

# Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment

Leeds Local Development Framework



July 2011

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## GLOSSARY

ANGSt	Accessible Natural Green Space Standard
BME	Black and minority ethnic
BSF	Building Schools for the Future
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
E&W	England & Wales
FIT	Fields in Trust (formerly the National Playing Fields Association)
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
IPA	Informal play area
LCC	Leeds City Council
LAP	Local area of play
LDF	Local Development Framework
LEAP	local equipped area for play
LNR	Local nature reserve
MUGA	Multi-use games area
NEAP	A neighbourhood equipped area for play
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PROW	Public rights of way
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SSSI	Site of special scientific interest
STP	Synthetic turf pitch
SOA	Super Output Areas
UDPR	Unitary Development Plan Review (2006)



## **Executive Summary**

Good quality, accessible green space has an important role to play in people's lifestyle choices. As land becomes more densely populated and Leeds expands, the quantity of green space available for public use is placed under increasing pressure. The opportunities to create new green space in urban areas are few, due to requirements to accommodate housing demand and economic growth.

Consequently, the number of people using green space has increased, creating additional demands on the space which are detrimental to the quality of the space and its ability to perform its function successfully; whether it be a park, recreation ground, children's play area or an area of woodland. It is critical that green space of the correct type, with the required facilities is provided in the right locations if the positive benefits towards people's physical and mental health and well being are to be secured. It is also essential to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

There are 1,750 green space sites, 278 children's play facilities and 154 indoor sports sites serving the Leeds population of approximately 761,124. Planning has a crucial role in determining the environment in which people live and consequently, securing good health and well being for residents and visitors to Leeds. Effective use of the planning system is paramount to protecting needed green space, creating new green space where there is a deficit, and improving the quality of green space where it is placed under increasing pressure.

This assessment of sport, open space and recreation needs and opportunities is presented in three parts. Part one of the assessment introduces the assessment and its purpose, sets out how the study was carried out, including separating open space, sport and recreation into typologies, and outlines the strategic context. It then goes into further detail on relevant strategies and policies.

Part two of the assessment sets out the context for each green space type, the current provision, quality and accessibility, the results from consultation and other relevant evidence. Based on this evidence standards for future provision up to 2026 are recommended. Whilst there is disparity in quantity, quality and accessibility of green space between different areas of Leeds, overall there is good green space provision in Leeds, which is influenced by the presence of 6 large city parks and many natural spaces on the edge of the urban area. However, consultation reveals dissatisfaction in the amount and distribution of quality green space provision. There are many reasons for this dissatisfaction which are complex and interrelated, such as location, layout, quality, site size, access, the facilities available and design.

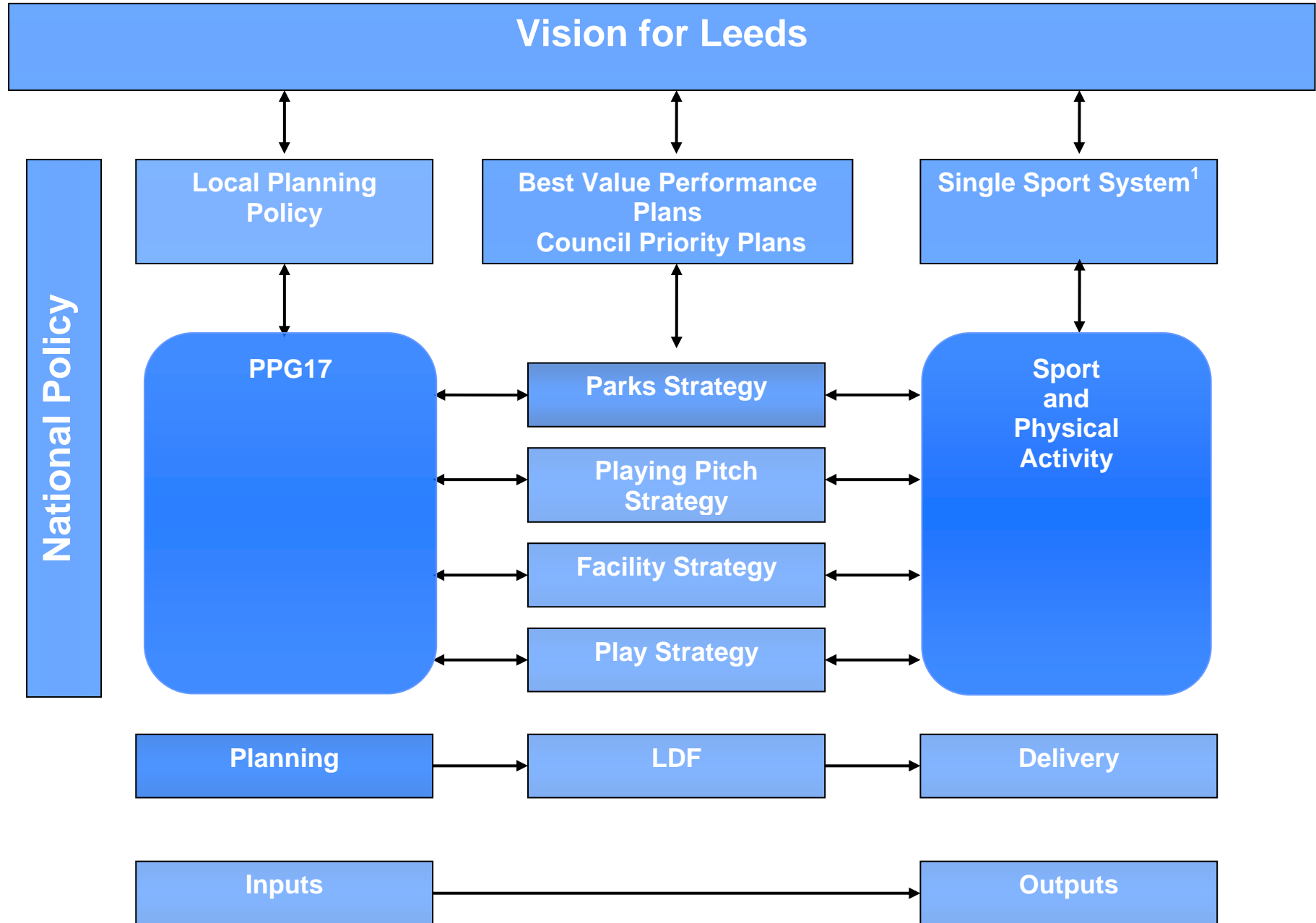
Part three covers implementation and suggests how the proposed quantity, accessibility and quality standards derived from the process should be used to inform the future planning policy approach in the Leeds Local Development Framework and subsequent development management decisions. Open space and recreation provision will continue to change and evolve as the city grows. It is crucial that the information gathered for this study is monitored, shared and updated to enable a continued informed dialogue between the relevant stakeholders and affected communities. It recognises that for Leeds to successfully reap the many benefits of open space, sport and recreation provision, implementation of the recommendations and findings of the study requires the cooperation and involvement of many partner agencies and most importantly, Leeds residents.

## **Chapter One Introduction**

### **The PPG17 Study**

- 1.1 'Over 95% of people believe it is very, or fairly important to have green spaces near to where they live.' Marmot Review (2010)
- 1.2 This study concerns the supply and demand issues for open spaces, sport and recreation facilities in Leeds. It covers the issues for the following typologies defined in 'Assessing Needs & Opportunities: A Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17':
  - Parks and Gardens
  - Amenity Space
  - Children and Young People's Play Provision
  - Outdoor Sports
  - Allotments
  - Indoor Sport and Recreation Facilities
  - Natural Green Space
  - City Centre Civic Space
  - Cemeteries
  - Churchyards
  - Green Corridors
  - Private gardens open to the public ie. Harewood House
- 1.3 PPG17 does not include private estates and grounds, but for completeness, and given its contributions towards the overall open space supply in Leeds, Harewood House is included in the study.
- 1.4 The study is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation & Assessing Needs and Opportunities - A Companion Guide to PPG17 published in September 2002. "The information gained from the assessment of needs and opportunities and the audit of existing provision should be used to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities in their areas" (paragraph 7, PPG17).
- 1.5 Figure 1.1 overleaf illustrates how the overall assessment will influence and communicate with other related council, and strategic partner strategies.
- 1.6 The Government guidance states that national standards are inappropriate, as they do not take into account the demographics of an area, the specific needs of Leeds' residents and the extent of local built development.
- 1.7 PPG17 recognises that each local authority will need to adopt individual approaches appropriate to its area which reflects the diversity of that area, its different structures and local characteristics.

**Figure 1.1 Relationship of PPG17 Study to other Relevant Strategies**



<sup>1</sup> A single system for Sport is where all agencies work together collaboratively as a well organised network to make best use of resources, clarify roles and responsibilities, share an agreed vision and strategy for sport, develop clear pathways into and through sport, and develop a single access point for sport services.

- 1.8 In January 2008, the council began an audit of the city's open space, sport and recreation facilities. This was completed in March 2009. In March 2008, the council appointed PMP Consultancy Ltd to undertake an open space, sport and recreation needs assessment. This was completed in October 2008 and is available separately to this study.
- 1.9 This study outlines the proposed local standards, compares those standards to the existing provision and identifies areas of deficiency and surplus. The agreed local provision and accessibility standards will form an important element of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and will directly inform the Leeds Core Strategy and emerging development plan documents.
- 1.10 The standards will be used to ensure that the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities will be adequate to meet present and future needs across the city. The strategy will ensure that priorities for the future and resource allocation are based on local need and that a strategic approach to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities is adopted.
- 1.11 The study is underpinned by several key objectives, specifically:
- To provide an evidence base for appropriate strategies and policies as part of the Local Development Framework which are fundamental to:
    - supporting an urban renaissance
    - promoting social inclusion and community cohesion
    - tackling health and wellbeing issues
    - promoting more sustainable development.
  - to enable the establishment of an effective approach to planning open space, sport and recreation facilities
  - to set robust local standards based on assessments of local needs
  - to facilitate improved decision making as part of the development management process
  - to guide / steer / influence S106 negotiations and eventually evidence for the CIL charging schedule
  - inform priorities for investment

### **Function and benefits of open space**

- 1.12 Open space, sport and recreation provision has a crucial role in supporting the implementation of these objectives. The Leeds Strategic Plan (2008-11) highlighted the role of parks and open spaces in improving the health and well being of residents, further reinforcing the importance of effective provision.
- 1.13 Open spaces provide a number of functions within the urban fabric of cities, including, the provision for play and informal recreation, a landscape buffer within and between the built environment and/or a habitat for the promotion of biodiversity and helping the city combat the effects of climate change. Overall, the spaces contribute to the cultural life of the community by also providing space for community events, general social interaction, participation and volunteering.

- 1.14 Each type of open space has different benefits. For example, allotments for the growing of produce, play areas for children's play and playing pitches for formal sports events. Open space can also perform a secondary function, such as, outdoor sports facilities have an amenity value in addition to facilitating sport and recreation and all spaces can provide for visual amenity as a 'green lung'.
- 1.15 Changing social and economic circumstances, changed work and leisure practices, more sophisticated consumer tastes and higher public expectations have placed new demands on open spaces. The provision of open spaces and recreation provision is key to a sustainable and thriving community.
- 1.16 It is widely recognised that the provision of high quality 'public realm' facilities such as parks and open spaces can assist in the promotion of an area as an attractive place to live, and can result in a number of wider benefits.
- 1.17 The role of green spaces in flood management and mitigation of climate change is also recognised. Open space can allow for the storage and free flow of flood waters, reducing the risk to nearby houses. This is particularly important in an urban context, as highlighted by the Leeds Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Furthermore, Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS 1) specifically refers to opportunities for open space and green infrastructure to contribute to urban cooling, sustainable drainage systems and conserving and enhancing biodiversity.

## **Leeds and its Residents**

- 1.18 Leeds Metropolitan District covers an area of 217 square miles and is the regional capital of Yorkshire and the Humber. The area is extremely diverse, comprising a main urban area, surrounded by small towns, villages and countryside.
- 1.19 Leeds has strong artistic and sporting traditions; the city is well known for sport, from football at Leeds United, rugby league with Leeds Rhinos, rugby union with Leeds Tykes and Yorkshire County Cricket. Headingley is recognised throughout the world as a venue for test match cricket, and has recently been upgraded. The city also boasts a wealth of community-based sports, heritage and recreational facilities.
- 1.20 Leeds is the destination for large numbers of visitors and commuters and as such open space, sport and recreation facilities are essential to serve workers and tourists and to provide an attractive environment.
- 1.21 The population of Leeds based on the 2008 mid-year estimates is 779,256 and the age and gender split is shown in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 – Population breakdown of Leeds by age ('000 population) ONS 2008 Mid Year Estimates**

<b>Population age groups (years)</b>	<b>Total population</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
0-4	45.2	23.1	22.2
5-14	79.7	40.8	38.6
15-19	55.3	27.7	27.7
20-29	167.9	85.3	82.5
30-59	289.2	144.4	144.6
60+	150.6	67.4	83.3
<b>All</b>	<b>787.7</b>	<b>388.7</b>	<b>399</b>

1.22 The age structure of Leeds is broadly similar to that for England and Wales (E&W), with the notable exception in the 20-29 age band which in Leeds accounts for 21% of the population, compared to 13.0% nationally. This is because Leeds contains two large universities (combined total of 50,000 students) and numerous other institutions, including Leeds Trinity University College and the Open University's regional office. This is likely to have an impact on the demand for open spaces and sports facilities, both in terms of the type and the quantity, as this age group typically have above average participation rates in sport and physical activity.

1.23 Children (aged 14 and under) account for 16% of the population of Leeds. ONS data shows an increase to the birth rate not seen for 20 years, meaning the proportion of children will increase further. While people aged 60 and over account for 19%, reflecting the national trend of an increasingly ageing population.

### **Ethnicity**

1.24 In the 2001 census, 91.8% of the population of Leeds state their ethnic origin as 'White', slightly higher than the percentage for E & W (91.3%). The 'non-white population' in Leeds has increased from 5.8% of the total population in 1991, to 8.2% in 2001.

1.25 With just over 15,000 people (2.1% of the total population), the Pakistani community has replaced the Indian community (12,303 people) as the largest 'single' Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community in Leeds. It is also the largest BME community in the region (2.9%), twice the proportion across E & W.

### **Economic profile**

1.26 The economic profile of people in Leeds aged 16-74 is broadly similar to that for E & W, but the proportion of economically active adults is slightly lower in Leeds (65.8%), than it is for E & W as a whole (66.5%). The proportion of full time employees is comparable (40.4% compared to 40.5%), as is the proportion of part time employees (12.0% compared to 11.8%). As detailed

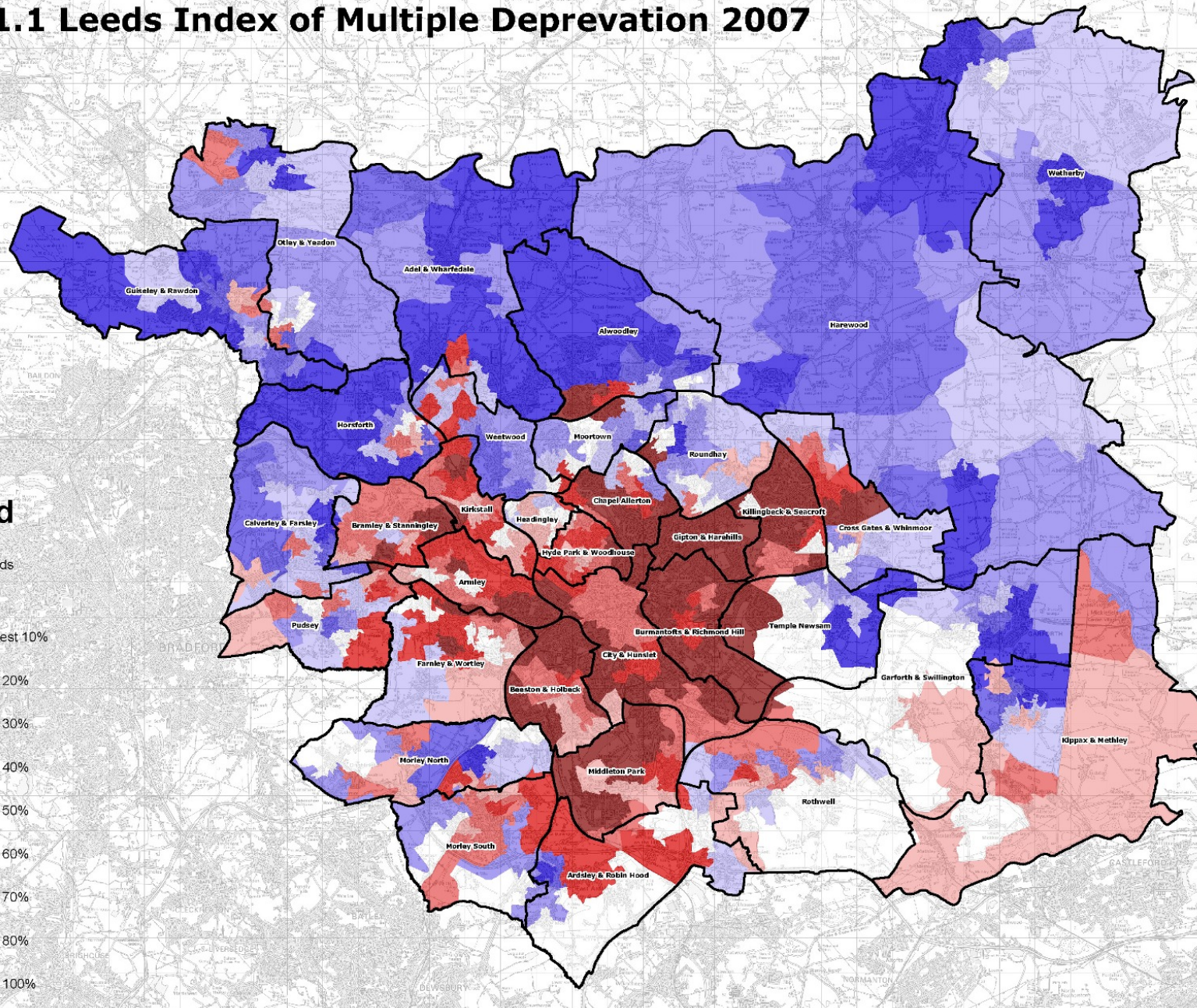
earlier, the proportion of full time students is higher in Leeds (10.4%), than for E & W as a whole (7.0%). The majority of residents in Leeds still travel to work in a car or van (60.3% compared to 61.5% across E & W). However, the proportion of residents travelling to work by public transport is higher in Leeds (18.8%) than it in E & W (14.5%), but the proportion of residents who cycle to work in Leeds is less than half the figure for E & W (1.3%, compared to 2.8%).

### **Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)**

- 1.27 The whole of England has been divided into 32,482 Super Output Areas (SOAs), with 476 in Leeds. According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2007), 20% of SOAs in Leeds were ranked in the 10% most deprived areas in England. This compares with 17% for the Yorkshire and the Humber region as a whole. 27% of Leeds SOAs are in the worst 20%, compared with 28% for the region. This information is shown on plan 1.1 overleaf. The concentrations of deep red identify the most deprived areas, with dark blue highlighting the least deprived locations. Deprivation is predominantly, but not exclusively located in the inner city areas.
- 1.28 Six wards in Leeds have more than half their SOAs in the 10% most deprived SOAs nationally (Burmantofts and Richmond Hill, Chapel Allerton, Gipton and Harehills, City and Hunslet, Killingbeck and Seacroft and Middleton Park). Eight wards in Leeds have more than half their SOAs in the 20% most deprived SOAs nationally (the above wards, plus Armley, Hyde Park and Woodhouse wards).
- 1.29 This reinforces the need to reduce social inequalities and address issues of deprivation. If the needs and expectations of local communities are fully understood, provision of appropriate local green space and sport and recreation facilities can act as a catalyst for regeneration and help to reduce inequalities.

# Plan 1.1 Leeds Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007

## Legend



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## **Study Structure**

- 1.30 This study comprises 13 chapters. Chapter 2 sets out the methodology for undertaking the study and chapter 3 sets out the strategic context, highlighting national, regional and local influences on the provision of open space in the city.
- 1.31 Chapters 4–11 relate to each of the typologies identified within the scope of the study. Each typology chapter sets out the strategic context to that particular typology, key issues emerging from consultations relating to that typology and the recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards. These standards are then applied to determine the priorities for that type of open space across the different geographical areas of the city. Chapter 12 examines the availability of open spaces detailed in the previous chapters in the city centre, with the addition of city centre civic space.
- 1.32 Chapter 13 summarises the key issues for each type of open space and identifies the strategic priorities for each area of the city. An overview outlining the planning policy context and the future application of the study findings is also provided.
- 1.33 A number of appendices and technical papers are referenced throughout the study. These appendices supplement the information provided within this document.