

## Key findings from the Green Space Strategy Citizens Panel Exercise

### Methodology:

A questionnaire approach was used for the Green Space Strategy Consultation exercise. In line with the consultation strategy guidelines, the questionnaire used was created in SNAP software and was made available in both paper and electronic formats. To ensure a good response to this survey the questionnaire was sent to all 820 members of the newly recruited Citizens Panel. By using the Citizens Panel we would be ensuring a good geographic coverage of responses to the questionnaire as well as a representative sample.

### Response rate:

In total 216 panel members responded to the Green Space Strategy questionnaire. This equates to a response rate of 26%. This is a reasonable response as due to timing constraints it was not possible to send a reminder survey to boost the response rate. The fieldwork period for this exercise was 3 weeks.

#### Response rate by geographic location

In terms of response rate by geographic location, 29% (62 respondents) came from Hitchin, 26% (56 respondents) came from Letchworth, 16% (35 respondents) from Royston and 10% (22 respondents) from Baldock. 18% of the sample (39 respondents) responding to the questionnaire came from villages within North Hertfordshire including Newnham, Lilley, Ickleford, Codicote, Sandon, Barley, Pirton, Kimpton, Knebworth, Ashwell, Weston, Graveley and Preston.

#### Response rate by age and gender

In terms of response rate by gender, 49% (106 respondents) were male while 48% (104 respondents) were female. 6 respondents did not answer this question. In terms of response by age, the highest percentage of responses came from the 35-49 age category, with 31% of the sample (66 respondents) responding from this age range. This was followed by 30% (64 respondents) from the 65+ age group, 27% (57 respondents) from the 50-64 age group, 10% (21 respondents) from the 20-34 age group and 1% (2 respondents) from the under 20's.

#### Response rate by ethnicity and disability status.

In terms of response rate by ethnicity 88% (190 respondents) were from a White British background. 2% (4 respondents) were from a White Irish background and 0.5% (1 respondent) was from a White Italian or White Polish background respectively. 1% (3 respondents) were from a Mixed White & Asian background while 0.5% (1 respondent) were from a Black or Black British Caribbean, Black or Black British African, Asian or Asian British Indian or Chinese background respectively. 3% (6 respondents) selected other ethnic group to this question with 2 selecting white German, 2 selecting white European and 1 selecting white French. In terms of response rate by disability status, 84% (180 respondents) said they did not consider themselves as being a disabled person while 13% (27 respondents) said they did have a disability.

### Q3 Firstly thinking about the district as a whole and not the area that you live in, please rate the following elements of countryside and natural green spaces in terms of their quality.

The first question of the Green space strategy asked panel members to rate commons and meadows, nature conservation and wildlife areas, woodland areas and copses and open water using a likert scale ranging from very good to very poor. The results are shown in the table below:

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Mis...					
		No reply	Very good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	Don't know
Base	864	47 5.4%	97 11.2%	461 53.4%	148 17.1%	32 3.7%	79 9.1%
Commons and meadow	216	11 5.1%	39 18.1%	143 66.2%	14 6.5%	1 0.5%	8 3.7%
Nature conservation & wildlife areas	216	13 6.0%	29 13.4%	117 54.2%	29 13.4%	5 2.3%	23 10.6%
Woodland areas and copses	216	8 3.7%	26 12.0%	136 63.0%	25 11.6%	7 3.2%	14 6.5%
Open water (e.g. rivers)	216	15 6.9%	3 1.4%	65 30.1%	80 37.0%	19 8.8%	34 15.7%

Commons and meadows received the highest good rating from respondents with 84% (182 respondents) rating these as good or very good. Only 7% (15 respondents) rated commons and meadows in North Hertfordshire as poor. There was also impressive good ratings for both woodland areas and copses and nature conservation and wildlife areas which were rated as good or very good by 75% (162 respondents) and 68% (146 respondents) respectively. Open water received the lowest good rating from respondents with only 35% (68 respondents) rating these as good or very good while 46% (99 respondents) rated open water as poor or very poor.

When we look at the ratings for these elements of countryside and natural green spaces by the areas where respondents live, Baldock had the highest good rating for commons and meadows with 91% rating these as good or very good, while Royston had the lowest good rating with 77%. In terms of nature conservation and wildlife areas, respondents from Letchworth gave the highest good rating with 77% rating these as good or very good, while respondents from Baldock gave this area the lowest good rating with 59%. For woodland areas and copses, the highest good rating was received from respondents who live in Baldock, with 86% rating this element as good or very good while respondents from Hitchin gave this the lowest good rating with 68%. Finally, in terms of open water, respondents from Hitchin gave this the highest good rating with 38% while respondents from Letchworth gave this the lowest good rating with 27%.

**Q4 Thinking now about the part of the district where you live please rate the following elements of green spaces.**

As with the previous question, respondents were again asked to rate elements of green space using the likert scale ranging from very good to very poor. This time respondents were asked to think about provision not in the district as a whole but the are/town within which they live. The results are shown in the table below:

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Mis...					
		No reply	Very good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	Don't know
Base	296	74 5.7%	156 12.0%	689 53.2%	197 15.2%	27 2.1%	153 11.8%
Local recreation grounds and amenity areas	216	13 6.0%	29 13.4%	134 62.0%	34 15.7%	4 1.9%	2 0.9%
Parks and public gardens	216	13 6.0%	39 18.1%	111 51.4%	40 18.5%	4 1.9%	9 4.2%
Allotments	216	18 8.3%	14 6.5%	71 32.9%	27 12.5%	11 5.1%	75 34.7%
Churchyards and cemeteries	216	5 2.3%	27 12.5%	138 63.9%	23 10.6%	2 0.9%	21 9.7%
Active sports areas	216	13 6.0%	28 13.0%	114 52.8%	33 15.3%	3 1.4%	25 11.6%
Play areas	216	12 5.6%	19 8.8%	121 56.0%	40 18.5%	3 1.4%	21 9.7%

Churchyards and cemeteries received the highest good rating from respondents with 76% (165 respondents) ratings these as good or very good. All elements of green space received good ratings of 65% or more bar allotments which had a good rating of 39%. Poor ratings across all elements of green space, while not excessive, do show that things can still improve, with approaching 1 in 5 respondents (20%) rating each element as poor or very poor. The table over the page shows the percentage of respondents by location who rated each of the green space elements as either good or very good.

Element	% good Royston	% good Letchworth	% good Hitchin	% good Baldock
Local recreation grounds and amenity areas	74%	70%	76%	73%
Parks and public gardens	<b>89%</b>	75%	68%	73%
Allotments	20%	57%	21%	<b>86%</b>
Churchyards and cemeteries	66%	79%	76%	68%
Active sports areas	66%	73%	57%	82%
Play areas	63%	61%	59%	<b>77%</b>

From the table above the key positive messages are 89% rating parks and open spaces as good or very good from respondents in Royston, 86% rating allotments as good or very good from respondents in Baldock and 77% rating play areas as good or very good again from respondents in Baldock.

The table below highlights the areas from both q1 and q2 of the survey showing the highest poor ratings by geographic location. A poor rating of 20% or more is seen as representing a sizeable problem. Whilst there is little that the council can do with regard to open water due to a lack of provision in this area all other areas can be further investigated as part of the action planning process that will precede this consultation exercise.

Priority	% poor Royston	% poor Letchworth	% poor Hitchin	% poor Baldock
1	Open Water ( <b>43%</b> )	Open water ( <b>46%</b> )	Open water ( <b>51%</b> )	Open water ( <b>46%</b> )
2	Local recreation grounds and amenity areas ( <b>23%</b> )	Play areas ( <b>27%</b> )	Allotments ( <b>33%</b> )	Local recreation grounds and amenity areas ( <b>23%</b> )
3	Active sports areas ( <b>21%</b> )	Local recreation grounds and amenity areas ( <b>20%</b> )	Parks and public gardens ( <b>25%</b> )	

#### **Q5 How many times a week do you visit green spaces where you live?**

When asked to select from a prompted list the frequency at which they visit green spaces where they live, 38% (81 respondents) said they visited green spaces once a week. 32% (69 respondents) said they visited green spaces two to three times a week while 14% (30 respondents) said six to seven times a week. 9% (19 respondents) replied four to five times a week when asked how frequently they use green spaces. The most frequent users of green spaces were those responding from Royston where 29% said that they used green spaces between four and seven times a week.

#### **Q6 The council needs to ensure that there is enough of each form of provision of green space that people might want to use. What do you think about the current amount or quantity of the following in the district as a whole.**

Respondents were asked to comment on the provision of commons and meadows, nature conservation and wildlife areas and woodland area and copses using a likert scale ranging from 'a lot more is needed' down to 'there is more than enough'. The results to this question are shown in the table below:

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Missing					
		No reply	A lot more is needed	Slightly more is needed	It is about right	There is more than enough	Not applicable
Base	648	30 4.6%	109 16.8%	245 37.8%	243 37.5%	2 0.3%	19 2.9%
Commons and meadows	216	10 4.6%	20 9.3%	77 35.6%	102 47.2%	2 0.9%	5 2.3%
Nature conservation and wil...	216	9 4.2%	51 23.6%	87 40.3%	61 28.2%	-	8 3.7%
Woodland areas and copses	216	11 5.1%	38 17.6%	81 37.5%	80 37.0%	-	6 2.8%

The table above shows that respondents feel that there could be more provision for all three of the green space provisions. Nature conservation and wildlife areas was seen as needing the biggest increase in provision with 74% (138 respondents) saying either 'a lot more' or 'slightly more is needed'. Nature conservation and wildlife areas was seen as the area needing the biggest increase in provision across each of the 4 towns.

**Q7 For the part of the district where you live please tell us what you think about the provision of the following accessible green spaces?**

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Missing					
		No reply	A lot more needed	Slightly more is needed	It is about right	There is more than eno...	Not applicable
Base	1296	71 5.5%	129 10.0%	299 23.1%	652 50.3%	20 1.5%	125 9.6%
Local recreation grounds and amenity green spaces	216	10 4.6%	18 8.3%	52 24.1%	131 60.6%	-	5 2.3%
Parks and public gardens	216	13 6.0%	26 12.0%	52 24.1%	113 52.3%	1 0.5%	11 5.1%
Allotments	216	19 8.8%	19 8.8%	41 19.0%	76 35.2%	5 2.3%	56 25.9%
Churchyards and cemeteries	216	13 6.0%	8 3.7%	27 12.5%	139 64.4%	6 2.8%	23 10.6%
Active sports areas	216	8 3.7%	31 14.4%	67 31.0%	91 42.1%	3 1.4%	16 7.4%
Play areas	216	8 3.7%	27 12.5%	60 27.8%	102 47.2%	5 2.3%	14 6.5%

Based on the table above the area requiring the biggest increase in provision is active sports areas. 45% (98 respondents) said that either 'a lot more' or 'slightly more is needed'. 40% (87 respondents) also felt that there needed to be more play area provision in the district. The table below shows the priorities in terms of increased provision by town. Figures in brackets have been calculated by adding together the 'a lot more needed' and 'slightly more needed' percentages.

Priority	Royston	Letchworth	Hitchin	Baldock
1	Active sports areas (66%)	Active sports areas (45%)	Active sports areas (48%)	Play areas (59%)
2	Local recreation ground & green spaces (49%)	Play areas (45%)	Parks and public gardens (44%)	Parks and public gardens (55%)
3	Play areas (43%)	Local recreation grounds and amenity green spaces (33%)	Play area (41%)	Active sports areas (45%)

**Please identify the spaces within the part of the district where you live which are most valued by the local community. (Please see separate spreadsheet)**

In terms of any subsequent action planning as a result of this consultation exercise, the column within the separate spreadsheet entitled areas in poor condition should be carefully considered. A priority list should be established to tackle the issues raised by respondents.

**Most frequent method of travelling to each of the following types of green spaces within the district where you live?**

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Missing						
		No reply	Walk	Bicycle	Car	Taxi	Bus	Train
<b>Base</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>403</b> 23.3%	<b>845</b> 48.9%	<b>65</b> 3.8%	<b>390</b> 22.6%	-	<b>22</b> 1.3%	<b>3</b> 0.2%
Nature conservation and wildlife areas	216	41 19.0%	95 44.0%	10 4.6%	66 30.6%	-	3 1.4%	1 0.5%
Woodland areas and copses	216	35 16.2%	116 53.7%	11 5.1%	49 22.7%	-	4 1.9%	1 0.5%
Open water areas	216	63 29.2%	46 21.3%	7 3.2%	92 42.6%	-	7 3.2%	1 0.5%
Local recreation grounds and amenity green spaces	216	33 15.3%	150 69.4%	10 4.6%	23 10.6%	-	-	-
Parks and public gardens	216	27 12.5%	141 65.3%	8 3.7%	35 16.2%	-	5 2.3%	-
Sports pitches in public use	216	49 22.7%	105 48.6%	7 3.2%	52 24.1%	-	3 1.4%	-
Allotments	216	105 48.6%	79 36.6%	5 2.3%	27 12.5%	-	-	-
Churchyards and cemeteries	216	50 23.1%	113 52.3%	7 3.2%	46 21.3%	-	-	-

**In terms of journey time, what is an acceptable journey time for travelling to each of the following types of green spaces where you live if walking**

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Missing					
		No reply	0-5 minutes	6-10 minutes	11-15 minutes	16-20 minutes	Over 20 minutes
<b>Base</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>345</b> 20.0%	<b>169</b> 9.8%	<b>337</b> 19.5%	<b>390</b> 22.6%	<b>273</b> 15.8%	<b>214</b> 12.4%
Nature conservation and wildlife areas	216	36 16.7%	18 8.3%	25 11.6%	48 22.2%	53 24.5%	36 16.7%
Woodland areas and copses	216	36 16.7%	13 6.0%	34 15.7%	55 25.5%	51 23.6%	27 12.5%
Open water areas	216	55 25.5%	12 5.6%	18 8.3%	37 17.1%	36 16.7%	58 26.9%
Local recreation grounds and amenity green space	216	32 14.8%	33 15.3%	61 28.2%	53 24.5%	27 12.5%	10 4.6%
Parks and public gardens	216	29 13.4%	21 9.7%	65 30.1%	57 26.4%	26 12.0%	18 8.3%
Sports pitches in public use	216	45 20.8%	25 11.6%	50 23.1%	52 24.1%	28 13.0%	16 7.4%
Allotments	216	73 33.8%	26 12.0%	39 18.1%	37 17.1%	18 8.3%	23 10.6%
Churchyards and cemeteries	216	39 18.1%	21 9.7%	45 20.8%	51 23.6%	34 15.7%	26 12.0%

**In terms of journey time, what is an acceptable journey time for travelling to each of the following types of green spaces where you live if cycling**

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Missing					
		No reply	0-5 minutes	6-10 minutes	11-15 minutes	16-20 minutes	Over 20 minutes
<b>Base</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>532</b> 30.8%	<b>191</b> 11.1%	<b>343</b> 19.8%	<b>303</b> 17.5%	<b>158</b> 9.1%	<b>201</b> 11.6%
<b>Commons and meadows</b>	<b>216</b>	58 26.9%	25 11.6%	45 20.8%	43 19.9%	20 9.3%	25 11.6%
<b>Nature conservation and wildlife areas</b>	<b>216</b>	66 30.6%	13 6.0%	37 17.1%	48 22.2%	22 10.2%	30 13.9%
<b>Woodland areas and copses</b>	<b>216</b>	63 29.2%	14 6.5%	42 19.4%	48 22.2%	23 10.6%	26 12.0%
<b>Open water areas</b>	<b>216</b>	71 32.9%	13 6.0%	28 13.0%	31 14.4%	31 14.4%	42 19.4%
<b>Local recreation grounds and amenity green space</b>	<b>216</b>	62 28.7%	38 17.6%	48 22.2%	36 16.7%	15 6.9%	17 7.9%
<b>Parks and public gardens</b>	<b>216</b>	60 27.8%	32 14.8%	54 25.0%	33 15.3%	17 7.9%	20 9.3%
<b>Sports pitches in public use</b>	<b>216</b>	66 30.6%	27 12.5%	51 23.6%	36 16.7%	16 7.4%	20 9.3%
<b>Allotments</b>	<b>216</b>	86 39.8%	29 13.4%	38 17.6%	28 13.0%	14 6.5%	21 9.7%

**In terms of journey time, what is an acceptable journey time for travelling to each of the following types of green spaces where you live if travelling by car or public transport?**

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	Base	Missing					
		No reply	0-5 minutes	6-10 minutes	11-15 minutes	16-20 minutes	Over 20 minutes
<b>Base</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>357</b> 20.7%	<b>288</b> 16.7%	<b>326</b> 18.9%	<b>282</b> 16.3%	<b>221</b> 12.8%	<b>254</b> 14.7%
<b>Commons and meadows</b>	<b>216</b>	37 17.1%	36 16.7%	43 19.9%	41 19.0%	30 13.9%	29 13.4%
<b>Nature conservation and wildlife areas</b>	<b>216</b>	42 19.4%	22 10.2%	42 19.4%	36 16.7%	34 15.7%	40 18.5%
<b>Woodland areas and copses</b>	<b>216</b>	41 19.0%	24 11.1%	41 19.0%	44 20.4%	36 16.7%	30 13.9%
<b>Open water areas</b>	<b>216</b>	45 20.8%	16 7.4%	28 13.0%	40 18.5%	35 16.2%	52 24.1%
<b>Local recreation grounds and amenity green space</b>	<b>216</b>	42 19.4%	51 23.6%	45 20.8%	31 14.4%	23 10.6%	24 11.1%
<b>Parks and public gardens</b>	<b>216</b>	40 18.5%	46 21.3%	51 23.6%	29 13.4%	21 9.7%	29 13.4%
<b>Sports pitches in public use</b>	<b>216</b>	42 19.4%	46 21.3%	45 20.8%	30 13.9%	25 11.6%	28 13.0%
<b>Allotments</b>	<b>216</b>	68 31.5%	47 21.8%	31 14.4%	31 14.4%	17 7.9%	22 10.2%

Finally in terms of access to a car, 82% (177 respondents) said yes they have access while 14% (29 respondents) said no they do not have regular access to a car.