The variations in typology used by different datasets make it impossible for data relevant to historic parks and gardens to be easily extracted. Thus, the English Heritage Register and York Database use the same 'functional categorisation', which classifies sites according to their original type when made but does not classify them according to their current function…Data collected by the tourist boards and others tends to lump gardens of all types, whether historic or not, together' (Askwith, 1999, 35).

2 The traditional typology of designed landscapes

As with any form of environment or heritage asset, there are myriad means of categorising urban parks, designed landscapes, and open spaces. It is all the more surprising then that no authoritative typology exists that reflects the qualitative as well as quantitative distinctions between these landscapes. This is perhaps a result of necessarily specific focus of peer-reviewed research, and the subsequent pressure to restrict academic research projects to only one or two categories of urban greenspace. However, this level of focus has created a strange asymmetry in the manner in which designed landscapes are categorised within academic research. While academic historians are eager to define the parameters of their own research, carefully demonstrating their rationale for the inclusion or exclusion of specific case studies within a general category such as 'public park' or 'recreation ground', there is little evidence of such rigour being applied to the presumed consensus of what defines the general categories themselves.

In 1991, Hazel Conway hinted at the problem with this presumptive approach to general categories when she highlighted the misleading nature of the term 'public park'.

> Municipal parks are public parks, but these were not always as accessible to the public as their name would imply. In order to identify municipal parks to which there was free access, it is important to distinguish between the various forms of public park, but in practice it is not always easy to do so (Conway, 1991, 11).

The importance of such distinctions is not simply that appreciating such variations can help us to understand better the social context of the parks concerned, but also that different models of ownership and access affected the aesthetic design of landscapes, the regulations in place to protect them, and consequently their respective scarcity and the potential level of protection afforded them. Nevertheless, even CABESpace's inventory of green spaces applied the general category of 'Parks' alongside the more specific categories of 'Golf courses', 'allotments' and 'nature reserves':

Table 2: Contents of the inventory (all urban authorities, England)

Green space type	Count	Area (ha)	Data
Allotments	997	1,356.8	Allotment sites 2004-05
Cemeteries	1,643	3,679.1	Burial grounds 2006
Community farms	197	472.8	Community gardens and city farms 2004-05
Country parks	72	5,756.9	Country parks
Doorstep greens	82	140.3	Doorstep greens
Golf courses	361	5,720.6	Golf courses
Grass pitches	10,243	8,170.4	Sport England/Fields in Trust
Millenium greens	91	164.5	Millennium greens
Nature reserves	663	14,308.0	National reserves; local nature reserves
Parks	1,770	52,243.2	Registered parks and gardens 2008; *Public parks assessment*; Green Flag parks 2005-06; Green Flag parks 2006-07
National Trust	128	14,537	National Trust
All types	16,247	106,549.6	

From CABESpace, 2010f, 9

In terms of categorisation, form still dominates function. The emphasis placed upon design is demonstrated by English Heritage's own criteria for designation. Of the nine criteria currently applied, two are completely inapplicable to public parks as they were created after 1840 (criteria 1 and 2), while the majority of remaining applicable criteria place emphasis on the age and influence of the design and architect, and integrity of the extant landscape (criteria 3, 6, 7, and 9). Although social and cultural value in acknowledged in criteria 8, the advice still stipulates that 'a direct link between a site and a person or event, and this must be reflected in the actual layout of the site itself'

(English Heritage, 2011). This emphasis upon early, intact landscapes excludes many public parks from the Register and relegates them to the status of relatively 'insignificant' historical landscapes. If the real value of public parks is to be appreciated and protected, then there is an urgent need for organisations such as English Heritage to recognise and catalogue the significance of a landscape's function as well as its form.

1. Sites formed before 1750 where at least a proportion of the original layout is still in evidence.
2. Sites laid out between 1750 and 1840 where enough of the layout survives to reflect the original design.
3. Sites with a main phase of development post-1840, which are of special interest and relatively intact, the degree of required special interest rising as the site becomes closer in time.
4. Particularly careful selection is required for sites from the period after 1945.
5. Sites of less than 30 years old are normally registered only if they are of outstanding quality and under threat.
6. Sites which were influential in the development of taste, whether through reputation or reference in literature.
7. Sites which are early or representative examples of a style of layout or a type of site, or the work of a designer (amateur or professional) of national importance.
8. Sites having an association with significant persons or historic events.
9. Sites with a strong group value with other heritage assets.

From English Heritage, 2011

At present, the heritage industry is out of sync with the perceptions and values held by communities. An informed and consistent typology, which reflects both the form AND function of green spaces is a necessity if communities, academics, managers and heritage professionals are to exchange research outputs and inform the public understanding and interpretation of landscapes effectively.

The current focus on form confines every site to being understood only in terms of its most dominant landscape characteristics, and in so doing negates the possibility of acknowledging the multifunctionality that has ensured their enduring appeal and survival. It is also one of the reasons why so many important sites remained unlisted, as too many simply do not fit easily into existing categories. From the perspective of professional historians and conservation professionals, a qualitative typology is far preferable to a design-focused or purely chronological typology, as it encourages both further investigation and qualification. The need for such a sophisticated, functional, consistent and flexible typology of greenspace is pressing and should be a priority for English Heritage in the coming months.

- **Public Park**

As Conway highlighted, one of the recurrent areas of confusion and lack of consensus arises from two distinct uses of the term 'public park' to refer either a park with public access or a park in public ownership. Neither is incorrect, but they can apply to landscapes of quite different character and purpose.

Historically, the term originally referred to areas to which the public were granted at least partial access free of charge (Conway, 1991, 2 and Jordan, 1994, 86). In the early decades of the parks movement, few corporations or councils had the powers to raise funds to enable the creation of entirely public parks. As a result, early parks such as Princes Park in Liverpool were instead private schemes, funded by charitable donations and shareholders. The consequence was a series of privately-owned parks, of which a substantial portion was accessible to the public. The introduction of the second meaning of the term, the park in public ownership, occurred relatively swiftly after the first. The earliest example in England is Birkenhead Park (opened 1847), but numerous examples followed as during the 1860s as a large number of Improvement Acts for large towns and cities passed through parliament, enabling the creation of parks that were funded by rate-payers and retained in public ownership. Famous examples include Alexandra Park, Oldham (1865), Grosvenor Park, Chester (1867), and Abbey Park, Leicester (1882). In the early twentieth century, these were joined by many other sites, which finally passed into public ownership. For example, Canford Park, Bristol (1909). Hence, the mixed application of the term 'public park' is in fact a historical problem, dating from the time of the parks' creation. Nevertheless, despite its historical pedigree, it is an area of ambiguity that hinders an inclusive approach to the sector, particularly at a time when the public status of urban greenspace has been questioned at both a local and national level. The recent preference for terms such as 'open' and 'green' rather than 'public' in various policy documents, suggests that politicians at both a local and a national level are aware that 'public' is popularly understood to mean in public ownership and as this may potentially change in the near future, they have sought to distance the term and its associations from the landscapes in question (see 'The evasion of typologies' below). As Greenhalgh and Worpole observed in 1995,

> The public park retains some vestiges of natural rights and a sense of freedom, which may be disappearing fast in the highly commercialised and regulated environments of consumer society and urban centres (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 24).

For the purposes of this report, the term 'public park' is used only to refer to spaces that are in public ownership OR, if under the control of CiCs or charitable trusts, are normally accessible to the public free of charge.

Further to their 'public' status, the category of public parks has also become associated with particular key features that were popular among landscape architects during the golden decades of park creation. No exhaustive list of such features exists, not does the absence of these features necessarily exclude a site from this category. However, there are various elements of which the inclusion of one or more often signifies a park of this type.

> The formula included groves of trees, large areas of open lawn or meadow, artificial lakes, streams and waterfalls, meandering paths, and frequent benches affording pleasing vistas (Schenker, 2009, 5).

The large scale of many of these features has led some commentators to dub them 'urban landscape parks' (Low, Taplin, and Scheld, 2006, 20). Although the vast majority of large public parks in England were laid out between 1846 and 1918, there are more recent examples. Both enemy bombing during the Second World War and post-war optimism prompted the creation of new green spaces, particularly recreation grounds and playgrounds, some of which comprised part of the social housing projects of the 1960s. More recently, the creation of 'linear parks' and wildlife gardens, on previously derelict industrial and landfill sites have added to the catalogue of green spaces in public ownership (for examples, see West Berkshire and Merseyside). Although for many, the term 'public park' still brings to mind the large metropolitan schemes of the nineteenth century, comprising a greensward, lake and carpet beds, a more subtle interpretation and application of the term is required among those working in the sector.

- **Pleasure Garden**

Usually associated with the Urban Renaissance of the eighteenth century, no English 'pleasure garden' from this period remains in its original form. The famous Metropolitan examples of Vauxhall and Ranelagh Gardens have been lost. However, the legacy of some provincial Pleasure Gardens can be seen in street plans and neighbouring road names, such as Ranelagh Street, Liverpool. The term is sometimes applied more generically to more recent sites, where a fee was required to gain access to at least a portion of the park or a specific attraction. Examples of nineteenth-century pleasure gardens include Crystal Palace, London (1852). The influence of Pleasure Gardens can also be seen in wholly public green spaces which adopted the feature of musical performances, firework displays and novelty structures such as miniature pirate ships and Chinese pagodas. The term therefore remains applicable to many discrete areas within larger park schemes.

- **Public Garden**

> 'Gardens are instances of an uncommon collaboration between nature and culture, between living materials and the human imagination' (Thompson, 2012, 159).

Although more commonly used to refer to private domestic grounds, the term 'garden' applies also to a particular form of public park, where 'passive recreation' potentially take precedence over active recreation and sport. As Historic Scotland observes 'gardens and designed landscapes can be defined as grounds that are consciously laid out for aesthetic effect' (Historic Scotland, 2012, 4). Generally smaller in size than large metropolitan parks, public gardens are traditionally planted more intensively than greensward parks. They may have various origins, from churchyards to hospital grounds and private garden squares, but many are now in public ownership and for public use. A large number of public gardens were created in the wake of the First World War and now provide a horticultural setting for war memorials. Frequently located in the city centre, sometimes within a town square, they are also found within larger park schemes, but they

represent a marked contrast to the wider landscape and as such are treated as discrete environments in themselves. Examples include St. John's Garden, Liverpool (1904) and Mandela Gardens, Leeds (2001).

- Winter Garden

The term 'Winter Garden' can be applied to one of two landscape types:

1. An area planted for winter display with evergreens or winter-flowering plants

2. A large glasshouse for public entertainment (Symons, 2006, 144).

It is the second category here that represents a distinct category of green space. Frequently located along the coast, or in towns where the climate can inhibit the use of parks for a large portion of the year, this second category of Winter Garden are technically not 'open spaces', but instead parks within buildings. Housing exotic specimens, they have much in common with the palm houses and conservatories found in many metropolitan parks. The creation of radical new interpretations of this category in the form of the Eden Project (2001) and the Sheffield Winter Garden (2003) have resurrected this historical form. Although some demand an entrance fee, thus disqualifying them from this study, the recent investment in parks has seen many historic winter gardens restored and new examples created which are free to the public. Consequently, winter gardens must be included in any comprehensive typology of public greenspace.

- Botanic Garden

Most commonly founded as 'subscriber democracies', funded by annual subscription or entrance receipts, their relevance here extends only to those that have since shifted into public ownership and therefore comprise part of a city or town's canon of public greenspace. Some early urban botanic gardens date back to the eighteenth century. However, few exist on their original sites. The finest quality historical botanic gardens usually demand relatively high admission prices. The adult entrance fee for Kew Gardens in 2012 is £16.00. However, Sheffield Botanic Gardens (SBG) provides a good example of how high-quality historic botanic gardens can be made both economically sustainable and free to the public at point of access. SBC has balanced the need to retain the integrity of the historical design with accessibility and the needs of general park users. Clearly, botanic gardens offer important insights into the management strategies, species, and design elements that shaped the evolution of urban green spaces and designed landscapes.

- Public Recreation Ground and Large Playground

In a similar fashion to public gardens, these may be discrete landscapes or incorporated within larger public parks. Early recreation fields were often created intentionally within large parks, particularly in neighbourhoods deemed to be 'working class'. One of earliest examples of a recreation area within a park is the football pitch area in Hyde Park, set aside permanently for public use after the Great Exhibition of 1851 had made that section of the park a place of inclusive resort. Other examples include Stanley Park in Liverpool,

where Liverpool Football Club first played. It is often presumed that these sites tend to privilege function over form, 'playgrounds were laid out with their function in mind rather than from aesthetic considerations' (Jordan, 90). However, many such facilities comprised part of a wider landscape scheme and were intended to balance densely-landscapes areas in the vicinity.

3 Additions and exclusions

Traditionally, landscape historians have laid qualitative sub-categories across these main types of public urban greenspace. These are usually derived from the style favoured by their architect or their overarching stylistic principles. Terms such as 'Kemp landscape', 'Paxton park', 'Classical' and 'Modernist' landscape are to be found throughout the literature. However, these are highly specific categories that do not challenge, but rather fit within the broader typology outlined.

In addition to these traditional categories, there is an array of landscapes that have been traditionally excluded from typologies of urban greenspace, but which, by the terms of Hunt's proposed 'third nature', should be included in any comprehensive typology. We might deem these spaces 'peripheral' by virtue of both their relative absence from the academic radar and their physical liminality. Yet, as Greenhalgh and Worpole assert in their report *Park Life: urban parks and social renewal*, 'use could simply mean walking across a piece of common land to get to the shops' (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 9). Included in this category of 'integrated' green spaces are cemeteries, grass verges, 'wildlife corridors' (DCLG, 2012), lawned roundabouts, allotments and canal towpaths (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 9). A recent example of the social importance and potential of liminal urban greenspace is the Byker Community Garden (2011). Most of these landscape types are beyond the remit of this report (see 'Scope and Purpose' above). Indeed, significant work on country parks and cemeteries is excluded from this review (see Lambert, 2006b, English Heritage, 2007b). However, their perceived value and contribution to the canon of urban greenspace indicates that they should at least be acknowledged in future studies that make claim to any level of comprehensiveness.

4 Scale and extent

Alongside these relatively qualitative categories exists an approximate quantitative scale. Again, there is no clear consensus regarding the dimensions of each type. However, as the original landscape architects themselves realised, the scale and extent of a site can directly affect the experience of both the landscape within and beyond its confines and as such, is key to understanding its character and function.

Jordan uses a broad scale, in which Victorian public parks of between ten and 50 acres in extent provide a benchmark against which other categories are defined. In Jordan's typology, urban gardens and children's playgrounds are smaller and often under an acre in extent. At the other extreme are large estate parks, often donated to local authorities after the First World War, and comprising hundreds of acres (Jordan, 1994, 90). Conway's implicit typology is similar, although her study of the sites created in the wake of the formation of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association, suggests that

these gardens and playgrounds were slightly larger and ranged from 1.5 to 2.5 acres in extent (Conway, 1991, 216). What is clear is that although extent is an important element of categorization, it is best applied in a flexible manner. Although scale is important in the categorisation of specific types of public greenspace, as in Metropolitan parks or recreation grounds, it is important to note that no national organization or government department requires urban greenspace to be of a minimum size in order for it to be recognised as being of value.

5 Typologies from planning

In addition to the typologies traditionally employed by historians of landscape and the general public, a series of alternative typologies have evolved to serve different professional and political bodies. Perhaps the most influential of these are typologies of land use employed for the purposes of planning. During the early 1990s significant progress was made in integrating historic parks and gardens into planning procedures. The impact of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act, together with Planning and Policy Guidance 15 (Planning and the Historic Environment 2.24) meant that by 1997, parks and gardens deemed to be of 'historic' significance had become 'part of the mainstream function of the town and country planning system' (Pendlebury, 1997, 242). Planning Policy Guidance 17, published in 2006, provides an 'illustrative' typology of open spaces that might be deemed 'of public value':

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces
- Green corridors
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Amenity greenspace
- Provision for children and teenagers
- Allotments, community gardens and city farms
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Accessible countryside
- Civic spaces

(ODPM, 2006, Annex: definitions)

However, as these categories demonstrate, little attention is paid to the importance of sub-categories defined by scale or form.

In 2002, in their companion guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17, Kit Campbell Associates advocated the adoption of an arguably more qualitative and flexible typology of 'open space' in national guidance and legislation. Their typology was intended to encourage more "'joined-up thinking" in relation to planning, design and management' (Kit Campbell Associates, 2002, 2.6):

PPG17 Companion Guide Typology	
Greenspaces	Civic Spaces
Parks and gardens	Civic and market squares
Natural and semi-natural greenspaces, including urban woodland	
Green corridors	
Outdoor sports facilities	
Amenity greenspace	
Provision for people and young people	
Allotments, community gardens and urban farms	
Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	

From Kit Campbell Associates, 2002, 2.6

The reach of a number of planning-focused typologies has now extended beyond their original remit as landscape professionals seek a comprehensive and recognised typology of open spaces. In Scotland, Planning Advice Note 65 (PAN 65) has been used by Green Space Scotland as the basis for their ground-breaking green map project and a similar scheme is planned for England. Under Pan 65 typologies, the landscapes covered by this report fall within Section 6: Open Space and include 6.1: public park and garden, 6.4: play space and potentially 6.51: playing fields, 6.61 Green access routes and 6.9: civic space. However, lacking from the PAN65 categories is any indication of the public/private status that is so crucial to both the management and popular perception of urban greenspace.

PAN 65 Open Space	Public parks and gardens	Public park and garden
	Private gardens or grounds	Private garden
		School grounds
		Institutional grounds
	Amenity greenspace	Amenity – residential
		Amenity – business
		Amenity – transport
	Playspace for children and teenagers	Playspace
	Sports areas	Playing fields
		Golf courses
		Tennis courts
		Bowling greens
		Other sports
	Green corridors	Green access routes
		Riparian routes
	Natural/semi-natural greenspace	Woodland
		Open semi-natural
		Open water
	Allotments and community growing spaces	Allotments and community growing spaces
	Burial grounds	Churchyard
		Cemetery
	Other functional greenspaces	Other functional greenspace, e.g. caravan park
	Civic space	Civic space

From Scottish Government, 2008

The National Land Use Database: land use and land cover classification, published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2006, provides a comprehensive list of land use nomenclature, within which parks and urban greenspace are categorised under 'U040: Recreation and Leisure' as simply 'Outdoor amenity and open spaces' (ODNB, 2006, 34).

6 Inclusive or evasive typologies?

Over the past two decades, the terminology used to define public greenspace has taken a new direction, driven in part by the ecology and environmental agenda and partly as a response to changes to planning strategies at a national and local authority level. While academics have generally attempted to refine existing definitions and resolve contradictions and conflicts in their use by exploring that which is distinctive and specific about discrete sites, local authorities, NGOs and national government have by contrast, adopted a generic, 'umbrella-style' lexicon. In some instances this reflects a desire to adopt a more inclusive attitude towards sites, which may have formerly been excluded from historical typologies, such as peripheral grass verges, linear parks, cemeteries, and city farms. Terms such as 'greenspace' and 'open environments' are far less specific than the traditional categories applied by landscape historians and can thus be applied more widely. The perceived importance of applying a more inclusive lexicon was demonstrated in 2003, when the Urban Parks Forum was re-launched in England as GreenSpace (now defunct).

There is also evidence that this ambivalence towards formal typologies reflects, to some extent, the aesthetic neutralization that took place in neglected park landscapes during the latter half of the twentieth century. In their 1995 report, Worpole and Greenhalgh observed an 'increasing formlessness and attenuation of open space' as previously diverse public spaces became 'green deserts' (Greenhalgh and Worpole 1995, 11). When the landscapes themselves lose their distinctiveness, it is perhaps unsurprising that distinctive categories are also eroded.

• Green space

Although most definitions of 'greenspace' reference to vegetation in some form, there is significant variation in the range of environments to which the term itself are applied.

Despite adopting the term as its name, the English organization Green Space refers to 'parks, gardens and green spaces' in its mission statement, suggesting that it perceives parks and gardens to be specific, identifiable landscape types that deserve particular recognition. By contrast, Green Space Scotland makes no explicit reference to any sub-categories of green landscape in its self-definition. Rather, it assigns 'greenspace' a very specific meaning that is arguably more restrictive than traditional typologies, defining it as 'open spaces comprising green or vegetated spaces, including water and beaches but excluding streetscapes and urban civic spaces'.(Green Space Scotland, 2008) In this manner, Green Space Scotland's definition ostensibly excludes town squares and peripheral community green spaces if they are deemed to be 'civic' in character or not 'open' to the elements (as might apply to winter gardens and some architectural elements of public parks).

In 1993, Hazel Conway and David Lambert provided an early warning against the adoption of a term that presents parks and gardens as 'spaces' as opposed to designed, constructed schemes. In their report Public Prospects, they noted that 'Urban parks are in a kind of limbo at present, with their historic design interested still not adequately weighed against their role as greenspace' (Conway and Lambert, 1993, 16). This conflict remains and, if anything, has shifted at the cost of the heritage agenda.

- **Green infrastructure**

> Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional greenspace, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities (DCLG, 2012, 52).

In response to the functional limitations of the term 'greenspace', some organizations and agencies have recently adopted terminology that is even more generic and inclusive. In the 2012 report *Green Infrastructure and Open Environments: the all London green grid*, the Greater London Authority and the Office of the Mayor of London adopted the term 'open environments' as a means of reflecting the diverse range of sites across the city. (Mayor of London and Greater London Authority, 2012b). Similarly, the NPPF defines 'open space' along extremely inclusive lines as 'all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs), which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity' (DCLG, 2012, 54). However, what these monikers gain in terms of inclusivity is potentially offset by the loss of the terminology and typologies required to express, value and protect those elements of individual sites that are special and potentially unique. There is also evidence that the introduction of such opaque language in the definition and categorisation of the public realm is being used to 'rebrand' public space in a manner that changes its perceived 'public' character (Minton, 2009, 15-37). Whether such consequences are intentional or not, popular perceptions of urban parks, designed landscapes and open spaces are informed by the semantics of their description and categorisation.

This move away from specific typologies towards blanket terms is evident again in the current enthusiasm for collectivising a town or city's green spaces as one single resource rather than as a collection of distinctive and sometimes antithetical landscapes. The manner in which different green spaces relate to one another within the broader urban landscape has long been acknowledged and many park creation schemes of the nineteenth century were designed explicitly to create 'ribbons of parks' across a town or city. However, today explicit references to specific parks are frequently averted as discrete sites are subsumed into the broader epithet of 'green infrastructure' or 'green grid' (Mayor of London and Greater London Authority, 2012b).

Aside from the pragmatism of applying general, inclusive terms in policy documents, the shift towards terms such as 'green infrastructure' is also indicative of the recent attempts to justify and protect parks and green spaces by demonstrating their role in achieving statutory commitments, such as improvements to public health, mitigating climate change, and the promotion of sustainable communities.

> Green infrastructure refers to the combined structure, position, connectivity and types of green spaces, which together enable delivery of multiple benefits as goods and services (Forest Research, 2010, 9).

> We need urban green infrastructure to complete the links in our national ecological network. Urban greenspace allows species to move around within, and between, towns and the countryside. Even small patches of habitat can benefit movement. Urban green infrastructure

> is also recognised as one of the most effective tools available to us in managing environmental risks such as flooding and heatwaves. It is part of the answer to the challenges posed by a changing climate…Green infrastructure is a term used to refer to the living network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It is often used in an urban context to cover benefits provided by trees, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, woodlands, rivers and wetlands…Around the country local partnerships are seeking to use green infrastructure to drive economic growth and regeneration and improve public health, wellbeing and quality of life. It can also support biodiversity and the functioning of natural systems such as rivers and flood plains and help reduce the negative impacts of climate change (House of Commons, 2011, 2.78, 30-2).

There is important historical precedent for appreciating the interconnectedness of urban greenspace as exemplified by the relationship between Anfield Cemetery and its neighbour Stanley Park, Liverpool. In fact, historical approaches to what we might deem a 'green network' were arguably subtler than those being applied today, and reflected an understanding of visual exchange as well as physical proximity. The 'borrowed view' was a common conceit in the design of many public parks and assisted in the integration of these 'new' landscapes into pre-existing urban, suburban and semi-rural neighbourhoods.

In terms of the greenspace hierarchy, the increasing use of the term 'green infrastructure' does go some way to challenging the hierarchy of green spaces that has existed in Britain since the first exclusive pleasure gardens of the early eighteenth century. 'Gardens', 'parks', 'playing fields' are often associated with particular demographic groups and activities that may deter their use by a wider social cohort. In the past, these different labels have led to the emergence of a hierarchy that places higher value on sites of historic significance than those that perform an important contemporary role. The adoption of the term 'Green infrastructure' might potentially result in a democratisation of public greenspace. However, the term has become associated specifically with the ecological agenda, and is rarely to be found in use by park friends groups or those involved with heritage landscapes. Rather, at a time of increased focus on locality and community, the term 'green infrastructure' has, at times, confused the direction of the sector.

Against a backdrop of spending cuts and a lack of any central agency to represent parks at a high level, terms such as 'green infrastructure' can prompt suspicion and hostility at the local and community level. The involvement of organisations such as the TCPA and Defra in projects such as the Green Infrastructure Partnership, does little to reassure local parks groups. This is, in part, due to popular perceptions and sometimes misconceptions about the role of such agencies. Defra is associated in the popular imagination with agriculture, while the term 'planning' understandably provokes a negative reaction among those who have worked hard to protect and conserve greenspace from development. Thus, rather than weaving together the various landscape types and their qualities within one democratic, inclusive term, the expression 'green infrastructure' is rapidly approaching the position of becoming strongly, if inaccurately, associated with top-down policy initiatives and development-driven strategic plans.

Evaluating the value and role of urban green spaces in terms of their relationship to each other and the wider urban infrastructure, represents some progress in terms of acknowledging their significance beyond their immediate communities. As Low, Taplin, and Scheld have recently observed, 'when we discuss social sustainability, we need to address issues at various scales: the local, the regional, and the global' (Low, Taplin and Scheld, 2006, 8). However, this joined up approach presents a real challenge when posited against the Localism agenda (see section A above). If park management is devolved to individual communities, charitable groups, CiCs and trusts, a potentially vast and diverse range of stake holders, funds, initiatives, and management strategies will need to be harmonised for a green infrastructure approach to have any chance of success. In addition, if used without qualification, the term 'green infrastructure' may potentially restrict the perceived significance of individual sites to their ecological and environmental benefits. Such a broad definition of urban green spaces might yet come at the expense of an appropriate and comprehensive typology that reflects the qualitative diversity of heritage green spaces.

- **Greenspace as 'service provider'**

The recent shift in the slant of greenspace terminology towards a commercial lexicon is far from welcome among many park users, community groups and campaigners. For many, the notion that the meaning, value, individual and collective connection they have with an historic landscape is regarded merely as the reception of 'goods and services' implies that their status as citizen is being downgraded to that of consumer. The imprudence of adopting such a vocabulary for public greenspace is made clear when a comprehensive and accurate valuation of these 'goods and services' has proved elusive. In fact, it is those qualities that are most resistant to standard cost-benefit analysis that are valued most highly. The commercial neutrality of greenspace is one of its most distinctive characteristics, particularly in the urban landscape, where development for profit shapes most other elements of the environment.

In some cases this process of commercialising the vocabulary of greenspace has resulted from attempts to raise the perceived value of green spaces. In 2009, CABESpace's own report, *Making the Invisible Visible: the real value of park assets* sought to raise the political profile of urban green spaces by encouraging local authorities to place realistic monetary values on their park portfolio. A large amount of time and effort has been invested in an attempt to convince central and local government that parks deserve greater investment. However, for many users, the need to make such overtures to government seem absurd and distracting when the benefits to their local community are self-evident. The suspicion with which many park users view this lexical shift has only intensified as, rather than local authorities recognizing the intrinsic value of their parks, over the past two years we have seen a growing enthusiasm to create a commercially-equivalent valuation of parks and their 'services' – both in terms of ecology and health service provision (discussed more fully in Section C).

This process of re-conceptualising parks as service providers has been aided in part by the reluctance of heritage professionals and horticultural organizations to acknowledge and embrace the historical significance of public parks. The professional snobbery

directed towards Victorian parks in particular, has meant that until relatively recently, these landscapes were regularly abandoned to uninformed development and neglect. As Conway and Lambert observed nearly twenty years ago, '[parks] are seen as having low historic interest, as being more of less tabulae rasae over which new designs and new uses can be laid. No one would dream of proposing to redesign an eighteenth-century landscape park on the Register' (Conway and Lambert, 1993, 16). Very little has changed in this regard. From a heritage perspective, the use of the term 'maintenance' rather than 'conservation' in relation to many public parks has legitimised an under-appreciation of the specialist knowledge and skills required for the successful management of historic green landscapes. While building conservation has become increasingly professionalised, park conservation has been 'misfiled' as relatively unskilled labour and outsourced to untrained contract staff.

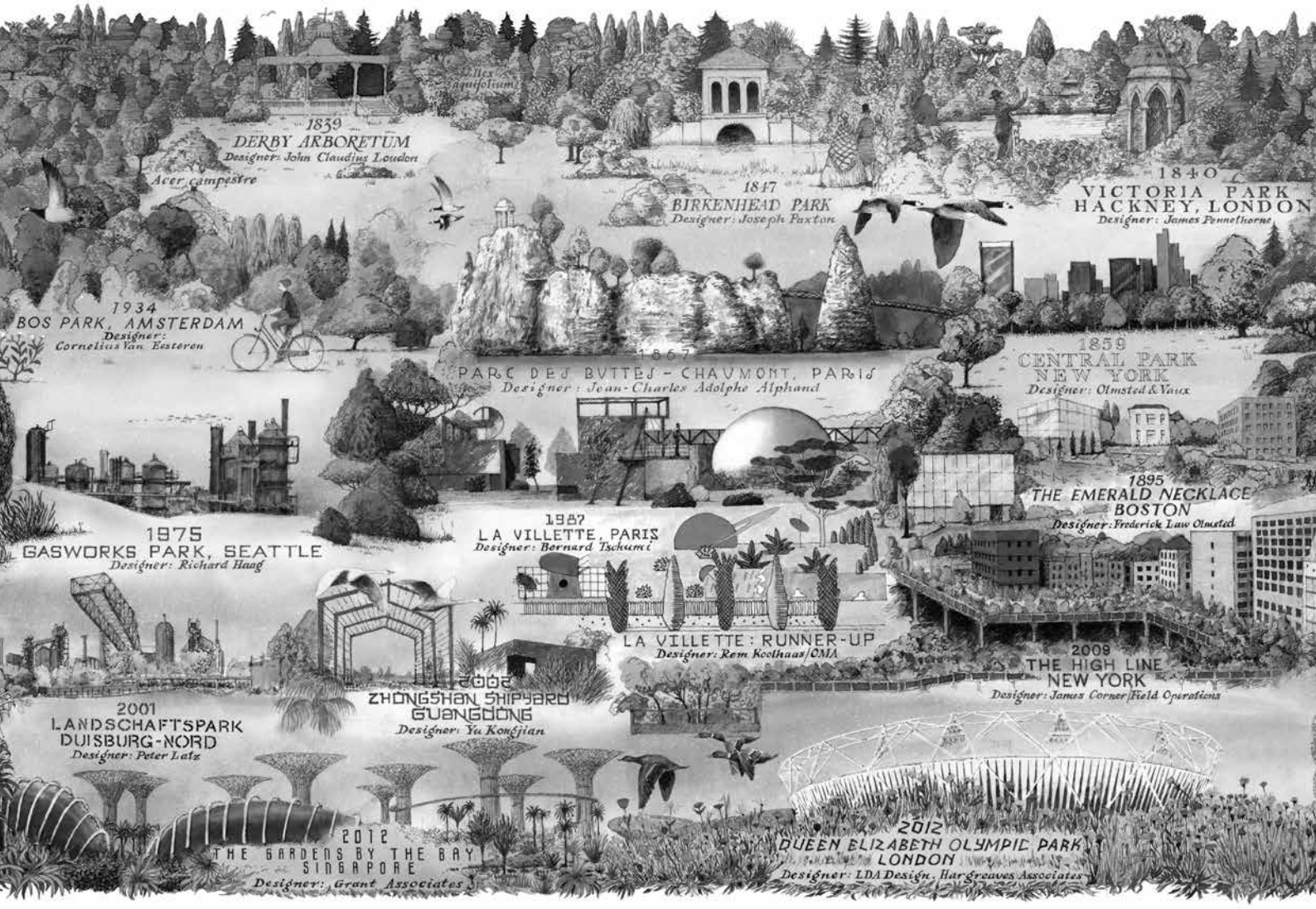
Management models, funding streams and organizations' internal structures have becomes increasingly influential in the manner in which green spaces are defined. The public perception of what does or does not qualify as greenspace has been persistently ignored or dismissed. This process of re-categorisation has been exacerbated at local authority level as many parks and gardens departments have been absorbed into other departments (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 11). The jurisdictions under which parks and gardens are to be found are as diverse as 'Events, Leisure and Tourism' (Manchester City Council), 'Planning and Environment' (Birmingham City Council, Brent Council and Bromley Council), 'Planning and Building Control' (Newham Council), and even 'Leisure, Culture and Libraries' (Bournemouth Council). The result of this approach to categorisation, funding, and management is that at both a local and a national level, parks, recreation fields, public gardens, and playgrounds have been deprived of their collective identity. Parks are therefore sometimes valued by the bodies that manage them only in terms of their status as variously 'event sites', 'tourist destinations', 'cultural artefacts' or 'sports facilities'. Their status as distinct, particular landscape types in their own right is frequently and increasingly ignored. In this model, the provision of parks is seen as a means to achieve other goals rather than as a primary objective in itself. This goes some way to explaining why urban park provision is constantly being re-justified in a manner not seen in relation to museums, rivers, or national parks.

If English Heritage is to resolve the inconsistent, and sometimes conflicting, categories applied to urban parks and designed landscapes, it must approach the issue at two levels. The first is to recognise the importance of community expectations and values in relation to urban parks and open spaces. The survey indicated a potential under appreciation at the local authority and national agency level of the strength of public feeling about the importance that parks remain funded from the public purse. The public status of parks is clearly deemed by many user to be essential to their character and value. Some further research into public attitudes to funding regimes is required and English Heritage should not presume that the financial framework of park management is of no interest or consequence to park users. In addition, English Heritage should consider developing an interpretation of historical park structures that reflects more explicitly the function of features as well as their architectural value. Recognition of the experiential benefits of specific features should be encouraged.

The development of methodologies for researching and capturing these expectations and values in a manner that can inform both English Heritage's internal approach to protection and external policymaking is recommended. Without this first step, any typological framework developed by English Heritage is likely to diffuse the sector even further. Once these values have been fully understood and their value acknowledged, English Heritage should work alongside greenspace managers, academics, and organisations such as Groundwork to develop an inclusive, flexible, and politically neutral typology of green spaces and designed landscapes.

PART THREE

POLICY DRIVERS, CONFLICTS, AND THEIR IMPACT



POLICY DRIVERS, CONFLICTS, AND THEIR IMPACT

1 Decline and regeneration

> One in five people thinks that it is 'not worth investing money in the upkeep and maintenance of local parks and public open spaces because they will just get vandalised (CABESpace, 2005a, 2).

In 1999, in commentary piece for Cultural Trends, the landscape architect Hilary Taylor drew attention to a clear division in approaches to understanding and valuing historic landscapes. The first, Taylor argued, draws attention to 'the disaster that has befallen so many of our urban public parks in the last twenty years', while the second approach is defined by a 'cool analysis of the specifically economic benefits associated with historic parks and gardens, including public parks' (Taylor, 1999, 81). Both approaches have been combined to various degrees in research that addresses parks as a genesis for, and beneficiary of, regeneration.

When examined closely, the notion of the park as a vulnerable environment dates back to their origins. George Chadwick observed that many of the early parks were 'limited green (soon to be smoky black) areas within the framework of bye-law street, mill, and factory' (Chadwick, 1966, 19). This assertion is borne out by primary evidence, such as the SCPW report which in 1833 observed that one park 'is now little frequented in consequence of its being surrounded by the town, and the trees being spoiled by the smoke of the town' (SCPW, 1833, 41). However, during the second half of the twentieth century there was an undisputed decline in park quality as a result of war damage, changes to management and maintenance, loss of park police, and chronic underfunding (Lasdun, 1991, 187-202). The impact of falling levels of investment, and later of CCT and 'best value' models for contracting, have attracted much attention from conservation and landscape professionals alike. During the 1990s, in a period of relative economic prosperity, the consequence of decades of disinvestment was exposed as both a warning against future losses. Organisations such as the Victorian Society altered their approach from what had been a relatively defensive strategy, to one of attack; funding new and influential research into the physical condition of some of the nation's most historically-significant urban parks. Although the findings of much of the work were published in specialist journals, a few key reports attracted the attention of politicians, heritage professionals, and the public. One of the most well-known publications is Conway and Lambert's 1993 report for the Garden History Society and the Victorian Society, *Public Prospects: historic urban parks under threat*. In their report, the authors invoked a series of examples of parks at risk to demonstrate the extent of the challenge as it existed in 1993. Identifying the main threats to the integrity of historical parks to be: vandalism, redevelopment, funding, local government reorganisation, CCT, competition from the countryside, poor quality repairs, and the disappearance of floral displays, Conway and Lambert provided a checklist that was applicable across Britain. In addition, the report went some way to challenging the presumed hierarchy of landscapes that dominated the Register at that time by acknowledging the value of parks that were not designed by the 'big names' in landscape architecture, but rather by 'borough engineers, surveyors, or gardeners lent by the lord of the manor' (Conway and Lambert, 1993, 3). This form of qualitative assessment of value was influential in cultivating a new, community-focused

approach to landscape evaluation, particularly in relation to urban regeneration (Conway and Lambert, 1993, 19). It is perhaps surprising that having instigated what would come to be thought of as a renaissance of historical public parks and championing their value, the Garden History Society and Victorian Society did not pursue this agenda further. A reluctance to provide leadership for the parks sector, due to either a lack of funds or a lack of will, has persisted over the nineteen years since Public Prospects was published and is, in part, the reason why many of the problems identified by Conway and Lambert persist in the new millennium. The challenges of obtaining and maintaining funding, of combating vandalism and of resisting the threat of redevelop remain. However, a number of the case studies cited in Public Prospects have now been restored, repaired or irredeemably lost. In this sense, overreliance on older reports such as this may actually pose a threat to champions of greenspace. As some of the most famous examples, such as the Sefton Park Palm House and Alexandra Park Oldham, have been 'rescued' over the past decade, out-of-date examples present an unrepresentative picture and may lead to an incorrect belief that the problem has been 'solved'. In reality, other sites have taken their place as landscapes at risk.

The second report to be published in the mid-1990s was more substantial and, arguably, more influential. *Park Life: urban parks and social renewal* was the culmination of an extensive research project conducted in collaboration with twelve local authorities, numerous academics and landscape professionals. Published in 1995 in association with the centrist political think-tank Demos, Greenhalgh and Worpole's report proposed a renaissance in park provision within which the historical character of some parks would be acknowledged but not necessarily prioritised. The authors encountered negative perceptions of many urban parks, most particularly regarding safety (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 25, 31-4, and 46). Their response was to advocate the creation of 'all kinds of new public spaces' (p4) and propose 'open-minded spaces' which permit a wide variety of uses at different times of the day and for different user groups. Taking their starting point from Brian Clouston's assertion in 1985 that urban parks were 'obsolete in terms of design', Greenhalgh and Worpole advocate an ambitious liberalisation of attitudes to historical green landscapes, predicated upon the potentially provocative assumption that 'not all open space is sacrosanct' (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 5). The research is convincing and demonstrates the failings of two generations of weak and directionless public parks policy. Greenhalgh and Worpole's conclusions also hint at the social and cultural focus that research into parks was to take over the following decade, observing that 'the park was a place where people consciously or unconsciously marked the passage of their lives' (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 51) and posing broad conceptual questions such as 'who has moral and emotional ownership of public space?' (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 61).

Despite its positive message and valuable primary research, the report's radical approach is indicative of an age of relative optimism and rising property values, which arguably limits the relevance of the report's premise to future research. While many of the observations regarding the challenge of successful park management remain entirely valid, today's political, social and economic climate brings into question the authors' condemnation of many extant Victorian parks. While making a number of important observations regarding the cultural value of parks, the report arguably underestimates

the level public appreciation and enjoyment of the historic nature of older parks and their landscapes; an appreciation that has led to a large number of the regeneration projects that have taken place since.

The fluid and changeable nature of public opinion towards individual sites and parks in general highlights the challenge but also the imperative for the research agenda to keep pace with, and reflect, the changing political, social and economic context of park provision. Unlike historic buildings, public parks need to adapt to meet the needs of contemporary users; but one of the most important of those needs remains contact with historical elements of their landscape.

Since the 1990s, a number of attempts have been made to demonstrate the necessity of statutory protection for all public parks and gardens, not only sites of historical significance. Most recently, Julian Dobson's report for Groundwork, *Grey Places Need Green Spaces* recommends a Parks and Green Spaces Act to 'enshrine in law the responsibility of stewardship for all greenspaces that are currently open to the public, whether or not they are publicly owned' (Groundwork, 2012, recommendation 11).

2 Political conflicts and policy contradictions

Across the political spectrum, parks and urban greenspace are today acknowledged as valuable resources. However, the manner in which this 'value' is appreciated and articulated varies, reflecting the chequered relationship between national government and public greenspace management over the past half century. By the late 1970s many of Britain's parks were in a state of dereliction; World War Two damage remained unrepaired and the recommendations of the Baines Report of 1972 led to spending cuts, the loss of park staff, and sale of historically-significant park lodges. With the decline in horticultural skills that accompanied the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) between 1989 and 1994, the destructive cycle of decline was complete. The emphasis of park management principles shifted from conservation, protection and improvement to base line maintenance. As Worpole and Greenhalgh noted in 1995, the 'current emphasis on cost-cutting and "efficiency" through contracting out has led to a general attitude of political and managerial conservatism' (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, 4). At the same time, a number of agencies and campaigners were demanding a more positive attitude towards greenspace provision from both local and national government. In 1995, English Nature (now Natural England) published *Accessible Natural Green Space in Towns and Cities: a review of appropriate size and distance criteria*. A year later, in 1996 the Heritage Lottery Fund launched the highly-successful Urban Parks Programme and in 1998, the Urban Parks Forum was established to bring together park managers from across the country. Following their electoral victory in 1997, and perhaps inspired by the clear public interest in what was to become the greenspace agenda, the new Labour government voiced their intention to pursue a significant national policy shift in relation to urban greenspace (Wilson and Hughes, 2011). Under New Labour there was a concerted effort to improve the quality of urban parks and designed landscapes under the broader agenda of 'urban renaissance'. The creation in 1999 of the government's advisor on architecture, urban design and public space, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) signalled a financial and

intellectual commitment to public spaces. This was reaffirmed in 2003 when, in response to recommendations made by the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce (DTLGR, 2006) and the Select Committee on Town and Country Parks (House of Commons, 1999), the CABESpace programme was initiated, providing leadership and focus for an array of academic, community and professional groups engaged in the greenspace sector.

In the Government's Urban White Paper (2000), the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions identified greenspace as 'vital to enhancing the quality of urban environments and the quality of our lives' (DETR, 2000, 4.47). The impact of the Urban White Paper and the New Labour agenda for urban regeneration was arguably a shift of focus away from reducing the cost burden of parks and towards a model of income generation and financial self-sustainability. The 'strangle hold' of CCT was loosened, although the practice of sub-contracting park maintenance continued.

In a wider sense, the 'regeneration' of urban parks sat comfortably alongside the enthusiasm for broader urban improvement, which saw entire neighbourhoods undergo gentrification and significant increases in private property values. Under the Labour Government, the local benefits of regeneration were championed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (est. 2001) and since 2006 by its successor, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). At the same time, the Department of Cuture, Media and Sport (DCMS) brought two agendas central to park use, those of culture and sport, within one governmental department. Government strategies, such as 'People and Place', which targeted regeneration at the neighbourhood level in Northern Ireland, made significant progress in changing the scale and focus of the regeneration agenda. Some neighbourhoods and communities experienced unprecedented levels of investment and environmental improvement. At a regional level, the Regional Development Agencies Act of 1998 enabled the creation of Regional Development Agencies, which had the scope and power to develop the regeneration agenda on a wider level. As well as promoting business, employment and economic development, the RDAs sought to ensure sustainable development.

Notwithstanding the regeneration achieved in many neighbourhoods and regions, the focus on economic benefits, as opposed to the social benefits of equitable access to quality greenspace, ensured the continuation of the principle of competition in the greenspace sector. The benefit of 'heritage assets' was increasingly articulated in economic terms, and their social value assessed against their ability to generate income. In the case of various vulnerable structures, such as glass houses, this often resulted in the effective privatisation of formerly-public buildings with public access restricted in newly-commercialised facilities such as cafes and private function rooms (see the Kemp Bistro in the Isla Gladstone Conservatory, Stanley Park, Liverpool). Although this strategy has ensured the survival of many at-risk park buildings, there is no question the result has been a de facto privatisation of some park facilities. In some cases privatisation as a means to regeneration has been taken even further. Again at Stanley Park in Liverpool, the controversial agreement to permit Liverpool Football Club to build a 60,000-seat stadium on the historic park landscape divided the community and the greenspace profession. The benefits included the high-quality conservation and regeneration of one area of an exceptional Kemp landscape, but the costs include the permanent privatisation

and development of a significant tract of public greensward. The proposed stadium will now be built outside the park, but the threat of private control of the park itself remains.

Clearly, the period 1997-2007 was a decade of relative optimism regarding the future of Britain's urban green spaces. Nevertheless, ten years of investment did not reach every park and neighbourhood, and the uneven distribution of spending actively contributed to feelings of frustration and cynicism within some communities. Initiatives such as the Green Flag Award (established in 1996) undoubtedly led to marked improvements in the maintenance of some sites. From just seven parks in 1997, 1424 parks now fly the Green Flag (greenflag.keepbritaintidy.org, last accessed 30/10/12), and English Heritage helped develop and fund the Green Heritage Site Accreditation for the Green Flag Award. Nevertheless, with a portfolio of damaged sites to manage, local authority officers have been forced to adopt a strategy of selection, investing heavily in the sites likely to achieve the Green Flag standards, while leaving other parks to languish underfunded. Even where substantial investment was made, a lack of ring-fencing of funds and constraints on the auditing capabilities of grant providers like the Heritage Lottery Fund, meant that money did not always remain in the park intended, nor even in the greenspace sector. The potential for the abuse of funds was not tackled during the years of relative plenty and there is even less money available to invest in auditing and oversight today.

3 The funding crisis

The election of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government in 2010 marked yet another turning point in greenspace policy in Britain. The economic crisis of 2007 had already resulted in budgetary cuts, but in 2010 the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review saw the withdrawal of funding for CABE and in 2011 both CABE and CABESpace ceased to operate. The CABE agenda was taken up by the Design Council, a charitable organisation, now renamed the Design Council CABE, while Greenspace sought to take on some of the functions performed by CABESpace. In doing so, Greenspace stretched its remit from that of an advocacy body and representative of public parks professionals, to a national charity that aims to provide leadership on greenspace policy and standards. However, in the absence of funding to meet these new responsibilities, neither organisation was able to match the focus and output of CABE and CABESpace.

In March 2013, GreenSpace went into administration. Among park users across the country, there was widespread shock and dismay, but the announcement came as little surprise to those working within the sector who understood that the additional responsibilities taken on by the charity had not been accompanied by the funding essential to their fulfilment. The impact was immediate as the Big Lottery Fund-supported 'Love Parks' project to help create a nationwide network of trained volunteers was cancelled before it could begin. It is likely that some of the roles performed by GreenSpace will now pass onto other under-funded charities and organisations, such as Keep Britain Tidy, Green Alliance, and the National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces (NFPGS). In particular, GreenSpace assets have been transferred to Green Alliance, while KBT is likely to take on the organisational responsibilities of 'Love Parks Week'. However, with no financial support, GreenSpace initiatives such as the GreenSpaces Fund, which

was being piloted in Nottingham, are unlikely to continue in the near future. If new host organisations are found, the sector still risks a repeat and a potential domino effect of financial collapse as the responsibilities previously held by numerous organisations are concentrated on fewer agencies with no additional resources. The long-term implications for prestige indicators such as Green Flag Awards and Green Heritage Site Accreditation are unknown and difficult to predict.

In addition to these national losses, local authority spending cuts have seen the few surviving park ranger stations closed (Crystal Palace Park, Bromley), redundancies, and attempts to 'off-load' various green spaces and sports facilities to community trusts, schools, and private enterprises (Ravenscourt Park, London). Although various government agendas have attempted to provide a blueprint for alternative management and maintenance strategies, most notably under the banners of 'Localism' and 'the Big Society', there is a marked lack of independent leadership within the sector. At both the professional and the popular level, the sector has become a tangle of suspicion, confused and misused terminology, ideological conflict and destructive competition. In such a fractured and politicised sector, a review of the research needs of urban parks and designed landscapes is essential. Without taking stock of the bigger picture, there is a real risk that the greenspace debate will increasingly pit historical preservation against contemporary use, ecological sustainability, and social need.

4 Funding and management: an historical dilemma

Among park users, managers, and politicians alike, there is a common awareness that funding represents the greatest challenge to the on-going quality and protection of the nation's historical public green spaces. Many recognize that the Baines Report had an enduring and largely negative impact on park funding. Similarly, there is general appreciation that the question of funding is related implicitly to the choice o management regime. Today, alternative funding and management regimes are the subject of much enthusiasm and 'trusts', 'philanthropy' and 'volunteerism' are often promoted as a route to long-term financial sustainability. Although there may be much to recommend these models, the historical narrative of park ownership suggests some significant drawbacks, the majority of which are simply not acknowledged in the current debate.

Many public parks on the Register today, as well as others that still await recognition, were initially semi-commercial concerns, run by trusts comprising wealthy local patrons, and funded by philanthropic donations and/or private development schemes. This was never deemed the most desirable form of management strategy by park founders. Rather, it was the consequence of a lack of legal power on the part of local authorities to raise funds for park management. For the first park creators, funding by subscription or donation was the last resort and usually required that a degree of privilege be afforded to supporters, such as private gardens within the park or control over the activities of those who could not afford to subscribe. This inequality in access and provision changed finally with the Improvement Acts of the 1860s and towards the end of the nineteenth century, more municipal parks were created. Nevertheless, early sites, such as Princes Park in Liverpool, survived for around half a century in the control of private trusts, essentially open to the public, managed by a committee, and independent of local

authority control. This is the model that is currently championed widely, particularly by local communities who seek to take control of their under-funded parks. In some instances, such as Chiswick Gardens, trusts are now in place and, for a large part a clear improvement in the physical quality of the historical landscape is evident. However, the long-term consequences of adopting the trust model, charitable status, or of relying upon private philanthropy, have little positive historical precedent. The first generation of trusts and philanthropic ventures failed the test of financial sustainability. By the early twentieth century, the trusts managing parks such as Princes Park were in dire financial trouble as the initial capital investment was depleted and suburbanisation saw wealthy residents relocate away from urban parks. By 1920, numerous local authorities across the country had stepped in to save these parks and the cost to the public purse was vast. Parks in urban areas that had become temporarily unfashionable had to be subsidised to the largest extent as local residents needed a free resource and could not afford to spend money in parks' revenue-raising facilities; this is a situation that remained unchanged today. Nevertheless, the history of management and funding regimes between 1840 and 1970 receives little attention today.

This lack of appreciation of the longer history of funding and management strategies presents a very real threat to the long-term survival of some of our most valuable sites. A high-profile study is needed to improve awareness of the history of park funding models prior to 1970, and to examine objectively the economic, social, conservation, and cultural risks associated with different funding and management regimes. Such a study should incorporate an assessment of the value and relevance of historical models to twenty-first-century funding streams.

The heavily-politicised arena in which the funding and management debate is taking place has, in some cases, led to English Heritage being perceived as a politically biased organisation. Working through local authorities and professional bodies, who have often chosen their position before English Heritage become involved, has meant that English Heritage has sometimes become associated with local decisions that are informed more by political and economic expediency than by the heritage agenda. If English Heritage is to play an active and influential role in such processes in the future, it must nurture relationships with friends groups, local communities, and grassroots organisations in addition to local authorities.

An improved knowledge of historical precedent if the protection and conservation of historical green assets is to be assured and English Heritage is in the unique position of being able to research and disseminate this information.

5 Attitudes

Despite the many conflicts that have arisen in response to funding competitions, shrinking budgets and shifting political agendas, there is a great deal of consensus regarding the importance of urban greenspace and designed landscapes. Unlike the terms 'suburb', 'housing estate' or 'high street', 'park' generally conjures up positive notions of social harmony, clean air and relaxation. There is a clear underlying agreement that high-quality green spaces are an essential component of successful and sustainable towns and cities

and that historical greenspace constitutes a significant proportion of those sites. However, although high-quality greenspace is deemed a desirable feature, derelict sites can blight a neighbourhood and even create no-go areas in otherwise thriving communities. Thus, attitudes to urban greenspace tend to be site-specific. As proximity is a key criterion in how people select a park to visit, and individuals tend to visit their local park most often, the perception of the value of parks in general can be greatly affected by the condition of just one such site. The existence of a high quality park in another city, or even another area of the same town, does not redeem the sector in the eyes of those whose neighbourhood park is underfunded and neglected. If parks are valued most as local resources rather than national monuments, then local lists and regional portfolios must be an essential element of future strategies towards greenspace funding and research. Systems such as GREENSTAT, which enables park users to comment upon the quality of individual sites, provides a potential resource through which to interrogate this issue further (www.greenstat.org.uk last accessed 1/10/2012).

Although the literature generally celebrates the potential of parks and urban greenspace, this is a debate coloured by the contingency of quality. Parks are presented as either a blessing or a curse on a community and the line between the two can be crossed in the space of a few funding cycles. The longer a park suffers underinvestment, the more hostile public and political attitudes become. As was the case with industrial heritage thirty years ago, a more vocal justification of the social and cultural benefits of historic parks is urgently required if the canon of extant landscapes is to survive.

6 Triumph and failure: a divided sector

The implications of this contingency of quality can be seen in the change in public perceptions towards parks that have undergone regeneration or, conversely, been surrendered to unchecked decline. For every triumph there is a park that has gone ignored or even been sacrificed in order to ensure the survival of another site. The division of 'winners' and 'losers' has become more polarised as competition has emerged as the most common means of acquiring substantial capital investment for green landscapes. From the Green Flag scheme to Heritage Lottery Fund bids, local authorities have been forced to prioritise specific sites in their portfolio. With limited operating budgets, this has led to the unavoidable neglect of the remaining parks. While new funding streams were emerging, this was arguably a defensible strategy as it was intended that having regenerated one location, the attention of local authorities would move progressively down the list, improving each park in turn and raising the standard of park provision across entire regions.

> Oldham MBC developed a replacement for their 1995 parks strategy in 2001. As part of this, the council has followed an innovative rolling programme of park regeneration, designed to create a comprehensive network of accessible, high quality and sustainable greenspace. They comprehensively refurbish a minimum of one park a year by focusing all capital monies on one park at a time. Twelve of their twenty-three parks across the 'green estate' have been completed (Park strategy case study www.green-space.org.uk last accessed 10/10/2012).

Unfortunately, with the 2007 economic crisis, such programmes of protection and improvement were left in stasis and those parks lower down on the list, often located in poorer districts with less vocal residents' groups, now face an uncertain (and unfunded) future.

'Failure' in terms of historic public park protection comes in two main forms: net loss and material decline. The former presents a greater threat in prosperous areas, particularly during periods of economic growth, while the latter has traditionally occurred in disadvantaged neighbourhoods where the detrimental effects of low council tax revenues are compounded by transient populations, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. Details of 'lost gardens', including many that were in public ownership, can be found at www.parksandgardens.org.

One of the greatest ironies of urban greenspace provision is that throughout the twentieth century, the survival of some of the most historically-significant public green spaces was due to the economic decline of their surrounding neighbourhoods. Across the north of England and Midlands, industrial decline led to large-scale emigration away from city centres towards the southern counties and suburban developments. In cities such as Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham, the formerly smart residential districts surrounding Victorian and Edwardian public parks became under-populated. The lack of demand for housing in these neighbourhoods effectively protected them from any substantial residential or commercial development. Consequently, some of the largest portfolios of historical public greenspace can be found in cities associated with late twentieth-century urban decline.

Unfortunately, the same process of urban depopulation that inadvertently protected parks from the pressure of development, also resulted in a significant decline in maintenance budgets as rates, and later council tax revenues, shrank. Large tracts of land escaped the threat of development merely to succumb to vandalism and neglect. Examples of parks that arguably survived as a consequence of this not so benign neglect include Newsham Park, Liverpool, Heaton Park, Manchester and West Park, Wolverhampton. It seems that in the latter half of the twentieth century, you could not have your park and maintain it too. Nevertheless, despite this duel attack of decline and loss, the past 15 years have been a period of relative triumph for the greenspace sector. There have been mistakes made, but there has been an overall improvement in the quality of England's extant historical urban public parks and gardens. Assessing the extent of this success and the evidence it provides for future investment remains an area of contention.

One of the greatest challenges in identifying 'best practice' in the greenspace sector is the lack of any consensus regarding what represents 'success'. For local authorities, economic independence has emerged as a popular goal for many, but this often conflicts directly with community goals to retain accessibility and accountability on the part of elected officials. In addition, steps necessary for long-term maintenance can conflict with both officers' and the public's sense of connection with the historic environment. As Wolverhampton City Council found when they began horticultural restoration works on West Park, 'The repairs and restoration of historic structures were welcomed by

all concerned, but the restoration of horticultural features proved to be much more controversial' (Wolverhampton City Council, 4). As most regeneration and improvement projects have been completed relatively recently, the long-term sustainability of their results is unknown. Significant capital investments may prove to have been unwisely spent if sites return to a process of cyclical decline and underinvestment.

In the absence of any clear consensus regarding 'best practice', it may prove useful to adopt the Green Flag Award judging criteria as a provisional model. Although skeletal, and with Green Heritage Site Accreditation separated out at a special level, it provides some sense of the plural pressures and demands made upon public green spaces:

The Green Flag Award Scheme and Green Heritage Site Accreditation

The Green Flag Award criteria:

A welcoming place
The overall impression for any member of the community (regardless of the purpose of their visit) should be positive and inviting.

Healthy, safe and secure
The park or greenspace must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use.

Clean and well maintained
For visual as well as health and safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed.

Sustainability
Methods used in maintaining the park and greenspace and its facilities should be environmentally sound.

Conservation and heritage
Attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of landscapes, wildlife, fauna, buildings and structural features.

Community involvement
The park and greenspace management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community to represent as many parks and greenspace user groups as possible.

Marketing
There should be good provision of information to users regarding management strategies, activities, features and ways to get involved. The parks and green spaces should be promoted as a community resource.

Management
A management plan or strategy should be in place; this should clearly address all of the above criteria. A financially sound management of the park or greenspace must also be demonstrated.

Green Flag, 2006 (updated 2009)

Green Heritage Site Accreditation

Accreditation is given in recognition of achieving the required standard in the management and interpretation of a site with local or national historic importance. The accreditation is sponsored by English Heritage. Sites do not have to be on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens but they must be at least 30 years old. Sites hold Green Flag Award status and are judged against four key criteria:

Understand the heritage value of the site

Acknowledge the heritage value of the site

Share the heritage value of the site

Conserve, enhance and help people enjoy the heritage value of the site.

The judges score sheet sets out further detail:

Presentation of conservation plan e.g. quality of green space conservation plan

Strategic and policy background

Community involvement and marketing

Greenspace management e.g. training, advisors

Good conservation standards

Historic features given prominence

Restoration/re-creation of historic features

Historic features intact and in use

Historic features integrated into cultural events

Historic leisure and sports facilities in use and maintained

Information available and evidence that historic features are enjoyed by the public

Landscape/views not fragmented

Horticultural displays contribute to historic character

Continuity in historic horticultural collections

Retain/replace detailing on buildings and other infrastructure

New/replacement features conserve or enhance historic character and appearance

From the Green Heritage score sheet

7 The occlusion of heritage

The potential for the ecological, economic and health agendas to completely occlude the historical context of urban greenspace was illustrated in the Planning Policy Guidance 17 issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minster in 2006. Under the heading 'supporting the urban renaissance' reads:

> Well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreational facilities help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe. Green spaces in urban areas perform vital functions as areas for natural conservation and biodiversity and by acting as 'green lungs' can assist in meeting objectives to improve air quality (ODPM, 2006).

While sporting facilities are recognised as a distinct category of greenspace, historical parks are subsumed within the generic category of 'open space', reiterating the misinterpretation of these landscapes as voids or vacuums, receptive to any new function or design scheme. This misconception represents an enormous challenge to any significant future progress in the identification, interpretation and protection of heritage landscapes. English Heritage should take a leading role in promoting the pooling of data between organisations such as Parks and Gardens UK, Groundwork, and Heritage Lottery Fund. It should challenge the existing status quo, which sees organizations defending rather than sharing their intellectual property. To this end, English Heritage should encourage groups such as county gardens trusts, which have traditionally had little involvement with urban issues, to work with friends groups of urban parks to ensure that historic significance is understood and reflected in management programmes.

8 Towards 'best practice' in historic public greenspace: case studies

The relevance of any criteria to individual sites will vary, but there is recognition within the sector that the correct balance between physical quality, maintenance, economic and environmental sustainability and community engagement is key to best practice. This is reflected in some of the most successful park restoration projects of the last decade.

WEST PARK, WOLVERHAMPTON (opened 1881).

Size: 17 hectares

Owner: Wolverhampton City Council (since 1940)

Funding: Heritage Lottery Fund 'Urban Parks Restoration Programme' 2000.

Date of Works: 2001-6.

Restoration of historical features:

- Repair and clean bridge
- Repair and restore Grade II listed bandstand
- Repair gate piers, gates and railings
- Reconstruct paths
- Restore chalet to be reopened as tea room
- Restore rock garden beds
- Remove mature trees

Social engagement and community:

- Install information boards
- Install Victorian-styled benches and litter bins
- Install directional signage
- Employment of an Area Manager to promote the site provide a contact point

Sustainability and Legacy:

In addition to listing its structures on the English Heritage Register, Wolverhampton City Council formulated its own specific planning policy (HE21) for historic parks and gardens:

Policy HE21: Historic Parks and Gardens

Development which preserves and enhances the historic landscape, features and architectural elements which together give historic parks and gardens their special character, will be encouraged. Historic parks and gardens are defined as those on the national register of the local list.

Development which would:

- result in the loss or substantial redevelopment of a historic park or garden or adversely affect its special historic character or appearance; or
- impair views into, out of or within a historic park or garden and its wider landscape setting

will not be permitted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- the development is essential to the success of a scheme which would provide other, overriding, planning benefits;
- all reasonable alternatives have been investigated and proved not to be feasible, and
- opportunities have been taken to conserve and, where appropriate, restore important landscape design features and architectural elements.

In such cases, a full planning application should be submitted and an impact assessment, including documentary research information and a comprehensive landscape survey, may be required. Where such development is permitted, the council will consider imposing conditions to ensure that:

- Any features to be harmed or lost are investigated and recorded to an appropriate level prior to or during works;
- Where possible, such features are preserved in situ or off site;
- Provision is made for any records to be deposited with the archive service.

Wolverhampton City Council, cited in West Park: heritage, 36.

In 2011, Wolverhampton City Council obtained a grant for £981,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop its plans to refurbishment East Park.

Best practice indicators:

West Park was awarded its first Green Flag in 2008. This was repeated in 2009, 2010, and 2011. The park was first awarded classification as a Green Heritage site in 2009. This was repeated in 2010 and 2011.It has been awarded Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) status.

Sources:

Wolverhampton City Council, West Park Management Plan 2007 to 2012. (Available via www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/leisure_culture/parks_green_spaces/parks/westpark last accessed 10/10/2012).

BIRKENHEAD PARK, WIRRAL

Size: 56 Hectares

Owner: Wirral Council

Funding: Heritage Lottery Fund.

Date of Works: 2004-2008

Restoration of historical features:

Restoration of Grand Entrance, Roman Boathouse and Swiss Bridge historic structures.

Restoration of three lakes including new stone edging for largest lake,

Restoration of Gateways, perimeter and internal railings.

Restoration of pathways.

Restoration and creation of many shrub, perennial and annual beds.

Restoration of historic culvert system.

Also restoration of the number of visitors to the park which had dropped in the period prior to restoration.

Social engagement and community:

Birkenhead Park Advisory Committee set up for the restoration has continued post restoration and has recently expanded its membership. Community engagement, especially close working with the Friends of Birkenhead Park has been highlighted as a key strength in every Green Flag Judging.

Since 2007, the Friends of Birkenhead Park have raised almost £1m for a range of heritage education and community involvement projects; over 20,000 schoolchildren have visited the park to participate in education programmes; and the annual contribution of over 80 regular volunteers is equivalent to 2.5 full-time members of staff.

Sustainability and legacy:

Birkenhead Park is protected by inclusion in the following:

English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest,

Wirral Council's Core Strategy,

Wirral Council's Heritage Strategy 2011-2014

Wirral Council's Birkenhead Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Best practice indicators:

Birkenhead Park was awarded its first Green Flag Award and Green Heritage Site Award in 2007 and has retained these awards every year since. Birkenhead Park was awarded its first Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) in 2009, and has retained this award every year since.

Sources:

Wirral Council, Birkenhead Park Management Plan 2007-2017

ALEXANDRA PARK, OLDHAM (opened 1865)

Size: 29 hectares

Owner: Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

Funding: Heritage Lottery Fund and Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

Date of Works: 1997-2004

Restoration of historical features:

- Twenty eight individual restoration projects including: Design, manufacture and install replica 'Lion's Den' MacFarlane shelter
- Repair path boundaries and resurface
- Repair decorative stone work
- Reinstate the structural planting of trees, woodland and other soft landscape.
- Fell an over-mature and poorly sited avenue of black poplars
- Remove inappropriate species and trees in visually damaging locations
- Replant five new trees for each one specified for removal to mirror the original composition and layout

Social engagement and community:

- Provide a modern play area for young children and playground equipment for children with disabilities
- Maintain 7 free tennis courts
- Maintain 3 crown green bowling greens
- Public toilets (when the gardeners are on site)

Sustainability and legacy:

Woodland management and new tree establishment have been given a high priority by the Council's park service. Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council has also increased the amount of information available online and in leaflets such as 'Let's Go for a Walk'. The park is used of the park for large civic events, such as the People's Carnival and the Sport4Life charity fun run.

Best practice indicators:

Alexandra Park has won and retained Green Flag status. The park is also on the English Heritage Register.

Sources:

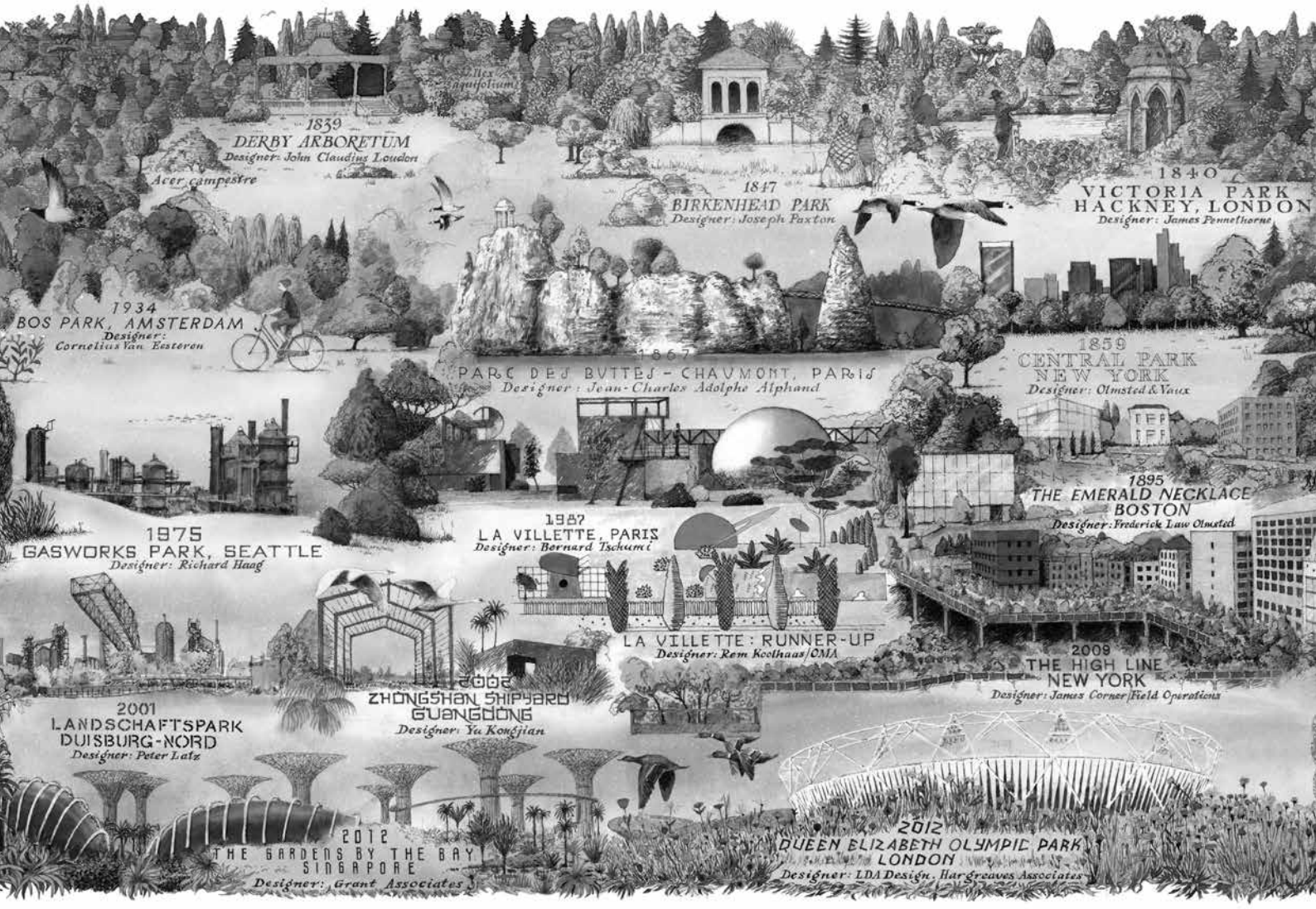
National Urban Forestry Unit, 2001Forestry in Practice: Regenerating historic urban parks – case study 27.

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD: Preferred Options: 5. spatial portrait available on http://oldham-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/oc/planning/spi/csdcpdpd/preferred_options/preferred_options_main_report (last accessed 15/10/2012)

In cases like West Park, Birkenhead Park, and Alexandra Park, physical restoration has been accompanied by changes to management strategies, a substantial improvement to the professional and public understanding of the sites' historical contexts, and an active engagement with the local population throughout the entire process. This holistic approach to the built environment is well-established in relation to other historic assets, such as country houses, but it remains a relatively unusual approach to urban greenspace.

PART FOUR

PRIORITIES



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

1 The research environment: competition vs. collaboration

There is only one point upon which everyone working in the field of public greenspace agrees, and that is that this is a subject about which there is rarely any consensus. From ownership to access, research priorities to budgets, the question of urban greenspace and designed landscapes currently divides public and professional opinion. One reason for the particularly acute conflicts that characterise the sector today is the dominance of competitive rather than collaborative models for funding, research, and management. From CCT to Green Flag Awards, Heritage Lottery Fund and academic research councils, the model of competition has created conflict at every level of park provision, interpretation and protection. Local authorities compete against one another for prestige and the funding it attracts, leaving smaller or less celebrated parks to languish and decay (see Political conflicts and policy contradictions above). The pursuit of grants of all sizes forces friends groups, sometimes within one community, to compete against one another in order to improve the condition of one park landscape radically, rather than raise the general quality of a portfolio of green spaces. Division is galvanised at every level of decision-making and professional organisations have demonstrated an equally jealous approach to funds, schemes and research. Control over high-profile schemes, such as the Green Flag awards, gives immense power to the organization responsible and creates animosity among those without similar powers. If the availability and scale of grants enjoyed in the first decade of the millennium had continued, this may have eventually become a less divisive issue. However, in an age of austerity, with the very survival of some green spaces at stake, the battles are fought more fiercely than ever before. Collaborative work is a luxury that many park managers and professionals cannot afford and the historic landscape is paying the price.

If this destructive cycle of division and competition is to end, then the promotion of objective, collaborative and pluralistic approaches to greenspace must become a priority for all institutions and individuals working in the greenspace sector. One barrier to a more objective approach to historic parks and gardens is the current vulnerability of many sites and the subsequent heated and emotive nature of public debate. Community groups and advocates have come to perceive history and historical precedent to be a potential line of defence against development. However, misconceptions about the nature of historical research means that some fail to appreciate academics' obligations to adopt a critical approach to evidence, even when it results in an unwelcome outcome for the stakeholders concerned. Overcoming this defensive attitude will only be possible when there is a clear and transparent approach to all public green spaces, their identification, interpretation and protection. The need for consistency and collaboration has become critical and English Heritage is perfectly placed to enable and promote a more cooperative approach within the sector.

2 The research environment: the university sector

The research environment in the British Higher Education sector is undergoing a radical transformation in terms of both structure and objectives. The most significant change to take place in recent years is the replacement of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) with the Research Excellence Framework (REF). In addition to being assessed and ranked in terms of their peer-review research output and research environment, departments in all disciplines will also now be appraised according to the quantifiable economic and social benefits of their research.

> The impact element will include all kinds of social, economic and cultural benefits and impacts beyond academia, arising from excellent research, that have occurred during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013.
>
> Decisions on Assessing Research Impact (www.ref.ac.uk last accessed 1/10/2012).

This change could be particularly significant for research projects relating to public greenspace and designed landscapes, as both the willingness of academics to engage in such research, and the criteria required by funding bodies, are likely to become increasingly contingent upon identifiable public benefits. This is encouraging in terms of research into practical elements of the conservation, management and regeneration of historical landscapes, but potentially more challenging for theory-based analyses.

Even when academics and organisations such as English Heritage are keen to work together, there are other obstacles that continue to block the way to successful collaboration. Perhaps the most significant of these is the full economic costing (FEC) which most institutions place upon even small research grants. This requires the funding body to cover overheads (which many scholars believe to be overestimated) in addition to the research. For assets such as parks and designed landscapes, which suffer disproportionately low levels of funding, this is a particularly dangerous disincentive and is the subject of much discussion within the sector. However, until it is resolved, opportunities for collaboration between the professional and academic workforce are limited.

At the time of writing, questions are also being asked regarding the opposite end of the research process. The government is currently pursuing an agenda of open-access publishing for peer-review journals. Publishers are preparing themselves to make the transition to open-access publishing. Various models are the subject of a professional consultation. One of these models would require academic institutions to fund the publication of research findings, at an estimated cost of £2,000 per article. This additional costing has potentially significant implications for the funding of small-scale research projects within academia and may limit the opportunity for peer-review research outputs from non-academic research projects.

English Heritage is part of the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award Scheme. There is a strong case to be made for pro-actively approaching universities with a view to applying for AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs). While universities may have their

own research priorities, in the current financial environment, English Heritage is in a strong position to encourage institutions to engage directly with its own research agenda. Periods and categories of greenspace which have hitherto been neglected by academia, such as twentieth-century parks, memorial gardens and playgrounds, provide ideal subjects for Doctoral research theses and local history research projects (see Research, Protection and Guidance Priorities 1.4). If English Heritage were to fund such clearly-defined academic work, it could dictate the parameters of enquiry and expand the academic debate.

3 The research environment: archiving and accessibility

Researchers seeking to interrogate any element of designed landscapes face two particular challenges in terms of archives.

- **The historical evidence base**

The first problem faced by many researchers is the inconsistency of the evidence base relating to urban greenspace. Historically, parks services and local authorities would deposit files and plans with the local or regional record office. Formal documentation, such as council minutes and accounts for park budgets, would automatically be archived, but additional information was also frequently deposited. Ephemera pertaining to fairs, pageants, sporting fixtures as well as building designs and planting schemes found their way into formal archives. Unfortunately, the urban location of many such archives means that aerial bombing during the Second World War destroyed a significant amount of this material. In addition, the local appeal of much of this information and its relative neglect by scholars led to other losses in the form of theft, while vandalism and accidental loss or intentional disposal by under-funded archive services, has eroded the available evidence base further. The archive is now fractured and deteriorating.

In recent years the quality of future archives has also been compromised. Whereas previously, park staff and superintendents may have remained in post for many years and so learned the value and methods of record keeping, since the 1980s, the increase in outsourcing has led to high levels of staff turnover and the loss of vast swathes of reports, management plans and other significant material. In some instances, it has been alleged that documents have been intentionally destroyed by staff as leaving their posts. In addition, the loss of park lodges and on-site offices means that there is no intermediate location at which documents can be stored before their potential historical significance can be assessed. Rather, material is disposed of as soon as its immediate use is ended. The result an archival black hole for the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries that presents a great threat to sites created or altered during this period. Without a solid evidence base, it is almost impossible to construct the case for landscape protection. Therefore, English Heritage must take lead and promote the need to build the archive at a local and nation level.

- The archive question

The main challenge relating to the construction and maintenance of the archive is the lack of any dedicated centre for material relating to green designed landscapes. The large quantity of management plans produced both for funding bids, and for use at a local level, are frequently disposed of or stored in an inaccessible location without any formal catalogue (Heritage Lottery Fund's own archive of management plans is currently un-catalogued and inaccessible). This has led to some duplication of research and is one reason why the study of parks and gardens has failed to gain consistent traction in the academy.

Attempts have been made over the past decade to address the archive question. In 2005, the Parks and Gardens UK project began. A partnership between The Association of Gardens Trusts and the University of York, the project received an Heritage Lottery Fund grant of nearly £1,000,000, which made possible the development of an online database of parks and gardens at www.parksandgardens.ac.uk. The site has now been severed from the University of York and replaced by www.parksandgardens.org. The site is live and provides a facility via which users can search for sites by name, location and key terms. However, despite its clear potential, the project was not as successful as might have been hoped. Over the seven years since it was created, digital collections and search engines have become more sophisticated and users familiar with advanced combined search options will find the interface frustrating. Furthermore, each entry provides only basic site information and does not attempt to fulfill the role of a digital archive, now so familiar to most researchers. In addition, the 'top down' approach adopted by the project failed to take advantage of local heritage organisations and the depth of knowledge and historical material to which they have access. Thus, despite providing some useful baseline data, Parks and Gardens UK arguably represents a missed opportunity to develop a new and substantial resource.

The on-going need for a more strategic approach to archiving has been recognised by the Heritage Lottery Fund and in May 2012 it announced initial support for the Garden Museum to bid for a full grant that would enable them to develop their site, double the size of their collections and establish the country's first archive of garden design. Such a resource would provide a focus for academics, park professionals and landscape architects and hopefully encourage a more rigorous and consistent approach to archiving than that currently adopted by both individual and local authorities. Nevertheless, it would not entirely satisfy the needs of the sector. The focus of the Garden Museum project would be gardens rather than all designed public greenspace or green infrastructure.

Other institutions and organisations have indicated interest in hosting some form of substantial physical archive of historic material and management plans. The Hestercombe Gardens Trust (est. 1996) recently submitted an unsuccessful bid to develop an archival facility within their grounds. Although in this instance, the proposal was not funded, it is clear that there remains considerable demand in the sector for a facility of this type.

4 Dissemination of research findings

> The problem we face is not a lack of evidence: it is a lack of will to act effectively on the evidence before us (Groundwork, 2012, 1).

The dissemination of research findings remains an undeveloped area in terms of research into urban public parks and designed landscapes. A combination of peer-review publications and popular histories dominate the field – the one rarely informing the other. As a result, many myths and half-truths continue to proliferate about individual green spaces and the parks movement in general. As the responses to the project survey demonstrated, the vast majority of park users (67.1 per cent) believe themselves to know 'nothing' or only 'a little' about the history of parks in general with an even greater percentage (70.2 per cent) knowing nothing or little about the history of their own local park (Appendix 1). Yet, this does not reflect the extent and detail of research already executed across the country.

One reason for the apparent disconnect between the scholarship and the general public is the 'wall of will' beyond which many of the agencies involved in park protection and management are reluctant to pass. This often takes the form of commissioning research but then failing to disseminate findings, either due to lack of funds or a weak platform for distribution. All too often, researchers are left to disseminate their work in arenas that offer them the best professional return on their labours, i.e. academic peer-review journals or professional magazines. On the practical application side of the research findings, the process all-too-often stagnates, leaving key documents unpublished and eventually obsolete. Examples include: Lambert, *Understanding the Significance of Urban Parks*, which was commissioned by Heritage Lottery Fund, but which has remained in draft form since 2006, and the planned second volume of Woudstra and Fieldhouse's *The Regeneration of Public Parks* published in 2000. Both publications require updating. This kind of stagnation and non-completion is common throughout the sector and has resulted in numerous pilot studies and initial surveys. The sheer number of these has become more of a burden than a benefit to those seeking to protect and manage historical landscapes. English Heritage should be leading the sector in the move beyond preliminary studies, towards more substantial work that is disseminated to the widest possible audience.

In terms of access to historical information about specific sites, for the main part, on-site resources continue to be limited to information boards. 72 per cent of respondents to the project survey claimed to have gained information about the history of public parks from information boards, with only 26.8 per cent having used local authority websites for the same purpose (Appendix 1). The survey also identified information boards as the most popular format through which park users would like to obtain such information in the future, followed by websites and Friends' groups. This traditional attitude reflected perhaps the demographic composition of the respondents as there were no respondents under the age of 21. Notwithstanding this demographic bias, having access to information while on-site remains important in terms of impact and accessibility. Some information boards are clearly welcome. The best incorporate images that help the visitor to identify and interpret the space and features around them as elements of an historical landscape. The City of Westminster Parks Service has one of the most effective series

of information panels. As a standard format is used across the borough, visitors know before they visit a park that there will be a significant quantity of historical information and imagery available to improve their understanding of the site. However, even when such resources are available, they present only a limited quantity of information and tend to privilege 'features' such as monuments and structures rather than a richer social and cultural narrative.

In the age of digital technologies, the potential for disseminating research findings to a wider audience and in myriad formats is clear. Podcasts, apps, visual downloads, interactive maps, and even 'Georgian listening devices' present great opportunities not only to improve public interpretation of designed landscapes, but also to increase public awareness of specific sites and promote the heritage agenda. Facilities such as www.historypin.com provide the opportunity to cultivate a research culture in which information is exchanged between academics, landscape professionals and the general public. In a field that suffers from archives of variable quality, crowdsourcing research material in this manner may provide truly new and important lines of enquiry within the sector. A number of academics are already exploring innovative technological solutions to the combined questions of research dissemination and engagement in the form of onsite-interactive audio systems (see Ghosts in the Garden below) and podcast audio tours (see Apercu Media Limited's audio guide for Melton Mowbray, 2012). Exploring and realising the potential of such media must be a key feature in the future dissemination of research findings.

GHOSTS IN THE GARDEN (REACT heritage sandbox project)

Department of Arts, UWE in partnership with Splash & Ripple and the Holburne Museum, Bath 2012

Funding: AHRC (REACT South West public engagement hub)

Researchers: Dr Steve Poole (UWE) and Rosie Fairchild (Splash & Ripple)

Sydney Gardens in Bath were developed as a public pleasure garden in 1795 but are now a municipal park behind the city's Holburne Museum. This project uses location-based media to repopulate the physical space of the Gardens with the voices of some of the figures who once walked in its labyrinth, castle ruins and Cosmorama. Part game, part story, part archival research, Ghosts in the Garden is a visitor experience that re-thinks garden heritage and moves beyond the passive framework of standard audio-tours and guides by restoring agency to the user through imaginative play.

Outputs:

Temporary installation of prototype in Sydney Gardens, Bath

Panel discussion at Heritage Sandbox showcase day, Bristol

Academic paper at University of Groningen, Holland (forthcoming, November 2012)

See film at
www.react-hub.org.uk/heritagesandbox/projects/2012/ghosts-in-the-garden/

5 Championing the British legacy

One of the most regrettable consequences of the lack of leadership in the English historical greenspace sector, is the wasted opportunity to celebrate and promote our international status as pioneers in public greenspace provision and design. For over a hundred years, Britain led the world in the creation and designation of urban greenspace and exported the blueprint across the world from India to North America, China, and Scandinavia. The greensward model can be found in Olmsted's parks in Memphis and New York, while components of park infrastructure, such as bandstands and boating lakes were introduced across the Empire and Commonwealth. Yet today, the historical public park agenda is shaped primarily by America. There have been tentative attempts to take an international view in terms of contemporary management strategies; most notably in Is The Grass Greener? Learning from international innovations in urban greenspace management (CabeSpace, 2004a). But, as this rare example demonstrates, recent convention has been to seek answers abroad rather than to promote and celebrate our own international contribution. We have failed to tell our story and celebrate the British legacy abroad. As the global political agenda focuses increasingly on the mitigation of climate change and on sustainable cities, we are presented with the ideal opportunity to promote our parks as site of international as well as national and local significance.

English Heritage is uniquely placed to take on the role of international champion and to forge links with similarly interested groups abroad, such as Central Park Conservancy and the International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administrations. In terms of internationalising the research agenda, this could be achieved by supporting research that seeks to reach beyond England to promote the global legacy of our public parks movement. Links should be forged with historians of the North American parks movement and historians working on the role of public urban space within the British Imperial project. Such an approach should invite as diverse a range of comparative studies as proves viable.

6 Stop Press: on-going research

In March 2013, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport commissioned Sir Terry Farrell to lead an independent review of architecture and the built environment.

The review has four main areas:

- Understanding the Government's role in promoting design quality in architecture and the built environment.
- The economic benefits of architecture; maximising the UK's growth potential.
- Cultural heritage and the built environment.
- Promoting education, outreach, and skills.

Following the UK Parks Summit in October 2012, at time of writing, Heritage Lottery Fund are in the process of commissioning a report titled *The State of the UK's Parks*.

The Policy Exchange has commissioned a report on urban parks and green infrastructure. The research is being conducted by the Policy Exchange's Environment & Energy Research Fellow, Katherine Drayson. The report is due in 2013.

RESEARCH, PROTECTION AND GUIDANCE PRIORITIES

What follows is a succinct summary of priority areas for English Heritage's consideration. Some relate to areas of research, some to the application of research for the purposes of landscape protection and management, and others to the dissemination of research and guidance. A balance between each of these elements is essential if significant progress is to be made across the sector.

Wherever possible, these recommendations should be implemented by English Heritage in collaboration with existing agencies and organizations. One of the definitive and most destructive characteristics of the greenspace sector over the past two decades has been the dissipation of efforts. There are too many agencies, organisations and pressure groups. The following recommendations present opportunities to encourage and develop collaborations and to unify the sector behind English Heritage's leadership.

1 Research

- **Produce and promote a consistent typology of green spaces**

Work alongside greenspace managers, academics, and organisations such as Groundwork to develop an inclusive, flexible, and politically neutral typology of green spaces and designed landscapes. The typology should reflect the importance of heritage within parks, and (where relevant) reassert the importance of heritage landscapes within the greenspace sector.

- **Recognise social value and function alongside design significance**

Recognition of the importance of community expectations and values in relation to park structures was an area of particular concern among park users and park managers. English Heritage should consider developing an interpretation of historical park structures that reflects more explicitly the function of features as well as their architectural value. Recognition of the experiential benefits of specific features should be encouraged; the Bandstand Marathon scheme, which seeks to bring idle bandstands back into use via a series of free public concerts, provides a successful model (www.bandstandmarathon.org.uk, last accessed 15/10/2012). The development of methodologies for researching and capturing these expectations and values in a manner that can inform both English Heritage's internal approach to such structures and external policy making is recommended.

The need for a theoretical framework within which parks are interpreted and represented as discrete PLACES, rather than SPACES awaiting development is pressing. This might take the form of a local urban pilot project in a location facing particular pressure for development. Management plans promise a wealth of case studies around which to formulate such a framework.

The literature reveals a lack of published material the history of landscapes designed for children. A comparative study, examining various sites across England would provide a much-needed evidence base. A chronological focus of 1914 – 1960 is recommended to

reflect the increase in investment in playgrounds and children's' gardens between and immediately following the two World Wars. AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards may provide a means of funding such research programmes.

- **Widen coverage of research**

Existing case studies of public parks are too isolated to provide a solid foundation for interpretation and protection. Investment in a substantial number of detailed case studies taken from across the country is needed to ensure wider geographic coverage and with it the legitimacy of the Register and the criteria applied to designation. The Liverpool Parks and Open Spaces project provides a model for such work. Case studies would initially focus on underrepresented areas of the country in terms of parks research, such as the North East and Midlands. By extending our knowledge of a wider range of sites, the research might also provide the means to redress the London-centric imbalance in the current Register. In addition to enriching the knowledge base, such studies might also fulfil other objectives, such as studies of 'designation outcomes' (see recommendation 2.5).

Park histories currently privilege the pre-war period. A more critical approach to twentieth-century park management, as well as parks designed and laid out during the post-war period, is needed to challenge this chronological bias. A regional pilot, or a comparative study, examining sites across England 1945-1985 would provide valuable insights into an array of under-explored funding and management regimes and their historical consequences (See recommendation 1.4).

- **Invest in academic and collaborative research projects**

The literature reveals a relatively recent academic interest in public park provision. It is recommended that English Heritage seek to sustain this engagement through co-funding focused research projects hosted within academic institutions. This offers the opportunity to combine training in the heritage sector with academic research of benefit to English Heritage. Potential areas of research identified by the review include:

Twentieth-century designed landscapes (with particular priority given to the period 1945-1985).

- Public attitudes to funding and management regimes.
- Historic funding models, in terms of both capital expenditure and maintenance.
- Small memorial parks and gardens not currently captured in the English Heritage Register.
- Winter Gardens, public ferneries and seaside promenade planting.
- Oral histories of park employees, particularly park keepers and gardeners and oral histories of park users. Collaborations with existing oral history archives such as EMOHA should be encouraged.
- Playgrounds and play areas.

The park as venue. Although the physical landscape remains a priority for future research, the use of parks as venues for concerts, pageants, exhibitions and festivals opens new lines of enquiry.

The literature reveals a tendency among many parks champions to obfuscate the relationship between housing developments and suburbanisation and the evolution of park landscapes. An objective and critical understanding of park peripheries from the 1840s to the present is essential if English Heritage is to both retain the confidence of park neighbourhoods AND adopt a workable approach to planning pressures. Such work might take the form of a commissioned report.

Existing research and guidance pertaining to park funding and management structures is almost universally out-of-date. As the most pressing concern among park users, park managers, and local authorities, a critical analysis of historical forms of park funding, their strengths and weaknesses is needed urgently if past mistakes are not to be repeated. Working with a consortium of local authorities to gain evidence of a representative range of historical funding practices, English Heritage should open up the debate and feed much needed empirical evidence into a controversial and polarised discourse. A combination of historical and contemporary case studies would provide the potential for valuable comparisons. Potential case studies include: Chiswick Gardens, Princes Park, Elvaston Castle, and, internationally, Central Park, New York and the Botanisk Have, Copenhagen.

Public attitudes to different funding and management regimes have been completely ignored by successive governments, local authorities and heritage agencies. A substantial and apolitical study of public attitudes to various financial and management frameworks would demonstrate English Heritage's commitment to the values of local communities. In addition, it would provide a more realistic picture of the potential for innovation in terms of capital investment and maintenance costs in public parks and designed landscapes.

- **The archive**

As volunteers, trusts and CiCs play an increasingly influential role in park provision and protection, there are new opportunities to expand the fragmented archival record for urban parks and greenspace. The creation of a database of cultural and social histories relating to parks would anchor their history within wider historical narratives and protect parks from the accusation of 'irrelevance'. A digital crowd-sourced archive would provide an affordable and accessible platform. Oral testimony, photographs, ephemera all represent potential sources through which to access hitherto ignored park histories.

In addition to constructing and reconstructing missing archives, English Heritage should encourage and, where appropriate, advise local authorities, trusts and similar organizations in how best to protect what archives they have. This may require a scoping survey of existing archives and their holdings relating to urban parks and designed landscapes. As much park-related material is currently dispersed across the archive, archivists should be encouraged to recognise and catalogue items' relevance to parks.

Where English Heritage has funded external research, e.g. within a Higher Education institution or local authority, it should require the archiving of both the research findings

and any new datasets produced within the host institution's archives. It should seek assurances of the protection and accessibility of such material in perpetuity.

Where appropriate, English Heritage should sponsor and/or endorse the digitization of material pertaining to urban parks and open spaces. A central hub after the model of www.PortCities.org.uk is desirable, but an even modest digitization programme would help to raise the profile of historical parks and gardens.

- Mapping and GIS

Until it is possible to identify, quantify and evaluation the condition of green spaces in England, the battle to protect and conserve our historical green spaces remains an apparently insurmountable challenge. Natural England and the Ordnance Survey's proposal to replicate the success of Scotland's green map project is encouraging. In order for it to succeed, it is essential that it receive support from across the entire sector. Encouraging local authority cooperation on this project must be a priority for all agencies. English Heritage would benefit immensely should such a project be realised.

Efforts should be made to find a means to exchange information between the greenspace mapping project and datasets produced by English Heritage's urban characterization programme.

2 Protection and management

- Provide leadership

Since the loss of CABESpace, the greenspace sector in England has lacked leadership. Attempts made by GreenSpace and the Design Council CABE to fulfil this roles have not been successful. English Heritage is ideally placed to provide such leadership, at least on an interim basis. Although English Heritage has provided professional guidance to the sector and is affiliated with a number of projects, it should be performing a much higher-profile role in shaping the future of greenspace provision and protection. This could be accomplished by liaising with organisations of all sizes, as well as local authorities and government agencies, to facilitate the creation of one single digital hub for research and policy documentation.

At present, the fragmented nature of the sector means that organizations currently defend their evidence base and research findings, rather than sharing them with 'opposition' organizations. English Heritage should act as mediator between the numerous groups that comprise the greenspace sector and provide leadership towards pooling intellectual property through resources such as www.parksandgardens.org.

Funding and management regimes are two of the most important subjects of current enquiry, but they are also highly contentious and politicised. If English Heritage is to play an active and influential role in such processes in the future, it must nurture relationships with friends groups, local communities, and grassroots organisations in addition to local authorities and national agencies.

English Heritage is uniquely placed to take on the role of international champion and to forge links with similarly interested groups abroad, such as Central Park Conservancy and the International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administrations. In terms of internationalising the research agenda, this could be achieved by supporting research that seeks to reach beyond England to promote the global legacy of our public parks movement. Links should be forged with historians of the North American parks movement and historians working on the role of public urban space within the British Imperial project. Such an approach should invite as diverse a range of comparative studies as proves viable.

- **Support protection and conservation at a local level**

There exists a vast wealth of information about specific forms of historical park structures and their conservation. Watkins and Wright (2007) provide useful guidance for park managers. As maintenance responsibilities pass to volunteers and local partnerships, a series of shorter publications or pamphlets, addressing specific features, their history, and care, are recommended. Ideally, English Heritage would host such material on a free-access website. This will liberate the research agenda from a cyclical revisiting of the subject at a local level, and also help to foster important direct relationships between English Heritage and local stakeholders.

Parks are visited most frequently and valued most highly by users from the immediate neighbourhood. This fits poorly with English Heritage's emphasis upon national significance. The preservation of a Victorian park in Manchester is of relatively little interest to a community in Norwich or Southampton whose own example remains in disrepair. Recognition of the need for regional examples of a variety of designed landscapes is key to ensuring equitable access and appreciation of historical green spaces. The development of regional lists of historical greenspace assets, above and beyond local authority lists, would assist in ensuring a geographically equitable distribution of designated sites across England.

- **Reassert the heritage argument in the 'Green infrastructure' debate**

The potential of the green infrastructure approach for studying historical green spaces is considerable. However, at present, heritage narratives are missing from this debate. Reasserting the importance of ecology and health to the origins of many historical parks provides a means of reintegrating the heritage agenda back into the greenspace debate.

English Heritage's own suburbs project has identified the need for a better understanding of the permeable boundary between the park periphery and the streets that intersect with it. At present, the relationship between urban green spaces and the developments that surround them is currently approached almost exclusively from the position of the residential architecture and planning. Further investigation of the subject from the perspective of the green spaces is needed. Themes for further study might include:

- The perceived relationship between residential architecture and park architecture among early park designers.

- The impact of housing market fluctuations on park provision and creation (c.1840-1914).
- The ownership and 'perceived ownership' of peripheral green spaces.
- The impact of suburban private gardens on the design and use of public parks.

- **Training and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships**

The loss of conservation and horticulture skills across the sector has been highlighted by CABESpace in partnership with English Heritage (CABESpace, 2005c, CABESpace, 2008c, CABESpace 2010d). The crisis in practical skills training was raised by nearly all the project consultees. In order to combat this loss of skills, there must be a co-ordinated effort to develop specific training schemes in landscape conservation and interpretation. This will become more important as traditional training routes disappear and park managers become more reliant upon untrained volunteers. English Heritage's Heritage Lottery Fund Historic and Botanic Gardens Bursary Scheme is a great development and needs to be sustained and expanded to address public parks. Supporting volunteers and professionals trained through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships could provide a possible solution to this chronic problem (www.ktponline.org.uk). English Heritage could forge such partnerships in suitable institutions and with local authorities and contractors. The loss of garden history courses at the University of Bristol and Birkbeck College makes the need for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships all the more pressing.

- **Expand and update the English Heritage Register**

Currently, the English Heritage Register is still dominated by private gardens, estate parks and pre-twentieth century landscapes. Due to a lack of research as well as pressure to regenerate post-war social housing developments, late twentieth-century landscapes are being lost to development or remodelling, leaving a poor legacy for future generations. A thematic review of post-Edwardian parks with a view to improving the coverage of sites towards the tail end of the 30-year cut off (currently 1982) is recommended. English Heritage should take a pro-active position in this regard and seek out sites that should be considered for the Register.

Register entries for listed parks and gardens should be updated as a matter of priority. Many landscapes currently listed as Grade II have been the subject of substantial investment over the past decade (most notably by Heritage Lottery Fund) and should now be considered for upgrading to Grade II* or Grade I status. Conversely, the condition of many parks has declined and historical integrity compromised by development or loss of heritage assets. In such instances, it may be necessary to downgrade the sites or remove them from the Register. A desktop study is recommended to review the grades of registered public parks and designed landscapes to ensure they are properly calibrated.

A study of 'designation outcomes' is recommended to examine and evaluate the impact of designation since the creation of the Register in 1983. This might constitute a component of a number of the regional academic studies (see recommendation 1.3). This research should be used to inform the criteria for designation.

Specific types of urban park or greenspace are currently unrecognised by the Register. The typology applied in the Register should be expanded to incorporate such landscape types as memorial gardens and promenade planting in seaside towns.

The typologies applied in the Register should correspond as closely as possible to those employed in greenspace mapping projects currently under development. This would ensure consistency in the sector as well as creating future opportunities to pool data and digitise the Register listings within a pre-existing greenspace map.

3 Dissemination of research and guidance

• Digital information distribution

The project survey revealed a strong bias towards over 21s. Digital platforms such as Historypin and QR codes provide a means of widening the impact of both academic and public research to a broader demographic group. A vast quantity of historical evidence relating to parks remains in private hands, inaccessible to researchers and park managers. English Heritage is perfectly placed to work collaboratively with archives and digital hosts to publish research and archival from a variety of sources. Such innovation has the potential to transform public engagement with and value placed upon historical landscapes. English Heritage should identify digital project partners (ideally with existing public platforms) to develop a unified, mobile source of information regarding historic landscapes.

• Publications

The Informed Conservation series continues to attract public attention and promotes the understanding and public appreciation of heritage assets at a local level. Cities such as Birmingham, Manchester and Sheffield benefit from IC books on their industrial, commercial, residential, and ecclesiastical heritage but there remains a conspicuous dearth of Informed Conservation publications relating to greenspace and designed landscapes. At present there are only two Informed Conservation publications that attend to urban parks and green spaces (Miller, 2010 and Layton-Jones and Lee, 2008). Commissioning Informed Conservation books that address the parks and historical open spaces of other significant towns covered by the series, such as Sheffield, Manchester, Birmingham and Newcastle, would help to raise the profile of parks across the country. Authors might be sought in universities, a step that would help to forge and reinforce research relationships within the Higher Education sector.

A special issue of an academic journal might be used to bring together the profusion of recent academic research about an array of parks and designed landscapes across Britain, Europe and the United States. Collaborating with a peer-review journal to produce a special issue that champions the historical significance of parks and urban greenspace. Potential journals include: Urban History, Urban Studies, and Planning Perspectives. Such a project would not require any additional research funding.

Despite a significant quantity of professional guidance, no definitive monograph on English parks has been published since Conway's People's Parks in 1991. A definitive volume, which reflects and responds to more recent research, is urgently required. At point of

writing, Dr. Carole O'Reilly of the University of Salford has been awarded a contract with Routledge to deliver a monograph covering the history of parks up to 1940. This goes some extent to filling the present publishing void. However, there is still a need for an attractive illustrated volume akin to Brodie and Winter, *England's Seaside Resorts* (2007) or Mawrey and Groves, *The Gardens of English Heritage* (2010). Such a volume, published by English Heritage, would help to maintain public attention on England's historical parks and green spaces.

Between 2008 and 2013 English Heritage funded a series of illustrated public history leaflets for four of Liverpool's historic urban parks and gardens. Liverpool City Council distributes the leaflets via tourist offices, friends groups, and schools. They have proved invaluable in promoting public awareness of historic landscapes across the city. At a current production cost of approximately £3,000 per leaflet (producing up to 5,000 copies for distribution), this represents an affordable for replication across the country. The impact is greatest when a series of at least three is launched. Manchester, Portsmouth and Sheffield are among a number of cities that would benefit from such a series in the immediate future.

Anniversaries and events such as the Diamond Jubilee and the anniversary of the start of the First World War, present valuable opportunities to refocus public attention on historical designed landscapes. English Heritage should explore every opportunity to exploit these opportunities with one-off publications in the model of David Lambert, *Jubilee-ation* (Lambert, 2012). These outputs could be made available digitally as well as in hard copy.

There exists a wealth of relevant research that has been completed but which remained unpublished. Experienced professionals such as Linden Groves and Peter Neal have produced valuable statements and reports that could be of great public and professional interest. English Heritage should encourage publication and increased accessibility to this material, potentially through external agencies such as Parks and Gardens UK online database. Where appropriate, English Heritage may want to publish such material themselves.

There are a number of documents that contain valuable and useful advice to park users and managers, but which require updating. One such example is David Lambert, *Understanding the Significance of Urban Parks* (draft, 2006). English Heritage should encourage, and where appropriate fund, the organisations involved to update these resources and disseminate them among a wider audience.

- **Broadcasting**

Broadcasting offers great potential for raising public awareness of designed landscapes. Programmes such as Dan Cruikshank's one-hour special Britain's Parks Story for BBC4 (first aired October 2011) have attracted some attention, but they tend to repeat a now well-rehearsed and familiar narrative of traditional park development. A more ambitious project, addressing issues of conservation as well as history, could refocus public interest on the question of protection. Radio offers a cheaper route to a similar effect and independent production companies may be attracted by association with English Heritage.

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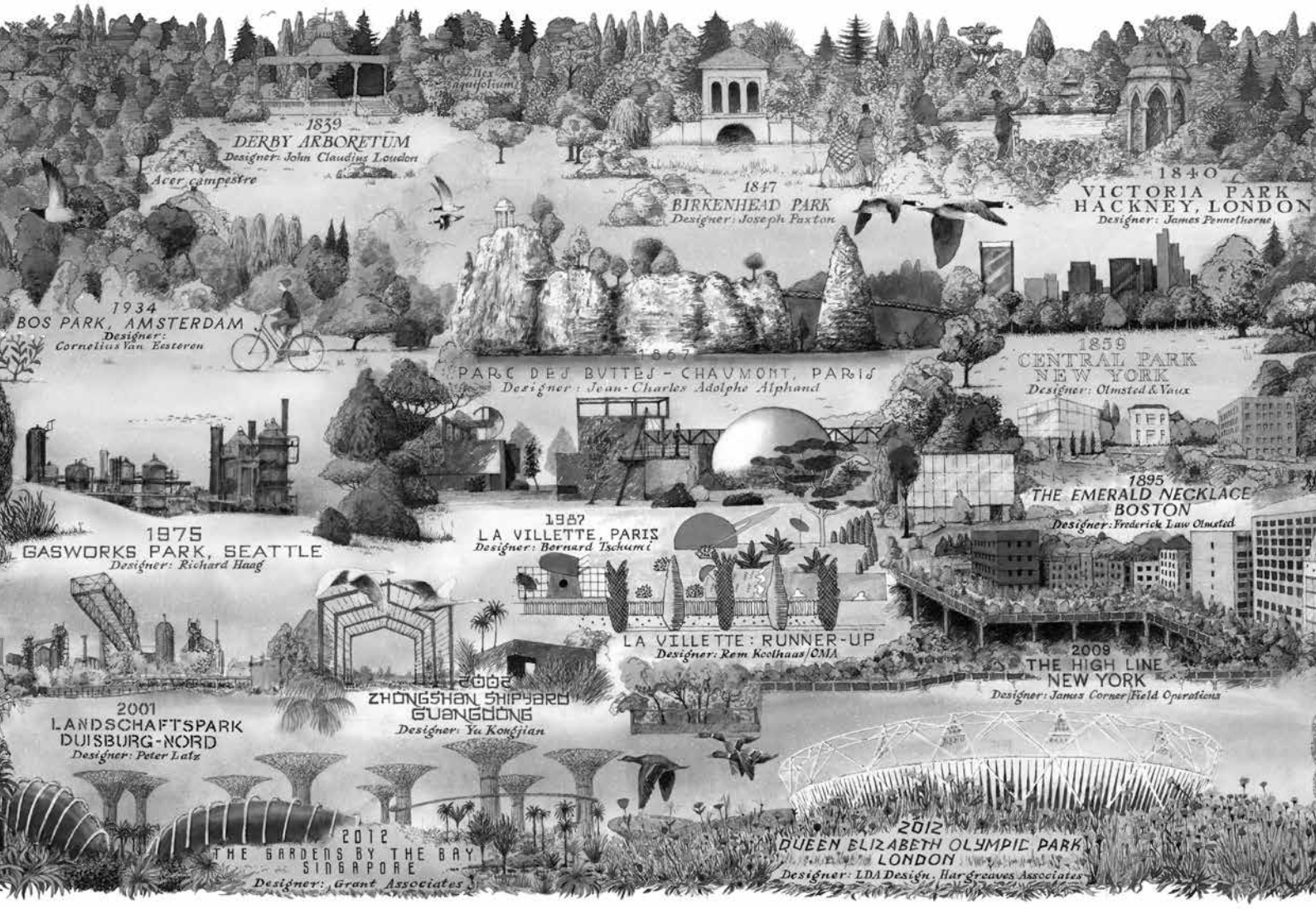
Ilex aquifolium
1839
DERBY ARBORETUM
Designer: John Claudius Loudon
Acer campestre
1847
BIRKENHEAD PARK
Designer: Joseph Paxton
1840
VICTORIA PARK
HACKNEY, LONDON
Designer: James Pennethorne
1934
BOS PARK, AMSTERDAM
Designer:
Cornelius van Eesteren
1867
PARC DES BUTTES-CHAUMONT, PARIS
Designer: Jean-Charles Adolphe Alphand
1859
CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK
Designer: Olmsted & Vaux
1895
THE EMERALD NECKLACE
BOSTON
Designer: Frederick Law Olmsted
1975
GASWORKS PARK, SEATTLE
Designer: Richard Haag
1987
LA VILLETTE, PARIS
Designer: Bernard Tschumi
LA VILLETTE: RUNNER-UP
Designer: Rem Koolhaas/OMA
2009
THE HIGH LINE
NEW YORK
Designer: James Corner/Field Operations
2001
LANDSCHAFTSPARK
DUISBURG-NORD
Designer: Peter Latz
2002
ZHONGSHAN SHIPYARD
GUANGDONG
Designer: Yu Kongjian
2012
THE GARDENS BY THE BAY
SINGAPORE
Designer: Grant Associates
2012
QUEEN ELIZABETH OLYMPIC PARK
LONDON
Designer: LDA Design, Hargreaves Associates

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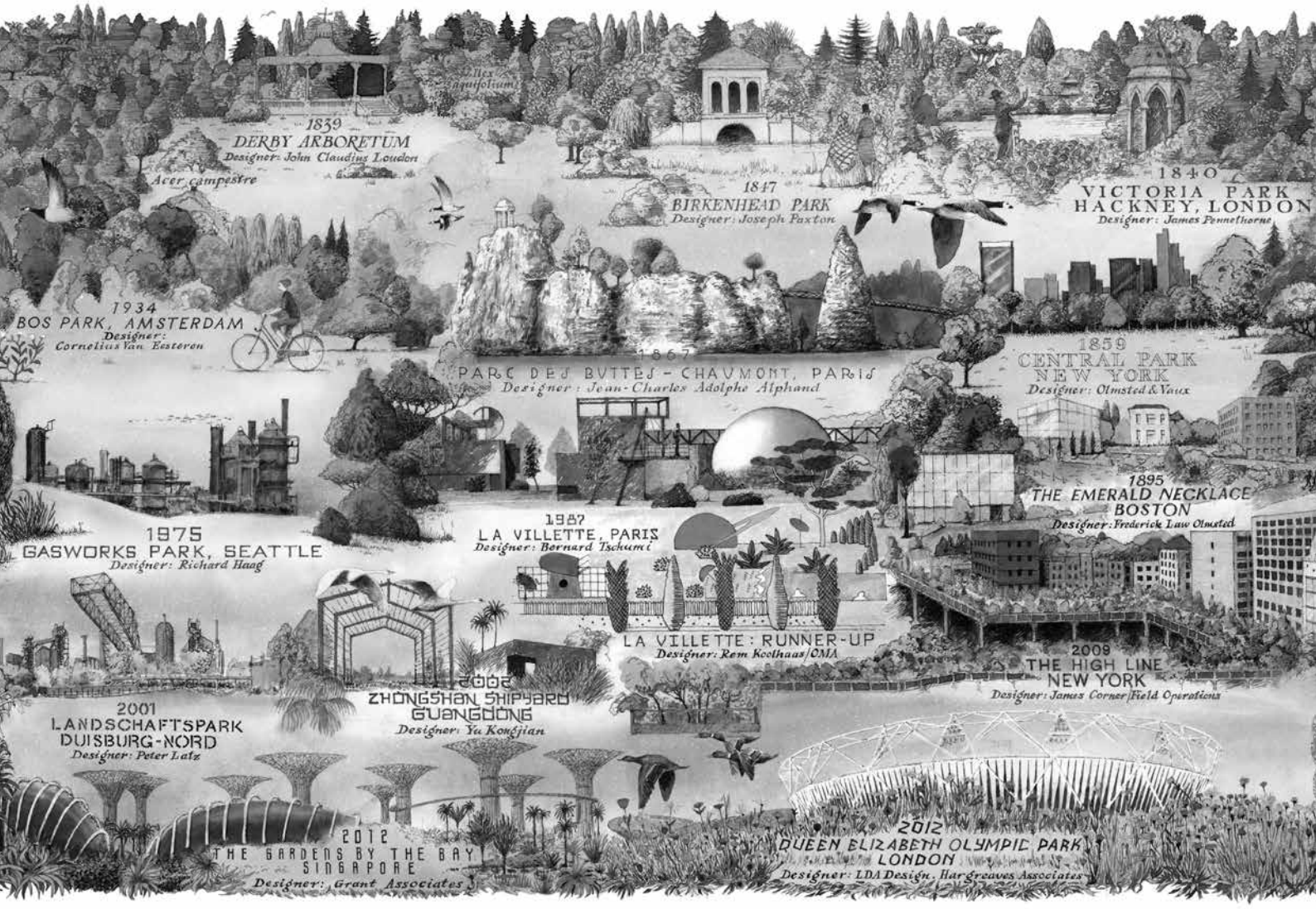
APPENDIX I

PROJECT SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE



National Review: urban parks, designed landscapes and open spaces

Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to answer the following survey. This survey is part of the National Review of Research Priorities for Urban Parks, Designed Landscapes, and Open Spaces.

The project is funded by English Heritage and is being conducted by Park Roots CiC. The findings of this questionnaire will be used to help improve our understanding of the value that park users and communities place upon public green space.

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***1. In what type of community do you live?**

- ◯ City or urban community
- ◯ Suburban community
- ◯ Rural community

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***2. Do you live or work within walking distance of one or more public park?**

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I'm not sure

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***3. Do you currently use one or more park on a regular basis? ('Use' means any kind of activity, including walking through a park on your way to work, spending an afternoon with your children, or eating you lunch on a park bench.)**

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

***4. Now think of the park that you use most often. From now on we will refer to this as YOUR PARK.**

Do you feel that YOUR PARK is beneficial to you and/or your family?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I'm not sure

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***5. In what ways does YOUR PARK benefit you and/or your family? Select all that apply.**

- [ ] I/we observe wildlife in the park
- [ ] The park provides me/us with a place to socialize.
- [ ] I/we rest and relax in the park
- [ ] Makes me/us feel part of the community
- [ ] I/we attend public events in the park
- [ ] It provides a place for children to play
- [ ] The park improves our experience of the neighbourhood by providing a 'breathing space' between buildings.
- [ ] The park provides a cool environment in hot summer months.
- [ ] I/we play sports or engage in active recreation in the park
- [ ] n/a (my park does not benefit me and/or my family)
- [ ] The park absorbs rainwater and reduces the risk of localized flooding

Other (please specify)

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***6. Do you feel that YOUR PARK benefits the neighbourhood and community in which it is situated?**

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I'm not sure

***7. In what ways does YOUR PARK benefit the neighbourhood and community? Select all that apply.**

- [ ] The park provides a play facility for children
- [ ] The park helps to forge community identity
- [ ] The park provides a facility for sports and active recreation
- [ ] The park absorbs rainwater and reduces the risk of localized flooding
- [ ] The park is a place to observe wildlife
- [ ] The park is a place to rest and relax
- [ ] The park provides a 'breathing space' in a built-up area
- [ ] The park provides a site for public events
- [ ] The park provides a cool environment in hot summer months.
- [ ] The park provides a place for locals to socialize.
- [ ] n/a (my park does not benefit the neighbourhood or community)

Other (please specify)

***8. Do you consider your park to be of historical interest?**

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I'm not sure

9. Why do you/do not consider your park to be of historical interest? If you answered 'I'm not sure' to previous question, proceed to next question.

***10. How much do you feel you know about the history of public parks in general?**

- ◯ Nothing
- ◯ A little (e.g. a general sense of when and why parks were created etc.)
- ◯ Quite a bit (e.g. the most famous designers, architects and campaigners, main phases of development etc.)
- ◯ A lot (e.g. a detailed understanding of the motivations behind park provision, knowledge of lesser-known designers, historic management strategies, periods of decline etc.)

11. From which sources have you gained information about the history of public parks in general? Select all that apply

- [ ] Library/museum
- [ ] Information boards within parks
- [ ] Ranger tours/guided walks
- [ ] Tourism websites/brochures
- [ ] Leaflets
- [ ] Newspapers/magazines
- [ ] Radio-television coverage
- [ ] Local Authority websites
- [ ] Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.)
- [ ] Special interest organizations (Garden History Society, Landscape Institute etc.)

Other (please specify)

***12. How much do you feel you know about the history of YOUR PARK?**

◯ Nothing

◯ A little (i.e. approximate date of creation, awareness of surviving features e.g. bandstands, lakes, statues and monuments etc.)

◯ Quite a bit (i.e. date of creation, designer responsible for original design, awareness of substantial lost features e.g. boat house lost to arson, glass house lost during the blitz etc.)

◯ A lot (i.e. knowledge about the site before it was a park, detailed knowledge of small lost features e.g. drinking fountains, understanding of the role of the park during historical events e.g. use for allotments during war time etc.)

13. From which sources have you gained information about the history of YOUR PARK? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Library/museum
- [ ] Tourism website/brochures
- [ ] Information boards within the park
- [ ] Ranger tours/guided walks
- [ ] Leaflets
- [ ] Newspapers/magazines
- [ ] Radio/television coverage
- [ ] Local Authority website
- [ ] Friend's group website
- [ ] Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.)
- [ ] Special interest organizations (e.g. Garden History Society, Landscape Institute etc.)

Other (please specify)

14. From which of the following sources would you like to be able to get information about the history of parks? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Library/museum
- [ ] Smart phone application (e.g. History Pin, QR codes)
- [ ] Audio guides for MP3 players
- [ ] Information boards within the park
- [ ] Ranger tours/guided walks
- [ ] Leaflets
- [ ] Newspapers/magazines
- [ ] Radio/television coverage
- [ ] Local Authority website
- [ ] Friend's group website
- [ ] Involvement in a park friends group
- [ ] Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.)
- [ ] Special interest organizations (e.g. Garden History Society, Landscape Institute etc.)

Other (please specify)

15. About which elements of YOUR PARK's history would you like to know more? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Origin of the park
- [ ] Past users, their lives and values
- [ ] Land ownership and accessibility throughout the park's history
- [ ] Design and architecture (e.g. features such as fountains, lakes etc.)
- [ ] How your park has changed over time
- [ ] Past management and policing strategies
- [ ] Historical context (e.g. how the park was affected by major events like wars and political protests)

Other (please specify)

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***16. Please rank the following reasons why you value public parks, with #1 as the most important and #9 as the least important.**

	They are a part of our shared history
	They provide substantial areas of green space in urban areas
	They are an environmental legacy for future generations
	They mitigate the effects of climate change
	They are a valuable resource for local communities
	They improve air quality
	They provide a place for children to play
	They are free and accessible to everyone
	They contain ecosystems

***17. Are you a member of a park friends group or neighbourhood organization engaged in volunteering in, or campaigning for, parks?**

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

***18. Which category below includes your age?**

- ◯ 17 or younger
- ◯ 18-20
- ◯ 21-29
- ◯ 30-39
- ◯ 40-49
- ◯ 50-59
- ◯ 60 or older

***19. What is your gender?**

- ◯ Female
- ◯ Male

***20. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?**

- ◯ Employed, working 1-39 hours per week
- ◯ Employed, working 40 or more hours per week
- ◯ Not employed, looking for work
- ◯ Not employed, not looking for work
- ◯ Retired
- ◯ Disabled, not able to work
- ◯ Student

***21. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?**

- ◯ Less than 5 GCSEs or equivalent
- ◯ At least 5 GCSEs or equivalent
- ◯ At least 3 A Levels or equivalent
- ◯ Bachelor degree or vocational equivalent
- ◯ Masters Degree or vocational equivalent
- ◯ Ph.D. or advanced professional qualification (e.g. MBA)

***22. What is your approximate average household income?**

- ◯ £0-£6,000
- ◯ £6,001-£10,000
- ◯ £10,001-£20,000
- ◯ £20,001-£30,000
- ◯ £30,001-£40,000
- ◯ £40,001-£50,000
- ◯ £50,001-£60,000
- ◯ £60,001-£70,000
- ◯ £70,001-£80,000
- ◯ £80,001-£90,000
- ◯ £90,001-£100,000
- ◯ Over £100,000
- ◯ Prefer not to say

***23. Please provide the first part of your postcode. (This will be used to calculate the geographical spread of responses only).**

***24. Please provide the name and town/city of YOUR PARK**

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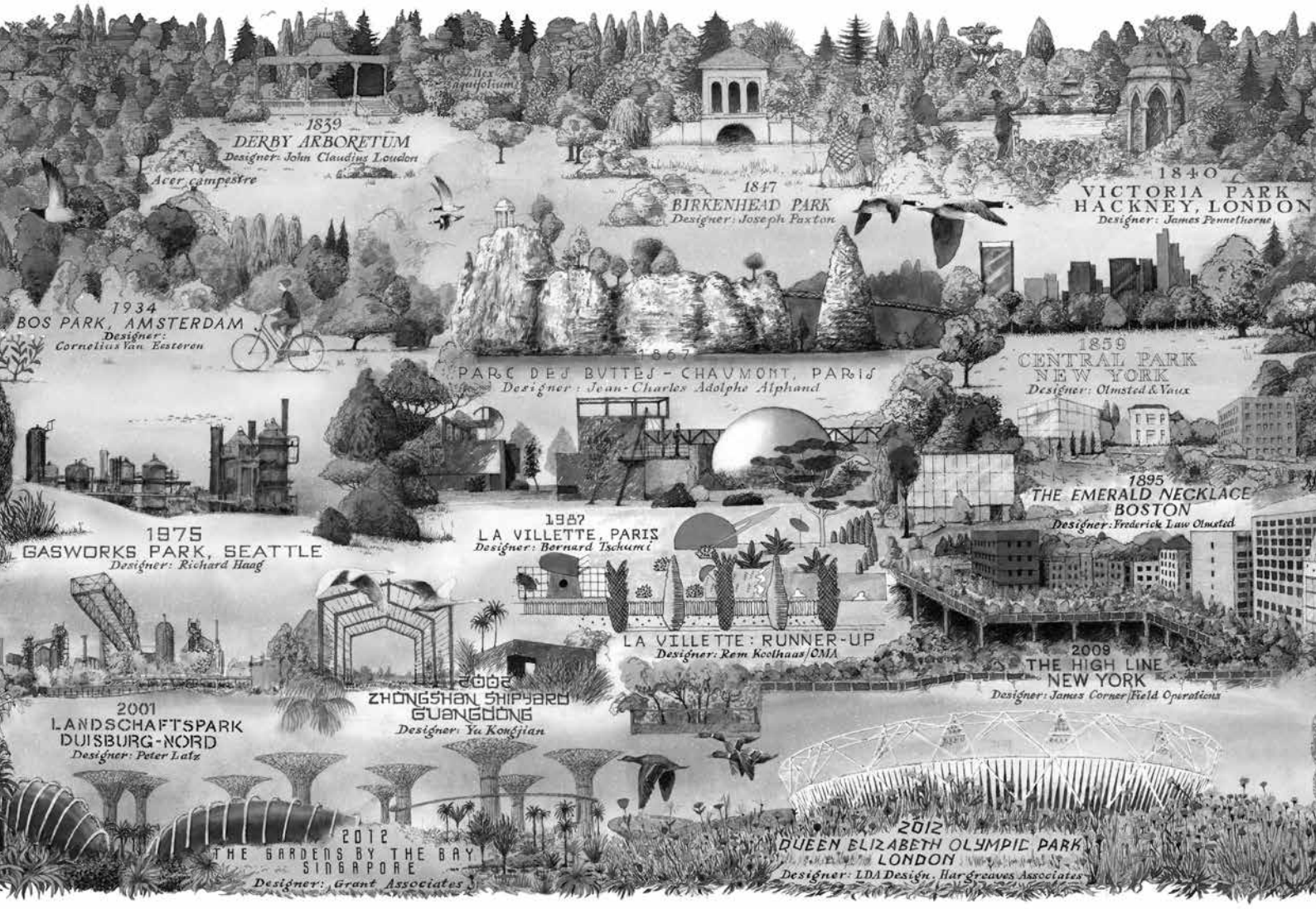
Thank you

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. More information about parks, public green spaces, and their role in your community can be obtained from your local authority and from the following organizations and websites:

www.english-heritage.org.uk
www.green-space.org.uk
www.defra.gov.uk
www.gardenhistorysociety.org
www.landscapeinstitute.org
www.naturalengland.org.uk
www.gardenmuseum.org.uk
www.parksandgardens.ac.uk

APPENDIX 2


Ilex aquifolium
1839
DERBY ARBORETUM
Designer: John Claudius Loudon
Acer campestre
1847
BIRKENHEAD PARK
Designer: Joseph Paxton
1840
VICTORIA PARK
HACKNEY, LONDON
Designer: James Pennethorne
1934
BOS PARK, AMSTERDAM
Designer:
Cornelius van Eesteren
1867
PARC DES BUTTES-CHAUMONT, PARIS
Designer: Jean-Charles Adolphe Alphand
1859
CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK
Designer: Olmsted & Vaux
1895
THE EMERALD NECKLACE
BOSTON
Designer: Frederick Law Olmsted
1975
GASWORKS PARK, SEATTLE
Designer: Richard Haag
1987
LA VILLETTE, PARIS
Designer: Bernard Tschumi
LA VILLETTE: RUNNER-UP
Designer: Rem Koolhaas/OMA
2009
THE HIGH LINE
NEW YORK
Designer: James Corner/Field Operations
2001
LANDSCHAFTSPARK
DUISBURG-NORD
Designer: Peter Latz
2002
ZHONGSHAN SHIPYARD
GUANGDONG
Designer: Yu Kongjian
2012
THE GARDENS BY THE BAY
SINGAPORE
Designer: Grant Associates
2012
QUEEN ELIZABETH OLYMPIC PARK
LONDON
Designer: LDA Design, Hargreaves Associates

APPENDIX 2

Examples of English Heritage's urban public park activities from 1999 onwards

1998/99 Evidence to the Parliamentary Town and Country Park Select Committee

monitoring advice for Heritage Lottery Fund public parks projects

statutory casework

spot designations

A Campaign for London's Squares

Played in Britain series

Streets for All

Informed Conservation series

2001 Nigel Temple Temple archive collection of 4,256 postcards catalogued

2001 *Public Parks Assessment* (Urban Parks Forum/GreenSpace)

2001-2 DTLR's Urban Green Spaces Taskforce

2002 OPDM's Assessing Needs and Opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17

2003 *Public Parks Review*

2002 Green Heritage Site Accreditation added to Green Flag Award Scheme

2002 *Gardening in the Global Green House*

2004 *Parks Need People: the skills shortage in parks a summary of research*

2005 *The Park Keeper*

2005 *Easy Access to Historic Landscapes*

2005 *Commons, Heaths and Greens in Greater London*

2006 Good Parks Guide (in partnership with GreenSpace)

2007 *England's Seaside Resorts*

2007 *The Management & Maintenance of Historic Parks and Gardens: The English Heritage Handbook*

2008 *Places of Health and Amusement: Liverpool's Historic Parks and Gardens*

2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

2009 *An Archaeology of Town Commons in England. 'A very fair field indeed'*

2009 Registered parks and gardens added to Heritage at Risk

Heritage Lottery Fund funded Historic and Botanic Garden Bursary Scheme

2010 *English Garden Cities: an introduction*

2011 online National Heritage List for England includes all public park registrations, listings and scheduled monuments

2011 Listing selection guides covering public parks and the public realm

2012 Heritage at Risk teams set up

2012 National Planning Policy Framework

2012 National Heritage Protection Plan includes historic towns and suburbs activity area

2012 *Cultivating Skills in Historic and Botanic Gardens: careers, occupations, and skills required for the management and maintenance of historic and botanic gardens and Grow Your Own Career in Horticulture* www.growcareers.info

2012 *Jubilee-ation! A History of Royal Jubilees in Public Parks*

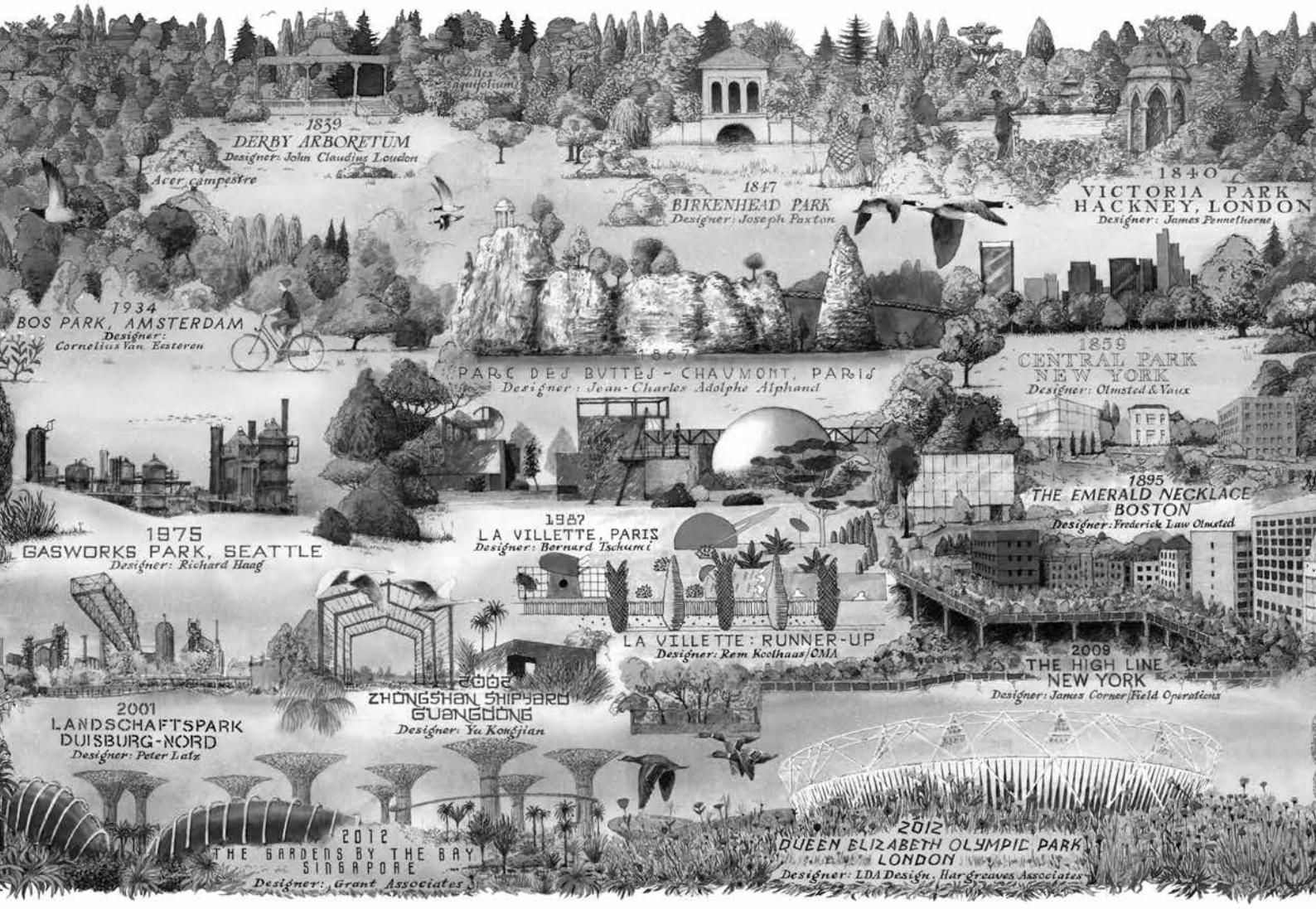
2012 war memorial gardens and landscape advice published

2013 *Register of Parks and Gardens Selection Guide: Urban Landscapes*

2013 Registered public park regarding review published

2014 English Heritage's Nigel Temple postcards for each registered public park added to www.historypin.com

APPENDIX 3


Ilex aquifolium
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DERBY ARBORETUM
Designer: John Claudius Loudon
Acer campestre
1847
BIRKENHEAD PARK
Designer: Joseph Paxton
1840
VICTORIA PARK
HACKNEY, LONDON
Designer: James Pennethorne
1934
BOS PARK, AMSTERDAM
Designer:
Cornelius van Eesteren
1867
PARC DES BUTTES-CHAUMONT, PARIS
Designer: Jean-Charles Adolphe Alphand
1859
CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK
Designer: Olmsted & Vaux
1895
THE EMERALD NECKLACE
BOSTON
Designer: Frederick Law Olmsted
1975
GASWORKS PARK, SEATTLE
Designer: Richard Haag
1987
LA VILLETTE, PARIS
Designer: Bernard Tschumi
LA VILLETTE: RUNNER-UP
Designer: Rem Koolhaas/OMA
2009
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THE GARDENS BY THE BAY
SINGAPORE
Designer: Grant Associates
2012
QUEEN ELIZABETH OLYMPIC PARK
LONDON
Designer: LDA Design, Hargreaves Associates

APPENDIX 3

English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens: Urban Parks Register Upgrade Project (2012-13)

With 220 examples, municipal parks are one of the main types of designed landscape on English Heritage's 1,626-strong Register of Parks and Gardens now part of the National Heritage List for England. Most were created between the 1840s and 1860s – the great period of municipal park foundation – and generally retain good original landscaping, planting and park structures.

As with listed buildings, parks are divided between three grades: Grade I sites are of exceptional interest; Grade II* sites are particularly important, of more than special interest; and Grade II sites are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.

Under English Heritage's National Heritage Protection Plan, thirty municipal parks registered at Grade II were identified for upgrading based on the criteria set out in the *Register of Parks and Gardens Selection Guide: Urban Landscapes* (English Heritage 2013) http://swncms01/publications/drpgsg-urban-landscapes/.

Twenty-eight of these have been upgraded to Grade II* (making a total of 42 at this grade), and two, Royal Victoria Park (Bath) and Sefton Park (Liverpool), to Grade I. Only one municipal park has been registered at the uppermost grade, and these two parks are of comparable quality, fully deserving this mark of exceptional interest.

Royal Victoria Park, Bath, opened in 1830, was the first park in England to be named after the then Princess Victoria. It has been raised to Grade I as it is an especially early municipal park with its original design by Edward Davis, the City Architect, little altered. The park is enhanced by a large number of listed park structures and by rich planting beginning; the founders' ambition was for this to be a major arboretum, and a Botanical Garden was added in 1839. The park also has strong group value as it is overlooked by the Grade-I listed Royal Crescent and lies within the Bath World Heritage Site.

The other park promoted to Grade I is Sefton Park, Liverpool, the design of which is essentially unchanged since its opening in 1872. Its designer, Edouard André, had worked on Paris's parks, and was the first to introduce French park design to England. Sefton Park was and still is an important element of one of England's great industrial cities, and was one of the parks designed to form a green belt around Liverpool. The park retains various 19th-century and later memorials and structures including the Grade II*-listed Palm House of 1896.

South

Alexandra Park, Hastings, Grade II*

Central Parks, Southampton II*

North

Sefton Park, Liverpool I

Grosvenor Park, Cheshire II*

Queens Park, Crewe II*

Ropner Park, Stockton-on-Tees II*

Alexandra Park, Oldham II*

Corporation Park, Blackburn II*

Miller Park, Preston II*

Moor Park, Preston II*

Avenham Park, Preston II*

Hesketh Park, Southport II*

People's Park, Grimsby II*

Wavertree Botanic Garden, Liverpool II*

Norfolk Park, Sheffield II*

Peel Park, Bradford II*

West

Royal Victoria Park, Bath I

Wellington Park, Taunton Deane II*

Burslem Park, Stoke-on-Trent II*

Hanley Park, Stoke-on-Trent II*

Queens Park, Longton II*

West Park, Wolverhampton II*

Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham II*

East

Queens Park, Chesterfield II*

River Gardens, Belper II*

Abbey Park, Leicester II*

Waterloo Park, Norwich II*

Eaton Park, Norwich II*

Highfields Park, Notts II*

Nottingham Arboretum II*

http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/

ENGLISH HERITAGE RESEARCH

English Heritage undertakes and commissions research into the historic environment, and the issues that affect its condition and survival, in order to provide the understanding necessary for informed policy and decision making, for sustainable management, and to promote the widest access, appreciation and enjoyment of our heritage.

English Heritage carries out a wide range of investigative and analytical projects, and provides quality assurance and management support for externally-commissioned research. We aim for innovative work of the highest quality which will set agendas and standards for the historic environment sector. In support of this, and to build capacity and promote best practice in the sector, we also publish guidance and provide advice and training.

We support outreach and education activities and build these in to our projects and programmes wherever possible.

We make the results of our work available through the Research Report Series, and through journal publications and monographs. Our publication *Research News* aims to keep our partners within and outside English Heritage up-to-date with our projects and activities. A full list of Research Department Reports, with abstracts and information on how to obtain copies, may be found on www.english-heritage.org.uk/researchreports

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