

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET 31st May 2018

GREEN GUARANTEE AND 'THE BIG GREEN VOTE'

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: BUSINESS, DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR JOHN MINOR

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

The Green Guarantee

1.1 The Green Guarantee is a commitment by the Council to safeguard Council owned green spaces valued by local communities for both the wildlife they support and the opportunities they provide for leisure and recreation and the positive impacts they bring to health and wellbeing.

1.2 In 2016 104 sites were approved by Cabinet and it was agreed that a further 50 sites would be presented to Cabinet for adoption at a later date. This Report seeks formal approval for the protection of a further 96 green spaces, bringing the total number of sites listed under the Green Guarantee to 200. This exceeds the the Councils commitment set out in the Local Plan.

1.3 The Green Guarantee is part of the Council's overarching commitment to promote accessible green space. Approximately 90% of the borough is composed of 'Green Infrastructure' with only 10% comprising buildings, roofs, roads, footpaths, town squares and car parks. Telfords Green Network covers approximately 2500ha and, described as "*one of the largest scale, visually beneficial and informal recreation assets of any town in the country*", is a lasting legacy of the original landscape structure plan designed for the New Town in 1971.

1.4 Within this Green Network sits a hierarchy of statutory and non-statutory sites comprising:

- c. 108 hectares of SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).
- c.380 hectares of Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- c.215 hectares of proposed Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- c. 386 hectares of existing Green Guarantee sites, and
- c.513 hectares of Local Wildlife Sites (some of which overlap with LNRs)

1.5 The 96 sites proposed for adoption in this report will add a further 160ha of protected green space many of which are the closest areas of accessible green space for the boroughs residents. The adoption of these sites will result in approximately 60% of the total Green Network in the borough being protected by either a statutory or non-statutory designation or listed under the Green Guarantee.

The Big Green Vote

1.6 As part of Telfords 50th Anniversary celebrations. Members of the public have been able to take part in 'The Big Green Vote' via the website casting five votes each for their favourite from the 96 new sites. Once registered on the website individuals have also been able to leave comments, share photographs and win prizes.

1.7 Voting opened on March 1st 2018 and, due to increasing engagement from members of the public, local Friends groups and Parish councils, the voting period was extended to 20th May 2018. 807 individuals registered on the site casting 1825 votes and posting 118 photographs. Comments uploaded included:

Woodland at Brookside Avenue

“This area of woodland is a very important resource for local wildlife but also serves as a sound reducer/barrier from the A442 for local residents and visitors. The pathway through the woods is also a welcome and pleasant area to allow trusted dogs a little freedom when travelling from any of the lower areas of Brookside towards the Silkin Way which it eventually leads to.”

Dawley Park, Dawley

“This is a well maintained and excellent outdoor area. I love to visit with my children and niece”

Woodland at Shifnal Road

“This is my childhood playground. A green area in the new town that is untouched by development and an oasis for wildlife”

Stoney Hill

“Sensitive management required to prevent balance of habitats altering. This may be no more than a watching brief at present - too much management is as bad as none. The site supports good colonies of dingy skipper & small heath butterflies (dry grassland) as well as Roesels bush cricket, long-winged conehead & lesser marsh grasshopper (lush/wet grassland). Heather shieldbug has also been recorded in the heathy areas. This site would be my number one most important site in this whole list.

The Big Green Vote also formed part of the ‘Telford@50 Photo Challenge’ with members of the public sharing 296 photographs over 7 weeks.

1.8 Telford & Wrekin Council’s £2m Telford 50 Legacy Fund supports a mix of physical schemes and projects that help tackle key social issues in the borough and reduce demand on council services. The 50 sites receiving the highest number of votes will be able to access a share of Legacy Funding of £50,000.

1.9 After voting closed the 50 sites receiving the highest number of votes were identified. During this process sites were seen to be tied at 50th place. Therefore, funding will be secured to enable the sites ranked 51st and 52nd to also receive £1000 each. Resulting in two extra sites receiving funding and all 96 sites protected under the Green Guarantee. The 52 sites are presented in Appendix C.

1.10 It is proposed that winning sites will be grouped by ward and a series of consultation events will be run at Ward level. Consultations will involve councillors, council officers, local friends groups and members of the public. Consultation events will identify how the Legacy funding will be spent on each site. Options for site enhancements may include, wildflower seeds, bird and bat boxes, site signage and access/interpretation enhancements. Opportunities also exist for the Legacy funding to form the basis of a larger match funded investment at either site or Ward level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approve the proposal to identify and protect 96 green spaces as set out in the report and to remove the current officer delegation relating to these spaces to ensure that all decisions relating to disposals or changes of use of these are determined by Cabinet and as set out in section 5**
- 2.2 Approve the list of 96 green spaces as identified in Appendix A which, once endorsed by Cabinet, will be listed under the Council’s Green Guarantee**
- 2.3 Receive confirmation at Cabinet of the 52 sites which have received the highest number of votes and will receive an investment through the £2m Telford 50 Legacy Fund**

SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?
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IMPACT	Yes	Maintaining a clean, quality environment and improved green infrastructure and public realm: - Protect and enhance the green infrastructure and biodiversity of the Borough
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Telford & Wrekin Council, Local Green Space Infrastructure Needs Survey (2013) states that qualitative improvements of natural green spaces would help address health and wellbeing needs.
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 52 sites in The Big Green Vote announced 21st May 2018 • 96 Sites listed at Cabinet 31st May 2018 • Legacy Fund consultation with Wards to commence June 2018 	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	<p>The inclusion of a site under the Green Guarantee will not commit the Council to undertaking additional maintenance on the sites. The maintenance costs of some of the green sites are held within Service areas. The Service Areas will continue working in partnership with Town Councils and Parishes along with developing current and future Friends groups and local communities to ensure maintenance costs are within budget. Some sites could place restrictions on our future ability to raise capital from perimeter land sales.</p> <p>The 50 sites identified via The Big Green Vote will be supported by £50,000 one off Legacy fund, the funds will be spent in line with the outcomes from the Ward consultation process.</p> <p>In relation to the proposals in section 5 of this report, it is important to note that any proposal which imposed an unbudgeted financial pressure on the Council, either capital or revenue, will require the approval of full Council.</p> <p>AEM & DR – 30/04/2018</p>	
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	Cabinet is the decision making body in respect of disposals and management of Council owned land. However, some of these Cabinet disposal/management powers have been delegated to officers. This means that they can be exercised without the same publicity and member involvement as takes place when matters are reported to Cabinet. Ensuring that all significant decisions regarding the future use and ownership of the areas included in the Council's Green Guarantee list are reported to Cabinet provides a layer of transparent process-protection. IR- 30.04.18
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES		Enhances the natural environment of the Borough and contributes to the overall attractiveness of the Borough that will support the local business and visitor economy.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS		Borough wide impact.

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5 Green Guarantee Sites

5.1 The Green Guarantee identifies a range of locally important green spaces which are in the ownership of the Council and helps to safeguard these sites from development. The Green Guarantee will contribute to the existing provision of green spaces which are protected from development including Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves and SSSI's. The Council will continue to seek opportunities

to further protect appropriate sites through mechanisms including Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site designation where appropriate.

- 5.2 The process of protection will see the current officer delegated authority being removed for those sites identified as part of the Green Guarantee Land Management Commitment.
- 5.3 Any future proposals for the disposal of the identified sites or indeed the potential change of use (even if they were to remain in Council ownership) will require a Cabinet approval.
- 5.4 It is not anticipated that works which are in the community interest and do not impose any unbudgeted financial commitment on the Council would require cabinet approval in addition to existing controls through the planning process through which the views of the local community would be fully considered. Examples would include:
 - Proposals intended to enhance the recreational or leisure value of Green Guarantee sites for the communities they serve;
 - Proposals directly related to the management of the site for its current use;
 - The removal and/or replacement of existing structures or apparatus where there had been public engagement and where the local Parish Council are in agreement with the proposal;
 - Proposals for the creation or management of below ground easements and wayleaves with full re-instatement following the proposed works;

In these cases the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment (or an officer authorised in writing by that Assistant Director) would be asked to agree the proposed change under their delegated power.

- 5.5 Where access or physical alteration to part of a Green Guarantee site is sought by a third party to facilitate a neighbouring development e.g. boundary alterations or works to achieve highways visibility splays etc. the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment (or an officer authorised in writing by that Assistant Director) would need to agree the proposed works under their delegated power in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Green Spaces & Parks. Such works would require planning permission and would be controlled through the planning process where the views of the local community would be further and fully considered.
- 5.6 Although there will be no additional resources or funding provided to manage these identified green spaces, Telford & Wrekin Council will continue to work with partners such as Town and Parish Councils, existing and new 'friends of' groups and local communities to provide the maintenance and upkeep of these important community assets. Volunteer action is already strong in the Borough and includes a partnership of existing volunteering and 'friends of' organisations called the Telford Green Spaces Partnership (TGSP) who, along with Council officers and Shropshire Wildlife Trust, can offer support to new volunteering groups.
- 5.7 The protection of green spaces under the Green Guarantee may assist volunteer groups in making bids for funding to environmental, community engagement and biodiversity focussed funding organisations for capital works on sites and community engagement projects. Council officers, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and TGSP can provide some support to groups in assessing necessary or desirable works and drawing together bids.

6 SELECTION OF SITES

- 6.1 In line with the selection of the original 104 sites, each of the 96 proposed sites have been assessed against nine site selection criteria (Appendix B). These criteria assessed elements of ownership, site allocation and planning permission, ecological functionality, levels of existing public engagement, cultural significance and provision of amenity services..
- 6.2 Each site was also scored against the number of 'Green Infrastructure Functions' each site performs. These functions were selected from a list provided in Telford and Wrekin's '*Green infrastructure evidence and analysis document*', (Appendix B), and includes functions such as carbon storage, water and pollution management and the facilitation of recreation, green travel and outdoor learning.

7 NEXT STEPS

Listing of sites

- 7.1 Following Cabinet the 96 sites identified in this report will be formally listed as Green Guarantee sites by the Council.

Announcing the Big Green Vote Winners

- 7.2 The Big Green Vote closed at midnight on 20th May 2018 and the 52 sites receiving the highest number of votes will be formally announced at Cabinet on May 31st 2018.
- 7.3 The winners of The Big Green Vote Prize Draw will be announced during June 2018.

Legacy funding

- 7.4 The 52 sites receiving the highest number of votes will be grouped by Ward and a series of consultation events will then be run at Ward level. Consultations will involve councillors, council officers, local friends of groups and members of the public. Consultation events will identify how the Legacy funding will be spent on each site.

Milestone	Date
Cabinet approval of the list of 96 green spaces	31 st May 2018
Big Green Vote Site Winners Announced	31 st May 2018
Winners of The Big Green Vote Prize Draw Announced	June 2018
Legacy Fund Consultations	June 2018 onwards
Legacy Fund Implementation	June 2018 onwards

8 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 All members of the community should have the opportunity to benefit from the diverse range of species and habitat present in the Borough. Research has shown that improving the provision of and access to natural green space can be valuable to a wide range of groups within the community. A statement of land management for green spaces provides clarity that the Council recognises the importance of green space.
- 8.2 Research has shown that the public health benefits derived from living close to accessible green spaces are considerable and include decreased levels of obesity, heart disease and diabetes as well as lower levels of stress. Access to green spaces is also seen as an effective treatment for clinical depression and regular walking has been shown to increase life expectancy. Provision of accessible green spaces can help to reduce costs on some local NHS services.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet 24 March 2016 Green Guarantee

Report prepared by Mark Latham Ecologist and Green Infrastructure Specialist

Appendix A: List of Second Phase Green Guarantee Sites

1	Admaston Allotments
2	Aqueduct Green Corridor
3	Barnes Wallis Drive Green Space, Leegomery
4	Beanhill Valley North, Bratton
5	Beech Road Allotments, Madeley
6	Beech Road Green Space, Woodside
7	Bridgnorth Road Green Space, Sutton Hill
8	Bridgnorth Road Woodland, Sutton Hill
9	Brookside Allotments
10	Broomfield Road Green Space, Newport
11	Castle Farm Way Green Corridor, Priorslee
12	Castlefields Way Woodland, Aqueduct
13	Chepstow Drive Green Space, Leegomery
14	Chiltern Gardens Green Corridor, Dawley
15	Chockleys Meadow Green Space, Leegomery
16	Colliers Way Green Corridor, The Rock
17	Colliers Way Woodland, Old Park
18	Cornbrook Green Space, Stirchley
19	Dale Road Picnic Area, Coalbrookdale
20	Darby Road, Coalbrookdale
21	Dawley Park, Dawley
22	Donnington Recreation Ground
23	Eastwood Drive Woodland, Donnington
24	Fieldhouse Drive Woodland, Muxton
25	Furnace Lane Green Space, Trench
26	Glade Way, Shawbirch
27	Grainger Drive Green Space, Leegomery
28	Green Space Adjacent To Leegomery Allotments
29	Green Space East Of St Matthews Primary, Donnington
30	Green Space North of Ferndale Drive, Priorslee
31	Green Space Opposite Norbroom Park, Newport
32	Green Space South Of Ferndale Drive, Priorslee
33	Greenspace at St Saviour Close and St Helier Drive, Dawley Bank
34	Hartshill Park, Oakengates
35	Hill Top, Oakengates
36	Hills Lane, Madeley
37	Hollinswood Green Corridor
38	Hollinswood Green Space
39	Hurleybrook Way Green Space, Leegomery
40	Lakeside Playing Field, Stirchley
41	Leegate Avenue Green Space, Leegomery
42	Leegomery Allotments
43	Lightmoor Woodland and Pools, Lightmoor Road
44	Lime Tree Way Open Space, Wellington
45	Lodge Road Woodland, Donnington
46	Lower Park Drive, Dothill
47	Madeley Allotments

48	Majestic Way Woodland, Aqueduct
49	Malinslee Playing Fields
50	Malinslee Recreation Ground
51	Marshbrook Way Green Corridor
52	Masons Place Green Space, Newport
53	Mound Way Woodland, Woodside
54	Park Lane Green Space, Old Park
55	Parkway Woodland, Madeley
56	Peregrine Way Woodland, Apley
57	Queensway Woodland, Oakengates
58	Randlay Allotments
59	Randlay Green Corridor
60	Redlake Pit Mound
61	Rednal Fields, Little Dawley
62	Ringers Lane Allotments, Admaston
63	Russel Road Green Space, Madeley
64	Silvington Close Green Space, Stirchley
65	Smith's Crescent, Wrockwardine Wood
66	South of Admaston House, Admaston
67	Spout Lane Green Space, Malinslee
68	Stirchley Allotments
69	Stirchley Road Green Space, Stirchley
70	Stoney Hill, Lightmoor
71	Suffolk Way Green Corridor, Horsehay
72	Sutton Hill Green Space
73	Sutton Hill Woodland
74	Sutton Way Green Space, Sutton Hill
75	'The Green', Priorslee
76	Tom Morgan Green Space, Lawley
77	Trench Allotments
78	Wedgewood Crescent, Ketley
79	Wellington Allotments
80	West View Allotment Gardens, Madeley
81	Westminster Way Green Corridor, Priorslee
82	Wombridge Road Green Space, Trench
83	Woodland at Botfield Close, Randlay
84	Woodland at Brookside Avenue
85	Woodland at Duke's Hill, Ketley Bank
86	Woodland at Halesfield 2
87	Woodland at Heath Hill, Dawley
88	Woodland at Knightsbridge Crescent, Stirchley
89	Woodland at Madeley Academy
90	Woodland at Morton Court, Dawley
91	Woodland at Old Office Road, Dawley
92	Woodland at Rock Road, Ketley
93	Woodland at Shifnal Road, Priorslee
94	Woodland at Sunnyside Road, Ketley Bank
95	Woodland at The Keep, Woodside
96	Woodland At The Nabb, St Georges

Appendix B: Green Guarantee Selection Criteria and Green Infrastructure Function

Table B1: Green Guarantee Selection Criteria

	Criteria	Explanation	Evidence Base
1	Ownership	Telford and Wrekin Owned Land	Telford and Wrekin land ownership datasets, planning permissions and published site allocations
2	Green Network	Site mapped within the Green Network	Green Network spatial layer
3	Local Support	Current public engagement	Officer knowledge
4	Ecological Value	Ecological value as evidenced by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical species records • Presence of natural/semi-natural habitats • Potential for wildlife on site 	Shropshire Ecological Data Network Officer knowledge
5	Ecological Corridor Stepping Stone	Does the site form part of an Ecological Corridor or Stepping Stone (as defined Lawton <i>et al</i> 2010)	Telford and Wrekin Council Ecological Network mapping Technical Paper and Mapping
6	Friends Group	Existing and active 'Friends of' group	Officer knowledge
7	Passive Recreation	Site used for passive recreation such as dog walking etc.	Officer knowledge
8	Active Recreation	Site used for formal recreational activities such as formal sport pitches, game areas or play equipment	Officer knowledge
9	Cultural Significance	Site used, or displays potential to be used for small scale community events	Officer knowledge

Table B2: Green Infrastructure Function

Green Infrastructure Function	Description
Carbon storage	Trees and peat soils are particularly important types of green infrastructure for storing carbon. Sites with >75% tree cover score under this function.
Water storage	Water stored in ponds, lakes, reservoirs and certain wetlands. Sites with standing water score under this function ¹ .
Water flow reduction	The speed and amount of water passing through a site can be reduced by vegetation/habitat structure. Woodland and Allotment sites score under this function
Water conveyance	Green infrastructure can transport water and aid in flood relief. Sites including water courses score under this function
Water interception, infiltration and evaporative cooling	Interception of rain water by vegetation before it reaches the ground slows above ground water flow. Vegetation and plant roots help water to drain naturally

¹ This function is a combination of "Accessible Water Storage" and "Inaccessible Water Storage"

	into the soil. As plants breathe water is evaporated from their surfaces cooling their immediate locality. Woodland and Allotment sites score under this function
Ground stabilization	Woodland sites on historic pit mounds score under this function.
Pollutant removal from soil, water or air	Woodland sites and sites with wetland sites score under this function
Shading from the sun/shelter from the wind	Woodland sites score under this function
Noise absorption	Urban woodland sites score under this function
Habitat for wildlife	Sites containing habitat elements that can provide food and shelter for wildlife score under this function.
Corridors or stepping stones for wildlife	These are sites that improve the functional connectivity between core areas, enabling species to move between them the feed, disperse, migrate or reproduce. Connectivity need not come from linear, continuous habitats; a number of small sites may act as 'stepping stones' across which certain species can move.
Cultural assets	Green space used for cultural purposes including events and festivals. Parks and Formal Gardens score under this function
Heritage assets	Sites including ancient woodlands, canals, designated sites, monuments and industrial heritage (pit mounds) score under this function.
Site of learning	Green infrastructure can provide a back drop for outdoor classrooms and learning outside of the indoor school environment, and also a setting for learning new skills that may help adults back to work. Sites associated with schools and with a known history of public engagement/lifelong learning score under this function.
Green travel route	Sites with formal footpaths and cycle ways or providing linkages between centers of local population score under this function
Passive recreation	Sites with potential to be used for passive recreation such as dog walking etc. score under this function
Active recreation	Sites containing formal play areas and pitches score under this function
Food production	Allotment sites score under this function
Additional Function/Score	
Accessible natural green space	Sites able to be accessed by the public score for this function
Functions not selected for Green Guarantee scoring	
Aesthetic – criteria currently not defined	
Timber production – not applicable to Green Guarantee	
Private recreation – all Green Guarantee sites are in public ownership	
Biofuel production – not applicable to Green Guarantee	
Burial spaces – not applicable to Green Guarantee	

APPENDIX C: BIG GREEN VOTE RESULTS TOP 52 SITES

- 1 Lower Park Drive, Dothill
- 2 Beanhill Valley North, Bratton
- 3 South of Admaston House, Admaston
- 4 Peregrine Way Woodland, Apley
- 5 Glade Way, Shawbirch
- 6 Wellington Allotments
- 7 Lime Tree Way Open Space, Wellington
- 8 Broomfield Road Green Space, Newport
- 9 Green Space Opposite Norbroom Park, Newport
- 10 Masons Place Green Space, Newport
- 11 Dale Road Picnic Area, Coalbrookdale
- 12 Ringers Lane Allotments, Admaston
- 13 'The Green', Priorslee
- 14 Suffolk Way Green Corridor, Horsehay
- 15 Tom Morgan Green Space, Lawley
- 16 Darby Road, Coalbrookdale
- 17 Stoney Hill, Lightmoor
- 18 Green Space South Of Ferndale Drive, Priorslee
- 19 Woodland at Shifnal Road, Priorslee
- 20 Green Space North of Ferndale Drive, Priorslee
- 21 Randlay Green Corridor
- 22 Furnace Pools, Dawley
- 23 Woodland at Heath Hill, Dawley
- 24 Westminster Way Green Corridor, Priorslee
- 25 Barnes Wallis Drive Green Space, Leegomery
- 26 Donnington Recreation Ground
- 27 Fieldhouse Drive Woodland, Muxton
- 28 Admaston Allotments
- 29 Castle Farm Way Green Corridor, Priorslee
- 30 Woodland At The Nabb, St Georges
- 31 Lakeside Playing Field, Stirchley
- 32 Marshbrook Way Green Corridor
- 33 Lodge Road Woodland, Donnington
- 34 Leegomery Allotments
- 35 Randlay Allotments
- 36 Hartshill Park, Oakengates
- 37 Redlake Pit Mound
- 38 Aqueduct Green Corridor
- 39 Grainger Drive Green Space, Leegomery
- 40 Woodland at Halesfield 2
- 41 Greenspace at St Saviour Close and St Helier Drive, Dawley Bank
- 42 Hills Lane, Madeley
- 43 Woodland at Duke's Hill, Ketley Bank
- 44 Dawley Park, Dawley
- 45 Hill Top, Oakengates
- 46 Majestic Way Woodland, Aqueduct
- 47 Woodland at Botfield Close, Randlay
- 48 Chockleys Meadow Green Space, Leegomery
- 49 Sutton Hill Woodland

- 50 Woodland at Rock Road, Ketley
- 51 Cornbrook Green Space, Stirchley
- 52 Queensway Woodland, Oakengates