



Green Spaces Strategy Consultation Findings

Report by Consultation & Engagement Team

September 2025

1. Background and methodology

Between the 18th July and 29th August 2025, the Council ran a public consultation, seeking to engage residents, visitors and stakeholders that use green spaces in Bolton, in sharing their reflections on the Council's Green Spaces Strategy. During that period a comprehensive communication plan was implemented to raise awareness of the draft strategy across the borough, with a strong emphasis on engaging residents and community groups. Information sessions were delivered to the community and voluntary sector on the 28th, 30th and 31st July, and on the 19th August 2025. Sessions were held with representatives from:

- Bolton Green Umbrella,
- Bolton Conservation Volunteers,
- City of Trees,
- Friends of Queens Park,
- Friends of Moss Bank Park,
- Bradshaw Brook Fly Fishing Club Volunteers,
- Friends of Harwood & Longsight Park,
- Smithills Nature Trail Volunteers
- Ivy Road Community Project

An email briefing was distributed to all stakeholders, including the Vision Partnership, Elected Members and residents on the e-View consultation database. Information was circulated to the community and voluntary sector, as well as equality and green groups. Supporting documentation was made accessible on the Council's consultation webpages and social media was heavily utilised throughout the period to share key messages about the consultation. Posters were also distributed to key local authority assets, including libraries and park cafes (refer to Appendix A).

Participants were surveyed using a questionnaire tool made up of open and closed questions, over a period of 6 weeks, providing respondents the opportunity to reflect and share their thoughts on the draft strategy. The questionnaire was made available both digitally and offline, with the questionnaire being accessible on the council's consultation web page, as well as in hard copy format, on request.

*A copy of the questionnaire is included at the end of this document, located in Appendix B.

Analysis notes

- Results are presented in the questionnaire format with 'Don't know' type responses removed unless stated.
- Comments have been categorised where feasible. Unless otherwise stated, categories with 9 or more responses are shown. Categories may overlap and a comment from one respondent included in multiple categories. A sample of comments [verbatim] are included in the report. Comments may be abbreviated so that only the relevant extract is included. One comment may be coded into multiple categories, and each category may only cover a certain aspect of the comment, for example a respondent may have made both positive and negative comments about the same aspect.
- Base: unless otherwise stated the base is the number of respondents to a particular question.
- Data has been cleansed where appropriate, e.g., comments moved into existing responses.

2. Consultation responses

A number of open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to give respondents the opportunity to comment on the strategy and suggest alternative and additional approaches to delivering on the objectives and key themes.

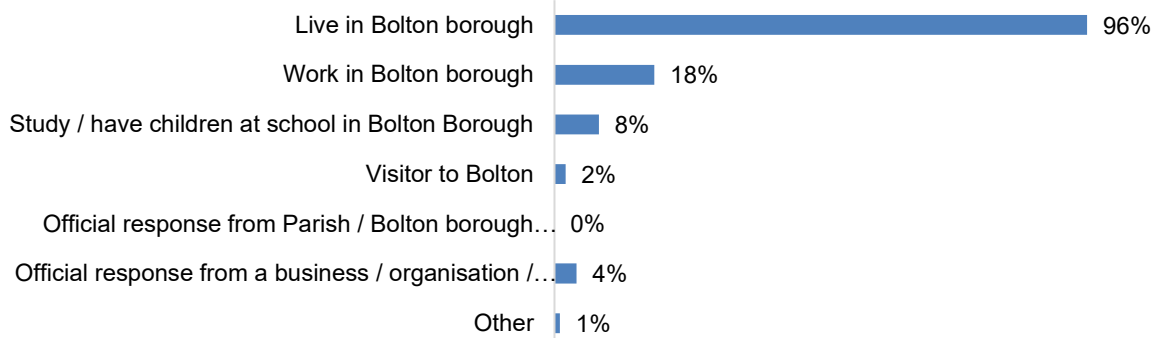
Throughout the consultation period the following responses were received:

- 263 completed electronic questionnaires from residents and stakeholders
- 8 completed paper questionnaires from residents and stakeholders.

A total of 271 residents and stakeholders took part in the consultation, with 96% of respondents residing in the Bolton borough. 2% of responses received were from visitors to Bolton. Those stakeholders engaging in an alternative capacity, stated that they are an allotment plot holder, volunteer, and an additional property owner in the borough. Those engaging in an official capacity are from the following organisations:

- Bolton's Age Well Partnership
- Bradshaw Brook Fly Fishing Club
- Brazley Community Centre
- Doe Hey Bowling Club
- Friends of Eatock Lodge
- Friends of Harwood & Longsight Park
- Get Up Keep Going CIC
- High Hopes for Halliwell
- Save our Green Spaces
- The Karmic Collective CIC

Respondents interest in the proposal



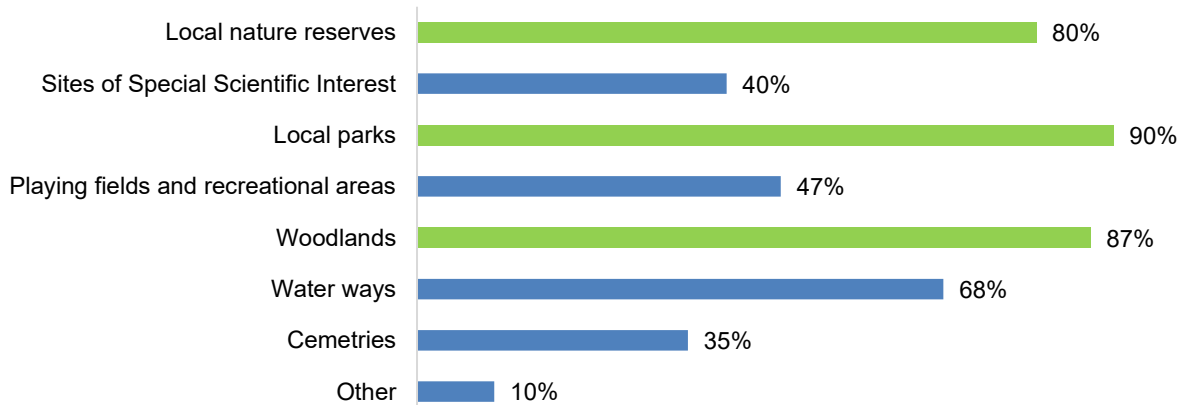
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3. Engaging with green spaces

3a. Types of green spaces

As part of the consultation process, Bolton Council were keen to understand the types of green spaces residents, stakeholder and visitors' access. The three most popular locations are *local parks* (90%), *woodlands* (87%) and *local nature reserves* (80%). The area seeing least engagement are *cemeteries* (35%) and *sites of specific interest* (40%). Those that cited another location, referred predominantly to allotments, however some respondents also referred to community growing hubs / gardens; public right of way (paths & trails); golf courses; moorlands; street greenery; and paddocks.

Which types of green spaces do you use in Bolton?

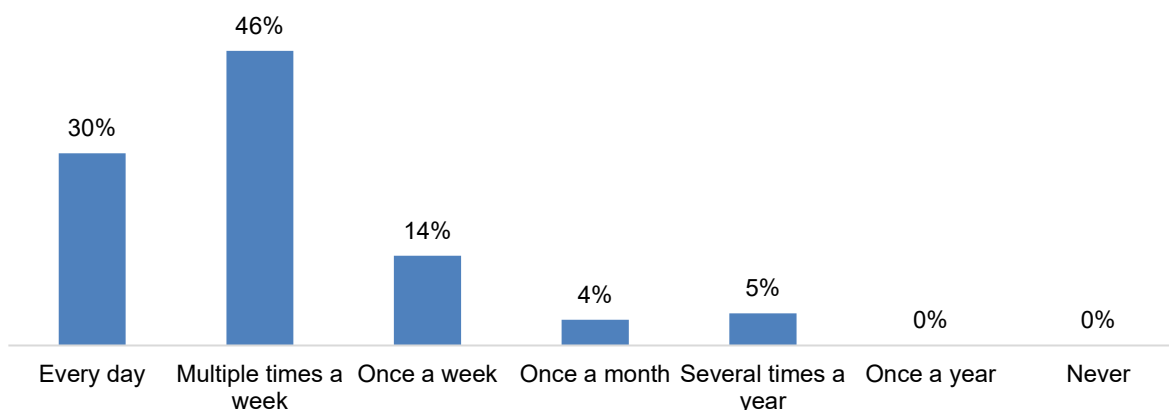


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3b. Frequency of visits

All stakeholders were asked to reflect on how often they access local green spaces. Many stakeholders (46%) visit their local green spaces multiple times per week, with 30% stating they visit daily.

How often do you visit your local green spaces?



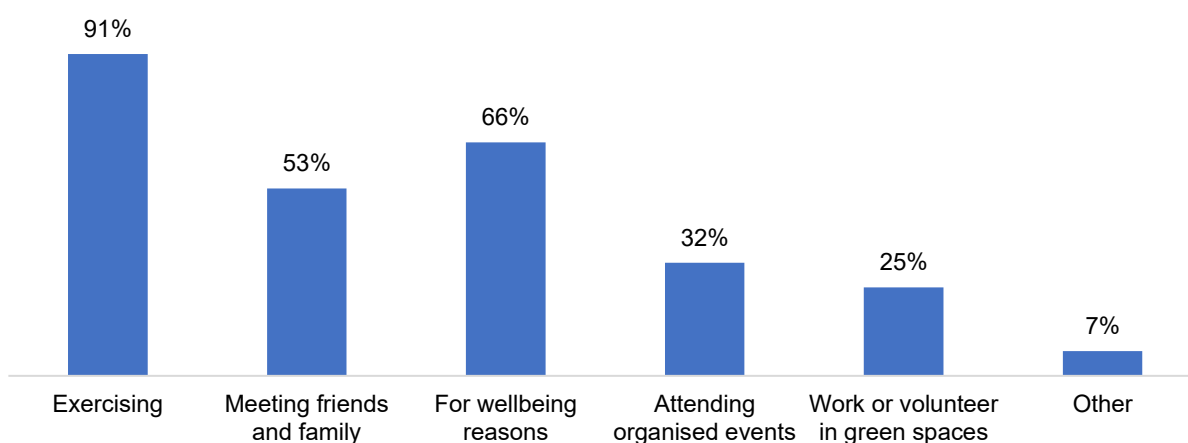
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3c. Using green spaces

As part of the strategy development the Council were keen to understand how residents and stakeholders use local green spaces. Of the 271 responses received, 91% access local green spaces to exercise. 66% use green spaces as a form of wellbeing, and 53% use the space to engage with family and friends. Of the 7% of stakeholders who provided alternative reasons for using green space, these included:

- Dog walking
- Growing food on allotment plots
- Accessing nature and wildlife
- Fishing
- Commuting through the space

How do you use your local green spaces?

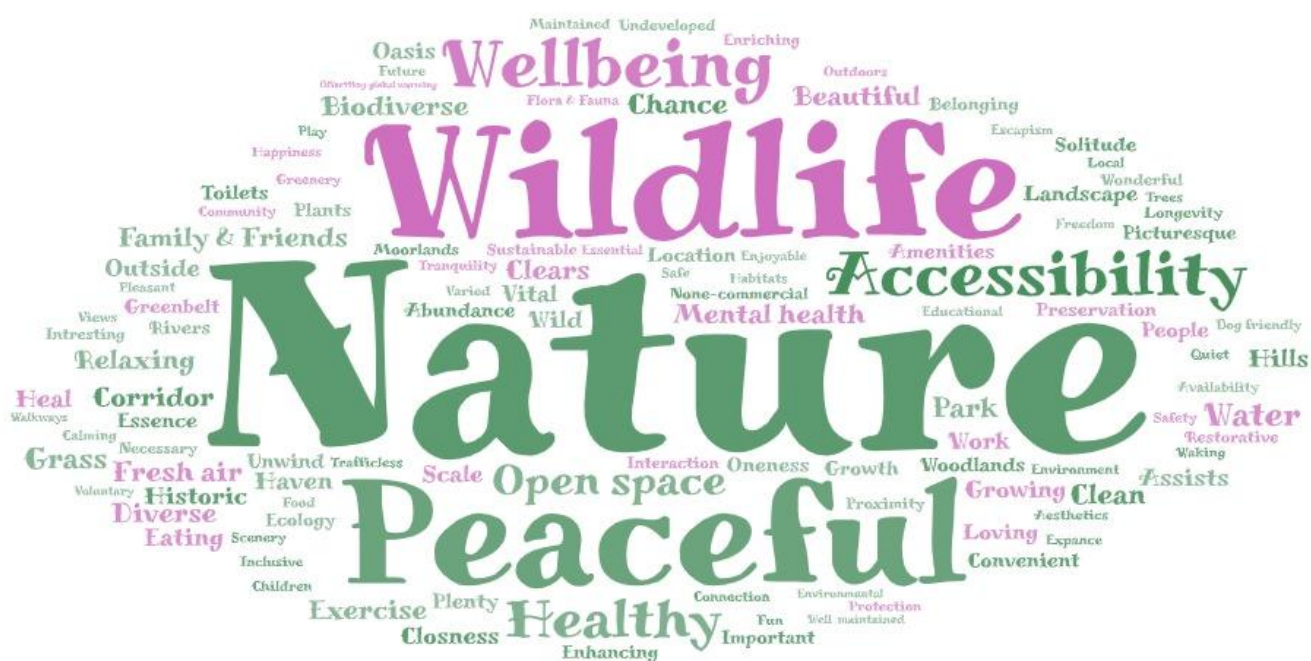
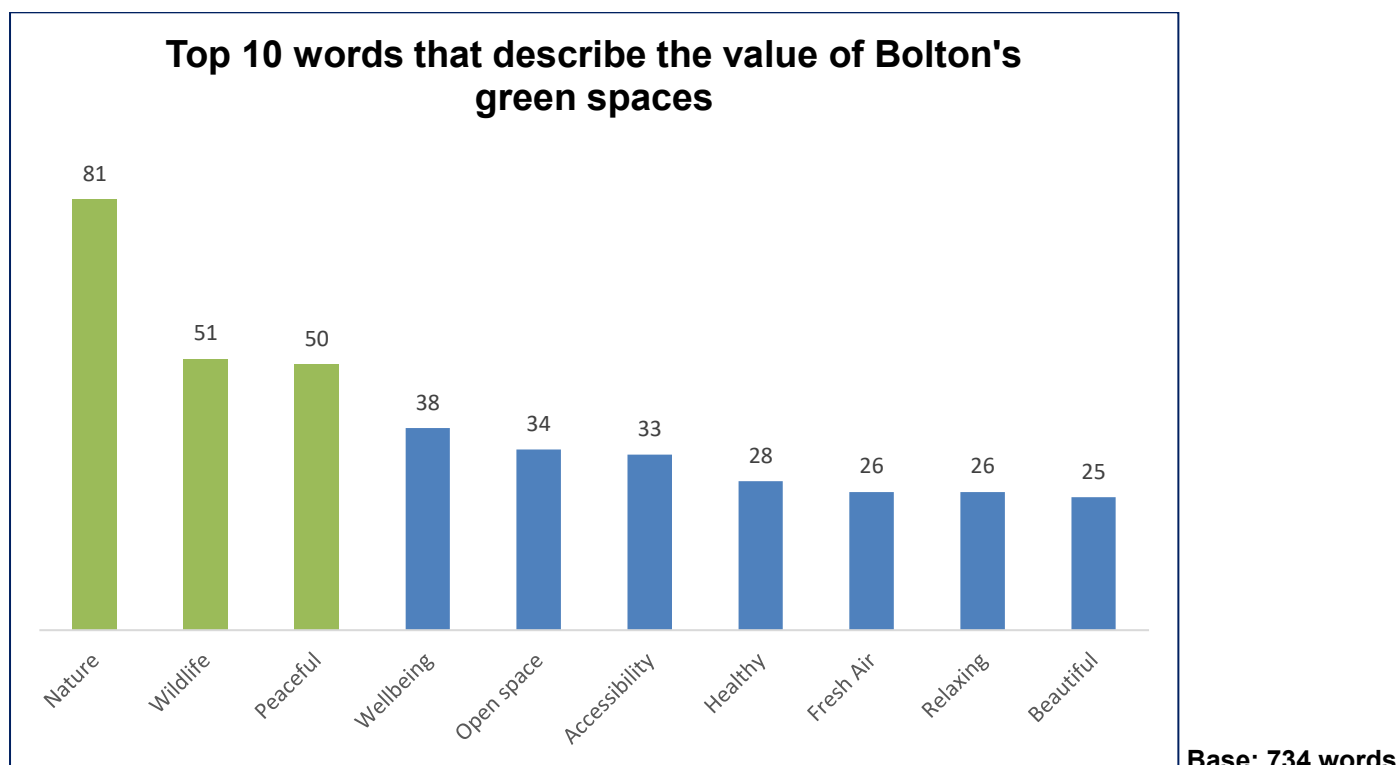


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3d. Valuing green spaces

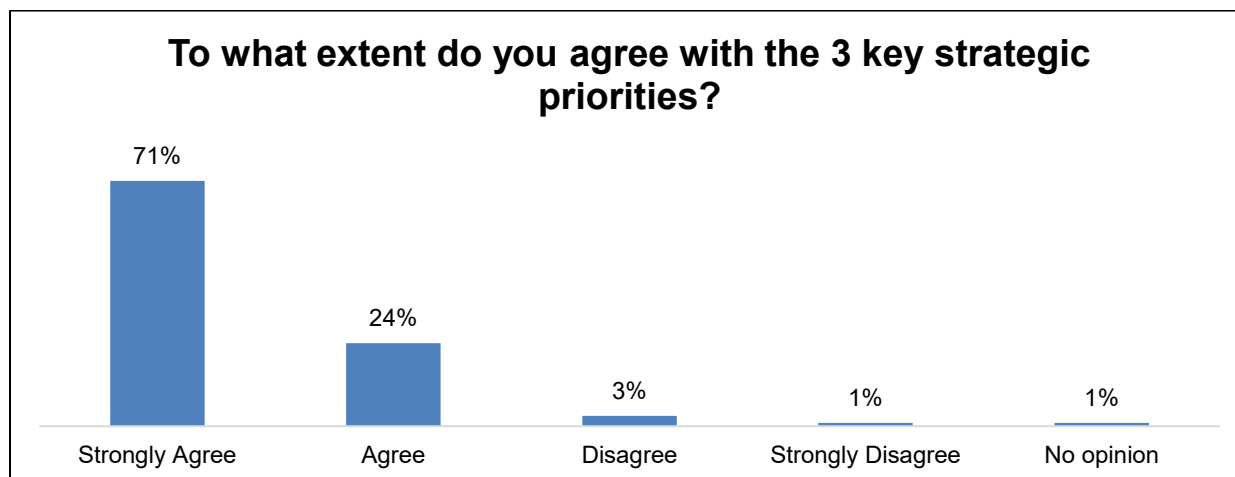
There are many reasons why people value their local green spaces and as part of the consultation process, the Council wanted to understand further what the overarching value of Bolton green spaces are. Of the 734 words received by residents and stakeholders, the top 3 value words that were repeated were 'nature',

'wildlife' and 'peaceful'. The graph below outlines the top 10 words repeatedly received and the word cloud below that, depicts a reflection of value comments. Those in larger font are those words that were frequently used by stakeholders responding to the consultation.



4. Strategic priorities

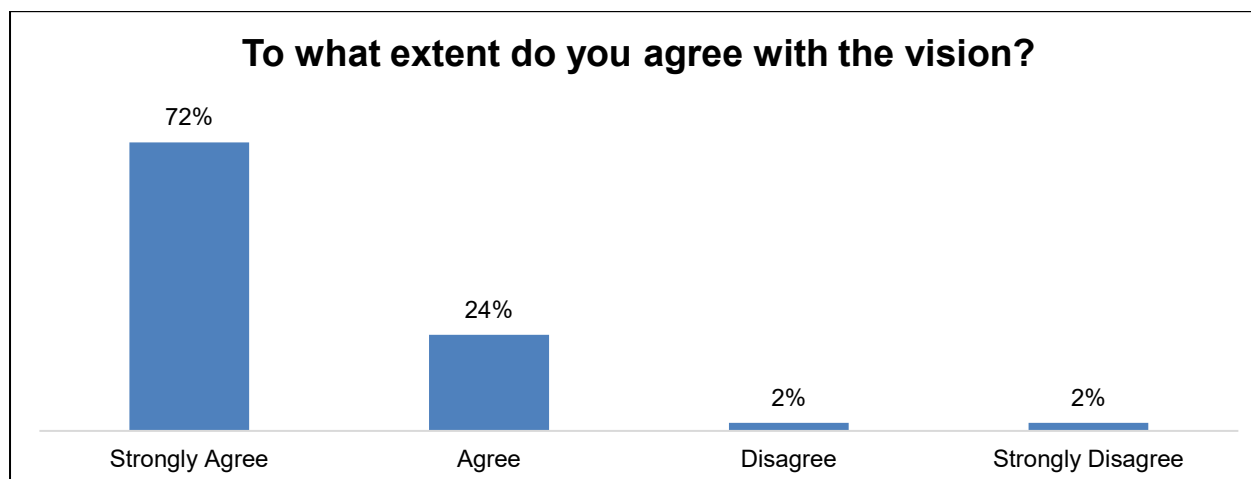
The Green Spaces strategy outlines three strategic priorities for green spaces across the borough. These are to *create safe open spaces; spaces that are protected for all; and to create equal access to green spaces*. When asked whether the 3 strategic priorities were appropriate, 95% of stakeholders agreed.



Base: 269

5. Vision for green spaces

The draft strategy outlines the vision for green spaces in Bolton, in that *'green spaces will be essential to sustainable growth, that they will improve our communities and provide benefits for all. They will also be accessible, safe and protected'*. When asked whether this vision was appropriate for inclusion in the strategy, 96% of stakeholders agreed.



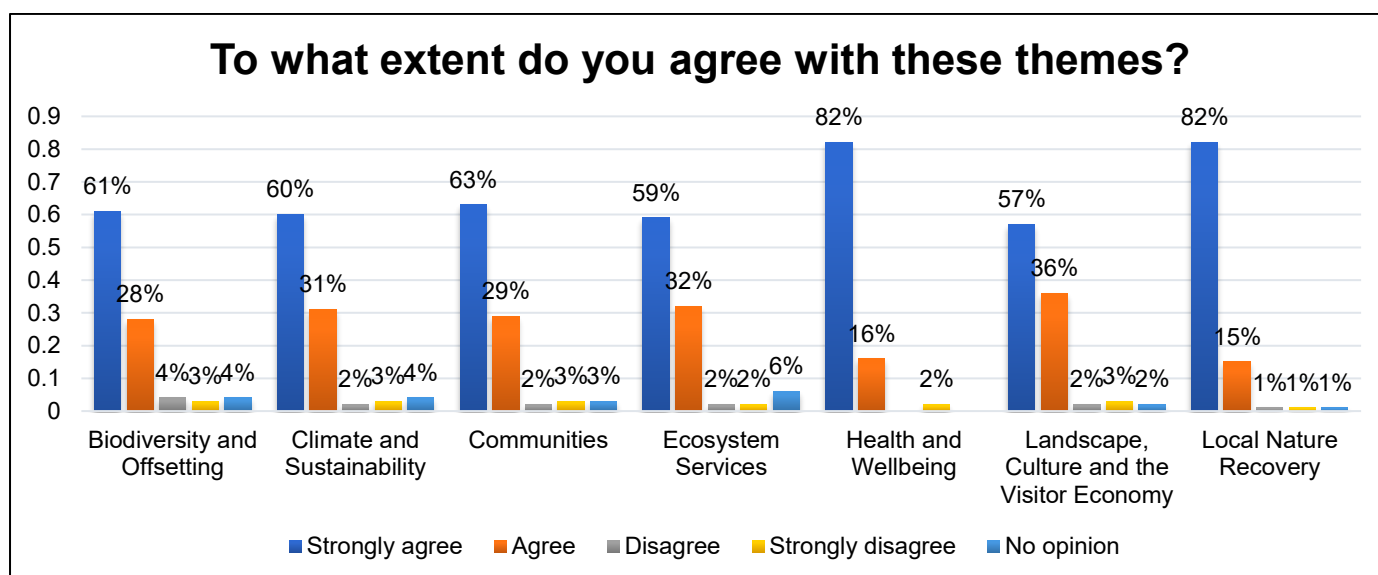
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6. Strategic key themes

The draft strategy outlines 7 key themes for green spaces in Bolton, these include Biodiversity and Offsetting; Climate and Sustainability; Communities; Ecosystem Services; Health and Wellbeing; Landscape, culture and visitor economy; and Local nature recovery. When asked whether residents and

stakeholders agreed that these themes should be included in the strategy, all areas saw positive agreement.

The areas seeing greatest agreement are Health and Wellbeing (98%) and Local nature recovery (97%).



Base average: 259

Respondents were asked to specify alternative themes that could be addressed in the strategy. 117 suggestions were provided that have been themed into 11 categories. The most common themes were green space protection and expansion, accessibility and wildlife protection.

Please specify any other themes that could be addressed in the strategy		
Rank	Category	No. of respondents
a.	Greenspace Protection / Expansion	31
b.	Accessibility / Access to Greenspaces	15
c.	Wildlife Protection	12
d.	Health and Safety	10
e.	Allotments and Food Security	9
f.	Education and Heritage	9

a. Green space Protection / Expansion

The most common alternative theme suggested by respondents (31 comments) surrounded the protection of existing green spaces in Bolton from development or conversion to grey belt land. Some respondents highlighted themes of improving water quality and protecting green spaces from human activities.

- *"Increasing green spaces"*
- *"Protect all boltons parks."*
- *"Security of green spaces not being classed as grey belt"*
- *"We should stop building on green spaces. There are plenty of brownfield sites. We need to protect the green spaces now"*
- *"It was highlighted that Bolton's rivers need improvement. Clean waterways are a good habitat for all kinds of wildlife species that live around water."*
- *"Conservation of Harwoods green belt land on Arthur lane, and millennium woods has always contributed to climate change in a pos way by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. It is also natutal habitat to insects, dragon flies, deer, birds, wild flowers etc etc!"*
- *"Protect green belt at all costs by refusing to reclassify land as grey belt in Bolton. Developments on green/grey belt land will ultimately destroy what little we have left. Green spaces don't have to be physically accessible to be valued and enjoyed. Living in and around green spaces, fields and woodlands is just as important. Knowing they are protected, conserved and valued, that they are part of our culture, that biodiversity and ecology thrives, that they offer the promise of offsetting climate change and improving sustainability and that by continuing to look after the historic landscape and local nature recovery we are sustaining our spaces and our futures."*
- *"Motorbikes and scramblers need to be stopped from ripping up the park fields and football pitches"*

b. Accessibility / Access to Green spaces

15 comments were received relating to accessibility, particularly referencing the need to improve footpaths and maintain green spaces. Some comments focused on unequal access to green spaces across Bolton.

- *"Developing and maintaining footpaths for accessibility for all"*
- *"Footpath improvement along green spaces for better accessibility."*
- *"Upgrade local public foot paths and access to green areas"*
- *"I'm fortunate in that I live near green spaces, but there are many areas of Bolton which lack them - maybe you need to concentrate on providing playing fields for deprived children?"*
- *"Privatised areas becoming accessible to public / council owned."*
- *"All areas should have Village Greens and protected trees."*

c. Wildlife Protection

12 comments related to a theme of protecting wildlife, including habitat conservation, wildlife corridors and species reintroduction.

- *"Reintroducing natural species of flora and fauna"*
- *"Biodiversity & Biosecurity: plant only native species; no imported plants"*
- *"The wildlife needs protection and the tit willow is a priority species which uses a wildlife corridor and its numbers need to increase and be protected."*
- *"Pathways / corridors for wildlife - connection of green spaces"*
- *"Create wildlife corridors and off road cycling and walking corridors linking communities. These should be safe and maintained."*
- *"Protecting important habitats threatened by planning, where the ecosystems under threat, host endangered, irreplaceable species."*

d. Health and Safety

Respondents highlighted safety in green spaces as a theme, particularly for women and children. Other comments highlighted tackling anti-social behaviour through interventions such as CCTV, implementing a police presence in green spaces, implementing park rangers, and improved dog fouling signage.

- *“Safe for women”*
- *“Safety for users. Stop fly tipping. Stop off road bikes”*
- *“Children’s play areas that are fenced so that they dog free areas.”*
- *“Ensuring the spaces are not spoiled by anti social behaviour, making them safe including CCTV”*
- *“Feeling safe in these areas is so important - a ‘park ranger’ each day in parks would be excellent. Or a regular police patrol.”*
- *“We need No dog fouling signs &at least 1 that says dogs aren’t allowed in the playground . The parks often used as a Dogs toilet for some people .”*
- *“Update the surrounding areas around Moses gate country park as it is now extremely dangerous to walk around in certain areas due to non existent upkeep of the walkways and the children's park”*

e. Allotments and Food Security

9 comments were received that outlined the inclusion of allotments in the draft strategy. Some comments focused specifically on food security.

- *“Local food production - eg allotments”*
- *“Food production in cost of living crisis”*
- *“More opportunities for access to allotments”*
- *“Food security: plant fruit trees and shrubs with food value, not ornamentals.”*
- *“Allotment's in Bolton are under used or inappropriately used they are key to several of the themes above such as health and wellbeing, communities, climate and sustainability but are not mentioned”*

f. Education and Heritage

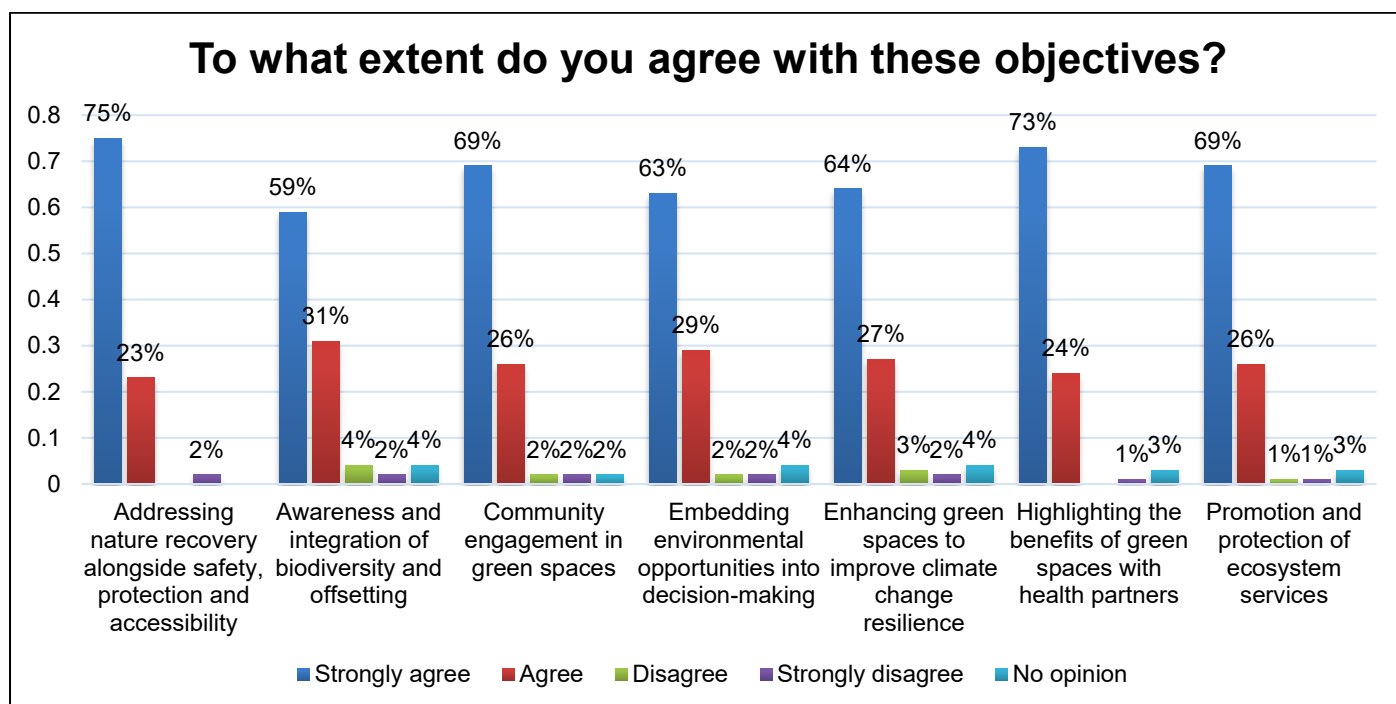
Educating people about green spaces and providing facilities for this was also suggested. Some comments referred to introducing a theme about the historic importance of Bolton’s green spaces.

- *“Heritage and education”*
- *“Education, self-ownership, pride”*
- *“Preserving Bolton's natural heritage.”*
- *“Keep history as a theme, gives perspective.”*
- *“Education facility - outdoor schools and centres”*
- *“Education of all to understand importance of our green spaces”*

Other comments received focused on maintaining green spaces, with some commenting on the need for improved maintenance, *“the maintenance of local parks should be more than random part mowing of the grass.”* Wider comments also explored the added value of community engagement in the production and delivery of the strategy, *“communities being really involved including the development of this strategy. Being involved from the beginning promotes ownership that brings with it pride, commitment and protection.”* Finally, some residents referenced the need to tackle invasive flora within the thematics, *“throughout our green spaces; parks woodlands country parks and waterways we have a problem of non-native evasive species. We need a joined-up strategy from the council to tackle this massive problem. Consulting with the public, farms, industry and volunteers to eradicate this massive problem.”*

7. Strategy objectives

Respondents were provided with 7 overarching objectives to reflect upon and outline whether they were appropriate for inclusion. All strategy objectives saw agreement of above 90%. The three areas with the strongest level of agreement are 'Addressing nature recovery alongside safety, protection and accessibility' (98%); 'Highlighting the benefits of green spaces with health partners' (97%); and 'Promotion and protection of ecosystem services' (95%).



Base average: 258

All stakeholders were asked whether they would like to reflect further on the objectives laid out in the proposed strategy document and provide extra comments on these objectives. 111 respondents took the opportunity to provide additional observations. Comments have been themed and categorised into the table below, outlining 9 thematic reflection areas.

What further comments do you have on the objectives?		
Rank	Category	No. of respondents
a.	Types of Green Spaces / Maintaining Green Spaces	31
b.	Planning and development	29
c.	Communication and engagement	21
d.	Delivering the strategy objectives / considerations	17
e.	Accessibility of Green Spaces / Health & wellbeing	16
f.	Challenges	15
g.	Creating climate resilience and priorities	12

h.	General agreement	11
i.	Anti-social behaviours	9

a. Types of Green Spaces / Maintaining Green Spaces

31 comments were received where stakeholders referenced the types of green spaces that should be prioritised within the strategy. These include the importance of allotments, green corridors, and spaces within walking distance of stakeholder homes, as well as green spaces being incorporated into street furniture and developments (green roofs). In addition, residents and stakeholders reflected on the importance of maintaining green spaces, providing regular upkeep to avoid overgrowth and improve accessibility of sites.

Types of Green Spaces

- *"Allotments are a key greenspace within Bolton but do not have their own category. Allotments should be split out as they are a unique environment which need better management."*
- *"I think we need to ensure all our citizens have access and support to produce some food themselves if wanted. It creates a level of resilience in times of high cost and climate change."*
- *"Everyone should have green space within walking distance from their home".*
- *"I am glad that cemeteries are included, however there appears to be no detail on this".*
- *"If we can have more green spaces around town and districts."*
- *"Create a greenway walk around the town for shared use."*
- *"Providing more sports areas".*
- *"There is nothing here about 1) ensuring spaces for growing 2) diversifying green spaces eg green bus stop roofs to create wildlife corridors."*
- *"Existing wildlife corridors should also receive maximum protection."*

Maintaining Green Spaces

- *"Emphasis on maintaining green spaces that have had public access".*
- *"We use and are very grateful for our green spaces. Unfortunately over the last few years the council are not looking after them like they used to. Trees need cutting back and looking after. Brambles that are left growing out of control , trees that have large heavy branches falling down. We spend a lot of time cutting back bushes and brambles trying to make a safe environment for the children. We can only do so much with our limited tools."*
- *"I walk through a local park nearly every day and every day I get caught up in nettles overhanging branches and other plants that cause danger to me. The plant sounds wonderful but in practice it isn't working at present because our parks are not being maintained if they're not maintained to a high level, they're not a safe place and they're not accessible for all."*

b. Planning and development

Concern was raised by 29 respondents, who outlined the challenges that planning and development could have on delivering the objectives within the strategy. Comments were particularly concentrated on the development of green belt land and the damage this could cause to eco-systems. Other comments referenced sites in the North and West of the borough, particularly those around Bradshaw and Westhoughton.

- *"Where planning decisions for new developments are made the objectives of Bolton Council should be that improvements to Bolton's green spaces and biodiversity gain should be part of the trade-off."*
- *"We need to stop building on greenfield land and fields and develop more outdoor green space for people to use and take better care of the space we have."*
- *"No more building on green belt in Bolton - use brown sites first."*
- *"No more building on green spaces and turning brownfield back into green spaces".*
- *"Offsetting seems to mean you allow building of new developments on biodiverse greenbelt land, I fundamentally disagree with this principle. I have yet to see how offsetting negates this on every planning application I have seen."*
- *"Our green spaces need to be protected and the wildlife is being affected by the building of houses in the wrong places."*
- *"The problem is BMBC are doing the exact opposite around Westhoughton. BMBC haven't got the sense to demand solar panels and water collection on the warehouses to be built, and are content to allow building on greenland which has maize and wheat being grown on the same soil type adjacent to Wingates and in Wigan BMBC just along the railway line towards Hindley."*
- *"It is imperative that the area that I live in (Harwood) protects the existing every decreasing green belt. Harwood has already been over-developed."*
- *"So many houses being built affecting the wildlife of the area."*

c. Communication and engagement

21 comments were received that outlined how improving key messages around using and accessing green spaces, as well as fostering greater partnerships and engagement with the community and voluntary sector, could add additional value to the strategy. Age UK Bolton did provide additional comment within this theme, stating that *"Age UK Bolton would welcome being named as a key partner in age-friendly delivery and stewardship"*.

- *"Community engagement in green spaces – Guarantee mini-grants and training so every key park hosts an active "Friends of..." group by 2030. – Offer community-asset transfer of suitable small sites where residents present a robust management plan. – Run an annual "Bolton in Bloom" micro-grant competition for street planters, orchards and rain gardens."*
- *"I think it's important that objectives include engagement with local businesses, especially those who work within the relevant sectors. For example local ecology firms should be contributing the local BNG strategies."*
- *"Community involvement and volunteering opportunities - especially aimed at schools and the young - are essential to help people care more and protect spaces from vandalism."*
- *"The promotion of Green Spaces and looking after green spaces should be a top priority."*
- *"There are currently charities doing lots of work that the council should be doing."*
- *"More positive info on nature, facts about Bolton etc., wildlife around, history of the area and who helped develop."*
- *"Involve communities in the development of this strategy, not just consultation."*
- *"There is strong potential to position older people as stewards, volunteers and champions of green spaces—but this isn't explored within the "Communities" theme."*
- *"More flexibility with equipment and specialist from within the council to work along with volunteers. Have a local environment Tsar who can cut through the red tape and get things done in the environment and can get resources and equipment for volunteers to use this will save thousands of pounds and time and empower communities."*

d. Delivering the strategy objectives / considerations

17 comments were received which queried how the strategy's action plan and key performance indicators would be monitored, providing assurance that the objectives were deliverable. In addition, wider considerations were also raised to add value to the strategy, including education, visitor economy and accessibility.

- *"Cross-cutting recommendation – Implementation, Monitoring & Governance Create a clear framework naming responsible teams, setting measurable KPIs, securing long-term funding (BNG receipts, sponsorship, volunteer hours) and keeping the public dashboard up to date, so these objectives translate into day-to-day delivery and transparent progress reporting."*
- *"Effective IMPLEMENTATION PLANS, RESOURCES AND PROGRESS REVIEWS are essential to make these objectives achievable, meaningful, realistic and relevant to our rapidly changing world (e.g. social, economic, climate changes)".*
- *"There is no mention of how impact will be monitored by demographic group, including age, nor how the strategy will align with wider equalities work."*
- *"Just a fervent hope that they will be implemented!"*
- *"These objectives are all laudable on paper but the issue is, how will these be achieved?"*
- *"Heritage and education should be a priority."*
- *"Defending green spaces."*
- *"Bringing value to Bolton economy rather than just spending money".*
- *"The whole green space strategy needs a look at for the next 15 years to strengthen Boltons position as a visitor and local destination of pride and enjoyment."*
- *"The strategy lacks detail on inclusive design, accessible infrastructure, and intergenerational approaches."*

e. Accessibility of Green Spaces / Health & wellbeing

16 residents and stakeholders outlined the importance of ensuring accessibility of green spaces, not only for those with protected characteristics, but for health and wellbeing benefits.

- *"The strategy presents strong ambitions across biodiversity, health, climate and community—but lacks explicit links to Bolton's Age-Friendly Strategy and the needs of older people. Opportunities to align with WHO Age-Friendly Domains—particularly Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Social Participation and Civic Engagement—are currently missed."*
- *"Addressing nature recovery alongside safety, protection and accessibility is extremely important in Bolton. Especially for local people who like myself have limited capability to travel due to disability and being unable to drive because of the disability. Often for people like myself these green spaces are a life line and I feel it is important that we are made to feel safe."*
- *"Accessibility is vital. Disabled people currently do not have 'equal' access, hence meaning they and their carers miss out on the benefits of our local green spaces."*
- *"Highlighting the benefits of green spaces with health partners – Embed green-social-prescribing pathways so GPs can refer patients to guided walks, conservation and gardening sessions. – Install outdoor gyms and marked Couch-to-5 K routes in every district park. – Expand edible gardens and orchard zones next to schools and care homes."*
- *Green spaces are important in living areas as there is a need to escape to silence and peace when living in built up area which have no relieve and it benefit for sanity and improving of mental health".*
- *"We need to keep our green spaces for mental health, environment and nature."*

f. Challenges

15 comments were raised by stakeholders, calling for the strategy to recognise key areas of concern, including tackling non-native species of flora and fauna, and providing clarity on key areas of the strategy.

- *"Explain further' equal access to space'."*
- *"Unsure what you have in mind for somethings like "off setting".*
- *"The Visions is unnecessarily complicated and doesn't make sense. Just protect green spaces. Simple"*
- *"Removing Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam from Bolton to allow native wild flowers to flourish."*
- *"I would have liked to see specifics so Bolton to remove all INNS from open spaces within x years".*
- *"The rise of himalayan balsam its everywhere need to be treated and stopped before we lose all our native plants".*
- *"Improve the green spaces we have left by allowing them to thrive naturally, improve foot paths, tackle Japanese knot weed, Himalayan balsam etc promote native wildlife, flora and fauna."*
- *"Stop planting those stiff, geometric beds of throwaway ornamentals, plant native shrubs, not yuccas! Plant fruit trees and and nut trees everywhere. people can't afford decent food and everywhere in the town are things that they can't eat. Where are the blackberries? Where are the rose hips, as tasty as any sweets from the sweet shop and full of vitamin C."*
- *"Many parks have toilets that are locked and only a few have access. Problematic when taking grandchildren to parks."*
- *"The town centre needs addressing as its an eyesore compared to other regions"*

g. Creating climate resilience and priorities

12 comments were received which focused on climate ambitions, challenges and priorities.

- *"Enhancing green spaces to improve climate-change resilience – Double urban tree-canopy cover to 20 % by 2040, focusing on streets, schools and hospitals. – Deliver a "cool-streets" programme (trees, permeable paving, shade structures) in the hottest urban areas. – Restore 200 ha of peatland by 2030 to lock up carbon and cut wildfire risk."*
- *"Include specified INNS reduction Targets in the Strategy, aligned with local and National Targets, for example GMCA 2025 Biodiversity Emergency aims to "Reverse Biodiversity Loss" and Defra INNS Strategy to "Reduce establishment on INNS by 2030 by at least 50% compared to 2000 levels"."*
- *"Bolton Council should work to promote recycling of waste from our greenspaces, composting, leaf-mould, wormaries, different litter bins for each type of litter to improve recycling. Use of solar and wind power to reduce carbon emissions at greenspace cafes and other facilities."*
- *"Two other things which will have a great effect in the Bolton has to do first, Reflected Heat, meaning the more we build the more heat will be picked up off all buildings, the more we aid G/W. The other is top water. Logistic North uses the SUD system for, its Top Water removal all these buildings should have Grass Roofs to slow down flooding in other areas like Higher Green and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Gobbling up of large areas of Green Land means that areas which use the SUDS have less area to soak away which intern lifts the water table."*
- *"Air pollution is a big concern."*
- *"Impact will make little difference if industry isn't challenged re environmental issues."*
- *"Nothing in the objectives seems to contribute to the carbon neutrality commitment."*

h. General agreement

11 comments were received which outlined general agreement with the strategy objectives.

- *“Benefits to the local economy derived from having a healthy and active population.”*
- *“Great objectives - I just hope you can find the resources to carry them out.”*
- *“I agree wholeheartedly with the protection of biodiversity for it's own sake”.*
- *“Its good that Bolton are enhancing green spaces.”*
- *“The objectives are fine.”*
- *“They are very closely aligned to my own views on the importance of Green Spaces.”*

i. Anti-social behaviours

9 comments were received which reflected concern with how anti-social behaviour, including littering and fly-tipping, could be dealt with within the strategy objectives.

- *“I believe that CCTV and clear signs that state CCTV is in motion will make people feel safe and predators / criminals think again about committing crimes in the areas.”*
- *“Making space so that when the long and dark nights come there are safe spaces for people to walk.”*
- *“Spaces for families where they feel safe”.*
- *“Needs to be more done to tackle off road biking in green spaces.”*
- *“No fly tipping green waste or any waste, better litter bin and servicing provision in the green spaces.”*
- *“When it is overgrown lots of undesirables hang around. Fly tipping increases”.*

8. Impact of the strategy

The impact of the draft strategy

Residents and stakeholders were invited to outline the impact the draft Green Spaces Strategy would have on them, their family, business or community. 190 stakeholders took the opportunity to reflect on the implementation of the strategy. These responses have been themed into 3 overarching areas of positive impacts, adverse impacts and neutral impacts.

Positive impacts: 231 reflections were made that outlined that the draft strategy would have positive impacts. These impacts have been categorised into 7 key areas.

Please outline how this strategy will have an impact on you and / or your family.		
Rank	Category	No. of respondents
a.	Benefits of green spaces and the draft strategy	99
b.	Greenspace / Wildlife Protection	55
c.	Accessibility / Access to Greenspaces	29
d.	Safer Greenspaces	21

e.	Green spaces as a visitor and historical destination	10
f.	Greenspace Maintenance	10

a. Benefits of green spaces and the draft strategy

Most respondents (99 comments) reflected generally on the benefits of green spaces, focussing on physical and wellbeing benefits through the use of sporting and recreational activities.

Many respondents also highlighted the benefits of implanting the strategy to areas of priority, including biodiversity and climate awareness. Some respondents also reflected on the benefits of the strategy to those with protected characteristics, particularly those with physical and mental health challenges and those caring for children and young people.

General wellbeing comments

- *"Healthy - physical and mental health benefits. No cost to use"*
- *"Continuing access to nature, a place to escape to, mental and physical well-being"*
- *"Accessible, in walking distance to enjoy, relax in, play in, gather in, sit & reflect in, de-stress & exercise in."*
- *"We have opportunity to experience areas of shade, natural plants and see wildlife. Also, space for sports and relaxation"*
- *"We enjoy access to clean, fresh air within an urban area - which contributes to our personal wellbeing"*
- *"If it comes to fruition, it will have a massive positive impact on our wellbeing."*
- *"Me and my family will be more interested to use those green space for better health and wellbeing, if better maintenance to them"*
- *"It'll help us maintain healthy lifestyles, exercise, whilst staying as one with and enjoying the fecund beauty of nature. Calming. Restorative. Vital to wellbeing."*

Benefits of the strategy

- *"Quality of our lives would be massively improved by early delivery of the strategy."*
- *"The increase in biodiversity and green spaces will improve the air quality and improve health."*
- *"If objectives are met, it will enhance general wellbeing and mental health. It will help raise awareness of the effects of climate change. Observe and maintain the preservation of our natural habitat for future generations"*
- *"Our quality of life will significantly improve if our green spaces are no longer under threat from development. It is to the benefit of everyone both now and in the future if we work together to improve, conserve and protect what we have left."*

Impact to protected groups

- *"My children & grandchildren will continue to reap the benefits of a co-ordinated, sensible and community-focused strategy for years to come"*
- *"If this plan was put into practice, and if all green spaces were accessible for all, I would enjoy a much healthier lifestyle with lots of free fresh air and exercise in local green spaces, along with lots of other other people who have a disability."*
- *"By ensuring there are spaces available for children, grandchildren, to utilise for exercise and health and to learn to protect what is valuable"*

- *"If green belt land and green belt corridors are removed from Harwood this would have a detrimental effect on, my elderly mother and child that has mental health issues and the population and community of Harwood would suffer from the removal of a much local nature spot."*

b. Green space / Wildlife Protection

Green space and wildlife protection was a common benefit reflected on by 55 respondents. Benefits included increasing biodiversity, safeguarding green spaces in Bolton for other generations and enhanced wellbeing.

- *"This should prevent the perpetual erosion of green space in Bolton"*
- *"Hopefully in will increase biodiversity in the area and continue to provide green spaces"*
- *"Hopefully preserve our small green spaces giving us access to greens and trees and wildlife".*
- *"To ensure that there is green spaces and green belt left for the next generations including my young granddaughter."*
- *"They're an invaluable resource and need to be protected and promoted."*
- *"Protection of green spaces is a priority for me, I regularly use them and have shown the benefits to my children and grandchildren"*
- *"Areas around my home are already being jepodised by planning permission and possible destroying habitats. My children love wildlife and exploring outdoors."*

c. Accessibility / Access to Green spaces

29 comments outlined that the strategy would positively impact and improve the accessibility of green spaces across the borough. Older people, families, and people living in areas without gardens or immediate access to green spaces were highlighted as being positively impacted.

- *"Not everyone can get out into the countryside and parks and community space is vital"*
- *"Maintaining access for all our family to enjoy outdoor space in our communities and town"*
- *"Hopefully the strategy will make a difference and improve access for the whole family from the very young to older generations."*
- *"We will have more access to green spaces in the places that we live, rather than having to travel to find it."*
- *"Making green spaces safer and accessible is really important to young people. We don't feel safe in these spaces."*
- *"Not for me but for people who don't have gardens & children who don't have anywhere to play I think it is essential"*
- *"If equal access is a genuine priority my family and I will be able to use green spaces more in the future."*
- *"If the areas are made more accessible, less able people for example the older generations such as my grandparents will be able to enjoy revisiting the areas."*
- *"This should provide a greater impact for those less fortunate and the focus needs to be on improving areas where less green spaces are available"*

d. Safer Greenspaces

21 comments were received from residents who referenced the need to improve safety of green spaces within the strategy, particularly of those with protected characteristics (children, women and those with health and disability challenges). Whilst some respondents referenced the need to reduce anti-social

behaviour within key hotspots, some comments called for greater maintained spaces, particularly where areas are overgrown.

- *"The strategy will allow the community to walk in safety and during all seasons."*
- *"Hopefully improve our green and open spaces and make them safe and comfortable"*
- *"It will allow me to enjoy the local green areas and parks without worrying about safety."*
- *"I believe spaces should be made safer, especially for women who want to enjoy spaces free of male harassment."*
- *"We will be able to use these areas separately rather than having to feel there is 'safety in numbers'."*
- *"It will make it safer for me to visit green spaces. I was recently attacked/mugged in Longsight Park on a Sunday afternoon, whilst playing with my friend"*
- *"Several members of the group I go to, who have a disability, don't venture into the parts because they do not feel safe. This isn't because of people, but it's because of edging it's because of plants and the fact that the parts are not maintained"*
- *"The strategy will have a significant impact if implemented properly and proportionately, with consideration to maintenance of paths, as well as mitigating against over development of the land and anti-social behaviour (as is a hotspot area)."*

e. Green spaces as a visitor and historical destination

10 respondents outlined that the strategy would benefit Bolton as a visitor destination, providing visitors with opportunities to engage in spaces of environmental and historical interest, as well as provide educational opportunities for those accessing these destinations.

- *"People travel great distances to access the green spaces in Bolton, as there are none elsewhere. Therefore not only is protecting them an environmental need, but it makes good business sense in terms of tourism."*
- *"Bolton's parks and green spaces are part of Bolton's heritage."*
- *"Part of Bolton's attraction is the green open hills and field around it. Not many places have that."*

f. Green space Maintenance

10 comments were received that reflected on how the positive implementation of the strategy could improve general upkeep of green space assets.

- *"Hopefully it will make green spaces more attractive and better looked after for the benefit of the community and wildlife."*
- *"Better management of issues that impact sites, like fly tipping and security."*
- *"Maintenance of access/ trails will allow us to take grandchildren and older 90 year old who require buggy pram and motorised scooter."*
- *"Some greenspaces can be better managed therefore a strategy is a good thing."*

Neutral comments

Strategy gaps: 46 comments were received that outlined that the strategy would have a neutral impact on the respondent or their family. Almost half of these comments referred to ideas that were missing from the strategy, such as allotments, or provided suggestions for the draft strategy, including boosting green

spaces in more urban areas or increasing active travel. Some respondents highlighted the role that volunteers could have with the implementation of the strategy.

- *"More green areas in the town centre would be good as they are disappearing"*
- *"Consideration needs to be made for Allotments as they aid in exercise, mental health & community activities"*
- *"I've seen the power of positive action from our volunteers .What can be achieved it truly amazing, you have a untapped resourse that with the right support can achive great things within the environment!"*
- *"I volunteer with several groups which have been working to improve the environment, I hope that the voluntary groups and Bolton Council can compliment each other to be more effective in protecting, restoring and improving our greenspaces."*
- *"Traffic will continue to be a barrier to accessing green space, this has not been considered"*
- *"As a person in his 50's, I suspect that without improvements in ASB and thus a consistent police policy to patrol and enforce, use of parks, particularly during darkness, will decrease."*
- *"I have an interest in community gardening in odd spaces eg surrounding utilitu supplier buildings but there is no detail of how we could use more of this land".*

Little or no impact or evidence: 18 comments concluded that the strategy would have little to no impact, or there was little evidence that the strategy would be impactful.

- *"It will not impact, we will have the same promises and nothing will happen."*
- *"It won't, because the strategy will not be implemented, just like it hasn't been done for the last ten years."*
- *"Unable to assess due to the lack of substantial details."*
- *"That depends entirely on how it is addressed and delivered"*
- *"Your strategy is vague, and shows no measurable outcomes so as there is nothing concrete on what when or where you are doing to promote your aims"*
- *"Very little because this is a vision with no clearly defined plan for action. It's concrete action that impact lives not vision."*
- *"Without IMPLEMENTATION PLANS, RESOURCES AND REGULAR REVIEWS this strategy will have minimal impact on me, my family and people of Bolton."*
- *"Realistically no one will logically and scientifically be able to answer this question without knowing the how!"*

Negative impact

8 comments were received that noted the adverse impacts of planning developments and changes of land use across the borough. Stakeholders acknowledge the juxtaposition between the intentions outlined within the strategy, alongside the borough's growth aspirations.

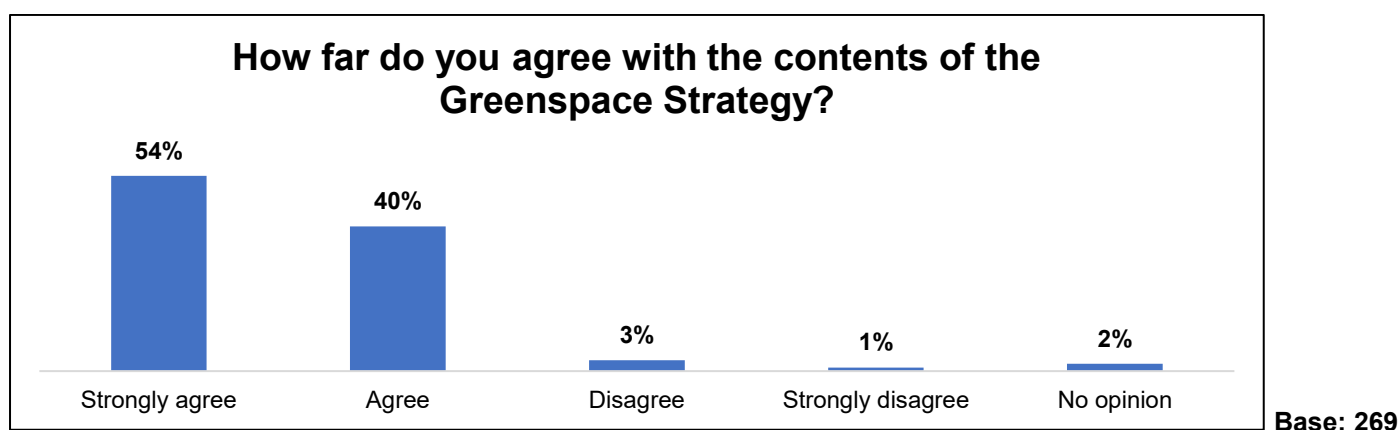
- *"We are avid bird watchers, and enjoy seeing the diverse birds our area provides for. We visit early in the morning and see deer and a wide variety of wildlife. Our worry is that this would change."*
- *"The strategy wording is fine. The implementation will be laughable. BMBC have even driven a link road through SSI Red Moss. Destroyed entirely the green lands over Bowlands Hey and will then continue to destroy what is left towards Borsdane Wood. When BMBC have finished there will be nowhere to walk or enjoy a green space from Westhoughton Golf Course/Old Lane to the old railway and Dod Lane."*
- *"If they were to gain land within this law, it could change the landscape and undermine biodiversity laws."*

- *"If you give our small park spaces to community gardens and sports leaving others with not much we will have no place locally. It's unfair these spaces should be for everyone."*
- *I dont agree with the biodiversity offset."*
- *"Your strategy doesn't make sense."*
- *"Yes, it should absolutely be priority to preserve and protect our land, ecosystems, biodiversity but the opposite seems to happen. Trees are getting felled by developers and the council does nothing"*
- *"No point in having these objectives, if planners allow all spaces to be developed for housing etc."*

9. Overall stakeholder reflections

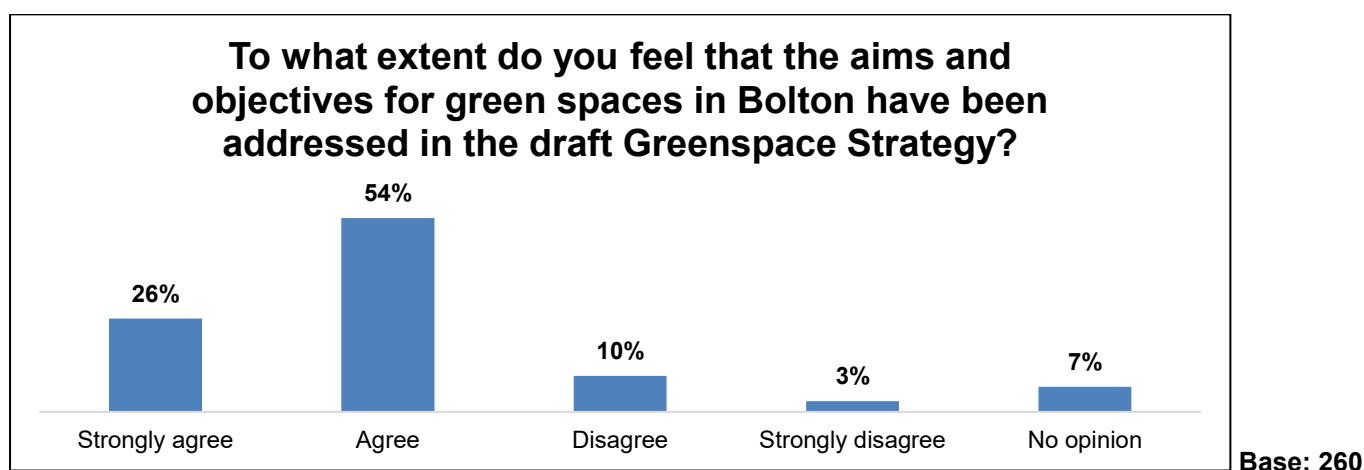
9a Content of the Green Spaces Strategy

Residents and stakeholders were asked to reflect on the general contents of the Green Spaces Strategy and whether they agreed that the information provided was adequate. Of the 269 stakeholders engaging with this question, 94% agreed with contents within the document.



9b. Addressing the overall aims and objectives

Residents and stakeholders were asked to reflect on the overall aims and objectives of the Green Spaces Strategy and whether they agreed with those put forward. Of the 260 stakeholders engaging in the question 80% agreed and 13% disagreed.



9c. Final reflections from stakeholders

104 respondents provided further comments on the draft strategy, which has been categorised into 10 themes, outlined in the table below. Many respondents used this space to reiterate their thoughts about protecting green spaces or shared concerns surrounding planning and development. There were several comments received that showed support for the strategy, as well as comments critiquing the content and providing alternative suggestions.

Please use this space to share any further comments on the draft Greenspace Strategy.		
Rank	Category	No. of respondents
a.	Draft strategy / consultation comments	31
b.	Green space protection / expansion	27
c.	Planning & Development	22
d.	Green space maintenance	11
e.	Health and Safety	11
f.	Allotments	10
g.	Community engagement / co-production	8

a. Draft strategy / consultation comments

There were 31 comments received which referred directly to the strategy. Some respondents demonstrated support for the strategy, focusing on the potential benefits for green spaces.

- *"I am impressed and hopeful that this strategy will ensure that our green spaces continue to be valued. The health and well being of people and the protection of our beautiful world should be a priority and this draft policy demonstrates an understanding of this."*
- *"This consultation is a good start and hopefully comments will be acted on accordingly."*
- *"It's a really good idea - I just hope you can get the funding to carry it out and maintain it."*
- *"A great strategy overall. I think it is very ambitious and would to see the vision take shape."*
- *I think it makes things quite clear to improve important spaces."*
- *"Strongly agree with the strategy but still can not see anything about defending our green spaces"*

Conversely, some respondents critiqued the strategy and the consultation. Criticisms included the content of the strategy, with some citing a lack of detail surrounding implementation, food security and biodiversity.

- *"There is no financial commitment, there is no budget for hiring Park Rangers, there is no plan to address invasive species, there is no plan, there is only buzz words."*
- *"The word 'Biodiversity' is used 17 times in the draft, however, there is no plan to reduce the current level of the main INNS in Bolton or prevent the ongoing. expansion... The 10% increase in biodiversity from new developments and carbon offsetting will only have a minimal impact overall."*
- *"You haven't said what you are going, where you are doing it, or what changes, or improvements you intend to do"*
- *"You pay far too little attention to the aspect of food security and biodiversity, especially if the pictures that you've chosen to illustrate it with or anything to go by."*

- *“Pointless waste of money - strategy for what? This is a ridiculous survey with the council controlling the narrative with the style of questioning and answering”*
- *“The vision, aims and objectives are not addressed in an meaningful way”*
- *“IMPLEMENTATION PLANS, RESOURCES AND REGULAR REVIEWS are required to address the key issues stated in this strategy, its aims and objectives.”*
- *“Transparency and more information on implimentation is needed for survey to be valid.”*

Some stakeholders provided suggestions on the written content of the strategy, whilst others highlighted education and funding as areas to expand on.

- *“Wording should be simple, so it can be easily translated given how diverse Bolton's community is nowadays. Also written to enthuse and engage.”*
- *“1) Publish a 5-year SMART action plan and an annual dashboard tracking safety, usage, biodiversity and health. 2) Give LNR status to Red Moss & Nob End, upgrade one ‘design-out-ASB’ flagship park, and start peat re-wetting/tree planting this winter. 3) Launch a council habitat bank, ring-fence BNG income, and create a Bolton Green Spaces Trust. 4) Mini-grants/training so every key park has a Friends group by 2030; expand green social prescribing.”*
- *“More could be given to how the strategy will be funded.”*
- *“The 3 main objectives in Q.15 are all human related and don't see to correlate well to the 7 objectives in Q19's draft strategy. I wasn't sure if these are two separate things?”*
- *“The greenspace strategy ticks expected boxes, but is vague. To give it teeth, embed it in Bolton Council's planning strategy with high priority. Example: “Habitats are fragmented and unconnected meaning our wildlife sites do not provide the green corridors that nature needs.” For this to work, the council's planning strategy should explicitly guard against existing wild corridors being severed; it should also favour reconnecting & extending wild spaces when brownfield sites are redeveloped.”*
- *“Green belt has not been included in the strategy.”*
- *“It would be helpful to see in the document area maps highlighting the greenspaces and rivers and clearly indicating areas that require improvement. This is a 15 year plan, but is there funding to undertake improvements?”*
- *“I agree to the draft strategy however, I feel that there needs to be an emphasis on education and involvement of the community. The environment needs to take priority over money making initiatives.”*

b. Green space protection / expansion

There were 27 comments centring on the protection of green spaces from development, with some noting wildlife corridors and habitats.

- *“Reiterate the need to protect council and private owned pockets of small green areas in and adjacent to housing estates. These areas provide a natural break in the urbanisation and their value to residents must not be underestimated - they must be protected.”*
- *“The main focus must remain on preserving and protecting all the remaining green space in Bolton”*
- *“It is also crucial that existing public rights of way and footpaths are preserved, along with wildlife corridors”*
- *“There should be no fires BBQs camping and we need a warden to help protect the wildlife”*
- *“If Bolton Council are serious about its commitments to communities in the future firstly it needs to protect its parks in law against development, secondly to use planning decisions to improve existing green spaces biodiversity. Thirdly to create new green spaces on brownfield sites.”*
- *“We have lots of willow tits in the woodland around us that desperately need a safe and protected environment”*
- *“For this to work, the council's planning strategy should explicitly guard against existing wild corridors being severed; it should also favour reconnecting & extending wild spaces when brownfield sites are redeveloped.”*

- *“Save our local green spaces including Hulton Park, save the wildlife, the trees and the open countryside”*

c. Planning & Development

22 comments referred to planning and development and the subsequent impacts on green spaces. Some comments focused on the influence that planning and development may have on the implementation of the strategy.

- *Whilst the strategy's objectives are laudable, I am concerned that the pressure to build houses in Bolton will lead to a watering down of this.”*
- *“I think it should be robust enough to deter developers and stop them finding loop holes. Promises of small community greens in the middle of large developments that take away acres of natural green belt land should not be enough to pass as ‘accessible’ or ‘for the community’”*
- *“It is absolutely essential to preserve the Green Belt. It must never be built on. Once it's gone - it's gone.”*
- *“Full protection from over development of housing is needed. Yet more green space has been taken for huge housing developments with little thought on the impact on the local infrastructure.”*
- *“Would be more impressed if you actually did preserve open space from developers”*

d. Green space maintenance

11 comments mentioned green space maintenance and investment. Cemeteries and parks were particularly highlighted, as well as issues including waste management, strimming and damaged public property.

- *“Would be more impressed if you... even managed to keep existing spaces in good repair ie - children's playparks.*
- *“Our cemeteries need more work. We go every week to our loved ones graves. The grass and strimming is not done regularly. There is litter everywhere.”*
- *“They need looking after. Bins emptied . Rubbish out of the rivers. Stop fly topping Deal with litter”*
- *“Strategy is words on report but need to a real investment in the parks and green spaces I live across from a lovely green space and park but over the years the investment in them has reduced. We had a lovely park at heywood park when the park keeper was there but now it's a no go area for family it's a shame as it was a lovely family park with sand pits and play equipment but now what's left is untidy and vandalised”*

e. Health and Safety

Some respondents (11 comments) referred to wellbeing benefits e.g. ecotherapy, tackling anti-social behaviour, improving water quality, maintaining public footpaths and improving safety of parks.

- *“More safe access, more creative spaces to tie in with ecotherapy also”*
- *“We need to encourage our families with young children to use our parks, the Parkland paths have to be safe and free from nettles overhanging branches, et cetera.”*
- *“There also needs to be an emphasis on working with on tackling anti-social behaviour in these places; residents don't feel safe - read your consultation findings on Serious Violent Crime perceptions.”*
- *“I would like to see some sort of strategy to help clear up Bolton's waterways. My 1yo loves to play in water but I don't feel comfortable letting him play on the local rivers due to the amount of litter and the stench coming from the water.”*
- *“There also needs to be more done to tackle off road biking in green spaces.”*

- *"I would like to see cameras in Queens Park to make it a safer place. There are a lot of incidents occur on the park and I for one have been assaulted. It was reported to the police."*

f. Allotments

Some respondents (10 comments) discussed the inclusion of allotments in the strategy, with wider comments addressing issues with allotments in Bolton.

- *"More needs to be done to address allotments in Bolton. There is no admin / management. I know a number of people who would love an allotment but can't find how to get one. There are a number that have fallen into disrepair and these would be snapped up by the local community if someone took control of it properly."*
- *"There is no specific mention regarding the Allotments in Bolton, Bolton Council need to improve in their Management of the 30 Allotment Sits an 900 allotments and reduce the waiting lists"*
- *"Allotments need to be a separate section with better management, facilities, security and processes."*
- *"Would greatly benefit by the return of a full time allotments' officer. It has been over a decade since...and many allotment spaces are not being used or not being used to potential, which in turn affects the waiting list. Also, there's work needed on the communal land of allotments that is the responsibility of the Council which often either doesn't get done due to lack of funds or the ploholders have to raise the money and carry out the repairs themselves."*
- *"I think the protection & maintence of existing allotment sites is extremely important. Also hopefully creation of new allotments and community gardens. They provide so many benefits in terms of biodiversity, fresh healthy food and physical / mental health. I reckon they should be more prominent in the strategy"*
- *"This survey does not include allotments and community gardens which are vital in a large urban town such as bolton where most homes do not have gardens, nor does it look at the importance to the local economy of growing food locally and having a healthy population."*

g. Community engagement / co-production

There were 8 comments that called for wider engagement on the strategy with volunteers, residents and community groups:

- *"Please consult with local communities on the creation of wildlife and recreational corridors for all."*
- *"Will there be local input sought from residents/community groups with regards how this strategy is to to be implemented?"*
- *"The community needs to be involved from the beginning to feel ownership and pride that leads to the community looking after green spaces, not the Council."*
- *"Encourage environmental groups and volunteers to help support Council with eradication of invasive species, eg; Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed."*
- *"Joined up thinking when addressing an area. For example, we have an excellent green corridor from Moses Gate Country park, Leverhulme Park, Seven Acres, Longsight Park to Jumbles and beyond. A diverse range of species thrive here. Urban Sprawl into these areas creates not only/ physical barriers but brings light and noise pollution. At present, Bolton could ensure the middle section around Longsight park is supported in their venture to incorporate land around to create Country Park Status."*

Other comments

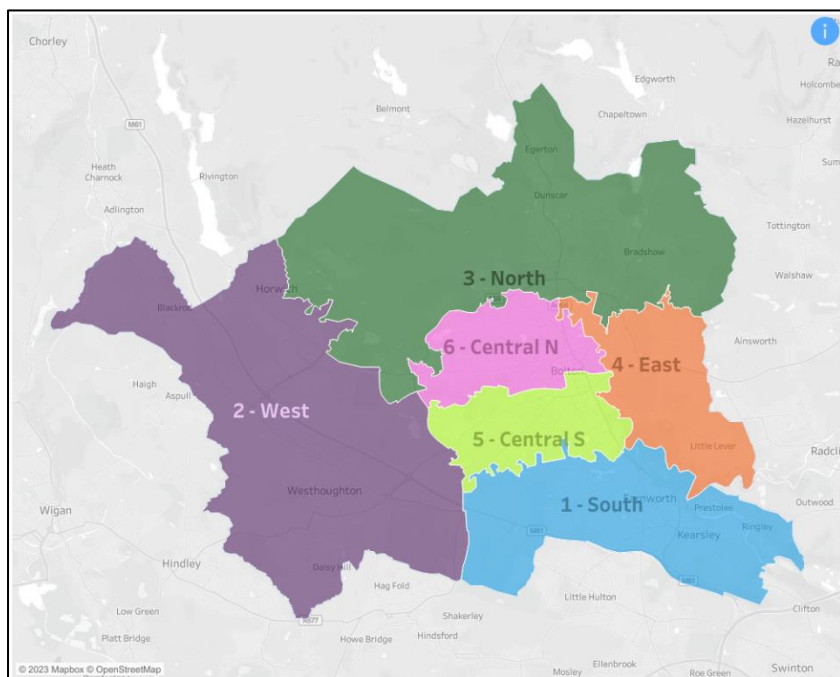
There were other comments (15) that touched on suggestions for the strategy, including access to green spaces: *"It's a shame we have to travel over an hour to get safe clean natural water to play in"*. The impact

of greenspaces on disabled people and families with children was raised: *“I really must reiterate that the green space is have to be safe. We have open grassland and Parkland with no clear designated paths that are safe for people with a disability or even for families with young children or people in motorised wheelchairs”*

A couple of comments highlighted the need to address invasive species: *“There needs to be more done to clean up invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam, Marestalk, Giants Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed.”* Some respondents outlined other suggestions for the strategy, including composting, funding for *“HaF and other programmes to support children engage and be at local parks and green spaces”*, and *“Climate & Sustainability - To enhance and improve urban green spaces to mitigate climate impacts such as urban heat risk, flood risk and surface water run-off vulnerability, within core urban areas... We need to deal with the real problems associated with this.”*

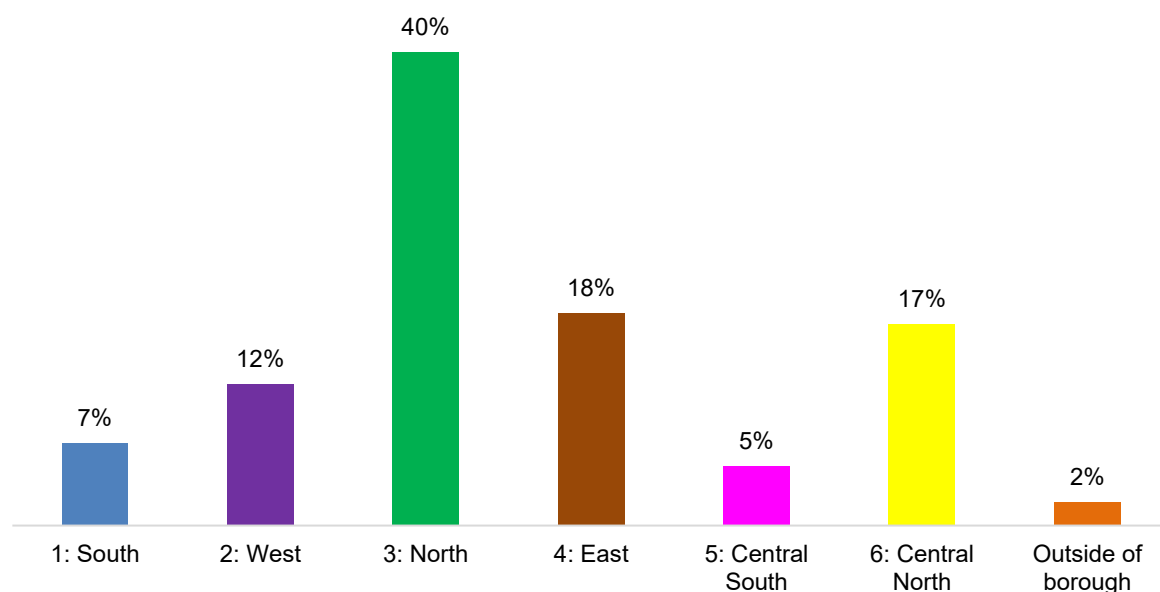
10. Stakeholder demographics

10a. Demographics: Geographical The table below outlines the demographics of respondents by geographical neighbourhood. A total of 242 respondents provided their full postcode, with stakeholders engaging from across the borough and further afield. Residents in the North of the borough reflected 40% of the responses received, whilst those in the East (18%) and Central North (17%) accounted for just under one-fifth of responses each. A breakdown of Ward level engagement is included within the table below, outlining greater engagement from residents in Bradshaw and Smithills.



*Neighbourhoods are a local geography for integrated health and social care; all have a population of around 50,000 residents.

Interest by geographical location



Base: 242

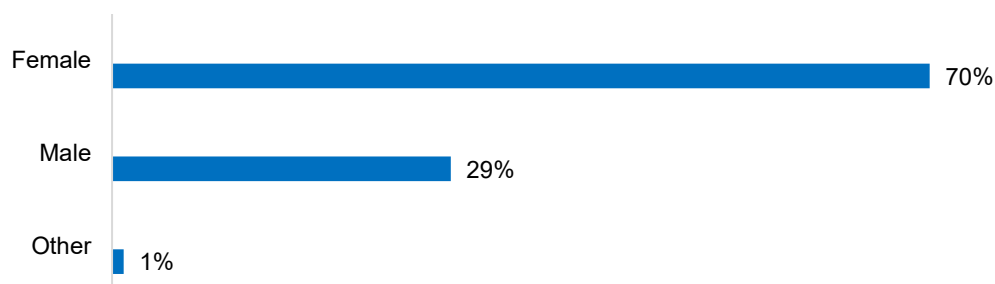
Ward	No of responses
Astley Bridge	8
Bradshaw	74
Brightmet	15
Bromley Cross	13
Farnworth North	5
Farnworth South	5
Great Lever	6
Halliwell	6
Heaton, Lostock & Chew Moor	10
Horwich North	9

Horwich South & Blackrod	1
Hulton	1
Kearsley	6
Little Hulton	1
Little Lever & Darcy Lever	13
Queens Park & Central	7
Rumworth	6
Smithills	22
Tonge with the Haulgh	13
Westhoughton North & Hunger Hill	9
Westhoughton South	9

10b. Preferred identity

262 responses were received providing the respondent's preferred identity. 70% respondents' identity as being female, 29% as male and 1% of respondents identify as 'other'.

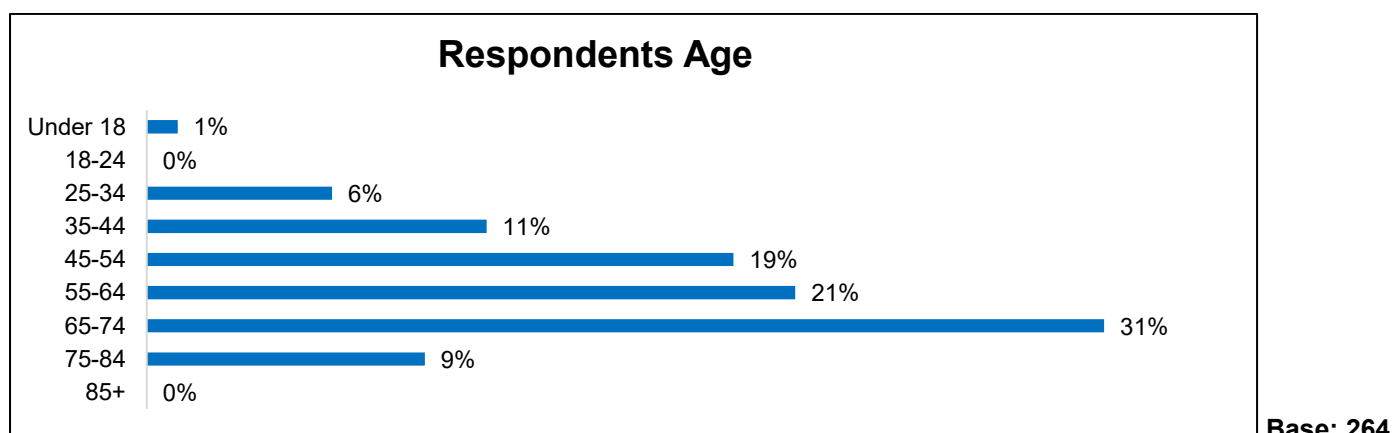
Preferred identity



Base: 262

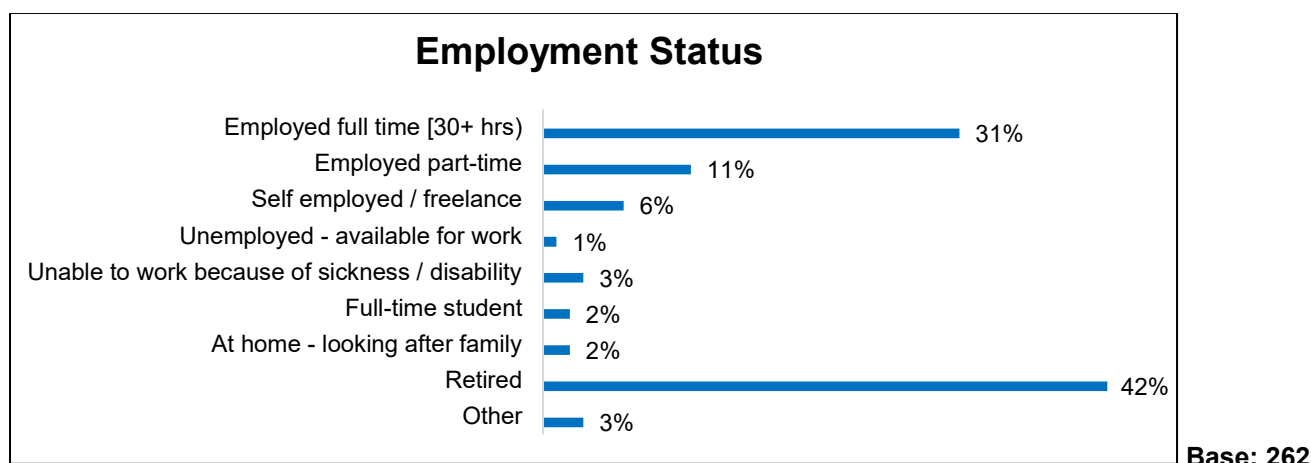
10c Age

Responses were received from individuals in most age categories. 7% of respondents are under the age of 34 years. 51% respondents are aged between 35 – 64 years. Two-fifths (40%) of responses were received from individuals above the age of 65 years.



10d. Employment Status

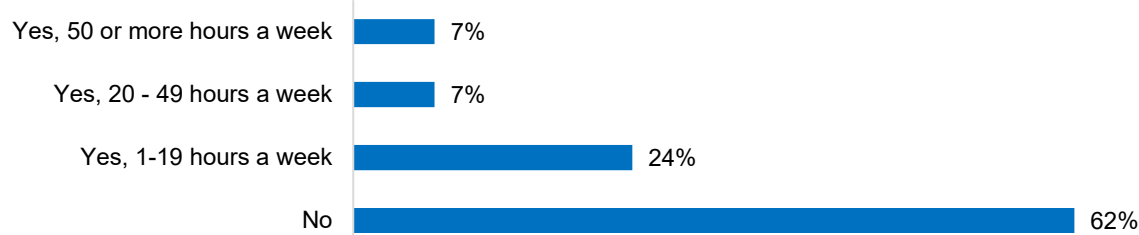
48% of responses were received from individuals in some form of employment. 42% of responses are retirees. 2% of responses were from individuals in education. 6% of responses were received from individuals who are not in employment due to sickness, are looking at family members, or who are currently looking for an employment opportunity. Those who stated 'other' are volunteers, landlords and carers.



10e. Caring Status

Respondents were asked whether they provide any care or support to individuals with long term physical and mental health difficulties. Just under two-fifths of the 260 responses received had a caring responsibility (38%). 62%% don't have any form of caring responsibility.

Caring Responsibilities

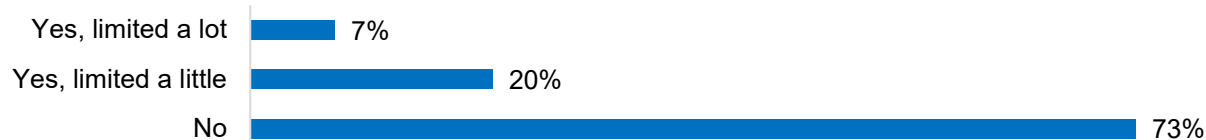


Base: 260

10f. Health and Disability

Respondents were asked whether they had a long term physical or mental health condition or disability. Of the 261 responses received, just over one-quarter (27%) have a health or disability challenge or impairment.

Health & Disability

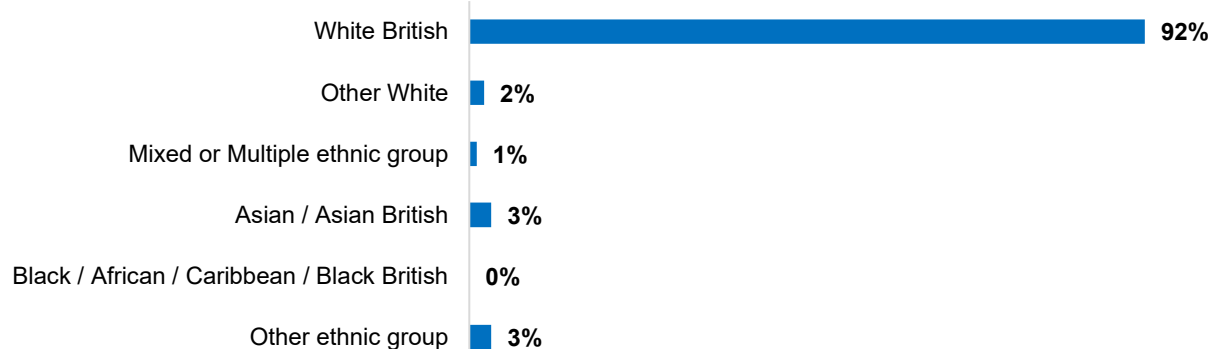


Base: 261

10g. Ethnicity

259 respondents provided their ethnicity when undertaking the consultation. 92% report as being white – British. 8% report as being from other ethnically diverse communities, this includes 3% from the Asian / Asian British community.

Ethnicity

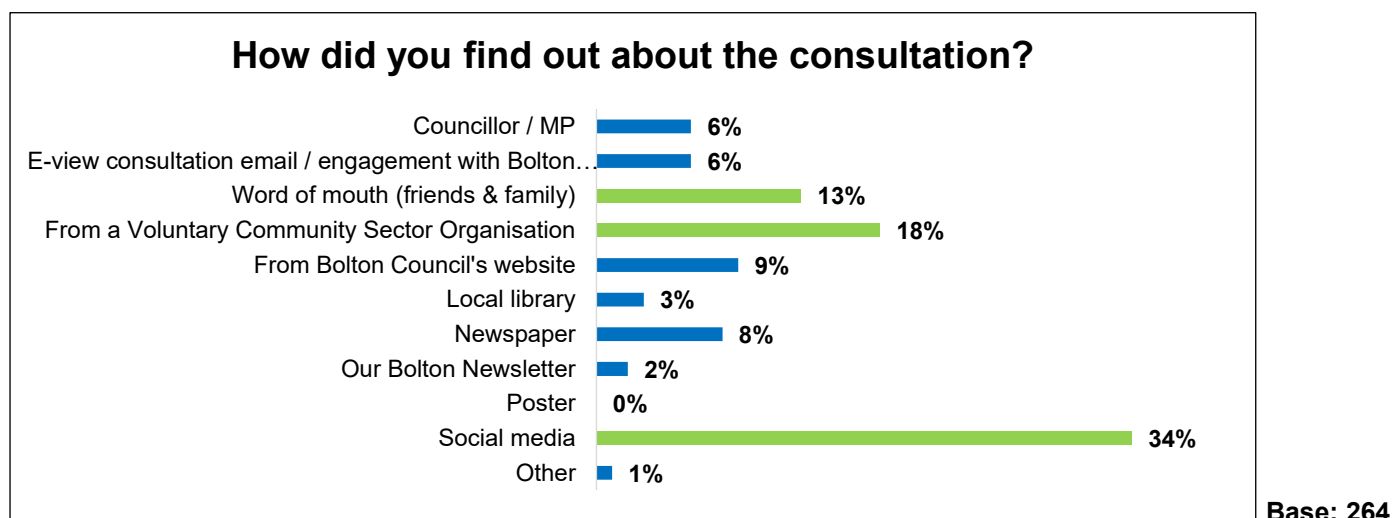


Base: 259

10h. Awareness of the consultation / survey

Respondents were asked how they found out about the consultation / survey. The medium seeing the highest level of engagement is social media (34%). Other areas where respondents accessed information

about the consultation include from the Voluntary and Community Sector (18%), as well as word of mouth (13%)




11. Report summary

Between the 18th July and 29th August 2025, the Council ran a public consultation, seeking to engage residents, visitors and stakeholders that use green spaces in Bolton, in sharing their reflections on the Council's Green Spaces Strategy. During that period a comprehensive communication plan was implemented, as well as a number of community and voluntary stakeholder awareness sessions. As a result, the consultation saw engagement from 271 stakeholders, including 10 representations from businesses, community and voluntary groups. It should be noted that the majority of reflections were received from residents in the North of the borough (40%), specifically from the Bradshaw ward (31%).

The types of green spaces stakeholders predominantly access are local parks, woodlands and nature reserves, with 30% of respondents accessing green spaces daily (30%), or multiple times per week (46%). Most respondents access this space for exercising and wellbeing purposes. Respondents valued green spaces for an array of reasons, but mainly to access '*nature*', '*wildlife*' and '*peacefulness*'.

Residents and stakeholders were asked to reflect on various elements of draft strategy. Consistent positive agreement was provided on all areas of the strategy. Stakeholders were overwhelmingly in favour of the strategic priorities (95%); it's vision (96%); and thematic areas, with '*Health and Wellbeing*' (98%) and '*Local Nature Recovery*' (97%) being identified as priority themes.

When asked to reflect on alternative themes for inclusion within the strategy, respondents called for the protection of green spaces from development or conversion to grey belt land. This particular reflection was referenced throughout the consultation feedback, predominantly highlighting concerns for eco-systems. Respondents called for there to be a greater balance and recognition of development impact within the strategy document.



When asked whether the 7 strategic objectives were appropriate for inclusion in the strategy, all areas saw agreement, with '*addressing nature recovery, alongside safety, protection and accessibility*' (98%); and '*highlighting the benefits of green spaces with health partners*' (97%) identified as priorities.

Residents did provide further comments on the objectives, highlighting the need for allotments, green corridors and proximately to green spaces from areas of residence, to have greater consideration within the document, highlighting the cross-cutting benefits to tackling poverty / food security, climate emergency, and tackling health inequality. In addition, the importance of maintaining these spaces, providing regular upkeep to enable accessibility and the management of invasive species, was deemed an important inclusion to the strategy objectives.

Respondents also outlined the overwhelming impact the strategy implementation could have on residents and visitors, citing the physical and wellbeing impacts could be significant. Other popular reflections noted the wider benefits of increasing biodiversity.

Overall, stakeholders agreed with the contents of the strategy (94%), as well as its aims and objectives (80%).



We want your views on Bolton's green spaces

Green spaces are valuable community assets which benefit the health and wellbeing of everyone.

Our plan is to ensure green spaces across the borough are accessible for all and rich in nature and wildlife, helping to further tackle the climate and ecological emergencies.

Help us create our vision for green spaces over the coming years by sharing your views.

Have your say by completing a short survey on the council website.

www.bolton.gov.uk/greenspacesconsultation

The consultation will run until August 29, 2025.



**Bolton
Council**



Greenspace Strategy Consultation- closes on 29th August

Background information

Bolton Council is seeking feedback on the draft Greenspace Strategy, which outlines the Council's vision and objectives for green spaces in Bolton for the next 15 years.

There are 3 strategic aims, 7 objectives and themes and 1 overarching vision in the draft Greenspace Strategy.

In this consultation, we are keen to hear from residents, partners, and stakeholders to understand whether the strategy reflects the borough's needs. We also want to find out if there are any key areas that have not been addressed in the strategy.

We invite you to give your views on the main proposals in the strategy, which are outlined within the questionnaire. Please read the background documents for more information at:

<https://www.bolton.gov.uk/directory/13/consultations/category/195>

Your response- keeping your data safe

Most questions are optional; just miss out any that you don't want to answer.

The results of this consultation may be made public. If you're responding as an individual, you won't be identified in any report as your responses will be anonymised and grouped with those from other people.

If you're responding in an official capacity, your response may be published but no personal details will be included.

Any personal data you provide will be held securely, in line with our retention schedule and privacy policy:

www.bolton.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/privacy-notice

We use Snap Surveys professional software to collect and process your data. Snap Surveys Ltd. follow the UK General Data Protection Regulation, and their privacy policy can be found by following this link:

<http://www.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/privacy-policy-uk/%3c/a%3dwww.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/privacy-policy-uk/>.

Your interest

1. **Please tell us in what capacity you are taking part in this survey. If you are completing this survey on behalf of an organisation, choose the appropriate response:**

- ☐ Live in Bolton borough [Bolton Council area]
- ☐ Work in Bolton borough
- ☐ Study / have children at school in Bolton borough
- ☐ Visitor to Bolton
- ☐ Official response from Parish / Bolton borough Councillor / Elected Member
- ☐ Official response from a business / organisation / community or volunteer group. You must have their permission
- ☐ None of the above – please explain below

2. **If "none of the above" please specify.**

3. **If applicable, which business, organisation or group do you represent?**

4. **If applicable, please say what your role is - in what official capacity do you represent the business, organisation or community group?**

5. **If you are part of a business, organisation or community groups, did you attend any of the presentation sessions for the draft Greenspace Strategy?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. If you attended a presentation session, was the information useful in raising awareness of the key points within the strategy?

Engaging with green spaces

7. Which types of green spaces do you use in Bolton? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Local nature reserves
- ☐ Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*
- ☐ Local parks
- ☐ Playing fields and recreational areas e.g. football pitches
- ☐ Woodlands
- ☐ Water ways (ie: canals, rivers, reservoirs, ponds and lakes)
- ☐ Cemeteries
- ☐ Other

*SSSIs includes sites such as Nob End, a former waste tip transformed into a unique calcareous grassland; as well as Red Moss, an important peatland reserve in Horwich.

8. If other, please specify.

9. How often do you visit your local green spaces?

- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Multiple times a week
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Several times a year
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Never

10. How do you use your local green spaces?

- ☐ Exercising, including walking, cycling etc.
- ☐ Meeting friends and family
- ☐ For wellbeing reasons e.g. reading, relaxation, picnics, as a creative outlet, learning about nature
- ☐ Attending organised events
- ☐ Work or volunteer in green spaces
- ☐ Other

11. If other, please specify.

In three words, what do you value about Bolton's green spaces? Please put one word in each box.

12.

13.

14.

Strategic priorities

The three strategic priorities for green spaces in Bolton are:

- Safe Open Spaces
- Protected for All
- Equal Access to Space

15. To what extent do you agree with the three key strategic priorities?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ No opinion

Vision

The draft vision for green spaces outlines that: *green spaces will be essential to sustainable growth, they will improve our communities and provide benefits for all, they will be accessible, safe and protected.*

16. To what extent do you agree with the vision?

- ☐ Strongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree
☐ No opinion

Key Themes

17. There are seven themes within the strategy (see below). To what extent do you agree with these themes?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No opinion
Biodiversity and Offsetting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate and Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ecosystem Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Landscape, Culture and the Visitor Economy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Nature Recovery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. If applicable, please specify other themes that should be addressed.

Objectives

19. There are seven objectives for the council in the draft strategy. To what extent do you agree with these objectives?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
Addressing nature recovery alongside safety, protection and accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Awareness and integration of biodiversity and offsetting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community engagement in green spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Embedding environmental opportunities into decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enhancing green spaces to improve climate change resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Highlighting the benefits of green spaces with health partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promotion and protection of ecosystem services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. What further comments do you have on the objectives?

Impact

21. Please outline how this strategy will have an impact on you and / or your family.

Overall

22. How far do you agree with the contents of the Greenspace Strategy?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ No opinion

23. To what extent do you feel that the aims and objectives for green spaces in Bolton have been addressed in the draft Greenspace Strategy?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ No opinion

24. Please use this space to share any further comments on the draft Greenspace Strategy.

About you

Your answers in this section help us make sure that we are getting views from different people. They will **not** be used to contact or identify you.

25. Please give your full postcode.

26. How do you identify?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Identify in another way

27. Which most closely describes you?

- ☐ Employed full time [30 hours or more a week]
☐ Employed part-time [up to 30 hours a week]
☐ Self-employed / freelance
☐ Unemployed - available for work
☐ Unable to work because of sickness / disability
☐ Full-time student
☐ At home - looking after family
☐ Retired
☐ Other

28. If other, please explain below.

29. Which age group are you in?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18 - 24
- ☐ 25- 34
- ☐ 35 - 44
- ☐ 45 - 54
- ☐ 55 - 64
- ☐ 65 - 74
- ☐ 75 - 84
- ☐ 85 or over

30. Do you look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others who need help because they have a long-term physical or mental ill-health / disability, or have problems relating to old age? Please don't count anything you do as part of paid employment.

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes - 1-19 hours a week
- ☐ Yes - 20-49 hours a week
- ☐ Yes - 50 or more hours a week

31. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a long-term physical or mental health condition / illness?

- ☐ Yes- limited a lot
- ☐ Yes - limited a little
- ☐ No

32. What is your ethnic group?

- ☐ White British
- ☐ White other
- ☐ Mixed or multiple ethnic group
- ☐ Asian or Asian British
- ☐ Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
- ☐ Other ethnic group

33. How did you find out about this consultation? Please select one option.

- ☐ Councillor
- ☐ E-View
- ☐ From a friend/family member
- ☐ From a Voluntary, Community Sector Organisation
- ☐ From Bolton Council's website
- ☐ Local library
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Our Bolton Newsletter
- ☐ Poster
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Other (please specify)

34. If "Other" please specify.

**Thanks! Please return to:
Freepost RTTT-YTEL-YSXS, Consultation & Research Team,
2nd Floor, Town Hall, Victoria Square, Bolton, BL1 1RU**