



# ***Green and Open Spaces Strategy***

***December 2017***



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## Introduction:

Big Local is a National Lottery programme, administered by the Local Trust, which has granted at least £1 million to 150 areas in the country. One such area is Hateley Heath and Stone Cross, hence the name of our programme is Hateley Cross.

One of the key goals for Big Local is that local residents will feel that their community is an even better place to live in the future. This is central to what we are trying to achieve.

The importance of Green and Open Spaces in our community cannot be over estimated. They provide opportunities for recreation, exercise and play for people of all ages. They can be beautiful and peaceful places and also somewhere members of the community can come together.

Our Green and Open Spaces can positively affect our physical, mental and emotional health. In short – they can help us live longer and more fruitful lives.



Accordingly, the resident led Big Local partnership has assigned a budget in its first plan to start developing the area. This strategy outlines what we hope to achieve; whom we are working with; the possibilities for our community; and our hopes and aspirations.



A key principle of Big Local and of this strategy in particular, is that the programme consults local people. We will not be seeking to impose our plans on the community, but work with people around our green and open spaces to develop ideas and combat any fears.

The purpose of this document is to resource the Hateley Cross Big Local Partnership to enable informed decision making as part of this strategy and their wider plan.





## Our working principles:

- 1 **Engagement:** we will seek to talk to people locally around every area so that we have people's opinions. We will do this face to face, and also use Social Media\*. This strategy outlines the possibilities for development following our research. We have held an initial consultation regarding Somerset Green, which is outlined below.
- 2 **Research:** we are looking into what works best in different areas in terms of equipment, types of flowers, trees, etc. We are drawing in experts who can help.
- 3 **Co-Design:** building on our consultation, we will co-design with local people and organisations what is installed or planted in the different areas of our community. We also believe that this will help people feel that these spaces belong to them, and therefore will care for them.
- 4 **Quality:** we believe that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing as well as possible. We want to make a lasting change, and think how anything we do can be sustained and maintained.
- 5 **Partners:** we will be working with partners as well as local residents. As well as bringing in expertise, by working together we can make the most of any resources that we have.



\* Online consultation: <https://prezi.com/view/0S28rDSnh9yHndpR1hAr>

\* Website: <http://www.hateleycross.org.uk/>

\* Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HateleyCrossBigLocal/?fref=ts>

## What we hope to achieve:

We recognise above all that community ownership and respect will be necessary to achieve outcomes that are sustainable.

These include:

- The **appearance** of the area is well maintained
- There is better **signage**, especially highlighting the assets of the area
- Good **health and wellbeing** (physical, mental, social and emotional) is being encouraged and developed
- There is **increased usage** of the green and open spaces of the area
- There are **opportunities** for trainees and volunteers to develop their skills
- There is a reduction in fear and concern in the area, with people **feeling safer**
- **Seasonal beauty** is evident through different types of planting, which educates our children and young people



## Our key themes:

Our outcomes will be best achieved through 5 themes.

Ownership by local people		
<b>Scope for Action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specifically targeted consultation around green spaces (eg Kesteven Road, Somerset Green, etc)</li> <li>Would people use an allotment?</li> <li>What about other growing areas?</li> </ul>	<b>Potential Partners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Groups</li> <li>Community Volunteers</li> <li>Libraries for info sharing</li> <li>Primary Schools pilot</li> <li>Uniformed Groups</li> </ul>	<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for consultation and research</li> </ul>
Appearance of the Big Local area		
<b>Scope for Action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All developments consider impact on Community Safety</li> <li>Continue skips programme - local targeting</li> <li>Identify sites with appropriate greenery</li> <li>Identify the parameters for development</li> <li>Pilot development on Somerset Green</li> <li>Research what's there already</li> <li>Visual audits via Area Champions</li> </ul>	<b>Potential Partners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses (eg Carillion, Rimstock)</li> <li>Groundwork</li> <li>Litterwatch</li> <li>SMBC</li> <li>Ward Councillors via Local Area Budget</li> </ul>	<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Volunteers</li> <li>Development costs</li> <li>Maintenance</li> <li>Resource mapping</li> </ul>
Positive impacts on Physical, Mental, Social & Emotional Health		
<b>Scope for Action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify 'Pathway games' sites</li> <li>Identify Men's Sheds possible sites</li> <li>Sites identified for outside gyms and trim trails</li> </ul>	<b>Potential Partners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANDO officers</li> <li>Public Health</li> <li>Sandwell Leisure Trust</li> <li>SMBC</li> </ul>	<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Volunteers</li> <li>Development costs</li> <li>Maintenance</li> </ul>
Skills development		
<b>Scope for Action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Men's Sheds possible sites</li> <li>Practical learning / mentoring</li> <li>Promote existing programmes (eg SAFL)</li> <li>Social enterprise possibilities</li> <li>Volunteers recruitment via other initiatives</li> </ul>	<b>Potential Partners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Volunteers</li> <li>Groundwork</li> <li>Litterwatch</li> <li>Mental Health</li> <li>SAFL</li> <li>SMBC</li> <li>UnLtd</li> </ul>	<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development costs</li> <li>Maintenance</li> </ul>
Mill Pool (also known as 'The Milky')		
<b>Scope for Action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change perception of Mill Pool</li> <li>Research previous actions</li> </ul>	<b>Potential Partners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMBC</li> <li>The Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust</li> </ul>	<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement</li> <li>External Funding</li> </ul>





**Examples of what can be done:**



Trim Trails (best on grassy areas)



Outdoor Gym (best on a hard surface)



Pathway games brighten paths



Bulbs add great beauty



Fruit trees don't need much space



Men's sheds develop skills and friendship



Allotments are educational, Healthy and save money!



Benches enable pondering, meeting and supervising children



Games areas can be simple





## Pilot Consultation and Development Areas

### 1 Somerset Green

We held a consultation event on the Green on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017. We gave people the chance to answer three simple questions:

- What do you like about this area?
- What would make it even better for you as a family?
- What would help you feel as safe as possible when using this area?

We also gave people stickers to 'spend' on the photographs what could be done.

The results are in appendix one below – but more importantly we were able to engage with people, with a number saying they would be willing to be part of a development group. This will be essential to make sure all developments are **done with** local people and not **done to** local people.



### 2 Our Local Primary Schools



We have set aside up to £5,000 for each school for a project that might cover one or more of the following outcomes

- Developing environmental awareness
- Growing fruit and vegetables
- Taking outside exercise
- Healthy eating

Any projects will need to be co-designed with children and be of such a quality as to create a legacy within the school.

We also hope that this will enable further funding to be drawn into the area via other sources such as the Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health, the Local Authority or independent grant funding. As with all areas though, we will be looking to develop a working partnership with parents and teachers.



### 3 *Open Space by Hateley Heath Primary School*

This field, which used to be shared by Hateley Heath Primary School and the now closed Kent Close School, has great potential for development. We will develop a small working group with the school and hold a consultation as we are doing elsewhere.

The area has scope for several large projects, for example:

**An allotment:** We know that there are waiting lists for other allotments in the area, and so there may be some demand. We would work in partnership with one of the current local allotments in order to bring in their expertise, as well as the dedicated local authority officer.



**A men's shed:** There is an emerging national movement around this initiative, which enables men to come together to develop skills and form friendships. Elsewhere they are having a positive impact on the mental health of men, for whom the suicide rate is three times higher than that of women. They reduce isolation and loneliness as well as developing a place in the community where items can be taken to be 'fixed'.



**A dedicated dog walking area:** We hope this also might lead to more responsible dog ownership in terms of cleaning up after them.

### 4 *Bulb Planting*

The beauty of flowers can transform the community, raise spirits and confidence in a place being a nice place to live.

We are aiming initially to plant bulbs in three locations across the Big Local area.

- Stone Cross Library
- Clarke's Lane
- Westmoreland Road



We believe that when people see what is possible, they will want something similar by where they live.





## 5 *Mill Pool (also known as The Milky)*

Mill Pool is the most amazing place in our Big Local area, but it is underused. Many people don't see it as a safe place and miss out on its beauty. We want to change its image by engaging local people to use it and look after it.



We recognise that we will need outside expertise and additional funding but believe all things are possible if local people get involved. We are going to consult the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust.



### ***Draft Action Plan working with the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust (BBCWT)***

- Developing a basic site maintenance plan as a mechanism for generating ideas.
- Engaging with schools using the BBCWT experienced officers. They are able to lead sessions relating to woodland skills. A pilot with Hall Green may be most appropriate given their adjacency to Mill Pool.



- Opening up the area to enhance the views.
- Working with SMBC to make the entrances inviting and accessible
- New signage, possibly designed by school children covering wildlife, flora and fauna as well as encouraging people to walk dogs responsibly, take their litter home, etc.
- Address the issues relating to the Westminster Road aspect with SMBC.
- Develop a maintenance plan that would, say, maintain different areas on a 5 yearly cycle.

- Engaging volunteers is essential, but very hard for an external agency to do. HCBL will consider that as part of the engagement strategy in their next plan.



## Feeling Safer

One of the outcomes listed above is that there is a reduction in fear and concern in the area, with people feeling safer.

Reassuring people is key to increasing usage of community spaces, especially areas such as Mill Pool.

Designing the use of Green and Open Spaces needs to take into consideration aspects of crime and anti-social behaviour. However, most people's fears are driven by factors other than crime itself.

There are two principal drivers of fear of crime. One is personal experience and the other is personal vulnerability. Anecdotally we can see this when an elderly person expresses a fear of assault, but a young man has no fear at all despite the fact he is four times more likely to be a victim.

### Personal experience

Personal experience that drives fear of crime:

- Being previously a victim of crime
- Being subject to persistent anti-social behaviour
- Feeling of powerlessness and isolation
- Individual feelings of vulnerability (see below)
- Living in a high crime area
- Poor information (myths about crime and historical stories)
- State of public transport
- State of the physical environment
- Stories about crime in the press (about any location)



### Personal vulnerability



*Clearly, people living in the Hateley Cross Big Local area will have a higher fear of crime than is appropriate for the crime levels of the area. Understanding the drivers of fear of crime enable a strategic approach that is based on reassurance and communication.*

Personal factors that drive fear of crime:

Members of these groups will have a fear of crime that is between 25% and 100% above the national average.

- Council / Housing Association tenants
- Disabled
- Ethnic minorities
- LGBT community members
- Living in areas in physical disorder
- Living in inner city
- Low income
- People over 60
- Single parents
- Women



**What will the Pilot Consultation and Development cost?**

Category	Notes	Ballpark Total *
Pilot 1: Somerset Green	Trim Trail – 5 features Two metal benches Pavement Games (community artist plus materials) Goal / Basketball hoop Bulb planting (say 50 square metres) <b>Total including allowance for delivery &amp; fitting</b>	£12,000 £2,000 £1,500 £2,000 £1,750 <b>£19,250 †</b>
Pilot 2: Primary Schools	3 grants of up to £5,000 per school to encourage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing environmental awareness</li> <li>• Growing fruit and vegetables</li> <li>• Taking outside exercise</li> <li>• Healthy eating</li> </ul>	<b>£15,000</b>
Pilot 3: Denbigh Drive	Men's Sheds (single metal garage, fitting) Allotment development (engagement / consultation) Start up costs (legal advice) Soil testing Fencing Grant for start up materials for tenants <b>Total</b>	£8,000 † £1,000 † £1,000 † £5,000 † £10,000 † £5,000 <b>£30,000</b>
Pilot 4: Bulb planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stone Cross Library</li> <li>• Clarke's Lane</li> <li>• Westmoreland Road</li> </ul> Say 100 square metres (total)	<b>£3,500 †</b>
Pilot 5: Mill Pool	Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust support (BBCWT charge £250 per day) Professional Fundraiser? Signage <b>Total</b>	£5,000  £2,000 £3,000 <b>£10,000 †</b>
Total	£77,750 (ex VAT) When VAT is added to † items	£77,750
VAT	The items above, marked †, are likely to attract VAT	£11,550
<b>Total</b>		<b>£89,300</b>

\* These ballpark figures are based on quotes, but will need to be confirmed. The total would indicate a budget of £100,000 would be appropriate, which would include a 10% contingency.

Maintenance is not included above.



## **Further development information**

**Bulb planting** is estimated at £35 per square metre. In order to give some perspective for this the areas of Worcester Green, Radnor Green, Clarke's Lane, Wiltshire Way and Kesteven Green total about 200 square metres, meaning a cost of approximately £7,000.

**Tree planting** costs about £150 per tree.

**Outdoor Gym** costs about £500 - £1,000 per item. The total cost of the outdoor gym in Grace Mary to Lion Farm Big Local was £16,000. Maintenance?

**Metal Benches** will cost £300 - £1000 to be installed depending on specification.

**Trim Trails** cost about £1,000 per unit, but should be cheaper to install than an outdoor gym. A company such as Play Dale (<https://www.playdale.co.uk/catalogues/playdale-17/index.html>) have extensive knowledge and experience. That is also a helpful source of information regarding **goals** and other **games equipment**.

Pavement games could cost as little as the materials if they are developed by the children themselves. There is guidance at <http://www.schoolgrounds.ca/projects/walls.html#R39>. Alternatively, commissioning a community artist who could engage with schools would help give that sense of ownership. An organisation such as Art 4 Space would be able to identify appropriate people <http://www.art4space.co.uk/>.

**Men's Sheds** costs depend on the size required, the extent of the equipment inside, security and the development of a base. One of the most helpful websites in terms of history and impact is <https://barrygoanna.com/projects/>. A metal single garage costs from £3,000 - £5,000.

**Allotments** would need to be developed with the advice of Sandwell Council's Parks Community Development and Allotment Officer, who is supportive of the idea and will meet with any group that wishes to progress it.

The process would require:

- 1 Identifying a group of people who will manage and run the allotment.
- 2 Testing the soil. 1200 square metres, with about 30 samples, will cost from £4,000 - £5,000.
- 3 Seeing if planning permission is needed to change the land use from parkland to agricultural.
- 4 Identifying the site as temporary in the first stages, to make sure it is feasible (closing a permanent site requires the permission of the Secretary of State).
- 5 Fencing the area (likely to be in excess of £10,000)
- 6 Establishing an association for on going governance (or making it part of an existing association).





## Appendix One - Findings from the Somerset Green Consultation

### ***What do you like about this area?***

- I have lived here for 40 years, and I love it being green
- I have raised all my children here. It is a nice area
- It's a lovely green area (x3)
- It's a nice quiet green area and my child rides his bike here (x2)
- It's a peaceful area (x2)
- The open space - It's nice and clear
- This is a nice area to walk

### ***What would make it even better for you as a family?***

- A play area with the monkey bars
- A sitting area (x2) - may be memorial benches to local residents who have passed away
- A youth club
- An outside Gym
- Cycling for young children - Bike Trail and bike ramps
- Dog waste bins
- Football and Basketball Court
- Make it more child-friendly
- Pavement games (x2)
- Play area for children and ramps for scooters
- Something for the younger children that doesn't attract teenagers
- Something for young children to do as they play here (x7)
- The area to be safe for children to play outside
- There is nothing for the young or teenagers

### ***What would help you feel as safe as possible when using this area?***

- CCTV
- Don't put up any swings as they attract teenagers who may break them
- Happy with it as it is (2)
- I worry about cars speeding and children running into the road (x2)
- I'm worried about its being taken over by drinkers and drug takers
- Making the area gated
- More lighting (x2)
- More Police around
- Neighbourhood scheme - there are helpful neighbours here
- Put the children's activities in an open area (not in the corner)
- Sort out dogs and their poo (x3)
- Stop antisocial behaviour - we don't want to go back to when there was vandalism

### ***Votes for options:***

Trim trail	40
Outdoor Gym	33
Pavement games	25
Benches	22
Goal & Basketball	21
Bulb planting	19
Trees	18
Do nothing	7
Raised beds	5

